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# EDITOR'S NOTE

We started with a thought—a thought of wanting to further the Global Studies community, a thought that we wanted to give our degree extra purpose and visibility. One and a half years later, Nomad Journal reaches its third publication and an audience that scales beyond our humble beginnings.

Reclaiming Identities. The repertoire of works published in this edition display such a dichotomy. Some papers explore how certain communities have been empowered. Other works in this edition display how certain communities have been diminished. This edition features five papers from the Global 300 course, three essays from the Area Studies components, plus additional works that the editorial team has contributed.

In this edition, we had the delight of bringing in stronger input from our Māori and Pacific community. We had the delight of continuing our international scope by partnering with students at Monash University. We had the delight of gathering valuable insight from our small but intimate batch of Global Studies graduates.

As always, we give our sincere thanks to all authors, contributors, and the Faculty.

In the space of three editions, the progress and traction Nomad Journal has made is incredible. We hope our work, the work of the authors and contributors, is something you find value and inspiration from.

- Nomad Journal Editorial Team -

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# Aotearoa New Zealand, A Nation in Flux?

Albert Nguyen

In 2018 the Global Studies programme was introduced to the University of Auckland. It promised to be different, and it promised to be something new. A promise to look outwards to new forms of knowledge, to look forward to a hopeful future, but also to look inwards.

The first Global 100 lecture opened its doors nearly five years ago. Within that time, so much has happened, inadvertently reifying the entire Global Studies experience. We could not have asked for a more hands-on, immersive experience of the Global Studies phenomena even if we had wanted it.

From the Christchurch Mosque Shootings in 2019 to the passing of the Queen earlier this year, not to mention a global pandemic in between, so much has happened. The war machine continues its tyranny in Yemen, in Ethiopia, and now engulfs Ukraine. In other parts of the world, the struggle for justice continues through the Global Climate Strike, the Hong Kong Protests, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the Myanmar coup. So much has happened—too much that our singular experience derived from our part of the world cannot hope to capture the full extent of these global fluctuations.

A wanderer without a home. A soul that endlessly searches. An existence in perpetual motion. That is what Nomad is. Finding comfort in the confusion, grappling with the chaos, reconciling and adapting to new ideas and perspectives—that is the purpose of Nomad and the purpose of Global Studies.

With the passing of Her Majesty The Queen, a symbol of stability in modern day international affairs, questions over New Zealand's identity resurfaces. In the first place, is New Zealand even the correct name for this country? Given that the strength which has prompted New Zealand into the modern era has been dismantled, what does that mean for us going forward? Who is included in 'us' anyway? What does it mean to be a New Zealander? Technically, New Zealand is still part of the monarchy; but what does that mean? Should we be, or should we be considering otherwise?

In amongst this nation's reckoning with constitutional reform, in amongst its confrontation with its colonial past and an uncertain future, in amongst this nation whose progressive backbone has suddenly been torn down by disease; New Zealand's identity is stripped down to the bare bones. Aotearoa New Zealand, a nation in flux?

Political division, economic hardship, social unease, ethical dilemmas. What is our stance and how will we respond? Times are changing, and if change is inevitable, we need to be prepared and properly equipped with the tools to change along with it. That is all we can do.

## HOW ARE DISCOURSES OF NATIONALISM CHALLENGED BY THE NARRATIVE OF 'THE DESERVING REFUGEE'?

Shanaya Crasto

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### Abstract:

**Nationalism is a concept that has been evoked repeatedly to understand how nations perceive themselves and how this reflects their attitudes and interactions with other nations. Implicit is the assumption that the concept of the 'nation' is just out there. This paper aims to poke holes at the argument of nationalism as an ideology and its relations to refugees, using constructivism and inter-group threat theories. The data sources are derived from two prominent Polish (online) newspapers: *Gazeta Wyborcza* (left-wing) and *Gazeta Polska Codziennie* (right-wing). The data was confined to the years 2021–2022, which comprise the years of the Belarus-Poland border crisis (July 7, 2021) and the Russian invasion of Ukraine (February 24, 2022). Critical discourse analysis was used to analyse the data and derive conclusions based on the two theories aforementioned. This study aims to debunk taken-for-granted nationalism that justifies the logic of inclusion and exclusion towards a group (refugees) coerced to move.**

### Introduction

As the world turn its head eastward toward the Russia-Ukraine crisis, tensions are high and rising between nations, ideologies, economies, and societies. Caught in the crossfire are civilians who often bear the brunt of these geopolitical games. Three million Ukrainian civilians were forced to leave their homes and lives because of the Russian invasion (Zhou et al., 2022). The speed and scale of this movement has been unseen by Europe since the Second World War (Zhou et al., 2022). Neighbouring Poland absorbed two million Ukrainians in a commendable show of hospitality and compassion (Zhou et al., 2022). However, the reception was not as welcoming on Poland's other eastern border with Belarus. Thousands of asylum seekers, mainly from Middle Eastern countries, attempting to cross the frontier were barricaded by walls and pushed back by border guards (Lorenzo, 2022). Western media quickly pointed out the stark contrast in treatment between the two groups of refugees. Many humanitarian organisations were also critical of the wall between Belarus and Poland claiming that the money could have been diverted towards launching an effective and humane asylum policy (Lorenzo, 2022).

From the outside, the commendation of Poland

seems fitting. Race, culture, and religion certainly play some part in who Polish society will extend a giving hand toward and who they will not (Zhou et al., 2022). Conflict creates this moment of heightened self-awareness of the nation, where the boundaries between groups and societies seem to be neatly drawn. It is easy to ignore the latent tensions that pre-exist and succeed them (Jaskulowski, 2019). The narrative of the deserving refugee is clearly problematic, but simply pointing out its presence says nothing about the underlying conditions and inter-group dynamics that have given rise to it. It is a symptom rather than the disease itself. This presses questions about how ideas of the nation are constructed and perpetuate 'us' vs 'them' rationales. The media plays a significant role in the theatrics of nation construction by shaping public opinions, setting the agenda, and presenting the positions of political actors (Troszyński & El-Ghamari, 2022). It also provides a valuable starting point to unpack these discourses and examine if and why Ukrainian refugees are different from Middle Eastern refugees or Poles are different from both refugees. In treating these three groups as distinct, the aim is not to perpetuate the very phenomenon this paper wishes to debunk but rather to strategically essentialise it for comparative purposes.

### Positionality

The idea of a nation has always unsettled me. Growing up in Dubai, UAE, being of Indian descent and spending my adult life in Auckland, New Zealand, has made me wary of the concept altogether. I do not associate myself with one nation because I have spent my life on the move as what you would call a 'migrant'. When I first heard about the differential treatment of refugees on Poland's two borders, I sympathised with the refugees, a kind of coerced migrant. Their fate was at the hands of the nation, but all they wanted was a decent life, economic opportunities, a peaceful environment, social networks, and stable homes. Alas, that is utopic thinking. However, it led me down a rabbit hole of abstracting the events unfolding on the Eastern European side of the globe. Hence, this project attempts to make sense of nationalism by breaking down its constructions and 'us' vs 'them' manifestations. Migration will become an increasingly pressing issue for the world as climate change and hyper-globalisation coerce people to keep moving. Hence, the puzzles raised here intend to

provide a stepping stone towards understanding the invisible barriers to human movement.

### Research Context

Poland-Ukraine-Belarus has historical relations that precede the events under examination. Arguably, the warm embrace of Ukrainians is partly due to the shared history, trauma, and culture between the two countries for years. After the fall of communism, circa 1989, Poland was determined to consolidate relations with its eastern neighbours for two main reasons: to provide a hedge against Russian imperialism and to integrate smoothly into western institutions (Snyder, 2003). However, on the Ukrainian front, Poland had to operate in a dubious atmosphere where memories of ethnic cleansing by Ukrainian partisans and memories of forced resettlements by the Polish communist regime existed amongst nations on both sides (Snyder, 2003). Yet, Poland and Ukraine established a working relationship successfully until late 1993, when they found their limits due to differences in interests regarding Russia. On the other hand, Belarus was a more complicated case for Poland to establish ties with because it claimed (non-existent) Polish terror against Belarusians in Poland (Snyder, 2003). These apprehensions reflected Belarus's position as a puppet of the Kremlin (Snyder, 2003). Whilst Belarus eventually shed its pretensions toward Poland, a thick line continues to be drawn between Belarus's authoritarian regime and Poland's democratic one (Snyder, 2003).

Fast forward to the contemporary, Poland's historical relationship-building established its borders as a gateway into the free, western democratic world for its eastern neighbours. This was apparent because most foreigners applying for international protection in Poland often did not stay and continued their journey to western Europe (Klaus et al., 2018). To enable its ascension into the European Union (EU) in 2004, Poland incorporated the EU common *acquis* rights and obligations into its national order (Klaus, 2020). This entailed the shared responsibility of EU members towards refugees. Although Poland signed the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1991, the Polish asylum system did not receive asylum seekers well (Klaus, 2020). For instance, between 2011 and 2016, only two per cent of applicants received refugee status in Poland, the lowest rate in the EU (Klaus, 2020). Moreover, denied applications for international protection come with dire consequences as the foreigner must leave Poland and is often barred from re-entering the EU for several years (Klaus, 2020). Most of this antipathetic sentiment was directed toward refugees who were Muslim, Roma or Jewish (Klaus, 2020). Arguably, xenophobia was

not new to Polish society, just temporarily obscured to fit European Union values (Klaus, 2020).

Interestingly, Poland was not affected by the 2015 migrant crisis since it has no transit routes from the Middle East nor participated in relocation or resettlement programs (Klaus et al., 2018). However, the symbolic threat of these refugees entering became the central debate for the parliamentary election in 2015, addressed by all political parties contending (Klaus, 2020). The newly elected government's cancellation of the 'Polish Migration Policy—Status Quo and Plan of Action' extended this anti-immigration rhetoric in October 2016 (Klaus, 2020). The xenophobic and anti-immigration narratives were not something Poles acquired first-hand but instead were circulated mainly from the media and other people's stories (Klaus et al., 2018). Far-right media devoted a lot of space to 'Polishness', and aversive attitudes toward immigrants were justified as a threat to Polish identity and culture (Klaus et al., 2018). Change in public discourse had a dramatic impact on the public opinion towards refugees. The number of people opposing refugees rose from 21 per cent in May 2015 to 61 per cent in April 2016 (Klaus, 2020). Consequently, this fuelled more "security-based" immigration policies as politicians presented themselves as enforcers of the people's will (Klaus, 2020).

Despite opinion polls that showed Poles were accepting of foreigners if they are ethnically similar, only one in four Poles admitted to liking Ukrainians (Klaus, 2020). Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014 resulted in an influx of Ukrainian asylum seekers into Poland (Klaus, 2020), of which a deficient number were recognized as refugees (Szczepanik & Tylec, 2016). The legal basis for rejecting so many asylum applications was the concept of 'internal flight alternative (IFA)' (Szczepanik & Tylec, 2016). During the 2014 crisis, this concept was applied to Ukrainian asylum seekers from eastern rebel-held areas that had the possibility (at least theoretically) to resettle in western parts of the country, making it nearly impossible for these refugees to obtain protection in Poland (Szczepanik & Tylec, 2016). Russia's newest aggression against Ukraine elicited a different response from the Polish asylum system and the public. Presumably, Polish politicians are using the war in Ukraine as a geopolitical tool to align themselves alongside liberal democracies rather than quasi-authoritarian regimes (Szacki & Bobinski, 2022). Poland is using a similar argument of geopolitical alignment to rid itself of the refugee responsibility at the Belarusian border. Poland accuses Belarus's President Alexander Lukashenko of deliberately provoking a refugee crisis, by promising asylum seekers from the Middle East a safe passage to the EU through its border with Poland (Lorenzo, 2022). These

events have led to Poland declaring a state of emergency at its border with Belarus, consequently giving police authority to expel refugees without even reviewing applications for asylum (Roth, 2021).

### Links to Literature

The research context showcases a multitude of factors to consider when unpacking the events that led to a wall being built on one border and an embrace being shared on the other. Furthermore, the research context also proves that the event in discussion is not an isolated instance of refugees entering Poland. Hence, a body of work examines the contradictory and diverse public opinions of refugees in Poland, most prominently during the period of the migration crisis (2015–2018). Past literature has stressed the importance of media in the reproduction of public discourse (Krotofil & Motak, 2018). Troszyński and El-Ghamari (2022) state that despite the growing salience of social media, the press continues to dominate public debate. Notably, online newspapers enable the press to engage in many to many communications, acquiring similar benefits to internet communication (Troszyński & El-Ghamari, 2022). Building on the work of Troszyński and El-Ghamari (2022) along with Krotofil and Motak (2018), this paper aims to examine Polish attitudes toward refugees using online press as a data source and critical discourse analysis (CDA) as an analytical tool. This paper is unique from the work of Troszyński and El-Ghamari (2022) because it applies their model of linguistic indicators to a more recent event. In contrast, their work was exclusively about the 2015–2018 migration crisis. Furthermore, their findings were grounded in theories of securitisation, which are not addressed in this paper since securitisation is a theory that is already well-established in the literature (Troszyński & El-Ghamari, 2022). Krotofil and Motak's (2018) work contains multiple points of difference from this paper, particularly because it uses Polish magazines and is interested in the role of religion in nationalist discourse construction. However, this paper adopts Krotofil and Motak's (2018) practice of headline inquiry. The authors claim that headlines are especially revealing in CDA, as it functions as a cognitive structure which primes the reader and hence controls how the rest of the content is processed (Krotofil & Motak, 2018). Headlines are carefully structured to contextualise the meaning of the text that follows and maximise impact (Krotofil & Motak, 2018). Therefore, this paper aims to capitalise on discourses embedded in headlines while using some key text in the body of the report to provide context for the CDA.

### Conceptual Framework

This paper engages the concept of nationalism and its contested meanings in relation to the idea of refugees. The nation is not a static object with a shared meaning (Bonikowski, 2016). Jaskulowski (2019) claims contradictions to the seemingly lay categories of 'us' and 'them'. In the same study, the author interviewed Polish civilians about their perceptions of immigrants. They found that the interviewees started to use the word 'immigrant' to refer not to all foreigners but only to those they regarded as radically different (in terms of culture, race, religion) and those with low social status (Jaskulowski, 2019). What is significant in this example is that nationalism is not being invoked consciously as an ideology but rather through a discursive and cognitive framework (Bonikowski, 2016). How people think, act and relate with the nation is a symbolic practice (Bonikowski, 2016). Then, the central unit of analysis should not be ideologies but collective narratives and political claims (Bonikowski, 2016).

The concept of a refugee further disrupts the taken-for-granted notions of 'the nation'. The term 'refugee' is adopted by international law strategically to narrow down a category of people with universal rights (Marx, 1990). Since states have a free hand in whom they can call a refugee, they also hold power to withdraw or apply the rights that come with the title (Marx, 1990). Arguably, refugees do not fit neatly with the nation's deeply internalised and embodied practice; hence, they pose a threat to its conceptualisation. This is also reflected in the ways that refugees are integrated. A simple correlation between strongly nationalistic states and poorly integrated refugees can be derived because of less accepting societies. Nationalism is inherently based on the exclusionary logic of group membership (Bonikowski, 2016). Countries that continually reassert the importance of the national community by defining populations through citizenship laws and institutionalising national territory (Bonikowski, 2016) showcase the fragility of the concept of the nation in the way that it must be routinised.

The events in discussion can be translated to reflect these conceptions. Polish political and civic society is constantly trying to internalise and embody the concept of a nation, as seen through their dissent for refugees that do not neatly fit into their conceptualisations. Interestingly, Ukrainian refugees are being extended into this concept of a nation at the present stage of the 2022 Russian-Ukrainian crisis, while Middle Eastern refugees are flat out denied this possibility. The theoretical frameworks of constructivism and inter-group threat come in to explain these conceptual puzzles.

### Methodology



### **Part I: Theoretical Framework**

If the nation is constantly contested, and therefore needs to be legitimised through practice, it questions whether it exists in social reality. Constructivists hold that interests and identities are created through social interactions and, therefore, constituted intersubjectively (Goode & Stroup, 2015). From a constructivist perspective, it is helpful to look beyond the individual or group for modelling and explaining how power is exercised and meanings made in the name of the nation (Goode & Stroup, 2015). Focusing instead on varieties of nationalist practice makes sense where observable phenomena bear historical and institutional similarities (Goode & Stroup, 2015). Similarly, the research context demonstrates that “Polishness” is not a new concept. It is embedded in Poland’s history and institution. However, the differential treatment of refugees at two different borders at the same instance is a discernible practice of “Polishness”. Some risks in narrowing practices as a unit of analysis may decontextualise nationalism to unintelligibility. Hence Goode and Stroup (2015) warn that case studies should be understood as observances of theoretical phenomena rather than a specific group or country. Therefore, this paper makes no assumptions that the events in discussion are specific to Poland, it becomes a site of observation of critical questions that are everyday objects of nationalist politics (Goode & Stroup, 2015). It should also be addressed that this constructivist approach does not intend to discredit the role of institutions and the ever-present power imbalances in configuring identities (Goode & Stroup, 2015). Everyday construction of nationalism hence provides a theoretically corrective and complementary approach to how scholars traditionally view nationalism; a process of state-building and continuation of pre-existing ethnic groups (Jaskulowski, 2019).

It is easy to miss the fluid relationship between nationalist practices and other varieties of social boundaries (Goode & Stroup, 2015). Hence, combining constructivism of nationalism with inter-group threat theory is a valuable approach to understanding the multiple layers that bring together the differential perceptions of two groups of refugees. In simple terms, the inter-group threat is experienced when members of the in-group (Poland) perceive the out-group (refugees) can cause them harm (Stephan et al., 2016). Embedded is an assumption that Poles are somehow different from refugees, which is the cause of prejudice (Jaskulowski, 2019). However, inter-group threat theory is not concerned with the actual threat posed by out-groups but rather the degree to which in-groups perceive a threat to exist (Stephan et al., 2016). Stephan et al. (2016) argue that perceived threats have real

consequences, regardless of whether they are accurate or not. This holds for the demise of refugees based on their perceived threat to the construction of the ‘Polish’ nationalist identity. Inter-group threat theory divides threats into realistic (concerning physical or material harm) and symbolic (concerning values, religion, worldview or morality, and classes) (Stephan et al., 2016). For this study, symbolic threats are the main topic of concern. As the constructivists have already established, power imbalances always exist, and inter-group threat theorists contend the same. Stephan et al. (2016) state that groups can be categorised as having low or high power, affecting their perception of threat. Using these theoretical categories, we can derive that Middle Eastern refugees on the Belarusian border have low power, being ‘symbolically’ more threatening than Ukrainian refugees. Poles have high power due to them possessing resources to respond to perceived threats. Ukrainian refugees also have relatively high (or somewhere on the spectrum between high and low) power due to them being symbolically less threatening and possessing fewer resources than the in-group (Stephan et al., 2016). High power groups inherently react strongly to perceived threats because they have a great deal to lose (Stephan et al., 2016), as seen through the construction of a wall at the Belarusian-Polish border. When the in-group and out-group have relatively similar levels of power, the perception of threat may also be high (Stephan et al., 2016), which explains contradictory Polish attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees from the previous crisis (2014 Russian invasion) and the current crisis (2022 Russian invasion).

### **Part II: Data Collection**

The data sources for this study consist of two Polish (online) newspapers:

1. *Gazeta Wyborcza* (liberal left wing)
2. *Gazeta Polska Codziennie* (conservative right wing)

Newspaper articles between the years 2021-2022 were sourced since they pertain to the years of the Belarusian-Polish border crisis (July 7, 2021) and the Russian invasion of Ukraine (February 24, 2022).

The Polish linguistic indicators used by Troszyński and El-Ghamari (2022), utilised here include:

- migracje/migranika* (migrant)
- nachodźcy/uchodźcy* (migrations/migrant/refugee)

Additionally, Białoruś/Ukraina (Belarus/Ukraine) were also used to narrow search results to articles about refugees at these two borders. Google Translate translated the newspaper’s web pages for analytical purposes.

These two newspapers, representing two contrasting worldviews, also appear in other migration discourse studies (Troszyński & El-Ghamari, 2022). Importantly, these are

the same newspapers selected by Troszyński and El-Ghamari (2022), who are well versed in the Polish media landscape, and whose work this paper intends to build upon. These authors also contend that despite the growing diversity of global media, there is a consistent trend of political polarisation into distinct camps (i.e., left and right-wing). The classification into political camps here acts as a method to categorise results and is not a basis for superficial interpretations (i.e., the conservative, narrow-minded population are susceptible to xenophobic discourses, while the well-educated metropolitan liberal class are not) (Jaskulowski, 2019). To account for this dilemma, Troszyński and El-Ghamari (2022) use tabloids in addition to the two newspaper publications, as tabloids tend to provide politically diverse opinions and are not faithful to anyone's political camp. However, for the scope of this study, the two newspaper publications provide ample and relevant data coverage. Moreover, since the events under observation in this study are so recent, newspaper publishers rather than tabloids are more likely to keep up to date with unfolding events.

### **Part III: Data Analysis**

Following the course set by Troszyński and El-Ghamari (2022), this study also uses critical discourse analysis (CDA) to distinguish prominent and relevant themes within selected articles. Investigating the meanings people attach to the nation uncovers how symbolic boundaries are constructed and how particular categories of people are excluded from the nation (Jaskulowski, 2019). CDA is an analytical technique used by researchers to uncover how social structures are reflected in discourse patterns, relations, and models (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). CDA is interested in examining representations of reality in text and whether they are biased, distorted, aligned with political propaganda, support prejudices, impose power, are ideological-laden etc. (Bączkowska, 2019). Hence, CDA advocates for interventionism because it critically investigates social practices (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). Fairclough's three-dimensional framework for conceiving and analysing discourse provides a methodological blueprint for CDA in practice (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Lusiana, 2018). The first dimension is discourse as text, which analyses choices and patterns in vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and structure (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). The second dimension is discourse as a discursive practice, the analysis of speech acts, coherence, and intertextuality (aspects that link text to its context) (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). The final dimension is discourse as social practice, which analyses ideological effects and hegemonic processes within which discourses

feature (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). In the context of this study, emphasis will be put on the second and third dimensions since the first dimension is more brutal to analyse using translation services (vocabulary and grammar may not retain their integrity when translated).

**Results\*** (see below)

### **Discussion**

The data shows that Polish society has contradictory views on refugees at both borders. Public discourse on Ukrainian refugees evokes more collective, nationalist identities than Middle Eastern refugees at the Belarusian border. At the same time, both groups of refugees produce inter-group threats to some degree. The conservative right-wing publication tended to have a general distaste for refugees by associating them with crime and corrupted politics of the Lukashenko regime. However, their preference for Ukrainian over Middle Eastern refugees has sympathetic and heroic undertones. The left-wing liberal publication provides a variety of sentiments around refugees—they are critical of the government/border guards at times and concerned with other issues (environment/Polish people) at others.

Comparing the data shows that Polish identity is mobilised through the 'hero' or the narrative of the 'resistor'. The 'hero' narrative rallies Polish society as defenders of Ukrainian and Belarusian refugees. The 'resistor' narrative rallies Polish society as a strong force that doesn't succumb to the pitfalls of being a refugee host (crime or geopolitics). Moreover, the data reveals that the boundaries of the 'us' vs. 'them' are mutable. When Polish society sympathises with Ukraine because both face Russia as a common aggressor or Middle Eastern refugees, when the brutality at Belarus-Poland border detention centres reminds them of their own experiences of historic 'concentration camps', it tells of the way the cracks in nationalist constructions. Goode and Stroup (2015) contend that the state and political institutions regulate the conditions for actors to manipulate identity categories to achieve mobilisational or distributional outcomes. However, the data proves that civil society can manipulate identities beyond the state to achieve outcomes based on their own political or opinion-forming biases.

The inter-group threat theory is not very revealing in the data. Polish society overall is mainly not threatened by Ukrainian refugees. However, because Polish society holds higher power, they want to ensure their resources (security and economy) are not symbolically at risk from the arrival of refugees. While the data does reveal a certain distaste for refugees at the Belarusian border, this can be accounted

**\*Results****Table 1: Data from *Gazeta Polska Codziennie* (conservative right-wing) for refugees at the Ukrainian border**

Headline	Date	Context	Themes
Refugees from Ukraine revived Polish trade	May 24, 2022	Ukrainian refugees support Polish economies by purchasing clothing, furniture, medicine etc. (basic household goods to help them resettle in a new country).	Refugees seem to incur benefits for the host economy. Striking similarities between refugees and economic migrants, in the way that the economy is emphasised. Overall positive perception/attitude towards Ukrainian refugees.
The refugees in Warsaw are safe	May 30, 2022	Reporters investigate whether Poland has had a crime problem since the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees. They report that even though over 3 million people have crossed the Polish border from Ukraine, there is no “avalanche” increase in criminal offences.	Contradictory perceptions of Ukrainian refugees. The title suggests that this report is concerned about the well-being of refugees; however, the report’s content confirms that the concern is about whether Ukrainian refugees have raised crime rates. Assumptions are being made that there is a correlation between an influx of refugees and crime. The avalanche metaphor suggests that there is an expectation that crime rates would skyrocket with the arrival of so many refugees.
All of Poland helps Ukraine	March 16, 2022	Border Guard checked 1.83 million fleeing from Ukraine to Poland at the border crossing. 71.6 thousand war refugees were sent to our country.	Affective undertones can be interpreted in the text rather than simply factual. Content seems to be bolstering pride in the Polish nation for taking on ‘war refugees’ and helping them/supporting them.
The cost of supporting Ukraine is the best investment	May 30, 2022	An analysis of economic issues makes it clear that an international effort now must be made to have future benefits. Protecting the economy and international security helps to understand why Russia must be defeated.	Economic links are strongly emphasised in association with Ukrainian refugees. A common enemy is identified—Russia. Supporting Ukraine aligns with Poland’s economic and security agenda and hence can be interpreted as exerting positive perceptions of Ukrainian refugees.
Particularly in Ukraine!!!	February 25, 2022	The Ukrainians are fiercely resisting, defending their homeland against the Russians but also defending the free world. Today is the time for Ukraine, but Putin has already talked about the Baltic states and is also undermining Poland’s sovereignty. If we don’t stop it, someday, the time will come for us.	There seem to be undertones that Poland sympathises with Ukraine because they have felt Russian aggression in the past and continue to feel threatened by Russia. Solidarity is a prominent theme in this text, but also an emphasis on the common enemy being Russia, and the division of the world into two camps—democracy (‘free world’) and autocracy.

Table 2: Data from *Gazeta Wyborcza* (liberal left-wing) for refugees at the Ukrainian border

Headline	Date	Context	Themes
Poles and Ukrainians- a breakthrough in relations. Polls confirm this	May 31, 2022	Hard survey data confirms that the Russian invasion brought Poles and Ukrainians closer together. The two nations no longer live side by side, but both literally and metaphorically together. Polish aid was only the culmination of the rapprochement process that had taken place over the last 30 years between the two societies.	There is a strong sense that the arrival of Ukrainian refugees has strengthened the ties between both countries. Polish aid has somehow demonstrated that both countries rely on each other or there is forgotten camaraderie between the two countries.
Ukraine is not giving up; Free Belarus is not giving up. And this could just be the beginning of a new story	April 20, 2022	The rulers of Poland, who refused to accept a single refugee when Russia bombed Aleppo, and refused international protection to refugees on the Polish-Belarusian border, fortunately opened border crossings this time.	This text is critical of the Polish government. It acknowledges the discrepancies in Polish refugee aid and, at the same time, showcases gratitude that humanitarian assistance was present this time around.
Conflicts over resources, food, water, and mass migrations. The war on Ukraine does not take us away from the climate crisis.	May 22, 2022	The dramatic events in Ukraine do not slow down the climate and ecological crisis processes. We can see what conflicts can lead to, and there can be many more about resources, food, and water.	This text demonstrates an obvious agenda. It uses alarmist messaging to draw some attention away from the Ukrainian-Russian crisis and towards the climate crisis. It does not negatively portray refugees but somewhat reminds the reader that they should take care not to neglect the climate crisis.
Refugees versus the eighth-grade exam. Expert: A significant challenge. Nobody wants to repeat the year.	May 26, 2022	In a war situation, there are no solutions that would save everything. One solution is to create a full-time school that allows students from Ukraine to learn remotely, following their system, under the supervision of Ukrainian teachers. Combining such learning with introducing children to the Polish reality would give these children a better chance.	Here there is an explicit embrace of Ukrainian refugee children by Polish society. It demonstrates Polish efforts that go above and beyond to make Ukrainians feel settled and integrated, even thinking about long-term robust solutions (like the remote learning systems).
Under the guise of helping refugees, the particular act took the responsibility off the voivodes. Foreigners cannot sue them.	April 22, 2022	In the amendment to the Act on Assistance to Ukrainians, a provision was introduced according to which foreigners can no longer complain about the delay of provincial offices' proceedings to court and demand compensation.	The intent of this text seems to be defamation of the amendments to the Act. It is positioned as an ally to the Ukrainian refugees, as seen by the compelling headline. However, the content itself reads factually and not for or against any side.

Table 3: Data from *Gazeta Polska Codziennie* (conservative right-wing) for refugees at the Belarusian border

Headline	Date	Context	Themes
Belarus brings Chinese people to the Polish-Belarusian border	May 5, 2022	The migratory pressure on Poland, artificially created by the regime of Aleksandr Lukashenko continues. There were over a thousand attempts to illegally cross the border in April alone. At the beginning of the May weekend, there was some anxiety in Białowieża, where a group of 30 foreigners, with the support of Belarusian uniforms, tried to force the Polish border. Flashlights blinded the Polish services, and stones and firecrackers were also thrown at them. The detainees included citizens of, among others, India, Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Côte d'Ivoire, Turkey, Somalia, Tajikistan, and China.	The text has xenophobic sentiments through the way in which the nationalities of the detainees are listed to make clear it is a group very different from us. The refugees are portrayed as a physical threat (stones and firecrackers thrown at them). It also describes the anxiety that residents at the border are facing due to the influx of refugees.
The regime wants to earn double income from immigrants	November 25, 2021	The general staff of the Belarusian army informed about the complete suspension of diplomatic channels with NATO, accusing the member states, mainly Poland, of creating war rhetoric. Meanwhile, the authorities of the Grodno Oblast (western region of Belarus) are demanding that international organizations bear the costs of immigrants' stay in Belarus.	Geopolitics rather than refugees is the main emphasis here, and in doing so, it shifts the responsibility of hosting refugees onto the international community rather than to Poland precisely. Particular attention is given to the cost of hosting refugees (immigrants) here.
Lukashenka took his tourists	August 28, 2021	The tactic of not yielding to pressure from Belarus is paying off. Experts and journalists agree that Belarus cynically exploits immigrants to take revenge for the European Union's imposition of sanctions on the ground of violations by the Belarusian human rights services. The Latvian authorities admitted that they wanted to follow the example of Lithuanian and Poland by building fortifications on the border with Belarus. Meanwhile, the situation in Usnierz Górny remains unchanged, where the border services, the police and the army protect the border where a group of immigrants, mainly from the Middle East, are camping.	Refugees are not explicitly addressed in this text; instead, the emphasis is on Poland not giving into the geopolitical game of the Belarusian government. Moreover, Poland's approach to refugees is admirable and should be replicated by other neighbouring host countries such as Latvia.

Table 3 continued

Headline	Date	Context	Themes
Fans of Kremlin propaganda	November 23, 2021	<p>Successive groups of prepared migrants who got to Belarus by aeroplanes for a lot of money are led to the Belarusian services. They use various tools to attack Polish soldiers, police officers and border guards. Some, however, behave as if Polish services tortured groups of poor people on the border.</p>	<p>The text frames the Middle Eastern refugees as cunning and dangerous while framing the Polish border guards as victims. Moreover, the aim is to 'debunk' other theories (that Polish services are the aggressors instead of the victims).</p>
Because Poland owes itself	November 23, 2021	<p>The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson promotes the message that Poland is responsible for the migration crisis because it participated in the US intervention in Iraq. They ignore the fact that since 2013 Russia has regularly bombed parts of Syria, destroying homes and hospitals. That is where the genuine refugees from the Middle East are coming from. Intervention by the US and allies in Iraq was a mistake. The Kurds, who constitute most Iraqi citizens who came to Belarus and stormed the EU's borders, have benefitted from it.</p>	<p>The sentiment in this text is pro-America (i.e., pro-democracy). It justifies the actions of the US while at the same time trying to clear the blame off Poland.</p>

Table 4: Data from *Gazeta Wyborcza* (liberal left-wing) for refugees at the Belarusian border

Headline	Date	Context	Themes
Michalowo. Debate “We can all be refugees”. Nobody has the right to stop people from helping	June 5, 2022	Debate in connection with the refugee crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border and the war in Ukraine- was the slogan “Humanity without borders”. Michalowo is a city with over 3.6 thousand residents, whose local government was the first in Poland after a unanimous decision of the local city council in September to help migrants pushed out by the Lukashenko regime.	This article signals that Polish intellectuals and civil society are thinking critically about the situation at the borders. There seems to be a bottom-up effort to intervene in the matter and help refugees despite the government’s stance.
The crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border. Roads in ruin, and the local government with PiS and Solidarity Poland patches the hole with “cotton swabs”.	June 2, 2022	Local government authorities handed out checks to border communes and countries for activities related to “combating the negative effects” of the migration crisis. They gave tens of thousands of dollars for road repairs when even hundreds of millions were needed regarding roads broken by the army.	It is revealed here that there are negative impacts of policing the border for Polish civilians. Broken roads due to army vehicles are framed by the government as the adverse effects of the migration crisis. This publication seems to be critical of this attempt to direct the blame onto the refugees themselves (as seen with the quotation marks).
Ukraine is not giving up; Free Belarus is not giving up. And this could just be the beginning of a new story	April 20, 2022	The number of refugees pushed to the EU across the Belarusian border has not exceeded 20,000. For these people, Polish border guards, “following state policy”, repeatedly denied the right to international protection, and by returning to the borderline, i.e., pushbacks, create “living conditions that threaten their biological existence, by depriving them of access to food or medical care”. The border with Belarus, which is extended by centres for foreigners, popularly known as “concentration centres”, are lawless zones generated by the Polish authorities, pushed into oblivion by most opposition parties and politicians as well as the boards of humanitarian organisations.	Direct support is shown here for the refugees at the Belarusian border. Emphasis on refugee detention centres as ‘concentration centres’ is important as it connotes Nazi Germany’s concentration camps. This implies that the brutality is appalling and that the border guards are mindlessly following ‘state policy’ without humanitarian concern.
In the European Parliament: “The wall of shame should be pulled down as soon as possible”	April 22, 2022	MEPS demand that the construction of a wall on the Polish-Belarusian border be stopped, “harmful to people and nature”	As seen before the left-wing agenda includes concern for the environment/climate change and therefore emphasis on the nature being harmed as well as people is strong here.
Is the fight for human treatment of migrants on the border with Belarus anti-Polish? President Andrzej Duda thinks so	May 12, 2022	The President in an address on the 30th anniversary of the Central Border Guard Centre: I assure you of the gratitude of the whole society for not allowing the wave of uncontrolled migration to enter Poland.	The anti-refugee stance of the President is blatantly obvious here. Moreover, his words evoke a sense of the collective as he credits the effort to all Polish society.

(Discussion continued)

towards geopolitical threats (Lukashenko regime) rather than a threat from the out-group alone. The fact that certain citizens are critical of the government proves that they are willing to go beyond static symbolic perceptions of threats to help refugees on a humanitarian level.

## Conclusion

This study sought to unpack the public discourse on refugees in Poland because of an influx from Poland's Belarusian and Ukrainian border. While western media showcased the events as a simple discriminatory act, media inside Poland provides more diverse insight into Polish perceptions. Primarily, there are economic, political, security and humanitarian concerns surrounding refugees from both groups. While past literature reveals that the Polish national identity is tightly wound, the data shows there is a strong sense of 'Polishness' but it is not the main point of concern when discerning discourses about refugees. Even conservative groups are more critical of the politics of the refugee crisis rather than the group itself. While Poland grapples with the politics of its eastern neighbours and obligations to its western institutions, it has left Polish society variegated in its perceptions. Therefore, the inter-group threat should be treated as one of many theories that explain why Poland is defensive of who it allows through its borders. Generally, it can be said that Polish attitudes have evolved from their beginnings as selective immigrant hosts. This evolution could account for Poland trying to lean in on its allegiance to EU values. Overall, this study reveals more on the implications of geopolitics on refugee movements than on the nationalist constructions or inter-group threats.

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# HUTU-KILLERS: IDENTITY-BASED MOTIVATION FOR THE RWANDA GENOCIDE

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## Abstract:

**Identity politics literature lacks a satisfactory analysis of the role and function of identity in motivating violence. This research utilises concepts of identity in psychology to examine identity politics during the Rwanda genocide to reveal the potential identity-based motivations of Hutu perpetrators. Thematic analysis was used to analyse RTML radio propaganda transcripts and perpetrator confession tapes, and findings were applied to a unique theoretical framework which displays the relationship between identity and behaviour. Identity motivates behaviour through self-verification and self-protection, and comparisons between findings revealed how Hutu perpetrators were motivated to commit genocide to verify an identification with being winners and being superior to the Tutsi, verify an identification with being representative of Rwanda, protect Hutu from loss of dignity, and protect Hutu from the perceived potential for annihilation by the Tutsi. The project ends by exploring the relationship between identity and identity politics to propose an explanation of why Hutu perpetrators were motivated to verify and protect the Hutu identity through extreme violence.**

## Introduction

Psychological studies have recognised identity as a fundamental driver of human behaviour, and the topic touches on the universal philosophical debate of what it means to be human. The study of identity highlights core self-projects, including making sense of oneself and who one may become, acting as a form of navigation to the path one should take in life. The importance of identity for people and its significance in human behaviour is undeniable (Leary & Tagney, 2014).

Understanding identity and its influence on human behaviour is a crucial element of identity politics, which in extreme cases, describes how identity can become so important that individuals are willing to kill and die for dignity and recognition (Fukuyama, 2018). Identity politics showcases how having an identity makes humans vulnerable to manipulation to the point of accepting or committing acts of extreme violence. The events of the Rwanda Genocide in 1994 highlight this, when historical identity-based divisions, when paired with inflammation from European colonialism and discriminatory propaganda, culminated in an ethnic

cleansing that killed at least 800,000 Tutsi in 100 days (Meierhenrich, 2020). Six people were killed every minute during the entirety of the genocide, and around 80% of the Tutsi population was wiped out (Verpoorten, 2005). It's almost impossible for an outsider to understand what motivated Hutus to kill their friends and neighbours, including many children. This event is considered a complete failure of the global political system and is a cautionary tale of the dangers of a postcolonial context. Through the utilisation of concepts surrounding identity and identity politics, this project will attempt to clarify how identity became so important that Hutus were willing to kill, identify the role of identity and identity politics in the construction of propaganda, and answer the question: What were the identity-based motivations of Hutu who killed Tutsi during the Rwanda Genocide?

This theory-based, case study project would not be possible without the utilisation of an interdisciplinary framework as derived from a Global Studies perspective (McCarty & Darian-Smith, 2017). This project draws from a range of different concepts and lenses across several disciplines, including psychology, developmental studies, politics, and international relations. Conceptualisations of identity within psychology and developmental studies, when combined with processes of identity politics as defined by Fukuyama (2018) and Mansbach & Taylor (2018), make up the project's conceptual framework, and allowed the researcher to develop a unique theoretical framework of identity and its influence on human behaviour (Fig. 1). This framework was then applied to the chosen case study, The Rwanda Genocide, to provide a new way of understanding why the genocide occurred, from a standpoint of identity-based motivations of individuals within a group.

This standpoint recognises that whilst historical, political, and economic structures in Rwanda helped to pave the way for such extreme violence, it was people who committed these acts. This project aims to understand why. Furthermore, whilst previous literature has determined that identity politics played a significant role in the genocide, there is very little understanding of identity in relation to identity politics. In addition to outlining the specific motivations of Hutus during the Rwanda genocide through an identity lens, this project attempts to clarify the identity/identity politics relationship, showing why identity politics in Rwanda led to violence.

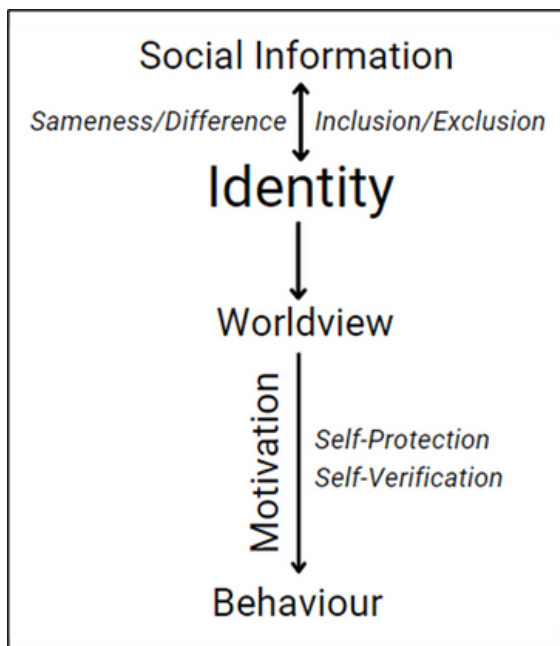


Figure 1: Theoretical framework for the construction of identity and its influence on behaviour

This research paper begins with a short background of Rwanda's recent history with its colonisation by European nations as a starting point. This helps to contextualise specific features of the Hutu identity, which frequently make appearances in the data, and provides information about the conditions Rwandans were living in at the time of the genocide. Following the background section is the conceptual framework, which provides a short literature review surrounding identity and identity politics, with an emphasis on the influence of identity on human behaviour. From these concepts, the researcher derived a theoretical framework to clarify the relationship between political messages and identity, and how this relationship shapes an individual's motivations. The methodology section explains how the theoretical framework was utilised to analyse the data using thematic analysis, to reveal findings regarding motivations for the Rwanda Genocide. Two forms of data were chosen to do so, including radio propaganda transcripts, as a representative of the social information which shaped Hutu identities, and perpetrator confession tapes, to reveal the actions of individual Hutu perpetrators as a representation of behaviour. Comparing the findings from both sources, with reference to the theoretical framework helped to narrow down specific identity-based motivations of Hutu perpetrators. The findings and discussion section lays out the project's findings and highlights their significance concerning the conceptual framework and Rwanda's background. Finally, the conclusion pinpoints the most important findings of the research, provides a theory regarding the role of identity in identity politics, and lays out future directions for this research.

## Background

The three major ethnic groups of Rwanda consist of the Twa, the Tutsi, and the Hutu, who pre-genocide, made up 85% of the population (Moghalu, 2005). The 1880 Anglo-German Treaty made Rwanda a colony of Germany, but the First World War resulted in the transfer of sovereign powers from Germany to Belgium, which more strongly asserted its authority (Moghalu, 2005). Belgium favoured the Tutsi ruling class, who were willing to assist in the advancing of Belgian interests, and introduced mandates that privileged the education of Tutsi children, providing advantages in administration and business (Moghalu, 2005). It was common to see Hutus working as labourers harvesting Belgium coffee beans, overseen by Tutsi enforcers (Kamola, 2007). Furthermore, Belgium considered Tutsi more physically similar to Europeans than Hutu, so named them racially superior (Caplan, 2007). All Rwandans were issued ethnic identity cards which used skull, nose, lip, and height measurements to emphasise and solidify differences between Tutsi and Hutu identities (Caplan, 2007).

Several waves of violence were seen under the colonial rule of Rwanda, which began with Flemish Belgian Missionaries arriving in Rwanda, who themselves were an unprivileged minority under the French Belgium upper class, and supported Hutu (Moghalu, 2005). In 1957, Hutu intellectuals published *'the Hutu Manifesto'*, calling for democracy, and spreading xenophobic rhetoric against Tutsi (Moghalu, 2005). A social revolution began in 1959, with Hutu extremist politicians and groups calling to escape decades of domination by Tutsi (Moghalu, 2005). This triggered the mass killing of Tutsi, causing thousands to flee to surrounding nations to escape the violence. With bases in Uganda and Burundi, Rwandan refugees formed resistance groups, such as Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF),<sup>1</sup> with intentions to take back power, but violent stealth attacks caused further revenge killings of Tutsi who remained in Rwanda (Moghalu, 2005).

Juvénal Habyarimana, a Hutu officer who led a military coup against his predecessor, became the Prime Minister in 1973. He vowed to end the mass killing of Tutsi, but channelled power and wealth to a small majority of Hutu from his home, undermining his legitimacy (Moghalu, 2005). One such group was Akaza, headed by his wife, Agathe, who vowed to remove all Tutsi from Rwanda (Moghalu, 2005).

In 1990, a war emerged when the RPF<sup>1</sup> invaded Rwanda and killed many Hutus, with most of those fighting being born outside of Rwanda to refugee parents (Moghalu, 2005). Over the next few years, anti-Tutsi rhetoric reached a peak, fuelled by propaganda radio stations such as *Radio*

Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTML),<sup>2</sup> broadcast to a mostly illiterate population (Kimani, 2007).

On April 6th 1994, a plane headed to a summit in the capital of Tunisia carrying Juvenal Habyarimana and several other significant officials was shot down, killing them all (Moghalu, 2005). It is unclear who carried out the assassination, but RTML quickly blamed the killings on the RPF. ‘Crush the cockroaches’ and ‘cut down the tall trees’ were code phrases that triggered the beginning of a 100-day genocide (Ndahiro, 2019). Within this short period, an estimated 800 000 to 1 million Tutsi and Hutu moderates were massacred with guns, hoes, grenades, and machetes—roughly 10% of the total population and 80% of the Tutsi population (SURF, 2022; Verpoorten, 2005).

## Conceptual Framework

### *Identity*

Since the 1970s, ‘the self’ has been an essential concept in psychology and developmental studies to enhance understanding of human motivations and behaviour. The self has been used to explain a wide range of phenomena—self-awareness, self-motivation, self-verification, and more—but at its core, having a self means having the ability to self-reflect (Leary & Tangney, 2014). Human identity is a product of this reflexive consciousness, which is constructed by having self-relevant thoughts (Leary & Tangney, 2014). By this, identity is formed when an actor who can think considers themselves as the object of thinking—“I think therefore I am”. An identity is the narrative of one’s own self-concept, and organises the beliefs someone has about themselves.

Erikson (1951) proposed that how we interact with others is what shapes our sense of self. Identities are built from self-reflection on traits, characteristics, roles, social group memberships, and relations; and provide a sense of knowing who oneself is in a context (Tajfel, 1981). By this, identity construction relies on relationality—an awareness of sameness and difference between one’s own identity and that of others in the social realm (Tajfel, 1981). Identity is a social product, and this is true in at least three ways (Elmore et al., 2014):

- Input comes from social context, as people define themselves in terms of what is relevant to their time and place (group memberships, family roles, etc.);
- Having an identity requires others to endorse and reinforce one’s selfhood;
- The parts of one’s identity that matters in the moment is determined by what is relevant in that moment.

Having an identity is important because it provides a direction and reason for making choices. “Identities are orienting, and provide a meaning-making lens and focus

one’s attention on some but not other features of the immediate context” (Oyserman, 2007, 2009a, and 2009b). This highlights an important function of an identity, which is that it shapes an individual’s worldview. People interpret situations in a way which is congruent with their pre-existing identity. An identity draws attention to some aspects of reality and away from others, building a person’s worldview over time. Bless and Schwarz’s (2007) Inclusion-Exclusion model shows how not all social information is integrated into identity creation, where “people are likely to include social information into self-judgement unless the social information is markedly different enough from the self that it becomes excluded and is used as a contrasting standard” (Elmore et al., 2014).

Another important function of identity is that it motivates behaviour. In particular, Swanns (1983) self-verification theory “assumes that stable self-views provide people with a crucial source of coherence and continuity, and invaluable means of defining their existence, organising experience, predicting future events, and guiding social interaction” (Swann & Buhrmester, 2014). Beyond this, stabilising behaviour makes one more predictable to others, hence making the actions of others more predictable, forming a more stable social environment, once again stabilising self-views (Goffman, 1956). People are motivated by self-verification to create feelings of psychological coherence and to guarantee their interactions with others go as predicted (Goffman, 1956). The experience of coherence is so important that people will fight to maintain their identity beliefs, and will go to great lengths to do so (Swann & Buhrmester, 2014).

Another motivator of action wrought from identity is self-protection from self-threat, which acts to minimise “perceived or real doubt, diminishment or devaluation of one’s own self-concept” (Sedikides, 2014). Identity is experienced as something of great value and attachment, so people put significant amounts of time and effort into maintaining identity coherence and protecting their self-concepts from possible contradictions, negativity, and threat (Abelson, 1986; Leary, 2010). Identity is a product of situations and a shaper of behaviour, influencing what choices people make, and motivating them to perform identity-congruent actions.

### *Identity Politics*

Identity politics are considered one of the most important drivers of conflict today, highlighting identity’s relevance in the modern world. Social identity takes precedence in identity politics literature. To have a social identity is to belong to a particular identity group. Those within the group hold collective beliefs, values, practices,

social behaviour, interests, and more notably, common enemies (Mansbach & Taylor, 2018). Traditional examples of social identity include nationalism, religion, and ethnicity, but others such as gender and political identity are becoming increasingly relevant (Mansbach & Taylor, 2018). Each person has multiple identities and can be members of multiple identity groups, sometimes with competing interests (Kang & Bodenhausen, 2015). As explained in Elmore's (2014) reasoning for identity as a social product, the group identity that becomes most important at a particular time is the one which is most relevant to the context.

Similar to identity formation theory in developmental studies, recognition of sameness and difference and processes of inclusion/exclusion are central to group formation. This process can create boundaries between groups resulting in an in-group and an out-group (Mansbach & Taylor, 2018). Unique lived experiences mean that those outside an identity group are unable, or are perceived to be unable, to understand the worldview and experiences of members of the in-group (Fukuyama, 2018). Increasing real and perceived differences between groups creates psychological distance, and in extreme cases, the in-group identity may perceive members of the out-group as less-than-human (Mansbach & Taylor, 2018). When members of a group share a common feature that is tangible in reality and can be noticed by others, such as physical appearance, speaking the same language or wearing the same clothes, perceptions of differences are inflamed (Mansbach & Taylor, 2018). Beyond this, sameness within the in-group creates a sense of legitimacy for that group's way of life (Mansbach & Taylor, 2018).

Interests of an identity group can be taken into account by leaders to gain power and achieve their own goals. To do this, historical injustices, examples of discrimination against the group, and messages of group pride might be used to intensify passions and hatred. Fukuyama (2018) sees the politics of resentment as a motivator, and using identity politics, leaders can convince a group that their dignity has been affronted to mobilise large numbers of people and promote action. At the core, most instances of violence caused by identity politics is a perceived or real threat to the dignity of a group identity.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Identity politics is when the input of social information used to build a group identity takes on political interests. The process of self-verification may cause identity beliefs to become rigid to maintain a coherent view of the in-group and out-group identities. The inclusion-exclusion model explains how certain input might not be internalised if it is

too different from pre-established identity beliefs (Bless & Schwarz, 2007; Swann & Buhrmester, 2014). An identity requires others to endorse and reinforce one's selfhood, hence recognise it's dignity, so if such political messages utilise real or perceived instances of injustice against the group identity, those within that identity group will be motivated to minimise the threat (Fukuyama, 2018; Sedikides, 2014).

This project utilises a unique theoretical framework derived from literary understandings of identity and identity politics, proposing a logical, evidence-based theory of how identity politics acts on identity to influence behaviour (Fig. 2).

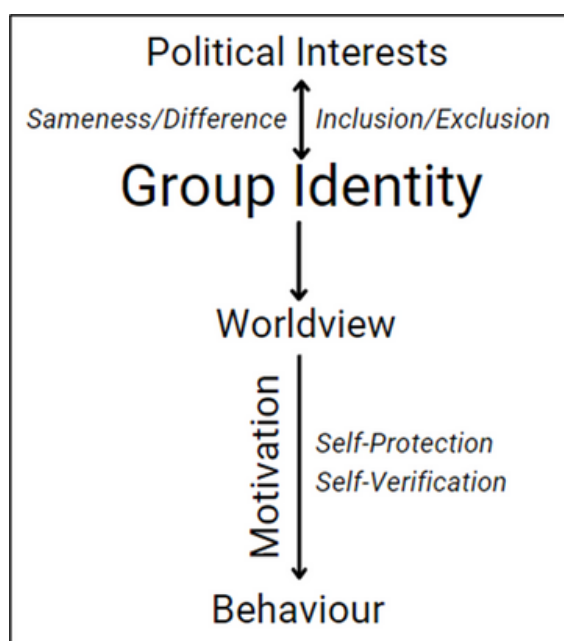


Figure 2: Theoretical framework of the construction of identity through identity politics and its impact on behaviour

### **Methodology**

In order to understand the role of identity in shaping violent actions of ordinary Hutu Rwandans, a discursive analysis of themes in two primary sources was used to reveal instances of self-verification and self-protection. Firstly, radio propaganda broadcasts provided insight into the social information which shaped Hutu identities. This was then compared with the actions of Hutu Rwandans as described in confession tapes to understand how Hutu identity characteristics motivated the actions of those who committed genocidal crimes. Identity is constructed through the input of social information which is highly varied and subjective. As a result, discursive thematic analysis remains the most effective way to analyse the data. With consideration to identity-based motivations in developmental studies:

- Self-verification influences behaviour so that actions taken make self-views stable in order to enhance coherence and reduce cognitive dissonance (Swann &

Buhrmester, 2014).

- Self-protection influences behaviour so that actions taken reduce threats to the identity, such as the devaluation of dignity or self-concept (Sedikides, 2014).

**Radio Transcripts: Social Information**

The researcher compiled radio transcripts translated into English from a major radio station whose audience were Hutu civilians, which was accessed from the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies Archive of Rwanda Radio Transcripts (RTML, 1994). One radio transcript broadcast on April 22 1994, 16 days after the assassination of Juvénal Habyarimana, was analysed as a representative of the social information being broadcasted to Hutus. The radio broadcast was chosen because it was run near the beginning of the genocide, when significant numbers of the population would be listening to gain information about the violence occurring. By viewing a transcript that was broadcast during the genocide, information could be gathered regarding how the genocide itself was framed by propaganda sources. The broadcast also correlates with the dates described in the confession tapes, where perpetrators describe events at the beginning of the genocide. The transcript includes discussions from RTML hosts, the Editor-in-Chief, answers from a CDR<sup>3</sup> representative, and answers from an MDR<sup>4</sup> representative.

To pinpoint the identity-based motivations of Hutus, the researcher used thematic analysis to identify, analyse and report themes of self-verification and self-protection within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes were identified through recognising common patterns. In the case of the radio transcripts, the chosen themes were recurring framings of the Hutu identity (to pinpoint the social information informing self-verification) and framing of threats to the Hutu identity (to pinpoint the social information informing self-protection).

**Confession Tapes: Behaviour**

A thematic analysis approach was used to identify common behaviours of Hutu Rwandans during the genocide as depicted in Hutu perpetrator confessions filmed in 2003 during solidarity camp in Munyonzwe (Genocide Archive of Rwanda, 2005). This includes confessions by six people as depicted in a 40-minute video with English subtitles, which were transcribed by the researcher. In the confessions, the perpetrators describe the events that occurred at the beginning of the genocide and their actions which contributed to it. These confessions are crucial to understanding the identity-based motivations of Hutu perpetrators, as viewing radio propaganda alone ignores processes of social information inclusion/exclusion, and so

assumes a direct link between propaganda and violence (Mironko, 2007). Beyond this, the specific behaviours seen during the genocide provide information about the motivations of those committing the acts.

**Identity-Based Motivations**

Framing of the Hutu Identity and threats to their identity were compared to the actions of Hutu perpetrators to highlight identity-based motivations (Fig. 3). By this, how Hutu acted through self-verification of their Hutu identity, and how Hutu acted through self-protection of their Hutu identity.

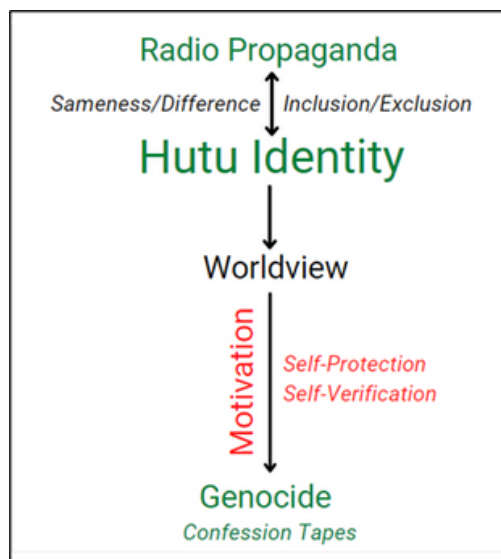


Figure 3: Theoretical framework to determine the identity-based motivations of Hutu Rwandans in the Rwanda Genocide

**Findings and Discussion**

**Radio Transcripts**

Thematic analysis of the radio transcripts revealed four categories in which the Hutu identity was framed: Hutus as superior, Hutus as Rwanda, Hutus as winners, and Hutus are mistreated (Fig. 4). These themes show strong correlations with the four categories of threats to the Hutu identity found in the radio transcripts: the Tutsi enemy, Rwanda is in trouble, loss of power, and loss of dignity (Fig. 5).

Hutu Identity	Threats to Identity
Hutu are superior	Tutsi enemy
Hutu are Rwanda	Rwanda in trouble
Hutu are winners	Loss of power
Hutu are mistreated	Loss of dignity

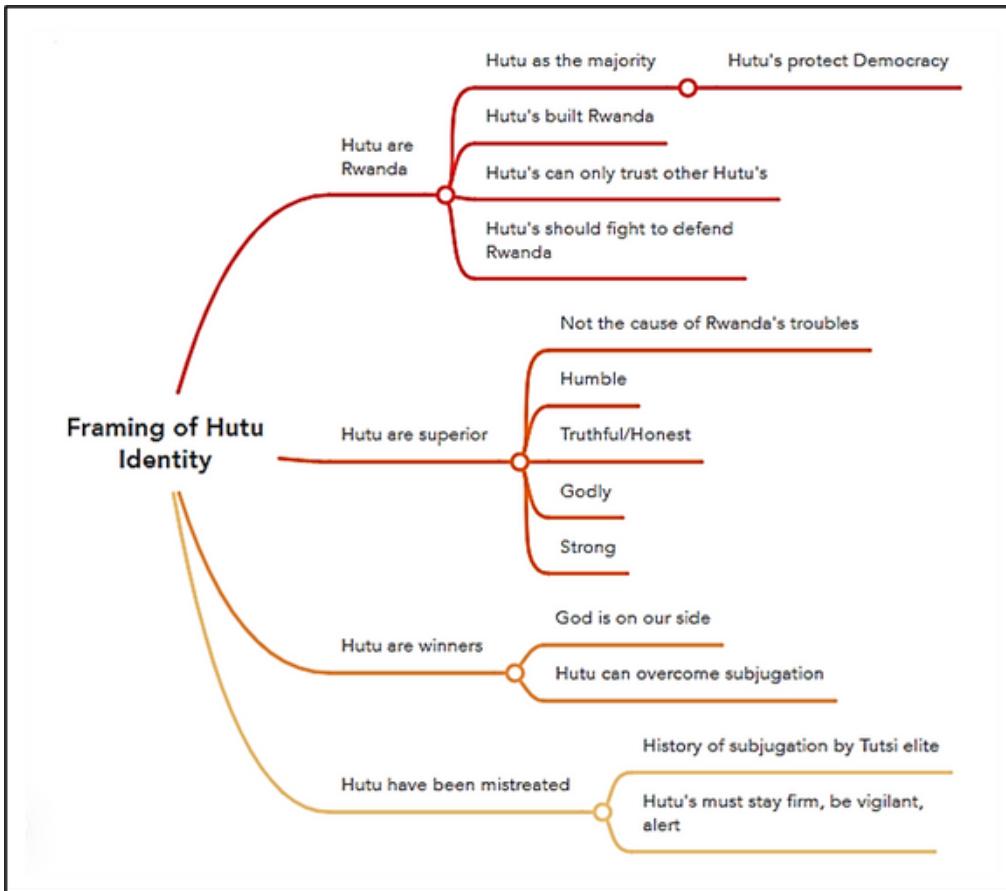


Figure 4: Themes of framing of the Hutu identity in Radio Propaganda

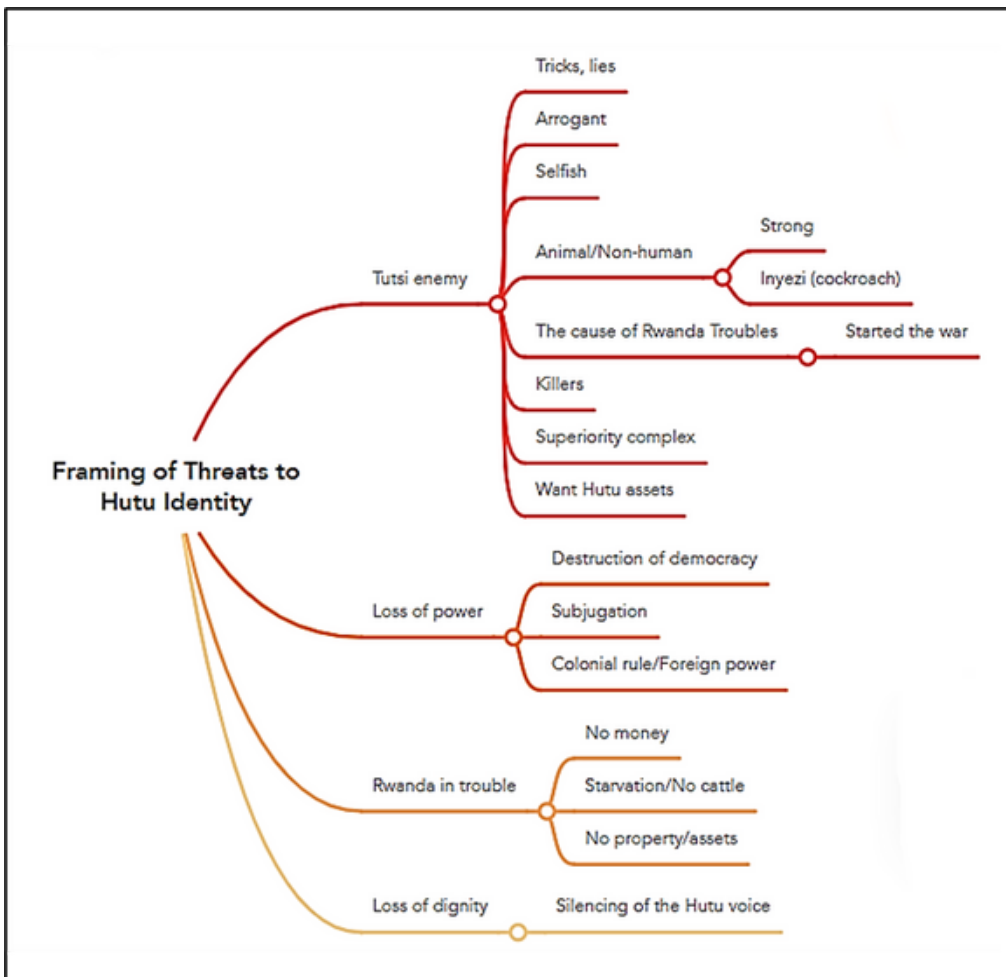


Figure 5: Themes of framing of threats to the Hutu identity in Radio Propaganda

### ***Hutu Identity Framing***

All quotes within this section were retrieved from RTML (1994).

- Hutu are superior

In the radio transcript, Hutus are depicted as exemplifying positive traits, and are blameless for the poor conditions in Rwanda. Hutus are humble, truthful/honest, peaceful and “hate arrogance”. They are strong and will overcome Tutsi rule—“we have resurrected and we are alive, we were wounded by not killed”; “truth is on our side”. Despite the construction of Hutus being anti-superiority, Hutus are depicted as being better than Tutsi.

- Hutu are Rwanda

Hutus have “suffered for this country”; they have built Rwanda. Hutu are the majority, and “for every inkotanyi<sup>5</sup> soldier there are at least two Rwandan soldiers.” Themes of protecting democracy in order to maintain majority rule are common. Orders to protect Rwanda—“we must defend our property; we must defend this country”. Rwanda is the Hutu ‘Motherland’.

- Hutu are winners

Hutus are the rightful winners of the war and are guaranteed to prevail—“the interests of the majority will prevail”; “nowhere in the world has a minority ruled over a majority”. God is on the Hutu side, so Hutu should “be firm, stay put”.

- Hutu are mistreated

A large portion of the transcript is spent describing the Hutu’s history of mistreatment under a colonial Tutsi partnership. “This not the first time that [this clique] wants just to oppress Hutus and thus do away with democracy”; “still much less for the Hutus, who have been subjugated for centuries”. Mentions of colonial schooling for Tutsi but not Hutu.

### ***Threats to Hutu Identity***

All quotes within this section were retrieved from RTML (1994).

- Tutsi enemy

Tutsi are depicted as arrogant, selfish killers with a ‘superiority complex’—“Inkoanyi’s<sup>5</sup> ever-present arrogance”. They are the cause of all of Rwanda’s trouble and started the war to begin with; “it is them who attacked us”. Comparisons with animals are common, such as cockroaches.

- Rwanda in trouble

Rwanda has problems, so those living there have no money, food, or assets. “We have so many problems right now.... We have to tighten our belts and win this war because then we will be able to eat well, we will be able to drink”. If Hutus are in Rwanda, threats to the nation are

perceived as a threat to the Hutu identity.

- Loss of power

The threat of loss of power from Hutu majority—“RPF Tutsi-Inyenzi<sup>6</sup> clique, who wants to take and monopolise power”; “this shows what the Inkotanyi<sup>5</sup> really want: acquiring property and power, they do not care about people”, “their objective is to steal power”, “imagine a minority... Including bandits and all, coming to take over power from leaders representing the people who make up the majority of the population”. “The Tutsis explain that they acceded to power in Rwanda through killings”. If Tutsi take power, Hutu are no longer winners.

- Loss of dignity

There have been numerous depictions of the threat of Hutus being treated without dignity. Such as “the use of a whip (against Hutu) which was a creation of the past Tutsi-German alliance”, “Wherever the Inkotanyi<sup>5</sup> have been with the smear campaign against us”. Tutsi as ‘looking down on Hutu’. A song by Simon Bikindi is played called ‘I Hate Hutus’, targeting Hutus who betray Hutu interests.

### ***Confession Tapes: Behaviour***

Pre-existing perceptions of identity division between Hutu and Tutsi as a consequence of the nation’s colonial past informed the radio propaganda that helped construct the Hutu identity which existed during the genocide. Declarations of differences in the propaganda increased perceived psychological distance between the Hutu and Tutsi identity groups. Identity, as a social phenomenon, means that ‘having an identity requires others to endorse and reinforce one’s selfhood’, so the propaganda’s continuous depiction of Hutus being superior, being winners, being mistreated, and being a representation of Rwanda, reinforced these identity traits as being true, inherit, and ‘natural’. Self-verification encourages stabilising behaviour to create feelings of psychological coherence. In terms of Hutu identities, it would mean that those who identified with being Hutu took action to prove these identity characteristics were true.

Similarly, narratives within the radio propaganda touched on historical truths to outline potential threats to the Hutu identity. If the Hutu identity is built on being superior, being winners, being mistreated, and representing Rwanda itself, self-protection theory states that actions will be in accordance with reducing threats to these self-concepts. The threats to Hutus described in the radio transcripts—the loss of power, the loss of dignity, and Rwanda’s troubles—are intangible compared to the ‘Tutsi enemy’, so actions to reduce threats are somewhat unclear. The Tutsi, on the other hand, are a tangible enemy, and are ultimately presented as the cause of each of these threats to the Hutu. Consequently,



the Tutsi are depicted as the main threat to the Hutu. Self-protection theory states that actions would be taken to reduce the threat.

Three significant categories of behaviour are described in all of the confession tapes analysed (Genocide Archive of Rwanda, 2005). These include killing and burying Tutsi, killing cattle, burning Tutsi property, and conforming to authority hierarchies.

- Killing and burying Tutsi

The confession tapes all describe the hunting and killing of Tutsi, mostly in group raids with large numbers of Tutsi killed in short periods of time. These actions result in the perceived verification of the Hutu identity characteristics outlined in the radio propaganda. For example, the successful killing of the Tutsi reinforces how Hutu are superior and winners. Furthermore, annihilating the Tutsi in Rwanda means that Rwanda is composed of majority Hutu and no Tutsi, reinforcing the identity feature of Hutu as being Rwanda.

Killing the Tutsi removes the threat of the Tutsi to the Hutu identity. Beyond this, killing the Tutsi reduces the threat of a potential loss of power, which may come from the Tutsi takeover of Rwanda, and the threat of loss of dignity from potential mistreatment of Hutus by Tutsi is removed. With Tutsi being represented as the cause of Rwandan troubles, killing them is perceived as reducing Rwanda's troubles.

Tutsi burials are frequently mentioned after killings. As a catholic tradition, the burial of Tutsi by their killers indicates how the Hutu still identified with godliness and self-verified this identity characteristic.

- Killing cattle and burning Tutsi property

Each confession tape mentions the killing or stealing of Tutsi cattle and the destruction of Tutsi property. Food is a continuous theme throughout the radio transcripts and confession tapes, and the threat of starvation is clearly outlined. Historically, Hutu were farmers while Tutsi were keepers of cattle, a far more lucrative livelihood—"this was the original inequality: cattle are a more valuable asset than produce" (Moghalu, 2005). In this way, cattle represent injustice and Hutu mistreatment by Tutsi, and killing the cattle is symbolic for reducing the threat of a loss of dignity. This theme is also echoed in the examples where Tutsi property is destroyed, fuelled by an identification with mistreatment by Tutsi and perception of Tutsi with a 'superiority complex'.

- Conforming to Authority Hierarchies

Each confession tape discusses authority hierarchies, and how the actions they took were informed by sector leaders, often within community meetings. Burgomasters,<sup>7</sup> Responsables<sup>8</sup> and Conseillers<sup>9</sup> commanded the perpetrators

to kill Tutsi and join raids, and the perpetrators followed instructions. One perpetrator, an MDR<sup>4</sup> party member, frequently mentioned how he was banned from his duties when he was not perceived as working in the interests of the MDR.<sup>4</sup> In some cases, the perpetrators killed Tutsi because if they did not, they were perceived as being against Hutu interests and hence excluded from the Hutu identity group.

### *Identity-Based Motivations*

Based on the behaviour outlined in the perpetrator confession tapes, specific identity-based motivations may have influenced Hutu actions through the performance of identity self-verification and self-protection, as shaped by propaganda material:

- Motivations for Self-Verification actions

Firstly, Hutu perpetrators were motivated to kill Tutsi to verify an identification with being winners and being superior to the Tutsi. Killing the Tutsi verified Hutu strength, the ability to overcome Tutsi 'trickery', and was seen as goodness in the eyes of god. If Hutu did not kill Tutsi, they were not supporting Hutu interests, and would be excluded from the Hutu identity and its corresponding identification with superiority.

Secondly, Hutu perpetrators were motivated to kill Tutsi to verify the identification with being representative of Rwanda. Killing Tutsi verified the Hutu as defending the interests of Rwanda, as Tutsi were viewed as the cause of Rwandan troubles. The annihilation of the Tutsi population verified the Hutu as the majority population of Rwanda.

- Motivations for Self-Protection actions

Firstly, Hutu perpetrators were motivated to kill Tutsi to protect Hutus from loss of dignity. The Tutsi represented historic mistreatment and Hutu inferiority, and killing Tutsi removed the potential for future mistreatment and potential for the reduction of Hutu superiority.

Secondly, Hutu perpetrators were motivated to kill to protect Hutus from the perceived potential for annihilation by the Tutsi. Rwanda was considered a physical representation of the Hutu identity, and so the perceived destruction, resource depletion, and takeover of power from Tutsi was a threat to Hutu. Furthermore, Tutsi were presented as a threat to Rwanda's democracy, power structures and hierarchies, and so was seen as a cause for the disorder. "Dogs [Hutu] and Cats [Tutsi] went mad. They have to be kept on a leash, rather they have to be killed.... You cannot keep a cat on a leash so they must be killed" (Genocide Archive of Rwanda, 2005). Killing the Tutsi removed the potential for the destruction of pre-existing Hutu power hierarchies and removed the threat to Hutu power.

For each of the self-verification motivations, there is a

thematic correspondence with a self-protection motivation. The motivations to ‘verify an identification with being winners and being superior to the Tutsi’ and to ‘protect Hutu from loss of dignity’ each have a theme of dignity. The motivations to ‘verify an identification with being representative of Rwanda’ and to ‘protect Hutu from the perceived potential for annihilation by the Tutsi’ each have a theme of survival. Broadly speaking, the perpetrators of the Rwanda genocide were motivated to kill the Tutsi for the survival and dignity of the Hutu identity.

### Conclusion

To conclude, this research project discovered four potential identity-based motivations for the six Hutu perpetrators who contributed to the Rwanda Genocide, as constructed within propaganda material. These include:

- Verifying an identification with being winners and being superior to the Tutsi
- Verifying an identification with being representative of Rwanda
- Protecting Hutu from loss of dignity
- Protecting Hutu from the perceived potential for annihilation by the Tutsi

Whilst identity politics literature has recognised that propaganda and ‘us’ vs ‘them’ dynamics as core contributors to the Rwanda Genocide, this project proposes a possible answer for how and why propaganda motivated the killing of Tutsis by Hutus by utilising identity as a filter. This project narrowed in on the ‘identity’ aspect of identity politics, and distinguished the processes of self-verification and self-protection that occur as a result of having an identity, which motivate behaviour. This is significant when considering that to be human is to have an identity, so understanding the most extreme examples of identity-motivated actions can reveal how and why, if the conditions cultivate it, all people are vulnerable to committing violent actions themselves. Furthermore, the theoretical framework utilised in this project can also be used to understand more banal examples of human behaviour as a result of both group and personal identity.

### *Identity and Identity Politics Relationship*

A surprising finding within the research was that for each theme of framing of the Hutu identity within the radio propaganda, there was a correlating threat to the identity. This reveals a potential connection between identity characteristics and threats to identity, suggesting that constructing an identity requires an awareness of what could prove the identity construction false. This echoes the literature that suggests identity is constructed through comparisons of sameness and difference, but with the

inclusion of political interests as the social information from which comparisons are being drawn. By this, actions that result from having an identity are completed to prove an identity belief as true and remove things that might prove the identity belief as false.

Though this point shows how identity motivated Hutu perpetrators to act, it does not explain why the actions were so extreme and violent. All humans have identities and face threats to their identity beliefs, but this hardly results in mass killing. The relationship between identity and identity politics provides information as to why. Identity politics is when the scale of identity expands from an individual to a group, so all identity processes are scaled up too. Furthermore, identity politics includes political interests in the social information that construct a group identity. Often these political interests take on tangible properties and goals, such as the Hutu people representing the territory of Rwanda, so they must protect the nation. When a large collective takes on the same identity, the identity beliefs appear true, and justifies the identity construction (Mansbach & Taylor, 2018). This rings true with consideration to what makes identity a social phenomenon, “having an identity requires others to endorse and reinforce one’s selfhood” (Elmore et al., 2014). If the majority of the Hutu population did not have the same beliefs, the genocide would not have occurred.

The ability of a group to justify their identity beliefs as true means that groups can continually reinforce the dignity of their identity group, and justify their own identity group as being deserving of their political interests. Identity coherence is so important that people will fight to maintain their group identity beliefs, and so if the identity belief is one of dignity, and there is a threat to that dignity, the group will fight to reduce the threat (Swann & Buhrmester, 2014). If an identity group’s political interests are tangible, such as defending Rwanda as a representation of Hutus from the Tutsi threat, then the protection of identity beliefs is perceived as being a matter of survival. Consider how a group acts to ‘remove things that might prove that the identity belief is false’—if the threat to the identity is tangible and appears to threaten that group’s very survival, and if the identity beliefs of that group appear justified to those within the group, extreme violence to remove the threat may occur. The Tutsi were perceived as a threat to the survival and dignity of the Hutu identity, and the justification of these beliefs from Hutu radio propaganda motivated Hutu perpetrators to commit genocide. When identity is hijacked by identity politics so that an out-group is perceived as a threat to the in-group’s dignity and its very survival, individuals are motivated to commit extreme violence which would otherwise not otherwise occur. This

project is limited in its scope and volume of primary sources analysed, so this theory of identity/identity politics is rudimentary, but further research would help to clarify and strengthen the theory.

These conclusions regarding the identity-based motivations of Hutus, the relationship between identity and identity politics, and the resulting explanation of how identity politics can result in extreme violence would not be possible without the use of an interdisciplinary Global Studies framework. Drawing from psychology/developmental studies and global politics helped to develop a more comprehensive understanding of identity politics. The project is global in its significance too, because if humans are motivated by their identities, and humans are responsible for the world economic, social, and political infrastructure, then identity has had, and will continue to have, significant impacts on the world as we know it. This case-study, theory-based approach to research also has roots in a global studies framework and allowed the researcher to utilise theory with a global reach by applying the theoretical framework to a local event.

#### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Though this project covers several subjects, there were limitations which prevented a more thorough exploration of identity and its influence on behaviour. Firstly, the amount of data analysed was limited, so themes of identity framing may be less accurate than if a greater number of radio transcripts and confession tapes were analysed. Secondly, some aspects of the theoretical framework were not explored in depth, such as the inclusion/exclusion model and the relationship between identity and worldview. The picture of the relationship between identity and behaviour is therefore incomplete. Thirdly, thematic analysis, though the most appropriate analysis for the project, is victim to researcher subjectivity, so there can be a mismatch between the data, theory, and analytic claims (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Future directions for this research could see a larger range of data analysed for the Rwanda case-study to expand on proof for the theoretical framework and enhance the accuracy of the determined motivations for the genocide. Other case studies, such as other genocides, terrorist incidents, or more banal instances of identity influencing behaviour, could also be studied using the theoretical framework within this project.

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### Footnotes

1. RPF – Rwanda Patriotic Front. Tutsi resistance established by refugees who fled to nations surrounding Rwanda
2. RTML - Radio Télévision des Milles Collines. Popular radio station in Rwanda leading up to, and during, the Genocide. Broadcast to a mostly illiterate Hutu population
3. CDR - Coalition pour la Défense de la République (Coalition for the Defence of the Republic). Hutu-Power political party, called for complete segregation of Hutus from Tutsis, and complete exclusion of Tutsis from public institutions and public life (Berry & Berry, 1999)
4. MDR - Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (Republican Democratic Movement). Governing party in Rwanda leading up to the Genocide, headed by President Juvénal Habyarimana
5. Inkotanyi – Slang name for the RPF
6. Inyezi - Cockroach
7. Burgomaster – Dutch term for mayor
8. Responsables – Authority figure in Rwandan villages
9. Conseillers – Zone councillor, who is elected, and has leadership responsibilities within the community

## KIM II SUNGISM 2.0? NORTH KOREANS' EXPERIENCES OF CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY AT SAFE HOUSES IN CHINA

Anonymous

*Author's request to retract identifying information out of sensitivity*

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** What are the factors that contribute to the unethical conversion to Christianity in the safe houses residing on the Sino-Korean border?

### **Introduction and Background**

North Korea has strictly controlled immigration and emigration since the Korean War. North Korea's domestic and international mobility is rare, making it near impossible to leave the country lawfully. Many North Koreans strive to flee the nation to escape the Kim family's oppressive government and seek a better life. North Koreans must risk their lives crossing the Yalu River and flee through China to be free. North Koreans are seen as illegal economic migrants in China, and if found, they are frequently returned to North Korea, sold into human trafficking, or married to Chinese men.

If a North Korean connects with or gets intercepted by the Christian underground network's safe houses on the Sino-Korean border, the chances of a successful escape to South Korea improve. Defectors are kept up in these safe houses with little to no movement (for their safety) until they are chosen to continue the long trip to freedom, which can take months. Many are obliged to learn about the bible and the concept of God during their time in the safe houses. Some North Koreans are taught that God chose them and that it is their destiny to return to their homeland to share the gospel.

I volunteered at a religious non-governmental organisation (NGO) in South Korea, assisting North Koreans in assimilating into South Korean society. Many defectors who came to Korea through the safe houses told me they did not know if they wanted to be Christians but felt compelled to be. This notion was eerily similar to the dictatorship they had just escaped, as though North Koreans were faced with another version of indoctrination. Perhaps this was a nicer-looking version of Kim Il Sungism. This made me wonder about the ethics of proselytising in the safe houses, and what factors contributed to the seemingly unethical conversion to Christianity in the safe house at the Sino-Korean border. This is an essential topic to investigate, as religious NGOs have minimal accountability as they are lauded for assisting North Korean defectors flee the country (Kang, 2016). It is considered that because missionary groups work hard to help minorities, they must be doing everything right. It is difficult to disagree when contrasted

with the alternatives available to North Korean defectors. Through secondary ethnographic data, I will aim to show that while accepting Christianity is not a bad thing, the exposure to just one version of Christianity and the demands placed on defectors is unethical. This essay will first investigate why Korean Christian organisations are obsessed with North Korean conversion, and then offer facts on the treatment of defectors at the Sino-Korean border and how believing in God is their ticket to freedom. It will then investigate the more extensive networks involved with safe houses, and the pressures that carers face before discussing and challenging the mission of safe houses.

### **The Mission > Free Will**

The zealous belief of Christian NGOs that spreading the gospel will ignite reunification has become a driving factor coercing North Koreans to continue to suffer. Christian NGOs believe spreading the gospel is the way to achieve the mission of the imagined reunified Korea (Bennet, 2020). Cohrs (2018) explains how support for unification among young people in South Korea is fading, whereas, because North Korean defectors are closely connected, they are seen as potential leaders in reunification. A defector who tried to escape her husband, who she was sold to in China, came across a safe house. She was convinced to accept her God-given destiny and stay with the man since according to the bible, divorce is wrong. Then, when the time was right, she was to return to North Korea to preach the gospel (Han, 2013). This is why Christian NGOs have such an invested interest in defectors, and the vision justifies the continuous suffering of defectors.

Many South Korean Christian NGOs place the "mission" before the Christian value of free will. North Koreans are seen as subjects to help fulfil a 'greater purpose', and because North Koreans have never had much agency, caregivers can shape the defectors' lives. An interview conducted at a safe house with a defector, Grace, highlighted the control caregivers have over their lives. During the interview, Grace was asked about her future; the caregiver said, on Grace's behalf:

Her destiny is to return to North Korea as a missionary so she can build a church in her hometown. She has had a vision from God, who showed her a church painted in white with a cross on top, near the place where she grew up (Han, 2013, p. 548).

This is despite the fact that Grace had already been repatriated to North Korea once and had been beaten and imprisoned (Kang, 2016). Defectors are often treated as subjects to fulfil the mission without space to form their own path.

### Conditions For Freedom

As well as being coerced to return to the homeland, defectors are also guided to South Korea. However, the conditions for freedom appear to be contingent on how loyal a follower of Christ one is, which exploits the freedom of religion. This is strikingly similar to elements of the dictatorship they faced back home. One must bow to the Kim portraits every day, and their loyalty is one factor dictating their position in society. Likewise, in some instances, caregivers told the defectors that those who were diligent in reading the bible and praying would be prioritised for rescue (Han, 2018). Another example, at a safe house, children were required to read the whole bible whilst no other education was given to them. Han asked what the children would read once they had finished the bible, to which the caregiver replied – “they can read it again” (Han, 2013, p. 542), proving their belief in God is what will give them their freedom. This exploitation, I believe, is a result of Christianity combined with long-standing cultural values.

The way Christian missionaries should treat North Korean defectors, and the way how they are treated is diametrically opposed. Because Christian values and cultural values conflict with one another, the evangelical mission is a complex system that functions as humanitarian aid and has hierarchical power imbalances that oppress and exploit defectors. According to Hazzan (2016), the Pastor’s word is God’s word in South Korea, and there is a sense of elitism within Christian networks. Defectors in some safe houses are required to follow a strict schedule of hymns, prayers, and bible teachings to stay; if they do not, they may face severe punishment (Chung, 2003). Because of the hierarchical nature of society, North Koreans are seen as less than, and as a result, North Koreans are subject to poor treatment.

### Pressure From Institutions

Furthermore, the caregivers will be under significant pressure to deliver results (i.e., conversion numbers). Many safe houses are funded by large South Korean churches as one of the church’s most significant mandates is anti-Communist sentiment, and the Sino-Korean border is seen as a gateway for evangelising (Han, 2013). Large churches support safe houses through funding, prayer, and missionaries. These actions also help the prominent

churches, and when the congregations hear these stories, it helps build faith within the community and builds a good reputation for the institution. With the pressure to succeed, I believe many caregivers will possibly do ‘whatever it takes’ for defectors to believe in God in order to keep the larger church happy and for support to continue, even if it includes manipulation tactics and indoctrination.

### Discussion

Safe houses for North Koreans are not only a site of hope and freedom but also a site of fear and trauma with an uncanny resemblance to North Korea’s ‘Kim Il Sungism’. While the conditions for surviving in a safe house are not necessarily ethical, the alternative is much worse. The alternative of being captured and sent back to North Korea or being sold as a slave can be seen as a justification for the unethical conversion process to Christianity.

However, in response to this research, the conversion to Christianity seems to take into no account the mental state of the defectors. Defectors are not seen as human beings finding healing and their own path, but as subjects to fulfil institutional missions and targets (Cohrs, 2018). This is especially noticeable in the high suicide rates, even though people encounter faith (Cohrs, 2018). This shows me that the institutions possibly have more concern for the number of conversions instead of caring for defectors’ mental health and well-being.

Although it would be wrong to say evangelical missionaries operate with bad intentions, the ends justify the means for many of these organisations. They have been blinded by the mission and forgotten basic biblical principles. The Bible in Matthew 25:40 says, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Holy Bible: NIV: New International Version., 1973, Matt. 25:40). Furthermore, 2 Corinthians 9:7 says, “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (Holy Bible: NIV: New International Version., 1973, 2 Cor. 9:7). As stated in this essay, Defectors have undergone treatment that strips them of their rights and freedoms, which contradicts the bible. The character of Jesus, whom the evangelists follow, simply loved people and gave them a free choice.

Furthermore, on a basic human rights level, the way North Koreans are subject to coercion is a breach of their right to religious freedom. Another defector, Joseph, highlighted that he thought there was no other way and only accepted the teachings to get help. Although he is a Christian now, he wonders if he would have been helped if he did not accept the religious teachings (Pilkington, 2015). Article 18 of the Universal Human Right Declaration states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance (United Nations, 1948).

If defectors are living in confinement in China's safe houses, only taught one version of Christianity with no other exposure to the religions or choice, then the process of becoming a Christian is a breach of human rights despite the missionaries' intentions.

### Future Research and Conclusion

This essay highlights the experiences defectors faced in safe houses converting to Christianity. The people who have a voice in this evangelical mission are the evangelists – the people with the power. Therefore, this essay highlighted the very few voices of the people on the receiving end, as these people do not have the power to speak out. The experiences of defectors highlight a need for change and awareness surrounding rights for defectors. Converting to “Christianity” can be attributed to another version of ‘Kim Il Sungism’. The fear of what will happen if they disobey is what drives their decisions. Freedom comes at a price, and that price is believing. Further research in this field may prompt the decentralised evangelical safe houses and networks to reflect on their systems, values, and ethics in the safe houses on the Sino-Korean border.

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# BOLSTER OR BURDEN? BRAZIL'S AUXILIO EMERGENCIAL POLICY AND GENDERED IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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## Abstract:

**The COVID-19 global pandemic has been an unprecedented public health crisis with widespread physical and economic consequences. What is yet to be fully explored is the gendered nature of the crisis and its disproportionate impact on women. Due to unequal distribution of household and care responsibilities, women have found themselves with less opportunities to engage in paid employment during the pandemic. To combat the effects of COVID-19, many governments introduced emergency economic relief policies. In Brazil, a country who experienced extremely high rates of COVID-19, the government introduced *Auxilio Emergencial* (AE), Emergency Aid, to provide economic support to those living in conditions of poverty during the pandemic. Using existing literature as a reference point, this paper analyses the AE policy through a feminist lens, unpacking how it addresses or combats the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. AE offers targeted economic support to women experiencing conditions of poverty during the pandemic. However, this policy also plays into preconceived notions of the role of women as carers and household managers. AE is just one example from a wider family of policies employed to battle the effects of COVID-19, all of which will have gender dimensions to be investigated.**

## Introduction

As the global COVID-19 pandemic enters its third year, the impacts of various policy responses to the crisis can begin to be more thoroughly understood. Since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020, global case numbers have topped 520 million and resulted in over six million deaths (World Health Organization, 2022). In Latin America, Brazil quickly became an epicentre for the virus as it infiltrated major cities and surrounding communities. To protect citizens and economies from the virus, governments across the world implemented a range of emergency policy measures including financial, immigration, and educational support.

While COVID-19 had immense impacts for many people, the virus' effects on social and economic functions disproportionately affected women (Mooi-Reci & Risman, 2021). As primarily responsible for domestic caring duties

and being more likely to be employed in unstable work, women bore the brunt of the collateral effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (Mooi-Reci & Risman, 2021). Due to the large-scale generalised support measures necessary to combat such a widespread crisis, emergency COVID-19 policies appear not to have adequately accounted for the gendered impacts of the pandemic.

To investigate the relationship between the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and its consequential emergency policy measures, this paper will undertake a policy analysis of Brazil's *Auxilio Emergencial* (AE) policy. This analysis will seek to answer: How has Brazil's *Auxilio Emergencial* policy addressed or combated the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic? Firstly, Brazil will be positioned in the wider context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, relevant literature regarding the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and relevant academic concepts will be explored. Thirdly, AE will be analysed against the concepts raised in the literature. Finally, the implications of the policy analysis and future avenues for research will be presented.

## COVID-19 in Brazil

As the largest country in South America and with expansive land borders, the outbreak of COVID-19 in Brazil was near inevitable as the virus spread across the globe (Alves, 2021). Brazil's first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed on February 26, 2020 (Massard de Fonseca et al., 2020). By mid-October 2020, Brazil had recorded over 5 million confirmed cases and over 150,000 deaths (Massard de Fonseca et al., 2020). These incredibly high case numbers saw Brazil become the country with the second-highest number of COVID-19 cases worldwide between June and September 2020 (Massard de Fonseca et al., 2020). As a poignant point of reference, Massard de Fonseca et al. (2020) claim that "the second-worst epidemic to affect Brazil was the so-called Spanish Flu of 1918, whose impact pales in comparison with the consequences of COVID-19 on Brazilian lives".

The extremely high COVID-19 case numbers that struck Brazil did so during an existing nationwide economic crisis. As of 2020, nearly half of Brazil's population lived in poverty, on less than US\$5.50 a day (Massard de Fonseca et al., 2020). These poor economic conditions exacerbated the effects of the pandemic on Brazilian society, concentrating



impacts on the already poor and vulnerable. Bargain and Aminjonov (2021) argue that households experiencing poverty suffered immensely under COVID-19 and lockdown conditions as they had limited savings, limited food stores, were less able to work remotely, and relied more heavily on daily ‘hands-on labour’ income compared to their wealthier counterparts. As a result of these economic and welfare stress factors, Bargain and Aminjonov (2021) argue that those living in poverty could not afford to adhere to the confinement and self-isolation requirements and were more likely to be forced to continue labour activities, making them highly exposed and more vulnerable to COVID-19 infection.

In addition to the existing economic factors, Brazil’s susceptibility to high COVID-19 case numbers can also be attributed to the controversial leadership of President Jair Bolsonaro. As COVID-19 took hold in Brazil, the Bolsonaro government and its supporters approached the pandemic with denialist and anti-science tendencies (Massard de Fonseca et al., 2020). This resistance to the reality of the COVID-19 crisis caused delays in responding to the outbreak in Brazil. The government was therefore slow to adopt measures such as border closures, assisting affected workers, providing guidelines for educational institutions, and producing a centralised healthcare response (Massard de Fonseca et al., 2020). Despite these delays, the Brazilian government declared a “state of calamity” in March 2020, allowing for increased federal expenditure to combat the COVID-19 crisis (Massard de Fonseca et al., 2020, p. 4). This “state of calamity” spending accounted for the introduction of the AE and other emergency policy measures.

Brazil’s intense, complicated, and destructive experience of COVID-19 makes it an important subject of investigation regarding the pandemic. Given its high case numbers, existing socio-economic difficulties, and controversial government response to COVID-19, Brazil represents the nuances of the pandemic well. As a focal point for the virus in both Latin America and the world, Brazil is a crucial point of interest for analysing not only the effects of the virus, but also the impacts of the policy measures employed to reduce such effects. In analysing AE, this research seeks to understand how critical COVID-19 policy responses have gendered impacts. AE represents the wide range of financial support measures employed by governments across the globe, each of which will have gendered dimensions. When investigating the gender dimensions of Brazil’s AE policy, the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 crisis as a whole are a critical starting point.

### **The Gendered Impacts of COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented physical, social, and economic havoc across the globe. For millions of people, life with COVID-19 has been characterised by “widespread unemployment, job displacement, and income loss” (Mooi-Reci & Risman, 2021, p. 161). Throughout the pandemic, women have been disproportionately affected by these pandemic conditions as they bear the brunt of caring responsibilities and unstable work. As COVID-19 reduced mobility and increased time spent at home for entire families, the time spent by women undertaking domestic work, childcare, and home-schooling all increased (Mooi-Reci & Risman, 2021). This increase in demand for domestic and care work forced many women to reduce their working hours, or even leave paid employment (Mooi-Reci & Risman, 2021).

While the pandemic and its related restrictions increased demand for these types of care and domestic work, it is the cultural norms associated with such roles that directed the brunt of the impact towards women. Cultural expectations that define care and domestic work as ‘feminine’ activities entrench gendered roles within family structures. The expectation that women would take on the extra work necessary under pandemic conditions reflects a wider scheme of cultural logistics that does not place this burden on men (Mooi-Reci & Risman, 2021). As women took on reduced employment to account for new demands, COVID-19 also left them at an increased risk of poverty and social dependency (Mooi-Reci & Risman, 2021).

The conditions for the gendered impacts of COVID-19 were particularly prevalent in Brazil given women’s existing socio-economic positions. In Brazil, consistent with many other countries, women have been overrepresented in sectors that are most sensitive to changing labour market conditions (de Oliveira & Alloatti, 2021). According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, in 2018, 28.2% of employed women worked only part-time jobs (de Oliveira & Alloatti, 2021). Those who work in these fragile forms of informal labour, often black women, are also typically underpaid (de Oliveira & Alloatti, 2021). These fragile and underpaid positions occupied by women in Brazil were put further at risk from the outbreak of the pandemic due to the increase in care responsibilities required. According to the *Sempre Viva Associação Feminista* (de Oliveira, 2021, p. 216), 50% of Brazilian women started taking care of someone during the pandemic, among which “72% reported an increase in the time they already spent accompanying or supporting those being taken care of”. Women in Brazil took on extra care and domestic responsibilities during COVID-19, a burden that was exacerbated by existing structures of unstable and underpaid employment.

### **The Gender Division of Labour and the Feminisation of Poverty**

The gendered impacts of COVID-19 are a symptom of wider structures of oppression that are woven into the lives of women everywhere. Two key concepts that are critical for understanding these structures are the gender division of labour and the feminisation of poverty. Together these two interacting concepts constitute a firm theoretical basis for engaging with the gendered impacts of COVID-19 in a variety of contexts, including Brazil.

The gender division of labour has evolved as a concept alongside the developing family and market structures of capitalist society. In its essence, the gender division of labour refers to the social phenomenon in which women spend more time than men carrying out unpaid care and domestic work such as childcare, cooking, cleaning, and other home maintenance (Craig et al., 2012). The expectation for women to take on the majority of household and parental duties has remained firm since the domination of the male breadwinner model typical of early capitalism. Despite the exponential rise in women's paid employment since the male breadwinner model was the default, the expectation that women will continue to manage the home has remained (Craig et al., 2012). Despite evolving employment opportunities and dual income households, women are still being subjected to societal norms and values that determine what behaviour is expected of them (Neilson & Stanfors, 2014).

This expectation for women to manage the home regardless of the rise in female employment has relegated many women to unstable or part-time paid work (Sen, 1980). It is no longer logical for women to bear the burden of managing the home on their own, given their involvement in paid work, and yet; mothers spend two to three times more time with children than men. They are more likely to reduce working hours for care responsibilities, and spend much more time than fathers on domestic duties (Craig et al., 2012). The 'default' delegation of these domestic and care responsibilities to women not only limits the time women can invest into paid employment, but also reproduces gendered expectations of the 'ideal worker'.

Under the gender division of labour, women are expected to carry out household and care duties to support the time commitment men make to financial pursuits and paid work. This perceived freedom of men from carrying out these activities further reproduces them as the ideal worker who, unlike women, are "relatively unencumbered by domestic responsibilities" (Craig et al., 2012, p. 718). The perception that women in paid employment will have reduced efficacy due to the demands of domestic and care

work perpetuates the idea of the idealised male worker. The household and childcare work that women disproportionately undertake is not valued nor rewarded in a capitalist context, any intrinsic merits these activities may have are undermined by their lack of economic output (Ross, 1987). In the context of COVID-19, women taking on further domestic responsibilities and being forced to limit their paid employment is a symptom of the gender division of labour, as it is socially instilled into individuals and family structures.

Closely related to the relegation of women to domestic duties which constitutes the gender division of labour, is the feminisation of poverty. The term 'feminisation of poverty' was first coined by Diana Pearce in the 1970s but became part of popular discourse following its use at the Fourth UN Conference on Women in 1995 (Chant, 2008). The definition of the term is twofold; the feminisation of poverty refers to "an increase of women among the poor" and "an increase of female headed households among the poor households" (Medeiros & Costa, 2008, p. 116). In addition to these core definitions of the feminisation of poverty, Medeiros and Costa (2008, p. 117) propose an extension to define it as "an increase of the role that gender discrimination has as a determinant of poverty", moving towards a more complex 'feminisation of the causes of poverty'. Medeiros and Costa (2008) indicate that the nuance of the feminisation of poverty goes beyond numerical data focused on income disparities between genders, but also represents the plight of women at the hands of socio-economic structures of subordination.

Data regarding the feminisation of poverty is lacking and relatively irregular. There is no clear international database that breaks down the extent of women's income poverty in relation to men's, despite calls for such data from large international institutional outputs such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Chant, 2008). However, smaller studies have produced data concerning both national and regional trends in poverty among men and women, many of which rely on female headed households as a proxy for women in poverty. Medeiros and Costa (2008, p. 118) find that in Brazil, "the probability of being poor is higher among female headed households". This focus on female-headed households is common amongst discourse on the feminisation of poverty and reflects a need to focus not just on income, but the position of women in dealing with poverty.

As sex-disaggregated data regarding income poverty is scarce, the analytical limitations of privileging income-based definitions of the feminisation of poverty can be overcome by considering a more holistic approach to the

complex dimensions of poverty (Chant, 2008). While women are often income poor, they are also “increasingly at the frontline of dealing with poverty” (Chant, 2008, p. 176). The gender division of labour sees women bear the responsibility of household management and childcare, a task that becomes immensely difficult under economic stress. Women may also experience economic discrimination that feminises poverty by reproducing the idea of a male ‘idealised worker’ (Craig et al., 2012). Women are also vulnerable to other causes of poverty such as the legacy of gender gaps in education, literacy, wages, and other factors that limit the economic participation and success of women (Chant, 2008). Recognition of these socio-cultural factors that ‘feminise’ poverty in addition to income disparity are critical for understanding the position of women amongst the world’s poor.

The attempt to reduce the prevalence of women in poverty through welfare programs also has the potential to reproduce socio-cultural expectations for women’s roles in the economy. The perceived responsibility of women for their children and families means that many welfare programs target women not just to potentially address their economic hardship, but as a means for distributing welfare benefits more effectively. Many welfare programs targeting women assume that women will behave ‘altruistically’ to use support and to improve household wellbeing (Bradshaw et al., 2018). Bradshaw et al. (2018) argues that the economic support of women targets them as ‘conduits’ for distributing resources to other family members and dependents. This dependence on the obligation of women to behave according to social expectations for household management, constitutes a “feminization of poverty alleviation” that is linked closely to the feminisation of poverty as a whole (Bradshaw et al., 2018, p. 121).

The feminisation of poverty in this instance encompasses not just the lack of income experienced by some women. It also includes the other social and cultural factors that put women in a position of disadvantage for paid employment, the access to, and use of economic resources. Linked intricately to the cultural logics of the gender division of labour, feminisation of poverty discourse outlines the various conditions that cause an overrepresentation of women among the poor and the disproportionate impact that economic hardship has on women. As a symptom of both the gender division of labour and the feminisation of poverty, the potential for the ‘feminisation of poverty alleviation’ in economic aid welfare is of critical importance for unpacking AE through a feminist lens.

### Research Design and Methodological Approach

To answer the question: ‘How has Brazil’s *Auxílio Emergencial* policy addressed or combatted the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic’, this paper will use the gender division of labour and the feminisation of poverty as foundational reference units for analysis when examining Brazil’s AE policy through a feminist lens. Taking this approach to the policy analysis is an effort to investigate the complexities of the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and how emergency support programs implemented during the pandemic interact with these gender dimensions. The feminist approach to this policy was chosen above a generalised policy analysis to ensure a deeper, more comprehensive picture of the policy’s gendered nature. A generalised policy analysis would require far greater time and resources than those available for this research. Not only is a more focused feminist analysis of this policy more feasible, the contribution to a wider consideration of the gendered impacts of COVID-19 is both necessary and valuable. While the economic and institutional impacts of COVID-19 have been abundantly clear at the forefront of popular discussion, the nuanced social impacts of pandemic conditions and efforts to alleviate them are yet to be explored so widely.

For the purposes of this analysis, the details of the AE policy have been accessed primarily through the information provided by the Federal Government website of Brazil (Governo Federal, 2021). The government resources are the primary sources from which the details of the policy and its provisions will be drawn for analysis. Additional information has also been sourced online from secondary sources such as banks and blogs. Where these resources are written in Portuguese, they have been translated to English using both Collins and Cambridge online dictionaries. Translation has been cross-referenced across multiple dictionaries to minimise errors wherever possible. Together, these sources will provide a comprehensive picture of the content and nature of the AE policy as it was implemented in Brazil.

The literature reviewed above, concerning both the gender division of labour and the feminisation of poverty, will be referred to as secondary sources during the policy analysis. The theoretical and contextual information drawn out of these key concepts will be the central reference points against which the content and nature of AE will be examined. Throughout the policy analysis, both the practical financial provisions and the embedded socio-cultural assumptions contained in the AE will be analysed. Combining both the technicalities and more holistic characteristics of AE will provide a more comprehensive picture of the policy implications.

Using online government resources and secondary

beneficiaries received monthly instalments of R\$600 and single female heads of household received R\$1,200, whereas in 2021 those living alone received R\$150, individual beneficiaries who lived with others received R\$250, and single female heads of household received R\$375 (Governo Federal, 2021). Payments were likely reduced in 2021 to reflect the lesser COVID-19 restrictions in place and the potential improvements made by the vaccine rollout.

If recipients of AE were existing beneficiaries of the existing Bolsa Familia welfare program, payments were made automatically into the bank account through which Bolsa Familia was being paid (UNHCR, 2021). If AE recipients were not Bolsa Familia beneficiaries, payments were made into online savings accounts that were automatically opened for those eligible by the Caixa Econômica Federal bank contracted by the Ministry of Citizenship (UNHCR, 2021). To access these online accounts and thus the payments, beneficiaries needed to download the Caixa app (UNHCR, 2021). If recipients were unable to access the app or the internet, payments could also be accessed at physical agencies of the Caixa Econômica Federal bank, ATMs, and lottery retailers (UNHCR, 2021).

AE has a robust set of criteria for eligibility and outlines in detail who can receive the benefit and to what amount. Up to August 2021, the AE payments had reached a peak of 67 million beneficiaries, costing R\$218 billion (Barberis, 2021). The AE cash-transfer program reached many recipients who were experiencing poverty and was one of the largest scale COVID-19 relief payments in the world.

### **Analysis of Policy Findings: Gender in Auxílio Emergencial**

On the practical level, the value and delegation of payments in AE serves to protect and uplift women in poverty. AE recognises the economic difficulties of women and in part rewards the value of the disproportionate responsibilities of women in the home. Single female house heads are consistently offered larger payments than individual beneficiaries. Women are privileged as individual recipients of the aid over some male counterparts. In a more holistic nature, the assumed nature of single headed households and the role of women as family managers that are embedded in the policy structure, have the potential to reproduce problematic cultural logistics concerning women.

AE's most straightforward support of women facing difficulties in pandemic conditions is the increase in the value of payments for single women supporting households with other members under the age of eighteen. In 2020, single female heads of households received double the

monetary value in payments than any male beneficiaries. It is not stated in the criteria for the aid that the minors in the households of single women necessarily had to be their own children. The policy does not grant this increased aid solely to single mothers, but in its omission of children as a qualifier for single female aid, it accounts for single female led households that support siblings or younger friends and family members as dependents.

According to de Oliveira and Alloatti (2021), among the single women headed households in Brazil, 56.9% are considered to be below the poverty line. This majority figure reflects the pressing need for the economic support for these women that is offered by AE. The gender division of labour is exponentially intensified in single female headed households. The cooking, cleaning, housework, and childcare that is expected of women as outlined by Craig et al. (2012) remains unpaid for single females. However, while the gender division of labour remains in place, it is imagined to some degree to be supported by a male income-earning partner. As single female house heads do not have economic support from a partner, women are further forced to undertake household duties with minimal time available for paid employment. The structure of AE addresses the difficulty single-female house heads have in gaining income by offering higher value payments to women in this situation.

The prioritising of women as recipients of the aid over some other family members also increases the likelihood that women will have adequate access to the aid payments. Where men are usually envisioned as the 'ideal' worker (Craig et al., 2012), women are positioned as equally deserving of economic support in AE. While the prioritising of women as recipients of the aid works in service of women, part of the eligibility criteria for family income thresholds does not account for the influence of assumed gender roles. The eligibility criteria states that one is not eligible if a family household member earns more than three times the minimum wage per month, which is supposed to indicate the financial standing of a household. This fails to recognise that women who are more likely to be in part time work or unemployed due to care and household responsibilities may not have adequate access to the income of high-earning partners. The income status of possibly higher earning partners is not an adequate indicator of the economic wellbeing of women in this scenario.

In its design and implementation, AE makes a conscious practical effort to improve the economic status of women during the COVID-19 crisis. Particularly, the policy's support of single-female house heads who are prone to experiencing poverty has immense potential to support women who are bearing the brunt of pandemic

sources to examine the nature of AE are not the only ways in which the policy could be examined. Nor are the gender division of labour and the feminisation of poverty the only key concepts relevant to feminist analysis. Research investigating the policy implications through interview, poll taking, or other data-based research methods could also examine the nature and content of AE from a gendered perspective. However, due to time and travel constraints, the literature review and subsequent written analysis of AE employed by this paper are the most appropriate methodological tools for this particular research. As for the chosen concepts, the gender division of labour and the feminisation of poverty are two critical components of much feminist analysis. These two concepts and related ideas encompass a range of factors that are most pertinent to gendered elements of economic policy. The analysis will begin with the empirical findings concerning the details of AE. This will be followed by a breakdown of the implications of these details through a feminist lens with reference to the previously detailed relevant literature.

### **The Content and Delivery of Auxílio Emergencial**

First established in April 2020, AE was one of the central policies introduced by the Brazilian Federal Government to combat the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis (Santander, 2022). After its initial introduction, AE was originally proposed to end on 31 December, 2020 (Law no. 13982, 2020). Instead, it was extended in December 2020 and throughout 2021 (Governo Federal, 2021). The AE policy was approved by Brazil's national congress and sanctioned by President Bolsonaro of Brazil in Law 13982 (Governo Federal, 2021). Beneficiaries of the AE were to receive monthly instalments, the value of which differed according to the meeting of particular criteria (Governo Federal, 2021). AE was a targeted benefit, unlike other general welfare programs in Brazil, it targeted the poor and most vulnerable in society.

Beneficiaries of AE had to meet a range of criteria to qualify for the aid, the first of which was based on their existing income. Beneficiaries must not be in active paid employment and must not be receiving financial assistance from existing social security benefits within a federal income transfer program, with the exception of the civil servants salary scheme and the Bolsa Familia (Governo Federal, 2021). In terms of individual income, beneficiaries must have earned taxable income of less than R\$28,559.70 in 2019 (Governo Federal, 2021). As of December 2019, beneficiaries must also not be in legal possession of property or rights that exceed R\$300,000 in total value (Imprensa Nacional, 2021). Apart from taxable income, beneficiaries also must not have received non-taxed or

alternatively taxed income in excess of R\$40,000 (Governo Federal, 2021). These conditions constitute the income-based requirements for individual AE beneficiaries, there are additional criteria on the basis of family.

Those receiving AE as representatives of the family have additional criteria. The family must not have a family income per capita that exceeds half the minimum wage of R\$1,100 per month (Governo Federal, 2021). There must also not be a family member who earns a total monthly income above three times the minimum wage (Imprensa Nacional, 2021). Beneficiaries must also not have been included as a dependent on any Personal Income Tax Declaration in 2019 (Governo Federal, 2021). Families and individuals are also subject to a range of criteria outside of income assessment to qualify for the AE benefit.

Beneficiaries must be over the age of eighteen, with the only exception being adolescent mothers, defined as women aged twelve to seventeen years who have at least one child (Governo Federal, 2021). Beneficiaries must not be residents abroad nor be imprisoned and therefore a reason for the granting of reclusion aid (Governo Federal, 2021). Beneficiaries must not be one of the following: an intern, medical or multi-professional resident, or a beneficiary of a scholarship for education or scientific and technological development at the municipal, state, or federal level (Governo Federal, 2021). Those who meet this criterion for eligibility were granted the aid according to predetermined steps for delegation of the money. For eligible recipients already receiving the Bolsa Familia support payment, if the value of AE exceeds that of Bolsa Familia, Bolsa Familia will be suspended and beneficiaries will receive AE in replacement (Governo Federal, 2021). Suspended Bolsa Familia payments will resume at the conclusion of AE payments (Governo Federal, 2021).

The granting of AE was limited to one family member in 2021, down from two in 2020, regardless of the number of multiple eligible beneficiaries in one household (Governo Federal, 2021). In this instance, women who head single parent households, oldest family members, and then females have priority in receiving the aid (Governo Federal, 2021). If members are of the same age, females would receive the aid over males (Governo Federal, 2021). For the purpose of the benefit, women heads of single parent households are defined as the head woman of a family without a husband or partner and with at least one person in the home under eighteen years of age (Governo Federal, 2021). Women were prioritised as receivers of the benefit in both the 2020 and 2021 payments.

As for the value of the payments, the amount of money given to beneficiaries differed between the original 2020 schedule and the 2021 extension. In 2020, individual

conditions. The policy grants economic support to women directly, aiding in the management of dependents and personal conditions of poverty. The effects of the intensification of the gender division of labour and the loss of paid employment faced by many women throughout COVID-19 will have been combated by the economic support of AE.

While the targeting of women and single-female house heads alleviates the economic impacts of pandemic conditions for women, it also, rather paradoxically, has the potential to reproduce problematic assumptions about women's roles in the home and economy. AE targets female single house heads specifically. Women are also privileged as recipients of the general AE payments. The economic burden that is lifted off of women by AE is connected to a different burden that is added, wherein women are appointed the responsibility of distributing welfare support in a way that most benefits all other family members. Female house heads, single or otherwise, become a 'proxy' for effective welfare distribution.

As outlined by Bradshaw et al. (2018), women are prone to becoming 'conduits' for cash transfer welfare programs. Women are assumed or expected to behave in a manner that ensures welfare payments will benefit entire families fairly and effectively. This phenomenon is summarised by Bradshaw et al. (2018, p.121): "cash transfer programs tend to target women as 'conduits', whose assumed 'altruistic' behavior means the resources provided are used more effectively to improve household well-being and reduce poverty". The social standard for women's behaviour assumes that they bear the most responsibility for the state of their families, and thus are the most practical recipients of welfare. It is assumed that women will use welfare payments for the good of their families, regardless of individual experiences of poverty. Bradshaw et al. (2018, p. 121) term this process "the feminization of poverty alleviation".

In outwardly targeting females as recipients, AE engages in the feminisation of poverty alleviation. The policy identifies women as household managers and makes payments to them that are intended to alleviate poverty in entire family or household groups. In conditions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, women who are already managing increasing time demands for care and household work are also delegated the responsibility of managing welfare income. Despite the practical benefits of economically supporting women, the potential for feminising poverty alleviation is also embedded in AE.

Another difficulty that AE presents to women, particularly those who are single house heads, is the restriction of any active paid employment. Any active paid

employment will cancel eligibility for the payments. The policy does not differentiate between casual, part-time, or full-time employment, none are acceptable in the criteria. COVID-19 increased the number of women working reduced hours or irregular employment hours. As no paid employment is allowed under the AE policy, it is possible that the payments would exceed the earnings of many women juggling low employment hours during the pandemic. Women could reasonably leave remaining paid employment and seek the AE payments in replacement. The choice to leave paid employment and instead meet criteria for welfare payments is a typical avenue for breeding welfare dependency, leaving many vulnerable when the payments come to an end.

To summarise, AE effectively addresses the gendered economic impacts of COVID-19 by targeting and privileging women as recipients of the aid. The policy serves to economically support many women experiencing conditions of poverty during the pandemic. For those experiencing the increases of household and care duties during COVID-19, the policy effectively targets single-female heads of household by increasing the value of support available to them. The policy also allows for the support of non-traditional family structures. In a conflicting nature, the clear targeting of women in AE engages in the process of the 'feminisation of poverty alleviation' by generally assuming that female recipients will use the payments in a way that most benefits entire families and households. The restriction of any form of paid employment in the policy eligibility criteria risks welfare dependency among those who choose to leave paid employment to qualify for more valuable payments. Overall, AE has mixed results in addressing and combating the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy effectively addresses the intensified economic difficulty experienced by women throughout the pandemic, but like many other policies, engages in the perpetuation of established assumptions about women's roles in the family and economy.

## Conclusion

The gendered components of AE are complex, the policy both addresses the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and engages with existing cultural logics that position women as altruistic distributors of family resources. In keeping with the immense economic impacts of the pandemic, the policy makes a concerted effort to support women suffering intensified conditions of poverty. It is to be expected that policies such as AE are entirely economic in focus, given that income poverty is the problem they are designed to address. However, taking a feminist approach to welfare support policies such as AE reveals an engagement

with underlying structures of gender roles and ideals that have, and will continue to contribute to the subordination of women in society. In emergency conditions such as the COVID-19 crisis, these nuanced implications for gender relations are unlikely to be prioritised over the pressing economic hardship being experienced by so many people.

In the future, feminist analysis of policies such as AE has the potential to uncover the interactions between practical policy work and socio-cultural ideas of gender that reproduce and enforce structural inequalities. Relating policy to greater social structures seeks to unravel any sense that policy is an intangible, immovable force that works only in a top-down format. Feminist policy analysis such as this one would benefit from the inclusion of more data regarding the experiences of recipients in their access, distribution, and dependence on welfare payments. Providing academic foundations for feminist policy review paves the way for policy creation that is more responsive to the social phenomena that are linked closely to policy results. AE is a timely example of the way even effective economic aid policy can engage with problematic notions regarding gender.

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# TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: EXAMINING THE POTENTIAL OF ECOTOURISM IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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## Abstract:

**This research will examine Samoa's Tourism Industry considering the Samoan Tourism Authority's (STA) vision towards a more sustainable future. In particular, the research will focus on whether the STA envisions key principles of the Ecotourism concept. Ecotourism is quickly becoming a popular alternative to conventional tourism. It places special focus on the minimalist experience of nature and culture. Ecotourism considerations also pertain to the improvement of these aspects of tourism especially in places where they can quickly become secondary to capital. From the design phase to the operation phase, the ecotourism principles aim to the experience in the least destructive way possible. Does Samoa's tourism industry have the determination to embody these?**

## Positionality Statement

I have always been curious about the interlinking dynamics that influence how different systems and processes impact the world. Growing up in the Pacific, I spent a good portion of my childhood living in what is described as remote and untouched environments. I was born on the island of Upolu at Moto'otua Hospital. I grew up on the coast in Siufaga, Savai'i, and spent half a decade hearing, feeling, and experiencing a unique cultural environment. The Samoan culture—and way of life—was the only lens through which I had viewed the world. Values such as community, honour, and respect were embedded into my worldview early on. It was not until my family moved to Papua New Guinea that I became exposed to a different cultural environment. My experiential inventory imported new values such as spirituality, integrity, and selflessness. Spending a few years in a remote highland environment also enabled a deep appreciation for the environment, considering rapid urban development.

Eventually settling in New Zealand, I experienced a culture shock like no other. Not only was this the most technologically advanced environment that I had lived in regarding healthcare and services, but the education system was vastly different. Exposure to different environments, ways of knowing, and lifestyles fueled my interest in global realities. While a Western education system informs my higher education, my bi-cultural experience underscores my curiosity about the complex functions and relationships

driving an increasingly globalised world. Thus, my research interest reflects this culmination. I want to explore how the Pacific Islands, specifically my homeland, Samoa, operate in this globalised world, while still accounting for their unique cultures and livelihoods.

## Introduction

Ecotourism is an emerging subfield within the tourism industry that foregrounds its initiatives on finetuning the relationship between people and the environment. It emphasises the importance of connecting people with the natural world. Still, it is also distinguished from other forms of tourism by its emphasis on responsible behaviour and concern for the environment. One of the principal aims of ecotourism is to explore and implement mutually beneficial systems within the tourism industry that can facilitate ways in which responsibilities between host communities and consumers are maintained. As such, ecotourism is an approach to tourism that focuses on the local economy, culture, and environment, rather than on the visitor experience. Rather than relying on mass production and large-scale tourism operations, ecotourism seeks to provide small-scale, customisable experiences that prioritise the wellbeing of the people, wildlife, and environment of the place rather than the profits of the tourism industry. Naturally, one of the distinctive features of ecotourism is its ability to be community inspired and led. Its requirement for local input allows for community leadership and influence. Consequently, the community-based element of ecotourism functions conjointly to reinforce this innovation. This approach to tourism has been imagined in order to provide jobs, higher wages, and more significant community benefits than traditional tourism development, making it a powerful innovation.

Ecotourism is exceptionally viable in less-developed countries (LDCs) that have massive areas of undeveloped lands, pristine landscapes, and diverse cultures (Goodwin, 1996). However, while the term was conceptualised in the 1960s, graphing its improvements has proven difficult. Adopting this alternative has been slow-moving and undemanding compared to conventional tourism.

This research paper will examine whether Samoa's tourism industry embodies the fundamental principles of ecotourism. The research will draw on materials about the policy and marketing reports, looking at targeted areas with



tourist attractions. This research will also include personal anecdotes framed under the critical autoethnography approach to demonstrate how ecotourism is perceived and experienced in Samoa.

### Background & Research Context

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world. Every year, millions of tourists travel between countries and engage in touristic activities. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (2022), the global tourism industry was estimated at US\$9.6 trillion in 2019, contributing 10.3% to the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). For the longest time, the tourism industry was synonymous with romantic notions of paradise getaways. Indeed, the promise of unspoiled, pristine escapes provided the impetus for developing this vast industry. These imaginations have arguably become associated with the tropical appeal of the South Pacific. For example, over the past three decades, more and more Pacific Island countries developed an interest in the tourism industry. Tourism grew exponentially in the South Pacific; by 2022, over 21 Pacific Island governments will be actively engaged with it (South Pacific Tourism Organisation). The draw to the South Pacific paradise is undeniable. Singh et al. (2020) reported a dramatic increase in tourist arrivals to the Pacific Islands, with an estimated 1.4 million in 2014 compared to 620,000 in 1996. The tourism industry continues to demonstrate growth in the South Pacific.

Samoa, formerly known as Western Samoa until 1997, is an archipelagic island nation nestled in the heart of the South Pacific. It is part of the Polynesian group and lies approximately 3,200 km northeast of New Zealand and 4,100 km southwest of Hawaii. It comprises 12 islands, of which only four are inhabited: Upolu, Savai'i, Manono, and Apolima. Samoa's population of over 200,000 is concentrated around the two largest islands, Upolu and Savai'i. The capital city, and the nation's central commercial area, Apia, is located on the second largest island, Upolu. Upolu is also the most populous island, with over three-quarters of Samoa's population living there. Samoa has a combined land area of approximately 2,800 km<sup>2</sup>. Savai'i, the largest island, spans 1,700 km<sup>2</sup> and has a mountainous, volcanic interior but is also fringed by white sandy beaches and hidden waterfalls.

On the other hand, Upolu spans an area of 1,100 km<sup>2</sup> and has flatter elevations. Upolu has historically been recognised as Samoa's primary tourist location for entertainment and experience. Samoa's climate is characterised by the 'Hot and Wet' and 'Cool and Dry' seasons throughout the year (Samoa Meteorology Division, 2022). The average temperature ranges between 22–31°C

annually. These positional features provide Samoa with an ideal platform to develop its tourism industry.

Tourism remains a bedrock of Samoa's economic industry, along with timber exports, development aid, and remittances. Samoa's tourism industry has grown steadily over the last decade. In 2014, 133,070 arrivals were categorised in the tourism bracket, which increased to 178,564 by 2019 (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2019). According to the World Bank (2022), Samoa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was estimated at US\$852 million in 2019, and its tourism industry constituted 24% of its economic performance. Undoubtedly, Samoa maintains one of the Pacific's proudest and most productive tourism industries. The friendly and easy-going attitudes boast the unspoiled natural attractions of its people.

In 2016, the Samoan Tourism Authority (STA) outlined a plan for sustainable tourism in which fundamental values were envisioned and strengthened. These values were proposed to integrate the industry more intimately with the local context. Some of these core values included:

- Respect (Faaaloalo)—for the environment, the culture, and the people;
- Effective and Efficient (Lelei na Fuafua ma vave Faataunuu)—policies and process refinement;
- Accountability and Transparency (Mafai ona Tali Atu ma Faatino Pulega Manino)—acknowledging the risk-benefit factor of the industry (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2016).

These essential values also underpinned the long-term vision, which proposed that: "By 2019 Samoa will have a growing tourism sector, which engages our visitors and people and is recognized as the leading Pacific destination for sustainable tourism" (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2016).

This vision conceptualised the perception that Samoa's tourism industry undeniably has the potential to grow in the national context and the wider Pacific. However, certain imperatives were set in place to mitigate the unsuspecting environmental or cultural impacts of such a colossal industry. This imperative was to adopt sustainable measures through cultural engagement. Critical to this vision was the specified corporate mission, which was to "ensure the achievement of quality sustainable tourism that is beneficial for Samoa and delivers a satisfying premier Samoan Experience for tourists" (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2016).

Delivering a premier visitor experience while maintaining the industry's sustainability integrity was a principal aim of the STA. Over the eight years, both long- and short-term policies were integrated locally as part of the corporate directive. This research will examine whether these policies accommodated the critical principles of

ecotourism over this duration and if so, it will explore whether the industry has unknowingly practiced these principles.

### **Conceptualising Framework**

Ecotourism sprouted out of considerations of mass tourism alternatives. These concerns primarily dealt with the need to respond to and mitigate the ongoing damages caused by mass tourism; more specifically, the impacts on the natural environment and issues with social structures. Goodwin (1996) describes the growing catalogue of the environmental effects of tourism on the environment, such as aircraft emissions, tourist litter, and even polluted beaches. To understand the value ecotourism brings to the host communities and tourism industry, it is crucial to define and position this emerging concept within the sustainability view. This research will utilise the Sustainable Tourism framework and describe how ecotourism was initially framed.

In 2005, The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defined sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (UNWTO & UNEP, 2005). The UNWTO ascribed a list of holistic imperatives that inevitably paved the way for the concept of ecotourism. While the imperatives were declared generally, the idea had uncapped potential. Considerations for social and environmental impacts in host communities allowed the picture to be easily adapted and contextualised. AbbasiDorcheh and Mohamed (2013) contend that this concept was adapted from the overarching notion of Sustainable Development outlined in the 1987 Brundtland Report, in which sustainable development was articulated as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, 1987).

This working definition considers the exponential growth of tourism worldwide and weighs these variables specifically to achieve a sustainable future. Sustainable tourism qualifies as a form of sustainable development in practice, particularly due to its ability to satisfy the present generation’s needs, whilst preserving the ability of future inhabitants and consumers to meet their own.

Even with this definition, the concept of sustainability remains feathered in practice. For example, what does it mean to be sustainable? McCool (2016) argues that for something to be sustainable, we must be able to provide the future choices equal to or more than what we currently experience. In a way, this definition is complicated because

sustainability as a whole—including development and tourism—is easily understood but much more difficult to apply (McCool, 2016). The encompassing ideal varies by group and society, and its success hugely depends on these groups’ ability to maintain the right balance. In the tourism context, it can be suggested that sustainability is shaped by the inherent local values rather than the technology that will enable the achievement of sustainable measures. For this work, Dodds and Graci (2012) argue that tourism must be perceived as more than an economic opportunity, but also an activity that can influence critical socio-cultural and environmental interests. Although sustainable tourism is the ideological umbrella for ecotourism, this effect will only be mentioned anecdotally.

The ecotourism concept is cradled within the sustainable tourism framework, in which its initiatives have not only been popularised but also adopted invariably by context. Accordingly, AbbasiDorcheh and Mohamed (2013) reason that tourism is one of the fastest-growing industries in the world that faces many challenges with excessive development. The implementation of ecotourism in a complex industry certainly has its challenges. So far, ecotourism is described against sustainable tourism and development. However, for this paper, this backdrop only provides a conceptual foundation for ecotourism. Instead, this research will adopt this framework in the Samoan context. Like sustainable tourism, ecotourism has been broadly defined since its initial inception in the 1960s. For instance, Goodwin (1996) frames ecotourism ecologically as the travel to unspoiled natural environments to enjoy that environment. Duffy (2002) describes ecotourism as an experience that increases social and cultural awareness. Both definitions encompass the social and environmental considerations of tourism. Likewise, ecotourism is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education” (Ouboter et al., 2021). Naturally, given that this project investigates whether STA embodies fundamental principles of ecotourism, it is necessary to outline the central tenets. Some of these include, but are not limited to:

- Building environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Providing positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Designing, constructing, and operating low-impact facilities
- Generating financial benefits for both local people and private industry (The International Ecotourism Society, n.d.)

### **Methodology**

This research will be conducted using the critical autoethnography (CAE) approach. Critical autoethnography is a qualitative research methodology that explores complex social and political issues by drawing on the researcher's personal experiences and background. It is used to study various topics and contexts, including education, inequality, and the experience of living with a disability. It is closely related to other critical approaches to research, such as feminist and post-structural methods. Critical autoethnography is a way of doing ethnography that emphasises reflexivity. It is a way of doing ethnography that intends to improve the quality of research and increase the depth of understanding. In the Pasifika context, CAE is utilised as a means of knowledge wayfinding. It is a method used to relay an individual's experiences within an environment and to communicate and preserve generations of Pasifika culture (Iosefo et al., 2020). I contemplated using a self-reflexive style whilst pondering a methodological approach to this research.

However, I hesitated for many reasons to use CAE. For one, it has always been my experience that qualitative research stands distanced from subjective experience. That, in a sense, would also deduct from the quality of the project. It has been criticised for being too subjective and for failing to follow the conventional rules of academic writing. The Pasifika teacher-researcher, David Fa'avae (2020), explains that CAE can be problematic and counterproductive to the research process. In his experience, traditional empirical research and analysis had been heavily encouraged at research levels (Fa'avae, 2020). However, he also reasoned that through a *talanoa*, or a conversation with fellow students, he could grasp the essence of CAE as not an expression of self-indulgence but as an experiential reflection. As such, the significance of this approach must not be ignored. Ultimately, the decision to undertake this approach is not only a reflection of the belief in the importance of the CAE methodology but also a testament to the implications of tourism in Samoa.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection for this research will be drawn from various sources, covering 2014 through 2019. The data examined will include reports from the STA's corporate website and its STA's visions and policies during these years. Particular attention will be given to the mentioned ecotourism principles of:

- Building environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Providing positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Designing, constructing, and operating low-impact

facilities

- Generating financial benefits for both local people and private industry (The International Ecotourism Society, n.d.)

Ascertaining this data was eased by the tourism reports over the years. Nevertheless, it was also reinforced by the progress of the tourism industry towards a more sustainable framework. Data will also be analysed from the STA website from tourism research conducted in 2015. The STA extensively performed the Tourism Development Area (TDA) management plan across the main inhabited islands, including Upolu, Savai'i, and Manono. The areas to be examined will include TDA3 and TDA4. Central to the TDA's goals was the identification of tourism presence in these locations and the potential to improve the development and experience of tourism.

To truly understand the scope of this research and analyse the reality of ecotourism in Samoa's travel industry, the data will be firmly investigated against the principles outlined in The International Ecotourism Society (TIES, 2015) threshold. It is also critical to distinguish the conceptual differences when dealing with this data, to avoid the misplacement of ecotourism perceptions. Duffy (2002) contends that a form of public tokenism has developed in participation because ecotourism literature neglects these differences. A central feature of sustainable tourism also insinuates that it should prioritise local outcomes rather than the industry itself. Goodwin (1996) explains that sustainable narratives easily misdirect the tourism industry simply by importing the 'eco' tag. In some instances, the eco-label has morphed synonymously with responsible consumerism (Goodwin, 1996). However, it must be prefaced when this data is analysed that the paramount goal is not purely on responsible consumerism in this industry, but whether Samoa's tourism industry has performed to the level that meets the fundamental thresholds of ecotourism. Rather than enveloping a tokenistic appreciation, these aspects must embrace the holistic traditions and values that support it.

Not only this, but the sustainability policies will also be examined against the recently activated TDA. As detailed on the STA website, the marketing strategy includes considerations for key developments in tourism sites. There will also be insertions of personal anecdotes as part of my lived experience in these enterprises. I believe that including personal images taken between 2018 to 2019 would provide much insight into ecotourism in a local context and bolster the application of the CAE methodology.

### **Findings**

In August 2015, the STA, in partnership with the

Planning 4 Sustainable Development, Water Technology, and Social Planning agencies, implemented a development plan that focused on improving the impact of sustainable tourism against many concerns, including climate change, across key sites in Upolu, Savai'i, and Manono.

The outlined Community Vision for this plan was:

A sustainable and practical tourism development area which recognises, protects and promotes the environmental assets of the area for the benefit of tourists, based on a partnership approach between the community; the tourism operators and the government and accordingly enhances the quality of life for all communities (Samoan Tourism Authority, 2015a).

One of the biggest drivers of this plan was the STA's ability to formulate an approach that recognises, protects, and promotes the assets, both environmentally and culturally, for the overall benefit of the industry and most importantly, the community. Interestingly, the STA's research design was well-positioned to answer the hypothesis of this research. The mentioned ecotourism principles incidentally fit this construction as well. However, its applicability is invariable and must be considered carefully. These findings will examine the outcomes of the TDA's research proxy, the STA.

#### **TDA4: Lano**

While the STA imparted a blanket vision for the communities involved, it also reserved a tailored approach for each community. Part of the STA's approach was to consider how tourism policies would impact the ongoing practices and methods. Reportedly, over the four days of consultation, participants were asked to deliberate how the common goals toward sustainable development would pan out by considering the "'past, present and future' of their TDA" (STA, 2015a, p. 2). The Lano community reached the conclusion that sustainable tourism can be achieved through the following objectives by:

A sustainable and practical tourism development area which recognises, protects and promotes the environmental assets of the area for the benefit of tourists, based on a partnership approach between the community; the tourism operators and the government and accordingly enhances the quality of life for all communities (Samoan Tourism Authority, 2015a).

Lano is a small coastal village in the northeastern part of Savai'i. It is situated within the *itumalo* (district) of Fa'asaleleaga and has an estimated population of just under 700. Lano is characterised by white sandy beaches, scattered stream inlets, and a mangrove wetland that completes its low-lying profile. It is a quiet village known to many tourists as an ideal spot for surfing and snorkelling. The

Lano locals largely depend on subsistence fishing and farming as a source of income. However, the biggest attraction for this village is the beach *fales* (thatched huts) offered by local business operators. One of the well-known locations is Joelan's beach fale, which offers tourist services, including the famous beach fale. The STA (2015a) report indicated that around 18 traditional fale were operating, which provided 40 beds and shared facilities for tourists and locals. One of the best features of the Lano tourism system is that the facilities are open to tourists and locals. It is mainly utilised for marine activities and as a venue for gatherings and celebrations. The primary tourist experiences offered are surfing, kayaking, and snorkelling. Regarding tourist trends, many visitors enjoyed their experience in the Lano setting, primarily because of its 'back to nature' vibe. Not only this, but the simple cultural hospitality also welcomed participation in fun cultural activities such as weaving, cooking, and dancing. Also, the undisturbed beaches and lagoons in the Lano bay adequately satisfied the area's potential.



Figure 4.1: Joelan Beach Fales, 2019

I have included the above photo to showcase my experience at the Joelan beach fale in 2019. One of the benefits of operating a small-scale tourism site is that it is readily available to locals and tourists alike. In my experience, the ability to use existing resources heavily reduced the environmental impact of the attraction. However, it also reduced the pressure on the local people to deal with the impacts, such as noise and littering. As evidenced in the photograph, there was no need to construct fancy bungalows. The beach fale symbolises simplicity, yet it is also the physical representation of a sustainable design. The beach fale are common in coastal Samoan villages and are easy and cheap to build. Most importantly, the environmental print is minimal.

While it is also technically a tourist location, it provides opportunities for locals to make some capital. My

observation of the Joelan beach fales was that the operators allowed locals to sell their goods to visitors on-site for a small fee. Items such as taro, banana, and fish were bargained between the locals and visitors, often at low prices with generous portions. Indeed, the presence of a tourist site in this small village presented many opportunities and encouraging signs for sustainable tourism.

However, despite the promise of serenity, Lano's natural assets would also be the topic of much deliberation during the TDA sessions. One of the issues that encroached on the small village was the mass extraction of its white sand to support other popular tourist locations lacking this resource. The long-term impacts of the sand depletion exposed Lano's beaches to various risks, including erosion and flooding. It also posed significant risks to its ability to maintain attractive but sustainable tourism. These risks were evident on the adjacent beaches. While the tourist location was seemingly fine, the neighbouring beaches with no offerings suffered much from sand mining. Patches of indented beach profiles not captured in the photograph demanded immediate attention. In order to address these issues, the TDA 2015 survey collected concerns that would be integrated into the regional tourism policy and the corporate tourism vision. The outcomes of the TDA consultations were gathered via a Priority Assessment model, in which the most pressing issues were rated out of 25, with 25 being the most urgent. Some of the vital policy items are listed as follows:

- The ban/control of the sand mining operations (22/25);
- Sandwatch program training for tourism operators and communities (18/25);
- Improve coral reef system protection by educating villages; ...coordination between Fisheries and the village community (20/25);
- Beach replenishment or beach replenishment with control structures (17/25) (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2015a).

Overall, the STA recognised the budding potential of tourism in Lano. While there were some present issues with addressing the impacts of sand mining, there was also space to insert aspects of ecotourism to empower local capacities and assets of environmental and cultural importance.

### **TDA3: Palauli**

Similarly, the STA actioned the same research in Palauli. Palauli is a district on the southwestern coast of Savai'i. It has an estimated population of just over 9,000, according to the 2016 census. The district capital is Vailoa, and some of its constituent villages include Taga, Vaito'omuli, and Pitonu'u. Palauli has a rugged coastal profile that was formed from geological activities. Most

notable are the lava tubes in the Taga village, which created the Alofaaga Blowholes. This is one of the most popular attractions in Samoa. It has been noted that more than 20% of international visitors visit the Alofaaga Blowholes, of which 90% of visitors are surfers and divers (STA, 2015). The blowholes are open to both tourists and locals for a small fee and have shared facilities including toilets and eating fales.



Figure 4.2: Alofaaga Blowholes, 2019

Also, within the Palauli district is the AfuAau Waterfall, which is near the district capital. The waterfall is alongside the blowholes as the district's most popular tourist location. It is characterised by three levels of swimming holes with varying depths. Likewise, it is also open to the public with a small access fee and has a sealed car park, toilets, and a fale.

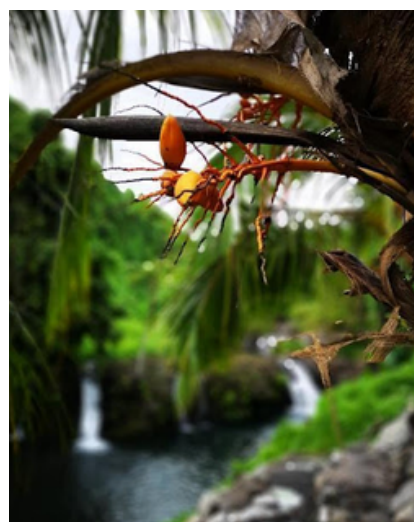


Figure 4.3: AfuAau Waterfall, 2019

The TDA research recognised the potential to support these activities more sustainably and inspected areas where tourist offerings could be diversified. The proposed improvements were discussed with the villages and were aligned with the district vision by:

Improv[ing] promotion of the assets and strengths of Palauli to travelers including ‘telling the area’s story’; working together transparently as a community and tourism destination area, improv[ing] access to attractions for tourists (Samoan Tourism Authority, 2015c).

Granted, these community ambitions were imagined in 2015. However, the outcomes were established. In 2019, I was able to experience these natural sites and was quite impressed with how it was managed and the processes behind them. Indeed, the tour operators and locals who staffed the access areas perfectly embodied the community’s visions. This was done well in terms of promoting the assets and strengths of Palauli and telling their story. Billboards and information plaques were integrated through the sites detailing the history and importance of these sites to the local people. The communal aspect was also evident in how these activities were transparently operated. From maintenance, to cleaning, to gatekeeping, it was a communal responsibility and an opportunity for locals to make an income. Also, improving access to the attractions was eased by the participation of the local families whose lands were offered as passageways for locals and tourists. Undoubtedly, the STA’s presence within this district is effective, as it recognised not only growth potential recognised growth potential and the chance to optimise tourist operations more sustainably.

### Analysis and Discussion

The STA expressed its desire to improve its tourism system by acknowledging its potential for the environment, the culture, and people. Its vision outlined the qualities of respect, efficiency, accountability, and transparency as its foundations. The STA’s goal was to create an industry that embodies sustainable tourism. More importantly, this industry would engage key socio-cultural and environmental concerns without sacrificing the tourists’ experience and the locals’ benefits. In turn, the fundamental principles of ecotourism described the need to:

- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Design, construct, and operate low-impact facilities.
- Generate financial benefits for both local people and private industry (The International Ecotourism Society, n.d.)

Nevertheless, the question remains: does Samoa’s tourism industry embody these key principles? This discussion will analyse the STA’s vision against the outlined ecotourism principle and examine whether these have been embodied over the years. The STA’s first core value is *faaaloalo* for the culture, the environment, and the people. In the Lano context, this value was embodied by the tourism operators and locals in the way that they recognised the detrimental impacts of sand mining on their beaches. What they did well was utilise—with maximal efficiency—the resources they had, to develop critical attractions in their areas. The TDA management plan realised the importance of maintaining *faaaloalo* for the local environment by adjusting the approaches to sand mining operations. By supporting local enterprises such as the Joelan beach fales, the STA demonstrated how imperative it is to understand that the environment, the people, and the culture are interconnected, rather than separated. This approach also satisfies the four mentioned ecotourism principles. The construction of beach fales is a low-impact facility that is durable and sustainable. Evident also is the Lano example is the opportunity for locals to make an income at these sights by selling local produce. Comparatively, the Palauli district developed a positive community vision that weaved a sustainable narrative into its tourist attractions. The value of ‘Effective and Efficient’ (Lelei na Fuafua ma vave Faataunuu) planning also showed their determination to adopt the best means to sustain their assets further quickly. The community vision not only prioritised the monetary aspects of these popular attractions but also accounted for the implications on the local environment and people. Being able to streamline its maintenance was a wholesome reflection of accountability and transparency as well. Indeed, the community’s involvement in operating these sites demonstrates shared trust. The ecotourism principles are again satisfied by these developments by the STA. The simplicity of these operations contributed significantly to the STA’s alignment with the ecotourism principles. For instance, the shared eating fales and toilets are both low-impact facilities that require minimal disturbance to the environment and maintenance. In terms of scaling, the only difference between the Lano and Palauli contexts was operational demands. Palauli had two of the most popular attractions in Savai’i and arguably Samoa, while Lano maintained a humble yet practical attraction. However, the principle remains the same. The STA identified aspects of tourism that can be framed more holistically to integrate the environmental, cultural, and social aspects.

Upon closer analysis, I can argue that the present conditions of the STA’s visions have always been ingrained in sustainable tourism in Samoa. Essentially, the industry’s

socio-cultural and environmental aspects have been present but perhaps not recognised in the literature as ecotourism. Values such as respect, efficiency, and accountability have been the cornerstones of tourism in Samoa, even more so in village contexts. Also, operating these facilities in ways that enhance the opportunities for financial benefits is a shared desire between operators and the locals. The Lano and Palauli examples demonstrated these very aspects. By maximising the appeal of its natural attractions, communities can also modify these activities not to undermine the tourists' experience, but promote cultural and environmental significance. Considering the threshold markers of ecotourism alongside the STA's vision, it is clear that—whether indirectly or intentionally—Samoa's tourism industry indeed embodies certain principles of sustainable tourism that qualify ecotourism. However, the conclusion is not quickly drawn; certain limitations must also be considered.

In the context of this research, there is a glaring limitation to the research and the hypothesis. The first limitation is corporate. The TDA research engendered the visions of the STA to improve sustainable tourism across crucial locations in Samoa. These locations were identified in both Savai'i and Upolu. The exemplary research sites provided ground for policy refinement and considered how these attractions could be more marketable, among other goals. While this was a fantastic outcome, the corporate vision was limited by its ability to assess tourist attractions in urban areas. Attractions such as the Taumeasina Resort and Moanalisa Hotel are disengaged from aspects that qualify them as sustainable. Not only does it have a high environmental presence, but it also arguably lacks the new draw of nature in rural areas. Therefore, it is not easy to ascertain the applicability of ecotourism principles to these areas. The second limitation is that the hypothesis assumes the position that Samoa's tourism industry does possess the qualities of ecotourism. As mentioned, the ecotourism concept has only emerged recently as an alternative to combat the impacts of mass tourism. In terms of quality, the values of the STA have long been embedded in its tourism industry, and its vision was only a window into how it will be strengthened in the future. There is no doubt that with its resources, appeal, and determination, Samoa's tourism industry can continue to operate sustainably.

## Conclusion

I have always been interested in examining whether this high economic activity can be positioned sustainably within the local community. Perhaps this research was proposed with a doubtful perspective that it could not be done. However, my experience reminds me that the cultural

values that drive concerns for the environment have supported the promotion of this industry globally. In truth, Samoa has a wonderful tourism industry. It is beautiful, simple, and accommodating. Its people make the experience even more satisfying. The ecotourism concept is not a substitute for Samoa's current performance. It only indicates what could be achieved if all aspects of tourism were weighed equally— including the capital, culture, and, more importantly, the environment. Considering this potential against the sustainability index, I can safely assume that the STA, with its values and corporate vision, is on the right path. Conclusively, it is a path that can be refined continuously with growing developments and sustainable input.

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# NEIGHBOURS, BUT NOT QUITE

Marni O'Connell, Nikitha Ramkumar, and Caitlin Graham

*Interviewed and Edited by Jess Cordes, Isla Killalea, and Albert Nguyen*

**G**LOBAL STUDIES is all about building connections across cultures. For this collaborative piece, we wanted to put this tenet into practice by investigating how Global Studies operates outside of New Zealand. In order to do this, we got in touch with Global Studies students from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, to ask them a few questions about how Global Studies helps them to make sense of their local realities. Our motivation for approaching Monash was to dismantle the commonly-held assumptions that Aotearoa and Australia are twin nations with identical concerns and cultures. Though having followed similar historical trajectories, the responsibilities and issues each of our nations face are nonetheless distinct.

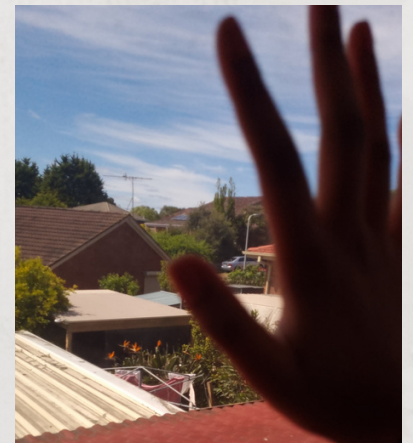
We thank the Global Students department at Monash University for their cooperation and contributions which helped us discern how global issues are interpreted through the lens of an Australian identity. All descriptions and images have been produced by Monash students and edited by the Nomad Journal team. All images are used with permission.

## What is an Australian human rights issue that is relevant to Monash Global Studies students?

**Nikitha:** The issue of how hotel quarantine was severely mishandled by the Victorian government, led to guests being locked in for days on end with not enough resources provided, has resulted in a class action against the government. As a Global Studies student, the intertwining of health, human rights and security is cause for lots of discussion and deliberation into the effects and impacts of pandemics.

**Caitlin:** One of the most prevalent human rights issues facing Australia is the poor, inadequate treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers. The Australian system is built to encourage 'skilled' migration from western countries whilst creating impossible barriers for non western migrants. Climate migrants in South East Asia and the Pacific are facing major climate disasters – some of which are caused by Australia's carbon contributions. We continue to create a problem for people who do not want to emigrate, and ensure they cannot find safety in Australia despite our immense wealth and resources.

**Marni:** Gender equity is an ongoing issue in Australia. It is relevant given that the issue extends itself into multiple sectors, and there is an ongoing fight for it to be achieved. Some specific examples could include the right to access abortion and reproductive health care, the right to education, clean water, and food, safety, freedom from violence and economic security. The pictured protest was in relation to the death of Jill Meagher in Melbourne, who was murdered whilst walking home one night. However, these issues are not limited to Australia, and are therefore extremely relevant to the global studies degree—especially our human rights specialisation.



**What is an Australian environmental issue, and how is it being tackled?**

*Marni:* An Australian environmental issue is our nation’s reliance on coal, gas and fossil fuel industries. Australia has recently had a change of government, and is focusing on its transition to renewables.



*Caitlin:* One of our biggest environmental issues is our contribution to climate disasters; in Australia alone over the past few years we have faced bushfires of significant magnitude and in recent years, unprecedented ‘once of a lifetime’ floods which have occurred multiple times in 2022 alone. This is a significant issue because of our inaction on climate change. Despite a new, more progressive government promising action on the climate, new mining and fossil fuel deals are on the table.

*Nikitha:* Being global also means working seeing that connection to the local, so the environment is a very discussed topic. An issue that Melbourne is trying to tackle is recycling, with the four-bin scheme being deployed to manage waste. A Global Studies student would find the implementation and impact of this program relevant on a local-global scale.



**Where in your community can multiculturalism be found?**

*Marni:* Respecting, acknowledging and learning about whose land you are on is vital to Australia’s multiculturalism. Australia is originally the land of many Aboriginal groups, and whilst we have a way to go considering Australia’s history, you can find multiculturalism simply by going outside.



*Nikitha:* These three photos are mere snapshots of the small local businesses that serve a variety of different cuisines in my local community. This is a small testament to how easily multiculturalism can be found in Melbourne, especially in this suburban part of it. Having these small businesses serving different food from all around the world is actually a cultural practice, a multicultural practice of Australia.



### Are there any unique Australian businesses designed to tackle local issues?

**Marni:** There are a lot of businesses which are looking at sustainable solutions for consumers, especially given the projected population growth. The retail sector is a huge proportion of Australia, it is vital that Australians become more sustainable, use less and are environmentally conscious.



**Nikitha:** There is a strategy being employed by lots of businesses and that's keep cups, as well as disposable cups that are environmentally sustainable, like 7/11's \$2 coffee cups. The aim is to reduce the amount of coffee cups going to waste, especially in Melbourne where café and takeaway culture is popular.



### What about the Australian experience draws you to Global Studies?

**Nikitha:** Australia in comparison to many countries, (as an international entity) is relatively new to the stage, with a lot of chance to make change nationally and internationally. I think many students see this as an opportunity to make a difference in shaping Australia because of its relative youth in the current political climate. The multicultural nature (almost half of the population are either born overseas or have a parent that was) also gives rise to so many different perspectives

and experiences, that make a unique Australian identity. With this, I think many people have that connection to the global and be more conscious of it, which has led to amazing graduates and future and present global studies students.

**Marni:** I think the Australian experience demands a level of adventure and open-mindedness from participants. Given that Australia is a very old country with high levels of trauma, injustice and prejudice, it is vital that this willingness to learn is also paired with a willingness to do - not only in Australia, but around the world.



### What about the Australian experience draws you to Global Studies?

**Marni:** My degree involves choosing a specialisation from four options. It also has a compulsory, core units focusing on leadership development, alongside a compulsory overseas study component. The international relations specialisation is popular, given that it underpins our whole world today. Knowing how to interact on a global stage is a skill that almost every job will require. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic (which is still continuing), Monash University implemented units which could be taken remotely, and which covered the compulsory overseas component of the course. You can go to a variety of Monash's partner universities, such as Italy, Indonesia, India, Warwick and more. Whilst languages aren't compulsory in all majors, there are required cultural competence units that need to be taken prior to leaving. It is also encouraged to be able to speak some of the language before going, given one cannot always expect that someone is going to have English skills.



**Nikitha:** The Global Studies degree has a focus on “leadership, culture and globalisation”, and those units are exclusively for those who choose this course. These “capstone units” cover the skills and knowledge required and some are compulsory for all students, disregarding their specialisation and the rest of the degree are made up of elective units and international study tours. There are four specialisations, Human rights, international relations, international studies and cultural competence. International relations seem to be the most popular as it’s the most relevant to the issues of matter to youth today, with topics like the economy, politics and policy, security and power being discussed.

The overseas exchange compulsory to the degree is an opportunity to really apply the global in our learning, to work with a range of people around the world. It’s an important step in our growth as Global Studies students to put the theory into practice and take a step to collaborate and communicate, despite language barriers. This can also be a learning to help in your professional career as well, as it would be a common occurrence for a Global Studies job. Unfortunately, during COVID time this was impossible due to restrictions, and the program is still taking time to get started again.

### How do you view New Zealand and our relationship with Australia?

**Nikitha:** Firstly, my image of New Zealand, the things that immediately pop into my head are rolling green hills, mountains, Jacinda Ardern, Māori and the set for the hobbit homes in Lord of the Rings. To say the least, not a lot unfortunately and I think this is the same for lots of people. I know that as countries in the Commonwealth and in the Southern Hemisphere, we are partners and allies in economic, security and cultural efforts. I think we’re friends with some tension, as Australia being the larger country may take a sort of “big brother role”, therefore some misunderstandings, but I think it's in the Australian identity to be friendly and open, and so we have a lot to learn from New Zealand as well, which might be brushed over sometimes.

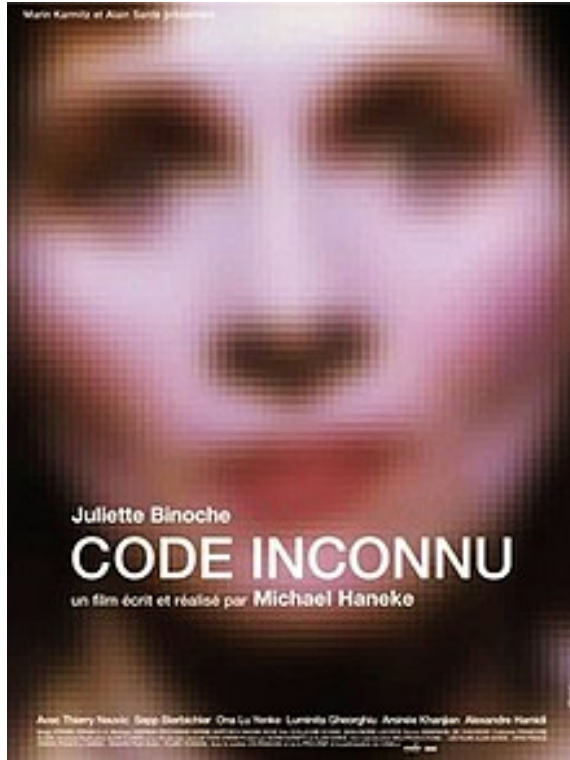
**Marni:** I see New Zealand as a sibling to Australia. In many ways, we share a lot of similar characteristics - our main language, customs and drive to interact with the globe on a broader level. However, I think that there are also distinct differences. New Zealand is far greater at incorporating its indigenous history, culture and way of life into modern times, whilst Australia has a long way to go. Also, its respect for protecting land, environment and nature is also, in my opinion, more progressive than Australia’s. However, I hope that the Australia-NZ relationship continues to thrive, as I think that we have a lot to learn from each-other, and a potential to help each other make greater impacts in the international arena.



## BRECHT, MELODRAMA, AND IMMIGRATION: A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE IN EUROPEAN CINEMA

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For as long as nation-states have existed, Europe has had complex relations with immigration, which art forms such as cinema and theatre are drawn to addressing. The ability of popular melodramas to emotionally engage an audience, in combination with Brechtian theatre's critical distancing techniques, provides a unique yet necessary perspective on immigration in Western Europe. With regard to film techniques, I will explore how the 1974 film *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, and the 2000 film *Code Unknown*, directed by Michael Haneke, differ in their approaches, while constructing an overall understanding of Western Europe's mistreatment of immigrants. Firstly, I will analyse how physical differences from a dominant group lead to the exclusion of immigrants. Secondly, I will consider how these physical differences extend to mistreatment by societal structures. Thirdly, I will establish the sexualisation of immigrants due to the aforementioned physical differences. Finally, I will assess the role of Eastern Europeans and character assemblages.

Fassbinder's approach in *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* animates the wider societal judgements placed on immigrants based on their physical differences, particularly darker-skinned people. When *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* was released, West German society was in hysteria, blaming

Arab immigrants for economic and security threats. In 1973, Middle Eastern oil companies raised their export prices by 70%, which led to enforced restrictions on car usage in West Germany. By association, many West Germans blamed Middle Eastern immigrants for these restrictions on their cultural practices and daily lives (Wise, 1995, p. 53). Fear of terrorism exacerbated the public's distress after a series of kidnappings of Israeli athletes, by a group loosely affiliated with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation at the 1972 Olympics in Munich, ended in 15 deaths when West German police intervened (Wise, 1995). According to Wise (1995, p. 54), this event shocked and embarrassed West Germans and contributed to an intense backlash against Arabs, which grew with further terrorist attacks in Western Europe. By 1973, economic crises and poor working conditions triggered many foreign workers' strikes in West Germany which were not met with sympathy from the public when unemployment was growing. Given these societal concerns, it is important to consider that Fassbinder does not portray Ali's presence in West Germany as a public crisis through the depiction of worker's strikes and violence towards foreigners. Instead, he employs the convention of popular melodrama to transpose overtly political features into the private sphere. This is to say that cinema can

represent the broader social and political concerns but in the melodramatic transmission of feelings (Burns, 1995, p. 58).

Ali's general sense of foreignness as a dark-skinned Middle Eastern man is what singles him out from the dominant group and aligns him perfectly with the scope of West German resentment. The scene in which Emmi and Ali dine in an outdoor beer garden (Fassbinder, 1974, 1:00:00) perfectly demonstrates public judgements based on his appearance. Inspired by Brecht's epic theatre, which theories that each scene should appear as an autonomous tableau rather than part of a fluid, dramatic development, Fassbinder stages a freeze-frame out of the restaurant staff (Burns, 1995, p. 69). Using an over-extended camera hold, the onlookers stand side-by-side as they hold a remorseless gaze towards Emmi and Ali. This tableau is representative of the West German opposition to foreign workers, particularly their integration into society, which Ali and Emmi cannot help but visually depict as an inter-racial age-gap couple. The excessive duration of the shot forces the audience out of a conventional narrative structure and makes them aware of the dramatic processes within the scene. Using this Brechtian tableau technique, Fassbinder compels the audience to consider their position as spectators—encouraging critical reflection. In line with the convention of melodrama to render common scenarios at an intense level so that figures of everyday life attain a symbolic projection, Emmi shouts at the onlookers not to stare, calling them “swine” in a melodramatic fashion (Burns, 1995, p. 58). At the height of empathy for Emmi, facilitated by close-up shots of her face in tears, the camera pulls around in a different direction, isolating Ali and Emmi from their surroundings. By moving the audience from a position of empathy to a position of social disapproval, Fassbinder advances that, as Emmi discusses an escape from the constant glares, we as spectators understand that societal judgements are so deeply ingrained that an escape from social realities is not possible. In addition, Fassbinder's decision to have Emmi insult the onlookers as “swine” while the camera focuses on Ali is significant in considering the implicit judgements in language. Since Ali is a Muslim, he does not eat pork, which “swine” refers to, and the implicit cultural meanings that are obviously lost on Emmi would be familiar to Ali. This points to Europe's wider misconceptions of Islam, which Wise (1995, p. 61) characterises in line with Edward Said's analysis of Europe's “lasting trauma” and a historical fear of Islam in general. This lack of cultural understanding reflects Brecht's idea of language as an instrument of socio-political oppression as the bearer of ideological values (Burns, 1995, p. 66). Overall, the use of Brechtian tableau and melodramatic acting in this scene directly address the West

German's racialised resentment of guest workers like Ali and the idea that there is no escape from the collective social glare which exerts power. Ali's appearance is what identifies him in West German society, which is what is judged by onlookers.

In the film *Code Unknown*, Haneke highlights the pervasive nature of societal judgements into institutions based on characters due to their physical differences as immigrants, or in the case of Amadou—children of immigrants. Set in 2000s Paris, the film represents a post-colonial France and a much more multicultural society than West Germany. Haneke references contemporary French anti-immigrant discourse that presents immigration as a threat to French national culture, cohesion, and security by outlining how a personal assumption is reflected in the actions of those in power, such as police officers (Lykidis, 2009, p. 41). The scene after the prologue (Haneke, 2000, 0:02:00) traverses a boulevard with the white character of Jean, where passers-by rush and interweave from foreground to background to create a convincing urban milieu. This represents melodrama's compatibility with realism, that the naturalistic setting of this scene has the power to engage spectators through the premise of a recognisable world (Burns, 1995, p. 58). In the scene, Amadou, a young black man, physically confronts Jean for nonchalantly littering on a begging woman. The police immediately seize Amadou, and when he says that he can explain, an officer sarcastically says, “that's a smart idea”, in which subtle racist tones are evoked (Wood, 2003, p. 43). Though Amadou is initially the aggressor in the scene, when the police have the situation explained, they remain focused on Amadou and let Jean go. The police exert power by seizing Amadou's ID card, which Wood (2003, p. 43) indicates is because he is perhaps already considered ‘alien’ because of his skin tone. As with Ali, Amadou's skin tone immediately sets him apart from his European counterparts, inviting prejudiced societal judgments. In this scene, the racial motivations of the police in arresting Amadou are clear. Still, they are not sensationalised as a Hollywood film may employ music and dramatics to engage the audience with the character, creating a safe distance for the viewer (Loren, 2013, p. 10). Rather, the audience is placed somewhat at a distance with the continuous shot and an eventual blackout on screen. The immediate transition to a black screen at the height of the intrigue can be seen as a Brechtian tableau, calling attention to the editing. This awareness of the filmmaker encourages critical distance, forcing the spectator to discern the pervasive nature of the social judgements based on the physical appearance of immigrants when it reaches the level of the police force.

Similarly, in *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, there is an

interaction between Ali and the police when a neighbour complains to the police that his cultural music is too loud (Fassbinder, 1974, 0:56:00). In comparison to *Code Unknown*, the police in this scene do not display a racialised response to Ali and instead defend him against stereotypes; the complainant said, “*you know what they’re like, bombs and all that*”, to which an officer responds, “*they’re not all like that ma’am*”. It would be reasonable for an audience to expect that the police would react in a racial manner, given the many police-initiated unjust deportations of Middle Easterners and prominent politicians dehumanising them through using Nazi terminology (Wise, 1995, p. 55). By not appealing to these expectations, Fassbinder confronts the spectator with their prejudice—forcing them to ask themselves why they assumed a racially-driven reaction and, more broadly, what societal structures say about injustice. This subversion of audience expectation is characteristically Brechtian as it forces critical analysis of one’s assumptions (Loren, 2013, p. 10). From this analysis, it is evident that both Haneke and Fassbinder discern the impact of the physical appearance of immigrants in a critique of Western European institutions that privilege white, naturalised people, and disenfranchise immigrants.

In *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, Fassbinder employs popular melodrama techniques to subvert them in a critique of European societies’ sexualisation of immigrants based on their ‘exotic’ features. In her analysis of sexual politics, Wise (1995, p. 85) points to feminist scholar Laura Mulvey’s assertion that Hollywood cinema is visually organised for male spectators with women as spectacles. This gaze is present in the melodrama by which Fassbinder was heavily influenced by—Douglas Sirk’s 1955 film, *All That Heaven Allows*. In Fassbinder’s beer garden scene, Emmi and Ali come together as a spectacle; however, throughout the film Ali, as a dark-skinned man is made a sexualised spectacle (Wise, 1995, p. 84). This sexualisation is nowhere more present than in the scene where Emmi invites her friends to touch Ali’s muscles (Fassbinder, 1974, 1:18:00). A close-up shot of Emmi’s friend’s face as she discusses Ali’s physical appearance stages Ali in the background. Blurred by the shallow focus on her face, Ali is reduced to only a silhouette of his physique and nothing more. This parallels a scene in *All That Heaven Allows*, in which the younger man is treated as a showcase exhibit by his older girlfriend’s friends (Sirk, 1955, 0:50:00). However, as the male gaze is evoked in Sirk’s film, the camera follows Carey to capture her erotic attraction (Burns, 1995, p. 65). By employing these techniques of melodrama to criticise them, Fassbinder highlights how the element of race and Ali’s foreignness place him as Europe’s object of contempt and simultaneously their object of desire. Overall, Fassbinder

criticises European fetishisation of dark-skinned people, which obstructs the humanity of immigrants.

Haneke and Fassbinder also critique Western Europe’s mistreatment of Eastern European immigrants. In *Code Unknown*, Maria, a Romanian immigrant does not appear visibly different from Western Europeans as she has white features in comparison to Ali and Amadou. This is not to say that Ali’s experience as an immigrant is only represented through his physical characteristics, as he also has many references to cultural interests that Emmi does not respect. For example, his love for his cultural food of couscous which Emmi does not cater for due to her assumptions of the need for immigrants to assimilate into the normative culture (Lykidis, 2009, p. 45). However, his other experiences of marginalisation as an immigrant are characterised by his physical difference from the dominant group. Hence, it is not Maria’s physical differences that lead to her mistreatment but her position as a beggar, illegally in Paris. Though the altercation between Amadou and Jean centres around her, Haneke purposefully uses cropped framing to exclude her from the narrative (Haneke, 2000, 0:03:00). As the situation escalates, Maria is seen to exit the frame and does not return until a police officer forcibly returns her to the scene. The tightly cropped frame of the one-shot take slightly achieves a Brechtian distancing effect as it encourages the spectator to wonder what is being withheld from the screen, thus making them aware they are watching a film and providing critical distance (Elsaesser, 2010, p. 61). Maria can evade the gaze for so long because of her status as a beggar with no place in the capitalist hierarchy, effectively a ‘non-person’ (Wood, 2003, p. 45). Accordingly, her offence to Western European’s cultural superiority comes down to her lack of social status, in keeping with the mistreatment, or lack of treatment, she receives in Paris. Where Ali exists for Western Europe’s contempt but needs for labour and sexual desires, Maria seems to exist to no one but herself, due to her background of struggling with an economic collapse in Romania and an immigration status not allowing her to work. This critique of capitalist structures is akin to Brecht’s Marxist ideology. By forcing us to reflect on this, Haneke evokes comparison with the treatment of the Yugoslavian cleaner Yolanda in *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*. As Emmi and her co-workers plan to ask their employer for a raise because they are unhappy with how close their pay is to their new Eastern European counterpart, Yolanda sits above them, obstructed by the bannisters on the staircase in an over-extended shot. This framing suggests her a prisoner of her co-workers’ prejudice, and the silence and over-extended shot function as a Brechtian tableau calling the spectator’s attention to their own gaze (Burns, 1995, p. 73). In a discussion of

contemporary European immigration, Parvulescu argues that Europe must pay close attention to the operation of race, produced by European colonialism, and the importance of addressing the various heterogeneous European racisms (2019, p. 472). This consideration is vital given the Western European capitalistic and continued subordination of Eastern European immigrants.

It is important to note that not only Western Europeans are architects of oppression, but instead, in societal structures, the victim can often become a victimiser. Highlighted in *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* as Emmi, who experienced the same kind of isolation as Yolanda due to her relationship with Ali and is complicit in her later poor treatment. In *Code Unknown*, Maria confesses to a Romanian friend that she once gave money to a gypsy, she saw how "dirty" they were and ran to wash her hands (Fassbinder, 1974, 1:32:00). She then recounts when a man in Paris threw money in her lap and was obviously disgusted with her. Just as Eastern Europeans are excluded from the "European community", their exclusion of gypsies from their "national communities" and the "community of humans" shows a vicious cycle and contradiction (Trifonova, 2015, p. 6). By highlighting flaws in the most sympathetic of characters, both Fassbinder and Haneke subvert melodrama's simplistic and binary assumptions of good and evil characters, inspiring further spectator thought regarding processes of exclusion (Burns, 1995, p. 43).

In conclusion, the combination of melodrama and Brechtian theatre encourages critical thinking necessary in addressing Western Europe's poor treatment of immigrants on all levels. Fassbinder's novel consideration of the social problems of cultural integration between the private and public world inspired the New German Cinema's contribution to the subject (Burns, 1995, p. 57). Haneke's contemporary analysis of traumatic multicultural encounters animates the public and private spheres (Lykidis, 2009, p. 41). Both directors' appeal to emotion and critical thinking is highlighted nowhere more aptly than in the final scenes of each film. Where Ali becomes sick as a metaphor for social ills, and Maria is depicted back begging in Paris a few doors down from where she was deported, the spectator can interpret that these are ongoing issues in our societies. The final words of *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, the doctor's "Auf Wiedersehen", meaning not the literal sense of goodbye but rather "until we meet again" succinctly locates these issues as current and in our cultural context as a spectator.

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# MORTA A LINGUA, MORTU U POPULU: (DE)COLONISATION PROCESSES OF CORSICAN IDENTITY THROUGH SPHERES OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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## Section I:

### Introduction

Control over language acquisition is an effective tool for establishing cultural hegemony in the process of colonisation. The consequences of linguistic colonisation are felt globally and have resulted in the endangerment of languages such as Te Reo Māori (New Zealand), Gaelic (Ireland), Welsh (Wales), and Catalan (Catalonia, Spain) among many others. The effects of language minoritisation correlate with the global issue of minority identity oppression, and in recent years with the rise of nationalist, regionalist, and minority movements around the world, there is growing recognition for the need to decolonise both culture and language. This paper will examine the linguistic decolonisation efforts of Corsica, a small French-owned Mediterranean island off the coast of Italy. Corsica has experienced centuries of cultural colonisation, firstly through Tuscan and Genoan control, then by the French after 1768. As a consequence of this, the Corsican language, which will be referred to as Corsu in this research, is now officially recognised by UNESCO as endangered (Endangered Languages Project, n.d.). However, since the 1970s, with the rise of nationalist movements in Corsica, Corsu has turned into a symbolic beacon for the process towards revitalisation and decolonisation of cultural identity. It remains an important symbol of the Corsican people today, as the nation continues to push for autonomy (Vasina, 2022) and for Corsu to receive official language status (Picard and Salazar-Winspear, 2018). This research will analyse the processes of cultural colonisation and decolonisation in the context of Corsu language acquisition in the institutional sphere, domestic sphere, and through the mediatic sphere. It will provide an insight into the current status of Corsican cultural decolonisation and revitalisation efforts against *'morta a lingua, mortu u populu'*<sup>1</sup> (Jaffe, 2008).

### Historical context

Since the 1980s, the Corsican Assembly has voted numerous times to grant Corsu co-official language status (Oakes, 2017). Despite the high local support in favour of co-officiality for Corsu (Fazi, 2020), this proposal has continued to be rejected by the French state to this day

(Colonna, 2020). The strong support towards language officialisation reflects the upwards trajectory of Corsu's status, and the desire for it to be viewed as a legitimate language after a long period of stigmatisation and cultural devaluation (Jaffe and Oliva, 2013; Colonna, 2020).

Historically, Corsica was alternately controlled by French and Italian (Genoan and Tuscan) forces until France's purchase of the island in 1796 (Timm, 2000). However, the influence of Italian culture, and Tuscan in particular, had been much stronger than the French, and linguistically, Corsu and Tuscan "were not considered as distinct languages but as different levels of the same idiom" (Blackwood, 2004b, p.308). The process of integrating French language and culture in Corsica did not happen immediately after the annexation, and a strong Italian influence remained on the island. French was gradually infiltrated through the posting of francophones in positions of "administration, the civil service and the judicial system on the island" (Blackwood, 2004a, p. 308), cementing it as the language of high domains. However, to secure French political and cultural dominance, and to assimilate Corsica with France's post-Revolutionary monolingual 'one language, one nation' identity (Hélot, 2003; Perrino and Leone-Pizzighella, 2019), active stigmatisation of Italian and Corsu spread into society. These languages were associated with themes of "counter-revolution, religious fervour, and backwardness" (Määttä, 2005, p. 169) whilst French was associated with progress and personal advancement (Blackwood, 2004b, p. 145). The intense 'frenchisation' that occurred during the twentieth century included banning Corsu from education and making French a prerequisite for public high domain jobs (Adrey, 2009). Although Corsica is not technically a French colony and is instead viewed as a region of France, these forceful assimilation measures led to the perception that Corsica had undergone the process of colonisation (Blackwood, 2008; Mendes, 2018), certainly through cultural hegemony.

It is also important to note that although Corsu was not actively stigmatised under Tuscan rule (Blackwood, 2004b), it has never been a high domain language (Blackwood, 2004b; Blackwood, 2004a). The aggressive assimilation strategy of incorporating French into Corsican society was also due to Corsu and French not being

mutually intelligible as it was with Tuscan Italian. As Oliva explains, “Corsicans had to *learn* French, rather than absorb it informally” (Oliva, 2012, p. 76), which shows why Tuscan rulers never resorted to such colonial measures. Thus, by using language as a tool for cultural colonisation, the French state was successful in eliminating the ‘patois’<sup>2</sup> from the public sphere, making French the official high domain language used by all citizens, (Hélot, 2003; Colonna, 2020) to the detriment of Corsu.

In 1951 however, the Deixonne Law marked the first official recognition of France’s regional languages in response to pressure from regionalist movements (Blackwood, 2004a). It allowed limited teaching of French regional languages in schools, but Corsu was excluded from this decree on the grounds that ‘it was not a language but a group of dialects’ (Adrey, 2009, p. 212) and that it was “merely a patois” (Blackwood, 2004a, p.310) of Italian. This resulted in Corsu being relegated to a lower status than it already was (Blackwood, 2004a), but the snub also sparked debates around Corsican identity and culture, leading up to the rise of nationalist movements in the 1970s. As Roger notes, “it is not uncommon for minority language activists to be nationalists as well” and he questions whether “separatism is more likely to be caused by the recognition of language rights or by their non-recognition” (Roger, 2019, p. 320).

The push for wider recognition and legitimisation of Corsu continues in the present. Despite the signing of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 1999, France has still not ratified it on the basis that the ‘special rights’ only confer on specific groups (Blackwood, 2008; Oakes, 2017). However, since then, Corsu has expanded from being restricted to the domestic sphere and it has entered the public domains of education and the media. This research will explore how (de)coloniality is reflected in language acquisition in the Corsican domestic, institutional, and mediatic spheres and how Corsu is being used to counter French cultural hegemony.

### Methodology

This project will research the question: *How is coloniality reflected in the sociolinguistic context of private and public spheres of Corsican language acquisition?*

This research will be conducted using the theories of cultural hegemony, postcolonialism, and decolonisation to analyse the changing cultural status of Corsican from 1999, when France signed the European Charter for Regional and Minority languages, to the start of 2020.

I will be using a large variety of sources which primarily consist of secondary literature written by researchers with linguistic, anthropological, and/or historical

academic backgrounds such as Alexandra Jaffe, Robert J. Blackwood, and Jean-Bernard Adrey. These three authors will be particularly helpful in my research due to the high amount of literature they have produced about various angles of Corsican language use and acquisition for a long period; in the case of Alexandra Jaffe, her research spans from 1988 to the present day. I will also use research written from Corsican academic perspectives, such as papers by Dominique Foata and Romain Colonna from the University of Corsica, as well as research from French and external perspectives.

My sources include contextual, methodological, and theoretical literature to help build my methodological framework and contextualise the issue I am researching, but I will also use media sources such as news sites like France24. I will access these sources from online databases from the University of Auckland Library such as JSTOR, eHRAF World Cultures, De Gruyter, and Taylor & Francis online.

I will mainly be doing a comparative historical and textual analysis of my sources. I am planning to compare the private and public spheres of Corsican acquisition and use, specifically the domestic, institutional, and the mediatic. I will analyse the processes of decolonisation in these spheres by comparing how each domain affects the cultural status of Corsu and how effectively they allow the language to tackle French linguistic hegemony. Although many researchers have analysed this topic through a political lens, I will not follow in their framework as I intend to conduct my research from a cultural perspective, meaning that although I will use evidence such as language laws for context, they will not be focal areas.

This research is limited in scope due to the tight restrictions, most specifically in respect to time allocated for completion, and my sources are also arguably limited due to restricted accessibility. I was only able to use online sources that were available for free because I am not able to pay for articles or journal subscriptions. It is also unfortunate that a significant number of potential sources were unable to be used to the fact that they were written in Corsu, which I lack experience with. This is a predictable yet disappointing limitation that comes with researching a foreign language.

Finally, I acknowledge my positionality as a second-generation immigrant woman of colour. I was born and raised in New Zealand with family roots in Hong Kong and South Africa, all places with British colonial history. I am currently in my final semester of an undergraduate degree with majors in Linguistics (BA) and Transnational Cultures and Creative Practices (BGlobalSt), and specialisations in French and Italian. Apart from my language studies, I do not have any cultural ties with Corsica, and I can only

conduct my research from an external Western-educated perspective. I will attempt to be impartial in my research to examine and understand properly how coloniality is reflected in Corsican language acquisition in the domestic, institutional, and mediatic spheres, but there is also potential that my cultural and academic background will influence my research.

## Key Concepts and Theories

### *Cultural Hegemony*

Cultural hegemony is the process of colonial domination France used to assimilate its culture and language into Corsican society. This process involves “normalisation through different scales” (Colonna, 2020, p. 6), and in the case of Corsica, it occurred in three stages; firstly through the settlement of professionals from the French mainland, then through the assimilation of local elites who saw the advantages of using French instead of Corsu to rise in the new power structures, then finally pressuring the remaining non-French speakers to learn French to adapt and survive in the new normal (Blackwood, 2004b; Adrey, 2009). This heavily influenced the diminishment of Corsu transmission, since French, the colonial language, was seen as the more advantageous language politically, economically, and socially; so parents started to teach “French first and foremost to their children” (Blackwood, 2004b, p. 146).

### *High and Low Culture/Status (Diglossia)*

One of the concepts that supports the process of hegemony is the differentiation of high versus low culture. High culture is often associated with “intellectualism, political power, and prestige” whereas low culture is associated with the “lowest class segments of a society” (Conerly et al., 2021). High does not necessarily always align with positive connotations and neither does low with negative, however in the context of language status, in the process of French hegemony over Corsica, French became the high language while Corsu remained the low language, creating a linguistic hierarchy. In linguistic terms the “distribution of use between a “high” and a “low” language” (Jaffe, 2020, p. 74) is referred to as diglossia, and power and influence are attached to the high language whilst the low language is perceived with lesser legitimacy. In this research, I will be using the linguistic diglossic framework of referring to ‘high’ to mean the status of influence and legitimacy and ‘low’ to refer to the opposite.

### *Centre-periphery*

The centre–periphery theory is another way of viewing power dynamics which finds roots in the binary

framework of (post)colonialism. This concept is used alongside the idea of ‘insider–outsider’ to mark people “in spatial terms as well as in socio-economic, political and cultural terms” (Tuhwai Smith, 2012, p. 325) and being peripheral equates to being the ‘other’ or ‘outsider’ (Perrino & Leone-Pizzighella, 2019). In the context of this research, “being named and categorised as a minority language is a result of centralising and peripheralizing processes” (Kelly-Holmes and Pietikainen, 2013a, p. 8), which Corsu has undergone as a result of French hegemony. Like with high languages, the centre is associated with “advancement, metropolitanism, and political, economic, and trade power” (Kelly-Holmes and Pietikainen, 2013a, p. 3) while the periphery is perceived as the opposite. This “reinforces binary understandings” (Mendes, 2018, p. 180) of French and Corsu power dynamics and encourages the view that the Corsican language and identity is on an opposing pole to the French, or namely Parisian, the ultimate centre (Blackwood, 2004a; Mendes, 2018). In the process of hegemony, embracing the Corsican identity and being ‘not French’ (Blackwood, 2004a; Adrey, 2009) was undesired; however, with the recent trajectory towards decolonisation, embracing the peripheral has become more favourable.

### *Decolonisation*

Decolonisation is a global issue and a difficult concept to define as it is a continuing process, however, there are two main strategies of cultural and linguistic decolonisation I will use in my research. The first is the ‘resistance of reversal’ which involves overturning the current hierarchical structure, putting Corsu into the high position and French in the low (Timm, 2000; Jaffe, 2008). However, this method simply repeats the hegemonic cycle and does not affect the binary language hierarchy (Timm, 2000; Adrey, 2009). As Romaine claims, “while decolonization entailed rejecting colonial languages, globalisation intensified and renewed the need for them” (Romaine, 2006, p. 460), reflecting on the binary perspective of diglossia and the dilemma of choosing one or the other. However, in my research I will suggest an alternative way of thinking that incorporates both, in a form of a “plural model of language and identity” (Timm, 2000, p. 764), which would allow the choice of multiple identities simultaneously and account for the evolving nature of modern-day Corsu.

## Section II:

### **The Domestic Sphere**

While French cultural hegemony pushed Corsu out of the public sphere, the language survived through family transmission in the home. Before France imposed compulsory secular education on the island, Corsica’s

remote and poorly connected landscape allowed for the preservation of Corsu and distance from urban French influences (Blackwood, 2004b; Blackwood, 2004a; Adrey, 2009). However, as French influence grew and the island became more connected, the disparity between French and Corsu status became more apparent. The domestic sphere began to be perceived as “alienating their members from modernity” (Fazi, 2020, p. 126) and having Corsu at the centre of the home was viewed as an obstruction to social mobility (Adrey, 2009; Fazi, 2020). The peripheralisation of Corsu to only the domestic sphere added to the delegitimisation of its status as a language, and stigmatising connotations of rurality, backwardness, and even peasantry were attached to this language (Blackwood, 2004b; Määttä, 2005). Thus, although Corsu language acquisition was permitted in the domestic sphere, the colonisation of public spheres resulted in a permeation into the private sphere, “undermining the family transmission of Corsican” (Adrey, 2009, p. 175). Families were less likely to transmit stigmatised Corsu and opted for the teaching of French, *la langue du pain*,<sup>3</sup> instead which they could benefit more from, economically and socially (Blackwood, 2004b; Jaffe, 2008; Adrey, 2009). The reality of the situation is that Corsu is no longer widely used in the domestic sphere (Blackwood, 2004a) despite it historically being one of the only domains for Corsu survival and acquisition.

Other than reinforcing French cultural and political dominance, the exclusion of Corsu from public spheres and ‘domains of power’ was framed to be essential “for preserving an authentic, autonomous identity” (Fazi, 2020, p. 125), for the benefit of Corsican culture. Supporting this argument, in Blackwood’s research, 70% of respondents thought that the domestic sphere should be the primary domain in Corsu language acquisition due to tradition (Blackwood, 2004a). However, while it is true that Corsu has never been the high language of society, language maintenance was not always restricted to the home, for example, Corsu use in public domains such as markets supplemented domestic use (Adrey, 2009). Additionally, due to effective French hegemony, it is no longer viable to teach Corsu in the home (Blackwood, 2004a), as it is “no longer anyone’s ‘mother-tongue’” (Jaffe, 2008, p. 522; Adrey, 2009, p. 210). Thus, language acquisition in solely the domestic domain is insufficient, despite its ability to preserve authenticity.

The limitation of Corsu language acquisition to the sole responsibility of the domestic sphere reinforces the perceived low status of the language and continues to marginalise it. Additionally, because it is a private sphere, the dispersion of the language is low, meaning the domestic sphere is relatively ineffective in creating the drastic change

Corsu needs to sustainably revitalise. Although the domestic sphere allows for the preservation of authentic use of Corsu, which is valued by the decolonisation strategy of the ‘resistance of reversal’, it is still limited in its ability to disperse into society, and even excludes members of present-day Corsican society (Blackwood, 2004a), such as migrants and those without Corsican backgrounds. The domestic sphere cannot uphold the responsibility of Corsu language acquisition on its own, and it certainly cannot do so effectively from the periphery where it holds little to no power.

### The Institutional Sphere

Since 1882, the French state has used “free, compulsory and secular state schooling” (Blackwood, 2004b, p. 143; Fazi, 2020, p. 126) as a tool of forced cultural integration in Corsica to reinforce their position of power (Mendes, 2018). French was the only language permitted in schooling (Blackwood, 2004b; Mendes, 2018; Fazi, 2020) and this contributed to a “systematic delegitimization” of Corsu (Fazi, 2020, p. 126). However, in 1981, the University of Corsica reopened, sparking change in the Corsican diglossia as it created a space for Corsu to enter the public sphere and become legitimised in its Corsican Studies program (Colonna, 2020). It served as a starting point for the recognition of Corsu in higher status public domains, and led to the creation of a law making Corsu teaching compulsory in primary and secondary schools (Blackwood, 2004a; Viangalli, 2020). This has also led to the evolution of Corsu becoming a “medium of instruction rather than merely a taught subject” (Adrey, 2009, p. 184) in newly-formed bilingual schools which signifies a move towards cultural reclamation, away from learning the local Corsican language as a foreign peripheral tongue. The educational sphere is perceived by a considerable number of people to be the “only option for transmitting [Corsu]” (Blackwood, 2004a, p. 326), and it has certainly been influential in the revitalisation of it.

The institutional sphere is a solid high-status domain in a diglossia which, historically, Corsu has never been able to enter until the 1980s (Blackwood, 2004b). Thus, initiation of teaching Corsu in schools ameliorated its cultural status and legitimacy (Blackwood, 2004a; Adrey, 2009), encouraging Corsu acquisition, while simultaneously playing an active role in increasing the actual language acquisition itself. This reflects on the ‘resistance of reversal’ strategy of decolonisation, as the institutionalisation of Corsu encourages the normalisation of the language in the school and the public sphere in general (Jaffe, 2008), a strategy that was once used by the French in building their cultural hegemony.

As the institutional sphere is a public domain, it is also able to influence a great part of society, particularly since schooling is compulsory. Thus, whole generations of Corsican children will be affected by mandatory Corsu teaching. Despite this rule and the fact that education “almost exclusively leads the [language] revival effort” (Adrey, 2009, p. 197), the effectiveness of these measures is still to be determined. Even though in theory, the institutional sphere is highly influential and encourages the increase of Corsu use and acquisition, in practice, the time allocated to Corsican teaching varied depending on the school, “ranging from half an hour to a week” of informal teaching to “over three hours of intensive language” study (Blackwood, 2004a, p. 329). Additionally, “in 2017-2018, at primary level, 39.5% of Corsican pupils were involved in bilingual school classes, while 29.2% had at most 1h 30 mins of Corsican language lessons per week” (Fazi, 2020, p. 131). Comparing these statistics with those at “college level (first four years of secondary school)”, where “16.2% of students were enrolled in bilingual programmes” (Fazi, 2020, p. 131), the low percentages and drop in Corsu education make it evident that in practice, the institutional sphere is not wholly successful with increasing Corsu acquisition to the level it requires to become the dominant high language in the Corsican diglossia. However, it is also important to note, as Adrey notes, it may be too early to observe the results of institutionalisation because “those who have benefited from it are not all yet parents” (Adrey, 2009, p. 197) and it will likely take more than one generation to reap the benefits of this framework. Nonetheless, like the domestic sphere, the institutional sphere too cannot bear the responsibility of increasing Corsu acquisition alone, although it is a substantial first step forward towards closing the gap between the colonial ‘centre’ and the colonised ‘periphery’.

### The Mediatic Sphere

The presence of Corsu in the mediatic sphere is relatively new and to this day it remains primarily in the visual and audio domains. The lower volume of written media in Corsu is attributed to the limited size of readership, as Adrey notes, “since older Corsican-speaking generations do not necessarily read the language and younger generations’ reading skills are not yet sufficiently developed” (Adrey, 2009, p. 192). Nonetheless, visual and audio media produced in Corsu have significantly grown since the 1980s (Adrey, 2009), and there is now a vast range of different resources, for example, radio, television, and more recently, privately made media such as YouTube videos. The variety and expansive number of resources available in Corsu have led to the mediatic sphere becoming

highly valuable in the decolonisation process as the nature of the media itself allows for bridges to be built between the centre and the periphery.

### Radio

Corsu’s entrance into the mediatic sphere initiated on the radio, with broadcasting such as *Voce nustrale*<sup>4</sup> which was conducted fully in Corsican (Adrey, 2009), and the *Radio Corsica Frequenza Mora* (RCFM) which created bi- and tri-lingual emissions with Corsu, French, and Italian (Jaffe, 2008). In this domain, there were both formal and informal emissions, such as formal publicly produced radio news programs, and less formal programs like RCFM (Jaffe, 2007). The radio news served as a platform to encourage the legitimisation of Corsu, and due to its reputation as a high-status domain, there was an active effort to use formal language. This was emphasised through the need to create neologisms since Corsu had never been used in formal settings prior (Jaffe, 2007). Additionally, the Corsican radio news created an “equivalent Corsican monolingual broadcast space” by actively trying “not to use any French in these broadcasts” (Jaffe, 2007, p. 149). Lower status programs such as RCFM also served as a platform to support the legitimisation of Corsu in the public space, but instead through allowing a “more heterogeneous linguistic space where codeswitching and dual-language conversations were common” (Jaffe, 2007, p. 165). It also allowed for the use of dialects within Corsu itself, which reflected a more realistic picture of Corsu’s use in society (Foata, 2005), or at least a more realistic goal for Corsicans.

### Television

Corsu also benefited from the rapid advancement of technology and it was able to enter the television space soon after success in the radio domain. The 2007 launch of the Corsican television channel *Via Stella* introduced a new space for the creation of new language acquisition resources, numbering to “over 838 hours of Corsican-language and over 566 hours of French-Corsican bilingual programming in 2014” (Oakes, 2017, p. 380). The diverse range of language styles were similar to those available on the radio, as television offered programmes in both “formal journalistic genres and their set of diglossic ‘high’ themes” as well as “spontaneous expression from Corsicans” (Adrey, 2009, p. 194).

### YouTube and the Internet

All of these platforms are highly accessible for Corsican society, and the progression of using new media sources as mediums of language acquisition and practice have evolved alongside the advancement of technology.

Radio was a highly influential starting point that allowed for television media to follow, and in turn, Corsicans were able to produce media sources themselves on platforms such as YouTube. With each mediatic progression, the sphere of influence expanded, so much so that now, resources in Corsu are not restricted to just those residing in Corsica or France, but to anyone internationally who can access the internet. The accessibility of Corsu on the internet allows for the inclusivity of all members of Corsican society, so groups like immigrants on the island are not disadvantaged by the lack of Corsu input in the domestic sphere. This counters French cultural hegemony in two ways; the first, by providing numerous resources to re-infiltrate into the domestic sphere, de-stigmatising and legitimising Corsu acquisition, and the second, by opening up more spaces for Corsu representation in the public domain. Entry into the public domain itself is a form of legitimisation and the infiltration of Corsu through society is another form of using hegemonic strategies to reverse the current linguistic hierarchy. In practice, platforms such as YouTube not only allow Corsicans access to resources but also give them spaces to practise and create sources themselves in a public domain.

### ***Media in total***

Ultimately, the mediatic sphere accounts for the inevitable effects of globalisation while simultaneously progressing towards decolonisation. The movement of people and cultures is not an obstruction to Corsu acquisition as the accessibility of media on the island and on the internet can connect both immigrants and emigrants to Corsu. It also creates a space where language that is authentic to Corsicans and used in the periphery can be reproduced (Foata, 2005) and legitimised. Media is not only used to “inform and entertain” as sources in the home and at schools, but also to “represent, legitimate and instruct” as a teaching source itself (Jaffe, 2007, p. 151). Media sources create a reciprocal relationship between the mediatic sphere and the domestic and institutional spheres, as it would not exist or be as successful without the language foundation from the other two spheres. Corsu has also benefited from the advancement of technology, not only because the creation of the mediatic sphere has created a practical public space for language acquisition and maintenance, but also through its association with modernity, countering the “backward and inferior” stigma that was previously attached to the language (Jaffe, 2007, p. 151). Additionally, the mediatic sphere allows for the representation and legitimisation of both the public and private, and the high and low forms of language. Thus, overall, the media has raised the status of Corsu and has successfully created a

dent in French hegemony (Dalbera-Stefanaggi, 2005), advancing Corsican cultural decolonisation.

### **Section III:**

#### **Domestic and Institutional**

A common debate in the realm of Corsu language acquisition is whether the teaching of Corsu should be the responsibility of education or the home. According to Blackwood’s research, there is a comparable percentage of support for teaching to be the responsibility of the family and that Corsu belongs in the private sphere (Blackwood, 2004a; Blackwood 2008b). He reasons that this perspective can be attributed to the ban of France’s minority and regional languages from schools (Blackwood, 2004a) and this reflects on the hold French cultural hegemony still has over Corsica. However, it is important to remember that due to French hegemony, Corsu transmission is very low in the domestic sphere except for “formulaic greetings, swear words and popular slogans”, so the institutional sphere is the “only serious forum for the teaching and transmission of Corsican to young islanders” (Blackwood, 2004a, p. 330). Thus, Corsu transmission in schools is essential more for the revitalisation of Corsu instead of the maintenance (Hélot, 2003; Jaffe, 2010) and “the role of the school systems takes on a primordial importance” (Blackwood, 2004a, p. 330). However, there is another reason for hesitancy towards institutionalising Corsu, as it is viewed to be ‘de-authenticating’ (Adrey, 2009; Jaffe, 2010) compared to the linguistically diverse domestic sphere which allows for the acquisition of Corsu dialects. Therefore, the institutional sphere, despite being necessary for the revitalisation of Corsu, is not a sufficient tool for fighting French hegemony on its own (Jaffe, 2010). As Jaffe claims, education conducted in Corsu plays an “important role with respect to the public representation of the Corsican language as legitimate and authoritative” (Jaffe, 2007, p. 150) and this encouragement would de-stigmatise the teaching of Corsu in the domestic sphere, which would supplement formal education and normalise the presence of Corsu in society at both the private and public levels. Education was once used as a tool by the centre, and now it is being used by the peripheral to reverse the diglossia. However, like the French process of hegemony, infiltrating the domestic sphere is necessary too. While French hegemony has diminished the ability for Corsu to be spread in the home, it is an area where future language acquisition should be targeted as a supplement to the institutional sphere.

#### **Domestic and Mediatic**

Despite the immense influence of the institutional sphere on Corsu acquisition overall, the domestic and

mediatic spheres are equally as important for retaining the resistance against French hegemony. A key part of language revitalisation includes creating spaces where the language can be practised and used, not just forgotten after education is completed (Blackwood, 2004a). As Jaffe points out, it is imperative to normalise the use of Corsu “in the family, in everyday conversation, in activities associated with personal development, leisure and the social” (Jaffe, 2010, p. 211). To increase the use of Corsu in the private sphere, social attitudes towards the language must change, meaning that in order to meaningfully change the Corsican diglossia, a status-enhancing public domain such as the mediatic sphere must first be used to legitimise and de-stigmatise the language (Jaffe, 2010; Viangalli, 2020). Although the domestic sphere is a helpful starting point for language acquisition, the mediatic sphere has greater influence over society as its resources are more easily accessible. There is also greater variance available because it offers a space for both high and low language to become visible, and although it is a public domain, it can easily be used or produced in the private domain too, which decreases the space between the centre and the periphery. Informal media allows for the representation of authentic street-language and for the code-switching of languages that occur in the reality of Corsican society (Adrey, 2009). Ultimately, teaching Corsu in both the domestic and mediatic spheres are important in the process of decolonisation as they are both spaces where language can be experimented with and match the reality of Corsican society. The mediatic sphere allows for the legitimisation of the low domestic forms of Corsu by broadcasting authentic sources for the public. While both the mediatic and the domestic spheres foster the practice and maintenance of Corsu outside the institutional sphere, the mediatic sphere in particular allows for the inclusion of non-Corsicans or families that have lost contact with Corsu, accounting for the effects of globalisation while simultaneously contributing towards decolonisation.

### **Institutional and Mediatic**

Both the institutional and mediatic spheres are public spheres that historically excluded Corsu (Adrey, 2009). Despite the strong influence of the institutional sphere, it still lacked opportunities for Corsu practice outside of school, which is necessary for motivating society to continue maintaining the language (Blackwood, 2004a; Jaffe, 2010). The mediatic sphere, however, created opportunities to fill this gap, and it is “now arguably the most influential domain within language-status planning” (Blackwood, 2004a, p. 310), overtaking the institutional sphere with the rapid advancement of technology in the past 50 years. The media increases the visibility of Corsu in

society (Adrey, 2009) beyond the reach it has so far achieved in the institutional sphere, because although it is optional, it is not restricted to the school population, thus anyone, even those beyond Corsica, can access it. Additionally, while institutional Corsu is mainly restricted to formal instruction, mediatic forms of Corsu are more flexible and serve as “an extension of the ‘street’—the informal public domain” (Jaffe, 2007, p. 150-1) which reflects on the reality of Corsican society more than in schools.

Another part of the success of the mediatic sphere in relation to Corsu acquisition and cultural decolonisation can be attributed to the nature of this sphere itself, and how it allows a combination of “language as a system” and “language as practice” (Kelly-Holmes and Pietikäinen, 2013b, p. 2). This signifies that the media allows both the systematic social endorsement of Corsu, by legitimisation through representation on a high public domain, and the practical benefits such as the actual distribution of resources in Corsu that tangibly encourages language acquisition and maintenance in the real world. Nonetheless, both spheres are vital for expanding Corsu acquisition and countering French hegemony. The institutional sphere raises the legitimacy and status of Corsu, decreasing the distance between the centre and the periphery by putting them in the same environment. The mediatic sphere goes one step further and, in a way, blends the centre and periphery by allowing the visibility of language mixing and code-switching. Both the formal and informal styles of Corsu are equally important parts of the language despite the novelty of many formal neologisms, and they both serve the Corsican community in decreasing French hegemony. Therefore, both the institutional and mediatic spheres are necessary and should supplement each other to give Corsicans a well-rounded multi-faceted experience with their language, like most major languages do.

### **Section IV:**

#### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is evident that coloniality has played a large role in both the diminishment of Corsu and the process of revitalising it back into society. To counter French hegemony, Corsu has expanded its presence from being solely in the periphery and the domestic sphere to participating in the public domains of the institutional and mediatic spheres. This was necessary for the revitalisation of Corsu because family transmission of the language was diminishing rapidly after a long period of stigmatisation and marginalisation. The institutionalisation of Corsu played an essential role in reintroducing the language to society and it also raised the cultural status of Corsu with its importance

as a high domain. It recognised the language in the public domain for the first time in Corsu's history and gave the language more legitimacy in the public eye. As technology advanced, Corsu was able to enter in the mediatic sphere and introduced another dimension of Corsu acquisition to society.

Prior to this, the language from the domestic sphere and the institutional sphere were categorised as informal and formal respectively, and while the institutional sphere held high influence over society, the domestic sphere was limited. With the addition of the media, Corsicans could now benefit from highly accessible and influential public resources that offered both informal and formal styles of speech. Whilst it would be easy to conclude that the mediatic sphere is currently the most influential of the three spheres compared in this research, it is important to recognise that all three spheres are necessary to continue the process of decolonising French hegemony as they blend together to create a new multi-layered experience of Corsu that did not exist when the language remained solely in the private sphere. The introduction of Corsu to the public sphere decreased its marginalisation and distance from the centre, aligning it somewhat to majority languages which tend to have different linguistic codes for different domains too (e.g., YouTube language vs TV News language).

By using the same hegemonic methods for the purpose of decolonisation, one would be following the strategy of the 'resistance of reversal', but simply switching the status of French and Corsu would not be feasible with the reality of present-day Corsica. In the age of globalisation, Corsica cannot afford (both monetarily and culturally) to detach itself fully from France or the French language as firstly, the island remains the possession of France and secondly, French remains an economically valuable language, not just within Corsica or France, but internationally. Therefore, for a more effective decolonisation strategy that accounts for globalisation, a less binary model that allows for blending would suit the Corsican situation better, instead of simply reversing the diglossia. Since code-mixing and language switching is already present in the lives of Corsicans, the acceptance of it is not completely detrimental in the movement towards decolonisation, but rather it is a move towards deconstructing the structure of hegemony as a whole, recognising the value of both languages and making space in society for the acquisition of both, in a polyglossic direction, which will require the cooperation of the domestic, institutional, and mediatic spheres.

Overall, the Corsican case shows an interesting insight into the process of cultural decolonisation through the revitalisation of its language. The issues it has faced with the French state continue in other forms in the present, and

to this day, Corsu is still not an official language of Corsica. Corsu is not alone in this struggle, however, and other French regions also face an uphill battle in increasing language acquisition and maintenance after long periods of uncompromising monolingualism. In addition, Corsu finds similarities with Te Reo, Welsh, Gaelic, and Catalan, among other languages, in their push towards increasing minority cultural engagement through language acquisition and maintenance. Language and cultural colonisation is a global issue that is finally being addressed, and increasing visibility in cultural domains like the domestic, institutional, and mediatic spheres are all essential for progress towards decolonisation.

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#### Footnotes

1. Early Corsican Nationalist slogan meaning: death of the language, death of the people.
2. Meaning: non-standard form of language, like a dialect. Sometimes viewed as a derogatory term.
3. Literal translation: the language of bread.
4. Translation: our voice.

# STRAIGHT WHITE LINES

**Authored by Ayla Yeoman, Ofa Soakimi, Ruby Sattler**

*Quotes and Interviews from Dr Tiopira McDowell (Ngāti Hine), Dr Maia Hetaraka (Ngāti Wai, Ngāi Tahu), Suelaki Tiatia (Nofoali'i, Lelepa, Avaro), Justice Hetaraka (Ngāti Wai, Ngāi Tahu), Hollyanna Ainea, Quack Pirihi (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Wai, Ngati Porou)*

Aotearoa's education system aims to guide young generations and aid them in their growth to eventually set them up to enter the 'real' world. Besides the fundamentals of reading, writing, and maths, the time that young people spend at school is also where they come to terms with their identity and who they are as a person. Going through the full 13 years of this country's education system is a lengthy time and if the system that is meant to guide youngsters perpetually puts them down, what does this mean for this country and its young people? When the current education model, that is taught in the language of the coloniser, continues to undermine and ignore the values and worldview of Māori and Pacific communities, where does this place the young indigenous people of Aotearoa? While their Pākehā peers gain a foothold to set themselves up for life, young rangatahi are still left yearning for their history, yearning for methods to find and express themselves, yearning to be embraced by the nation that was taken from them. What does this make of Aotearoa's identity and what does this mean for future generations of this country?

Quack Pirihi, a young Māori rights activist and youth worker explains how they felt they never had role models to look up to while at school to help guide them through the barriers they faced during the time. Doors were never opened to their heritage and culture, which left them putting themselves into a box that they did not fit into. This is often the case with young Māori and Pacific youth as they feel they have two sides to their identity, their Pākehā side, and their Māori side, making them feel divided between their two cultures. "For generations of Māori, it was the systematic and purposeful squashing of our identities through our education system being mono-lingual and mono-cultural"—those are the words of Dr Maia Hetaraka. "If you want to see what that looks like, go into a lecture theatre and look where the Māori and Pacific students are sitting in the room. They will all be sitting up in the back row...they know their 'place'" says Dr Tiopira McDowell.



**Quack Pirihi**

Māori rights activist and Youth Worker

This is a sobering thought, but is the reality that young rangatahi are facing. Adding to the problem is the ignorance from teachers who do not realise the implicit actions they do which belittle Māori and Pacific identities. Tiopira continues: "Everything ... the minute you walk into a class and you see a white teacher, and you sit down, and they stand up, and they mispronounce your name and then they laugh at you. You are told even before the class starts, on the first day at school that you mean nothing". Within the current education system which has been in place for so long, the cycle of discrimination and oppression will continue, yet those unaffected by this and those who the system has been designed for, are not even aware of it.

By decolonising education, it is a step away from colonial knowledge and a step towards allowing rangatahi, and students from diverse cultural backgrounds to begin embracing their unique identities, while still succeeding in the system. Currently, as Tiopira mentions, "the only way you can succeed is to embrace the whiteness". Maia continues this thought: "In the current education, it is difficult to hold onto our unique identities and still succeed in the system". This current systematic path to achieving goals and success is by turning one's back on their cultural identity, which for many students like Quack, left them feeling divided or torn between their cultures. By decolonising education and rethinking how the system is run, the ideal would be to enable Māori and Pasifika students to embrace their heritage from a young age without compromising their ability to succeed.

**What Would Decolonising Education Entail?**

Justice Hetaraka, co-founder of HĀ (Histories of Aotearoa), explains that a decolonised education system would involve “making room for other bodies of knowledge to flourish in their own way as opposed to controlling it through colonial structures and systems”.

Dr Tiopira McDowell explains that forming a decolonised education system would entail “not just being force-fed information”. “[Decolonising education] means doing away with chairs, it means removing the structure of the classroom, it means totally decentralising the position of the lecturers ... doing away with writing .... It's about uplifting people's mana ... speaking in a different language”. How can Māori students thrive when everything they are being taught is in the coloniser's language? If every student went through school having to speak and learn both English and Te Reo Māori, “we would grow into a totally different country, [people] would have a different attitude to the land, the ocean, the sky, the birds, the trees and tangata whenua”. Decolonising education is not necessarily a direct rejection of the current education system, but it involves improving and diversifying it in order to allow everyone to thrive. It involves “using Māori resources for Māori ways of thinking to be done in a Māori way”, Quack explains. It involves providing training in the Te Tiriti based approach to University, and creating environments where all students, especially indigenous can thrive.



**Dr Tiopira McDowell**

Senior Lecturer in Māori Studies

In the words of Maia Hetaraka: “In the current system, what's important to lots of us is how well we do in our tests and exams. Incorporating Mātauranga Māori would change that, what would be important to us would be what we know and how we learn, ... how we operate on the earth, how we look after each other, how we look after our things”. Decolonising education, to an extent, would involve distancing ourselves from the strict graded approaches of learning, and broadening our horizons when we think about what knowledge actually is.

The push for decolonising the educational system is crucial for the future of New Zealand, as it will educate children and youth to recognise indigenous Māori culture and Pacific traditions. Doing so will help to bring forth “new ways of thinking and doing things, which can only bring benefits for our country as a whole”, comments Suelaki. Instead of restricting students' minds, Tiopira says “they are given the right to speak for themselves and they are supported and celebrated for it. It makes them realise, if I can do this here then I can do this elsewhere”.

### **What methods or strategies could be used to decolonise education? How will this look in different levels of education, such as primary, intermediate, college, and tertiary?**

Decolonising the education system can happen through a variety of strategies, some that will take time and others that have a more optimistic timeframe.

- ***Creating an emotionally safe teaching environment***

Quack argues that for the sake of our rangatahi Māori, certain topics need to be taught in less distressing ways. Quack comments how students are constantly being retraumatised, particularly when learning about colonial histories, and in turn becoming radicalised after learning about the many misjustices their ancestors faced. He suggests that more boundaries need to be in place and that trigger warnings are vital when receiving harsh images. Justice runs a program called HĀ (Histories of Aotearoa) that teaches students the uncomfortable histories of New Zealand in a safe and empowering environment using oral narratives and artwork. Justice stresses the importance of creating an environment where students are allowed to



**Dr Maia Hetaraka**

Director of Tai Tokerau campus

feel emotional about the horrors of history and feel safe to express their pain and sense of injustice. Quack explains: “Acknowledging I’ve been displaced from the land, culture, language, mana whenua, whakapapa, the land I’m standing on ... having to live day by day [knowing] that their land is stolen ... there is a specific trauma and desensitisation that has to come with this”.

- ***Hiring more Māori and Pacific staff and incorporating Mātauranga Māori and Pacific Knowledge***

Tiopira stressed the importance of hiring more Māori and Pacific staff. “You can’t deliver a Māori world-view if you don’t understand it and you don’t speak the language”. There needs to be “Māori leadership at the highest level, and not just at the governance level”. For Pacific and Māori perspectives and world-views to be taught, they need to be taught by Pacific and Māori teachers. Additionally, Mātauranga Māori doesn’t need to be just a cultural artefact used by Māori and Pacific people, it can be utilised to the system’s advantage. Justice explains, “I think our bodies of knowledge, of Mātauranga, indigenous knowledge is rich and has depth to guide us into the future. It brings up the past and it makes it relevant today and it helps us to look forward into the future”.

- ***Shifting the power dynamics between students and teachers***

The relationship between students and teachers also needs to be reevaluated. Suelaki suggests that in a decolonised education system there would be less divide between staff and students. There needs to be collaborative work and a system where there is mentorship rather than teaching. Tiopira says that shifting this balance would place more emphasis on peer learning where “everyone in the room teaches the room” and the teacher assumes a more facilitative, backseat role.

- ***Restructuring the classroom***

The structure of the classroom itself needs to be reimaged. When describing what a decolonised classroom structure would look like Justice said, “it’s not a classroom ... or a lecture theatre”. She suggests that we need to break out of the classroom structure, class time, sitting at desks, and the teacher standing in front of you. This could be considered by rearranging “the shape of the room, the seating arrangements, the power dynamics” to match with Māori and Pacific values and worldviews, says Tiopira. He additionally emphasises that “classrooms are set up to oppress people”.

- ***Decentralising Western view***

New Zealand’s current education system is based solely on the Western view. By decentralising this view and allowing other views and ways of learning to be incorporated into the system; we would form a successfully inclusive education. In Tiopira’s words: “Writing is only ever going to carry a Western world-view. Some assignments must be sung, spoken, performed, danced, painted, wept, sculpted, vandalised”. Suelaki expresses the importance of recognising that written sources are not the only useful historical accounts. Oral histories are vital to learn about Pacific histories and Māori histories as stories are passed down generations and knowledge is passed down through dance. Suelaki also expresses how exams are not the best way to assess someone’s knowledge. Rather than forcing students to absorb knowledge and regurgitate it back up for tests and exams, Suelaki says that we should be “teaching people in the way in which they learn.”

These strategies would have an immense impact on the education system and the identities of students. Hollyanna, explained that “decolonising education would have a massive impact on future generations. It is hard to be anti colonial. But we can be decolonial”. Improving the education system would allow for “people’s identities to flourish and grow” instead of restraining the potential of students and pushing them into preconceived pathways. Ultimately, the goal is ensuring that Aotearoa’s education system meets the needs of all students and that all students feel culturally safe and empowered.



**Hollyanna Ainea**  
Graduate Teaching Assistant

## POWER, ART, AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: MEXICO'S MURALIST MOVEMENT

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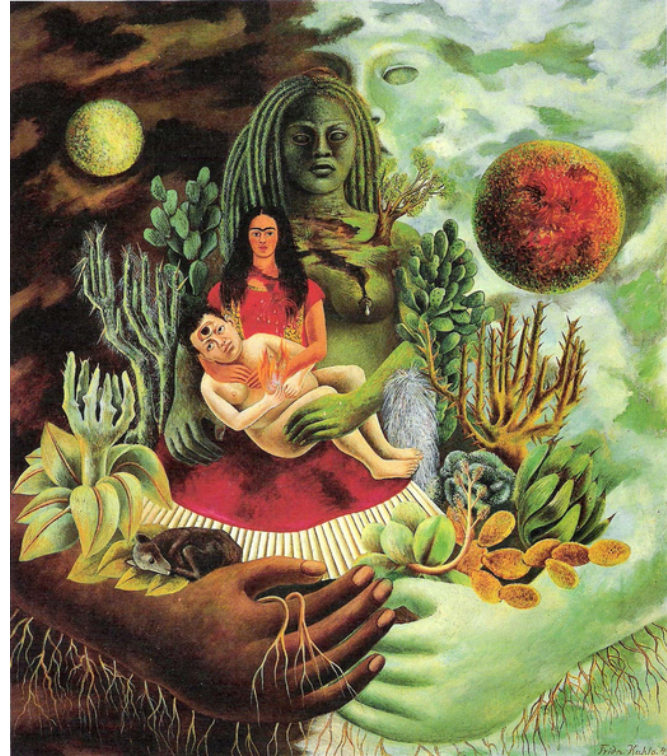


Figure 1. Left: *Cortés y La Malinche* (Orozco, 1926); Right: *El abrazo del amor del Universo* (Kahlo, 1949)

The Mexican Revolution not only transformed the scope of social possibility for the Mexican peoples, but also elevated the meaning of art in the building of their nation. It emphasised the idea that art is not only an imitation of life, but, more importantly, it has the power to change the living direction of the nation by way of (re)presentation. In this essay, I explore two objects of analysis related to these ideas: José Clemente Orozco's 1926 *Cortés y La Malinche* fresco; and Frida Kahlo's 1949 *El abrazo de amor de El Universo* painting. I intend to dissect each image's historical, political, and cultural contexts, their audiences and creators, and, finally, their purposes by framing my analysis with the theoretical concepts of representation, (neo-)colonialism, and decolonisation.

Firstly, the fresco *Cortés y La Malinche* by José Clemente Orozco is situated in the context of early colonisation in the Americas, indicated by the 'conquistador' Hernán Cortés and the translator Marina, named *La Malinche*, placed in the centre of the image. Their positioning reveals many things: the viewer is made to question whether Cortés is protecting her with his arm or holding her back, symbolically from progress as an Indigenous woman or from her own culture, as beneath his

feet lies a slumped Indigenous or African person. The duality of their hand placement also raises more questions; their hand holding indicates a sort of agreement or connection, yet his arm shielding or restricting her suggests a possessive trait indicative of the colonial state. Their gazes are also important in the sense that Cortés is staring listlessly or stonily into the distance with his eyes open, whereas *La Malinche's* gaze is downcast. It suggests that she would rather be elsewhere, is introspective, or wants to avoid the gaze or judgement of the viewer altogether. From this, we get the impression that she did not have much agency in their relationship; the fact that her gaze is not level with Cortés' could be a metaphor for the power asymmetry that existed between them, thereby inverting the popular narrative that she unconditionally and freely chose to betray her own people. Furthermore, their nude state indicates a state of nature, and their lack of adornment or costume is obvious to the eye. Here, Orozco has quite literally stripped them of any grandeur that their finery would otherwise allude to, in turn stripping down and challenging the glorification of Cortés created by a colonial framework. It deconstructs both of their exterior positions and reduces them to 'everyday' people, despite their famous

reputations as conquistador (from the colonial perspective) and—as her nickname suggests—an accused traitor to Indigenous people.

These duplicities are testament to the practices of visual cultures as explored by Andrea Noble (2003). This painting is “a place where meanings are created and contested” (p. 297), and solidifies the idea that “the visual image cannot be separated from the sets of viewers who give them meaning” (p. 298). This is demonstrated in the connotations that both we and the artist bring to the image when we view it—without knowing the title of the fresco, our knowledges are applied to the painting so that we identify who they are. After all, “we make meaning of the material world through understanding objects, images, and entities in their specific cultural contexts” (Cartwright & Sturken, 2001, p. 19). The fresco relates to the goals of Mexican muralism as it retells the past of the Americas through a lens that does not depict Cortés in an exaggeratedly glorified or romanticised way, nor as the most important figure in the image. It transgresses the tradition of “discourse of the West about the West” (Noble, p. 300) and brings to light the Indigenous perspectives and knowledges that were forced into rigid hierarchies of importance, much like the peoples of the Americas were by the colonial agenda. It also relates to Frida Kahlo’s female perspective following the Mexican Revolution as it constructs the nation with a lens that portrays women in a more realistic way relative to the early modern period in which the fresco is set, or even on a scale that shows they are acknowledged at all. It does not portray Marina as a shameless traitor or a consenting ‘trophy’ of Cortés (as the stereotype of her follows), but rather depicts her as being forced into that role without much choice, as her downcast gaze and position sitting slightly behind Cortés reinforces. These visual subtleties connect with the knowledge that she was a slave, which is an important aspect of her situation when regarding her agency. The purpose of this fresco is to question why we put certain figures at the centre of our attention as it is in the painting, and whether or not we are conflating their images, as suggested by their exaggerated sizes in comparison to the man lying beneath them. It makes us examine our own assumptions about the foundations of Latin America, how the past is constructed, and how this construction is represented today amid its neo-colonial context and decolonising trajectory.

My second object of analysis is Frida Kahlo’s 1949 painting *El abrazo del amor del Universo*. It is a powerful work of art that relocates Indigenous Mexican identities in their own “rules and conventions of the systems of representation” (Cartwright & Sturken, 2001, p. 19), by setting the painting in the natural world, a significant value

within Indigenous cultures. This is seen in the layering of personified environmental or spiritual elements. It spans from a sky figure or personified universe, to the earth mother, to Kahlo herself, then to Diego Rivera who is being cradled like a baby in her arms. It is a visual genealogy—a specific way for Indigenous peoples to relate themselves to the world around them that both respects and pays homage to the environment. This is a powerful representation of the world because it is distinctly Indigenous; from the cacti native to Mexico, to her long, colourful dress, to the life-giving representation of the earth mother, to the personified universe’s embrace around them all. It reminds us that what we know or what we choose to see is very intentional and specific, and in this case, has either been carved out or into history by various colonial agendas. Here, Kahlo is reasserting her Indigenous ideological perspective of the world and in turn, contributing to the decolonial goal of Mexican nation-building that followed the Revolution.

While Kahlo was not technically a part of the muralist movement in Mexico, her artwork contributed to and was defined by similar goals and ideological positionings, albeit with more personal and feminist nuances. An example of this is the third eye on Rivera’s forehead. The symbol of a third eye implies that he has an ‘all-seeing’ power, or possesses a form of supernatural intelligence. What is interesting is how the genealogy idea fits in with his position in the painting—he is being cradled by Frida as if she and all the figures around her made him who he is, and nurtured that ‘all-seeing’ power. In other words, although he may have been intelligent in his own respect, this trait was nurtured by someone. It not only reinforces the powerful and multi-generational nature of knowledges, but also the idea that behind every influential male figure in her society there were women propping them up. It was also women who were building the Mexican nation in a significant way but were not strongly acknowledged in the mainstream muralist movement, a void that Kahlo addressed with artworks like *El abrazo del amor del Universo*. In an historical context where Indigenous cultures were either marginalised, ignored, or represented through colonial frameworks that had an ‘othering’ effect (Spivak, 1988), Kahlo’s painting is significant because she reclaims power by representing the world through a feminist and Indigenous perspective crucial to the backbone of Mexican society.

There are some significant differences between Orozco and Kahlo’s artworks relevant to Mexican muralism’s goals and ideological positioning. One difference is that Orozco painted the past, whereas Kahlo painted the present. He set his painting in the 16th century whereas Kahlo literally placed herself in the paintings; she reinforced the continuous and active state of history,

whereas Orozco attempted to make sense of the present by painting the past. Nevertheless, each of their artworks touched the future in the sense that we as viewers are looking at it as actors living beyond their futures, but also in the way they transformed how Mexico was to be viewed by others and their own people for the years to come. As Cartwright and Sturken (2001) outlined, “one of the ways that we can see how images generate meaning across contexts is to look at the image icons and how they both retain and change meaning across different contexts” (p. 41). Here, the context is time. The overall implication of this is that Kahlo showed how we can change the dominant (colonial) narratives of the world by envisioning our own roles in a better one, compared to Orozco who had more of a reflective than transformational effect.

A second difference was the gendered nuances in their paintings. While Orozco did not glorify Cortés as mentioned earlier, he did portray *La Malinche* only in relation to Cortés and in a way that highlighted her misery. Glauber Rocha (1965) explored the general depiction of misery of Latin America and how international audiences engaged with it, concluding that “while Latin America laments its general misery, the foreign observer cultivates a taste for that misery...merely as a formal element in his field of interest” (p. 13). He highlighted the tragedy in this form of depiction—presenting only the ‘dark’ parts of history undermines the profound strengths of Latin America. Most saliently, the perseverance, resilience, and power of the Latin American Indigenous cultures is seen in the continuation of their cultural traditions and values today and also through demonstrative events such as the Mexican Revolution itself.

Kahlo, on the other hand, portrayed herself and the other deities (including the feminine earth mother) in a way that outlined abundance, collectivity, and unity through *El abrazo del amor* of all the elements in her painting. Her perspective highlights the beauty, positive values of the world, and ultimately the element of possibility, whereas Orozco’s was more backward-looking and despairing in comparison. These two different approaches have important implications for the nation-building of Mexico; do you transform the nation with a vision intent on re-presenting the past as Orozco did, or emphasise the possibility of positive transformation through perspectives more representative of the present moving forward? Lastly, relating to the historical context of the artwork, the question must be asked: why was Kahlo’s art peripheral to the muralist movement in the first place? Aside from obvious stylistic separation (she did not paint murals), she was still strengthening muralism’s main goal of building the nation through a decolonial and empowering way. This question remains pertinent to all nation-building, not only Mexico’s. Culture and change do

not only happen on a large scale like murals, but also in other spheres on a more personal level, like Kahlo did.

Overall, in this essay I explored José Clemente Orozco’s 1926 *Cortés y La Malinche* fresco and Frida Kahlo’s 1949 painting *El abrazo del amor del Universo* by framing my analysis with the theoretical concepts of representation, (neo-)colonialism, and decolonisation. I situated these images in their historical, political, and cultural contexts, outlined their audiences opposing the (neo-)colonial state, and analysed how they represented ideological positionings such as Indigenous and feminist perspectives. Following this analysis, it is clear that art is much more than an imitation of life; it has the power to transform and mobilise. Equally important are the knowledges and perspectives that we as the audience bring to the images. Like these images’ messages, we have the power to be mobile and influence the trajectory of our lives and the nations we actively construct, something that we should all learn from moving forward into the future.

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# GLOBAL STUDIES: ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES

Jerald Yutaka Chan, Maria Kopelivich, Kimberly Widia Thio, Samantha Fei, Poppy Thurston

Interviewed and Edited by Charlotte Parker, Frances Bobbit



**BGlobalSt**

**Major:** Global Environment and Sustainable Development

**Area study:** Asian Studies

**Language:** Japanese

## Jerald Yutaka Chan

### *What are you currently doing in terms of work?*

I am a Graduate Policy Advisor with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) - formerly the Ministry of Civil Defence.

### *What was your favourite Global Studies course, and why?*

Global 252 Asian Cities - the all in one course which I could hope for... Asian, cities, global studies, the crossovers of all these fields and topics covered in this course really captivated my interest. I found this course to be very eye opening, especially when learning about the issues in Asian cities, and it had taught me ways to question everything - perhaps more so than any course I had taken in my first two years of Uni.

### *Do you have any advice or tips for new Global Studies students?*

My advice is to focus on the positives in the unknown and really make Global Studies your degree. I really enjoyed Global Studies because it allowed me to choose what papers I want to take based on my varied interest.

### *Do you have any regrets or is there anything you wish you had done during your time in your Global Studies degree?*

One thing I would have encouraged myself to do, if I did the degree again, would be to take on internships in my field of interest (whether paid or unpaid). Reason for this being that my work experience in the first half of my final year really helped shape my thinking for my final Global Studies project and having exposure to good working practices from the start just sets you up so well for work life outside Uni.

### *Do you have any tips for graduating students going out into the workforce?*

The world is your oyster, take every opportunity you can. This might not be the most original bit of advice, but you have the potential to explore so many different areas of work - I started full-time work in the business services, aiming for either project management or agriculture sustainability role, but now I am in emergency management policy, a field which I would not have imagined myself in, not even a year ago.

### *How does Global Studies compare to other degrees when going after the same or similar job?*

At my interviews, employers were interested in finding out more about what the Global Studies degree is, a question which perhaps I may not have had so often if I took a degree that is more commonly known. The more interviews I've had, the more I talked about my interests and passions, and how Global Studies fits in and the less I recited Global Studies theory from the textbook.





## Maria Kopelivich

### *What are you currently doing in terms of work?*

Currently completing my Master of Conflict and Terrorism Studies at the University of Auckland. I have also just started as an intern at ReliefAid, a humanitarian organisation delivering aid in Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Syria.

### *What was your favourite Global Studies course, and why?*

I personally enjoyed Global 300 (alongside the sub-course of Global 200). This was a great course for me to develop research and writing skills in preparation for my dissertation that I am currently working on. It was extremely useful for understanding the range of theories, frameworks, and methods available for research papers, while simultaneously expanding my knowledge on my chosen area studies. This course was practical and engaging, and was a great opportunity to understand the workings of postgraduate studies.

### *How has Global Studies changed your perspective?*

Global Studies has changed my perspective on how I approach topics, both in my academics and daily life. Usually academic disciplines will incorporate the theories within their own knowledge bases, but more often than not a transdisciplinary framework offers more insights to understanding a particular topic. This has helped me understand current affairs, approaches to different policies, and even helped me in my own academic writing.

### *What has been the most challenging aspect of Global Studies for you?*

The most challenging aspect of Global Studies was how long it took me to understand what Global Studies entails. It wasn't until my last year of my undergraduate that I finally got a grasp on how this degree was altering my thinking (in a good way!). I struggled to understand if I was doing things "right" or not in the way I approached certain assignments and tasks. My advice would be to talk to your lecturers and peers, read through the materials, and really understand the workings of the Global Studies approach - because understanding that can really help in approaching assignments.

### *Do you have any advice or tips for new Global Studies students?*

Get to know everyone in the degree, and share ideas! Upon writing my mini-thesis for Global 300, the one aspect which helped me the most was discussing my ideas with other students. Even though we had completely different topics, many of the theories we were using were really interrelated and allowed me to incorporate new frameworks to my research.

### *Do you have any regrets or is there anything you wish you had done during your time in your Global Studies degree?*

One of the goals for the Global Studies degree was to get every student abroad in one way or another. I was so

adamant that I wanted to complete my degree here, and that I did not want to do an exchange. Covid-19 happened, and the option was gone without me having to do anything about it. Looking back, I realise how incredibly useful and fun the opportunity would have been. If not for COVID, I'm not even sure if I would have realised that. Even though I didn't go, I would recommend doing it if you can. The experience is like nothing else (or so I've heard...), and it would open up a variety of new possibilities and friends.

*Do you have any tips for graduating students going out into the workforce?*

Don't stress! I came out of the degree feeling like I wasn't ready for a job, and that I didn't know anything. Give yourself more credit, because I am still consistently using and expanding the knowledge I learnt from my Global Studies degree. Not all interviews will go to plan, and you might hear the "lack of practical experience" phrase come up a lot, but don't let it get you down. There are so many opportunities out there, but make the most of the networks you have available to you at uni, and this will really help. I decided to continue with postgraduate studies because a) I was really interested in it but admittedly also b) I didn't feel quite ready yet, and that's okay too! I am loving postgrad, and would recommend pursuing that path for anyone who wants to learn more.

*How does Global Studies compare to other degrees when going after the same or similar job?*

It's always a great conversation starter. Since Global Studies is relatively new, not many employers have heard about it. It feels really rewarding to explain the degree, what you learnt, and how you can apply it to the particular job.

*Have you used your area language since graduating from Global Studies? If yes, how/where? If no, do you intend to in the future?*

Not yet, but I know it's going to be extremely useful. I hope to travel to my area one day soon and learn the language first-hand. Many of the jobs available out there will ask if you can speak any other languages, especially if you are wanting to work for an NGO, or an organisation like UN.

## Kimberly Widia Thio

*What are you currently doing in terms of work?*

I'm a Support Worker at Emerge Aotearoa, and next year I'll be doing my Honours in Psychology with the Kupe Leadership Scholarship

*What was your favourite Global Studies course, and why?*

Global 351: Migration in the Americas. Really put into perspective how dynamic cultures are and how everyone has a different idea of what 'home' is in terms of cultures, especially when you are forced to migrate to another country.

*How has Global Studies changed your perspective?*

It really broadened my perspective. It made me see how interlinked and close we all are, even when we are living in different continents. Yet, also made me see how easy it is to let our differences divide us.



**BA(Psychology)/BGlobalSt**  
**Major:** Global Politics and Human Rights  
**Area study:** Latin America  
**Language:** Spanish

*What has been the most challenging aspect of Global Studies for you?*

I think academically, it was challenging to combine all the diverse knowledge from what I've learned into my global 300 research paper.

*Do you have any advice or tips for new Global Studies students?*

If you can do an Overseas Exchange, definitely do it! It really puts to perspective what you study into action (plus you get to use your language & get new friends from all over the world).

*Do you have any regrets or is there anything you wish you had done during your time in your Global Studies degree?*

I wish I had done another Overseas Exchange!

*Do you have any tips for graduating students going out into the workforce?*

Once you're out in the workforce, it's easy to despair and think that there's nothing there for you, but actually, it's also exhilarating to think about the possibilities of what you can do. Sometimes being a leader means that you're the one that has to create the path.

Do a quick search on what other Global Studies graduates are doing, and you can find such inspiring things they've done (or ask the GS staff and I bet they'll rave on about our graduates).

*How does Global Studies compare to other degrees when going after the same or similar job?*

Global Studies really enrich you as a person. This year I wanted to work in the mental health sector, which led me to my work as a support worker at a Youth respite. My clients are referred for a variety of mental health issues and diagnoses, such as suicidal ideation or psychosis, and they also come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. I find that the cross-culture we're exposed in Global Studies can help me connect more with some clients and see their experiences differently.

Also, Global Studies can be a bridge to interesting studies. Next year I want to bridge my interest in cultures and mental health by doing qualitative research in Psychology Honours!

*Did you do any extracurricular activities outside of Global Studies?*

I did volunteer for AIESEC and was a part of the Young Sustainability Programme, which was very fun! I also created Nomad Journal with a bunch of other amazing people.

*Did you do any extracurricular activities outside of Global Studies?*

I was a summer intern for Koi Tū: Centre for Informed Futures, and I got a paper published with them. It's helpful for a research career, but it also showed me what a future in policy and research might look like.

*Did you do any extracurricular activities outside of Global Studies?*

Not quite! I'm a part of LANZBC which is the Latin American Society in New Zealand and sometimes I'd use my Spanish there. I do plan to travel to Latin America again, possibly combining both my Psychology and Global Studies degree to work with NPH New Zealand in South America sometime in the future (check them out if you're interested in Latin America).

## Samantha Fei

*What are you currently doing in terms of work?*

After graduating in June, I spent 2 months working for an international film festival in Calabria, Italy (La Guarimba) and I am currently finishing a 2-month internship at a publishing company in Milan. After this, I am planning to teach English in Korea in Feb/March 2023. For now, I am trying heaps of different things while travelling, but I will probably end up coming back to Italy because I have had such an amazing experience.

During the film festival, I got to be a sound assistant for the showings, and for the residency we hosted (where we had 49 filmmakers from 20 countries come to make short films), I mainly worked on the social media but I also got to be in some of the films!! I also did some informal translating/subtitling/transcribing for them which was really fun. It's love how I can keep learning and practising my languages after uni, in both formal and informal settings. I also taught English in Trentino-Alto Adige for one month (June-July) with the Joinki program where I had an unforgettable experience (with the Dolomites in my backyard!), and in Milan I have mainly been working with foreign rights (reading books and writing reports on them, translating etc).

***What was your favourite Global Studies course, and why?***

A hard question, but the Italian film course (ITALIAN 212). All the films were great and it just really clicked with me (probably why I'm here in Italy right now). I also loved how the class was small, and we all became friends after it. Also, European integration (EUROPEAN 302). It was really cool how we got to meet and interview the EU ambassador and an MFAT representative. Additionally, even though this was just an elective for me, I really enjoyed Asian Identities (ASIAN 202) and an Asian music anthropology (ANTHRO 329) anthropology (ANTHRO 329) paper I did. There was a bit of a crossover with them both and I was glad I took it at the same time, as it helped me dig deeper into my Asian roots and felt more personal.

***How has Global Studies changed your perspective?***

I used to be a planner; I wanted to know what to do with my life and exactly what direction I was going in, but Global has really opened my eyes to just being flexible and waiting for opportunities to come, because they are constantly going to come. If you plan too much you might miss out on something amazing that comes unexpectedly! It's helped me learn that just because you don't know where you're going or if the job you want doesn't exist yet in the world, just keep taking steps toward what you want and the things you want will come.

***What has been the most challenging aspect of Global Studies for you?***

Timetabling. I did 5 papers almost every semester and finished a conjoint in 3.5 years (but that was because I thought 'why not?', and absolutely loved what I was studying). Keep in mind some courses aren't offered every year, or sometimes they get cancelled, or there's course clashes. I've had many concessions during my time at university, so just be patient and who knows, you might find something else, a random course might really click with you that ends up shaping your life in a totally different direction than you expected.

***Do you have any advice or tips for new Global Studies students?***

Just enjoy it. Try to take courses that you are actually interested in and want to do, because it really helps with motivation and you meet really awesome people with similar interests! It also helps with leading you into a post-university life that makes you happy. If you study what makes you happy, you will find work that makes you happy. Talk to your lecturers if something interests you. My rather unexpected adventure in Italy all



**BA**(Linguistics with Italian module)/**BGlobalSt**

**Major:** Transnational Cultures and Creative Practices

**Area study:** European

**Language:** French

sparked from a random conversation with my Italian lecturer, Barbara!

*Do you have any regrets or is there anything you wish you had done during your time in your Global Studies degree?*

I wish I had space for more courses! There were so many that I wanted to do but didn't have time for. I don't really have any major regrets though. I wouldn't change my experience for the world. I was supposed to go on an exchange to the Netherlands in 2020 though, so that is one regret but not something I could've changed.

*Do you have any tips for graduating students going out into the workforce?*

Start looking early but also there is no rush at all. I didn't do any internships while I was still at Uni because I just didn't really think there were any in my field, but I wish I did because there were some interesting opportunities out there. Also, don't be afraid of taking risks and branching out even if it sounds too ambitious; just go for it because you never know.

*How does Global Studies compare to other degrees when going after the same or similar job?*

Global gives us a head start because in a lot of jobs all they want is a degree (unless you go into something specialised), but Global guides us to be open-minded and gives us skills to learn how to be flexible, which is especially important in today's rapidly changing world. Also the language component gives you a major boost in the CV, and opens up more opportunities for you.

*Did you do any extracurricular activities outside of Global Studies?*

I was one of the founding members of Nomad and was the Editor-in-Chief during my last semester. I was also the secretary for LLS for one semester and played a bit of netball with my friends in my first year.

*Did you do any internships during your degree? If so, how has this been helpful or unhelpful for you leaving Global Studies?*

No, I wish I had though. Although, I did an online course about India with 360 international which was really interesting. I highly recommend this, because we don't get to study anything about India at UoA, but it is such an important country that continues to grow in its influence. This has been helpful leaving Global Studies because it allowed me to tap into a world I knew very little about before.

*Have you used your area language since graduating from Global Studies?*

Absolutely! I'm living in Italy now but I guess that wasn't my global language, but was a module on my arts side. I have used French a bit while travelling, and I've helped people translate while I've been wandering about. I also did a Korean course in my last semester and I'm moving to Korea next year, so hopefully I'll get to learn more! I absolutely intend to come back to Europe and speaking the language really helps, especially when travelling, as you get a deeper experience. For example, I went to a random Nonna's house in Bari to eat the best pasta dish I've ever had in my life (orecchiette con cime di rapa) and I wouldn't have been able to do that if I didn't speak Italian! But even with my jobs and finding jobs, French and Italian have been so useful.





### **BA/BGlobalSt**

**Major:** Global Environment and Sustainable Development

**Area study:** Latin America

**Language:** French

## Poppy Thurston Graduating Cohort

### *What was your favourite Global Studies course, and why?*

I loved so many of my Global Studies courses but one of my absolute favourites was Politics 313—Governing Planet Earth. This course is taught by Andreas Neef who I really admire for his depth of experience and expertise. The course assignments are very engaging and relevant to the real world. In fact, for one assignment we had to design a policy brief. This was a significant advantage when it came to going through graduate recruitment processes which required me to produce similar documents.

### *What has been the most challenging aspect of Global Studies for you?*

This is not unique to Global Studies but like many of us, I really struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic. I found the constant switching between online and in-person very difficult particularly for someone like me who really likes routine and structure.

### *How does Global Studies compare to other degrees when going after the same or similar job?*

I have always been engaged with global issues and had a strong social conscience. Global Studies has really helped me refine my beliefs and given me a theoretical base to better understand global issues. When I started my degree, I was primarily interested in social justice, human rights and people. However, Global Studies has helped me understand the importance of sustainability and the intersection between society, the economy and the environment. I now have a much more holistic approach to global issues.

### *What's been the most valuable thing you've learnt that you think new Global Studies students should know?*

Do not doubt the degree. If you work hard and allow yourself to be challenged academically and personally you will reap the rewards. You will absolutely be employable and have exciting opportunities presented to you. Trust the process.

### *What's the graduating role you're going into once you've finished? Do you have any tips on how to get one for other students?*

I am still deciding which offer to accept, but I have been lucky enough to be offered two graduate positions:

- Graduate Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
- Graduate Analyst at the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

For students looking for graduate roles my advice would be to position yourself well for success. Recruiters are looking for well-rounded people so diversify your skills. I.e. work hard to get good grades, take on leadership opportunities, volunteer, make sure you have work experience etc. I would also recommend putting as much effort into the recruitment process as possible.

### *Do you do any extracurricular activities outside of Global Studies?*

Volunteering at Everybody Eats, rock climbing, a few UN Youth case comps, and different part-time jobs.

### *Did you do any internships during your degree?*

During my degree I did the University of Auckland Summer Research Project. This was helpful as it gave me research experience which positioned me well for the analyst role and also enabled me to build a relationship with academics who have been able to give me valuable career advice and provide me with academic references.

If you are interested in joining the Nomad team  
or would like to send a submission,

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