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DECAY

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Note from the Editor

The Queen Mary History Journal was founded in 2011 with the aim of publishing the best undergraduate essays from the School of History and to highlight the breadth of research at Queen Mary, University of London.

In our eleventh year, we aim to publish three journals, each with a launch event to celebrate the pinnacles of our undergraduate research. For this year's autumnal issue of our journal, we chose the theme of 'Decay', and I couldn't be more pleased with the outcome. In a historical context, decay is a potent motif. Take, for example, the slow crumbling and eventual extinguishment of an empire or city, like in Shelley's *Ozymandias*. An equally powerful interpretation is the moral decline of a society or individual, sometimes depicted through decadence or sexual subversion. We can also see decay through the lens of economic deterioration and the many consequences involved. The diversity of topics we have been able to include in this edition is unparalleled.

As Emily Dickinson so wonderfully puts it:

Crumbling is not an instant's act,

A Fundamental Pause,

Dilapidation's Process,

Are Organized Decays.

Through the collection of essays we've selected, this edition of the Queen Mary History Journal celebrates decay, not as something to be feared, but as a natural occurrence, an ally of the ebbing and flowing of time. The razed ground always births greener grass, even if it takes a while to find its roots.

It goes without saying that I am tremendously grateful to the hard work and collaboration of the Committee and editing team, as well as the School of History, without whom this publication would not

be possible. I am looking forward to bearing the torch of another successful year of our esteemed journal, and hope that all our readers enjoy this autumnal edition.

Hannah Maddison Cragg

Editor-in-Chief

Cover Image:

George Mason, 'The Harvest Moon' (1872), painting, courtesy of Tate Britain, London.

Contents

<i>Note from the Editor</i>	3
Why Did the Malian Empire Disintegrate in the Fifteenth Century? <i>Anwen Iris Venn</i>	6
Does the Company of Wolves Offer an Empowering or Exploitative Female Perspective? <i>Maria Balint</i>	15
Was the Mughal Empire in 'Decline' by the Mid-18 th Century? <i>Ambia Akhtar</i>	27
To What Extent Did the Policies of the Presidents of the 1920s Cause the Great Depression? <i>Abigail Harrison</i>	38
Does Grave of the Fireflies Represent a Victim's History? <i>Anwen Iris Venn</i>	48
How Successfully Did the Student Activists of 1968 Confront Germany's Nazi Past? <i>Simran Bance</i>	59
<i>Queen Mary History Journal Committee 2021-22</i>	67

Why Did the Malian Empire Disintegrate in the Fifteenth Century?

By Anwen Iris Venn [Edited Hannah Maddison Cragg]

The Malian Empire disintegrated in the fifteenth century due to a variety of factors, including shifting trade routes, structural and leadership weaknesses, and the growing domination of their neighbouring rivals. Albeit 'disintegration', in this case defined as decreasing power, suggests chronological decline, it is more accurate to consider Mali's decline as a result of increasingly unfortunate events. As Nehemia Levtzion emphasizes "the authority of Mali" declined "as one province after the other seceded" due to its weakening power, which, arguably, was intensified significantly by the growing domination of the Songhay Empire who took advantage of Mali's decades of weak leadership and loss of important trading routes.¹

Shifting trade routes contributed to the Malian Empire's disintegration around the fifteenth century. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Malian Empire prospered due to its control over the trans-Saharan trade and gold fields around western Sudan, where famously Mansa Musa's grand expenditure during his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324 led to inflation on the value of gold.² The scholar Al-Umari explained in 1324 how gold's "value fell and it cheapened in price" which only recovered decades after Musa's golden age.³ Yet, by the fifteenth century Mali's economic prowess was deteriorating, partly due to European traders. Prominent from the 1450s onwards, the Portuguese had emissaries sent by John II to the king of Futa, the Koi of Timbuktu and the Mansa of Mali between 1481 and 1495.⁴ These 'friendship' missions often were political methods to give trading advantages to small coastal chiefs to free themselves from the Mansa's control for better access to gold.⁵ For example, in 1456 Ca'da Mosto travelled to Songhay to trade for gold and slaves which helped to strengthen Songhay's economic position against Mali.⁶ Another significant problem that diminished the empire's wealth was its slave labour dependency

during the beginning of the Atlantic Slave Trade. Many slaves in the Malian Empire were tasked to transport commodities, which Valentim Fernandes affirmed that “each [Jula] merchant has [...] 100 or 200 black slaves [...] to carry the salt” and gold.⁷ The Portuguese penetration into this slave economy, observed by João Fernandes in 1445, began during the fifteenth century and intensified at a greater rate than Mali.⁸ Thus, as Hugh Thomas explains, the development of the Atlantic Slave Trade was “discovered by Europeans five years before [...] Columbus” reached America, which would not only help to finance Mali’s competition as the Portuguese searched for cheaper slaves, but depopulate the empire by 1492.⁹ Although Thomas rightfully emphasizes that Portuguese infiltration into coastal Mali territory was the inception of the Atlantic Slave Trade, it is perhaps more important to comment on how this changed the economic landscape. Not only was there a growing trade along the coast as Mali’s enemies slowly conquered the established trans-Saharan trade routes, but the slow beginning of depopulation meant that Mali’s dependency on slave labour was increasingly difficult to maintain, thus contributing to its decline.

There had been a gradual shift of trade from the Arabs in the north to the Portuguese along the coastal regions that allowed rival empires, such as Songhay, to dominate in the Saharan trade and destabilise Mali’s control of Western Sudan’s trading region.¹⁰ By the mid-fifteenth century, Mali lost direct influence over Saharan trade in northern provinces like Wadan, so by the turn of the sixteenth century the *askiyās* of Songhay and the Sa’did *sharīfs* of Morocco held political control over Saharan trade.¹¹ At Mali’s strongest, in the fourteenth century, the Malian Empire had various Berber groups under its rule, like the Yantara.¹² Yet, due to weakened leadership, the Tuareg captured Timbuktu in 1433 along with Walata and Nema, which deprived Mali and allowed the Tuareg to reinforce their position in the trans-Saharan trade, later taken by Songhay’s Sunni Alī.¹³ The Mali Empire’s weakening administration led to loss of vital commercial spaces in both the Senegal and Niger

valleys caused by Tuareg and Berber attacks.¹⁴ Moreover, Mali lost control over the Sahel and Niger River, which severed direct contact with the trans-Saharan routes and Muslim traders, contributing significantly to the deterioration of the Malian Empire alongside Portuguese interposition.¹⁵ Following Thomas' argument, Levtzion states "the principal trans-Saharan routes shifted eastwards" in favour of Timbuktu that superseded Walata, part of the Malian Empire, to a city now captured by the Songhay Empire.¹⁶ Thus, Levtzion convincingly demonstrates how the changing political and economic landscape in trans-Sahara during the fifteenth century deeply contributed to the Malian Empire's deterioration as competitive empires conquered previously vital trade areas.

One of the most significant reasons for the Malian Empire's disintegration in the fifteenth century was due to poor leadership and the empire's structural inequalities. To begin with, ill-defined rules for royal succession frequently led to civil wars for the throne. Sundiata Keita is established as "the father of Mali" who gathered "all the kings and notables" to create Mali's imperial structure, according to the Sundiata Epic.¹⁷ This structure, composed of different 'vassal kingdoms' that retained considerable autonomy, meant that the Mansa's control became nominal and less evident as the distance from the capital increased, especially with a lack of ethnic, cultural or political homogeneity.¹⁸ Furthermore, this created three types of government within the empire: autonomous provinces supervised by a Mansa's representative, provinces directly administered by a *farba* or governor, and the Malinké heartland controlled by the Mansa directly.¹⁹ Coupled with the flexibility of succession, Jan Jansen explains succession "is often no more than a claim to a particular status".²⁰ Here, Jansen convincingly argues how succession rules were indistinct where even rulers unrelated to Sundiata's line were able to become Mansa through usurpations. For instance, in 1360 when Sulayman's son Qāsā came to the throne "dissension broke out" according to Ibn Khaldun and Qāsā would rule only nine months before being deposed by Mari Djata Keita II,

who plunged the Malian Empire into bankruptcy through lavish spending.²¹ Thus began the slow deterioration of Mali's leadership, in which brothers or sons overthrew each other for legitimacy, and the fortunes of the empire rose and fell depending on their capability.²² The end of the fourteenth century and the fifteenth century never saw a repeat of Mansa Musa's success and Mari Jata II's tyrannical rule caused such suffering that Ibn Khaldun reported he "ruined their empire [...] and [...] demolished [...] their rule".²³ After his death, many weak rulers became puppets for their advisors, and in 1390 the throne of Mali was recaptured by Mahmud Keita from Sandaki, a member of the imperial court. However, by the fifteenth century, generations of power struggles and weak leadership severely weakened the Malian Empire in the face of growing power of its enemies.²⁴

Additionally, the structural inequalities of the Malian Empire helped contribute to its disintegration in favour of its enemies. Firstly, there was a significant divide between Mali's ruling elite and its subjects as the wealth remained mostly amongst the upper classes- despite who they worked for, all slaves were exclusively loyal to the Mansa. Social mobility was significantly hindered by the fact that the Mansa was the only person with rights to gold nuggets and indirectly controlled many of the goldmines, whilst others could only have gold dust.²⁵ Secondly, the growth of Islam spread most significantly in the ruling elites with many Mansas becoming Muslim. Ibn Battuta recorded that Mansa Sulayman in 1352 observed "the midafternoon prayer" but also noticed that they observed old customs "prior to the introduction to Islam [...] that they have kept".²⁶ This observation showcases an important dynamic where the elites observed Islam whilst integrating the animist traditions of the Malinke people, but significantly this duality meant that the integration of Islam was not accepted. Although, Ibn Battuta's animosity to Malian animist beliefs and the Mansa's Islamic flexibility perhaps reflects his personal opinions over the Malians' opinions.

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

Nonetheless, Islamic studies were conducted in Arabic which disenfranchised the population outside of the educated elites, and Mansa Musa's extravagant pilgrimage was critiqued by Malian griots as foolish, wasteful and alienating the traditions of the population.²⁷ Even Timbuktu, which became an international trade and learning centre in the Muslim world, was unable to relieve its pre-Islamic heritage.²⁸ It could be argued that what helped contribute to the Malian Empire's deterioration was this lack of social mobility and Islamic alienation in comparison to its competitors, such as the Songhay Empire's more ethnically heterogeneous society unlike the Malian empire's emphasis on the Mande elite.²⁹

Finally, the growing power of neighbouring kingdoms coupled with the Malian Empire's diminishing control during the fifteenth century furthered its deterioration. This was most notable through the Songhay Empire, which would conquer most of the Mali Kingdom by the late fifteenth century, and the Moroccan Empire's conquest in the seventeenth century that finally extinguished the Malian Empire. Not only were Timbuktu and Gao retaken in the 1430s but around 1460, Sii Sulayman Dama of Songhay conquered Mali's Mema, thus showing that the Songhay Empire was capable of taking territories that were once on the fringes of Mali.³⁰ The Songhay Empire would continue to conquer previous Malian territories, including Timbuktu in 1468, which had already been taken by the Tuareg, Jenne, and Walata near the end of the fifteenth century.³¹ The Mossi also raided the Middle Niger around 1430, invading Massina and Walata in 1480, although they were eventually driven back by Sonni Ali of Songhay in 1483, showcasing how the Mossi were considered more dangerous than Mali.³² As argued by Levtzion, "internal disputes" helped the Malian Empire's disintegration which "attracted the Mossi [...] to increase their mobility", creating insecurity on the Middle Niger where the Songhay empire would exert "increasing pressure on Mali".³³ Although this argument focuses too intensely on the succession of the Songhay Empire after the Malian Empire, ignoring other

kingdoms and factors, the significance here is that the Mali Empire was severely weakened by their strong neighbouring states to the point where it was considered a lesser threat. By the fifteenth century, Mali's authority in the north dwindled to three provinces from Mansa Musa's peak at fourteen provinces, which had been taken by Songhay, the Tuareg and the Mossi.³⁴ Inevitably, the Malian Empire's deterioration was amplified by neighbouring kingdoms who took advantage of its instability through territorial gains.

In conclusion, by the end of the fifteenth century, with incapacitated leadership, structural inequalities, Portuguese intervention, decreased trading routes, and continuous invasions from neighbouring kingdoms, the Malian Empire was disintegrating, even during periods of stability. Yet, the most significant factor that ended the Malian Empire was the expansion of the burgeoning Songhay Empire, dominating Malian territory after decades of weak leadership and economic decline.

Notes

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4. D.T. Niane, *Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*, (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1984), p. 182.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
6. Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870*, (New York City: Simon & Schuster, 2013), p. 61.

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

7. Michael A. Gomez, *African Dominion: A New History of Empire in Early and Medieval West Africa*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), p. 387.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 362.
9. Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870*, p. 82.
10. Matthew Kofi Ocran, *Economic Development in the Twenty-first Century*, (New York City: Springer International Publishing, 2019), p. 211.
11. Levtzion, *Ancient Ghana and Mali*, p. 150.
12. Niane, *Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*, p. 174.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
14. Gomez, *African Dominion: A New History of Empire in Early and Medieval West Africa*, pp. 397 – 398.
15. Ocran, *Economic Development in the Twenty-first Century*, pp. 211 – 213.
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17. Dhibril Tamsir Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1979), pp. 81 – 82.
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22. Nawal Morcos Bell, ‘The Age of Mansa Musa of Mali: Problems in Succession and Chronology’. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2 (1972), p. 11.
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27. Mia Sogoba, “Mansa Musa: The Rejected Ruler of the Mali Empire?”, *Cultures of West Africa*. Accessed 28 December 2020.
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29. Gomez, *African Dominion: A New History of Empire in Early and Medieval West Africa*, p. 399.
30. Conrad, *Empires of Medieval West Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhay*, pp. 60 – 61.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 63 – 66.
32. Levtzion, *Ancient Ghana and Mali*, p. 84.

33. Ibid., p. 83.

34. Ibid., p. 83.

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Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

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Does *The Company of Wolves* Offer an Empowering, or an Exploitative, Female Perspective?

By Maria Balint [Edited Breda Corish]

The Company of Wolves is a subversive film in terms of exploring femininity due to its heavy reliance on the unconscious mind. Rosaleen is on the edge of womanhood, her puberty a liminal state, but treated as a child, calling into question the feminist value in having a young girl sexualised and preyed upon by monsters and older men. She undergoes her rite of passage and explores her perception of her womanhood symbolically, in the unconscious dream state. This is the mind of a pubescent girl, no less, meaning that methods of analysing childhood development are psychoanalytic in nature, coinciding with the allegorical manner of her dreams. Freud stressed the importance of repressed traumatic memories or transgressive early desires as destabilising, and that if the specific trauma was not resolved, it would resurface in later life. Psychoanalytic theory states that dreams represent unconscious desires and conflicts, and the latent content of the dream is where allegorical meaning is found. Thus, Rosaleen's fairytale dream is rife with desires and conflicts unbeknownst to her conscious mind. The overarching question is whether or not the film offers an empowering, or exploitative, female perspective. Psychoanalytic and gender film theories are used to answer this, but the conventions of horror film, and the role of women in conjunction to them, need to be understood in order to deduce if there even is the capacity for a woman to be empowered in the horror genre.

In referring back to the female experience exhibited by the film, I stress the traditional role of the woman in horror. Furthermore, the extent to which the woman can be empowered, or empower herself, needs to be read within the parameters of horror tropes. Mulvey argues that film reflects on the socially established "sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking and

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

spectacle,”. When considering that women’s sexuality is a “difference grounded in monstrosity,” it becomes clear that the woman herself is the spectacle, subjected to the male gaze due to her inferior social status. The role of scopophilia in this is compelling, because the active looker subjects the passive woman to a “controlling and curious gaze,” but this exchange is explicitly gendered, because “the woman is punished for looking”. Women are not always victims but the monstrous is often, or always, female in theory, though this still confines them to the male gaze because women and monsters are “biological freaks” who threaten the established social order that prioritises the experience of the white, heterosexual man. These fears are derived from masculine fears of women’s sexuality, desire, the reproductive body and childbirth, hence when the woman’s pleasure is at the forefront, there is no male gaze because she is not displaying or stimulating herself for the male audience. In *The Company of Wolves*, women’s desire elicits a response in the form of punishment, emphasising that unconventional sexuality is a “potent threat to vulnerable male power”.

Rosaleen is introduced as bold and free-spirited: she defies Granny and, by extension, the normative, patriarchal society she lives in. She retains her agency throughout the narrative, with her maturation being neither violent nor forced. Though the wolves crashing into her childhood bedroom represent a sudden end to her naivety and innocence, no part of her is lost. Studlar proposes that women are powerful because they possess a womb and breasts which men lack, thus disputing Freudian ideas of incomplete femininity. From a biological perspective, the woman is therefore superior, and it is men’s insecurity that projects fears onto her, hence the woman being the basis for the monster. When she is victimised, it is a means of subjugating her.

The relationship with the wolves is important in achieving this: the intrinsic link between the two is because of their mutual recognition of their 'otherness' within the patriarchy. Neither of the monsters is 'lacking,' however - what is feared "is similar to what Lurie says is feared in the mother: not her own mutilation, but the power to mutilate and transform the vulnerable male". Though the werewolf is still man, and enjoys the privileges of manhood, he also enjoys the power of the beast: the power to lure and tempt, coaxing unconscious desires to the surface. He is, however, more beast than man, because it is as Williams suggests: keeping Lurie's ideas at the forefront, the "power-in-difference" that sows fear of women also sows fear of the monster. The beast controls the human male part of the werewolf. At its core, this could be read as empowering in the sense that the woman is seen as a threat to the establishment in the same way as the monster, but the equating of the woman to the monster is problematic because it strips her of her humanity, leaving room for interpretation into her agency.

When talking about the wolf attack, Granny equates the sister to a lamb, insinuating that she had no hope, but Rosaleen questions why she couldn't have saved herself. This displays both her childish understanding of the world and also her self-reliance, in that she shows no fear of the wolves, in spite of what they did. This foreshadows her own encounter, in which she maims the beast with a shotgun. Rosaleen subverts horror tropes in this scene because she prevents "the killer's phallic purpose" of thrusting his weapon into his women victims; instead, she is the one to do so, thus empowering herself. The "symbolic phallicisation" represents both the canon image of heroism as male, but also her transitioning out of the liminal childhood state and down through the psychosexual stages of development. Unlike her sister, she was able to save herself in spite of societal restraints. Therefore, when Granny warns Rosaleen that she could end up like her sister, she is foreboding her own fate, not Rosaleen's.

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

A criticism of *The Company of Wolves* is that it is exploitative in its treatment of Rosaleen. When employing Mulvey's ideas about the male gaze to the film, in that women in film are fetishised as objects that provide pleasure to the male audience, voyeurism is identified as a component of Rosaleen's presentation. "The conventions of mainstream film focus attention on the human form" and thus contribute to voyeuristic pleasures: associations with sadism through "guilt, control, punishment" coincide with Rosaleen's narrative of self-discovery, seen through her damnation in response to her sympathy for the wolves. Patriarchal film norms capitalise on her coming-of-age, hence the over-sexualisation of the narrative, seen in subsequent critics' interpretations.

Cherry builds upon the theory that women and monsters are intrinsically linked by sexualising the affinity between the two. The priest stating that 'the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb' foreshadows this. This is troublesome in that the vulnerable, oftentimes young, woman is taken advantage of, both by the patriarchy, but also by who is described as her ally. By exploring women's sexuality parallel to bestiality and violence, Carter's source material provides an opportunity for subversion of the stereotype of the woman in horror as a passive victim, but when she remains a victim by the end of the narrative, the effort is futile. The "subversive affinity" introduces the ideas discussed in Freudian readings, and whether or not alternative interpretations should be discounted merely for providing an introspective, psychoanalytic, albeit overly sexual, perspective.

Bettelheim states that oedipal desires are intrinsic to Rosaleen's coming-of-age, but her "deathly fascination with sex" being caused by her "oedipal longings for her father" limits the scope of the film. When she climbs the tree and reaches maturation, symbolised by hatching eggs, the baby figurines and lipstick, she is guided by the archaic mother in the form of the forest. The stress on the father in

Bettelheim's interpretation belittles the role of female autonomy, which the girl exhibits throughout the film, but falls in line with Perrault's version of the tale, with explicit and repeated emphasis on sexual seduction. The contradictory dual personality of the male is made up of the "dangerous seducer" and "the hunter, the responsible, strong, and rescuing father figure". The dynamic between Rosaleen being tempted by the werewolf and listening to Granny's advice culminates in a conflict between the selfish, destructive id and the selfless ego, with the girl acting as the superego. Granny also acts as the superego, in repeating that Rosaleen must not 'stray from the path' but her advice is ignored. The effect of this Freudian allegory is to display the girl's unconscious moral strain in regard to her maturation: the tale ensures the girl faces "her oedipal conflicts during puberty, and then saves her from them, so that she will be able to mature conflict-free". This links back to the basis of psychoanalysis, and the importance of overcoming unresolved conflicts in psychosexual development, so as to prevent developing fixations.

Rosaleen's relationships with women can also be analysed in conjunction to this. The idea that "in order to resolve the oedipal journey, the child must necessarily displace the older, more sexually attractive, competition" is explored symbolically. When her sister is introduced, she is wearing a white dress. Rosaleen's own dress is hanging up on the back of her bedroom door: she is not yet ready to wear it as her sister is still alive, but when she is running from the wolves in the forest, Rosaleen's dress is seen again. This reinforces her sister's impending death and thus, Rosaleen displacing her. There is an issue of time and propriety in this, in that the red cap symbolises a "premature transfer of sexual attractiveness". She has not yet reached maturation, but she is no longer a girl: Granny alternates between calling her a 'special lady' and a 'foolish child,' highlighting her naivety about growing up. The colour white typically represents purity and innocence, whereas red represents "violent emotions, very much including sexual ones". This is a further

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

example of the conflict between ego and id that Rosaleen experiences, the dichotomy between purity and corruption.

In a broader context and alongside Zipes' writing, I considered the cultural repercussions of commodifying Little Red Riding Hood as a sex symbol. Her age, to begin with, implies dubious consent, and therefore, poor, unfounded decision-making. Most psychoanalytic discourse uses Perrault as a reference point, with Zipes' thesis that "Perrault transformed a hopeful oral tale about the initiation of a young girl into a tragic one of violence in which the girl is blamed for her own violation.". By stripping the protagonist of her autonomy, essentially rendering her a "sodomasochistic object", she becomes more malleable. She can be repressed, sexually awakened, a heroine, a femme fatale, a victim, but the most common trope is the girl as "thoroughly grown-up and desirous of some kind of sexual assignation with the wolf". This reinforces Cherry's ideas about the pervasive sexual tension between woman and monster, no longer an uncomfortable, unfortunate affinity, but rather a means of surviving within the constraints of patriarchy. What is interesting to note is that when commodifying Little Red Riding Hood, she is depicted as older, 'mature,' in order to reduce the moral strain of having a character only recently abandoning childhood seeking out an unnatural sexual encounter. There is little empowerment in the perverse commodification of a children's fairytale character.

Though psychoanalytic approaches to analysing horror are valid, in that they are "able to explain the unconscious patriarchy in film", they are also limited in scope. The monstrous can invoke unconscious desires in its victims, but also in the female ally, and there is often crossover between the two. As these desires subvert the patriarchal norm in terms of sexuality in particular (as is often the case with psychoanalysis), the monster is deemed a considerable threat. Hutchings, though discussing Dracula, proposes that "in practice, psychoanalytical approaches to culture often have an ahistorical or universalising dimension". This means that

recurring Oedipal and pre-Oedipal concepts, imposed in various social contexts and settings, may not reveal that there is an “ongoing, ceaseless confrontation with deep-seated and immutable psychological fears and anxieties,” that is pervasive in spite of race, class, or gender. Rather, prioritising the sexual over factors such as race, class, or gender eradicates any sense of working within the parameters of historical context. Understanding the role of gender in psychoanalytic study is vital because misogynistic ideas about women’s sexuality call into question whether or not horror film can ever be feminist.

Taking Carter’s retelling of the tale of Little Red Riding Hood into consideration, Snowden suggests that the emphasis on women’s sexuality is neither misogynistic nor anti-feminist at its core, but rather that it is the societal double standard that holds women to a higher standard in terms of expressing their sexuality. The “complexities of female desire and sexuality within patriarchal contexts” encompass the sexual double standard. The feminine perspective is treated as more explicit by censors too; female sexuality onscreen is subversive in that its censorship lies in its rarity. As soon as women do not exist solely for men’s pleasure, but rather their own, the scene is scandalous and not to be looked at, subverting Mulvey’s trope of the male gaze. Carter’s presentation, however, is not without fault, with “images of passivity, violence, bestiality and sadomasochism” raising questions of consent and suitability. When so-called empowerment is paired with superfluous torture and trauma, it is performative. Though it is true that Rosaleen retains her autonomy, as she “refuses to be objectified by the werewolf or sacrifice her own desires”, the patriarchy does still overrule this. The bestial desires of the young girl come to fruition in an ironic manner, as she becomes a beast herself: her punishment for transgressing social norms. What is the significance of subverting the male perspective if Rosaleen is still to be punished at the end?

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

Critics have also argued that the horror film is in and of itself a misogynistic spectacle: the very basis of horror lies in deploying men's fear of women's bodies and sexuality. Creed argues that the monstrous-feminine, "what it is about woman that is shocking, terrifying, horrific, abject" refers to the symbolic female threats to the patriarchal unconscious and sense of self, often extending to the genitals. The further away one gets from the heterosexual, white, male norm, the bigger the threat, hence the affinity between women and monster being (physically) grounded in their status as "biological freaks" whose bodies represent a fearful and threatening form of sexuality". Their difference challenges "vulnerable male power" because it situates women not only as victims but as the threat itself.

Furthermore, the abject being "gendered female" reinforces the horror genre as misogynistic. The abject is linked to the distinction between 'self' and 'other,' and when there is a danger of the 'other' encroaching upon our sense of self, it is "radically excluded". The reaction in response to this, in the form of vomit, excretion, crying, symbolises the male response to the female challenge to the patriarchy, but also the female body. The 'monstrous' female sexuality is a Freudian idea, but Lurie disputes the traditional view, instead maintaining that "men fear women, not because women are castrated but because they are not castrated". The woman's 'wholeness' is troubling: she is in possession of "all her sexual powers", and thus capable of castration. "The meaning of woman is sexual difference" reinforces that by definition, what the woman represents at her very core is the outsider, the threat. Rosaleen represents this both in her identity as a woman, but also through the various weapons she carries, suggesting phallic metaphor, hence the awareness of her sexual power.

The context, intent, and reception of a film influence its critical theory. A modern-day vocabulary and understanding of feminism

ensure that aspects like nudity, for example, do not have to be exploitative. This would dispute Mulvey, as her ideas are reductive and do not take historicity into account: while exploring the role of the passive woman, she further subjugates her to the inferior role by solidifying film as a patriarchal spectacle. Williams and Clover argue that the woman is monstrous, not the victim as Mulvey stresses. Although the latter is the case here, “abject horror, in short, is gendered female”. This means that in order to create an empowering portrayal of women in horror by 21st century standards, the woman cannot simply not be the victim; the principle of monstrous femininity has to be analysed for relevancy to the narrative.

The Company of Wolves offers a multifaceted presentation of the liminality between puberty and womanhood. Though not overtly feminist, it is not entirely misogynistic either; the overarching hindrance is the horror canon itself. The association with femininity and victimhood, as well as monstrousness, makes empowerment more difficult because these pillars of the horror genre have to be addressed. Empowerment is also prevented by the punishment of female curiosity, which Rosaleen does subvert to a certain point. The significance of this is affected by her fate at the end, as it implies that women’s sexuality and desire are significant threats to patriarchal structures, and thus deserve to be suppressed and punished. The exploration of Rosaleen’s psychosexual development is complex, depicting a conflicted young girl and the dichotomy between purity and corruption, but highlights the exploitative nature of the narrative. The pursuit of the boy in the forest and the temptation of the werewolf are examples of the voyeuristic pleasures the film indulges in, with the male gaze being a pervasive aspect of Rosaleen’s maturation. The recurrence of scopophilia is a reminder of film as a misogynistic spectacle. Despite this, *The Company of Wolves* presents an empowered protagonist, but it is the response to her unconscious desires that calls into question if the horror genre’s reception to women’s sexuality is exploitative.

Notes

1. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (eds.), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, (Oxford: OUP USA, 2004), p. 833.
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3. Braudy and Cohen (eds.), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, p. 840.
4. Barry Keith Grant (ed.), *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015), p. 20.
5. Creed, *The Monstrous Feminine*, pp. 1-6.
6. Ibid.
7. Pauline Greenhill and Sidney Eve Matrix, *Fairy Tale Films: Visions of Ambiguity*, (Utah: Utah State University Press, 2010), p. 174.
8. Creed, *The Monstrous Feminine*, p. 6.
9. Phil Powrie, *French Cinema in the 1980s: Nostalgia and the Crisis of Masculinity*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 25.
10. Grant (ed.), *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*, p. 25.
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13. Carol Clover, *Men, Women and Chainsaws*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 80-84.
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18. Greenhill and Matrix, *Fairy Tale Films: Visions of Ambiguity*, p. 169.
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20. Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976), pp. 172-176.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Emer Rockett and Kevin Rockett, *Neil Jordan: Exploring Boundaries*, (Dublin: The Liffey Press, 2003), p. 43.
27. Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 173.
28. Ibid.
29. Jack Zipes, *The Trials & Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, (Sussex: Psychology Press, 1993), pp. 7-9.

30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Braudy and Cohen (eds.), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, p. 833.
33. Peter Hutchings, *Dracula*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), pp. 10-16.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Greenhill and Matrix, *Fairy Tale Films: Visions of Ambiguity*, pp. 169-174.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Creed, *The Monstrous Feminine*, pp. 1-6.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Clover, *Men, Women and Chainsaws*, p. 82.
44. Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 2.
45. Creed, *The Monstrous Feminine*, p. 6.
46. Ibid.
47. Braudy and Cohen (eds.), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, p. 840.
48. Clover, *Men, Women and Chainsaws*, p. 82.
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Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

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Was the Mughal Empire in 'Decline' by the Mid-18th Century?

By Ambia Akhtar [Edited Anwen Iris Venn]

The Mughal Empire was birthed in the early modern period during the rise of other 'gunpowder' states, such as the Ottomans and the Safavids, yet the shift into the era of trade and commerce in the 17th to 18th century led to the weakened positions of all these empires. The term 'decline' fails to adhere to the complexities that surrounded the Mughal state which attempts to frame a single, failed trajectory of the empire that often follows a Eurocentric narrative. Instead, modern historiography has attempted to understand less on how the empire 'declined', instead focusing on how it morphed into relevant branches of power. Although the Mughal Empire may have shifted power away from central authority, the fundamental foundations, that already held a malleable pretence, must be observed to understand whether there was truly a 'decline'. The impact of major economic stagnation as well as 'modernisation' pushed the practical aspect of whether the Mughal Empire could financially survive in the first half of the 18th century. Alongside the economy, several political shifts and cultural tensions also provided further details on how Mughal power was able to adapt to survive. The role of the Mughal emperor is important in assessing fluctuations in the empire's progress, and understanding the impact of economic policies on not just the central body, but to those living under Mughal rule. With the death of Aurangzeb in 1704, the rise of external and internal opposition were vital in questioning the role of the English East India Company (EIC), the role of invaders, such as the Maratha's, as well as the subsequent emergence of successor states. With questions on the lack of cultural advancements within the Mughal Empire by the turn of the century, these areas must be placed together in order to understand whether a linear course of decline existed.

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

The successful reign of Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) of the Mughal Empire often is used to exemplify a period of successful military, economical, political, and cultural expansion and innovation, often compared to the shortcomings of his successors. Meena Bhagava rightly argues that the notion of 'decline' assumes that this period is one of "perfection" before the "chaos and disharmony" of the 18th century. It ignores root sources of corruption, delicate balances of power, and the role of external encounters that were apparent long before the death of the Aurangzeb in 1707, which is commonly marked as the point of decline. Imperial historians have tended to focus their historiography on this 'decline', focusing on assessing which of the several causes was to be blamed for the breakdown of the empire. The role of the monarch in particular played a highly memorable figure representing the regal attribute of the Mughal Empire. In essence, the changing of monarchs, from Akbar to Aurangzeb, signalled the fruition of a certain period either linked to a golden era or one filled with despair and 'decline'. Bhagava notes that the death of Aurangzeb did in fact mark a slow succession of a series of poor rulers between 1707-1719, leading to a series of failed economical, political, and cultural policies. Although the empire was prone to more destructive attacks than ever before, many historians have argued that Aurangzeb's own failed policies, including "over ambitious" expansion of territory, extreme religious sentiment and inability to revolutionise failing economic systems perhaps contributed to the downfall of the Mughal's prosperity. Combining these factors, there is no doubt that the empire went through evident rapid transformations by the mid-18th century, but to follow the strong Orientalist narrative of 'decline' ignores the complexities of scattered progress. The importance of the Mughal emperor was fundamental within the culture, where "the emperor's ultimate authority, as opposed to his power, was rarely challenged" even after the decentralisation of central power. Practises, such as asking permission from the emperor, a figure of legitimacy and law, can be seen to be evident in Delhi in 1858. However, tributes to the emperor perhaps imitates the narrative of the Mughal Empire as a

whole, where power can be seen to fluctuate between real power and the appearance of power by the end of the 18th-century.

The rich and wealthy title of the Mughal Empire was one of the most noted aspects of the superpower, and the economic policies implemented during the earlier centuries played a role in understanding why such changes happened. The jagirdari system, a feudal land ownership system originally used by 13th-century Sultans of Delhi, was adopted by later Mughal emperors as a fundamental source of revenue that balanced on a fragile "tripolar relationship". The role of the jagirs, zamindars, and the cultivator could only prove effective as long as the central government was sought out to be the main source of assistance, which, alongside overexpansion, became difficult to maintain. Many 20th-century historians like Satish Chandra pinpoint decline within the Mughal economy with the subsequent 'jagirdar crisis'. This 'crisis' explains the impact of the constant transfer of jagirs, with complex administrative pressure discouraging land owners to continue to cultivate land properly. As a result, devastating agrarian famines, such as the ones in Deccan in 1703-4, emphasise the grim picture of the birth of the new century for the Mughal Empire. Yet, the large terrain of different sources of revenues for the empire allowed it to thrive in other areas at times of crisis, such as its prominent role within the Eastern trade. Ashin Das Gupta argues that the Mughal Empire benefited from maintaining control over a cluster of prosperous trading ports by the 18th-century, such as Surat, where the rich sources of indigo and cloth were in constant demand. As Gujarat and Bombay were hotspots for Mughal enterprise, quieter trade points, like Thatta and Lahri Bandar, illustrated the growing economic diversity within the empire itself. Thus, Gupta highlights the difficulty in understanding the "Indian economy as an integral whole", which further presents the question of whether 'decline' applied to the entirety of the Mughal economy. Alongside the sophistication and power dynamic shifting with the global commerce, the consequent upheavals of previously prosperous ports began in the first half of the 18th-century alongside the

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

expansion of bodies, such as the English East India Company. The disturbance of ports of places like Gujarat during the earlier period of the century often disrupted streams of textiles and indigo, where the total trade decreased to a third of its previous volume. Yet, the Indian merchant class continued to grow, especially the families who were able to cooperate as intermediates for European merchants, who were unable to navigate the entire Eastern market without assistance. The question falls on whether this thriving merchant class represents the entirety of the Mughal economy, where we see success of the people in adapting to the needs of the 18th-century of trade, unlike the central state's outdated jagirdari system.

The effects of transforming economic policies created a vacuum of political power within the Mughal Empire that sourced into several branches of power. Before discussing the inevitably weakened central body within the empire, we must understand the prominent emergence of the EIC as mentioned before within the global trading commerce. Alongside their economic outreach, the political sphere encompassed certain rights that many historians believed were unregulated and wielded greater authority. The process of EIC expansion into the Eastern trade may often gloss over the existing thriving networks within the Asian empires, but by the mid-18th century stimulated "zaminadarization and regional centralization." Rather than implement complete foreign policies, the EIC's efficient manipulation of the existing Eastern trade ports and networks maximised long-term benefits for the European company. The Company was able to form years of "political and constitutional legitimacy", allowing them to work within their own framework and entitled rights, omitting the role of an invading, external force. The slow assimilation into Eastern global commerce not only allowed them to compete with other European companies, but allowed the EIC to challenge Mughal ports, with the conquest of Bengal's trade in 1757. According to Emily Erikson, by tapping into one of the richest sources of silver bullion, it revealed the ambitious nature of the Company. The real threat for the Mughal Empire now became a

change of interest from commercial to territorial expansion for the EIC. Erikson points out that the Company already held a presence within the global commerce before the mid-18th century, establishing political power through their titles as the "Zamindars of Madras" by the end of 1688. The moving force of the external power of the EIC did attain levels of competition at local levels, but they continued to operate within the powers of Indian elites, constantly seeking Mughal constitutional authority as a sign of legitimacy by the mid-18th century. Thus, perhaps past historians focus more on the exaggeration of EIC in hand with Mughal 'decline', whilst more contemporary insights question the Eurocentric narrative for further interrogations into the political complexity of the empire.

In addition to the rise of external competition, the situation within the internal political sphere of the Mughal Empire faced perhaps the largest change by the end of the mid-18th century. During the wars of succession after the death of Aurangzeb, the inability to suppress the uprisings of Rajputs and Jats (1707-9) and the Sikh rebellion (1709-15) highlighted elements of weakened central power within the empire. The regional discontent was not all new to the empire, as these were frequent throughout the multicultural element of Mughal history. Yet, the fact that these internal rebellions were able to reach the extent that they became, such as the Maratha's successful bid for independence in 1710, revealed the inability for the Mughal Empire to dilute the situation with their weakened control. By the turn of the 18th-century the results of the Mughal's anti-Hindu sentiment motivated "invasions from all sides", and the breakdown of economy and political rivalry meant the once-great Mughal army failed to withstand the opposition. The empire became "territorial[ly] limited", and the invasion of the Marathas exemplified the result of the overstretched control of the Mughal Empire. The further plundering of vital areas, such as Gujarat in 1721 and Surat in 1723, illustrated the consequences of poor political integrity on Mughal revenue. Yet, even with the force of political opponents, revisionists question whether the empire

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

completely dissolved by the end of the 18th-century, or rather evolved in a less centralised state. Athar Ali draws on the decentralised structure of the Mughal Empire before the 1700s, rooted within the system during the early reigns of Akbar. The autonomous nature of the Mughal Empire, which enabled devolvement of power to maintain order in earlier periods, became vital for the emergence of successor states by the turn of the century. The rise of the English East India Company traditionally used the idea of the emergence of successor states as a sign of decline, using the 'divide and conquer' method to break down the central power of the Mughal Empire. However, recent work demonstrates that these smaller successor states often mimicked the Mughal administration systems locally and did in fact remain strong throughout external interventions. As textiles remained in demand throughout the 18th-century, so did the strength of places of states, such as Bengal, whose exports did not diminish despite larger Mughal political instability. Ali concludes that perhaps the Mughal Empire 'collapsed' in an unconventional form that evolved into these succession states, such as Hyderabad, that upheld many aspects of Mughal's machinery of administration. These inherited attributes within regional levels exemplified how the empire remained relevant throughout the 18th-century global exchange. Against the political and economic turbulence of the 18th-century, Christopher Bayly agrees that the Mughal Empire emerged as a symbol of "growth and regeneration" through the establishment of strong regional states as central authority loosened. It allows us to understand the more evolutionary aspect of the Mughal Empire by the 18th-century as an entity that can be seen to be modern in its ability to remain foundational, even through times of crises.

Many economic and political conflicts that arose within the Mughal Empire during the mid-18th century followed the trajectory of a long history of cultural tensions. The uprisings during the turn of the period were in part reactions to the long anti-Hindu attitude projected by the Mughal Empire. Bhagava importantly notes the tendency for imperialist historians, such as James Mill, to narrate

the 'backward' behaviour of the Mughal leaders, in order to justify the EIC's completion to liberate and modernise the Eastern world. Therefore, the years of conflict between the diverse Hindu and Muslim population within the Mughal Empire has been used to note its downfall during the 18th-century. Compared to Akbar's more tolerant reign, Aurangzeb's leadership often alienated certain groups, destroying temples and increasing the imbalance of jizya tax. Yet, there have always been sporadic moments of conflict, and they cannot justify the decline of the entire Mughal Empire, who have maintained a basic form of civility of the two religions long before the 18th-century. Bhagava also argues against 20th-century historians, like Ishwari Prasad, whose work revolves around the power incentives for religious conversion within the Mughal Empire. The overemphasis on the "Hindu reaction" ignored the practical aspects of cultural weakness in terms of the Mughal's technological advancement. At the height of their progress, the gunpowder state progressed in their effective use of military techniques during territorial expansion, famously under Emperor Akbar. However, Ali argues of the "slow pace" of urbanization and technological exploration at the beginning of the 1700s that limited the Eastern world. He connects the lack of weaponry advancements to the Mughal's inability to fight off its enemies, both internally and externally. Consequently, this "cultural failure", which balanced into the favour of European armies, made it difficult to deal with agrarian crises arising frequently during the economic turmoil of the 18th-century. Although Ali's analysis of the Mughal Empire perhaps reveals the stagnant rates in comparison to the rapid development of the past, it re-emphasises 'decline' as directly linked to the progress of European powers. As Erikson rightly warns, many historians tend to categorise Western versus Eastern attributes, backwardness in the face of progress, and liberalism compared to the Mughal's tyrannical feudal system. The Mughal Empire still held strong cultural resonance within the Eastern world, through its diverse population, rare trading resources, and the extensive literature derived from the variety of dialects spoken throughout the land. Therefore, the larger picture of the Mughal's steady rate of

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

cultural progress requires more research as a separate point of interest away from its role as evidence of European attainment.

Ultimately, it is too ignorant to conclude that the entire Mughal Empire declined economically, politically and culturally by the mid-18th century. Instead, we have seen how the adaptable features of the empire enabled a more evolutionary manner in which elements of the state were able to survive even in the later period of the century. The emperor of the Mughal state ideally represented prestige, economic prosperity, political stability, and cultural harmony. However, as the general consensus of both modern and past historians, the failures as well as the death of Aurangzeb led to the beginning of a century plagued with both economic and political strife, yet assessed alone cannot determine the end of the empire. Alongside the failure of the traditional, perhaps outdated, use of the jagirdari system, came the rise of the merchant class and the emerging trading market with its rich resources. It is important to note that we must not see this as new progress, as the Mughal Empire thrived alongside other states within the Eastern global commerce long before the arrival of the EIC. Indeed, the fast assimilation of the English East India Company held challenges as it soon became a worthy political opponent for the Mughal Empire by the mid-18th century. In addition to this, internal rebellions and invasions from the Marathas illustrated a clear breakdown of the central authority of the Mughal state. Nevertheless, the response to these political shifts was the number of successor states that demonstrated the modern devolution principle already built within the Mughal system. These states became stronger through the hardships of famines and plunders frequent during the turn of the century, and survived to continue to represent some aspects of the old empire. Unlike the analysis of political and economic 'decline', the changes within Mughal culture have not been explored much in detail by historians outside of the emphasis on the 'Hindu reaction'. Even so, the question of slow technological progress undeniably must avoid the route of being compared to the progress of their European counterparts. Although little modern weaponry may have

given the upper hand to opponents, the context of rapid cultural development before the 18th century must be taken into account. Within this context, even if the Mughal Empire remained stagnant for a period of time, perhaps there may be more signs of progression without the heavy shadow of competition alongside European powers. Thus, rather than 'decline', the Mughal Empire did indeed illustrate greater strength by scattering elements of its sophisticated system throughout the challenging events across the 18th century.

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3. Ibid, p. xiv
4. Shireen Moosvi. "The Mughal Empire and the Deccan - Economic Factors and Consequences." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 43, (1982), p. 365
5. Bhagava, *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, p. xii
6. C. A Bayly. *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*, (Cambridge, 1990), p. 15
7. Bhagava, *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, p. xxi
8. Ibid, p. xvvi
9. John F Richards. "The Seventeenth-Century Crisis in South Asia." *Modern Asian Studies*, 24: 4, (1990), p. 637
10. Ashin Das Gupta. "Trade and Politics in Eighteenth Century India", in Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Mughal State, 1526 - 1750*, (Oxford, 1998), p. 371
11. Ibid, p. 368
12. Ibid, p. 383
13. Bhagava, *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, p. xli
14. David Veevers. *The Origins of the British Empire in Asia, 1600 – 1750*, (Cambridge, 2020), 'The End of These Things Will Not Be Good' Legacies of Empire in Mid-18th century India', p. 245
15. Sushil Chaudhury. *Companies, Commerce and Merchants: Bengal in the Pre-Colonial Era*, 1, (London, 2016), p. 37
16. Emily Erikson. *Between Monopoly and Free Trade : The English East India Company, 1600-1757*, (Princeton, 2014), p. 84
17. Ibid, p. 132

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

18. Veevers. *The Origins of the British Empire in Asia, 1600 – 1750*, p. 259
19. Bayly. *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*, p. 8
20. Gupta. 'Trade and Politics in Eighteenth Century India', p. 36
21. *Ibid*, p. 378
22. Veevers. *The Origins of the British Empire in Asia, 1600 – 1750*, p. 250
23. Chaudhury. *Companies, Commerce and Merchants*, p. 376
24. Ali. "The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case.", p. 391
25. Bhagava, *The Decline of the Mughal Empire*, p. xiv
26. *Ibid*, p. xi
27. *Ibid*, p. xii
28. *Ibid*, p. x
29. Ali. "The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case.", p. 389
30. *Ibid*, p. 391
31. Erikson. *Between Monopoly and Free Trade*, p. 138

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To What Extent Did the Policies of the Presidents of the 1920s Cause the Great Depression?

By Abigail Harrison [Edited Raminta Kacinskaite]

Upon the dawn of the Wall Street Crash in 1929, America had been victim to a rapid century of industrialisation, urbanisation and in parts, war. Throughout such changes to preserve economic stability, it is required of the President to mobilise alongside such changes, and inspire the nation to do the same. Nonetheless, the Presidents of the United States within the 1920s offered a much more conservative, traditionalist style of leadership which generated a myriad of negative externalities. There is some debate on whether it was presidential policy that catalysed the Great Depression or not. The New Deal Narrative, embodied by Robert J. Samuelson, suggests that an abundance of laissez-faire attitude in the 1920s caused an enormous boom, including several market bubbles, thus causing an equally sizable bust accordingly. Alternatively, historians such as John A. Moore would challenge this narrative, suggesting that Presidents Harding and Coolidge stabilised the economy post-war.

This essay seeks to illustrate that the policies of the Presidents in the 1920s did not cause the Great Depression, but instead catalysed it. A multitude of factors contributed to the crash, thus presidential policies cannot be viewed in isolation, yet they can be given a significant portion of the blame as often it was the lack of presidential intervention that worsened the economic status of the United States during the 20s. In order to demonstrate this, this essay will consider the laissez-faire attitude of the Presidents of the 1920s, wealth disparities and the lack of purchasing power for citizens and consumers within the United States and the pursuance of protectionist policy. All of which constricted spending and triggered withdrawals from the circular flow of money.

Presidents Harding and Coolidge both maintained a prominent and stubborn attitude to laissez-faire economics, but for this essay particular emphasis shall be placed on Coolidge, as he employs laissez-faire through more substantial means. In the 1920s, the banks suffered a liquidity trap which resulted in the undertaking of uncalculated risks, hence customers preferred to maintain their money on their person, rather than deposit it through a bank. Consequently, between 1929 and 1933, two fifths of the nation's banks fell victim to either failure or a merger. The lack of confidence in the banking system, causing consumers to hoard their money caused two major problems for the US economy leading up to the Great Depression. Firstly, the prolonged collapse of the banks triggered a shrinking of confidence in the economy. Consumers, businesses and investors alike would detect the instability in the economy, thus contracting their spending for saving. Market bubbles collapsed as the artificially swelled prices of the war were no longer affordable and stocks and bonds were sold, reducing their yield significantly. Secondly, the banks themselves suffered a lack of liquidity, which equalled a lack of investments into the stock and bond markets, limiting their activity. It can be understood that Coolidge in his intention wanted to refrain from an interventionist presidency, had he chosen to mediate the banking crisis, it would engender increased confidence and thus liquidity in the economy and perhaps have maintained stimulation within the circular flow of money, protecting the United States from deflation.

President Hoover diverged from Harding and Coolidge's emphasis on laissez-faire, instead offering a Presidency much more focussed on voluntarism and conservatism, which substantiated an equal diminishing of confidence within the economy. Kendrick A. Clements asserts that Hoover ran America in a very business-orientated fashion, and in such a way replicated the ideals of Henry Ford. Hoover's mentality, deeply rooted in idealism, argued that businesses in America would 'do the right thing' and maintain staff wages at a reasonable level and avoid redundancies, despite the economic downturns surrounding them. This unrealistic outlook

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

placed too much confidence on a business' morality, where mostly they operated for sales, revenue and profit alone, decreasing confidence in Hoover's leadership itself. Hoover did choose to bail out some failing businesses through the Reconstruction of the Finance Corporation, which could be argued as just as incompetent; he saved inefficient businesses from collapse, saturating the market whilst decreasing the United States production possibility frontier, ultimately decreasing efficiency. Equally, Hoover fixated on conservationism and the ideals of efficiency rather than those more pressing in a period of economic hardship; welfare, demand or fiscal policy, stimuli in the economy. Hoover ultimately failed in his allocation of presidential resources, despite his misguided fixation on it, and thus failed to provide any legislation which would have stimulated the economy before the Great Depression took place.

Correspondingly to the non-interventionist attitudes of the Presidents in the 1920s, Harding, Coolidge and Hoover all favoured trickle-down economics as the basis for stimulus in the economy in the 1920s. The misguided theory that when money is spent on the rich, often in the form of tax breaks, everybody benefits from the upper-class investment. However, instead of pushing the economy into a 'boom', it plunges the economy into a 'bust'. The economic instability of the 1920s engendered those who could afford to do so, to hoard their money and spend mainly on inelastic goods. This method of investment does not work, especially when catering to the narrative of demand-side policy, which emphasises that consumer demand drives the economy, particularly the lower and middle classes. If the Presidents of the 1920s had invested instead in these classes, it is statistically proven that they would have spent more of this money, for they need to purchase necessity goods, and thus this investment is unaffected by the peaks and troughs of the economy. In the same vein, Federal unemployment aid was not made available until 1935, thus in the years leading up to the depression those unemployed almost completely withdrew from the circular flow of money, for their purchasing power fell to

tangible levels. Moore argues that throughout the 1920s real wages increase, at the testament to Harding and Coolidge, however Moore fails to address the emphasis that the rich got richer and thus purchasing power fell; in 1926, 1% of the population owned roughly 60% of the nation's wealth. To summarise, had the Presidents pursued a much more welfare-focused policy in the 1920s, then this would have been injected back into the circular flow of money and provided the stimulation the economy was so desperate for.

An example of presidential negligence in intervening in market failure is through the agricultural depression. Following the Great War, agricultural prices plunged significantly after a period of artificially swelled prices and supernormal profits. Farmers were overproducing, and market forces were driving prices down to unattainable levels, thus the market was failing and required intervention to readjust prices. A lack of intervention however, caused the continued pricings that were too low to be sustainable, which ultimately became part of the trigger for deflation. Had any of the Presidents of the 1920s chosen to fix prices within the agricultural industry, then not only would this realign market forces to be at a sustainable level of production, but also this would have caused artificial inflation, which the United States desperately needed as they faced the ever-nearing abhorrent impact of deflation on the economy.

An absence of international cooperation in the 1920s was erroneous of the United States, starving the country of external demand, when internal demand was simply insufficient. The collapse of the gold standard throughout the 1920s and 1930s globally had a huge impact on global trade. Despite gold being heralded as a secure or safe haven currency, often used to hedge against economic downturns, the gold standard, which tied currencies to the value of gold, made those currencies much less liquid. The co-dependency on the gold standard came at the price of economic freedom, consequently, as the gold standard began to collapse, relations

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

between these countries fell apart. Global trade became increasingly important in the 1920s, particularly the trade of currencies; the most active trades of currencies were in New York City, Paris and Berlin. Without such trades, America would suffer a decrease in the value of the dollar, and the purchasing power of the country would subsequently decrease, once again limiting the purchasing power of American consumers whilst also reducing choice. Though the collapse of the gold standard wasn't a direct result of presidential policy, it had significance in causing the Great Depression, especially when coupled with other protectionist policies of the 1920s, exacerbated the global situation and worsened the national economy.

The Horley-Smoot Tariff, made effective in 1930, was an example of protectionist policy that worsened the effects of the Great Depression. Though the tariff was implemented after 1929, it plunged the United States into a deeper depression and is representative of the protectionist policies of the 20s as a whole. In economic theory, protectionism can be enacted in order to stimulate an internal economy by incentivising consumers via price to shop nationally rather than purchasing imports. Despite this, in 1920s America there was a severe lack of purchasing power of consumers to allow such a policy to be fruitful. Correspondingly, reactionary tariffs are often implemented which reduces the United States' exports, which would have proved a desirable injection into the economy. After the tariff was implemented, imports fell 66%, with world trade falling by the same amount. By dramatically reducing supply, market forces tend to increase the price a proportionate amount, as the elasticity for goods decreases, which would, in theory, with an increase in aggregate demand, cause inflation, which would be a positive during this period. On the contrary, the increase in prices in reality merely decreased consumer purchasing power further, equalling a decrease in aggregate demand and perhaps catalysed the collapse of several market bubbles. Ultimately the tariff, which rejected President

Wilson's ideal of international cooperation, alongside others such as the Fordney-McCumber tariff, caused a negative global reaction and subsequently a contraction in demand for American goods, whether that demand was internal or external. Perhaps the pursuance of a more globalised economic policy in the 1920s would have negated some of the negative effects of the depression.

To summarise, a plethora of different economic policies and circumstances in the 1920s were responsible for the Great Depression. It is likely that even without such business-driven, 'small-state' policies of the 1920s there would have been an economic downturn, as America was reeling from the destabilising effects of rapid urbanisation, industrialisation and from the impact of fighting in the Great War. The evidence of the lack of purchasing power, the devastating effects of protectionism and laissez-faire economics is testament to the large role of presidential policy in shaping the economic outcome of America in the 20th century. Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal would follow in the 1930s and implement a welfare-based scheme, which the Presidents that preceded Roosevelt were prohibited from using, due to the parameters of their non-interventionalist policies.

Macroeconomic policy is fundamental to understanding the nature of the Depression following 1929, especially considering that many policies that emerged from the Depression, in the form of Keynesian economics, focussed on fiscal stimuli to the economy in order to heal from the devastating effects of the Depression. Despite this, macroeconomic policy often fails to consider the effects or causes of individual markets or at a personal level, particularly in regards to the stock market. Yet, macroeconomic policy does not consider the effects or causes of the Depression at a more individual level, such as businesses that were affected by the artificial price swelling following war and the subsequent deflation that followed, or the effects on the consumers themselves with a lack of purchasing

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

power. Except for the assessment of the agricultural market, a larger emphasis on microeconomics may be useful to assess the effects of the depression at a more individual level. This would provide a much more personal telling of the Great Depression, rather than one that generalises and groups individuals into aggregate supply and demand. The idea of behavioural economics may have proved fruitful in providing an insight into the decision to hoard and save money rather than spend and stimulate the economy.

Notes

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Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

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Does *Grave of the Fireflies* Represent a Victim's History?

By Anwen Iris Venn [Edited Fenella Jenkins]

Takahata Isao's *Grave of the Fireflies* (1988) portrays the fictionalised experience of two Japanese children through realistic accounts of World War Two. Susan Napier argues it conveys a 'victim's history' narrative, as Seita and Setsuko are mouldable victims with little historical responsibility, but this fundamentally neglects the subtle criticism towards Japan's imperialism, especially through *mise-en-scène*. 'Victim's history' will be defined in this essay as the presentation and representation of Japan's history and experiences as sufferers, which does not acknowledge or take responsibility for its own imperialistic and militaristic past. This essay will analyse the extent to which *Grave of the Fireflies* represents a 'victim's history' through analysis of the forms of spectatorship and identifications in the film and through the works of Susan Napier, Wendy Goldberg, and David Stahl in particular. By conveying historical trauma and memorialisation through the aestheticized characters of Seita and Setsuko, the film conveys personal suffering without using it as an excuse as Japan equally plays a part in their own suffering.

In order to consider whether *Grave of the Fireflies* represents a 'victim's history', it is necessary to define and consider historiographical considerations over what a 'victim's history' is and whether *Grave of the Fireflies* depicts this. For Napier, who coined the term 'victim's history', she describes it as the Japanese seeing themselves "as helpless victims of a corrupt and evil conspiracy between their government and military." Therefore, she concluded that the film constructs a mournful ideology of victimhood and loss as part of the Japanese identity with little context over Japan's militarism that led to this devastation. Yet, Wendy Goldberg was less inclined to label *Grave of the Fireflies* as representing a 'victim's history', instead likening it more to a nationalist history where the depiction of suffering is "critical of a blind patriotism" during the

war, and concludes “Japan’s inability to confront this past.” According to Goldberg, rather than seeing the film as purely focused on victimising Japan during World War Two like Napier discusses, Seita becomes a vehicle to express the nationalistic brainwashing of 1940s Japan, as well as embodying an unwillingness to confront this, just like how modern Japan is unable to. Contrastingly, David Stahl considers the anime a survival history, reflecting the director and original author’s trauma, thus through Seita and Setsuko’s failing attempts to survive, the film argues it is necessary for “contemporary reality” to not dissociate “from the traumas of the past”. Stahl considers the victimisation of the children not as a victimisation of Japan, but actually a by-product of Japan’s imperialism, and if historical catastrophes of the War and before are not remembered, they could be repeated with deadlier consequences. Taking this historiography into consideration, I aim to present that *Grave of the Fireflies* does not solely represent a ‘victim’s history’ since memorialising personal and historical trauma does not excuse it, but instead the film engages with Japan’s imperialistic past in order to express regret and critique.

Firstly, through the film’s aestheticized and idealised configuration of Setsuko and Seita, Takahata works with historical trauma and victimisation that does not always narrate Japan’s own historical brutality but suggests it. By utilising the anime genre, Setsuko and Seita become more abstract, malleable and less mired than real people, thus making them universal so viewers can relate to them easier. Yet, the animation amplifies the reality in the story, especially as the film expresses the real-life experiences of World War Two for Takahata and Nosaka Akiyuki, the author of the *Grave of the Fireflies* book. Nosaka used ‘factual accounts’, or *jitsuroku*, and autobiographical fiction, or *jiden shōsetsu*, to work over his traumatic experience of his sister’s death from malnourishment during the war, whilst Takahata, also a childhood survivor of an American incendiary raid who was separated from his parents with his younger sister who got severely burned, used his experiences for his adaptation. Nosaka wrote in August 1968 that “the air raids had

an enormous impact on my generation; they wounded us in ways we will never recover from". With this in mind, this deeply affected Japan even in the 1980s during the film's production. During Japan's 'Bubble Period', less than thirty years after the end of World War Two, Japan became the second largest global economy. This coincided with Emperor Hirohito's declining health, the textbook controversy of 1982 that downplayed the nature of Japan's military aggression before and during the war, and the controversies surrounding Yasukuni Shrine for the War Dead which enshrined fourteen Class A war criminals in 1978. Just as 1960s Japan affected Nosaka's writing, 1980s Japan must have affected Takahata's anime adaptation and by aestheticizing and idealising Seita and Setsuko, it allowed him to engage with current debates over the whitewashing of Japan's imperialism before and during the war alongside his personal trauma.

Nonetheless, Seita was written as an idealised version of Nosaka to deal with his survivor's guilt which Takahata continues, portraying Seita as an incarnation of devotion to Setsuko. This is shown especially in a scene during the severe decline of Setsuko's health, where Seita begins stealing during air raids to buy food for Setsuko. No music plays besides the crackle of fire or noises from the planes. The only dialogue given is by Seita who shouts "Go, go! Yay!" at the American firebombers as the scene is engulfed in the overpowering shades of red. Not only is Seita willing to steal for his sister, which Nosaka was not, but Seita has become so disenfranchised by his nation that he rejects his Japanese obligation, or *giri*, and follows his feelings, or *honne*, even supporting his country's enemy because it benefits him far more than what Japan provides him. Moreover, the overwhelming red palette, which connotes self-sacrifice and blood in Japan, not only refers to the devastation of the firebombing, but links significantly to the spirit world of this film that consistently is portrayed in red. As this narrative is a recollection of Seita's spirit demise, the red may signify how close Seita may have been to dying during his air raid thefts, or the deaths and ascension of victims during this attack. By fictionalising and idealising their personal

experiences, Nosaka and Takahata engage with the difficulties on Japan's Homefront during World War Two coinciding with the isolation of the children by Japan's authorities and communities. Thus, *Grave of the Fireflies* may display a victim's story based on the real experiences of the original author and director, but the aestheticization and malleability of Seita and Setsuko allows renegotiation with historical trauma as something to remember but not excuse.

The strongest reading of a 'victim's history' in *Grave of the Fireflies* is through Setsuko, but her demise is also intertwined by Japan's neglect. Setsuko encompasses childlike innocence so as the viewer slowly watches her deterioration it's deeply emotional and places Setsuko as a victim of circumstances. The only comfort the viewer receives over Setsuko is her spirit reborn as her healthy self by her brother's side, as shown by the final scene of the film as Seita stares directly at the 'camera' in red lighting, directly confronting the audience and modern Japan's unwillingness to engage with this traumatic past. According to Napier, the feminine becomes the embodiment of victimhood as Setsuko is "adorably helpless" and linked with "evanescence and death". Although Napier's argument highlights the use of a female child as an innocent victim continuously linked to death, it does not acknowledge her demise stems partly from the neglect of the people around her. Besides Seita, most other figures in the film provide little support for her, partly due to their own circumstances. Throughout multiple scenes, the aunt provides little support and embodies survival egotism and irresponsibility. This accumulates especially in the scene where they eat porridge together as she reprimands them for wanting rice, calling them "loafers" and "spoiled" for not working for Japan and demands they eat separately. In contrast to Setsuko's helplessness, the Aunt actively chastises the children, and her femininity embodies victimiser rather than victim where her severity eventually causes the children to leave. She does not follow the *ie* system and purely focuses on herself and her immediate family, the *mise-en-scène* also insinuates her cruelty by consistently placing her

in darker areas in the scene than Setsuko and Seita, who are always basked in the sliding door's light behind them.

Furthermore, Setsuko embodies victimisation not only from her aunt's neglect, but the neglect of Japanese officials. In the scene where Seita takes Setsuko to a doctor, we see the severity of her malnourishment as she showcases her starved physique covered in rashes, linking with *hibakusha* and the idea of bodily trauma representing visually the trauma of an individual or nation. The doctor is dismissive, stating she needs food before saying "Okay, next!" and Seita is given no help for Setsuko. Seita stands over the doctor, holding back tears as the camera zooms onto his face whilst Setsuko's face is hidden, using the angle to fully witness Setsuko's feebleness and dependency on Seita even though Seita is equally as powerless. Setsuko epitomises a 'victim's history' as she is a vulnerable child given little help, her femininity presented as suffering an inescapable fate, linking *mono no aware*, in contrast to Seita's masculine role as a provider. There is little reference to why the children suffer in Japan during World War Two, despite Japan's involvement, yet calling this a 'victim's history' neglects the cinematography's emphasise on their neglect by the majority of other Japanese civilians. There have always been conscientious voices that have called on Japan to recognise that they have been victimisers as well as victims, despite attempts post-war to emphasise the victimisation of Japanese people by their wartime leaders. They are not only neglected by officials, but even their own family does not extend nearly any assistance to Seita or Setsuko even during intense periods of suffering, partly due to a lack of responsibility as well as personal survival. For Setsuko and Seita, Japanese society has failed to help them due to Japanese society's complicity, partly stemming from concepts of *giri* or their duty to their country, to act in ways which feel appropriate despite the fact that what they consider dutiful is actually egocentric.

One of the film's most provocative displays critiquing Japan's militaristic and imperialistic past is through Seita's memory and

idealisation of his father and Japan's militia followed by his subsequent abandonment, despair and rejection. One of the strongest scenes that reflects Seita's idealisation and romanticisation of Japan's militarism is in the family portrait flashback during his time at the beach with Setsuko. Seita, growing up in 1930s Japan, reflects the propagandised nationalism of Japan pre-World War Two as his uniform is militaristic, and he stands rigidly by his father's side to imitate him, showcasing the importance of *tatemaie*. Seita uses his father as a beacon of hope during his wartime experience, clinging to the idea that he will bring them justice and save them or becoming the parental figure inspired by him and partly his mother. In this scene, their absent navy father seems aligned with an unproblematic vision of authority with the system itself barely criticised, but this is because this is being narrated from Seita's first-person perspective. Seita has been indoctrinated by Japanese militaristic propaganda since the 1930s as a child, unlike Setsuko, which was a method of social control that built on existing systems established in the 1920s and 1930s. The film does not mention the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the Manchuria and China incidents of the 1930s, nor the Nanjing Massacre of 1937-1938 because Seita's indoctrinated memory reflects Japan's unwillingness to engage in these crimes. With this inculcation, it emphasizes the individual's *giri* to their country as to protect the *uchi* of Japan and reject outsiders, or *soto*, which Seita reflects. The flashback is brief with childlike music engulfing all other sounds besides the camera's click, and the cherry blossoms that dominate the background convey *mono no aware*, the recognition of the impermanence, beauty and "sadness" of that memory. As Goldberg explains, Seita's "fantasy world of righteousness and revenge is a mirror to the society" he lives in, thus he reflects Japan during and before World War Two in his unwavering belief in winning and retribution for the crimes committed against him and his family. Yet, this ignores Seita as a victim of this ideology, especially when Setsuko's deteriorating health forces Seita to re-evaluate this fantasy. Therefore, this scene is not attempting to victimise Japan and ignore its responsibility, but that Japan is equally

at fault for the suffering of its children and their propaganda's erasure.

The scene of the fireflies in the bunker conveys the themes of responsibility and trauma significantly, which introduces another one of Seita's flashbacks that remembers his father and a naval display. Their father's established position as a naval captain suggests involvement in expeditions pre-World War Two, such as the Battle of Nanjing in 1937 during the Second Sino-Japanese War of 1937-1945 which resulted in the mass rape and murder of its inhabitants. Thus, the film presents this imperialistic scene almost mockingly when the audience is aware of Japan's losses and atrocities. In his imagination, Seita begins to sing a war song to the fading sound of the navy's instruments, playing 'soldier' as he imagines shooting a gun at opponents. The silence of both his own awareness of this propagandised militarism's absence and his father's absence breaks this illusion as he stares brokenly at the fireflies. His desperation to hold his sister only for her to push him away furthers this broken fantasy that Seita took comfort in which he cannot anymore. As a child he deeply admired his father and the nationalism of his country, but his desperate circumstances allow him to reconfigure this fantasy and realise Japan and his mistakes. Seita's realisation reflects a reality in that their 'enemies' are not just forces from outside, or *soto*, but that Japan has constructed its own sorrows.

The configuration of the fireflies in the movie is also significant in understanding the subtlety of mourning and the struggle of reconciling Japan's past, which may victimise the children and civilians, but does critique military and political authority. In Japan fireflies, or *hotaru*, represent passionate love, but their eerie lights are also thought to be the altered form of the souls of soldiers who have died in war, thus they represent remembrance and memorial. Moreover, the individual characters of *hotaru* mean 'fire falling', which resonates symbolically in the film by reflecting the American B-29 bombers and the firebombing of Japan. This is exemplified by

the movie poster itself which, when seen in different contrasts, the fireflies can also be seen as firebombs as a firebomber is revealed (Figure 1). The fireflies are the opportunity to say goodbye to those lost, for the children or for the audience, as well as a hopeful plea to bring these lost souls back home. Since World War Two, the Japanese consider it their national duty to bring back the remains of their dead soldiers as it is believed that Japanese souls can only ascend spiritually in Japanese soil according to *muenbotoke*. This is encompassed in the scene where Setsuko buries dead fireflies into a mass grave. Compared to the joy of the fireflies in the bunker, the children cry as Setsuko states that “Mama” is “in a grave”, their mother’s mass grave flashing between this scene as melancholy piano music plays when Setsuko asks, “Why do fireflies have to die so soon?”. The *mise-en-scène* slowly pans away from the children mourning to two lone fireflies who float around their mother’s boxed ashes and then into darkness until they slowly disappear, representing the spirits of these children who can never rest because they never got their burial like the fireflies had. As Stahl explains, the only “burial ritual is performed by Setsuko for dead fireflies”, which effectively evaluates how for the Japanese, not only is the suffering terrible to consider, but that many who died were never given the burial they deserved. Combining all these meanings in *Grave of the Fireflies*, the fireflies are the duplicity of the victimisation of innocent non-combatants and the problematisation of forgetting Japan’s darker heritage. Using fireflies, the film carefully tries to differentiate from a ‘victim’s history’ to a history that created these victims because of Japan’s mistakes.

In conclusion, *Grave of the Fireflies* does not solely represent a ‘victim’s history’ but is a story about the victims of Japan’s militarism and subsequent enemy retaliation. By considering the arguments of Napier, Goldberg and Stahl, it helped to construct an effective idea of a ‘victim’s history’. The film remembers and focuses on personal and historical trauma but does not use it to excuse Japan’s imperialistic cruelty, in fact subtly implying that Japan itself led to Seita and Setsuko’s suffering. By considering the aestheticization

and idealisation of Setsuko and Seita to convey trauma and victimisation, the irresponsibility and uncharitable actions of Japanese civilians to the children, the indoctrination of Seita and his subsequent experiences that break this fantasy, and the use of the fireflies as memorialisation for both the characters and the losses of civilians and soldiers caused by Japan's actions, *Grave of the Fireflies* does not represent a 'victim's history' but how Japan's early twentieth-century brutal expansionism created their own 'victimisation' by officials and civilians alike.

Notes

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Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

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15. Napier, 'No More Words: *Barefoot Gen*, *Grave of the Fireflies*, and "Victim's History"', p. 228.
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19. Thomas Berger, 'Review: [Untitled]', *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 28, no. 2 (2002), pp. 437 – 438.
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32. Tadao Sato, *Kenji Mizoguchi and the Art of Japanese Cinema*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2008), p. 115.
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Appendix



Figure 1. Yoshifumi Kondō, *Grave of the Fireflies Poster*, (1988) Poster, Studio Ghibli, Tokyo.

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How Successfully Did the Student Activists of 1968 Confront Germany's Nazi Past?

By Simran Kaur Bance [Edited Lara Rita Froes]

Trigger warning: This essay contains themes of Nazism/ genocide / violence

The historiography of West Germany during the 1960's has portrayed it as a turbulent period due to the activism of students. Leading historians such as Axel Schildt and Ulrich Herbert collectively agree that there was a process of liberalisation amongst the new generation who sought to engage with the realities of the war generation. In 1967, the shooting of Benno Ohnesorg by a policeman at a demonstration in West Berlin, marked the beginning of West Germany's student uprising and the subsequent events of 1968. In contribution, the attempted assassination of Rudi Dutchke, who was a leading activist against the growing concerns of authoritarianism, also led to the uprising that confronted the Nazi past. In 1968, students brought to public attention their nation's past by targeting the characteristics of fascism in order to prevent it from happening again. When recognising the fundamental components of Nazism, it is clearer to identify which aspects were tackled by the students. As Norbert Frei argues, the real "miracle" for the post-war period was that 'the contemporary exclusion of Nazi ideas from public life had contributed to the ostracism of Nazi ideas.' This miracle was conducted by students who questioned the social and political ideologies of Nazism, acknowledged the violence perpetuated by the Nazi regime, and brought to attention the former Nazis who were integrated into West German society.

Students were aware of how violence was an essential component of Nazi policy and how its progression procured national subordination. It was these acts of violence that they aimed to impede in their new West German republic. By addressing the similar issues in modern politics such as the Vietnam War, students found commonalities in the barbarism carried out by both powers,

which allowed them to confront their nations past. According to students, 'Kurt Georg Kiesinger and Lyndon Baines Johnson were representatives of a violent system that had brought forth Springer and Vietnam.' The US involvement in Vietnam erupted in global protests against the atrocities towards Vietnamese civilians and as Uta Poiger puts it, 'the Vietnam protests 'became another venue to talk about the Nazi Past.' Students saw a familiarity with the strategy of US warfare, the use of napalm and Agent Orange with that of the Nazi's *vernichtungskrieg* which proliferated throughout the war. In a speech addressing the US involvement in Vietnam Rudi Dutschke expressed that, 'Those who supported the US in Vietnam were just as guilty as those who remained silent in the face of Nazism.' Not only did West German students make nexus between US governments as the growing authoritarianism of their own government, but they also criticized other forms of intervention. Alongside the protests against the Vietnam War, the social German student foundation attacked US policies against the Cuban Revolution, Portugal's "Genocidal war" in the African colonies and the French colonial war in Algeria. Therefore students protested against global acts of violence and expansion and not just domestic issues of West Germany in an attempt to confront the horrors of the Nazi Past.

From what the students witnessed post war, the National Socialist ideology encompassed social restraints which fostered the interests of *Lebensraum*; territorial expansion to accommodate the German *Volk*. The activism of 1968 demonstrated a rejection of these policies, specifically the ideological intentions behind family and culture. Commune I, which was an experiment to challenge this dynamic, was first opened in January 1967. It ostentatiously turned away from the values and lifestyle of the bourgeois and Cold War-minded older generations. The encouragement of sexual freedom did a significant amount to reinvent the social expectations of women that was administrated during Nazi rule. Under the Third Reich, 'women's role was kinder, kuche, kirche: children, kitchen, and church.' In a documented tape recording of students' experience in 1967, a member of commune 99 describes how 'our

everyday lives are not organized...but through individual initiative.' He further expresses how 'I am in favour of totally abolishing family and marriage', something that was regarded essential to the growth and success of the Nazi Germany. Thus, students protesting in 1968 aimed to exert independence and free thought in rejection of the draconian restrictions of the Nazi Party which dictated a lifestyle in the interests of the Reich. According to Maria Tritz, 'there is no accurate gauge of women's attitudes towards Nazi ideology and politics that elevated the status of those women.... children and housework constituted the most important employment'. The formation of communes therefore exerted freedom for women to confront the sexism of Nazi policy which dictated the functions of a family.

Alongside Nazi social policy, the political ideologies from the past were still being carried through to post-war Germany. Thus, bringing former Nazi's to public attention was a key feature of the student movement in engaging with the Nazi past. According to Jürgen Habermas, in West Germany there were continuities with the hierarchical organisation of Germany during the Wilhemine Era. It seemed that post-war West Germans concentrated upon economic recovery, social reconciliation, and rebuilding Germany's international standing, rather than the persecution of Nazi war criminals. However, the Ulm Special Task commando (Einsatzkommando) trial in 1958, the Eichmann trial in 1961 and the Auschwitz trial in 1963 helped publicise Nazi Era crimes to West Germans. The coverage of former Nazis prompted students to interrogate the succeeding ideologies of National Socialism within institutions. Particularly, they criticised Kiesinger who had been head of the Grand Coalition government since December whilst a former senior official in Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry. As Peter Paul Zahl, editor of the underground newspaper *Agit 883* described, 'We didn't want it to be said about our generation that we were just as silent about [this] swinishness as our parents were about what happened in the Third Reich.' As a form of protest, in 1967 two students held a banner during the opening ceremony of the

Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

academic year in Hamburg University, which read: "Under the gowns, the smell of 1000 years." Synonymous to the 1000 year Reich that Hitler was devising, students were thus insinuating that their professors were the legacy of the Nazi regime and their ideologies and ways of thinking needed to be revised and addressed. The consciousness that fascist ideals had proceeded post-war therefore legitimised the student determination to expose the older generation.

In order for students to omit the fascist principles that potentially threatened West German institutions, they intervened in politics which did a considerable amount to prevent authoritarianism from reemerging. Fritz Fischer's *Sonderweg* argued that, unlike France and Britain, Germany had taken a special path which was different from other European countries. However the period of student activism demonstrated the westernisation of the federal public where West Germany became a west European state, thus deviating from the *Sonderweg* thesis. As seen in the Weimar years, the Third Reich and through the Grand Coalition, students were detecting a reoccurring theme within German politics in which they needed to interject. As the Grand Coalition of the CDU and the SPD held 90% of seats, opposition became a weak minority. Alongside this growing majority, the enactment "Emergency laws," where the chancellor could rule by decree, also triggered suspicion of impending authoritarianism. In response, the formation of the APO (Außerparlamentarische Opposition) was a form of confronting their past politics as they feared the resurgence of a dictatorship. According to Michael Schneider, the student protest of 1968 convinced many SPD politicians and trade unionists who had earlier opposed such legislation that a state of emergency could in fact occur in West Germany. Student protests thus reflected on the Nazi past when dealing with their current politics in order to prevent history from reoccurring. They attempted to break away from autonomous politics and unite its nation with Europe to reject the German *Sonderweg*.

Although students of 1968 did not implement any de jure legislation in West Germany which overtly addressed the Nazi past, they were instrumental in raising the deep-rooted issues of the Third Reich. Students deconstructed the rudiments of Nazism that could have potentially infiltrated West Germany with the intention of securing democracy. According to Schildt, the 'real miracle' was not the economic miracle of post-war Germany, but the role of the student movement in confronting the Nazi past. Reminding the public of the atrocities committed under the Nazi Regime, which dictated social policies and orchestrated violent acts, allowed students to blockade any attempt of an autocratic uprising. The year of 1968 was therefore a poignant moment and turning point in post-war German history as according to Poiger, 'in West Germany, identifying as a 68'er had been claim to political courage and historical conscious, suggesting that one had worked successfully to overcome Nazi and other authoritarian legacies. The 68 generation paid attention to the issues that their parents either did not want to acknowledge or did not believe in and their protest movements were a lifeline for West German Amnesty. Therefore students were not ashamed to face the realities of their previous generation, and instead of trying to cover their Nazi past, they acted on it by confronting the errors made and protesting for socio-political change.

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Queen Mary History Journal: Decay

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