

PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

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Volume 17, Issue 1
February 2024

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Ukraine, Ideology and Military Spending: Rethinking International Security

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Abstract

How well do Russian and “Western” public narratives about the current Ukraine war correspond with policymakers’ real agendas? Is it credible that Russia intervened to “denazify” Ukraine, or that the US and other NATO members are arming that country in order to uphold a “liberal democratic” world order? What are the actual intentions of the various policy elites? This article explores these questions against the backdrop of post-Cold War geopolitics. To assess competing ideologies and probe underlying policy dynamics, I compare US/NATO and Russian military spending from 1992 to 2021. These data call into question both Russian nationalist and dominant Western narratives and reveal the true role of NATO expansion in the policy dynamics leading to war. The article concludes with the emerging New Cold War and an alternative paradigm of world order based on verifiable security agreements.

UKRAINE, IDEOLOGY AND MILITARY SPENDING: RETHINKING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Brian D'Agostino

Introduction

While literal fighting and killing has raged in Ukraine since Russia's 24 February 2022 invasion, another kind of war is being waged in a parallel universe of ideas. The physical war requires vast amounts of weapons, soldiers, training, ammunition, vehicles, fuel, and other resources—massive costs which someone has to pay. It is ideology that legitimizes such expensive projects and the transfer of wealth from Russian, Ukrainian, European, and US citizens to the special interests who benefit from war, particularly defense contractors and military bureaucracies.

This article provides an overview of the Russian and “Western” ideologies that keep resources flowing into the Ukraine war. I then provide historical data on Russian and US/NATO military spending that shed light on the real policy dynamics currently obscured by the fog of ideological war. The paper concludes with alternative paradigms of world order beyond Ukraine.

The Specter of Russian Imperialism

On one level, the warring parties' ideological justifications for fighting in Ukraine seem oddly consistent. American, European, and Russian hawks alike seem to agree that the war is about Russian imperialism. Their differences are not about the supposed fact of Russian imperialism, but about how it is evaluated. Western elites see Russian imperialism as a threat to their “liberal democratic” values and the US-led world order, while Russian ultranationalists see imperial expansionism as a restoration of their country's bygone days of power and glory, originally under the Czars and more recently under the Soviet Union.

The agreement of US and European hawks with their Russian counterparts about the alleged fact of Russian imperialism merits closer examination. At issue is the crucial distinction between public justifications for a policy and the real rationales for action held by policy makers and discussed behind closed doors. There may be substantial overlap between what policy makers say publicly and their real intentions, but it certainly cannot be assumed that these are identical. In some cases, they may be very far apart indeed.

In October 1962, for example, the Soviet Union justified putting nuclear missiles in Cuba as an act of solidarity with that country, which had experienced the Bay of Pigs invasion the previous year. Based on the policy record, however, political scientists have concluded that the main reason for stationing the missiles was really to shore up the Soviet nuclear deterrent, which the Russians believed inadequate in the face of US military superiority (Hilsman, 1987).

To take another example, the United States justified using atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 as a way of ending the war with Japan without massive US casualties, which would otherwise occur in an invasion of Japan. It is now known from internal government documents, however, that the atomic bombings had other objectives, mainly to compel Japanese surrender to the US before Russia entered the war against Japan and to demonstrate to Soviet leaders America's awesome new power and willingness to use it (Alperovitz, 1994; Stone and Kuznick, 2012/2019).

Similarly, it should not be assumed that public statements by the warring parties in Ukraine today express their real intentions unless the statements can be independently confirmed by corroborating evidence. Do claims about defending liberal democracy or making Russia great again shed light on actual reasons for the conflict, or are they politically expedient rationalizations that obscure the real policy agendas at issue in the war?

In a 22 March 2022 *New York Times* Op Ed, historian Jane Burbank outlined Russian imperialist ideology, while uncritically assuming that it explains Putin's invasion the previous month. "Since the 1990s," she wrote, "plans to reunite Ukraine and other post-Soviet states into a transcontinental superpower have been brewing in Russia. A revitalized theory of Eurasian empire informs Mr. Putin's every move."

The word "plans" suggests the work of a policymaking bureaucracy, and yet the author provides no evidence whatsoever about planning in the Kremlin. Rather, she invokes the writings of Russian intellectuals such as Aleksandr Dugin, for whom it is the destiny of Russia to become a "world empire;" she then simply *assumes* that such ideas have been adopted by policy elites. In support of this assumption, she cites public statements by Vladimir Putin, most notably in July 2021 about Russians and Ukrainians being one people. She concludes, ominously: "The goal, plainly, is empire. And the line will not be drawn at Ukraine." (Burbank, 2022)

In light of the abovementioned historical examples (the Cuban Missile Crisis and the atomic bombings of Japan), the question we must ask is whether Putin's imperialist-sounding statements reveal the actual intentions of Kremlin planners, or whether they are rhetorical "red meat" intended to shore up his popularity with Russian nationalists and legitimize allocation of public revenues to the country's military industrial complex. While Burbank provides a helpful reconstruction of Russian imperialist ideology, she sheds no light on this question.

NATO Expansion and "Denazification"

Before testing claims about Russian imperialism against objective data (as opposed to public statements by Putin and others), I turn now from Russian hawks such as Aleksandr Dugin to two of their American counterparts, Michael McFaul and Robert Kagan, who argue that Russia must be defeated in Ukraine in order to uphold "liberal democracy" in the world. I begin with McFaul's 20 October 2022 PowerPoint and oral presentation to Stanford University alumni entitled, "Putin's War in Ukraine: Causes and Consequences" (McFaul, 2022), a concise argument for maximalist U.S. war aims in Ukraine.

McFaul begins by critiquing an alternative to the Russian imperialist theory of the Ukraine invasion, namely, that NATO expansion posed an intolerable threat to Russian security. Like Jane Burbank's arguments, McFaul's rest mostly upon public statements, particularly (1) by Putin in 2000 that he did not perceive NATO as a threat; (2) by Putin in 2002 that he regards Ukraine as free to have its own relationship with NATO; and (3) by Dmitry Medvedev in 2010 that the period of conflict between Russia and NATO was over.

However, McFaul chose to ignore other statements that contradict this picture. These include Putin's response to NATO's April 2008 Bucharest Summit; his 21 December 2021 statement

that NATO members' arming of Ukraine posed a threat "on the doorstep of our house" and that "we simply have nowhere further to retreat to;" and a 22 February 2022 speech in which he said "we are categorically opposed to Ukraine joining NATO because this poses a threat to us." In addition, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated at a 14 January 2022 press conference that "the key to everything is the guarantee that NATO will not expand eastward." (See Mearsheimer, 2022, for these statements by Putin and Lavrov).

In addition to cherry picking the public record, McFaul misleadingly claims that, "On the eve of this war, there was no push for Ukraine to join NATO." Here he chooses to ignore the 10 November 2021 U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership, which not only called for Ukraine to join NATO, but threatened war by affirming an "unwavering commitment" to the reintegration of Crimea into Ukraine (U.S. Department of State, 2021).

McFaul also addresses the claim by Putin that the Russian invasion was needed to "denazify" Ukraine, which McFaul equates with removal of Volodymyr Zelensky. This way of defining denazification is a straw man, however, since the neo-Nazi element in Ukraine is not the Zelensky administration, but the Azov Regiment, Right Sector, and other groups who allegedly have persecuted and killed thousands of Russian speaking Ukrainians, particularly in the Donbas. To be sure, Zelensky has certainly failed to protect Ukraine's citizens from fascist violence, but it does not follow that denazification can be equated with removal of Zelensky. On the historical roots of Ukrainian fascism, see Sakwa (2015/2022) and on the rise of neo-fascist activity in Ukraine in the years since the Maidan uprising, see Golinkin (2019).

None of this is to say that statements about the threat of NATO expansion and/or the need for denazification, taken by themselves, explain Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Assessing that question requires corroborating evidence, to which we will turn below. First, however, we must examine claims that a liberal democratic world order is at stake in Ukraine. Here, I turn to Robert Kagan's (2023) *Foreign Affairs* article, "A Free World, If You Can Keep It: Ukraine and American Interests."

Defending "Liberal Democracy"

In the above-mentioned article, Robert Kagan frames the geopolitical situation like this: "The United States has joined a war against an aggressive great power in Europe and promised to defend another small democratic nation against an autocratic great power in East Asia." Thus, according to Kagan, we are dealing with a Manichean conflict between Good and Evil. Ukraine is said to be without qualification "democratic" (no hint of neo-Nazi violence there), Russia is "aggressive" (no consideration that Western militarism might threaten Russian security), and "autocratic" China is menacing another small democracy (not threatening US access to Taiwan's microchips).

Staking out a position on this high moral ground, Kagan then turns to history, beginning America's geopolitical saga at the end of 1915, when "it became clear that not even the combined power of France, Russia, and the United Kingdom would be sufficient to defeat the German industrial and military machine. A balance of global power that had favored liberalism was shifting toward antiliberal forces." Incredibly, Kagan here counts Czarist Russia (one of the

most autocratic regimes on Earth) on the side of “liberalism,” and Imperial Germany, which was rapidly democratizing at the time (Craig, 1978), on the “antiliberal” side.

Similarly, according to Kagan, Americans fought Hitler “not because they faced an immediate threat to their security but to defend the liberal world beyond their shores.” This statement is manifestly absurd, given that the United States only declared war on the Third Reich after Hitler declared war on the US.

The author concludes, “Americans have ever since struggled to reconcile these contradictory interpretations of their interests—one focused on security of the homeland and one focused on defense of the liberal world beyond the United States’ shores. . . . in the eight decades from World War II until today, the United States has used its power and influence to defend the hegemony of liberalism.” And finally, “the defense of Ukraine is a defense of the liberal hegemony.”

This claim—that American power upholds “liberalism” throughout the world—merits closer examination. During the eight decades to which Kagan refers, the United States has generally used military force, covert operations, and other forms of power to subvert movements and governments “unfriendly” to US corporate interests and to install and maintain “friendly” regimes, typically right-wing dictatorships (Bacevich, 2021; Blum, 2014; Chomsky, 1979/2015, 2004; Johnson, 2004; Stone and Kuznick, 2019).

The list of these interventions is long and well documented. It includes but is not limited to:

- the Philippines (1940s and 1950s)
- Iran (1953)
- Guatemala (1953-1954)
- Costa Rica (mid 1950s)
- Indonesia (1957-58)
- Vietnam (1950-1973)
- Cambodia (1955-1973)
- Laos (1957-1973)
- Haiti (1959-1963)
- Guatemala (1960)
- Algeria (1960s)
- Ecuador (1960-1963)
- The Congo (1960-1964)
- Brazil (1961-1964)
- Peru (1960-1965)
- Dominican Republic (1960-1965)
- Cuba (1959-1980s)
- Indonesia (1965)
- Ghana (1966)
- Uruguay (1964-1970)
- Chile (1964-1973)
- Greece (1964-1974)

Bolivia (1964-1975)
 Guatemala (1962 to 1980s)
 Costa Rica (1970-1971)
 Iraq (1972-1975)
 Angola (1975-1980)
 Zaire (1975-1978)
 Jamaica (1976-1980)
 Granada (1979-1984)
 Morocco (1983)
 Suriname (1982-1984)
 Libya (1981-1989)
 Nicaragua (1978-1990)
 Panama (1969-1991)
 Iraq (1990-1991)
 Afghanistan (1979-1992)
 El Salvador (1980-1994)
 Eastern Europe (1990s to the present)
 Bosnia (1992-1995)
 Kosovo (1998-99)
 Libya (2011)
 Caucasus (mid-2000s)
 Syria (2011 to 2018)
 Ukraine (2014).

Calling this litany of American interventions a defense of “liberal democracy” is reminiscent of George Orwell’s words in *1984*: “War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.” And apropos Orwell, this is indeed how war propaganda works—in order to legitimize global militarism and domination, it is necessary to characterize these things as a noble enterprise serving a higher purpose. For the Spanish conquistadors, it was leading lost souls to Christ; for the British, it was the White Man’s Burden; and for Americans today, it is defense of “liberal democracy.”

Before concluding this section, let us note two points about Kagan’s frequent reference to “Americans’ interests” in the context of military policy. First, which Americans? The middle-class taxpayers who disproportionately pay for the country’s endless wars? Or the defense contractors, Pentagon bureaucrats, oil companies, and other big special interests who disproportionately benefit from them? Clearly, there is no monolithic national interest (D’Agostino, 2012), a concept that only serves to camouflage the war racket, as Major General Smedley Butler called it.

Second, Kagan’s discourse of “interests” when talking about military power suggests that it is somehow legitimate to use force or threaten to use force in pursuit of economic or other advantage. Alternatively, to put an altruistic face on “interests,” the United States and its allies, according to Kagan, have wielded and should continue to wield “superior power on behalf of their vision of a desirable world order.”

Under the United Nations Charter, however, the only legitimate uses of force are for self-defense (narrowly defined as repelling an armed attack on one's territory) or for collective security (if authorized by the UN Security Council). In fact, the uses of force endorsed by Kagan are what the Nuremberg Tribunal defined as "Crimes Against Peace." The time is long past to reject this criminal discourse of "national interests" as a justification for war. In the concluding section of this article, I will address the hawk objection that "it's a jungle out there" and that compliance with international law is a utopian luxury that "we" cannot afford.

Military Spending Tells the Story

From the above analyses, it should be clear that US and European claims about defending "liberal democracy" have little or no basis in the historical record. Nor is Vladimir Putin's talk about "denazification" a credible explanation for the invasion. Human rights violations have been reported on both sides of the Donbas conflict, and in any case, humanitarian justifications for military interventions should never be taken at face value.

This leaves us with two competing theories of the Ukraine war: Russian imperialism and NATO expansion. As we have seen, Putin has made public statements consistent with an imperialist agenda, but corroborating evidence is needed to know whether this is just political rhetoric or an actual basis for Russian foreign policy. In addition, Putin has made contradictory public statements about NATO expansion, sometimes denying that it threatens Russian security, and at other times calling it an existential threat.

Regarding NATO, McFaul (2022) argues that it has never invaded Russia and never would, so it cannot pose a threat to Russia. This may be true, but by the same reasoning, it was equally unthinkable prior to 2014 that Putin's Russia would invade Europe. (This is not to imply that Russia became a threat to Europe after the annexation of Crimea, which was triggered by a U.S.-supported anti-Russian coup in Kyiv, only that Russia certainly posed no threat before the annexation. See Sakwa, 2015/2022 and Cohen, 2019/2022.) Notwithstanding this lack of threat to European security, however, NATO expanded further and further into Eastern Europe, enlisting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in 1999; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Bulgaria in 2004; and solicited membership by Georgia and Ukraine at the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit.

To be sure, the Baltic and Eastern European countries had historical reasons to fear Russian imperialism in the post-Cold War period. However, this did not require the leaders of NATO to admit these countries into the alliance, nor does it entail that the former's decision to do so was motivated by genuine concern for the latter's security. Indeed, if such considerations were paramount, NATO was in a strong position to negotiate demilitarization and verifiable security arrangements on behalf of the vulnerable Eastern Europeans. Its failure to exhaust this remedy before expanding the alliance raises the question, at least for this author, whether the leaders of NATO were cynically exploiting the fears of Russia's neighbors in the service of an imperialist and lucrative (for military-industrial interests) policy towards Russia.

For purposes of this article, however, let us consider a traditional "security-dilemma" model of NATO expansion. In that case, we would have a classical chicken-and-egg problem. NATO

expansion, in the view of western hawks, was justified by Russian imperialist thinking, such as Aleksandr Dugin's 1997 book *Foundations of Geopolitics*. For Russian elites, on the other hand, NATO's unprovoked expansion was evidence that this nuclear-armed military alliance poses a real (not imaginary) threat to Russian security. To adjudicate these conflicting interpretations, let us now turn to objective data on US/NATO and Russian military spending.

The following US/NATO figures are the sum of the military expenditures of the United States, United Kingdom, France and Germany; the combined contributions of other NATO members are small by comparison and can be disregarded for purposes of this analysis. The US/NATO and Russian data are from the SIPRI Military Expenditure Data Base (2023) and are in constant 2020 US dollars. Here are what the data show (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

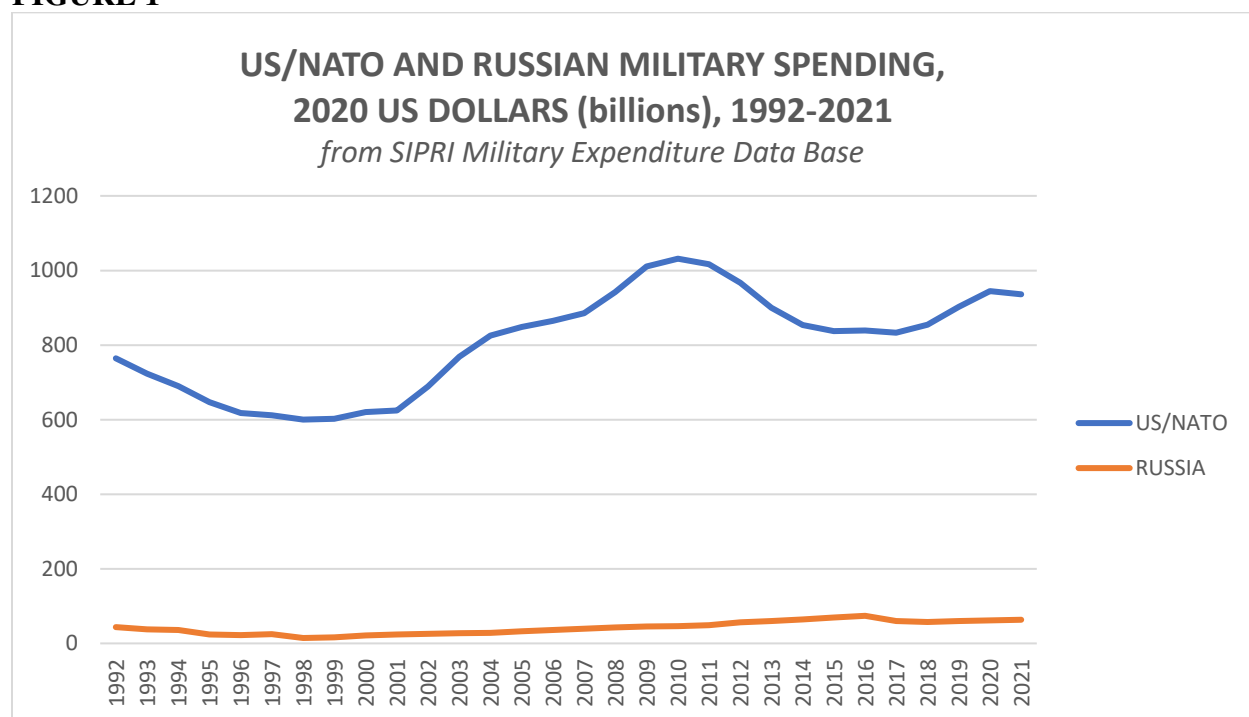


Figure 1 shows that in 1998, the US/NATO spent 600 billion dollars on their militaries and Russia spent 15 billion (less than 3% of US/NATO); these amounts are the lowest for both sides in the post-Cold War period. Outspent by a factor of 40 to 1, Russia clearly posed little or no military threat to Europe in 1998. In this context, Aleksandr Dugin's vision of Russia becoming a "world empire" in the coming decades was simply delusional. All this was certainly common knowledge for policy elites in the Kremlin, the Pentagon, and Brussels alike.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming military superiority that the US/NATO held vis a vis Russia in 1998, over the next 23 years, the former increased their military expenditures 56% from their already astronomical baseline (600 billion) to 936 billion dollars in 2021. This period also saw the first wave of NATO expansion in 1999, the second ("Big Bang") wave in 2004, the 2008 threat to bring Georgia and Ukraine into NATO, US support for the 2014 anti-Russian coup in

Kyiv (Sakwa, 2015/2022), and the 2021 U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership, calling for Ukraine to join NATO and threatening a war to reintegrate Crimea into Ukraine.

Confronting this extraordinary escalation of US/NATO military power, Russia increased its military spending over 300% from 15 billion (its 1998 baseline) to 63 billion in 2021. Notwithstanding this massive effort at catch-up, Russia went from being outspent by 585 billion dollars in 1998 to 873 billion dollars in 2021, a large increase in the US/NATO's already absurd level of overkill. These relationships are evident from Figure 1, which graphically encapsulates the whole statistical picture and all its underlying data.

In summary, the notion that Russia and the US/NATO are comparably matched players on the geopolitical stage is a complete myth. To be sure, Russia's large armed forces as measured by numbers of troops may well have posed a threat its neighbors. As discussed above, however, this cannot explain why NATO's leaders chose to militarize European and international security, rather than pursue negotiated and verifiable threat reduction initiatives. And the US/NATO could have made peace from a position of overwhelming strength, as shown both by the above-referenced military spending data and US global projection of power including more than 700 military bases abroad compared with Russia's less than 20.

Imperialist rhetoric may play well with nationalist elements in Russia, but the Kremlin—far from fielding military resources capable of conquering Europe—is hard pressed to defend its own borders from an expanding military alliance that entirely dwarfs its economic and military capabilities. That is the story the military spending data tell, which (like other actions) speak louder than words. These data are a total *reductio ad absurdum* of the Russian imperialism narrative.

The Ukraine War: A Causal Theory

We can conclude that the post-Cold War expansion of NATO played a role in the etiology of the Ukraine war; even Michael McFaul (2022) acknowledges this much. However, the expansion of NATO per se is not a sufficient explanation for Putin's 24 February 2022 invasion. To gain a more adequate understanding of causes, it is necessary to step back and take a broader historical view of Western-Russian relations.

In the seven years between the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and the first wave of NATO expansion in March 1999, both US/NATO and Russian military expenditures were declining, as seen in Figure 1. In the United States, there was talk of a "peace dividend"—the long overdue redeployment of resources from military production to civilian investment, which could bring about general prosperity.

Meanwhile, Boris Yeltsin had outsourced Russia's transition to capitalism to Western banks and economists, and Wall Street was sharing the spoils of the Russian economy with a new class of oligarchs, all at the expense of the Russian populace (Stiglitz, 1994). What brought this short-lived era of demilitarization and neoliberal profiteering to an end?

First, permanent war economies and national security states had become entrenched in Russia, Europe, and especially the United States, and defense contractors and their counterparts in government needed new threats to justify their continued control of public revenues (Melman, 2001). The expansion of NATO was a natural outgrowth of this militarized system of political economy in the West, as were “Full Spectrum Dominance,” the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, a new arms race with China, and nuclear weapons “modernization.”

Second, by the time Vladimir Putin was elected President of Russia in May 2000, the country was ready to turn the page on his predecessor’s disastrous neoliberal experiment. Putin enacted reforms that benefited ordinary Russians, simultaneously earning their political support (Sakwa, 2007) and sealing his fate with Western elites, who perceived a strong Russian leader and state as an obstacle to their own economic and geopolitical agendas (Lauria, 2022).

Putin initially sought good relations with US/NATO leaders, and many of the latter wanted good relations with Russia, but the hard liners sabotaged these efforts. Especially in Washington, the war lobby’s capture of foreign policy became evident with the relentless expansion of NATO and other militarization of international security culminating in the current war.

In a highly perceptive analysis of these dynamics written three days after Putin’s 24 March 2022 invasion, eminent journalist Joe Lauria (2022) noted public statements by Joe Biden suggesting that the real objective of US policy in Ukraine is regime change in Moscow. After the “Big Bang” wave of NATO expansion in 2004, Putin was openly critical of Western militarism, which he denounced at the 2007 Munich Security Conference. The US and NATO, reacting to Putin but also confirming his perception of Western hostility, solicited Georgia’s and Ukraine’s membership in NATO at the alliance’s Bucharest Summit the following year.

Having overwhelming military superiority over Russia during this entire time (see Figure 1; note also the more than 700 US military bases abroad compared with Russia’s less than 20, as indicated above), the US and NATO could have acted to defuse these tensions if there had been a will to do so. Instead, the United States pursued a hawkish foreign policy under President Barak Obama that included support for an anti-Russian coup in Kiev in 2014 (Sakwa, 2015/2022), which was followed by Russian annexation of Crimea. Relations between the two sides continued to deteriorate, leading up to the current Ukraine war. Even now, however, little has changed in the completely lopsided military imbalance between the US/NATO and Russia. As the side that is holding nearly all the cards, the former can pursue peace at any time. Why does this not happen?

In addressing this question, first let us dispose of the myth that the fighting continues because the Zelensky administration wants to continue fighting. Even if this is the Ukrainian government’s preference, Zelensky’s continual petitions to Washington and Brussels for military aid underscore the dependence of Ukraine on the US and NATO members to fund the war and provide advanced weapons and training. This dependence means that the US and NATO can prevail upon Ukraine to negotiate an end to the war at any time. The reasons this does not happen have little to do with Kiev.

There may be two reasons why the war continues, and both are related to the question why the “peace dividend” after the Cold War was so short lived. First, a prolonged war in Ukraine is a huge bonanza for US defense contractors and Pentagon bureaucrats, who exert outsized influence on US foreign policy. A December 2022 *New York Times* article (Lipton et al, 2022) chronicled this boom. William D. Hartung, a public interest analyst quoted in the article, said that the weapons makers are “riding high again, and Ukraine just gives them another argument as to why things need to continue onward and upward.”

Defense contractor Raytheon “went through six years of Stingers [anti-aircraft missiles used by Ukraine] in 10 months.” Allocating 45 billion dollars more than President Biden requested (for a total of 858 billion for Fiscal Year 2023), Congress put military spending “on track to reach its highest level in inflation-adjusted terms since the peaks in the costs of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars between 2008 and 2011, and the second highest in inflation-adjusted terms since World War II” (Lipton et al, 2022).

Second, the war aims of the US and UK are apparently not to uphold Ukrainian security; indeed, US policy has been described as “fighting Russia to the last Ukrainian” (Bandow, 2022). Rather, the aims are apparently to completely defeat and humiliate Vladimir Putin, exhaust Russia economically through a military competition which it cannot win (as the US did previously with the Soviet Union), and see Putin replaced with a Yeltsin-like leader who will give Western corporate and financial elites unimpeded access to the Russian economy (Lauria, 2022). There is evidence this game plan is backfiring and that the war is enabling Putin to consolidate his power (Troianovski and Hopkins, 2023), but this would hardly be the first time the United States has persisted with a failed foreign policy.

Indeed, Joe Lauria (2022) proposes the entirely plausible hypothesis that Washington designed its policy in Ukraine precisely to entrap Russia in a war that would be the Putin administration’s undoing. As Lauria points out, there were two precedents for such a policy. First, on 3 July 1979, President Carter signed a directive secretly aiding the anti-Soviet mujahideen; this was apparently intended to draw the Soviets into a quagmire in Afghanistan, which in fact did occur, contributing to the eventual collapse of the USSR. Second, President George H. W. Bush signaled to Saddam Hussein (via US Ambassador April Glaspie in a 25th July 1990 meeting with the Iraqi dictator) that the US would not intervene if Iraq invaded Kuwait. In a bait and switch maneuver, when Iraq subsequently did invade, the US then led a war against Iraq that decimated its armed forces and showcased America’s latest weapon systems; for an in-depth account of this backstory of the Iraq war, see Hilsman (1992).

To be sure, the above explanation of the Ukraine war is necessarily incomplete and tentative. The real intentions of US and NATO policy will not be known with much confidence until historians and political scientists in the future have adequately analyzed the relevant internal policy documents, most of which are not yet in the public domain. The most anyone can provide at this point is informed speculation, but that is vastly preferable to the tsunami of war propaganda currently flooding the international mass media. In that spirit, I offer the above causal theory.

Beyond Ukraine: Demilitarization or a New Cold War?

I will conclude by addressing whether a demilitarized world order is really possible, and if so, what a pathway to it might look like. This relates to the above-mentioned objection of hawks that “it’s a jungle out there” and that the US and its allies need to utilize “superior power,” not international law, “on behalf of their vision of a desirable world order,” as Robert Kagan (2023) put it.

First, given our militarized status quo, the world can at best expect a new Cold War, and possibly a “hot” nuclear war if worst case scenarios for Ukraine materialize (Mearsheimer, 2022). Under Robert Kagan’s Manichean view of the world, which is apparently shared by the Biden administration, the US and NATO should be willing to use force to defend “liberal democracy” from “aggressive” and “autocratic” great powers, particularly Russia and China. I exposed the fallacies of this paradigm earlier in this article; its role in provoking Putin’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine (or at the very least its failure to deter the invasion) constitute a further reason to reject it. But it remains to be shown how a viable alternative can be crafted, which is the subject of this concluding section.

The alternative I propose, which is well-defined and supported by the peace studies literature (Butfoy, 1997; Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict, 2008; Benedict et al, 2016), is the path of verifiable security agreements. Contrary to conventional wisdom, this path does not require all signatories to be liberal democracies, since violations of the agreements can be detected by all parties, triggering remedial actions. Bilateral US-Soviet successes, relying on satellite verification (Day, 2022), include the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, SALT I, and START I treaties. Multilateral successes include the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal (JCPOA), and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). (To be sure, North Korea withdrew from the NPT, and Iran was possibly in violation before the JCPOA. But these failures were small for a treaty with 190 states parties, especially compared to the nuclear-armed signatories’ non-compliance with their NPT disarmament obligations; see Deller, et al, 2003).

In short, governments know how to negotiate verifiable security agreements and have done so successfully in this and the previous century. Autocratic governments, which have participated in these agreements, are not an obstacle. Rather, the obstacle is the stranglehold that defense contractors, military bureaucracies, and other special interests have over foreign policy, particularly in the United States, currently the world’s only superpower. (The US, a liberal democracy, actually has a poor record of compliance with security related treaties; see Deller et al, 2003).

As for Ukraine, negotiations to end the war can build upon and update the 2014-2015 Minsk agreements. To be sure, full diplomatic resolution of the status of Crimea and other territory annexed by Russia may not be possible in the near future. However, a long-term cessation of hostilities, such as the 1953 armistice that indefinitely suspended the Korean War, is certainly a possibility. For other regional and global demilitarization initiatives, see Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict (2008), Benedict et al (2016), and Butfoy (1997).

Far from being an untried, utopian experiment, the path of threat reduction through verifiable agreements is a practical and tested paradigm of international security. Given its record of success, and the militarists' record of failure culminating in the current Ukraine war and looming New Cold War, the burden of proof is not on doves to show that demilitarization can succeed, but on hawks to show that it cannot.

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Bringing Lasting Peace to Dagbon in Northern Ghana: The Role of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs

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Abstract

Dagbon, the ancient kingdom found in Ghana witnessed a protracted dispute related to the succession to skin of the Ya Na. Efforts by successive governments dating back to the colonial and post-colonial periods to help resolve the crisis were not successful. These peace efforts only resulted in cosmetic peace arrangements with no lasting solution. In 2002, the King, Ya Na Yakubu Andani II, together with 40 others were killed. This article takes a look at the efforts of successive governments to find a lasting solution to the Dagbon succession dispute. Using the Relative Deprivation Theory, the article examines the role the Committee of Eminent Chiefs set up by the government of Ghana to help find a lasting solution to the dispute. The paper accesses how the Committee relied on the customs and traditions of Dagbon to help broker peace and brought about a lasting peace to the Yendi skin.

BRINGING LASTING PEACE TO DAGBON IN NORTHERN GHANA: THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE OF EMINENT CHIEFS

Vincent Assanful

Introduction

Ghana is one of the stable democracies and one of the most peaceful in West Africa. The country has not suffered any national crisis that has led to a situation of civil war or civil strife. Though Ghana is said to be relatively peaceful, this peaceful nature has in many occasions been interrupted by communal conflicts. Several communities in Ghana according Kendie, et al (2014) have witnessed communal strife, particularly on land and chieftaincy related. These conflicts have had negative impact on both human and economic growths of the country.

Many factors have been identified to trigger a lot of these conflicts. Among these are ethnicity, religious, political and chieftaincy. Ghana has witnessed some ethnic conflicts notably in the north of the country. Examples are the Konkomba and Dagomba ethnic conflicts in 1994 and the Mamprusi and Kusasi conflict that has protracted since colonial times (Mahama and Longi 2013). Religious conflicts have also been experienced. There has been clashes between the Ga youths and Christian churches over the observance of the month long no noise-making ban before the celebration of the annual Homowo festival of the Ga people. There have also been intra-religious clashes between the Tijanniya and Al-Sunnah Muslim sects (Mahama and Longi 2013). Ghana has again witnessed many political conflicts. Even though these conflicts have not led to full blown war, they have however, led to destruction of properties and loss of lives. Most of the political conflicts witnessed currently have been between the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the two dominant political parties in Ghana in this fourth republic. This paper for the purpose of illustration, using the relative deprivation theory examines the Dagbon succession crisis and how the Chieftaincy institution, being the custodian of the customs and traditions of the people led in the search for a sustainable solution to the conflict.

Relative deprivation theory

This paper was undergirded by the relative deprivation theory. Relative deprivation has been used by scholars to understand how people react when they have a feeling of been denied what is due them. Relative deprivation theory was important for this study because most of the chieftaincy conflicts arise when expectations do not meet attainment and this could lead to people confronting those who they hold responsible for depriving them of their ambitions (Boakye 2016). In most of the chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana, the various litigating parties feel that they have been deprived of their right to install their member as chiefs.

Methodology

This study used one case of chieftaincy succession dispute in Northern Ghana: The Dagbon (Yendi) Chieftaincy succession dispute to examine the role traditional leadership employed time tested indigenous mediation mechanisms to find solution to the intractable succession dispute.

The study drawing on primary and secondary data examined how the Committee of Eminent Chiefs helped to solve this succession dispute.

Dagbon State and Chieftaincy

Dagbon is the largest kingdom in the Northern part of Ghana. It was founded in 1403 by King Sitobu when the Gbewaa Kingdom was divided by his two sons into the Mamprugu and Dagbon Kingdoms (Ahorsu and Gebe 2011; Tonah 2012). Yendi is the ancestral capital of the Dagbon Kingdom. There are two main gates of the kingdom from whom potential candidates can ascend to the Yendi skin as Ya Na, the King of Dagbon. Sovereignty among the Dagbon lies with the Ya Na (Pellow 2016). The ritual functions of the Dagomba (how the people are called) are performed by the *Tindanaa*, the earth priests. They are believed to be indigenous to the land and were there before chieftaincy was introduced to the land. One of the *Tindanaa* is quoted by Pellow (2016) to have said “we were here when the chiefs came ... The chiefs they fear us, the *Tindaamba*. They don’t know how the lands are performed [cared for], for long life and prosperity” (p. 45).

Dagbon is a centralized state with the kingdom administratively ruled by the Ya Na and assisted by three Paramount Chiefs, the Karaga Na, Mion-Lana and Yo Na. These Chiefs administer the towns of Karaga, Mion and Savelugu respectively and for anyone to aspire to be a Ya Na, the individual must have occupied one of these skins (Ladouceur 1972; Pellow 2016; Tonah 2012). The Kingdom of Dagbon is fully Islamised. Islam reached Dagbon dating from the 7th century with its introduction by the Arab traders. The culture of Dagbon has been heavily influenced by Islam as well. This has resulted in the indigenous festivals such as the Damba and Bugum (fire festival) assuming Islamic characteristics. The Dagomba have a strong attachment to their chieftaincy institution. This partly account for the intensity with which chieftaincy disputes are carried out (Ladouceur 1972). The Ya Na is the overlord of the Dagbon Kingdom. All lands in the kingdom are vested in him and religiously, has the sole right to officiate the Damba, Bugum and the Eid festivals (Ahorsu and Gebe 2011). The Ya Na also has the exclusive right to appoint Muslim scholars who perform ritual functions for the kingdom (Ahorsu and Gebe 2011). Once a Ya Na has been enskinned, Dagbon tradition has it that he cannot be deskinned. If a king has to be removed for a stated misbehaviour, he was by consensus poisoned by the kingmakers or driven into exile (Ladouceur, 1972).

Succession to the Dagbon skin

Chieftaincy has been part of the history of Dagbon since time immemorial (Salifu, 2013). The overlord of Dagbon is the Ya Na who as earlier stated, is assisted by the three chiefs of Karaga, Mion and Savlugu. Succession to the Dagbon skin was previously opened to all male children of the previous Kings who sat on the skin of the kingdom. This arrangement was changed when the king of the neighbouring Mamprusi state intervened in an arbitration settlement and settled that only the sons of the Ya Na’s occupying the skins of Karaga, Mion and Savelugu can ascend to the skin of Yendi (Ladouceur 1972; Brukum 2004).

The Dagbon skin has rotated between the descendants of the two sons of Ya Na Yakubu, Abdulai and Andani (Ladouceur 1972). Abdulai I succeeded to the skin on the death of his father

and Andani II succeeded his brother on his death. Since the death of Andani II, there emerged a pattern of rotation between the sons of the brothers who now form the royal Abudu and Andani gates of Dagbon. The ascension to the skin of Ya Na skin at Yendi follows a pattern of promotion. Eligible royals from both gates join the fray to the ultimate by first seeking appointment to smaller skins, gradually moving on to the divisional skins and the lucky one eventually makes it to Yendi to sit on the skin of the Ya Na (Tonah 2012; Salifu 2013).

Succession Dispute to the Ya Na skin

Before 1948, succession to the skin of the Ya Na was peaceful. The genesis of the dispute as has been articulated by scholars started when the Ya Na, Mahama II died (Ladouceur 1972; Tonah 2012). With the death of the Ya Na from the Abudu gate, it was believed that in line with the rotation principle established, an Andani royal was going to be enskinned as the next Ya Na. This was not to be as another Abudu, Abdulai III was instead enskinned as the Ya Na to the chagrin of the Andani royal gate (Ladouceur 1972; Tonah 2012). The Abudu gate dominated their Andani brothers in the aftermath of the 1948 enskinment. In 1954 the Abudu gate tried to import the primogeniture idea into the succession practice by claiming that the right of inheritance exclusively lies to the eldest son of the Ya Na skin (Kanda, 2019). Aikins (as cited in Kanda 2019) opines that since 1948, the Abudu gate occupied the skin to the exclusion of the Andani gate. Ya Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV was later deskinning and the Mion-lana, Yakubu Andani from the Andani gate was enskinned as Ya Na. This act of deskinning and enskinning of Mahamadu Abdulai IV and Yakubu Andani II respectively, led to the bitterness that belied the rivalry between the two gates (Ladouceur 1972; Tonah 2012; Kanda 2019). This bitterness witnessed many conflicts between the two gates as the Abudu refused to recognise the enskinning of Yakubu Andani II as the Ya Na.

The Abudu and Andani divide was exacerbated by other factors. National politics helped to deepen the divide between the two gates. The first attempt of political interference came right after independence. The CPP government was confronted with the thought of deskinning Ya Na Abdulai III of the Abudu gate in favour of the Mion-Lana, Andani. Nkrumah established the Opoku-Afari Commission to look into the affairs of the Yendi skin. Even though the report of the committee was never made public, it was believed that the committee recommended for the deskinning of Ya Na Abdulai III (Ladouceur 1972). The recommendation of the committee was rejected by Nkrumah and a meeting was later called in Accra to find a lasting solution to the succession dispute. In 1960, L.I 50 was passed to ensure that the rotation system was adhered to and that the Andani gate will have the benefit of having two royals from their fold occupying the Yendi skin in succession (Ladouceur 1972).

The overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966 saw a return of the crisis again. The Mate Kole committee set up by the NLC regime recommended for the deskinning of Ya Na Andani III. In his place the Gbo- Lana, Mahamadu Abdulai was enskinned as the Ya Na with the active support of the Busia regime (Tonah 2012). The overthrow of the Busia government reignited the family feud between the Andani gate and the Abudu gate. The NLC regime of Acheampong set up the Ollenu Committee to establish the right customs and practices that leads to the nomination, selection and enskinning of a Ya Na (Tonah 2012). The Ollenu committee recommended that the removal of Ya Na Mahama III was unlawful and the enskinning of Mahamadu Abdulai IV as null and void

(Tonah 2012). A judicial review by the Supreme Court in 1986 affirmed the rotational practice which the Andani gate favours (Tonah 2012; Ateng 2020). The Supreme Court ruling seem to have settled the Dagbon succession dispute until the events of March 25th-27th, 2002 threw the whole peaceful atmosphere out of gear.

The Crisis of March 2002

The events leading to the outbreak of violence in Yendi has simmering been in the background for some time. The change of government in 2001 that brought the New Patriotic Party (NPP) to power seems to have emboldened the Abudu gate to take certain actions that threatened the peace of Dagbon (Tonah 2012; Ateng 2020). The Abudu royal family were emboldened by what was rumoured to be a promise given them by the NPP in the run up to the 2000 general elections that should they emerge victorious, they would assist in helping the Abudu perform the final funeral rites of the late Ya Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV who had died in 1988 (MacGaffey 2006; Ahorsu and Gebe 2011; Tonah 2012; Pellow 2016).

The events that led to the present crisis was precipitated by both remote and immediate causes. The remote cause was the refusal of the then Ya Na Yakuba Andani II to allow for the burial and final funeral rites of the deskinned Ya Na, Mahamadu Abdulai IV to be performed at the Gbewaa palace. His reasons for the refusal were based on the fact that allowing the funeral of the late deskinned Ya Na will mount to recognising him as a former Ya Na. The demand of the Abudu gate to have Mahamadu Abdulai IV buried as a former Ya Na was based on the Supreme Court ruling which legitimised the rule of Yakubu Andani II as a former Ya Na and also gave recognition to anyone who has ever sat on the Yendi skin as a former Ya Na. The part of the ruling states:

having regard to the Dagomba's Constitution that deskinment is unknown in Dagomba, all persons who have ever occupied the Nam of Yendi shall without regard to how they ceased to be Ya Na's be regarded as former Ya Na's. Consequently, their sons do qualify for appointment to the gate skins of Savelugu, Karaga and Mion (Anamzoya 2008, p. 16).

Ya Na Yakubu Andani II was said not to have given notice to this ruling of the Supreme Court because he felt that was against the customs and traditions of Dagbon for a deskinned Ya Na to be continued to be given recognition as a Ya Na (Salifu 2013). According to Anamzoya (2008), the Andani elders expressed fears that if the Ya Na vacated the Gbewaa palace for the Abudu royal family to perform the final funeral rites of their late leader, they would refuse to vacate the palace for the Ya Na to return back. The immediate causes for the 2002 crisis were attempt by the Abudu gate to undermine the authority of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II by organising parallel celebrations of the Bugum and Eid-ul-Adha festivals in 2001 and 2002 and appointment of chiefs to traditional offices (MacGaffey 2006). These appointments, according to Tonah (2012), were considered by the Ya Na as an affront to his authority and a clear sign that the Abudu gate have the full support of the NPP government. Tension mounted in Yendi in March of 2002 when the government imposed a curfew on the town after rumours went out that both factions were stockpiling arms and the celebration of the Bugum festival could turn violent. The government was prevailed upon by Ya Na Yakubu Andani II to lift the curfew and allowed for the festival to

be celebrated. The Bugum festival is very dear to the Dagomba. The festival has been described by Mahama (cited in MacGaffey 2006, p.86) as a sacrifice to the gods and ancestors in which

the people hold not only flaming torches but also swords, cutlases, knives, bows and arrows and cudgels. The mood of the people is warlike. the atmosphere is heavily charged and disturbed. It appears ominous to any person who has ever witnessed the occasion. Men test their magical powers, defying other to shoot at them or cut them with machetes; if they are not hurt, it means that their powers are working.

The main act that triggered the fight of March 25 was an incident that happened when an Andani youth was chased and beaten by the Abudu for making a comment to the effect that by the next morning, the number of widows in Yendi will increase (Anamzoya, 2008). This incident sparked the three-day war that ended with the death of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II and some of his elders. The Gbewaa palace was burnt in the course of the fight (MacGaffey 2006; Anamzoya 2008; Tonah 2012). Pellow (2016) has characterised the fight as ‘technologies of terror’ or ‘logics of violence’. She states:

People who were related or married to one another, who lived next door to each other, who went to the same schools and shared the same social spaces and religious beliefs and practices, nevertheless engaged in acts of barbarity upon one another. They employed different types of violence to create terror, including body mutilation and the use of assault rifles (p. 47).

At the end of the three days of carnage, characterised by looting, arson, defiling of sacred spaces and emblems, the Ya Na and 40 of his elders laid dead. The Gbewaa palace, seat of the Dagbon skin, laid in ruins. The Ya Na was not only killed but mutilated as well. His killing could be described as gruesome as he was dismembered. A man was seen to have danced with the hand of the Ya Na hanged around his neck (Pellow 2016). The government responded, though belatedly, to the carnage and massacre in Yendi, by imposing a curfew on the town and a state of emergency on the whole of Dagbon with the aim to curtail the spread of the fight to other towns (Anamzoya 2008). To help find the cause of the fight and a lasting solution, the government set up the Wuaku Commission to go into the disturbances in March 2002. The three-member Commission was chaired by Justice Wuaku, a retired Supreme Court judge with Professor Kwesi Yankah and Mrs Florence Brew as members. The Commission after days of sitting presented its report to the government of Ghana. The Commission took testimonies from eye witnesses and concluded that both sides of the Dagbon divide were responsible for the carnage (Tonah 2012). The Commission further exonerated some government officials who had been accused as the main instigators of the fight between the two royal gates (MacGaffey 2006). The Commission further recommended for the prosecution of several people including the then Northern Regional Minister (Tonah 2012). The report of the Commission was rejected by both royal gates (Anamzoya 2008). The government had to fall on the time-tested traditional institution of chieftaincy and try to harness its strength in peace mediation. The President of Ghana, J.A. Kuffour set up a three-member Committee of Eminent Chiefs (CECs) to help find a lasting solution to the Dagbon skin succession dispute.

Committee of Eminent Chiefs (CECs)

The CECs was made of up the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II as its chair. Other members were the Nayiri, Naa Bohagu Abdulai Mahami Sheriga King of the Gonja and the Yagbonwura, Tuntumba Boreasa Sulemana Jakpa I king of the Mamprugu kingdom. The Committee was tasked by the President to look into the traditional issues relating to the conflict and to help find customary and traditional solutions to the dispute (Asiedu 2008).



Fig. 1

Members of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs.

Source: www.graphic.com.gh

Traditional leaders in Africa have many a time been called upon to help use their knowledge of the customs and traditions of their people to resolve any dispute that may arise. The traditional leaders are able to utilise their knowledge of the customs, traditions and worldviews of the community to help address and settle any conflict. Studies have shown that traditional means of resolving disputes have proven to be effective in most African societies (Bukari 2013; Tijani 2019). In African societies, the method of traditional conflict resolution mechanism involves the intervention of the revered elders of the community who on their own or on the invitation of a third party come in to help bring peace to the troubled community (Ghebretkle and Rammala 2018).

The role of the CECs in helping to resolve the Dagbon succession dispute is in tandem with the understanding that traditional leaders can harness the strength in the customs, traditions and world views of the troubled community in resolving such conflict. The Dagbon crisis became protracted as a result of the relegation to the background of the time-tested Dagbon traditional ways of managing conflicts and potential conflicts. By customs and traditions of the Dagbon, the Kuga Na was clothed with the customary duty to mediate anytime conflict arose over chieftaincy. His decision on the matter was never to be rejected or ignored. Where the Kuga Na found it difficult to deal with the issue, he referred it to the Nayiri, King of the Mamprugu kingdom. Though this practice helped to keep Dagbon at peace, it was unfortunately abandoned (Mohammed 2018). It was not surprising that when the Committee of Eminent Chiefs were put in place to resolve the Dagbon crisis, the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II was clear that the Committee will use the time-tested customs and traditions of Dagbon to resolve the crisis.

Road map to Peace

The CECs in their quest to find a lasting solution to the Dagbon crisis developed the 'Road map to Peace'. The road map was aimed at ensuring that the feuding gates were all accommodated in the various grievances they have put forward. The CECs took into cognisance of the previous interventions and recommendations, including the ruling of the Supreme Court that many thought should have put the crisis to rest. The Road map to Peace was an agreement that ensured that the outstanding issues raised by the Wuaku Commission were addressed (Asiedu, 2008). The main issue the Wuaku Commission identified to be the stumbling block for a lasting peace to Dagbon was the performance of the final funeral rites of the deskinned Ya Na, Mahamadu Abdulai IV. This funeral rite was in conformity with the ruling of the Supreme Court which recognised Mahamadu Abdulai IV as a former Ya Na.

The road map to peace signed in 2006 among others recommended the following:

1. The installation of the Regent of Ya-Naa Yakubu Andani takes precedence over the installation of Naa Mahamadu Abudulai's Regent since Naa Yakubu died in office and Dagbon custom did not contemplate a situation where there would be two sitting Ya-Na's or Regents at the same time.
2. A Council of Elders comprising three representatives each from the Andani and Abudu Families shall be constituted immediately to act in concert with the Kuga-Naa and the Regent of Naa Yakubu Andani to handle all traditional arrangements from the date of burial of Naa Yakubu Andani, the performance of funeral rites of both late Ya-Nas to the installation of a new Ya-Na.
3. The burial of Naa Yakubu Andani should take place on 10th April 2006, with the consultation and active participation of the Council of Elders, and his Regent appointed shortly thereafter in accordance with Dagbon customs and traditions.
4. The Kuga Na is enjoined to act as father of all, to be impartial and to ensure the full participation of the Abudu family in all matters relating to the burial of Naa Yakubu Andani and the management of the Dagbon State.
5. The powers of the Regent shall be limited because of the peculiar circumstances in Dagbon today. In this context, the Regent shall not have powers to appoint any chiefs or alienate any lands or other resources belonging to the Dagbon State.
6. Without prejudice to clause "e" above, the Regent with the concurrence of the Kuga Naa and the Council of Elders shall appoint chiefs to vacant skins whose participation will be crucial to the performance of the funeral rites of Naa Mahamadu and Naa Yakubu Andani, and to assign the Regent of Naa Mahamadu to a skin after the performance of the funeral of his father.
7. The burial of Naa Yakubu Andani shall be performed in the royal mausoleum. All other purposes connected to his burial shall be performed at the temporary palace (Ateng 2020).

The Road map to Peace unfortunately could not deliver the required peace as very little progress was achieved. The Kuga Na, the most senior of the elders of Dagbon, official custodian of

traditions, objected to certain provisions in the Road map to Peace which advocated for the creation of a temporary committee to be chaired by the Kuga Na to appoint royals for the vacant skins in the kingdom to enable the performance of royal funerals (MacGraftey 2013). After ten years of implementation of the road map, only two of the objectives set in it had been achieved (Tonah 2012; Ateng 2020). The governments of Prof John Atta Mills and John Mahama continued with the cooperation the previous government had given to the CECs. On November 18, 2007, all the parties to the dispute agreed on the final peace pact that showed commitment to the Road map to Peace earlier agreed (Ahorsu 2016). The Abudu gate later raised issues with the road map saying:

the Abudu ... has come to the sad conclusion that the pertinent issue central to the realization of sustainable peace in the Dagbon traditional area has not been properly resolved by the Otumfuo Committee of Eminent Chiefs. We, therefore, wish to state that the Abudu Royal Family has categorically rejected the final recommendations made by the Eminent Chiefs on the funeral rites of Na Mahamadu Abdulai (Ahorsu 2016, p. 109).

The Road map to Peace was stalled as a result of the disagreements between the two royal gates.

Peace at last?

Another attempt was made by the CECs to revive the stalled Road map for Peace. In 2014, President John Mahama called on all the parties to the conflict to resume the reconciliation process that has been stalled as a result of the concerns raised by the Abudu gate that the CECs has changed the agreed stipulations for the funeral rites of the Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV. They accused the CECs of losing their integrity and moral clarity to be honest brokers in the conflict (Ahorsu 2016).

In 2017, after a long period of break, the representatives of the Abudu and Andani gates agreed to resume the peace talks under the auspices of the CECs. The President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo, set up an inter-ministerial committee made of the Northern Regional Minister, Salifu Saeed, the Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs Minister, Kofi Dzamesi and the National Security Minister, Kan Dapaah to help revive the stalled peace talks (Adjei 2017). Speaking to both gates and CECs at the Jubilee House on September 17, 2017, the President reiterated his government resolve to support the formula to help end the Dagbon crisis. He said:

Whatever formula you the traditional rulers, yourself, the Nayiri and Asantehene agree on as the way forward and as roadmap for resolving the crisis in Dagbon, will have the full support of my government and me. We are prepared to support fully any formula that you devise or think will bring a lasting resolution of the problem. It is in the interest of all of us that this matter of Dagbon is put to rest ... it is retarding the progress of the area (Ghanaweb September 8, 2017).

The impetus of the inter-ministerial efforts helped to accelerate the pace to achieve a lasting peace in Dagbon. The CECs on the 16th of November, 2018 made a final push for finding a lasting solution to the crisis. The Road map to Peace was revived and new dates set for the final funeral rites of the deceased Ya Na's, Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV and Yakubu Andani II. Per the programme of activities for the funeral of the late Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abdulai IV,

1. the Bolin Lana will be installed as regent of Dagbon on 14th December, 2018.

2. On 15th December, 2018, there will be visitation by chiefs/regents, and sacrifices will be offered to the local deities amid musketry, drumming and dancing till 18th December, 2018.
3. On 19th December, 2018, there will be memorial lectures on the history of Dagbon, after which the drumming and dancing will continue to 21st December, 2018.
4. The youth will pay homage to the chiefs and regents amid firing of musketry, drumming and dancing again from 22nd -26th December, 2018.
5. The funeral will be climaxed with *Logri Bob'bu* and Muslim prayer by the Abudu Royal Family at Yendi.

The final funeral rites commenced with the installation of the Bolin-Lana, Abdulai Mahamadu as the Gbang-Lana, the regent of Dagbon (Alhassan and Doudu 2018). A Daily Graphic report of the installation reads:

The installation ceremony last Friday, which was witnessed by hundreds of people, including chiefs, religious leaders, ministers of state, metropolitan, municipal and district chief executives, took place in a cheerful and peaceful atmosphere. And when the Bolin Lana eventually stepped out of the palace moments after 4p.m., in his splendid regalia, he was greeted with wild cheers as people jostled to catch a glimpse of him. Some of the chiefs displayed their dexterity in horse riding by meandering their way through the thick crowd to make it to the palace amid the tromping beats of 'Lunsi' and 'Gonje' strings accompanied by the booming sounds of muskets (Alhassan and Doudu 2018).

The Bolin-Lana is the eldest son of the Mahamadu Abdulai IV. By Dagbon custom, the eldest son of a Ya Na on the death of the king becomes his regent (Ladouceur 1972). The final funeral rites of Mahamadu Abdulai IV were climaxed with a Quranic recital ceremony at the old Gbewaa palace which was reconstructed for the funeral rites. It is the custom of the Dagomba that the funeral rites of a late Ya Na must be performed at the Gbewaa palace. The ceremony was officiated by Muslim clerics who performed special Quranic recitals. They also prayed for the unity of Dagbon and genuine reconciliation after the funeral rites of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II. The funeral rites were climaxed with the performance of an important ritual by the regent, Bolin-Lana Mahamadu Abdulai. Dressed in his regalia, the Regent, Bolin Lana Mahamadu Abdulai, performed one of the significant rituals of the funeral — the circumambulation of the palace (three times) to signify his legitimacy and closure of the funeral observance, amid jubilation and firing of muskets, accompanied by unceasing drum beats and 'gonje' strings (www.graphic.com.gh). The final funeral rites of Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV at the Gbewaa palace which was the main stumbling block impeding the smooth implementation of the road map for peace paved the way for the full consummation of the peace pact. The Abudu royal family having completed all the rituals, vacated the Gbewaa palace as agreed, allowing the Andani royal family to move in to perform their final funeral rites for Ya Na Yakubu Andani II.

The final funeral rites of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II marked the end of the struggle for finding a final solution to the Dagbon crisis and opened the gate for the selection for his successor. The funeral rites afforded the people of Dagbon the opportunity to showcase their rich culture and traditions. The funeral rites started on the 4th of January, 2019. The ceremony began with the *kubihi pinbu*, the ceremonial shaving of hairs of the sons and daughters of the Ya Na to depict their royalty (Alhassan and Doudu, 2019). An important part of the funeral of the late Ya Na was

the three-day journey undertaken by the Chief Warrior of the Dagbon kingdom, the Kumbung Naa Yiri II from his palace in Kumbungu to Yendi on a horse. In line with traditions and customs, the Kumbung Naa usually moves along with bees and the *Logu* (spiritual powers) as a protective symbol, amidst drumming and singing of war songs, and he changes horses at regular intervals. This traditional exercise, only happens when Dagbon is on its way to the final funeral rites of a Ya Na. The warrior bees also guide the chiefs and people of Dagbon, led by the Kumbung Na when they are going to war (Saminu, 2019). The presence of the Kumbung Naa at the funeral of a Ya Na is very significant as the Chief Warrior of Dagbon. He is also involved in consultations on the selection of a new Yaa Na, even though he is not a kingmaker. The chief warrior further provides spiritual protection for a Dagbon Regent during the circumambulation, the act of moving around a sacred object, of the Gbewaa Palace (Alhassan and Doudu 2019).

The funeral rites of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II ended peacefully in Yendi with all the rituals performed. These included the sacrifices, almsgiving, Quranic recitation and special prayers led by the Yan-Liman, Shehu Yussif Yakubu Gomda, for the soul of the late Ya Na and his predecessors for lasting peace and harmony in Dagbon (Alhassan and Doudu 2019).

Selection and enskinment

The Road map to Peace agreed on by the two feuding gates stipulated that at the end of the funeral rites for the two former kings, their regents, Boni-Lana, Mahamadu Abdulai, and the Kampakuya-Na, Yakubu Andani will both step down as regents of Yendi. With the completion of the final funeral rites, the next stage of the road map was set for implementation. The responsibility for the selection of a new Ya Na is given to a council of four elders led by the Kuga Na who constitute the kingmakers of Dagbon. After consultation with the gods, the kingmakers would make their choice known and the chosen royal would be enskinned immediately (Ladouceur 1972). The four kingmakers of Dagbon, includes the Kuga-Naa, Abdulai Adam, Tuguri Nam, the Gushie Naa and Kpati Naa, consulted the oracles to guide them in the choice of a right candidate for the 'Namship' before settling on the Paramount Chief of the Savelugu Traditional Area, Yoo Naa Abubakari Mahama (Alhassan and Doudu 2019).

Divination is an important resource used by indigenous African societies to read and interpret the mind of the sacred. Divination has been used in all aspects of the life of the African to ascertain the cause of any calamity and find solutions to them. Divination has been used in health, economic and social aspects of the life of the African. In the area of governance, divination has been employed by indigenous African societies to determine who among the interested royals for a vacant seat has the support of the gods and ancestors. Tonah (2006) in a study among the Mamprugu of northern Ghana made the point that the practice of consulting diviners and Malam (Islamic teachers) during chieftaincy contest is very normal among the Mumprugu. He elaborated:

each contestant employs several diviners and malams during the period of the campaign. Preference is given to diviners and malams from far and wide, who are unlikely to know the background of the contestants and would, therefore, be able to soothsay independently (p. 30).

The Dagbon state shares similar characteristics with the Mamprugu state since they are considered as cousins (Churchill 1997). It is no wonder that divination also find special expression in the Dagbon quest to seek for succession to sit on a vacant skin such as that of the Ya Na.

With the selection of the Yoo Na as the next Ya Na, he was enskinned behind closed doors amidst Quranic recitations. He was then led in a procession to Zohe for his grooming where he was confined for a day. He was then taken to the Gbewaa palace through the residence of Mba Dugu, the Chief of Staff (Alhassan and Doudu 2019). The enskinment of Ya Na Abukari Mahama II brought to finality the Road map to Peace as set out by the CECs. The Ya Na in fulfillment of the Road map to Peace has enskinned the two former regents, Bolin-Lana Mahamadu Abdulai and Kampaku- Ya Naa Abdulai Andani as the Chiefs of Mion and Savelugu respectively.

For the first time in 17 years, Ya Na Abukari Mahama II led his people to celebrate the Bugum festival in Yendi. The Northern Regional Minister, Mr. Salifu Saeed, commenting on the celebration of the festival said:

I know for certain that with the peaceful and successful celebration of this year's Fire Festival, Dagbon has been restored to its past glory. With this renewed spirit of unity, oneness and togetherness, we can work to speed up the development of Dagbon (Doudu 2019).

Conclusion

The crisis in Dagbon started in 1948 with the formation of a new Ya Na selection committee to replace the traditionally recognised and accepted committee of kingmakers (Mohammed 2018). The crisis, which simmered for decades, has been finally resolved through the use of the time-tested customs and traditions of the people of Dagbon. The crisis had left Dagbon divided and retarded growth as suspicion from both gates stalled any cooperation that will lead to economic development. With the completion of the Road map to Peace, attention must now be turned on how to consolidate the peace achieved through the mediating efforts of the CECs with the help of government and other stakeholders. The Kuga Na, Abdulai Adam II, commenting on the way forward for a consolidated peace, has called for an amendment to the 1930 Dagbon constitution that deals with the customs and traditions of kingship. He called for an amendment to ensure that funerals of Ya Na's are performed within one year of their deaths, while those of the Paramount Chiefs, Divisional Chiefs, Chiefs and Sub-Chiefs are performed within six months of their demise. He elaborated further that

because the constitution was not duly adhered to, Regents were now compelled to occupy the skins for more than one year. If a Ya-Na died and his funeral was performed, contestants, were the sons of the Ya-Na, occupying the skins of Mion, Savelugu and Karaga and not the grandsons of the Ya-Na. The delay of such funerals brought about confusion, rumours, speculations and conflict (GNA 2019).

The Kuga Na was emphatic that Dagbon will stick to the tenets of the 1930 constitution and the ruling of the Supreme Court which stated that no sitting regent becomes an immediate Ya Na. The problem of Dagbon according to the Kuga Na “came about because any regent who performed the father’s funeral refuses to step down for another person and I think that practice will not continue.” (GNA 2019). Congratulating the new Ya Na, the CECs in a statement expressed gratitude to the kingmakers for using the time-tested customs and traditions of Dagbon in the process of selecting the new Ya Na. The statement concluded that there is now “a good chance of restoring Dagbon back to normalcy by using the time-tested Dagbon customs and traditions where only those who are to be enskinned as Ya Na’s shall come from GATE SKINS (emphasis theirs) unless otherwise.” (Press Release 2019).

This paper has examined the Dagbon chieftaincy succession dispute. Many scholars have written much on the Dagbon disputes dating back from 1948. This article has tried to fill the void in the discussions of the Dagbon crisis with the final conclusion of the Road map to Peace and the celebration of the Bugum (fire festival) by the new Ya Na, Abdulai Mahama II. Finally, with the completion of the Road map to Peace and Dagbon returning to normalcy, the attention of Ya Na and his elders has now turned to sustaining the peace of the kingdom. The Kuga Na, in thanking President Akuffo Addo and members of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, the Yagbonwuru, Tutumba Boresa Sulemana Jakpa I, King of the Gonja and the Nayiri, Naa Bohagu Abdulai Mahami Sheriga, King of the Mamprugu, called on politicians to abstain from the Dagbon chieftaincy as that has always led to conflicts (GNA, 2019).

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Gender, incarceration, and peacebuilding: A qualitative study on women inmates in Mexican prisons with a peacebuilding perspective

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Abstract

Mexico is one of the least peaceful nations in the world, and despite years of rule by governments affiliated with three distinct political parties, this situation has not changed. To comprehend this flawed system, it is important to examine the connections between gender and peacelessness, as well as the crimes committed by women, their confinement circumstances, and their chances of reintegration. There is a wealth of literature that discusses the incarceration of women, the causes of women's criminal behavior, and the conditions under which women are detained around the globe, but especially in Mexico. But there aren't enough studies that look at such issues from the standpoint of peacebuilding. A number of 33 in-depth interviews were done as part of the current qualitative research in jails spread throughout six different regions of the nation to examine these situations more thoroughly and in depth. The conclusions we found reveal the intimate connections between incarceration and structural gender-based violence. Structural gendered violence is present throughout the interviewees' lives, contributes to the

events and activities that push these women into prison, and ultimately is replicated while they are there. To put it simply, while investigating the relationship between structural gender violence and crime, we discovered that the same structural violence may be closely linked to the interviewees' potential innocence or at the very least, their self-perception of innocence. The pages that follow demonstrate how and why.

GENDER, INCARCERATION, AND PEACEBUILDING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON WOMEN INMATES IN MEXICAN PRISONS WITH A PEACEBUILDING PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Mexico is one of the 25 least peaceful nations in the world (IEP, 2022). Despite being governed for many years by three distinct political parties, this situation has not changed. In reality, structural and systemic issues are what lead to an absence of peace. Studying the connections between gender and peacelessness, the crimes committed by women, their circumstances of confinement, and their chances of reintegration are thus important topics to consider to comprehend this dysfunctional system. There is a wealth of literature on issues like gender inequality and structural gendered violence, as well as the connections between these things and the commission of crimes by women, the reasons why women commit crimes, the kinds of crimes they commit, and the circumstances under which women are imprisoned around the world, especially in Mexico. There isn't enough study, though, on how these problems connect to peacebuilding or how Mexican prisons wind up perpetuating the same patterns of violence that brought these women there in the first place, rather than serving as institutions that promote peacebuilding from a gender perspective.

The current study expands on a prior investigation conducted on women detained in three prisons in the State of Mexico (Meschoulam et al., 2020). That study was primarily concerned with examining the interviewees' opinions of the non-governmental organization-implemented labor and reinsertion programs in which they had taken part (hereafter, The Organization). However, the analysis of those interviews provided a wealth of information on topics like systemic gendered violence, the contribution of one or more men to the prospective conduct of the crime, or the association of the women interviewees with the commission of a crime. Additionally, that 2020 study demonstrated how the arrival of female prisoners and their time spent in Mexican jails may be examined from the viewpoint of the country's lack of peace from a gender perspective.

In light of this, and once more in partnership with the same social reinsertion group (The Organization), we designed the current study to explore those situations in greater depth and scope. The findings show a close connection between institutionalized gender-based violence and the incarceration of the women we spoke with. The violence that these women experience throughout their lives is part of the events and procedures that bring them to prison, and it then continues to occur while they are incarcerated. This violence, which originates from the

structures and the base of the system, and is not always visible but still haunts, hurts, injures, and even kills (Galtung, 1985), is present throughout their lives. To put it another way, while investigating the relationship between structural gender violence and crime, we discovered that the same structural violence may also be closely linked to the interviewees' potential innocence, or at the very least, their self-perception of innocence. The pages that follow demonstrate how and why.

Literature Review

As we mentioned, there is abundant literature published on this subject.

This includes research carried out in Mexico and in other countries about the factors that lead women to offend, or the types of crimes that women commit more frequently (Azaola, 2020; Casanova, 2017; De la Peña, 2011; Hernández and Domínguez, 2009; Loinaz, 2014; Soldino, Romero-Martínez, and Moya-Albiol, 2016). This area has also been investigated from a mental health or addictions perspective (Colmenares et al., 2007; Romero & Aguilera, 2002).

Study has also been done to determine the relationship between machismo and delinquency (Moral de la Rubia and Ramos, 2016), as well as research that contrasts the use of violence or the perpetration of violent crimes by men and women (Azaola, 1999; Dardis et al., 2015). Some studies even go so far as to investigate whether there is a connection between having experienced gender-based violence in the past and committing crimes later on (Leonard, 2012).

Other topics include studies that contrast the lives of men and women in prison (Herrera & Expósito, 2010), study on the conditions of detained women in Mexico and other nations, as well as assessments of the quality of their lives (Azaola, 2007; Malacalza, 2012; Sanhueza, 2015). Studies have also looked into gender stereotypes in the jail setting (Cinelli, 2020). An intriguing question regarding Mexico is whether or not the country's prison system incorporates a gender perspective in the execution of sentences, offers resources and tools to help women confront and escape situations of gender-based violence, or whether it instead reproduces macho behavioral practices (Hayner & Richter, 1942; or more recently, Garrido, Azaola, & Yacamán, 1996). There are also investigations based on facts, as the report the National Human Rights Commission published on Mexico City's jails (CNDH, 2002).

Numerous research projects have examined the relationships between women, crime, and different types of punishment from a criminological perspective (Ariza & Iturralde, 2017). Alternatively, a lot of criminology-related research has examined how women who are incarcerated see their roles as mothers, both in Mexico (Contreras, 2018; Pávez, Mena, & Lobos, 2009; Rangel, 2020) and abroad (Mulchy et al., 2011; Mauersberger, 2016).

These are only a few illustrations of the breadth of research that has been done on both the commission of crimes by women and their incarceration. It is generally agreed upon in this literature that there is no one element that causes women to commit crimes; rather, it is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that needs to be examined systemically. For instance, several Latin American studies on crimes involving emotional attachments tend to place more emphasis on women as victims of crime than as perpetrators of it (De la Peña, 2011). Accordingly, there is a ton of research that attempts to approach the problem from the standpoint

of structural gender violence (Price, 2012), or even studies that attempt to address the question, "Is violence against women an issue about women or about violence?" (Felson, 2006).

However, there aren't enough studies that look at such issues from the standpoint of peacebuilding. Studying gender violence is vital but insufficient to comprehend the phenomenon from a more systemic viewpoint that includes positive peace, i.e., the active components that produce and sustain peace, since peace is not limited to the absence of violence. Therefore, it becomes necessary to look at more complex issues in addition to "the factors that lead women to commit crimes," such as the presumption of their innocence, the possibility that they are imprisoned without realizing or accepting that they have committed any crimes, and the structural factors that contribute to their imprisonment and keeping them in that condition without having their legal situation resolved for very long periods of time (and how to transform those conditions). Particularly in Mexico, one of the least peaceful nations on earth, the combination of these variables with a thorough approach to the development of constructive peace with a gender perspective is most important. This research aims to advance that cause.

Research Questions

In order to better understand the connections between structural violence, structural gendered violence, crime and incarceration, in relation to peacebuilding with a gender perspective, the purpose of this research was to explore the perceptions of a sample of incarcerated women in 12 prisons located in different states of Mexico. It sought to provide answers to the following questions:

From the perception of a sample of incarcerated women in Mexico, how are the absence of structural peace, structural violence, and structural gendered violence linked to the potential perpetration of crimes by women, and the conditions of women's incarceration in Mexico? To what extent their role as women, as well as the roles played by one or more men in their lives, function as contributing or determining factors in their association with delinquency or crime? (This question originally spoke of "perpetration" of crime, but was modified to "association" upon observing, during the pilot interviews, the overwhelming self-perception among the interviewees of their innocence). What are their perceptions about their current situation and their future? How do the conditions under which they are incarcerated impact their emotional status, their possibilities for reparation, reinsertion, and reconstruction of the social fabric? To what extent do prisons in Mexico—one of the 25 most violent countries in the world—reproduce circumstances of structural and gendered violence, and fail to function as pillars for building peace in the country?

Finally, what recommendations can be drawn from this thematic exploration for the Mexican prison system to contribute to gender-sensitive peacebuilding in this country and perhaps in other parts of the world as well?

Methodology

Location

The 12 jails where the study's participants are incarcerated are where all the data was gathered. Coahuila, State of Mexico, Nuevo Leon, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, and Queretaro are the states

where these twelve jails are situated. We were not permitted to interview individuals in private, thus observations and interviews were performed in public areas of the jail, such as courtyards, dining halls, or workstations. But every interview was set up such that there were as few interruptions as possible.

Participants and Sampling Strategy

In the 12 jails listed above, 33 female inmates were questioned. The Organization looked for jails across the nation during the research period in order to conduct the interviews. This search led to the scheduling of meetings, excursions, and locations where the interviewing crew eventually arrived. Thus, both the prisons and the participants in this research were selected randomly. Two participants were interviewed in prison A (we used letters to omit identifying data); 2 in prison B; 2 in prison C; 2 in prison D; 3 in prison E; 3 in prison F; 2 in prison G; 2 in prison H; 5 in prison I; 4 in prison J; 4 in prison K; and 2 in prison L. This sample, as is usual in qualitative research, does not seek to represent the entire population of incarcerated women in Mexico. Even so, an attempt was made to obtain the greatest possible diversity among participants. Therefore, we interviewed five women between 20 and 29 years of age; 12 between 30 and 39 years of age; 11 between 40 and 49 years of age; 3 between 50 and 59 years of age; and 2 between 60 and 69 years of age. No other selection or sampling criteria was used.

Each participant signed an informed consent form prior to their interview, and the security of the information provided complied with the ethical standards of the Universidad Iberoamericana. The procedures for contacting and recruiting participants, as well as for conducting the research, adhered to Mexican laws on privacy and personal data protection.

Data Collection

Data collection consisted of 33 in-depth individual interviews carried out face-to-face with each participant. All interviews were carried out in Spanish, the mother language of the participants. The research period was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which unfortunately prolonged the data collection process for 12 months. We employed a semi-structured interview protocol that was partly based on the literature study and partly intended to elicit in-depth information about the categories we wished to investigate. Due to the participants' propensity for feelings of innocence, the first interview protocol had to be amended, and the questions had to be revised to take it into account. The interviewers' various and in-depth inquiries were designed to elicit more information about the pertinent issues the interviewee was addressing. In certain instances, we were given permission to bring in electronic recording equipment for the interviews. Only four out of the 33 interviews revealed instances in which it was impossible. We chose to conduct the majority of the interviews in two-person teams both because of this, and in an effort to reduce bias. The interviewer only took notes about pertinent information. The second person recorded every statement and word the interviewee spoke as accurately as they could. Although it was impossible to register every word of every conversation when recording was prohibited, the interviewer pairs would meet and exchange notes to make sure the transcription was as accurate as feasible.

Additionally, during the majority of the visits, the two team members carefully observed the prison's outside and interior environments as well as the activities of the convicts in an effort to

complement the topics mentioned by the participants. The interviewers created a memo with two columns, one for their feelings throughout the observation and interview and the other for a detailed explanation of what they saw (Janesick, 2004).

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed and subsequently processed through the qualitative software *NVivo 12.0*. For the analysis, pre-existing categories (drawn from our previous research [Meschoulam et al., 2020], as well as from the literature review), as well as emergent categories were employed. In order to detect patterns and repetitions, words, sentences or whole paragraphs were selected and coded within these categories, as well as the emergence of new themes. Fourteen different people participated in the analyses. Each analysis was carried out by teams of two people in order to detect further coding elements. Moreover, the project leader reviewed the 100% of the analyses to make corrections, add coding elements, and ensure quality, and potential bias control throughout the process. As a result of the large number of pre-existing categories, training sessions and many revisions were needed prior to conducting each analysis. Moreover, during the data analysis, new categories emerged and were detected by the team.

Trustworthiness

This was a unique research study in terms of the emotional impact it had on each of the researchers. It would be dishonest to say that we remained entirely "neutral" to what we heard, observed, and experienced throughout the months of visiting the prisons. Therefore, this research must be read with that limitation. That said, we went to great lengths to ensure the reliability of the results we found. These included the following elements: (a) a combination of qualitative methodological tools that included not only the in-depth interviews, but also close observations in order to provide additional objective elements to be contrasted with the interviews; (b) interviews conducted in teams of two, and subsequent contrasting of the notes of those two individuals for bias control; (c) at the same time, the different interviews were conducted by 17 different people, which helped to control for potential individual biases; (d) the writing of the memos included the feelings and impressions of the researchers, often impacted by what they observed during several months of attending the prisons; this helped to control for potential biases due to these accumulated feelings; (e) in parallel, continuous meetings were held in which the team was present, to compare the information, share feelings, and contribute to the control of potential group biases; (f) tests were carried out to contrast the results from participants in the different prisons we worked at, as well as contrasts between age groups. After all these contrasts, the main patterns we found remain unchanged.

Transferability

This research offers results related exclusively to 33 incarcerated women in twelve prisons located in six states of the Mexican Republic. Even though the sample may have been as broad as possible, it still does not fully represent all of the prisoners who are housed in various jails or locations. As a result, these findings cannot be directly applied to other groups. However, the recurrence of patterns and their consistency with elements found in the literature, as well as the relevance of the themes that most stand out in the interviews and observations, seem to suggest

that this small sample has much to teach and contribute to the Mexican prison system and peacebuilding issues in general.

Results

General Overview

The categories that came up most frequently in the interviews will be listed first. We then break down those categories into thematic subcategories to examine the outcomes in more detail. Table 1 presents the themes most frequently repeated by the interviewees:

Table 1.0 *General Overview*

Categories	Number of coding references	Percentage of participants who mentioned it at least once
Structural Gender Violence	372	94%
Mention of profession/work prior to prison	240	91%
Existence of a support network	239	94%
Inconsistencies or failures in the detention or legal process	229	97%
Perception of injustice	210	94%
Mention of ties or emotions related to relatives, present before confinement	190	64%
Emotional abuse	190	73%
Visits or lack of visits	188	97%
I am innocent/not guilty	188	82%
Gender stereotypes	185	91%
Disintegrated/dysfunctional family nucleus	180	79%
Gender-related physical violence	168	79%
Mention of basic needs (water, food, lack of space, medical services, hygiene products, menstrual products).	152	100%

The thematic dispersion, or the very broad complexity of our sample, the complexity of the factors that make up the interviewees' lives prior to their incarceration, and the various points of view and perspectives that make up each case are perhaps the first things that stand out from our overall findings. There is no singular story, as our interviews with individuals who were located

in twelve different jails around the nation demonstrate. The table shows that some of these individuals' stories reveal a great deal about their employment or professions before going to prison, and in some cases they had extensive and reliable support networks because of, essentially, formed family relationships that had developed over the course of their life. On the other hand, there are accounts of physical or overt domestic violence or gender-based abuse in other situations, which are mirrored in the absence of these support networks.

In other words, the findings point to a multivariate phenomenology that requires more in-depth review to identify the features that these stories appear to have in common. This was the task of the analysis of the interviews and this is what is relevant to highlight:

1. The most recurrent theme in our interviews is ***Structural Gender Violence***, that is, violence that comes from the structures of the system, which is not always visible to us, but which always harms, attacks, prejudices, stereotypes, discriminates, and frequently ends up facilitating or giving permission to a more direct and visible violence. This type of violence, which emanates from the system itself, underlies the stories they tell us and permeates almost all the interviews. This category received 374 mentions (frequency or "f") and is present in 94% of our interviews. Typical examples of these mentions include the following:

"My father did treat me differently. He told me 'You don't make progress because you are a woman'. When I was taken out of school and my father got married, I told him 'Dad, I want to continue studying. I want to study'. I have always liked to study, I wanted to be a doctor. And I tell him 'I want to be a doctor, dad'. 'Nonsense! Learn to do your housework because for washing diapers and cooking food you don't need a school degree of anything'. I said 'Well, that's fine'. Yes, that's how my father was. He always made women less. 'Men are the ones who should study because they are the ones who are going to provide'. But no, no, that's not true. We should both study. Both men and women, because we are responsible, both men and women." Participant 13

"I never talked to anyone. I kept everything to myself. Once I told my grandmother: 'Mom, I have problems with X because he goes out with women and all that'. And she says: 'You leave him alone, he is a man, he belongs to the street, you belong at home. You should say nothing'. No. 'But, I'd better separate from him', and she said: 'And where are you going? Do you have anywhere to go?' 'No. Well, you are right. You better put up with it then'." Participant 13

"That you can't talk to other men, that you don't go out in the street at such hours because a woman who is a lady of her house should not go out in the street. Like right now when I am here, sometimes when I talk to him and I curse or something like that, he says 'No, don't contaminate yourself, you are not the same as other women, you are a lady'. I mean, it's like... yes, he is one of those men who think like that. And now that I'm working, I just started working in fabric creation, I've been working for about a week. And it's like every day (he tells me): 'What are you working for, it's so cold!' and I tell him 'Let me go! I want to work'." Participant 21

"I mean, because we are not... we are not taken into consideration. We always, I mean we see it more than anything else in terms of visits. If you go to a men's prison, the waiting line is huge and women are always the ones who go there, but you go to a women's prison, and.... most of the visitors who come are our parents, mothers, fathers, but partners...those are very few. There are people whose partners have left them here abandoned. It's like a man can't stand the loneliness, I don't know, and then he looks for another woman." Participant 11

2. As we said, beyond the narrative related to their previous jobs or professions, or the presence of important support networks, the frequency with which the participants assumed themselves as innocent is very striking. This is perhaps one of the major findings of this research. In researching the literature, we originally sought to answer "Why do women commit a crime?" or "How do their gender role, gendered structures of domination and power, or the involvement of one or more men play a role as causal or contributing factors in their commission of crimes?" In contrast, from the first interviews, we found that most of interviewees claimed that they were not responsible for the commission of the crimes of which they were accused. This changed our approach.

In that sense, eight out of ten interviewees frequently spoke to us about their innocence (this theme was repeated 188 times during the 33 interviews). Thus, 94% of our participants perceive themselves to be victims of a high level of injustice during their trial or legal processes (f=210), and almost all of them, even those who recognize themselves as guilty, spoke frequently about the inconsistencies or failures in their detention or in their legal process (f=229). Later in the discussion, we will talk about the implications of these factors for the purposes of what we were originally seeking to explore. Consider the following examples to better understand this issue:

"And the day the judge said that it was the last time we would be in the prosecutor's office, I was happy because I said 'I'm not going to jail', well, then a stranger arrived. And he says that I was the person watching for him (during his kidnapping) ...I don't even know him! ... and I said 'You're lying because you're under oath and you're lying. Because at my forty-five years of age, when I was arrested, I had never met you before'. And as I told the judge, 'I am here to speak for me, I am not here to speak for my brother or for this stranger, I am here to speak for me. Whether they did it or not, I don't know for sure. I only come to say that I am innocent because I do not know this person, he is lying. Carry out an investigation, go to my house, talk to my neighbors because this does not make any sense, and the years you are assigning me to serve, make no sense at all'. That was and still is what hurt me the most." Participant 14

"Maybe I can say that things happened for a reason. I am innocent, of course I am innocent. But I also say that now I have become very close to God, and now I know that only God knows why He brought me here, why I have recovered my husband, I have recovered my family..." Participant 20

"It's unfair, all of this!... because I've been here for so long, and without having committed the crime. Without having done it. If I was aware that I did it, I would

be okay with it. But I didn't. I'm losing my best years and my children's recovery because of this asshole.” Participant 18

“I mean, there are many anomalies in the process. I always say so. And the lawyer recently told me that if someone had seen my process from the beginning, if they had done the accumulation of files, I would already be out. I told them 'I did not study law. I am here because I am a 'criminal', because I did not study. You are the ones who have to take care of that, not me'. I said 'and now seven years later you come to tell me that if someone had taken care of that four years ago, I would already be free... you are supposed to defend me, not the other way around! I mean, what, I have to spend 48 years here because of your ineptitude? I can't go free'. They said 'no, no, but don't see it that way...', 'how can I not see it that way?', I say, 'I have two children waiting for me outside and my wife'.” Participant 33

“And the first time I saw my mother was at the first audience ... and that was when my mother told me that for her, I was dead, right? Because I left my children again. I mean, she told me when we saw each other, 'I just gave you your children, you have them, and you do your shit', and I said: 'I didn't do anything! I didn't do it! I'm here unjustly, he knows I didn't do it, why did he do it? I don't know!'.” Participant 18

“A friend of mine was here with me, but she left because of legal protection. She was here for two years. And she left on a legal protection that cost her 130 thousand pesos and.... the corrupt lawyer who took her out... I say 'corrupt' because I didn't know he was taking her case, and he made me sign two blank paper sheets. And then, later I found out, a little while ago, that those signed papers by me were filled out in the handwriting of I don't know whom, because it's not my handwriting, they put that I plead as the only person guilty of the crime of homicide and robbery of a house.” Participant 13

“I am fighting them over... what I am asking for is a sentence [her voice is cut off] because I think it is unfair that it is already ten years, and... I am paying... nothing. It's been ten years of my life that I haven't seen my family grow and the truth is that nobody can help me, and I only ask for a sentence because I am here for an alleged homicide, and if they sentence me with twenty-five years I get to leave with half, and I already have ten, but nobody can help me.” Participant 19

3. The table above reflects, additionally, that beyond the possible existence of support networks or strong family ties, there is a high frequency of themes associated with gender-based violence in the lives of the participants. Emotional abuse was mentioned on 190 occasions by seven of each ten participants. Gender stereotypes of various kinds were repeated in nine of each ten interviews (f=185), and almost 80% of our participants spoke of disintegrated nuclear families and physical gender-based violence as a central part of their personal stories. These are some examples:

"I got rheumatoid arthritis, and because of all the medicine the doctors gave me, I practically lost one of my kidneys. I was already urinating blood. And my liver, because of so much medication, began to deteriorate. Then, my husband fought with me a lot. He would tell me, 'Drop dead, you wretch, drop dead. I hate you, die' already'. He says 'you make me spend the little money we have'. Well, he was a merchant. He made good money. 'You make me spend a lot of money, die!'. Or 'go away, with your family!'. And 'how much do you want me to pay you in order for you to go? And go away! He was very upset that I was sick. Then he told me he wanted us to separate. But where was I supposed to go? I couldn't walk. I was dragging my feet. And, full of panic, completely, full of panic, because with so much medicine they gave me, my liver died and one of my kidneys died. They wanted to take out my kidney. So, the man practically hated me." Participant 13

"Previously he himself raped me like eight, nine times before I got pregnant, but his threats made me so afraid, and not being able to talk, and trying to commit suicide. There was one suicide attempt. One moment I was riding my bicycle and I jumped in the middle of the road, but luckily the car stopped and didn't kill me, but yes, the sexual abuse attempt he made was an attempt to kill me, nothing else, and he told me 'If you tell your mom or your brothers, your brothers will be left without a father, and you don't want that, do you?' Why? Why that threat and why the fear involved? Because I didn't have a father either, I didn't know what a father was, a hug, a kiss. I mean, to this day I don't know who he is, I only know his first and last name." Participant 18

"That day when he hit me, I was short of breath and the more I was short of breath, the tighter he squeezed my neck and I told him 'I can't breathe' and he said that will be helpful for you" and he squeezed me more. When I could, I pushed him away and he kicked me, but all I did was cover my face. I didn't want him to hit me in the face. I told him 'wherever you want, but not in the face, I don't want my family to see me like that'. So he grabbed my head, he hit me on the ground, he kicked me, he said 'oh, aren't you going to die?' and he grabbed his gun and started to play Russian roulette on my head but I think... I don't know how that works, so I think that when it was the last chance and the bullet was already there, he said 'no, you're not even worth one of my bullets'." Participant 3

"The last chance I had with him was in Tulum, we lived in Tulum. In the car, he opened the door and tried to throw me out of the car just because I grabbed the baby girl, I carried her and told him 'Come on, throw me out, throw me out, but you're going to throw me out with your daughter and everything'. Because that way I knew he wasn't going to throw me out. And he told me 'You want to kill my daughter' and I told him, 'No. Come on, throw me out'. Because it was the only way he wasn't going to do anything to me. But yes, that was the last time that happened." Participant 23

"He had a machete and two knives... well, what do you think he had those for? To make mincemeat out of me, but I didn't know that... First of all, he wasn't

threatening me. No, he was just insisting that I should drink with him, and when I told him I didn't want to drink, he started to touch me with the machete.”
Participant 31

Thematic Subcategories

The following are results by each thematic subcategory for a closer analysis.

A. Women's life in prison

As was the case in our previous research (Meschoulam et al., 2020), participants continuously referred to topics such as visits, their basic needs, and issues related to their daily lives. As we stated above, the sample under investigation demonstrated the predominance of complexity among the 12 jails where we worked. Many of the interviewees spoke about their visits, which is related to what was said before regarding their support systems. However, another section discussed how visits became progressively less frequent over time. All participants generally mentioned their fundamental requirements at least occasionally, with a particular emphasis on the scarcity of water, medical care, hygiene supplies, or menstrual products. This topic was mentioned 152 times throughout the 33 interviews. In a similar vein, given that the interviews took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, this issue recurred frequently ($f=124$; 97% of participants mentioned it at least once), though the majority of the comments referred to the lack of sanitation or protective measures during the epidemic.

Interestingly, 97% of respondents mentioned having a good relationship with inmates or guards ($f=126$), while fewer (85%; $f=103$) talked about their conflicts, disputes or fights. Nevertheless, it is important to note that many of the participants are part of reintegration programs; 97% of interviewees talked about their work in prisons, which includes sewing, knitting, cooking, or other work, in addition to the fact that six out of 10 participants talked about the assistance of some civil society organization ($f=82$); 85% talked about their participation in sports or recreational activities and 67% referred to their resilience or adaptation. Therefore, it seems that to the extent that the participants felt assisted in some way, or found some productive work, to that extent there are chances that they will have positive experiences, even under the complicated conditions of imprisonment in which they live. These are typical mentions of this subcategory:

“And well, as I said, my children are fine. And I also want to say, thanks also to the associations, because in prison X there were associations such as A or B, many associations in... also the Christian and Catholic churches that looked at me and helped me with my children in terms of education. And in terms of food, they also help me. Organization A also helps me with my children's education, and with the psychologists as well, thank God. They help each of the girls every month. I can tell you that I am very blessed because it is not the first time that A helps me. It has been four times that they have given me this support, and I also look for a way to ensure that my children are well here, and that my mother has food. Because A helps her with food too.” Participant 20

"A lawyer brought a project through which all those small fines are going to be paid so that all those people can leave. They tell me that they don't even have enough money to leave. I told them 'Well, we're going to make a little saving fund, everyone who you helped fix their pants, are going to pay you. Don't worry if you don't have enough, don't worry about it'. But the point is that we all participate, we are aware that we have to support each other. That there is a unification among all women, that there is sorority among us." Participant 22

"We teach each other. For example, if someone new arrives, 'Oh, come. I'm going to teach you this or that' and they start, like that, that's how I learned. My partner is the one who taught me, she told me 'You have to learn well. Look, sometimes when you burn the thread you can't see it, do it this way'." Participant 11

However, as we have explained, the complexity of the sample with which we worked also portrays a reality of deficiencies, conflicts, disputes and corruption, a reality in which, while in prison, women have to buy almost everything they need, which generates internal mafias, and illegal merchandise trafficking.

"The place is very small, 'small town, big hell' they say (saying in Spanish). There is a lot of bickering, it's complicated. They beat each other up... There is a lot of violence, believe it or not, there is, because of nonsense things like: 'she looked at me in a bad way', 'she told me I was speaking about her', 'she wants to steal my girlfriend'." Participant 10

"When I arrived at the X prison, it did not go well for me since the beginning. Again, I was beaten there. Not because of the guards, but because of the people who were in charge there. Because there were people who were in charge, inmates who were in charge. I was hit again and again. I was thrown from the stairs from the fourth floor. I went to the nurse office with a neck brace." Participant 19

"There are times, for example yesterday, the day before yesterday, that they gave rotten beans. When it's good, we do eat, when it's not, we have to cook something." Participant 11

"They treat us really bad in here. They see you as the worst. Here we are not going to receive help from anyone, there are no friends here. We are colleagues here, but nobody is going to take care of you, nobody is going to give you bath soap, nobody is going to help you at all." Participant 14

"We all have to generate (money). Some of them with the telephone, they extort, prostitute themselves, we all have to produce money. There is no way to survive if you don't. Or if your family doesn't support you." Participant 15

"They almost always feed us with potatoes and beans. The food is very bad, it is badly cooked. And the meat and chicken are poor quality ... Besides, they don't give you enough vegetables. They bring three kilos of tomato for 100 people and

for the whole week. They serve the same as when we were 50 people and they bring in the same quantity. And I know this because I used to help in the kitchen.” Participant 19

“It's just that... Well, when they can't bring us money, we, the ones who have been abandoned, we have to buy pads, toilet paper, shampoo, toothpaste, tooth brushes... it is an expense that we have to cover as nobody bring us money.” Participant 18

B. Emotional Situation of the interviewees

In this subcategory we grouped mentions related to the emotional situation of the women interviewed, which is one of the topics that is frequently discussed in the literature. We look at this area, nevertheless, from a different point of view: Positive peace also encompasses emotional well-being (Ekanola, 2012). In this regard, it is impossible to imagine establishing peace in a setting where this emotional well-being is not seriously considered.

We found a marked sentiment of injustice due to the living conditions of the majority of the interviewees; 64% of participants reported experiencing this feeling at least once (f=82); 55% expressed their sadness at not being able to see friends or family. Similarly, more than half narrated their state of shock, confusion or depression due to their imprisonment; four out of 10 mentioned their anxiety and, again, almost half reported their emotional burnout (f=47).

“The first months were very difficult. Since I arrived in December, Christmas was already upon us, and being away from my children was like a shock. I thought very ugly things, I did not understand what was happening.” Participant 6

“When we were separated... he started talking and talking... I can't tell my mom because she feels bad, or a friend because she can tell me ‘You're weak’... I feel suffocated already, always the same every day, problems here or there. Everything has fed me up. It's been a short time, four years.” Participant 10

“Not anymore, I can't stand it anymore, I can't stand the mistreatment from... I know it's their job, I know they're here for that, but sometimes it is just like, 'let me go!' I know I'm paying for something, what else? I'm locked up in a jail, I'm far from home, I don't have my children, I don't have my mother, that's it, I'm alone here. Locked up. I mean, what else?” Participant 25

“I have hired many lawyers and the truth is that they have all taken from us nothing more than money and money and money. I ask God for help, a lot. God is my only hope here, really, because it is very unfair to me to be locked up for ten years when nothing I am accused of is true, and without being sentenced. I'm not asking to be released, I'm just asking for a sentence to know what to do, because my hands are tied right now.” Participant 19

However, this thematic subcategory once more reflected the sample's complexity. Seven out of 10 interviewees told us about their learnings while incarcerated ($f=64$); 45% mentioned having positive feelings ($f=82$); and almost half talked about their rehabilitation and readaptation. It is important to note that some individuals' motivation was heavily influenced by their religious convictions, which was the case for 48% of them. In most of the references to positive feelings, learnings, and motivation, it is possible to observe that these particular interviewees participate in different programs such as paid labor, workshops, courses, or reintegration projects. Here is a typical mention related to this last section:

"I believe that these nine years that I have spent in prison, have been a lot of learning, and believe me that in prison you learn to value everything: family, your freedom, the things you used to do before. You learn to value everything every day. Even a plate of food you can say to yourself 'I miss food at home, that someone cooks for me'. You miss that too. And I believe that if God allowed to be free again, I would come out a different person and with a lot of learning."
Participant 24

C. Socio-economic Background

As previously stated, the interviewees spent a significant portion of their conversations with us discussing their previous jobs or professions; however, this is where the story becomes complicated. While a majority of them (55%) talked about their economic struggles on 106 different occasions, and their lack of employment or opportunities, nearly half of the participants (48%) claimed to have experienced a material well-being (which, at least in our sample, suggests that there is no immediate correlation between a lack of environment and being imprisoned). Notwithstanding, this must be understood in light of the fact that gender violence, which was the most frequently discussed theme in the interviews, can take many different forms and is not always visible. Leadership role in the family economy is one of the categories that recur in almost half of the participants.

Examples of such mentions include:

"I lived very well, worked a lot. Since I was 17, I started working, that's why I stopped studying for a while. Later, I started working in a company with an uncle who helped me study a bachelor degree in computer science. I studied for two years. But then, I no longer liked the way my uncle was exploiting me and I stopped working with him...I worked all day and studied." Participant 15

"I used to go out at night to work. Unfortunately, I met a person who was introduced to me, I thought he had business and we got to know each other, and almost always the clients I had were very, very frequent... More than anything to support my children, right? I worked for my children, not for myself, not for clothing brands, nor for drugs, nor for drinks. No. I never used drugs or anything. It was simply to feed my children, and move forward." Participant 20

D. Personal Background

Our interview protocol also explored topics such as their family environments, the bonds forged throughout their lives, their partners and family situations. In general, there were a lot of mentions of this theme, indicating that these topics are clearly relevant to them.

Of these mentions, the category with the highest frequency (present in 94% of interviewees; $f=239$) demonstrates the existence of support networks before their incarceration or even while in prison. The high recurrency of this theme not only indicates the real or material existence of these networks, but also the importance that the participants place on this topic, which also seems to be reflected in the existence of links or ties, primarily family, that were part of their lives prior to being imprisoned ($f=190$ in 64% of participants).

Nevertheless, in keeping with the pattern of complexity revealed in this series of interviews, eight out of ten participants told us about the dissolution, dysfunction, or disintegration of their family ($f=180$), and 70% reported lack of support network. It is important to emphasize that this does not reflect contradictions in qualitative research, as we are not conducting surveys, but rather in-depth interviews that do not project white or black categories, but rather themes that are present to varying degrees and at various stages of the lives of the imprisoned women that we interviewed. Therefore, it is natural that some categories that may seem contradictory appear in the same conversation, and sometimes in the same paragraph. Thus, seven out of ten of them ($f=141$) disclosed their emotional or affective instability, six out of ten ($f=123$) talked about domestic violence, 50% told us about alcoholism and drug addiction in their lives, and 42% talked about their childhood and/or adolescence suffering.

Examples of this series of categories include the following:

"It is a two-story house; my parents live upstairs and I live downstairs. When I went to work, they looked after the children, so they were never alone. We always supported each other as family. They stayed with their grandparents and I went to work, and I came back and fed them." Participant 23

"My dad bought a sound system. I was in high school and my friends and I liked to play the guitar or sing. I asked my dad to borrow the sound system and we were all happy to play in an event with it. It turns out that the event was not held that planned day, and I asked for it for another day. It turns out that my dad had an event that same day at the church and since I had the equipment, the priest asked him about the speakers. I still try to forget about that moment, but he got very angry because I couldn't bring all the equipment the same day because it was already late and everything got complicated. In the end my mom got angry and so my dad, because he needed it. The next day my dad came for me. I was asleep and I heard him enter the room, closed the door. When I saw him, I knew it was over for me. My dad beat me very badly that day, it was horrible. The worst is that my mom saw this, and she did nothing. She told me that he was the macho of the house, that I made him look like an idiot, and that I couldn't be trusted. That I should put away those silly ideas of studying, because we were fighting a lot for the career I had chosen, she supported me but he didn't." Participant 10

“At the age of 15, my stepfather raped me and that's where my first son came from, the oldest. After he was born, I left. I had to leave the house. There was never a conversation with my mom, right now there is hardly any approach. But there was never a hug, an 'I love you', nothing, it was always a feeling of 'it's your fault and it was you'. When I told my mom that it was him, she did not believe me. On the contrary, she slapped me and she told me: How was it possible that I had messed with her husband? And I told her 'No'. At 15 or 16 years old I gave birth, I had my baby, I had him for about 5 or 6 months. As it was rape, and he was a product of it, I rejected him, right? At first, that's when I started drinking. I went out into the street, I lived on the street for a long time, I got over myself.” Participant 18

E. Situation of Legal Process

This was the second thematic subcategory with the highest number of repetitions during the interviews, indicating once more the significance this topic holds for the people we interviewed. What is relevant, however, lies in the story that is told from this table of results: a brutal perception of injustice in their process (f=210), essentially due to inconsistencies or failures both in their detention and in their legal process (f=229) present in practically the entire sample. In other words, the participants, during their interview, spent enough time talking about their innocence (eight out of ten claim to be innocent) and the violence with which they were treated by the system. They are imprisoned, as they perceive, due to a series of concatenated injustices. Most (97%; f=150) complained about lack of access to a lawyer or a competent lawyer, or about bureaucratic or administrative negligence (79%; f=108), but not just negligence. Also, the majority of them (60%) pointed out the abuse of power, and seven out of ten made reference to the system's pervasive corruption.

This portrays a system that is not only careless but also deprives them of their freedom as a result of administrative flaws, mistakes made due to a lack of expertise, or accidents. It conveys to us a sense of pervasive, almost organized violence that springs from the structures, a violence that allows, facilitates, and benefits many people; and indeed, a violence intimately linked to their gender. It is evidenced by mentions like these:

“They stripped me naked for a whole day, everyone came in, but I had a blindfold on. Hands behind and feet bandaged. They kept me naked but I do not know how long because I lost consciousness. They put a bag on me, they sprayed pepper spray on me, it was horrible. It was for me to confess but I didn't know what they wanted me to say. The truth is, if I had known what they wanted me to say, I would have said it from the beginning because what they did to us was horrible. No one knew anything, just the man—the reason I am here (jail)—and other guys who were never found, they never found anyone. They had me naked, all the officers entered, there were 8 officers and 8 anti-kidnapping officers from Cuautitlán. And there, all of them came and molested me, hit me, kicked me, spit on me, peed on me, everything. So, my mom brought me clothes, because they said I was already very dirty. My mom came and I put some pants on, with that they took me to a press conference, then all the people “involved”, including me, were standing still all day. They sat us down because they beat us and threw us

around and hit us. They took us to a park and tied us to a tree and there, they drowned us with water and beat us. They didn't even ask us anything anymore, because we didn't know anything. I told a person how everything had happened and told me 'You signed the paper, confirming you did everything'. I told him that I didn't sign nothing, and he told me 'Here is your signature that you did everything and that you planned and called them' and that there, they agreed to the kidnapping, and then I called them in (I don't know where) and that I called five others. I don't remember signing anything. I remember that the last day, my mother came to see me in a room and there was the general attorney, a fat old man. He looked at me so harshly. They say that the record was drawn up that day, where I allegedly signed, but I didn't see anything." Participant 15

"I had a public attorney. But I never knew who he was. I saw one, two... then none. I just stood there alone, like a fool. I mean, I never knew who he was, really. And now, before they sentenced me, the judge called me. A man of average height, with a broad forehead...He calls me and says: 'ma'am, I do not find any crime involving you. Neither you, nor your children, I do not find any crime. In the morning, I want 150,000 pesos and the three of you will be absolved'. And I tell him 'But I don't have that money'. And he says to me: 'Don't you have the money?' And I tell him 'No'. 'And your family?' I told him, 'I don't think so, they're angry with me, because they say why don't I speak out, why don't I tell the truth. And I can't talk, I can't say anything. And he says: 'So what do I do?'. I replied, "Well, sentence us, we have no other option." And he says, 'Fine'. He turns around, and leaves. And they did sentence us. My children were accused of house robbery. My son, car theft. How is he going to steal that old van that is falling apart? I mean, it's illogical. The x and the x (police), later I found out that they went to hide the van at my son's bakery. How illogical, right? It was not coherent. How a young man, who is not so economically fluent, is going to steal a van that is falling apart." Participant 13

"They (the officers) took us up, they took a long time to take us away, I was very afraid, I just thought 'Don't rape me, don't rape me'. I was very afraid. They intimidated us and told us things. I didn't know where my friend was because I didn't feel her around, only some officers, they're only taking me. What's going on? I felt that we arrived at a place, from the back. I tried to see but I couldn't, I was walking on the floor but I don't know if it was a house or a building. We got to the separation cells. I don't know how much time passed by, but I was scared to death. They didn't rape, me but they did point a gun at me. I got there, I was sitting and serious. At that moment I blocked myself. Since the officers entered the hotel, from that moment I blocked myself. I do not know what happened, right now I am crying like this because I get angry, but outside, I cannot even cry. My friend tells me to take it out, that I have no feelings, to cry. But I cannot." Participant 10

Table 2.0: Situation of Legal Process.

Categories	Number of references	Percentage of participants who mentioned it at least once
Inconsistencies or failures in the detention or legal process	229	97%
Perception of injustice	210	94%
I am innocent/mentions of not guilty	188	82%
Access or lack of access to a competent legal person	150	97%
Administrative-bureaucratic negligence in the legal process	108	79%
Abuse of authority and power	99	61%
Corrupt judicial system	66	70%
Mentions about the Sentence	56	79%
Legal Protection	42	45%
Lengthy Prison Sentence	41	64%

F. Family implications

A portion of the literature cited above addresses the effects that imprisoning women has on their families. Therefore, the extent to which this thematic subcategory emerged in our conversations with inmates was a part of the focus of the present study. Their roles as mothers were the most frequently mentioned. This category was repeated 119 times; eight out of ten interviewees mentioned it at least once. In this regard, emotional repercussions of separation, the participants' hope and motivation to see their children again, and for a third of the participants, references to motherhood in prison appear to be the most prominent impacts. Additionally, 67% of respondents expressed resentment for being physically separated from their children or other family members (f=51). Typical examples include the following:

"I have a lot of faith to get them back when I get out. I'm mentally prepared for that, because my son, the boy, doesn't know that I am his mother. The person who is looking after him treats him well, like a son. I know I have every right, but I don't know if I have the courage to claim him as mine, I don't know how he will feel. The girls, their aunt manipulates them so that they don't talk to me. It is valid, they are grownups now, whoever wants to be with me, will be with me. I would be delighted for everyone to be there." Participant 12

"What has affected me the most, is emotionally, because of what I was telling you about my family, I am very attached to my family. And even more when it comes to my son. I knew that he was hospitalized and would have liked to be with him. Even now, was something I was talking about with my friend a while ago, it's still something I regret." Participant 17

In this regard, the participants' perceptions of financial, health, and family issues as being directly related to their time in prison stand out; 73% of the interviewees mentioned this at least once (f=65). Here are some examples:

"Look, at the beginning it was very hard, because they were children. I left my son when he was 8 and my daughter when she was 6, they were not babies, but they were not that old either. It was very hard, they were in therapy, they had them... well, my mom was...I don't know, I don't know how she had them understand my situation." Participant 5

"Sometimes I tell her that I do have what I need, even if I don't have anything, so that she doesn't have to worry or spend money on me. I mean, I tell her that because she's already worried and burnt out. All the expenses, or that the lawyer asks for money...So, when many people say 'oh, why are you selling stuff if you don't need to because you have visits (meaning she receives economic support)'. Yes, but that has nothing to do with it. I mean, they already do enough by coming, paying for gas, or bringing me something to eat, for me to take even more from them, well, no. That's why when they want to leave me money, I don't take it. Sometimes I tell them, 'No, I do have soap', or 'yes, I do have softener' or something like that so they don't worry about it or spend money on that. So, I buy it here, but it is more expensive at the store. Yes, the truth is that it is more expensive because there is no other way but to buy it here." Participant 11

Nevertheless, to add complexity to the picture we have painted, it is important to note that on 86 occasions, 61% of participants spoke to us about the emotional support they receive from their relatives or support circle, which makes it easier for them to communicate with their children. For most of them, this factor is substantial for adapting to the environment in which they live.

G. Direct Gender Violence

A significant part of our discussion with the participants was focused on this theme subcategory. It refers to direct gender-based violence manifested through assaults and interactions that cause material and/or emotional harm. The presence of these issues appeared as part of their lives prior to being imprisoned and also during their incarceration.

In this regard, 73% of participants told us, on 190 occasions, about various forms of emotional abuse they had experienced in their lives. Eight out of ten (f=168) mentioned having been subjected to physical violence, and almost a third mentioned having been subjected to sexual violence. Their gender is linked to all of this violence. It is particularly noteworthy that the family is a breeding ground for gender violence in 40% of them. Unfortunately, issues like these are not uncommon in a nation like Mexico. Nevertheless, it was essential to examine the extent to which such categories appeared in the conversations we had with the participants in a project that aims to link these factors with peacebuilding. Here are some examples:

"I suffered a lot with him because he beat me; at that time, he was a very hard person with me and with my children. And always, when I was with him, he said

he would change, but he did not change. He would hit me again and I would separate from him again. That is, I lived with him, and I separated from him. And it was at that time when all this detention happened. He arrived and asked me for forgiveness at prison X after five months, and told me that if everything happened it was his fault too. He told me that he missed me a lot. And now that man is also coming to see me." Participant 20

"I didn't want to be without my children's father because, what would the family say? I put up with a lot. So much so, that...my family stopped hearing from me for about 3 months because he kept me locked in a construction room in his own house and wouldn't let me go out, because I was going to leave with the child. I never thought of going anywhere with the child, but... he was in bad shape. And he would pass me the food under the door, and it was like a trauma. But I'm not going to lie to you, I got used to that trauma. I preferred to continue with that trauma and not let him leave me. In other words, I told him 'It doesn't matter, I forgive you, nothing happens, I forget. Don't go, don't leave me'." Participant 25

"The problem was that since I came from my parents' mistreatment, beatings and all that, for me, he was like a help, to get married and make a life with a person to leave behind beatings, mistreatment, violence, all that. But instead of my life being better, it was worse. Because as I come from violence, he saw me being beaten and then it was easy for him to beat me. One day before my wedding, he hit me. I thought he was going to change. He never changed. He kept hitting me. He had my children, he treated me badly, he told me I was one of the worst, so there was always a lack of respect. When he used to make food, he would throw the food. There was a lot of abuse, so much abuse that I went to a church, and there a pastor told me 'Look, what God unites, man does not separate, but I separate you. Go away. I don't want to see you dead,' because there was already so much abuse." Participant 23

"Personally, I never saw him as a partner, I saw him with fear, he scared me...Several times I tried to leave, pack and go somewhere else but he threatened me, he pulled knives on me, that he was going to kill me, that I could not leave. That's what the situation was like." Participant 4

H. Structural Gender Violence

If we had to highlight only one thematic subcategory within the entire study, it would be that of *Structural Gender Violence*. As explained earlier, this category had the highest number of repetitions throughout this study ($f=372$ in 94% of respondents). However, proper examination of how other categories include this phenomenon is incredibly instructive:

First and foremost, nine out of ten interviewees mentioned the prevalence of gender stereotypes in their environment on 185 occasions. Seven out of ten revealed their gender identity and emphasized their subjectivity as women in the interviews we had with them. Specifically, this

refers to how the interviewees live their own experiences as humans and as subjects, and how they see and perceive their roles. This theme recurred on 120 occasions.

"No, there was no choice. He had to be super relaxed with me. He hit me hard when I didn't know how to cook. I used to tell him 'My mother always did everything for us', and he would say to me: 'Well, your mother is not here right now'. I didn't know how to wash, so he beat me. I didn't know how to cook, so he hit me. I didn't know how to sweep, he hit me. So, you learn, you learn. You don't know how to make flour tortillas? Ah, how the hell not?' Go do it! It was very macho." Participant 26

"Like for example... I was always looking for goals. To accomplish them. Every purpose, I achieved it, but there was always a man who I would hear say: 'How can I let a woman, and apart from being a woman, a butch woman, boss me around? In a way, it did make me insecure, but it also made me a little stronger, to not let them push me around and to show that I can be much more than them." Participant 29

"I consider that my life was normal; I was a housewife, I took my children to school, to the house, normal. Well, what a stay-at-home mother does, that is, she devotes herself to her children, to her home. When I was alone, I dedicated myself to work. I washed, washed dishes, took care of my children, took them to school." Participant 21

"No, it's always the same people. It's not husbands, it's their moms. There are more women who come to see women. There (in the men's prison) there are a lot of women who come to see men. That's where that part being a woman comes in, where she is more... I don't know... I don't want to generalize, but that empathy or love, because we are more foolish. A woman I think will be unconditional, the woman is supportive, and kind. When a woman is in the same situation the man goes away, he leaves her alone. We women are more than that, we are always there. That's why men have more visitors, their mom, wife, sisters, etc." Participant 10

"Well, I feel that I did well for being a woman, because of what I dedicated myself to. I mean, with my uncle I feel that he thought I was cute, or I don't know but everyone helped me and taught me how to do things. When I worked at the Palace, it was bad for me because I was a woman, because all the women were against each other, all the secretaries against each other. Then they were mean to me, if I was a minute late or if I stopped to use the bathroom they would say things about me, things like that. And in the taxi drivers, on the contrary, I feel that I opened myself a way being a woman because it is a man's world. And I was the only woman." Participant 15

Second, gender inequality was mentioned by 70% of our participants as being present in their lives and environments. The systemic forms of gendered violence to which we have referred include inequality. These are typical mentions in this context:

"He did go out with his friends. Sometimes he would leave work and go out. And he would come back late, he would come back at 11, 12 o'clock at night. And well, I was alone in the house. Because if you say 'well, don't enjoy yourself...'. Well, I wanted to go out, but I couldn't because I had to look after my daughter. Or I had to go to work early, so I had to go to bed early. So, he was doing something else, and I was doing something else." Participant 25

"Because he always... He knew that I had a hard time, literally, getting up at four, five o'clock in the morning, getting ready, getting my daughter ready. He would be there from eight to four and I would get up, prepare his uniform, breakfast, and by seven in the morning I had to go to the bridge to cross, to be at school at 7:45 a.m. I still had a friend who would pick me up from the bridge and take me. On the way back, I would leave school, arrive, and leave my kid to the day care center, which was there at the school, and then I would go study. Twelve o'clock, 1 pm, I had to breastfeed her, so I had to go to the nursery, eat at the nursery, breastfeed her, and come back. And then I had to do a lot of homework and then I had to be there with my child. It was too much." Participant 26

Finally, half of the women we interviewed perceive that they are in prison directly or indirectly because of a man. This theme was repeated 76 times throughout the interviews. Some examples include:

"In fact, yes, I was with... because I went with my brother, the oldest male. But that time I was pregnant, and they told me that we should stop at the store for a coffee or dinner, it was already nighttime. And I said yes, but they were drinking. So, I was looking for cookies and all that, when I heard them yelling and hitting. And that's when I approached them, and they were already committing the crime (the crime she was accused of committing)." Participant 17

"Unfortunately, he was the person I was with, he was my client, and I am here because of that man. I am here for this aggravated kidnapping, I was with him when he collected a ransom, and he says that I took him from one place to another, when I had no knowledge of it. In the statements... now they have confirmed that I have a sentence of 25 years." Participant 20

"I see that every morning he would leave and come back. And he tells me 'I'm looking for jobs, while this season passes'. And I told him 'Ah, okay, perfect'. When I found out that he was involved in the sale and distribution of drugs, that's when I was arrested. Because during the whole time we were like that, I didn't see him bringing drugs to the house." Participant 24

"Yes, they're investigating me for his crime and then they found out that the van was registered under my name, supposedly a crime was committed in that vehicle and since he put it under my name... well that's why I'm here." Participant 2

Table 3.0: Structural Gender Violence.

Categories	Number of coding references	Percentage of participants who mentioned it at least once
Structural Gender Violence	372	94%
Gender Stereotypes	185	91%
Feminine Subjectivity/Gender Identity	120	70%
Gender Inequality	84	70%
I am in prison indirectly or directly because of a man	76	48%

I. Gender Violence within the Justice System

This research demonstrates how the justice system reproduces and generates structural violence in general, and gender violence in particular, rather than functioning as an institution designed to build positive peace through programs, reestablishing the social fabric, and effective reinsertion of offenders. The majority of our interviewees are aware of these factors; of whom 67% reported instances of violence against them as women in their detention processes, violence against them as women in legal practices, or perceived that the authorities treat them differently because they are women (this last category was mentioned by 55% of participants on 47 occasions). In addition, almost half of our interviewees referred to the lack of norms that guarantee women fundamental rights; 45% perceive that women in prison are a marginalized sector of society, and four out of ten perceive prison as a male model.

Here are some examples that illustrate this thematic subcategory:

"So, I told him 'Well, my name is x'. And (the officer) tells me 'Ahhh, well you're a whore and you were doing very well. How much did you earn? Well, if you are a whore, then give me a service. How much are you going to charge me?' And I responded: 'No sir! Don't say that to me!', 'Ah, now you act offended'. At that moment I was thinking about my children, about how I had left them. I said: 'I want to go now sir'. And he told me: 'You're not going to leave until you tell us the truth.' I responded: 'I'm telling you the truth', And he told me 'Well, you better tell the truth because otherwise we're going to find out by beating you'." Participant 20

"In fact, my children were already going to school and we were buying things for them in a supermarket, and when we left with their things and we were about to get into the truck, the cops arrived and surrounded us. They threw me into the ground, they took my children away in a van and they put me into a different car. When they took me, they beat me, they beat me a lot. I was badly beaten, I was raped. I was raped, I was beaten by the cops. They threatened me a lot, they said that they were going to make my children disappear if I didn't sign the paperwork, they wanted me to sign to label me as guilty. I signed all the statements that they gave

me, all the sheets that they gave to me, I signed them up, on the condition that they would take my children home safe and sound.” Participant 19

“I believe that in legal terms women are neglected, here in Mexico, their processes take many years; men always, somehow get their freedom. The last time here in this prison that a woman received a sentence, was about six months ago. In the four years and five months that I have been here, I have seen very few times in which women have received a sentence. More or less 80 or 100 guys were set free, and women are still stuck in here. There is inequality in legal matters, the process for women has been largely abandoned.” Participant 4

“I think that judges, I do not like labels in general. But the one assigned to my case, what he did was because of... I think it would be gender. He (the judge), did that a lot (gender discrimination). He said that because the one accused was my brother, 'it was going to be the same or even worse for me'. That's how he expressed it. I think when he said it, that hurt me more than the sentence he gave me.” Participant 17

“Unfortunately, when men commit crimes, they are less judged than women. The laws, unfortunately, although they say that they seek gender equality, it isn't true. It isn't true because there are men who can steal and they will give them less years, but a woman can steal to feed her children and they give her a high sentence, so there is no equity in that sense.” Participant 3

“Men, they have a hammock, we don't. They have more stuff. They have more ways to get stuff. I think they have workshops there, and we have nothing. We don't. Men have more priority than women. We are more marginalized.” Participant 23

Discussion

It is hard to emphasize the significance of what the existing evidence shows: both domestic violence and gender violence are highly correlated with violence associated with organized crime (IEP, 2019). This becomes even more apparent when we examine the Women's Peace and Security Index (GIWPS, 2021). Countries with the highest rates of armed or criminal violence also have the highest rates of violence against women. Conversely, the reduction of armed and domestic violence in those societies is directly influenced by measures aimed at enhancing women's well-being, status in society, inclusion, integration, rights, and opportunities (GIWPS, 2021). In light of this context, we provide a summary of the findings of the present study as follows:

First, among the inmate women we interviewed, there is not just one story but rather, there is a complex picture. In some instances, there are backgrounds that indicate close links to family and friends, as well as ongoing support networks. On the other hand, in some instances, the stories are characterized by much more dysfunctional circles, including the dissolution or absence of family ties or support networks that could have assisted them in coping with their current

circumstances. Gender violence, both visible and invisible, as well as structural violence, recurs throughout the interviews. This even applies to interviewees who claimed they come from good incomes or solid family backgrounds. In other words, the glue that links all these stories, is an ecosystem of structural gender violence.

Second, their incarceration situation is closely tied to this structural gender violence. This statement does not seek to reduce the agency of women who choose to commit crimes for a variety of reasons; rather, it is about rethinking one of our initial questions, which is echoed in a significant portion of the existing literature: "Why do women engage in crime? That question assumed that the participants in this study had committed a crime or crimes and were currently in jail for that reason. As a research team, it is obviously impossible to affirm or deny that the participants are guilty or innocent of the charges against them. This investigation reveals, however, that the majority of them believe they are innocent and spend a significant part of their conversation explaining it, detailing the factors that support their argument, and tend to vent their accumulated frustration against a system and a process that they consider as unfair and riddled with inconsistencies. Nevertheless, the fact that this theme is prevalent across twelve female prisons that are located in a several states of the nation and are so dissimilar from one another, raises the prospect of at least conceding the benefit of the doubt in terms of their innocence. Therefore, the findings of this study do not allow us to answer "What led these women to commit crimes?", but rather, "What factors led them to imprisonment?". And it is not the same.

Third, we could put it this way: While attempting to answer the question of whether or not structural gender violence was linked to crime, we discovered that the same structural violence may be closely linked to participants' perceived or actual innocence. It necessary to understand how the systemic conditions of structural gender violence allow, facilitate, and occasionally directly activate the circumstances that lead our participants to prison. This is subsequently reproduced in a seemingly inexhaustible circle both (structural gender-based violence and structural violence) during their trial and during their incarceration. What is notable is that their relationships with one or more men appear to be factors that either directly or indirectly contribute to the incarceration of women. Furthermore, gender stereotypes, gender-specific behaviors, and psychological gender violence, tend to persist during their legal process and their stay at the prison.

Fourth, structural gender violence is a widespread phenomenon that is not restricted to imprisonment or the prison setting. The interviews are, sadly, a reflection of lives dominated by violence. Nevertheless, if we assume that Mexico needs to build institutions and pillars that help restore the country's peace, then all the factors related to the violation of the rule of law, the commission of crimes, and violent crime, should be investigated and prosecuted by institutions that are working to heal, restore, and repair the social fabric and ties. Instead, the findings of our study appear to demonstrate that the legal system, in particular the one that prosecutes the women we interviewed, not only reproduces but also activates conditions that produce and reproduce direct and structural forms of gender violence.

Fifth, perhaps like a light in the middle of this complex tunnel, an interesting finding emerges in this investigation: Women who participate in workshops, courses, religious programs, paid work programs, or reinsertion projects are the notable exception to the disruption of peace caused by the penitentiary system. There, in this picture, lies a possibility for the experience in prison to

become an axis that does rebuild the social tissue and contributes to peacebuilding. Despite the fact that the findings of the present study are in line with the research previously carried out by this team (Meschoulam et al., 2020), it stands out that this pattern can be found in several other prisons than those we investigated in our previous research. This work, often carried out by civil society organizations, should not be minimized and should, in fact, be promoted as supported by the evidence provided by this new study.

Recommendations

This research points to the need to reconsider everything related to the areas mentioned above if there is any real interest in making Mexico a peaceful country with a gender perspective. This includes from studying in greater detail how women end up in situations where they are imprisoned, to the creation of mechanisms, policies, measurements, and institutions that contribute to preventing these circumstances, the design and restructuring of the system procedural process with a peacebuilding approach, and a prevailing gender perspective in it (instead of a machine that reproduces gender violence), and finally, the design or redesign of a penitentiary system that can contribute more effectively towards the repair and restoration of the social fabric.

In a nutshell, based on the aforementioned findings (which add to the vast existing literature on the subject), we recommend focusing on two areas: first, the system, probably the most significant; second, the setting in which women are tried for the crimes they are accused of, as well as the setting in which they enter and remain in prison. The following is a list of our recommendations:

1. Further investigation of these issues needs to be conducted by replicating studies such as the current one in larger areas of the country, in addition to quantitative studies based on findings such as those presented here, which may have greater external validity. In general, it is acknowledged that much work has already been done on this phenomenology. However, more research with a focus on peacebuilding is required in this area of expertise.
2. These results should be disseminated among actors in the public sector, private sector, and social sector. The many organizations and individuals already working in these fields can benefit from knowing the evidence presented here, in addition to the existing literature, to which findings from additional studies could be added. It can also contribute to the relative discussion of policies and actions aimed at promoting peace in nations like Mexico.
3. Projects to train individuals in the public, private, or social sectors who are in charge of making decisions implementing public policies, or designing specific strategies, in order to integrate a peacebuilding with a gender perspective approach into already existing programs or new ones, should be put in place. This encompasses an approximation that fully considers the system of structural and direct violence, that embraces the gender aspect in that structural and direct violence, and that incorporates positive peacebuilding from a gender perspective. Within this recommendation, we suggest a detailed

reevaluation of training programs or courses, paid work, social work, or reintegration projects that already exist in prisons for women. These will help understand which parts of such projects function as effective peacebuilding strategies through micro level, which of them need to be adjusted or modified, and which other types of programs that are not currently available could be added to the system

4. Beyond training, this investigation provides evidence that supports the implementation of public policies and actions for the prevention of structural and gender violence, as well as peacebuilding with a gender perspective based on concrete short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures at the national, state, and local levels. Obviously, this is too broad for the purposes of a limited study like this, but the ongoing efforts of governments at all levels, the private and social sector, academia, the media, and religious organizations, among many others, to systematically address the absence of peace in countries like Mexico require the inclusion of a gender perspective and cannot be overlooked.

5. In a more concrete sense, the present study provides evidence that demonstrates the necessity of enhancing peacebuilding programs among women in prison. This does not only refer to workshops, courses or paid work projects, rather, it includes programs that ensure their human dignity, the fairness of their legal processes, and the effective delivery of justice; that, among many related issues, take care of their material and emotional well-being, strengthen dialogue and conflict resolution skills, and work to restore the social fabric. As previously stated, a number of these tasks are already being carried out. However, a cross-cutting design that incorporates them under the umbrella of peacebuilding and fills the gaps that are found as part of that integral vision is required.

Conclusions

Peace is not limited to the absence of violence. Therefore, the discussion of gender-based violence needs to be integrated into a broader vision: peacebuilding with a gender perspective. That is to say, gender violence is not external to the system or the structures that facilitate, produce, and then reproduce it in a country with a high incidence of violence like Mexico. However, contemplating a peace system also necessitates an understanding of its active components, which include not only how to eradicate violence and structural gender violence but also how to generate and sustain the active components of positive peace. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP, 2021), these elements include "attitudes, institutions, and structures" that create and sustain the peace we yearn for.

This discussion cannot be separated from the imprisonment of women. The research we present depicts an ecosystem that goes right to the core of structural gender violence, from its origins to the circumstances that send women to jail, and as a result, reproduces the worst aspects of these structures right there.

There are long-term solutions and responsibilities that require our attention. However, if we do not lose sight of the horizon, there are also concrete actions, very specific and targeted measures, that this study supports and that could be implemented or incorporated into cross-cutting and

broader programs. These could be grouped into programs for women that guarantee their human dignity, their right to a fair trial, and efficient justice delivery; that, among other measures, prioritize reparation and the restoration of the social fabric, strengthen dialogue and conflict resolution skills, and ensure their emotional and material well-being. These actions are not destined to pull Mexico out of the labyrinth in which it unfortunately finds itself. However, if we assume that there is no peace without justice, and that justice implies incorporating a gender perspective in its delivery, prosecution, restoration and reintegration, then these are indispensable tasks for the most violent countries on the planet.

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A Study Investigating Depictions of Workplace Bullying in Hollywood Films

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Abstract

This research focused on the portrayal and depiction of workplace bullying from a sample of 100 popular Hollywood films over the past two decades. This study utilized Hymes's SPEAKING Model, a well-established ethnographic communication method (Hymes, 1974), because of its rich interpretive and descriptive nature and its focus on analyzing communication and interaction in terms of both verbal and nonverbal exchanges. This study applied the framework of Hymes's model and analyzed the mnemonic elements of SPEAKING: setting, participants, end, act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms, and genre. The investigation was guided by the theoretical underpinnings of film theory, social construction theory, and symbolic interaction theory. The findings revealed theoretical frames that emerged and collectively these interpretive findings shed new light on understanding portrayals of workplace bullying in contemporary films. This research adds to the body of research on workplace bullying and calls attention to its expression in film.

A STUDY INVESTIGATING DEPICTIONS OF WORKPLACE BULLYING IN HOLLYWOOD FILMS

Alexia Georgakopoulos and Maria Georgo

Introduction

Bullying is the most prevalent form of violence in the workplace, has no boundaries, and damages healthy individuals and organizations (Chaplin, 2010, p. 438). The U.S. Workplace Bullying Institute's (WBI) national survey shows that 72% of American workers reported awareness of bullying in the workplace; 27% identified as victims, and 21% as witnesses (Namie, Christiansen, & Phillips, 2014). While most workplace bullying research has focused on psychological or social-psychological issues (Hutchinson & Jackson, 2014; Lewis & Rayner, 2003), this study used a new lens by exploring the questions, "can film help us make sense or meaning?" and "what do films convey through depictions of workplace bullying?" (Sutherland & Felty, 2013, p. 192).

There is a plethora of research connecting film, and the social world wherein movie scenes become reference material for social behavior. The role of movies in society is complex, and the debate continues regarding "when they mirror society and when they shape it" (McCullick, Belcher, Hardin, & Hardin, 2003, p. 5). Long after a film ends, it can continue to live on in thoughts, emotions, and interactions with others, becoming an integral part of the lived experience (Ross, S. 2014, pp. 9-11). This research aimed to take an in-depth look at depictions of workplace bullying in scenes of 100 popular Hollywood films released in the last two decades by exploring the ethnography of speaking within the context of workplace bullying. This study will begin with an overview of the literature on the powerful role of media and its link to workplace bullying. Next, it will move to the methodological design of this current research that utilizes ethnography. This section will be followed with the analyses of the data that includes the primary themes that emerged from the 100 films investigated in this study. Finally, a discussion will present the conclusions and implications of this study.

Literature Review

Historical Influence of Film

Movies have far-reaching influences on social life and continually prove to be powerful channels for disseminating ideas (Ross, S. 2014, p. 2). In 1923, a New York Times reporter described movies not as entertainment, but as a source of instruction and reflection influencing societal change in the US (Ross, S. 2014, p. 1). The Frankfurt School, created by international social theorists in 1923 (Routledge, 2011), argued that movies were producing "a mass society that undermines individuality, democracy, and the salutary aspects of high culture" (Kellner, 2004, p. 2). In response, the motion picture research council funded a study on the influence of movies on daily life (Keller, 2004, p. 2). These early studies were based on theories of propaganda and the belief that media had a direct influence on contributing to social problems (Keller, 2004, p. 3).

In the 1930s and 1940s, research shifted toward the influence of propaganda and concerns that

film was “promoting immorality, juvenile delinquency, and violence” (Kellner, 2004, p. 2). By the 1950s-1960s, going to the movies became a weekly tradition (Sutherland & Feltey, 2013, p. x). Films were bringing real-life issues to the screen (Ross, S. 2014, p. 4). The Vietnam War, women’s liberation, the sexual revolution, economic mobility, and the influx of international funding are examples of the social context from the 1960s throughout the 1980s (Ross, S. 2014, p. 6). Questions still persist on the influence of film.

Mediation Dependency Theory and Media Effect

Media has a formidable role in society as often people rely on it to form their attitudes and perceptions. Media Dependency Theory stresses that people likely depend on media, films, and television depictions to understand norms and behavior surrounding their attitudes and perceptions toward their environment. This dependency is heightened, especially when people do not have direct experiences in matters (Riffe & Varouhakis, 2008). For example, in the context of organizational life, people may depend on the media to inform them of what is acceptable to portray or accept within this setting. Workplace bullying may be illustrated as normative and even as provocative occurrences in the workplace in media depictions, so people will begin to normalize negative associations with real-world interactions and, in so become more complicit in accepting inappropriate norms because of these media depictions. These depictions are garnered from the different roles taken on by actors and media personalities that appear in media. Perhaps managers or superiors are commonly portrayed as aggressors with a thirst for unquestionable authority that manifests through regular verbal denigration, insidious harassment, and subtle or blatant sabotage. While these toxic behaviors are maladaptive for individuals, media dependency has significant impacts even in large-scale social disruption (Lowery, 2004). Today, the movement of Black Lives Matter that has ensued as a result of wrongful deaths to people of color who are tragically and brutally killed by police and the large-scale disruption and unrest between law enforcement and communities, gives society time to pause and reflect on how violence and tensions of this magnitude can be experienced. This movement has challenged people to reflect on what has gone array and media portrayals and depictions are part of the problem and root cause.

Media effect is interwoven with many influences, multifaceted, and sometimes convoluted. While in the early 1920s, media effect focused on what was referred to as the “hypodermic needle” effect; recent research argues that the audience is not passive (Ross, S. 2014, p. 7). Additionally, Katz (1959) points out that, “The selectivity approach emerged in the 1940s as a new paradigm that aimed to show that is more relevant to investigate what people do with media than what media do to people.” (p. 2) For example, it has often been found that people pay more attention to negative media content than to positive content, especially when it comes to news (Zillman et al. 2004). Considering and acknowledging media effects is integral to this study; recognizing the fundamental role of the characters, narratives, and context is imperative (Valkenburg et al. 2016). No longer can the media be unchallenged when topics such as harassment, bullying, and violence are investigated. For the purpose of this study, media dependency, and media effects are place squarely at the forefront of this study.

Role of Films

From the moment members of the audience leave the theater, they begin reflecting, discussing, and analyzing what they experienced (Barker & Austin, 2000, p. 2). The portrayal of all aspects of personal and professional lives is open to interpretation through film. Turner (2006) posits that “film is a social practice for its makers and its audience; in its narratives and meanings we can locate evidence of the ways in which our culture makes sense of itself” (p. 3).

Miller (2012) explored the film depiction of transgender people and posits that “legitimacy lies at the intersection between material reality and our symbolic world. Material reality often serves as the basis for representation while representation can also have an impact on material reality” (p. 1). Alternatively, Coleman (2005) considered the portrayal of Native Americans in Western films and argued that these films have “informed audiences how to think about cowboys and Indians” (p. 277). In addition, Quinn (2004) raises important questions related to the subtle yet pervasive influence of film on the portrayal of intellectuals. What the character’s look like, what they wear, and how they sound are some of the factors that influence the viewer’s interpretation. While, it can seem innocent at first, it can have irreparable harm (Quinn, 2004, p. 4).

Stereotypical depictions of physical education teachers in popular movies have been prolific for many years (McCullick et al., 2003, p. 4). From the more than average muscular male and the “masculine” looking female, to both portrayed as lacking intellect; it is no surprise to find that it has seeped into not just imagery on the screen, but also the more general context of society (p. 4). Farber and Holm wrote about movies and how they “construct images and themes capable of affirming or denying common perceptions” (McCullick et al., 2003, p. 4).

Bordon and Pietrobon (2012) studied 100 scenes analyzing how the depiction of domestic violence impacts the foundations of the family (pp. 221-223). Films can affect a viewer’s perception of what is real and shape their assumptions about “societal norms and values” (p. 220). The presumptions someone brings to a situation and attributes to “the others” involved are interwoven into the shaping film provides. Their findings reveal that film can be a powerful source for raising awareness about such a serious social issue, concluding that film is a valuable source for providing “a space in which social concepts can be formed and shared” (p. 223).

Movies continue to perpetuate negative and disparaging racism and stigma. Horton, Price, & Brown (1999) see this as Hollywood perpetuating a cycle of racism. Stereotypes persist, portraying African Americans as “lazy, stupid, foolish, and submissive” (Horton et al., 1999). Despite the United States’ cultural diversity, movies still tend to depict a biased homogenous view. The same rings true in the continued portrayal of women as inferior, promoting sexism, exploitation, and objectification (Berberick, 2010). Berberick (2010) explores connections with the depictions of women struggling with illness, surgeries, and death. Hollywood’s portrayal of women leads to eating disorders, cosmetic surgery, and emotional problems by dehumanizing and promoting shame and fear (Berberick, 2010).

Denzin (2007) reviewed 57 years of Hollywood’s portrayal of alcoholics to reveal the repeated symbolism of meanings attached to alcoholism. The depictions fluctuated from normalizing drinking to mockery or comic relief to sobriety or death (p. xiv). Consistent with the Goffman (1974) theory of symbolic interaction, while films may sometimes be entertainment; often, they are more, creating interpretations and understandings (p. xvii). Denzin (2007) asserts that films

have shaped public understanding of alcoholism (p. xv).

This research sought to gain a greater understanding as to how film may be shaping society's understanding of the horrifying phenomenon of workplace bullying. Much of what we know or think we know comes from symbolic influences rather than actual lived experiences (Helfgott, 2008, p. 369). It is a widely held belief, supported by scholarly research, that film is a bridge connecting symbolic representations with real-lived experiences. The stories that mold our thoughts and actions come from modern-day mythology, "pop culture, television, and film" (Helfgott, 2008, p. 372). Movies seem to keep up with the changes and the conflicts of everyday life. Film is a vehicle of popular culture, providing symbols that help construct reality. Depictions of workplace bullying in popular Hollywood films reveal its dimensions within pop culture and its common place in the world of work.

Definitions: Workplace Bullying

The WBI defines bullying as; "repeated, health-harming mistreatment of an employee by one or more employees through acts of commission or omission manifested as verbal abuse; behaviors (physical or nonverbal) that are threatening, intimidating, or humiliating; work sabotage, interference with production; exploitation of a vulnerability-physical, social, or psychological; or some combination of one or more categories" (Namie & Namie, 2011, p. 13). Bloch (2012) defines bullying as the carrying out of the bully's intention to degrade or reject others (p. 88). It causes shame and misery and interferes with job performance. It creates unpleasant working environments that have social, psychological, and organizational impact. Individuals may suffer from stress, while organizations face losses in efficiency, profit, and overall employee motivation (Harvey, Treadway, Heames, & Duke, 2009, p. 27).

A common working definition of workplace bullying from Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper is, "Bullying at work means harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks" (Van Heugten et al., 2013, p. 3). Bullying is an escalating process during which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. (p. 3). Frey, Hirschstein, Edstrom & Snell define bullying as a "social construct that disrupts social connection" (Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012, p. 48). Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2011) condense the definition of workplace bullying to "negative acts that occur in a persistent and systematic way" (p. 179). Paull et al. (2012) pulled from the research of Rayner and Hoel and extended the definition of workplace bullying into five distinct categories: threats to personal standing, threats to professional status, destabilization or undermining, overwork or undue pressure, and isolation (pp. 351-352). David Yamada, a leading proponent for US anti-bullying laws, defines bullying as deliberate verbal and non-verbal attacks in words and actions that are responsible for both physical and psychological harm (Chaplin, 2010, p. 445). A recent study defined bullying as negative acts, harmful effects, power imbalance, and persistence (Coyne, 2013, p. 159). This introduces a shift in focus on how workplace bullying is defined, from frequency or duration, to target perceptions, and the outcomes of the negative acts (p. 158). Bullying is a societal phenomenon attributed to various factors, from many perspectives (Einarsen et al., 2011, p. 28). The literature defines bullying with some variation, but all agree bullying on causes harm.

Workplace bullying is deliberate, sometimes covert, and always harmful (Rayner et al. 2002, p. xi), and has the potential for a full range of impact, either blatant or hidden, leading to emotional and physical harm (Paull et al., 2012). It is the cause of substantial health issues (Paull et al., 2012). Bullying is complex and interferes with social interactions; the relationship being a triad between perpetrator, victim, and bystander (Bloch, 2012). The “systematic mistreatment” of bullying can result in “severe social, psychological, and psychosomatic problems” (Einarsen et al., 2011, p. 4) and negatively impact employment, cause stress, and lead to social exclusion. Bullying encompasses criticizing and demeaning, disseminating rumors, and isolating co-workers (Chaplin, 2010). Namie (2003) describes it as a form of interpersonal hostility (Tye-Williams & Krone, 2014). More traumatic and damaging than any other work-related stress, bullying is shattering and debilitating (Einarsen et al., 2011).

Methodological Review

This study utilized qualitative methods to explore the patterns and themes in the representations of workplace bullying in a purposive sampling of Hollywood films spanning nearly twenty years. The second author provided the overarching design for the study, but both authors were involved with the analyses and theoretical model development. The design of the qualitative media analysis facilitates an in-depth analysis of “objects, symbols, and meanings that make up social reality shared by members of a society” (Altheide & Schneider, 2013, p. 2). Context, process, and emergence are the three focal points of this methodology. Context is the situation, the process is “how” it was created, and understanding emerges from context and process (Altheide & Schneider, 2013, pp. 9-10). Through a reflexive, constant comparison of context and process, social interaction is studied, themes emerge, and an understanding of workplace bullying is discovered. This descriptive and exploratory research involves interacting with the text (film), analyzing and inferring, and integrating constant comparison and reflexivity to the point of saturation.

Scenes depicting workplace bullying were selected from 100 Hollywood films released from 1994-2016. Extensive online searches of pop culture newspapers, magazine articles, social media, blogs, etc. on the topics of Hollywood films combined with “bullying” and “bullying in the workplace” created a list of potential films that were then matched for the following criteria:

1. Hollywood films released between 1994 and 2016.
2. Films with fictional narratives, designed for diverse audiences.
3. Films having one or more scenes depicting workplace bullying as defined by the WBI.

More than 150 films released between 1994 and 2016 were viewed and considered, 100 films matching the criteria were selected, and 453 scenes were chosen for analysis.

Textual analysis facilitated unearthing deeper meaning of how visual codes and narrative conventions of film worked together to portray and construct a paradigm of workplace bullying (Turner, 2006). The researcher looked for patterns and clues, moving back and forth through the data. The data was divided into smaller sections, categories were identified, and frames and themes emerged. Data collection and analysis were guided by the following research questions:

RQ1. What does workplace bullying look like, and how does it manifest in the selected Hollywood film scenes (1994-2016)?

RQ2. Do depictions change over time?

RQ3. What themes or patterns emerge; how do they inform us about the phenomenon?

RQ4. How do they inform us of purposeful new directions for further research?

The analysis employed the Hymes' Ethnography of Communication, speaking model, which is heuristic and a comprehensive and systematic way of exploring and understanding interpersonal speech and social interaction. Hymes developed this model to better understand our "ways of speaking" (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, pp. 3-4). This theory-based model acknowledges that speech has context and makes meaning (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, p. 4). It considers the relevance or context of the situation and the specifics of the participants (Hymes, 1974).

The process focuses on the three primary elements of speech: speech situations, speech events, and speech acts. Speech situations can be "ceremonies, fights, hunts, meals, lovemaking, and the like" (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, p. 7). Speech events are embedded in the situation, and speech acts are the literal words spoken or exchanged (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, p. 7). Speech situations are all-encompassing and consider the broadest context of the scene. The speech event and the speech act are components of the speech situation, which are not mutually exclusive, but rather interwoven (Zand-Vakili et al., 2012). The model provided an organized way of collecting data and facilitated theme emergence and analysis (Zand-Vakili et al., 2012, p. 42). The speaking model grid is a guiding tool for analysis and a greater understanding of the social context, purposes, and needs while exploring the ethnography of communication. To facilitate this process, Hymes provides a detailed framework referred to as the speaking model grid, where SPEAKING is an acronym (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, pp. 7-8):

- Setting: speech situation time and place
- Participants: characters; their relationship, gender, age, status or position in the speech situation
- Ends: the purpose of the speech event, goals, or intentions
- Act: topic or speech acts within the speech event
- Key: tone or way speech acts are said
- Instrumentalities: forms and styles of speech; linguistic code, language or dialect, variety of channels of speech and writing
- Norm: social rules of the situation; interactions and interpretations
- Genre: type of speech event

While guiding exploration, the speaking model helped to reveal the implicit context of workplace culture and depictions of workplace bullying. Films facilitated isolating the ways of speaking and consideration of their meanings in the film and provided a comprehensive and systematic process for gaining greater insight into exploring the phenomenon of workplace bullying.

The synthesis of Denzin's recommended phases for film analysis, qualitative media analysis, and the ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1974) provided five steps for rich and descriptive exploration, discovery, and analysis:

1. Films were viewed to identify scenes portraying workplace bullying; extensive use of

- pause, stop, start, rewind, repeat, and notetaking ensued.
2. Films were viewed again to affirm selected scenes, as well as to identify additional scenes that might qualify. Following the order and logic of the text (scene) and paying attention to textual and thematic analysis was imperative. Focusing on the social context, the researcher looked for three primary elements of speech; speech situations: speech events, and speech acts (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, p. 7).
 3. Utilizing the Hymes SPEAKING model grid as a guide for more detailed social context and ethnographic data (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010, pp. 7-8), the selected scenes were viewed a third time.
 4. As needed, as many as 2-5 additional viewings of selected scenes followed, the researcher continued to employ pause, stop, start, rewind, repeat, and more extensive notetaking. The focus at this stage included coding of scenes utilizing depictions of the typology of workplace bullying and lists of subtle and not-so-subtle signs of bullying.
 5. The researcher was diligent and thorough in searching for patterns and traces of the phenomenon of workplace bullying. Fluidity was constant, repeatedly navigating through the scenes utilizing the Hymes model (1974) and allowing themes to emerge. Codes were tabulated, patterns identified, comparing and contrasting, while searching for theme emergence.

Films proved to be an excellent tool for researching the phenomenon of workplace bullying by providing a place to explore, reflect, and analyze. A synthesis of Denzin's recommended phases for film analysis, qualitative media analysis, and the ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1974) provided a deliberate and intentional process, ensuring rich and descriptive exploration, discovery, and analysis. The researcher was diligent in searching for patterns and clues; while moving back and forth through the data. The data was refined into smaller sections, as categories became evident, and frames and themes emerged.

One unique strength of qualitative media analysis is its non-intrusive nature, and ability to be repeated. This provides strength in the sampling and reliability in the findings (Mcnamara, 2005). Its synthesis with Denzin's recommended phases for film analysis and the ethnography of communication (1974) reinforces trustworthiness for rich and descriptive exploration, discovery, and analysis. The Hymes speaking model added structural support to meet the challenge of traditional tests for rigor and validity, as well as the process of constant comparison, reflexivity, emerging themes, and thick descriptions safeguarding reliability and trustworthiness (Hansen, 2014, pp. 5-7). Qualitative research requires a delicate balance between the voice of the text and the voice of the researcher; however, the researcher is the conduit to understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 278).

Findings

RQ 1: What does workplace bullying look like, and how does it manifest in the selected Hollywood films scenes (1994-2016)?

Workplace bullying in this research predominately looks like Caucasian men over the age of 45 bullying Caucasian men under the age of 45. Bullies are most often top-down bosses, gatekeepers that primarily use intimidation and belittling to harm others. Pynnonen and Takala

(2013) report that abuse persists when transferred like a “domino effect” (p. 4). Workplace bullying behaviors get passed down; often through position, bullies have power, misusing and abusing their power through acts of “humiliation, intimidation, or punishing” (p. 5).

Workplace bullying is often depicted as humorous and sprinkled with obscenities. Comedy is pervasive, either standing alone, completely diminishing the violent and traumatic impacts of bullying, or intermingling as a sort of sedative to more dramatic and harmful story lines. In some cases, a touch of romance is interfused to ensure there is a nonsensical Hollywood happy ending to what otherwise is often abusive and devastating. Less often, but also impactful, bullying is sometimes dramatic, painful, and tragic.

Depictions of workplace bullying varied by industry: 50% of the films occur in corporate settings; the other 50% are distributed over 13 other industries: corporate setting, government, legal/law enforcement, retail, factory, restaurant, education K12, media, clergy, higher education, sport, domestic military, and construction. This range of industries confirms that no workplace is immune.

A total of 192 bullies were depicted in the selected scenes; 151 (79%) men, 41 (21%) women. A total of 130 targets were identified; 82 (63%) men, 48 (37%) women. In both cases, the number of bullies and targets reflects at least one occurrence by one individual; however, there are many cases when a bully or target is portrayed in multiple roles as part of their character.

The findings show that overwhelmingly Caucasian men are depicted as the bully and the target; Caucasian women are second highest. However, while Caucasian women are about equal in their prevalence as either bully or target, Caucasian men are nearly twice as often depicted as the perpetrator rather than the target. The age of the bullies or targets is difficult to determine since age is not specifically identified within the context of the film. However, two broad categories estimating age were identified to guide exploration of the participants within the portrayals of workplace bullying: young professional (under 45 years of age), and mature professional (over 45 years of age). Seventy-six of the 192 bullies met the criteria as young professionals and 116 as mature professionals. Targets were more often depicted as young professionals (98 out of 130). These numbers are based on 96 of the 100 films in our sampling; the four animated films were not considered for racial or ethnic identity nor age.

The roles portrayed by bullies fall into three primary categories: Boss bullies (top-down), co-workers (lateral), and subordinates (bottom-up). In some scenes, a character may have multiple roles and interactions in different directions. These multiple roles exceed specific counts of overall bullying participants; however, the findings are valid and provide powerful strength to the prevalence of top-down workplace bullying. Of 298-character portrayals in bullying roles: 234 (79%) were top-down bullying, 12 bottom-up, and 52 laterals. The portrayal of workplace bullying varied from one film to the next and from one scene to the next; however, overall, most character roles depicting workplace bullying were supervisors.

One hundred films released between 1994 and 2016 provided 453 scenes with 1,844 depictions of workplace bullying. In 1,844 portrayals, there were 982 subtle and 862 not-so-subtle signs of bullying. Intimidation (subtle) and belittling (not-so-subtle) were the most frequent

representations of bullying; 152 intimidation incidents (15.5%, subtle signs of bullying); 191 incidents of belittling (22% of not-so-subtle signs of bullying). Illustrated in Table 1, these permeate the depictions of workplace bullying in this research. The signs and descriptions were retrieved from the WBI.

Table 1: *Subtle and Not-So-Subtle Signs of Bullying*

# of incidents	Subtle Signs	# of incidents	Not-So-Subtle Signs
152	Intimidation	191	Belittling
115	Minimization	126	Threats
54	Taking credit	121	Offensive communication
75	Rationalization	136	Aggression
67	Criticism	103	Embarrassment
55	Seduction	50	Intrusion
36	Isolation/exclusion	55	Coercion
52	Creating a feeling of uselessness	34	Campaigning
41	Diversion	19	Punishment
45	Projection of blame	14	Revenge
41	Undermining work	23	Blocking advancement/growth
46	Pitting employees against each other		
28	Impossible/changing expectations		
45	Shame and guilt		
28	Ignoring		
45	Deceit		
27	Withholding information		
20	Removal of responsibility		
3	Constant change and inconsistency		
7	Mood swings		

In this research, workplace bullying was portrayed in sixteen different film genres: comedy, drama, romance, thriller, crime, mystery, action, sport, biography, fantasy, adventure, family, war, music, musical, and animation. Many films represent multiple genres. Depictions of workplace bullying were predominately found in comedy (69%), drama (58%), and romance (33%). These three genres are also often intertwined. Film ratings are also a vital aspect of the genre as defined within the Hymes model (1974). Workplace bullying is portrayed in various

ratings of films. Ratings of films in this study were represented as follows: 39 (39%) rated R; 46 (46%) rated PG-13; 10 (10%) PG, 1 (1%) G; and 4 (4%) was NR (not rated).

RQ2: Do the depictions change over time?

There was no significant change with the who, where, or how of workplace bullying over time. The only change reflected in the findings is related to the genre and ratings of the films. Bullying was not depicted in G rated films in the past 15 years and was reduced by 50% in PG rated films. These decreases are a positive sign, reducing the exposure of workplace bullying to children. Rated R films depicting workplace bullying increased by 25% in the past ten years, also a positive trend, a rating more aligned with the true nature of the phenomenon.

The findings show that the genre of films depicting workplace bullying does change over time. Comedy is consistently the most frequent genre utilized to portray workplace bullying, with only two 3-year segments showing it equal to depictions in drama, 1997-1999, and 2009-2011. In many cases, comedy and drama co-mingle as a genre and romance as well. During the period of 1994-1996, comedy was almost exclusively a genre for portraying workplace bullying.

Ratings of films depicting workplace bullying show a change over time. While there is still a significant number of PG-13 films in our sampling, the findings over time do reflect a decrease overall of PG films and some signs in recent years for PG-13 as well. This is a positive signal, reducing the risk of influence on children regarding the imagery of workplace adult bullying behaviors. R being the greatest overall rating is consistent with the portrayals of workplace bullying as being violent and therefore, should have limited access to youth viewing.

RQ3: What themes or patterns emerge; how do they inform us about the phenomenon?

Workplace bullying is a complex interweaving of interactions and relationships between bullies, targets, and bystanders; something not to be simplified. Some portrayals were distinct for bullies, targets, and bystanders, while many more are complex and intermingling. Looking specifically at bullies, targets, and bystanders, there is overlap or duplication of some categories. Ten of the categories that emerged focused on bullies: abuse of authority, threats and intimidation, belittling, competition and promotion, systemic bullying, firings, power and control, dismissive and minimization, doing gender, and rationalization. Five categories that came to light focused on targets: quitting, trauma, rationalization, speaking up, and silence, and four other categories aimed at bystanders: power and control, speaking up, silence, and doing gender. Depictions of bullies in this study were predominantly, but not limited to, abusing authority, belittling, threatening and intimidating, and competing. Targets are portrayed most often as quitting, being traumatized, or rationalizing; bystanders range from doing nothing, joining, or intervening.

These categories are rarely mutually exclusive. Bullies and targets are both sometimes portrayed as violent, aggressive, winning, or retaliating. Bullies and bystanders are both sometimes portrayed as having power and control, being dismissive or minimizing, and functioning as part of the system or representative of the culture of the workplace. Targets and bystanders are portrayed as puppets, traumatized, ignoring, joining, speaking up, or accepting. Bullies, targets, and bystanders all are at times portrayed as doing gender, forgiving, silent, in denial, or

rationalizing.

RQ 4: How do the themes or patterns inform us of purposeful new directions for further research?

In the 100 films studied, are embedded hundreds of potential case studies; each its own unique story, each diverse and rich in characters and relationships, each with suffering and in some cases also joy or triumph. Case study allows a researcher to study a complex phenomenon like workplace bullying with focused context and in-depth exploration (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544).

Davey in *Big Bully* (Barber & Miner, 1996) raised a new question regarding the phenomenon of bystanders in workplace bullying. Where is the support of bystanders in the workplace, as adults, that Davy refers to Namie's (2008) findings show that while 97% of co-workers were aware of mistreatment, and 95% attest to seeing it, less than 1% did anything to respond. The bystanders own personal fears are most often the explanation for their action or inaction, often resulting in nothing more than moral support or advice (Namie, 2008, pp. 3-4). The risks to a bystander are often like those of a target; active bystanders often are left with the alternatives of quitting or getting fired; therefore, many remain quiet and become complicit by default. Further study is recommended related to this theme of bystanders as well as a cross-relationship with other research of lived-experiences. Another area for research can focus on "do you see what I see," utilizing scenes from films to raise awareness and develop strategies for change.

Historically, leaders are looked up to for guidance and support. An organizations' success often relies on a leader's effectiveness, and more specifically, their emotional intelligence (Goleman et al., 2013, p. 6). A toxic leader creates an environment that breeds norms that are damaging (p. 194). This is consistent with the findings in this research; films can aid in raising awareness and facilitating change. The gatekeeper can be an essential part of propagating a culture of workplace bullying. Escalation of bullying in the workplace can lead to devastating outcomes. Further study of these depictions in film and bridging together with research on lived experiences can be a tremendous contribution to de-escalation. Top-down leadership has an integral part in workplace bullying, as depicted in films.

The findings in this study show that humor is the vehicle most often delivering workplace bullying. At first look, the extensive use of comedy is disheartening, seeming to diminish the horrors of the lived experiences of this phenomenon. On the other hand, this finding may instead prove to be the best inroad for further research and toward positive change. Humor has the power to anesthetize pain, form a common ground, and create a haven for more complex conversations. The findings of this study reveal a new and exciting direction for studying workplace bullying, studying the close and intimate relationship, the paradox of pain and joy, comedy and tragedy. In both film and lived experiences of workplace bullying, the concept of "I was just joking" is pervasive and deserves further study. Further research studying more closely the depictions of workplace bullying in comedy films, as well as placing broader emphasis on the impact or influence these films may wield on the lived experiences in workplace bullying, is encouraged.

Another significant finding in this study across multiple themes are repeated portrayals of co-workers pitted against one another in pursuit of advancement or promotion. Work is intertwined

so much in our identity and sense of belonging; it is where we spend most of our time, becoming a source for affirmation, relationship, and connection. In this study, the impetus of competition depicts the unraveling of selves, interloped with others, becoming a source of despair and destruction rather than success and community. Competition in the workplace is depicted as harmful and dangerous. Intermingled with workplace competition is the perpetuating of stigmatized gender roles. The films in this study reveal gross generalizations of men attempting to prove their manhood; and women trying to prove their worth in the world of work. Further research can delve more deeply into the impact of promotion and competition as well as the pervasiveness of “doing gender” and its integral relationship with workplace bullying. Depictions from the selected scenes in this study are consistent with the research of lived experiences of the phenomenon of workplace bullying. Further research into the portrayal of competition in the workplace in film, and its relationship to the lived experience, is essential. Whether exploring the possibility of positive outcomes or extending more awareness to the potential harm, a study of either or both would seem to have considerable potential value.

Significant in the findings of this research, and more poignantly from the researchers, is the emergence of film as a third voice. This research models on a large scale the unique role film can play as a sort of independent or “third-party” tool for difficult conversations related to workplace bullying. More research on this can be an integral resource for employee and management training, as well as focus groups for policy-making and legislative action. Further research is recommended to explore how film can be an excellent catalyst for sharing stories to inform about the phenomenon; how select scenes might be introduced into professional development and support curriculum and training. Film scenes can be a non-threatening way to help targets discuss more openly and objectively relatable experiences of workplace bullying in the workplace. Another area of research is to explore the usefulness of film depictions of workplace bullying in counseling and trauma interventions with targeted victims.

Theory: The Paradoxical Web of Workplace Bullying

“Paradoxical curiosity,” defined by Lederach (2005), “is a suspension of judgment; it goes beyond what is visible” (p. 36). The paradox is that something so devastating and destructive is also a source of entertainment, and further may be influencing what occurs in the lived experiences of this phenomenon. Curiosity took the researchers deeper, reaching beyond the surface and discovered the lapse in the research of workplace bullying depictions in film. It found a consistent lack of regard for the seriousness of violence experienced daily in the workplace; therein lies the paradox, the want for belonging interwoven with destruction. The lens of film in this study sheds light on this paradox through its vivid images of doing harm, sadly too often shrouded in humor. The paradox has become what seems an almost impenetrable web in the culture of the workplace and, more specifically, in workplace bullying. Rayner et al. (2002) liken corporate culture to a spider web, the web being strong, each strand supported by the other, the whole of it keeping even its prey captive (p. 97). This research extends the imagery of a web and posits that it is only through a collective effort that the culture of bullying at work be better understood or changed. Emerging from this research is a theoretical frame named *The Paradoxical Web of Workplace Bullying*, depicted in Figure 1. Tightly woven together within a paradox of comedy and tragedy, by a sampling of more than 30 capricious but persistent exploits, perpetrated or endured relentlessly by bullies, targets, and bystanders. This web

represents the findings and impact of this research, imagery of the depictions of workplace bullying in Hollywood films for more than two decades.

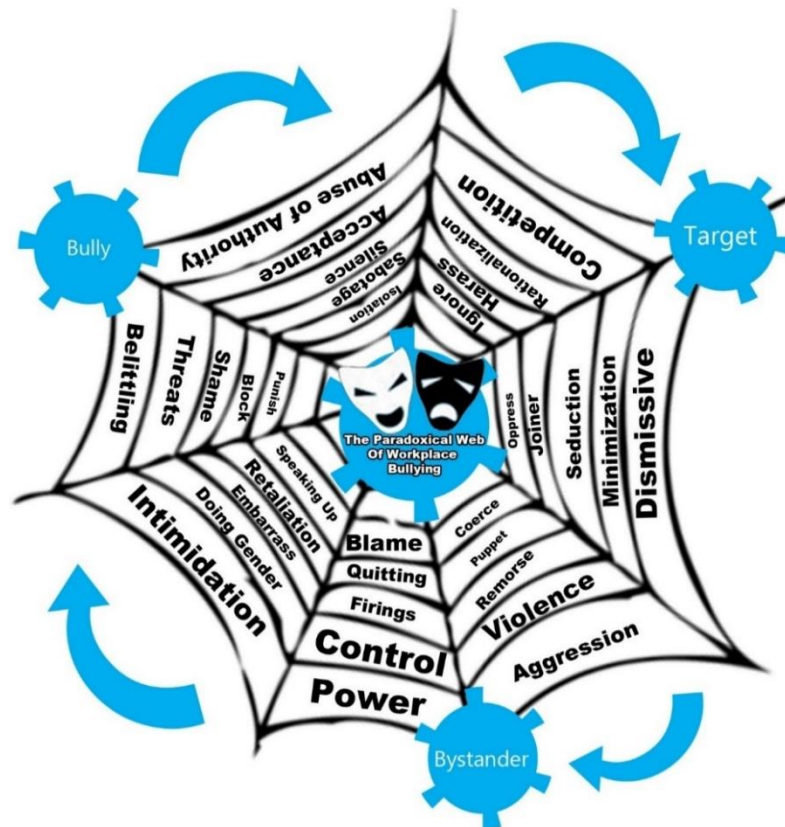


Figure 1. The paradoxical web of workplace bullying

The paradoxical web of workplace bully has interlocking strands with the capacity to protect or capture; the gears providing the opportunity for reconciliation or destruction, determined by the direction it moves. The depictions of workplace bullying in this study highlight the paradox of tragedy and humor. This web reflects the manifestations of workplace bullying, as depicted in Hollywood films and the delicate balance and intermingling of variables.

Ambivalence Resilience Theory (ART)

Ambivalence Resilience Theory (ART), purports that the depictions of workplace bullying in Hollywood films reflect an incessant tension within the workplace. Ambivalence refers to a constant strain impacting decision-making, choice, action, or reaction; resilience is an energy on a continuum impacted by fear and connection, inclusion, or belonging. Ambivalence and resilience are interwoven in the depictions of workplace bullying. Resilience can sustain, fluctuate, or eliminate ambivalence; ambivalence can, in turn, reduce, increase, or disengage resilience. This theoretical concept evolved from the themes that arose in this study and is depicted in Figure 2 below.

Ambivalence Resilience Theory (ART)			
High	Power (High Ambivalence, Low Resilience)	Comedy (High Ambivalence, High Resilience)	
	Tragedy (Low Ambivalence, Low Resilience)	Triumph (Low Ambivalence, High Resilience)	
Low			
	Low	Resilience	High

Figure 2. Ambivalence Resilience Theory

Where there are high ambivalence and high resilience, there is comedy as a means for navigating workplace bullying, the most prevalent depiction in this study. Even with humor, there is always a sense of confusion and nervousness emanating. Making light of vulnerable violent situations seems to provide relief. At the other extreme where there are low ambivalence and low resilience, this typically reflects tragic circumstances; forced resignations, firings, trauma, and even murder or suicide. The abuse is clear, the acquiescence apparent. It typically leaves targets feeling blind-sighted, depleted, even destroyed. Where there are high ambivalence and low resilience, it reflects situations wherein employees submit to the power or control, give in, or are compliant to the abuses. The ambivalence creates stressful situations, there is a yearning to act, but resilience is low. Low resilience comes from persistence and wears down defenses. On the other end of the spectrum, from tragedy, there is sometimes triumph. Low ambivalence and high resilience reflect action on the part of the employee. There is conviction or clarity, abuses are reported, and if problems are not addressed, they resign or quit. Ambivalence and resilience are unmistakable in this study, no matter the gender, age, ethnicity, industry, genre, or typology. The portrayals are impactful, not just as entertainment, but also as a looking glass of many examples of the lived experiences of workplace bullying. ART emerged as it pertained to the findings of this study, but also provides a more focused means for continued exploration and studying of depictions of workplace bullying in film, as well as lived experiences. Further research on the lived experiences of workplace bullying utilizing Ambivalent Resilient Theory is recommended.

Discussion

Research on the influence of film in American society goes back more than a hundred years (Ross, 2014, p.2); this research has the honor of contributing to a strong legacy. More specifically, this study is the first of its kind, a beginning of a new era for conflict and

communication scholars and practitioners committed to exploring and eradicating the phenomenon of workplace bullying. The findings provide the fertile groundwork, are far-reaching, and comprehensive. This research not only reveals the portrayals of the phenomenon of workplace bullying in film but, more importantly, provides a relevant resource that instigates further research. In the more than 20 years of Hollywood films, this study spans, it reveals persistent imagery of constant intermingling or paradox between humor, tragedy, and romance. Triumph for the target, depicted as individuals overcoming or quitting, is rare. Bullying at work in films becomes a vehicle for providing comic relief or the impetus for making tough decisions, i.e., filing complaints or resigning. Romance is also utilized to take the sting out of bullying, creating a sweet distraction from the atrocities along the way. Bullies, too often, are depicted as winning or being understood. Their role often is not viewed as a source of violence but instead a catalyst for the survival of the fittest at work. The focus is on survival and overcoming rather than intervention, accountability, and eradicating violence. Films often portray the workplace as stressful or demanding and bullying as a sort of distraction or comical remedy. The targets are dehumanized, and subsequently, conformity to abuse almost inevitable.

Future Research

The findings provide fertile groundwork that can be far-reaching and impactful for future research to ensure that it will be aimed at further tackling workplace bullying within organizational settings. Films create a fantasy that allows what we experience or to imagine gaining a life of its own. The question remains what depictions do people accept and apply to their interactions within the workplace contexts and to what extent does it include workplace bullying? This is a question that future research should extensively pursue. What we know from media dependency theory and media effects is that people learn and are impacted by media. Media provides meaning and meaning influences. Thus, media such as films can have pervasive impacts on social interactions and realities.

The significance and broader implications of this study of the themes that emerged out of the Hollywood depictions of workplace bullying are far reaching. In opening the Pandora's box to one extremely instrumental source of influence of the media and capturing the devastating phenomenon of workplace bullying, the stage is now set that warrants future research to investigate the role of media and workplace bullying along with workplace violence and harassment. This study provides an impetus for further studies to investigate workplace bullying in media depictions to foster improved approaches for understanding and discovering workplace bullying, so training and resources, may be provided to transcend and tackle workplace bullying from its roots. This study provides researchers with opportunities to conduct future research on the role and impacts of media on other critical topics that we are facing in today's society, such as systemic racism, structural violence, and broken relations between law enforcement and communities. A systematic analysis into media on these topics and related topics will yield formative findings to promote peaceful relations, change broken systems, and improve the human condition.

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Pacifism and Pragmatism: The Quiet Activism of University of Cincinnati President Raymond Walters, 1933-45

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Abstract

Raymond Walter is the longest tenured president at the University of Cincinnati (UC: 1932-45). Under Walters, UC was one of the nation's largest public and municipal universities. One two occasions in 1938, Walters took a public and vocal stand against Adolph Hitler's anti-Semitic policies. Normally, Walters was very circumspect about his politics in public. He lived in a conservative, midwestern city that harbored isolationist and even anti-Semitic impulses. If he felt the desire to express partisan or outspoken ideas, they were usually recorded in his private diary. Two things in Walters' earlier career can help us understand his behavior in 1938. First, before coming to UC, he taught at Swarthmore College, a tiny, Quaker liberal arts school, outside Philadelphia, for twelve years. Although a devout Episcopalian, Walters found himself drawn to the Quaker teachings on campus. In Cincinnati, he mostly conducted himself as a "closeted pacifist" until the nation entered World War II. Second, even earlier in his career, he worked for two Philadelphia newspapers before launching his career in academia. He never lost his love of current events. At UC, he created a foreign policy group that kept interested faculty apprised of the brewing war in Europe and Asia. His daily routine amounted to listening to the radio and

reading newspapers and recording the day's events in his diary. His preoccupation with news caused him great anxiety. In 1941, Walters temporarily abandoned his pacifism and pledged his personal and institutional support to the war effort.

PACIFISM AND PRAGMATISM: THE QUIET ACTIVISM OF UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI PRESIDENT RAYMOND WALTERS, 1933-45

Robert Earnest Miller

Introduction

On two separate occasions in 1938, University of Cincinnati President Raymond Walters took a forceful and public stand against the rise of anti-Semitism and fascism in a Hitler-dominated Europe. In the process, He would emerge as an unlikely ally of Cincinnati's Jewish population, willing to advocate issues on their behalf. This article will explore the reasons behind Walters' long forgotten activism and place them in a larger context and understanding of who Walters really was.

On February 12, 1938, while he was vacationing in Florida with his wife, UC President Raymond Walters took time to send a telegram to Richard Hertz, a student who had organized a protest of the Polish government's mistreatment of Jewish students. The objectionable practice known as *ghetto benches* required Polish students to sit in segregated sections of their university lecture halls. The segregated seating, it seems, identified the Jewish students to the non-Jewish majority and targeted them for additional harassment and probable harm outside of class. Walters firmly chided this behavior, noting that:

such discrimination is a sad backward step and I believe that, as individual American citizens interested in education throughout the world, we should express our conviction in a friendly but definite manner. (*Diary*, Feb. 10, 1938)

While several universities in Great Britain joined in this protest, the University of Cincinnati, according to its student-run newspaper, *The Bearcat*, was the first major American university to launch such a protest against "this breach of academic freedom." (*The Bearcat*, Feb. 12, 1938; *The Bearcat*, Feb. 18, 1938).

Nearly nine months after Walters protested the discrimination of Polish Jews in European universities by Nazis, Walters found himself in the eye of another storm, this time concerning the plight of persecuted Jews in Adolph Hitler's Germany. Since coming to power as Chancellor in 1933, Hitler worked assiduously at building and maintaining his grip on power. Anti-Semitism had always been a staple of Nazi rhetoric. But now, reports of open violence and discrimination against German Jews had become commonplace and normalized.

On November 20, 1938, just ten days after the horrific attacks on German Jewish synagogues and businesses known as *Kristallnacht*, "the night of broken glass," Walters was one of three guests invited to speak to the nerve-wracked Jewish congregations of the Rockdale and Isaac M. Wise Temples. The meeting took place at the Wise Temple. Mayor James Garfield Stewart and

William Hessler, of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* editorial board, were the other two speakers. Stewart, a gregarious good-natured raconteur, and orator had been elected Mayor that year on a Republican anti-New Deal platform. As the figurehead of the city his invitation was logical. Hessler, who worked for the *Enquirer* as a foreign policy columnist, could offer his own insights and expertise on the crisis brewing in Germany. To the uninformed Cincinnati, Walters' presence was less clear.

All three speakers dealt with the crisis in their own way. According to the *American Israelite*, Mayor Garfield struck more a philosophical note, reminding the congregation that "people are here so briefly, and they walk the same path to the same destination, and they should dwell together in harmony..." Hessler told those in attendance that the United States occupied the role as moral leader, condemning the blatant acts of discrimination against Jews in Nazi Germany. At the same time, he cautioned against hysteria and felt any efforts to sever relations between the U.S and Germany were premature. Walters tried to remain optimistic in his remarks pointing to Germany's past rich culture and history, he hoped Germany and her people could be saved from the current path they were on (*American Israelite*, Nov.24, 1938).

For individuals who had been keeping a close eye on the events in Europe, the recent acts of persecution in Germany merely confirmed their worst suspicions of the Nazi regime. That evening, Walters recorded his impressions of the meeting in his diary:

Our theme was the plight of Jews in Germany in consequence of the Nazi government's action. I spoke quite extempore, following my conviction that the Quaker principle of following the Inner Light was best for such a service. Our Jewish friends seemed appreciative of the words which as Christians we addressed to them. (*Diary*, November 20, 1938)

Walters' words and actions in the 1930s were not the norm for members of his profession, many of whom harbored close ties with Nazi Universities. Many Ivy League Universities had developed student exchange programs in the 1930s with German schools that they were unwilling to abandon, despite clear reports of Nazi persecution of German Jews. Nor were Walters' views the norm for residents of Cincinnati, a midwestern city predisposed towards isolationism with pockets of Anti-Semitism. Moreover, as the President of a prestigious municipal university, Walters had to learn to navigate a careful tightrope to avoid clashes and controversies with his more conservative board of trustees, to whom he ultimately reported (Norwood, 2009).

Not surprisingly, when Walters died in 1970, the *Cincinnati Enquirer's* obituary summed up his lengthy public record at UC in this pithy fashion: "scholar, author, and administrator." To be sure, Walters had been a prolific scholar. He authored five books and over three hundred articles. He had developed eclectic interests in the music of Johann Sebastian Bach that stemmed from his participation in a prestigious Bach choral group in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. When he moved to Cincinnati, he developed an interest in the American folklorist and songwriter Stephen Foster. Walters compiled many statistical reports for the magazine *School and Society*, a trade journal, for several decades. In 1939, the magazine's editor, J. McKee Cattell, referred to Walters a "an ideal university president." As an administrator, Walters, the longest tenured President at UC

(1932-55), Walters had posted a record as a top-notch president. Under his leadership, UC did not simply survive, it thrived and flourished (Dr. Walters, Former UC head, dies, 1970; McGrane, 1963; *Diary*, December 18, 1939).

The obituary made no mention of his activism, quiet or otherwise. Walters would have preferred that sort of legacy. The brief, and surely incomplete obituary made no mention of Walters' community activism, nor of his fervent political beliefs or attitudes. Walters, the university president, became a trusted community leader. A pillar of the community. He had a knack for befriending all manner of people, from well-known conservatives like Alice Roosevelt Longworth and state senator Robert A. Taft to progressive liberals like mayor Russell Wilson (1930-37) and Rabbi Julian Morgenstern, the President of the nearby Hebrew Union College (HUC). Publicly, he avoided controversy and usually kept his opinions about politics to himself. In private, Walters vented his opinions and frustrations in his diary.

What, then, prompted Walters to voice his concerns about the rise of fascism and anti-Semitism in Europe in such a public forum? What made him tick? A confluence of events in Walters' life helped shape and inform his compassionate and empathetic beliefs. By examining his past, we can better understand the reasons that compelled Walters to take a public stand against anti-Semitism in 1938.

Three different factors in Walters' 'life made him more predisposed to care about events in Germany, and the rest of the world, for that matter, long before most other Americans did. Before coming to Cincinnati, Walters had several opportunities to become acquainted with German culture. Straight out of college he worked as a reporter, which would ignite a lifelong, insatiable interest in current affairs. Finally, his nine-year stint at a Quaker college, prior to coming to UC, helped Walters develop his keen, unshakeable *moral compass*.

First, his interest in and exposure to Germany culture began during his undergraduate years as a student at Lehigh University, in his hometown of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Walters joined the prestigious Bethlehem Bach Choir. After graduating from Lehigh as a classics major, he married and started a family. With few immediate prospects in sight, he took a job as a reporter for the *Philadelphia Ledger and South Bethlehem Globe*, a position he held from 1907-1911. One year later, he returned to his alma mater to teach English classes. At the same time, he resumed studies, this time on a master's degree in history. In 1913, Walters studied abroad in Germany, and became semi-fluent in the language. After volunteering and serving a short stint in the U.S. Army, Walters returned to Lehigh and his teaching duties. Somehow, he found time to write a short history of the Bethlehem Bach Choir (Walters, 1918).

In 1921, Frank Aydelotte, the President of Swarthmore College, a tiny Quaker liberal arts school outside of Philadelphia, recruited Walters to teach in his innovative honors program. The pioneering program was based on Aydelotte's experience as a Rhodes Scholar, at Oxford University, in England. Part of Walters' duties in the 1920s, outside of his teaching and administrative chores, were to travel to Germany to recruit possible future candidates for the Rhodes Scholar Program. Before the war, Walters had been infatuated with Bach in particular, and German music and culture in general. After the war, these additional trips to Germany

allowed Walters to observe more soberly firsthand just how fragile the political and economic situation had become in the Weimar Republic (Miller, 2017).

Second, in 1925, Walters purchased a radio set for his family. This purchase proved to be transformative. Even after quitting his job as a reporter, and establishing his career in academia, Walters never lost his nose for news. From the moment he installed the radio, his diary entries essentially became a retelling or recapping of the day's news stories. Walters routinely read several newspapers each day, listened to the radio broadcast each night if time allowed, and took in the occasional weekly newsreel; in short, Walters was a news junkie, and the radio was his number one source of news concerning national and global events. (*Diary*, December 10, 1925).

Third, and perhaps most importantly, from 1921 until 1932, Walters, a devout Episcopalian, found himself drawn towards Swarthmore's Hicksite Quaker traditions and mission. While the decade of the 1920s is often misremembered as a time of intense national, economic growth and prosperity—the roaring twenties—it is less remembered as an era of growing pacifism; anti-war and anti-militarism sentiments were on the rise. In many ways, Swarthmore proved to be an epicenter of antiwar activities. Surrounded by passionate and outspoken pacifists on the Swarthmore campus, Walters comfortably wore his newfound pacifism on his sleeve among friends. He regularly attended prayer meetings, lectures, and other social functions. Walters had frequent contact with Jesse Holmes, one of Swarthmore's philosophy professors who had been active in the American Friends Service Committee's work in Europe after the war. Walters also traveled to nearby Haverford College to listen to the charismatic Quaker orator, Rufus Jones, deliver lectures about pacifism. In addition to the prayer services, Walters also attended meetings of the local chapter of the Friends of Reconciliation (FOR), a national peace group. By the late 1920s, as professional historians began to craft their first attempts at a critical, revisionist look at the Great War, peace movements and organizations sprang up all over the United States, as well as in Europe. Walters cast his lot among the ranks who wanted to believe that world peace could be a sustainable proposition and that any future conflicts could be mediated to the satisfaction of concerned parties. (*Diary*, September 13, 1925, May 25, 1926, October 2, 1927, and March 24, 1940; Gergen, 2022; Walters, 1924).

Walters, The Closeted Pacifist, 1932-38

At both Lehigh and Swarthmore, Walters served as the school's registrar. Aydelotte encouraged Walters' professional interests outside of Swarthmore. Walters frequently traveled to other schools each year, collecting data for his reports that appeared in *School and Society*, a trade journal. The affable Walters, by his own account, made a positive impression on university presidents and registrars. He earned the well-deserved reputation of a rising star in his field. By his own estimate, he was offered four university presidencies in the 1920s that he turned down. Some of those offers came with the hope that Walters would be able to implement the same curricular reforms, namely, Frank Aydelotte's honors program, on their campuses. That changed, of course, in 1932, when the board of directors at UC sought out Walters for a job interview to succeed its outgoing President, Herman Schneider. When Walters expressed doubts about moving to Cincinnati, Aydelotte gave him a gentle nudge, calling the new job "the chance of a lifetime." Once he was offered the job, Walters attended to his unfinished business at Swarthmore and eagerly awaited his future in Cincinnati. (Miller, 2017).

When he moved his family to the neighboring state of Ohio, and agreed to become the head of UC, he knew his life was headed for many changes, both personal and professional. Swarthmore had been like a cocoon, where like-minded and progressive-minded individuals openly discussed and shared their beliefs. During his time at Swarthmore, Walters surely must have reexamined what it had meant for him to serve during the Great War, training artillery officers to go off to the front. In a few short years, he had managed to integrate the teachings of Quakerism and pacifism into his core beliefs. In July 1932, for example, Walters expressed confidence in President Herbert Hoover, a Quaker, for trying to eliminate war debts and reparations to alleviate the global depression: "It is a grave responsibility we face. I would be for debt reduction in the measure of armament reduction." (Walters, 1919; *Diary*, July 8, 1932; Walters & Putnam, 1919).

As a new university president, Walters faced several daunting challenges. Student enrollments sagged during the lean years of the depression. The larger challenge revolved around the university's finances and whether it could remain solvent or not. It seemed likely that any attempts to balance the university budget would require cuts in faculty salaries. In addition to his administrative duties and concerns, Walters had to learn the political ins and outs of running a publicly supported school. As head of one of the nation's largest municipal universities, Walters quickly learned that he needed to get along with whatever political party-controlled city hall. It was the mayor who appointed members of UC's board of directors, who were, in effect, Walters' bosses. For the most part, Walters tried to remain above the fray.

Walters did not abandon his past life or his cherished beliefs. The point is, he kept his *moral compass* intact, but after he moved to Cincinnati, he was a closeted pacifist (by choice). In an overwhelmingly, conservative, isolationist city, Walters crafted a public image of himself as an apolitical, congenial, competent, and articulate spokesman for the university. If he had strong opinions about other issues of the day, he was careful to keep those feelings to himself. His bottled-up feelings always found their way to the pages of his diary. Recapping the day's events was both cathartic and therapeutic.

By August 1932, Walters had first arrived in Cincinnati, he spoke almost romantically about the "sturdy Germans," those hard-working folk, the "rank and file" who had done a lot of the heavy lifting and hard work in building up the city in the late nineteenth century. To be sure, German Americans who made Cincinnati their home had brought with them rich cultural traditions in food, drink, music, and religion, that contributed to the city's rich and unique character. Walters' cheerful assessment of Cincinnati's German heritage was consistent with his earlier views associated with his cherished Bethlehem Bach Choir (*Diary*, August 27, 1932).

During his first academic term, President Walters worked feverishly each day to solve the university's financial woes. At night, he and his wife ventured out to "meet and greet" dinners, to meet various members of the community. One of their earliest social engagements came in October 1932, when the Walters attended a gala celebration marking the birthday of one of the city's most beloved rabbis, Dr. David Philipson, of K. K. Bene Israel Temple. The party, Walters noted playfully in his diary, marked the fact that Phillipson was "seventy years young." His other remarks about the evening seemed less benign and slightly patronizing:

There were 600 in the Alms Hotel dining room, chiefly Jews--a very high-grade group. Many speeches, all marked by a fine sincerity which made me feel that Dr. Philipson has been a great good citizen as well as a spiritual leader and a leading scholar of the Reformed Jewry in America. (*Diary*, October 25, 1932)

Walters' stilted and slightly, clumsy language ("very high-grade group") reflected his discomfort at being in the minority, one of the few non-Jews at the event. While his time at Swarthmore had exposed him to many new progressive theories about social justice and pacifism, he had lived and operated in an insulated bubble in which the people with whom he lived, worked, worshipped, socialized, and taught essentially looked like him, white, privileged, and gentile. Dr. Phillipson's party may have been one of first times Walters had ever socialized with Jews. Walters' move from Philadelphia in the 1930s, then the third largest city in the nation, to Cincinnati, a much smaller city, had reverse implications. Even though the population of Philadelphia was more diverse than Cincinnati, Walters, until coming to UC, had had next to no contact with Catholics, Jews, or people of color.

Shortly after his arrival in Cincinnati, Walters created the *Business and Professional Men's Organization* and the *Foreign Policy Association*. These two groups featured a steady stream of notable speakers who had served in important capacities--as foreign correspondents or former public servants or policyholders--all of whom willingly shared their expert opinions and prognostications about the potential and various economic and military crises facing Asia and Europe. These talks nourished Walters' already voracious appetite for current events. These weekly lectures not only complimented his daily intake of news Walters kept up with in the media, but the speakers validated the fears of isolationists and the concerns of pacifists. Walters was particularly troubled about news coming from Germany. On March 21, 1933, he wrote: From Germany comes startling news. It looks as tho [sic] the days of the (Weimar) Republic were over. The old militant Germany appears to have returned with Hitler shaking a mailed fist. Rabbi (Stephen) Wise and other leading American Jews are protesting against Hitler's attitude toward (the) Jews (*Diary*, March 21, 1933).

In May 1933, students at the University of Cincinnati circulated an open letter protesting the mass book burnings that had become common place on German universities. The normally circumspect Walters supported the initiative wholeheartedly, calling Hitler's higher education policy "a menace to the entire world." While his views were reported by the *New York Times*, they did not represent the views of American universities in general. Many Ivy League Schools had developed close associations with Nazi universities, some even had student exchange programs throughout the 1930s. Walters was one of the lone voices condemning the loss of freedom of speech and expression on German universities. It's also worth noting the paradigm shift in Walters' attitudes towards Germany. The idealized German culture that he has so cherished before the Great War had been jeopardized and threatened by Nazi militarism and chauvinism (Norwood, p.118; *The Bearcat*, April 29, 1933).

Within months of Walters' arrival to the Queen City, events in Europe turned the attention of some Jewish leaders away from social gatherings and parties. More serious matters required their attention. The rise of Adolph Hitler and the legitimization of Nazi power in Germany in 1933 signaled trouble for Jews in Germany and other European nations. Walters empathized with the

concerns of the German Jews, in particular. At Swarthmore, among a community of pacifists, Walters had, of course, voiced concerns about Japan's military aggression in Manchuria that commenced in 1931. As Walters became acquainted with members of HUC faculty and the Jewish community, he began to understand the concerns they had for relatives in Germany. Perhaps, because of Walters' greater familiarity with Germany, the concerns of Cincinnati's Jews seemed less abstract.

In 1933, Walters' oldest son and namesake, Raymond Jr, then a history major at Swarthmore College going into his senior year, left Cincinnati to study in Munich, Germany for the summer. His letter home to the Walters family confirmed the fears of the father. On July 26, 1933, Walters confided in his diary:

Ray's letter gave us a sense of the feeling the Germans have that Hitler is a great savior of Germany. The Nazis attitude towards the Jews is less inexplicable after reading the first-hand report of our son. (*Diary*, July 26, 1933)

Stories of Hitler's rise to power led to fractures within Cincinnati's German American community. By the mid-1930s, some local German Americans openly praised the work of Adolph Hitler and spoke of a *New Germany*. They conducted pro-Nazi meetings and rallies and wrote favorable articles about Hitler and Nazism in a German language newspaper called *The Freie Press*. A few notable Jewish leaders in Cincinnati mobilized to combat the poor treatment of Jews in Germany as well as the rising tide of anti-Semitism locally. Once Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, HUC President Julian Morgenstern spearheaded an effort to rescue Jewish scholars whose careers and lives were threatened because of the Nazi's discriminatory and ruthless policies. Moreover, HUC staff, including Jacob Rader Marcus, a professor of American Jewish History, formed the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC). This organization monitored the activities of German American groups that it suspected to be either pro-Nazi or anti-Semitic, or both. The JCRC's efforts were eventually born out and validated. In 1942, Walter Kappe, the pro-Nazi agent who had worked as an editorial assistant for the *Freie Press* (in the early 1930s) in Cincinnati was arrested by the FBI on charges of sabotage. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover claimed that Kappe was a high value target in the Nazi intelligence network, and that he was partly responsible for the growth of the American Bund Party (*Cincinnati Post*, July 25, 1942; Meyer, 1976; Miller, 2014; Peck and Herscher, 1989).

During the early months of his tenure, Walters worked with both Catholic and Jewish leaders in the community early in his tenure to make student life on campus more inclusive for religious minority groups. His efforts to build bridges with the Catholic community mostly fell flat (Walters had trouble overcoming prejudices he must have inherited). On the other hand, his efforts to befriend several Rabbis at HUC, at the time, the oldest rabbinical school in North America, quickly blossomed. In 1935 Walters joined Rabbi James Heller, of Plum Street Temple, in sponsoring the inaugural "Peace Prom" at UC. Since 1920, the Cincinnati Peace League had been bestowing scholarships known as the *Geneva Award* to deserving students each year. The "Peace Prom" marked a new venue for like-minded students to socialize for an evening. Student composers wrote a special song for the festivities entitled "*Now's the Time to Sue for Peace.*" Walters was on his way to becoming a pillar in the community. His patronage of the arts and his service on a variety of community organizations brought him into frequent

contact with leaders of the Jewish community. One expression of that friendship manifested in two successive commencement ceremonies, when Walters awarded an honorary L.L. Ds to HUC Professor of Archeology Nelson Glueck (1936) and to HUC President Julian Morgenstern (1937). (*Diary*, January 1, 1927; October 25, 1932; June 11, 1937; *The Bearcat*, May 1, 1936).

As militaristic powers created tensions through their acts of violence in every corner of the world, Walters' pacifism caused him to worry about the victims who were being oppressed. Between 1933 and 1941, he expressed sympathy for rebels in Spain fighting against fascism, Jews who were victimized by the Nazi regime, Chinese civilians who were slaughtered by invading Japanese forces, and Finns who resisted a communist invasion of their homeland. Each of these incidents elicited a similar reaction of sympathy and despair. When it came to the oppression of Jews in Europe, Walters decided that more was required of him than passively recording his disapproval in his diary.

On June 17, 1938, Walters and his wife were among the 175 dinner guests at the Netherland Plaza downtown to mark the seventieth birthday of Mrs. Simon (Settie) Kuhn. The honoree had devoted countless years of hard work to the Better Housing League, to improve housing conditions for the city's disadvantaged. Walters seconded his approval of the celebration: "A well-deserved tribute to a woman whose energy and intelligence have made Cincinnati a better city to live in." At some point in the evening, the conversation turned towards the unpleasantness in Germany. Walters noted:

More than one of us at this dinner contrasted the plight of Jews in Germany, (Mrs. Kuhn's father came here as a German Jewish emigrant in 1847); the Nazis are persecuting them in a wave of fresh stupidity and wickedness. (*Diary*, June 17, 1938)

As Walters' contact with Jewish leaders increased, he earned their trust. With that trust, he learned about some of the concerns they had. He shared the worries they had for their relatives in Germany. He also lamented the hardships and slights they encountered living in Cincinnati because they were Jews.

The Local Context: Cincinnati in 1938: A Divided City

In retrospect, 1938 proved to be a pivotal year in the unfolding drama that eventually culminated in World War II. In addition to the internal chaos in Germany stemming from the mistreatment of Jews, German Chancellor Adolph Hitler had rebuilt and rearmed his country, openly flouting the restrictions that had been placed on his country at the end of the Great War. Seeking to rebuild a greater Germany, Hitler had already annexed Austria and now turned his sights on the Sudetenland, a section of the Czechoslovakian Republic, that boasted a German speaking majority population. At the Munich Conference, in October 1938, leaders of Great Britain, France, and Italy meekly succumbed to Hitler's demands. Walters was cheered to the extent that the conference helped avert a general war but pained that Czechoslovakia had been forced to bear such a terrible burden. In the aftermath of the Munich Conference, he gloomily noted:

This has been a lovely, peaceful day. Its beauty was enhanced, in my own mind, by appreciation of the peace [which] reigns in Europe instead of the war we had

looked forward to with dread a week ago...There ought to be a special place in Heaven for [Czechoslovakian] President [Edvard] Benes and his advisers. The shame of the treatment Britain and France have accorded Czechoslovakia will haunt those two proud nations for many a day. (*Diary*, September 15-October 2, 1938)

As serious as these conditions were in Europe, most Cincinnatians, and Americans, for that matter, stubbornly chose to remain disengaged from these disturbing global trends and seemingly faraway conflicts. Queen City residents crowded their minds with other concerns that seemed more tangible, more relevant, and closer the home. The economy in 1938 was still a pressing concern. While the national and regional economies had improved since the darkest days of the Great Depression, joblessness in Cincinnati remained a worry for many. When Robert A. Taft, the son of Cincinnati's former President William Howard Taft, launched his campaign for a United States Senate seat, he ran on an economic platform designed to stop President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal in its tracks. By not trumpeting foreign policy issues, candidate Taft played to his isolationist base of supporters. He was easily elected. Serious rainfalls during the winter and spring months triggered memories among nervous Cincinnatians of the one-year anniversary of the city's worst flood in its history. Still others were understandably and happily distracted by their beloved Reds. While the 1938 team never gelled as a contender, one of its pitchers, Johnny Vander Meer, set new records in the sport when he recorded back-to-back no hitters early in the season, a feat that has never again been matched. Fans also basked in the national spotlight as the city played host to the annual all-star game in July. For the most part, parochial Cincinnatians seemed content with their sheltered Midwest existence, ignoring the concerns of the wider world. (Johnstone, 2015; Miller, 2014; Patterson, 1972; Ward, 1994).

On November 20, 1938, on the same day Walters and others were addressing Jews at Rockdale about their concerns, it's worth noting that Father Charles Coughlin, perhaps the second most famous radio personality only next to the President, delivered a blistering sermon entitled "*Persecution—Jewish and Christian*" that defended the brutal actions of the Nazi regime and in effect, blamed the German Jewish minority for persecuting the German nation. Coughlin, a Catholic priest with a parish near Detroit, quickly rose to fame in the 1930s as the so-called "Radio Priest." He had originally supported Franklin Roosevelt and his New Deal policies, but in 1935, switched his politics. Coughlin found himself attracted to fascist governments, feeling that capitalism could no longer be trusted. His organization, the National Union for Social Justice, established thousands of clubs across the nation, including Cincinnati. Several groups were active in various outlying neighborhoods of the city. In 1935, Coughlin also endorsed Herbert Bigelow, a firebrand, radical pastor who ran successfully for city council. All of this is to say, while many Cincinnatians were attending anti-Hitler church services and planning future rallies, it reasonable to assume that many other Cincinnatians were either tuning into hear Coughlin's incendiary speech or reading about it the next day (*Christians unite for mass protest against the Nazi war on the minorities*, 1939; Coughlin, 1938; Eubank, 1935; *NUSJ group to elect*, 1936).

Four days later, Walters found himself in another house of worship. He and his wife attended an afternoon Thanksgiving Day service at their home church, Calvary Episcopal, in Clifton, where his family had attended as regular members since their arrival to Cincinnati in 1932. The continuing news coverage of the Jews in Germany continued to weigh heavily on Walters:

Our own hearts are truly thankful for the blessings God has given us and our loved ones. It is our prayer that the same blessings may flow to all the children of men in all lands, and especially to the persecuted Jews of Germany. (*Diary*, November 24, 1938)

Walters continued to lament the grave situation in Germany to the point where it interfered with his daily work, and finally to the point where the anguish left him feeling physically ill. Nine days after the evening event at Wise Temple, Walters scheduled a physical exam with his personal physician, Dr. Albert Friedlander, who had attended the meeting at Wise Temple on November 20. Friedlander had expressed his gratitude to Walters the day after his talk, telling him that many of his Jewish friends appreciated Walters' compassionate remarks. During the physical, Friedlander observed that the talk had taken a toll on his friend and patient. In the past, Walters had bragged about his excellent health in his diary. On this occasion, he admitted that his physical state had been less than optimal:

Dr. Friedlander gave me professional instructions today. I am to ease up in work. The touches of indigestion I have had recently are the results, he says, of prolonged nervous tension. (*Diary*, November 21, 1938, and November 29, 1938; McGrane, 1963)

For those who were well acquainted with Walters, they knew that he had a tireless work ethic. He gave frequent speeches to community and civic groups, made addresses on local radio stations, and made himself available to his students and faculty as much as the day permitted. Even though he often put in long days as a university president, it's far more likely that his extracurricular habits of tracking the news had taken a toll on his declining health and well-being. As mentioned earlier, ever since his fortieth birthday, in 1925, when he purchased a radio, Walters had become obsessed with current events.

Walters' addictive behavior was not unlike the scrolling technique used by countless Americans each night as they relive the day's events on their cell phones or tablets. Some social scientists refer to this modern behavior as "dooms scrolling." Walters' well-intentioned but addictive behavior was fueled by a phenomena known today as FOMO, fear of missing out (<https://www.wired.com/story/stop-doomscrolling/>).

Because of his hypervigilance in the manner that he followed current events, Walters, more than most of his contemporaries, felt certain that war was imminent in 1938 in Europe as well as Asia. Not surprisingly, he ignored Dr. Friedlander's advice, at least when it came to his penchant for keeping track of current events. On December 2, he ruminated: "The affairs of the world continue to be examples of travesties upon civilization. Germany continues her horrible persecution of the Jews. Japan continues to slaughter Chinese." One week later, he confided in his diary:

What a beautiful world it would be if there were only loving kindness in the hearts of men instead of the fear and hate which now make Europe and Asia twin nightmares. (*Diary*, December 2, 1938)

On the Holy Night of December 25, he gloomily reported that “darkening reflections... were aroused by the news broadcast tonight of the Franco offensive in Spain. Chinese and Jews are suffering cruelly also at this Christmastide.” As he reflected on the momentous events of that year, as the minutes literally ran down in 1938, Walters offered this bleak assessment:

I have been glancing over entries in this diary of the early part of 1938. We were so hopeful. Now a world blackened by Hitler is ready to see this year slip away. And once again we hope! (*Diary*, December 25 and 31, 1938)

While he never spoke explicitly about the plight of oppressed war victims after 1938, it would be a mistake to assume Walters stopped caring for or about these unfortunate victims. He desperately hoped that the British and French leaders would find a way to thwart Hitler’s lust for more territory. The new year, however, proved even more discouraging. In August 1939, Hitler signed a non-aggression pact with Soviet Premier Josef Stalin, that Walters called “appalling.” Less than a month later, Hitler ordered troops to invade Poland, triggering the onset of World War II. The intent of the non-aggression pact was now made manifestly clear, as both Nazi Germany and Communist Russia engaged in the joint dismantling of the Polish state. Walters continued to pray fervently for a peaceful resolution to the hostilities. As far as Walters was concerned, communism now posed as great a menace to global security as did Nazism (*Diary*, August 21, 1939).

Easter came early in 1940. On March 24, Walters sat at home listening to a holiday sermon broadcast by WSAI-AM, a local AM station. Rufus Jones, the seventy-seven-year-old, internationally known Quaker orator who had made such a positive and uplifting impact on Walters’ thinking when he taught at Swarthmore had been invited to Cincinnati to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Friends Church in Mt. Auburn. In his sermon, entitled “*The More Excellent Way*,” Jones declared: “Despite Hitler, despite Stalin, despite every adverse force, the Kingdom of God will come upon the earth.” Walters referred to Jones as “that grand Quaker apostle of peace.” Walters added: “Hearing Rufus Jones always recharges my batteries. He did it again on this Easter day.” (*Cincinnati Enquirer*, 1940; *Diary*, March 24, 1940).

Sadly, Walters’ sense of optimism was short lived. The renewed Nazi offensive in the spring of 1940 generated a new momentum for Germany, and a renewed sense of dread for its victims. Any prospect for a negotiated peace, which Walters had clung to, now seemed to be hanging by a thread. On April 9, Nazi forces occupied Denmark. A despondent Walters called it a “black day in a black period.” Similarly, when King Leopold surrendered his Belgian army to Nazi invaders on May 28, Walters called it a “black day for civilization.” (*Diary*, April 29, May 28, 1940).

Total War: Pacifism Yields to Pragmatism, 1940-46

Most standard historical accounts of how the United States eventually entered World War II focus on the stark differences between isolationists and interventionists. The former hoped to remain neutral and to follow Washington’s precept to “avoid entangling alliances.” The latter lobbied to relax restrictive neutrality acts and to give Britain and France the necessary economic

and military support, short of war, in order to defeat the Axis Powers. The crescendo moment of this narrative came on December 8, 1941, one day after the United States was attacked at Pearl Harbor by Japanese forces. Congress, at the behest of President Roosevelt, declared war on Japan. The prewar cleavages of American public opinion melted away as an anxious and resolute public rallied behind its president and the war effort (Dallek, 2017; Daniels, 2016; Goodwin, 1994).

While the standard narrative rings true, in many respects, Walters' life represented a counter-narrative of sorts. His tipping point came earlier, in June 1940, when France suffered the same fate as Poland, Denmark, Norway, and Belgium, and became a Nazi-occupied country. Only Great Britain remained to resist Hitler's plan of continental hegemony, and Hitler seemed poised to deliver the knockout blow. Evaluating the crises in Europe, Walters made a dramatic pivot in his decade's long beliefs about war and peace and the possible role the United States might play in the current mess. Up until that point, he had supported the idea that the United States could and should remain neutral in Europe's war, and that some sort of negotiated peace could be arrived at amongst the warring nations. Exhausted and disillusioned, Walters opted for a new course of action. His pacifism gave way to a newfound sense of pragmatism. A Hitler-dominated world now posed an existential threat to everything Walters held dear—democracy, representative government, freedom of speech. Walters was determined to support any policy, and leader, that would spell the defeat of Hitler and the "barbarous" Nazis, by whatever means necessary. The rapid Nazi onslaught in Denmark, Belgium, and finally France caused Walters to shift from his pacifist intentions to supporting more direct involvement in resisting Hitlerism (*Diary*, April 9 to June 21, 1940).

During the early months of 1940, before the fall of France, Walters had given his tentative support to his friend and fellow Ohioan, Robert Taft, who was seeking the presidential nomination of the Republican Party. After listening to the Senator deliver a forceful critique about his objections to the New Deal, Walters remarked enthusiastically about the "vigor, directness and persuasiveness in this address. It will do much to advance Mr. Taft's candidacy for the Republican nomination--and not improbably his election to the Presidency." By the time the convention rolled around, in June, Walters had thrown his support behind the political neophyte, Indiana industrialist Wendell Willkie. Taft had remained a staunch and uncompromising isolationist while the interventionist Willkie favored aid, short of all war, to Great Britain. Walters concluded: "I know and like Robert A. Taft but I hope Wendell Wilke receives the nomination. He could give Roosevelt a real run." Ironically, Walters, a lifelong Republican, found himself in the awkward position of opposing Roosevelt's efforts to secure an unprecedented third term, yet supporting FDR's policies, almost point by point, as his administration responded to the rapidly changing events in Europe. Walters supported the President's call for a massive defense mobilization that included a peacetime draft (*Diary*, January 5, June 23, and September 16, 1940).

Just weeks after Roosevelt's successful reelection, the President delivered one of his most consequential fireside chats, his "*Arsenal of Democracy*" speech. FDR's December 29th radio address outlined a blueprint for how the United States could better assist the British war effort. The United States, with its bountiful resources stood ready, in Roosevelt's words to become "an arsenal for democracy." Walters hailed the speech, calling it an "excellent

exposition...admirably delivered." Three months later, in March 1941, Congress enacted the Lend Lease Bill, which allowed the officially neutral United States to send massive economic and military aid to Great Britain, shoring up its defenses against Hitler. Walters supported that measure as prudent and necessary. (*Diary*, December 29, 1940, and March 11, 1941; Levine, 2002; Roosevelt, 1940).

When the United States entered the war, following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1941, Walters pledged himself to the war effort without thought or hesitation for the duration. He offered the support of the university and all its resources to the war effort. Individually, he supported the war in numerous capacities, serving his community locally in war-related efforts and traveling frequently to Washington D.C., where he assisted the War Department with several matters. There was one important caveat. Walters willingly cooperated when it came to material resources of the university. When it came to the male students, who were subject to the (now) wartime draft, he advised them, at a December 11 convocation to remain in school until their number was selected:

"The important thing is that you should act, not upon the spur of emotionalism, or war hysteria, but upon careful thought as to where you will be of most use to the country." (Walters, 1941)

Walters, the lapsed pacifist, now supported the war aims of the Roosevelt administration and the President's concept of total war. He approved of the decision by the United States and its allies, in 1943, which placed the demand of "unconditional surrender" upon the Axis Powers as the only acceptable way to end the conflict. Walters also approved of Truman's decision to drop atomic bombs on Japanese cities, in August 1945, to end the war. Finally, in November 1946, when the War Crime Trials in Nuremberg, Germany, handed down death sentences to its first wave of Nazis, Walters saw no reason to object (*Diary*, October 6 and 8, 1946; Patterson, 1972).

Conclusion

After commenting favorably about Rufus Jones' Easter Sunday sermon in March 1940, Raymond Walters never wrote explicitly about pacifism again in his diary. To be sure, the war had changed his way of thinking. The ever-growing threat of a Hitler-dominated world was a reality that Walters, despite his prewar pacifism, could no longer stomach. Even after Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan were vanquished in 1945, the fragile, postwar world, he reasoned, was still a dangerous place. Like many Americans, Walters felt that the United States faced a grave threat—from its former wartime ally—in the form of Soviet communism. Once again, his concerns proved prescient and slightly ahead of the curve of American public opinion.

During the early years of the Cold War, he supported the newly created United Nations, hoping this forum might find a way to maintain world peace. He also supported international efforts to destroy all existing atomic weapons. In some ways, Walters' postwar world view became a blend of his prewar, idealistic pacifism and his more hard-nosed, wartime pragmatism. On the one hand, his pragmatism placed him in the camp of Republicans who were more than willing to support President Harry Truman's efforts in 1947 to contain the expansion of communism in Europe and Asia. As cold war tensions spilled over into the next decade, Walters, the

consummate partisan Republican, supported Dwight Eisenhower in his both his bids for the presidency. Walters believed that Eisenhower was committed to a plan of nuclear disarmament. At the end of his career, his pacifist views were again part of his world view (*Diary*, June 14 and 20, 1946, and September 26, 1952).

Walters' decision to speak out against the mistreatment and persecution of German Jews might appear like aberrant behavior, a sort of "ten minutes of fame" moment." It would be an err to regard it as such. As previously mentioned, Swarthmore Quakers had embedded a moral compass in Walters, giving him a concrete sense of right and wrong. On several occasions during his twenty-three-year presidency at UC, he took discreet but principled stands when he felt students were being treated unfairly because of their race or religious affiliation.

After the war, Walters continued to work with Jewish leaders to promote a greater sense of tolerance and acceptance between Cincinnati's Jewish and Christian communities. On November 28, 1945, he participated in an interfaith conference that promoted "a new era of toleration." Walters summed up the challenge in this way: "It is a problem facing all Americans—to meet bigotry and hate." A testament of his high regard among Jews at HUC came that December when President Julian Morgenstern bestowed an honorary doctorate on Waters. (*Diary*, November 28 and December 8, 1945).

The ceremony took place at the Netherland Hilton Hotel in downtown Cincinnati. The commencement ceremony marked the 70th anniversary of HUC as a rabbinical school. The day Walters received his honorary doctorate from HUC he found himself in august company. Other recipients included former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt (in abstensia), former Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, who had worked to help Jewish refugees during the war, and Rabbi Stephen Wise, of the Free Synagogue, in New York City. In their own ways, each recipient had taken vocal stands against the abuses in Nazi Germany either before or during the war. (*Diary*, December 8, 1945; Maisel, 2001).

If Raymond Walters' form of quiet activism went unnoticed at the time of his death, so be it. During his lifetime, Cincinnati Jews who had come to know and understand him, and remembered, and appreciated his principled stands in 1938.

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