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Editor's Note

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How Japanese Women Got the Vote and Equal Rights, 1945-1946
By Amina Manguera

Introduction

After the East Asia/Pacific War, Japan was occupied by the United States military under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). The goals of the occupation, primarily set in Washington D.C., were democratization, demilitarization, and punishment. The occupation lasted from September 1945 - April 1952 and resulted in numerous political, economic, and social reforms of Japan. A new constitution was born from the occupation and resulted in new constitutional freedoms for men and women. Women had already earned the right to vote in December 1945 and gained new rights and gender equality under the constitution of 1947. Women's rights activists in Japan, such as Ickikawa Fusae, and foreign occupiers such as Beate Sirota and General Douglas MacArthur were the major people responsible for the emancipation of women in Japan after WWII. This paper argues that Ichikawa Fusae was the figure responsible for Japanese women getting the right to vote and while General MacArthur promoted emancipation, Beate Sirota had more of a significant impact on gender equality.

Ichikawa Fusae

Ichikawa Fusae (1893-1981) was a Japanese woman who was one of the leaders of the suffrage movement in Japan. She protested, organized and led groups, and represented Japan at women's meetings around the world as a delegate to work towards the goals for women's suffrage. Hiratuka Raicho, an influential woman in the fight for women's suffrage and an activist partner of Fusae's, was the leader of Shin Fujin Kyokai (New Women's Organization, SFK) She recruited Oku Mumeo and Fusae to join her in leading in 1918. Along with others, they worked with organization to achieve their goals, which were "obtaining women's suffrage, establishing equality with men, increasing the spread of higher education for women, improving the position of women within the family and by providing welfare for working women."[1] Women who supported the cause held multiple protests outside of meetings, and "in their efforts to see Diet members about the reform issue, SFK women often waited for long periods at the Diet building only to be refused admittance and at times [be] verbally insulted by men" to create an urge for women to have basic civil rights provided by their country.[2] When she visited the United States in the early 1920s, she met with Alice Paul, the leader of the suffrage movement and founder of the National Women's Party in the United States in the 1910s and early 1920s, an experience which encouraged Fusae to continue fighting for women's right to vote. Fusae and her supporters were in a difficult position in the 1920s because they were challenging the traditional roles and customs for women in Japan in order to give women basic rights.

Before the Pacific War, Fusae was a member of several organizations that focused on women's issues including the Women's Suffrage League that she founded in 1924. In 1925, the Universal Manhood Suffrage Bill was passed which allowed all men in Japan

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[1] Vavich, "The Japanese Women's Movement: Ichikawa Fusae, A Pioneer in Women's Suffrage," 412.
[2] Ibid. 411.

25 years old and older to vote.[3] In 1931, the Lower House approved a bill that would allow Japanese women to vote in local elections, but the Upper House did not pass it.[4] Continuing to fight for the vote with the same enthusiasm, Fusae and her fellow activists kept the movement going. Shortly after the beginning of the occupation, in September 1945, Fusae was opportunistic and pushed for the vote right as General MacArthur was forming General Headquarters (GHQ).[5] In November of 1945, Fusae founded the Women's League for New Japan. Fusae's group worked to get the vote through various efforts, such as protesting and letter writing.

After a meeting between General MacArthur in early October with the Prime Minister Shidehara Kijuro and the Japanese Cabinet, the bill to grant women the right to vote and lower the voting age for men and women to the National Diet was suggested. Fusae's efforts had a great impact on Home Minister Horiuchi Zenjirō who was "sympathetic to Ichikawa's cause since before the war, [and] suggested that women be granted suffrage" during his meeting with General MacArthur and got support from Prime Minister Shidehara.[6] The bill passed in December of 1945 and women were able to vote starting in the first postwar elections for the Lower House in April 1946. Ichikawa's many years of working with the Great Japan Literary Patriotic Society, which was a wartime propaganda organization, led to her political purge during the occupation, so she was not able to run for a position in the government until after the occupation to continue her career on a larger platform.[7] After the occupation, she was voted to the House for a six year term and continued to fight for the people of Japan.[8] Her involvement in the Japanese women's movement was important for the advancement of women's right to vote and equality.

Beate Sirota

Beate Sirota (October 25, 1923 - December 30, 2012) was born in Vienna in 1923, and grew up in Japan starting in 1929 at the age of five and a half when her father, a great pianist, was offered a position as a professor at the Imperial Academy of Music. She attended the German School for elementary school and the American school for high school in Japan until 1939 when she left for the United States to attend Mills College, a women's college in California, where she earned a degree in modern languages.[9] The Pearl Harbor attack occurred when she was in the United States while her parents were still in Japan. The Department of the Army hired her as a civilian in 1945, which allowed

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[3] Mayo, Marlene. Undergraduate Teaching Site, Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities. WOMEN URGED TO BEND EFFORTS TO UTILIZE FRANCHISE RIGHTS: Favorable Results Expected At General Election As Result of Enfranchisement of 'Weaker Sex'.

[4] Nolte, Sharon H. "Women's Rights and Society's Needs: Japan's 1931 Suffrage Bill." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28, no. 04 (1986): 690.

[5] Mayo, Marlene. Undergraduate Teaching Site, WOMEN URGED TO BEND EFFORTS TO UTILIZE FRANCHISE RIGHTS

[6] Koikari, Mire. *Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan.* "The Noble Influence of Womanhood and the Home". 47.

[7] Mayo, Marlene. Undergraduate Teaching Site, WOMEN URGED TO BEND EFFORTS TO UTILIZE FRANCHISE RIGHTS

[8] Smith, Bonnie G., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Women in World History*, Ichikawa Fusae. Oxford University Press, 2008. 527

[9] Gordon, Beate. *The Only Woman in the Room: A Memoir.* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1992). 76.

her to return to Japan to reunite with her parents and to work under General Courtney Whitney in the Government Section (GS) as a translator for GHQ. She was 22 years old when she was assigned in February 1946 to help prepare a model draft of the new, top secret, Japanese Constitution as a member of the Political Affairs division, (GS). She was assigned to the Civil Rights subcommittee with the task of writing the portion on women's rights and academic freedom.[10]

Sirota remembered her feelings, in her oral history, when General Whitney came and announced that a constitutional assembly was being formed, she said "My God, it's such an opportunity! But what do we know? What do I know about constitutions?"[11] She took this opportunity seriously and borrowed copies of other countries Constitutions from several libraries to remain discreet about her involvement in the drafting, to aid her in creating the section on women's rights. [12] The important articles Sirota notes are:

Article 14

> "All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin"

Article 24

> "1) Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis.
>
> 2) With regard to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes."[13]

When it came time for the U.S. and the Japanese to review the draft created by GHQ, Sirota, as she called herself, was the 'only woman in the room' and was able to take part and fight for the articles that made it to the final draft. Sirota brought her diverse experience as a world traveler and upbringing in Japan and college education in the United States to the draft to help women for generations after her stating in an interview, "If another woman who has travelled around the world as widely as I had written it, she might have written a similar article. I was young, but I had been to many countries in Asia, Europe and other continents. I was a cosmopolitan. So I would say that a person without such experiences or cosmopolitan viewpoints would not have been able to write women's rights as explicitly as I did."[14]

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[10] Organized by East Asia Studies and Marlene Mayo. *We the People: Commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of Japan's Constitution.* University of Maryland at College Park. 1987.

[11] Mayo, Marlene, "Oral History Project on the Allied Occupation of Japan": Beate Sirota Gordon. 44.

[12] Gordon. *The Only Woman in the Room. 118.*

[13] Ibid.

[14] "A Long Interview with Beate Sirota Gordon." A Chance for Peace Beates Thoughts on Japans Pacifist

It was through her diverse background and exploring many resources that gave Japanese women more rights than the U.S. Constitution guaranteed.[15] As part of a panel at the University of Maryland called "We the Japanese People", about the drafting committee for the Constitution, Sirota recalled thinking "unless very specific rights were given in the Constitution for women…that later on when the Civil Code male Japanese bureaucrats [were] writing implementations, Japanese women wouldn't have a chance."[16] When the Constitution steering committee reviewed the draft, the men told Sirota that having specific rights in the Constitution was not appropriate, because the United States did not even have a detailed women's right section.[17] Sirota replied, "I felt that if these rights were not put into the Constitution itself, the women would not get them later on.[18] Sirota's role on the drafting subcommittee was the most important for gender equality because she made it protected under the law. She grew up in Japan and saw a woman's place in society.When she traveled, she saw the differences between home and abroad and used her privilege of a good education and the ability to travel to the best of her ability to help the women of Japan. Her attention to detail and passion for precise articles made her involvement significant. Without her specific articles, there would be ways around granting women and men the same rights.

General Douglas MacArthur

General Douglas MacArthur, SCAP under President Truman and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington D.C., was responsible for making sure Japan was in a good position to return to the world stage as a peaceful democratic nation. His proposal to revise the constitution, as opposed to keeping the 1889 Meiji Constitution, which limited Japanese's freedoms and rights, was an important factor for gender equality, but not the deciding one.[19] Sirota recalls in her memoir that General Courtney Whitney came into the office and said "General MacArthur has given us the orders to do the historic work of drafting a new constitution for the Japanese people".[20] With Japan's agreement to cooperate with SCAP and become more democratic, General MacArthur and those above him in Washington had the platform to create a new constitution for Japan. General MacArthur gave Japan an opportunity to try on their own, but when they failed to meet his expectation General Whitney expressed General MacArthur's great disappointment and presented Japan with GHQ's secretly drafted one.[21] The new Constitution followed the Postdam Declaration of July 1945, which resulted in Japan surrendering to the Allied Powers on August 15, 1945. The Postdam Declaration offered MacArthur an opportunity to fulfill the plans he made to reform Japan and strengthen its democratic roots. The new Japanese Constitution states, "the Japanese Government shall remove all obstacles to the

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Constitution Article 9.

[15] Parisi, Lynn. "Lessons on the Japanese Constitution." *National Clearinghouse for US Japan Studies. Indiana: Indiana University* (2002).

[16] Organized by East Asia Studies and Marlene Mayo. *We the People: Commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of Japan's Constitution.* University of Maryland at College Park. 1987.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Meiji constitution

[20] Gordon. *The Only Woman in the Room.*104.

[21] Dower. *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II.* 374

revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. Freedom of speech, of religion, and of thought, as well as respect for the fundamental human rights shall be established".[22] With GHQ's constitution drafted, and Sirota taking charge of her women's rights sections, the final draft including the articles on women's rights was accepted.

Later, "the women elected to the Diet went to see him personally in appreciation for making suffrage possible. Ichikawa said: 'Without the Occupation or the defeat of Japan, the realization of the Japanese women's constitutional rights would not have been achieved so quickly'."[23] While Fusae states that women's suffrage was achieved quickly because of the occupation, she does not say that it would never be achieved. She gives herself and the women working with her credit, because the women pushing the movement were prepared to seize the opportunity of a new leader, General MacArthur. In January of 1946, Fusae wrote a piece for the *Nippon Times* discussing women's suffrage, saying that "it has been going on for the past twenty-five years, as a matter of fact, though it has never gained much force due to its inefficient leadership".[24] With her as one of the strong leaders driving the suffrage efforts, the movement was a force to be reckoned with.

When the Prime Minister of Japan Shidehara Kijuro met with General MacArthur in early October to discuss Japan's future reforms, MacArthur made the point that women's enfranchisement needed to be one of the reforms.[25] The meeting influenced the Cabinet to propose the women's right to vote bill quickly. A few months after that conversation, Shidehara's Cabinet suggested the bill to give women the right to vote, that Fusae and women activist were very involved in, that was passed in December of 1945. Pharr states that MacArthur believed that women's rights were important and had his support the entire time.[26] MacArthur was greatly influenced by his mother throughout his life and used that relationship in the occupation to ensure that women's issues were in discussion and made him "lend a sympathetic ear on issues relating to women".[27] There was no direct involvement of MacArthur with the Japanese women's movement to get the right to vote or equality, but he did not reject the possibility of women getting constitutional rights during the occupation. By creating the platform, the Constitution, General MacArthur was vital for the progress of the movement.

Conclusion

Women's rights and equality were legally achieved largely through the efforts of women Ichikawa Fusae and Beate Sirota, who were prepared and took advantage of the opportunity to reconstruct and reform Japan after WWII. General MacArthur was

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[22] Postdam Declaration, Article 10

[23] Vavich, "The Japanese Women's Movement: Ichikawa Fusae, A Pioneer in Women's Suffrage,"

[24]Mayo, Marlene. Undergraduate Teaching Site, WOMEN URGED TO BEND EFFORTS TO UTILIZE FRANCHISE RIGHTS

[25] "Premier Instructed On Social Reform" *Nippon Times* 13 Oct 1945: Microform. *Japan Times Oct 1945*

[26] Susan Pharr, "The Politics of Women's Rights During the Allied Occupation of Japan." Robert E. Ward and Sakamoto Yoshikazu, eds, "Policy and Planning During the Allied Occupation of Japan" (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987). 227.

[27] Ibid.

important for giving women the platform to create a long-standing set of laws to protect and guarantee civil liberties in the constitution. The Japanese women activists who created noise, started and continued the fight for many decades, and sacrificed a lot were also crucial because they focused on developing the suffrage movement and were prepared when the opportunity arose to change the law and give women the right to vote. Beate Sirota was an essential character in gender equality, largely because of her diverse upbringing and her commitment to ensure there was a part of the Constitution dedicated to equality under the law. The progression of women's equality, including the vote, might not have happened until many decades later without the occupation of Japan and the relentless and dedicated efforts of the women of Japan, Fusae, Sirota, aided by MacArthur.

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"Livin' Side by Side": Contrasts and Contacts in Lost Generation and Harlem Renaissance Literature

By Anna-Bella Sicilia

F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* has become famous for its depiction of a frivolous, aimless, and altogether pessimistic era. On the other hand, Alain Locke's *The New Negro* is a triumphant compilation of poetry, essays, and other artistic works by black authors, expressing a confidence that America was experiencing a "spiritual Coming of Age" during the time of its publication.[1] Given their diverging conceptions of America, it is difficult to believe that these works were both published in the same year, 1925. While the white Americans of Lost Generation literature were deflated by World War I and disappointed in American leadership, the war afforded opportunities for intellectual and political momentum among African-Americans, which sparked the Great Migration and the consequent explosion of Harlem Renaissance art. Despite their opposing trajectories, these two movements not only serve as historical lenses into their respective racial groups, but they also demonstrate how these groups viewed one another. These two literary movements of America's "Roaring Twenties" reveal how the close proximity of whites and blacks in northern cities resulted in shared tensions and celebrations in the aftermath of the Great War.

Both the Lost Generation and the Harlem Renaissance movements were products of World War I, although their different experiences of the war made for dramatically different reactions. For white Americans, it seemed as though the momentum of the Progressive era had been stifled by their leaders' missteps. President Woodrow Wilson, who had initially promised an isolationist policy, created outrage when reversing this position. One *New York Tribune* columnist wondered, "What shall we think of a leader who in the face of a great world crisis has no definite convictions, no steadfast policy to pursue, but who in vital matters of international concern talks prettily but aimlessly first on one side, then on the other, as the emotion of the moment may inspire him?"[2] The next decade reinforced this distaste for authority, as disobeying Prohibition became expected and even, to some extent, celebrated. The law, once a tool for practicality and social good during the Progressive era, was suddenly, openly, and wholeheartedly rejected. Not only did "an ever increasing number of otherwise good American citizens refus[e] to obey the law," but Prohibition also allowed criminal organizations who participated in bootlegging to expand and flourish.[3]

With rebellion in vogue, the writers of the 1920's took it upon themselves to participate in this scorn for the nation's leadership. Fitzgerald's writing was infused with "cynicism about a war that had not ended all wars and had not made the world safe for democracy," and with an "unbridled hatred of authority and of the 'old men' who had bumbled into World War I."[4] These works are detailed with what Amory Blaine, the protagonist of *This Side of Paradise,* calls the "petty fevers and struggles and exultations" of his generation.[5] Exuding distaste for the war

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[1] Alain Locke, "The New Negro," in *The New Negro,* ed. Alain Locke (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925), 16.

[2] Douglas W. Johnson. "Mr. Wilson on World War," *New - York Tribune (1911-1922),* Oct 19, 1916, p. 8.

[3] Nathan Miller, *New World Coming: The 1920s and the Making of Modern America* (New York: Scriber, 2003), 296, 297.

[4] Ibid., 6-7, 207.

[5] F. Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise* (New York: Charles Scriber's Sons,1920), 192.

and for authority in general, both Fitzgerald and Hemingway's works are rife with social drinking and even downright alcoholism, making Prohibition seem almost laughable, while female characters rebel against their parents' generation by flaunting their sexuality.

Black Americans approached World War I from a different angle. While white Americans had been benefitting from Progressive-era reforms, African-Americans had generally remained in the South, trapped within a cycle of tenant farming and disenfranchisement. The arrival of war, then, was not framed primarily as a disruption, but rather as an opportunity. Southern blacks hoped that "war service would somehow bring social and economic salvation for them and that white America after observing their service to the country could not deny them their recognition."[6] A 1917 article in the *Baltimore Afro-American* described the war as a "titanic struggle for world liberty," tying it to the black community's own struggle for equality. "As a race just emancipated and tasting the sweets of freedom we want it for all the world," the author declared.[7] Diverging dramatically from their white compatriots, African-Americans tended to express a renewed, rather than damaged, faith in leadership. The aforementioned article, in fact, discussed a telegraph sent by the "Negroes of Indianapolis" directly to the President himself, in which they assured him of their unwavering loyalty.[8] Despite his rather weak track record on race, Wilson was framed in the most hopeful light possible by another *Afro-American* article: "while during your entire career you have never done anything constructive for the Negro," the author wrote in an open letter to Wilson, "you have never done anything destructive against him. Your constructive opportunity is now at hand."[9] African-Americans saw World War I and the post-war period as a time for improvement, and felt their leaders—specifically the white elite—would participate in this project, if only they could see what blacks had to offer.

The largest catalyst for this improvement was the Great Migration of an estimated 7,000 to 1 million black Americans from the South to mostly urban Northern areas.[10] This movement was brought on by such a high war demand for unskilled labor that employers went so far as to send recruiters to the South to hire black workers.[11] Northern cities offered not only an escape from the lynching and disenfranchisement of the South, but also a chance to establish a reputation among the whites they would be living alongside in cities. More than anything, blacks hoped to be seen as valuable, as contributors.[12]

This sense of promise should not obscure the bleak realities that black soldiers and citizens faced as a result of the war. In general, they "received inferior clothing, substandard food, crowded barracks, little water, and open sheds for mess."[13] Cities may have been a preferable alternative for many blacks, but racial tensions followed wherever they went, "as the

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[6] Randy Finley, "Black Arkansas and World War One," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly,* 49.3 (Autumn, 1990), 257.

[7] "Colored Citizens Show Patriotism." *Baltimore Afro-American (1893-1988),* Apr 28, 1917, p. 1.

[8] Ibid.

[9] "The Disgrace of Democracy." *Baltimore Afro-American (1893-1988),* Aug 25, 1917, p. 4.

[10] Joe William Trotter, Jr., "The Great Migration," *OAH Magazine of History* 17.1 (Oct., 2002), 31.

[11] Miller, *New World Coming,* 51.

[12] Ibid., 48.

[13] Ibid., 262.

races jostled for limited housing and for jobs."[14] And yet, amid the discrimination there was still progress. African-Americans had not been commissioned as officers in the Spanish-American War, but gained this recognition in World War I.[15] Despite all the tangible ways in which treatment was uneven and deserved recognition was denied, black communities retained a "nascent confidence" that "such gargantuan and heroic efforts as fighting in France or collecting thousands of dollars for the war effort had to have some meaning."[16] In newly formed urban black neighborhoods, they embarked on a cultural project of uplift. Harlem was the most epitomic of these neighborhoods, and *The New Negro* was the clearest demonstration of this project. In its introduction, editor Alain Locke writes, "Negro life is not only establishing new contacts and founding new centers, it is finding a new soul."[17] That volume's works are the best way to glimpse the shape of this new soul.

The emerging New Negro identity did not go unnoticed by white authors, but first these authors must be examined in their own right. A close analysis of Fitzgerald and Hemingway's work reveals their pessimism as well as their rejection of authority through excessive drinking and open sexual relations. This carousing yet somewhat spiritually deflated attitude was directly tied to participation in a morally ambiguous war, which tends to be a plot feature in these novels. Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* traces the upbringing, war service, and romantic mishaps of Amory Blaine, all woven around pivotal events of the 1910s and 20s. As a young man, Amory is certain he will succeed in life. He indulges in "one of his favorite waking dreams," either about "becoming a great half-back," or "about the Japanese invasion, when he was rewarded by being made the youngest general in the world."[18] Neither of these dreams become reality; Amory is injured playing football and finds, after his service, that he has "los' idealism."[19] Amory senses that a resulting disillusionment with leadership is shared with his generation: "One minute they call Wilson 'just a dreamer, not practical'—a year later they rail at him for making his dreams realities."[20] In *The Great Gatsby,* there is a similar suspicion that the powerful are manipulative. Gatsby introduces Nick to Meyer Wolfsheim, remarking that he was the man who "fixed the World's Series back in 1919."[21] By weaving this real scandal into his fictional universe, Fitzgerald reiterates that nothing during this period can be trusted—even the results of the World Series have been engineered.

Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* deals more directly with the damage of World War I. Having received a mysterious injury during his service, Jake Barnes is left impotent, his manhood damaged both literally and figuratively.[22] The resulting frustration is directed toward American leadership in general. Jake's friend Bill, another veteran, claims, "Abraham Lincoln

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[14] Ibid., 50.

[15] Ibid., 263.

[16] Ibid., 270.

[17] Alain Locke, "Foreward," in *The New Negro,* ed. Alain Locke (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925), xxvii.

[18] Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise,* 12.

[19] Ibid., 156.

[20] Ibid., 218.

[21] F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby,* (New York: Scribner, 1925), 73.

[22] Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises,* (New York: Scriber, 1926), 120.

was a faggot. He was in love with General Grant. So was Jefferson Davis. Lincoln just freed the slaves on a bet."[23] This tale, though flippant, expresses a kind of homophobic resentment of American leaders—specifically ones involved in a previous war effort. Bill strips the Civil War of its ideological causes and significance, reducing it to "a bet," as if to say that politicians manipulate the people into fighting for frivolous causes. Bill tells another anecdote later, this one true. He was invited to a formal dinner at which "medals would be worn," but, having none, borrowed some from his tailor. When it turned out nobody wore their medals (an esteemed guest who was supposed to attend could not), Bill gave the "bloody military medals" out to girls at a nightclub.[24] To him, these signs of esteem associated with the war were useless trifles. By disposing of them he demonstrates disrespect for the man to whom they belonged (the unfortunate tailor, who was supposed to clean and return them, "kept on writing for months"), as well as contempt for the war itself.[25] Bill's solution is rebellion, and he notices this behavior in his friends as well, telling Barnes, "You're an expatriate […] You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed by sex."[26]

Indeed, in these novels as well as reality, sex became a means for rebellion against authority, specifically the authority of the older, more conservative generation. This generational tension was particularly acute among women, many of whom had battled for reforms concerning child labor, factory conditions, temperance, and suffrage during the Progressive era. "None of the Victorian mothers—and most of the mothers were Victorian—," Fitzgerald writes in *This Side of Paradise,* "had any idea how casually their daughters were accustomed to be kissed."[27] Amory's girlfriend Rosalind exhibits this sexual freedom, one which her sister Cecelia ties explicitly to the war: "She's average—smokes sometimes, drinks punch, frequently kissed—Oh, yes—common knowledge—one of the effects of the war, you know."[28] Describing Rosalind as "average" emphasizes the normalcy of this behavior. Amory's peers chafe with their parents over their flirtations, and when Rosalind complains to her mother, "you can't run everything now the way you did in the early nineties," she flaunts rather than hides this behavior.[29] Fitzgerald also writes about the ways this sexual rebellion often translated into interracial contact by pushing white men and women into the jazz club environment, "deep in an atmosphere of jungle music and the questioning of moral codes."[30] Clubs afforded these characters the opportunity to drink and romance as much as they pleased, and, incidentally, meant that they were more likely to socialize in a less segregated environment.

Where Lost Generation writing is pessimistic and rebellious, the works of the Harlem Renaissance are often optimistic and respectful of authority. For writers of the Harlem Renaissance, the "authority" to which they directed respect was often their white readership. Establishing positive race relations in order to receive fairer treatment was the mission of poems

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[23] Ibid., 121.
[24] Ibid., 140.
[25] Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises,* 141.
[26] Ibid., 120.
[27] Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise,* 45.
[28] Ibid., 133.
[29] Ibid., 46.
[30] Ibid., 46.

like Langston Hughes' "The White Ones." He assures the reader, "I do not hate you/For your faces are beautiful, too," leaving the poem on a plea: "Oh, white strong ones, /Why do you torture me?"[31] Many of Hughes' poems show a spirited hope that this "torture" will, in fact, stop, and a willingness to strive for a better, realizable future. In "Summer Night," Hughes depicts a Harlem night as initially solemn: "My soul/Empty as the silence, Empty with a vague/Aching emptiness, /Desiring, Needing someone, /Something." With the arrival of a "new dawn," comes a new sense of promise, the aching alleviated.[32]

John Matheus' "Fog" is equally hopefully about salvation through improved race relations. On a freight car on the bridge between Ohio and West Virginia, the atmosphere is initially tense; a white man makes a derogatory comment about an Italian mother: "They breed like cats. They'll outnumber us."[33] When the bridge suddenly begins to collapse, the terrifying experience strikes all of the diverse passengers the same: "These thoughts flashed spontaneously in the consciousness of the rough ignorant fellows, choking in the fumes of their tobacco, came to the garlic scented 'hunkies,' to the Italian Madonna, to the Sister of Charity, to the lover boy and his lover girl, to the Negro youths, to the Jews thinking in Yiddish idioms, to the old Negro man and his wife and even the Egyptian-faced girl, with the straightened African hair, even to the bored motorman and the weary conductor."[34] When they are able to climb out of the car and emerge from the fog, "there was a generous intermingling. Everybody talked at once, inquiring, congratulating."[35] According to the authorities, some of the bridge supports had slipped, but the girders had held and "a terrible tragedy had been prevented."[36] The story ends with a happy note. Matheus writes, "The fog still crept from under the bed of the river [...] but from about the hearts and minds of some rough, unlettered men another fog had begun to lift."[37] In this story, there is no failure of authority, which is symbolized by the bridge girders on which everyone relies to safely cross the bridge. These girders are secure enough to prevent tragedy, and the incident serves to create greater understanding among whites, blacks, and immigrants.

Essays in *The New Negro* frame its literature and make the message more explicit. **"**Surrounded by forces which persistently work to establish the myth of his inferiority," Elise Johnson McDougald writes in "The Task of Negro Womanhood," "the Negro youth must be encouraged to think vigorously."[38] Rather than rebel, there is a certain desire to assert moral uprightness. This extends even to sex. In a rare essay by a white author, Melville J. Horskovits remarks on a conversation in which he mentioned that the "sexual looseness" attributed to black women in literature might actually be a welcome relief from the current, rigid expectations for purity among women. Horskovits remarks on the "prompt and violent" reaction among the African-American individuals he was speaking with, who make it clear that "sexual rigidity is

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[31] Langston Hughes, *The Weary Blues* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944), 106.
[32] Ibid., 103.
[33] John Matheus, "Fog," in *The New Negro,* ed. Alain Locke (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925), 87.
[34] Matheus, "Fog," in *The New Negro,* ed. Alain Locke, 91.
[35] Ibid., 94.
[36] Ibid., 95.
[37] Ibid., 95.
[38] Elise Johnson McDouglad, "The Task of Negro Womanhood," in *The New Negro,* ed. Alain Locke (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925), 375-376.

the ultimate ideal of relations between men and women."[39] Through this, they assert their respectability and willingness to play by established societal rules.

Lost Generation and Harlem Renaissance literature gave voice to the unique desires and sentiments of their authors, but they also show the direct relationship between these groups. The desire to establish positive race relations obvious in Harlem Renaissance literature was just one way in which these two movements revealed increasingly frequent contact between white Americans and African-Americans. For urban whites, Harlem jazz clubs and speakeasies were appealing for their "music, excitement, alcohol, sex, and drugs," facilitating the kind of rebellion that had become normalized at this time, but also providing a social space to intermingle.[40] But not all white patrons went to Harlem merely for the excitement of jazz clubs. Some were supporters of black writers and helped publish their works, helping them achieve their mission of positive black publicity.[41] White patrons of black theater applauded the performances of black actors like Paul Robeson and "his color—his race—all, all were forgotten by those he had stirred so deeply with his art."[42] These moments of mutual celebration and support were matched by moments of tension and even violence. In July of 1917, for instance, St. Louis race riots resulted in the death of forty-nine people, thirty-nine of them black.[43] Just as Langston Hughes' poetic vision of Harlem could be at different times "a place to be shared with fun-seeking whites," and "a sanctuary from them," the complicated results of increased interracial contact are explored in both these literary movements.[44]

In *The Great Gatsby,* Fitzgerald does not include black characters but rather allows us to view race relations through the lens of his white characters. Tom Buchanan cites a book called "The Rise of the Colored Empires," claiming that "if we don't look out the white race will be—will be utterly submerged," and adding, "it's all scientific stuff."[45] Tom specifically mentions that white people, "have produced all the things that go to make civilizations—oh, science and art, and all that," as if directly rejecting the accomplishments of the Harlem Renaissance.[46] Fitzgerald uses Tom's blatant racism to characterize him as unlikable or perhaps paranoid. His voice is "impatient"; he interrupts his guests, and his wife winks as she agrees, mocking him. "There was something pathetic in his concentration," observes the narrator, Nick Carraway.[47] Tom's attitude is not only dated but "pathetic," as if to suggest that the idea of fearing contact with black Americans is absurd. Later, Fitzgerald describes a party scene in which "a celebrated tenor had sung in Italian, and a notorious contralto had sung in jazz," juxtaposing a traditionally "white" music style directly with jazz.[48] He embraces the idea that whites and blacks can live

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[39] Melville J. Herskovits, "The Negro's Americanism," in *The New Negro,* ed. Alain Locke (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925), 356.

[40] Miller, *New World Coming,* 221.

[41] Ibid., 221.

[42] Walter White, "The Paradox of Color," in *The New Negro,* ed. Alain Locke (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925), 361.

[43] Miller, *New World Coming,* 51.

[44] Arthur P. Davis, "The Harlem of Langston Hughes' Poetry," *Phylon (1940-1956)* 13.4 (1952), 280.

[45] Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby,* 13.

[46] Ibid.,13.

[47] Ibid., 13.

[48] Ibid., 46.

close to one another comfortably, while acknowledging the Tom Buchanans of the world will certainly make things difficult.

African-American writing was often more direct about the consequences of increased contact. *Compromise,* a play by Willis Richardson, tells the story of a black woman named Jane who lost her son Joe in a tragic accident. Ben Carter, their white neighbor, was trying to scare off what he thought was a group of boys stealing his apples when he accidentally shot Joe, who was perched in the tree. Ben, much like white characters in Lost Generation novels, was quick to reject an appeal to legal authority; rather, he paid their family a hundred dollars under the table to make up for the accident—Jane's husband agrees, though Jane is reluctant, agreeing that if they "had 'a' gone to law maybe [they] wouldn't 'a' got nothin'," given their races.[49] Despite the accident, Jane and Ben have a very pleasant relationship. He enters the house casually and she makes him a cup of coffee, which he insists is "the best coffee in this country."[50] She assures him that she has no bad feelings, and has "always found [him] a pretty good square man."[51] Their children seem to have overcome their races to some extent as well; Annie, Jane's daughter, and Jack, Ben's son, "growed up together" and have a special friendship that becomes romantic.[52]

However, problems begin to arise as Alec, another son of Jane's, becomes increasingly frustrated with the compromise. Even Annie and Jack's relationship appears to be rocky. Annie will not divulge what, but Jane suspects that romance is involved.[53] Jane, in keeping with the conservative sexual attitude of Harlem Renaissance literature, is furious. Ben even considers paying to educate two of Jane's children in order to smooth over this new snag in their relationship.[54] Eventually, Alec breaks Jack's arm, and Ben angrily abandons the prospect of paying for the education of Jane's children.[55] The fact that Jane and Ben are neighbors shows that friendliness as well as problems arise with closeness. Ben tells Alec, "Me and your people here been livin' side by side for years and we always got along all right, but you always seem like you're mad."[56] Overall, they are able to peacefully co-exist, but certain tensions are undeniable, and can grow into larger problems.

"Compromise" was an appropriate title, and an appropriate metaphor, for the interracial negotiations that helped establish a new, post-Great Migration way of coexisting. White Americans lamented the war and rebelled through drink and sex, often mingling with an increasingly diverse crowd. African-Americans used the war to fight for increased recognition, and infused a sense of moral obedience in their literature, hoping it would inspire more comfortable race relations. While the Lost Generation and the Harlem Renaissance tell different stories about America, they also share a narrative about what it meant for white and black Americans to coexist abruptly and closely.

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[49] Wilis Richardson, "Compromise," *The New Negro*, ed. Alain Locke (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925), 172.
[50] Ibid., 171.
[51] Ibid., 174.
[52] Ibid., 179.
[53] Ibid., 181.
[54] Ibid., 186.
[55] Richardson, "Compromise," in *The New Negro*, ed. Alain Locke, 194.
[56] Ibid., 182.

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Idealism, Pragmatism, and the Evolution of Bolívarian Rhetoric
By Charlotte Racioppo

Any discussion of the world's greatest revolutionaries, no matter the era or region, would be incomplete without some mention of the Venezuelan patriot Simón Bolívar. Over the course of his forty-seven years, Bolívar was directly involved in the liberation of six Latin American countries: Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Panama, Colombia, and parts of Bolivia. And even as his military and political legacy made a considerable impact on South America during his own time, the effects of his independence efforts can still be seen in the continent today. Both Venezuela – or, the Bolívarian Republic of Venezuela – and Bolivia are named after the Liberator, as are their currencies.[1] The Colombian city of Bogotá and most Venezuelan cities are based around a central square called the Plaza de Bolívar; and Bolívar himself is the focus of a number of films and, perhaps most notably, Gabriel García Márquez's 1989 novel *The General in his Labyrinth.*

As such, it should come as no surprise that Bolívar, both as a person and a source of political thought, is a frequent subject of historical review. In the words of Simon Collier, any such examination of the Liberator's life "runs the inevitable risk of covering ground whose most intimate topography has long since been scrutinized with care by generations of scholars."[2] Even so, Bolívar's instrumental role in acquiring nationhood throughout Latin America – an enlightened savior persona to which most historians limit him – often obscures and dominates other aspects of the discussion. His later conceptions of nationalism and independence were indeed a unique hybrid of pragmatism and idealism, but it was only after years of political maneuvering and reevaluation based on his current circumstances that these conceptions truly solidified.

Unlike the populations of France or Haiti during the late-eighteenth centuries, Latin America's citizens were not predisposed for revolutionary action. In principalities created, almost artificially, by Spain and Portugal, and with significant percentages of the population being either mixed caste, black, or Native American, few colonists at all felt like they truly belonged to America.[3] When reading the work of Simón Bolívar, however, such a sentiment is nowhere to be found; instead, cries for revolution and staunch condemnations of Spanish rule abound, a drastically different picture of Latin America's political climate. From Bolívar's statements one may be inclined to believe such nationalism was endemic to both the colonies and the time period. With such a discrepancy, it becomes less clear exactly why Venezuela became independent, how Bolívar became the revolutionary he did, and how such a transition could occur without any prerequisite impetus for revolution. As I will argue within the following pages, I believe the reason to rely on a single concept: the volatility of Bolívarian thought.

Despite the abundance of historical studies and biographies of the Liberator, only a portion focuses its attention on Bolívar's political ideology as it pertains to nationalism. Sara Castro-Klaren, in exploring Bolívar's Pan-American philosophy, claims that "Bolívar's quest [was] indeed about freedom for all the peoples born in America… and that the new freedoms truly meant the equality of all citizens of the republic."[4] And perhaps such could be said for

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[1]Venezuela uses the bolivar while Bolivia uses the boliviano.
[2]Simón Bolívar and Simon Collier, "Nationality, Nationalism, and Supranationalism in the Writings of Simón Bolívar," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 63, no. 1 (1983): 37.
[3]Ibid., 39.
[4]Sara Castro-Klaren, "Framing Pan-Americanism: Simón Bolívar's Findings," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3,

Bolívar's rhetoric well into the revolution, but earlier incarnations of his thought were not so idealistic. For African slaves, indigenous peoples, and even *peninsulares*,[5] Bolívar was not always in support of their freedoms, and reached his conclusions on liberty and equality for "all citizens" only after years of evolving philosophy and external forces made such an ideology tenable.

In fact, Bolívarian nationalism could be said to have been insular and elitist in its earlier iterations. Simon Collier agrees with historian John Lynch that, if there was any strong nationalist sentiment in Venezuela, it was Creole[6] and exclusive by definition;[7] and Bolívar, a Creole himself, embodied this worldview almost exclusively until later events would expand his thought. Even this specificity of philosophy was in response to the current political needs within Latin America. The revolutions, as Lynch says, "responded first to interests, and interests invoked ideas."[8] For Bolívar as with the general Creole population of New Granada, reacquisition of economic self-sufficiency and governmental offices, taken away by the Bourbon reforms, were the primary concerns of revolution, not the expression of republican political philosophy. Only when political principles became more important than economic retribution did the ideological shift occur.

Rather than a static, immutable set of values, Bolívarian nationalism is better defined as a process, a political ideology that changed over time just as the revolution did. It was not a fully-fledged worldview from the outset but instead responded to the events of the Age of Revolution, a message consciously crafted to achieve Latin American independence based on social, political, and economic factors. I will be tracing this evolution along two lines: perceptions of Spanish colonialism and slavery.

Defining Creole Thought

Throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the creole elite of Spanish America were able to outmaneuver the Spanish crown and separate themselves from the empire's economic dominance, providing them with a sense of self-sufficiency and contributing to the emergence of a new American identity. Through cultivation of local development and expansion of trade, the Spanish colonies had in effect "emancipated [themselves] from [their] initial dependence on Spain."[9] Their once-isolated and heavily restricted economy had broken from the Spanish monopoly, engaging in intercolonial trade and developing its own self-sufficient industry which, however modest, as Lynch points out, "was outside the trans-Atlantic sector."[10] This economic liberation and emergence of independent commercial industry contributed heavily to the creole identity as separate from that of Spain – no longer cogs in the Spanish mercantile machine, the emerging creole elite could see themselves not only as Americans but self-administrators, and they started occupying minor roles in colonial government.

With the ascension of the King Charles III (r. 1759-1788), the Spanish Empire sought out

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no. 1 (2003): 30.

[5]Peninsulares are whites born in Spain who emigrate to the Spanish colonies in America.

[6]Creoles are whites born in Latin America.

[7]Bolívar and Collier, "Nationality…", 38-39; John Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions 1808-1826* (New York, 1973), 25.

[8]John Lynch, *Latin America Between Colony and Nation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 96.

[9] Lynch, *Spanish American Revolutions…,* 2.

[10]Ibid., 3.

to reclaim its position of dominance over the American colonies and, in doing so, enraged the recently liberated creole class of which Bolívar was a member. The new monarch's Bourbon Reforms, enacted throughout the mid-18th century, were intended to attack any vestiges of creole independence, to "undermine the position of the foreigners but also to destroy the self-sufficiency of the creoles, to make the colonial economies work directly for Spain, to syphon off the surplus of production which for so long had been retained within America."[11] Governmental offices were redistributed, state monopolies were reinstituted, and immigration of *peninsulares* was heavily promoted, especially successful given the preference for mainland Spanish in the assignation of political power. Those outside the creole demographic, however, often saw their prospects improve. *Peninsulares* were able to assume governmental positions previously occupied by creoles, and non-whites were granted increased social mobility with provisions like the *gracis al sacar* which allowed the purchase of "certificates of whiteness" and subsequent access to previously denied civil rights like marriage to whites and education.[12] In this way Spain made a concerted effort to reestablish colonial dependency on the crown in all aspects, and the creoles found themselves deprived of their previous gains by a small minority of *peninsulares*[13] while less advantaged non-whites were closing the socioeconomic gap.

The foundation for creole nationalism – therefore, Bolívarian nationalism – can be derived in large part from this experience, in particular the racial climate of the colonies. As Lynch explains, "the creoles were intensely aware of social pressure from below, and the strove to keep the coloured people at a distance."[14] The combination of overwhelming numbers – indigenous peoples, African slaves and *pardos*, and *mestizos* far outnumbered whites in colonial society[15] – and increased social mobility for non-whites as granted by the Bourbon Reforms[16] meant white demographics like the creoles and *peninsulares* were not only wary of non-whites but often actively tried to limit them to their current states of bondage and political repression. This reluctance to liberate Spanish American slaves was reflected in the earlier stages of Bolívar's political just as it was with the creoles, and underscores Bolívar's often unacknowledged anti-abolition origins.

Witness of the revolutions in North America and France as well contributed to another pillar of creole nationalism: republican ideals. With the spread of Western philosophy – the works of Rousseau, Locke, Montesquieu, and others – the creole elite of Latin America were exposed to ideas like popular sovereignty and liberty, as well as examples of their successful implementation elsewhere.[17] Combined with the repression of their rights as committed by the Spanish state and their burgeoning realization of an American identity,[18] equality and

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[11]Lynch, *Spanish American Revolutions…*, 11.
[12]Lynch, *Simón Bolívar: A Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 11.
[13]Lynch, *Colony and Nation,* 82.
[14]Lynch *Spanish American Revolutions…,* 20.
[15]Ibid., 19.
[16]Ibid., 20-23.
[17]It should be said that, while the North American revolutionaries' efforts and political foundations were seen as a celebrated example of nationalistic revolution, France's fight for independence was seen more as a warning of the dangers of extreme liberalism.
[18]Victor Belaunde cites this point and expands upon it in his reasoning for revolution, claiming that "the existence of a national spirit and the ripening of a feeling of patriotism", as they pertain to the emerging creole identity, are vital in any explanation for Latin American independence. I am liable to agree; however, it is a topic unto itself and would be a digression if investigated here; Victor Belaunde, *Bolívar and the Political Thought of the*

representative government became hallmarks of creole nationalist thought. It is from this foundation that Bolívar developed his initial ideology.

Spanish Colonialism: Enmity and Brotherhood

Bolívar employed a number of different approaches when discussing the Spanish Empire, referring to them at once as ill-gotten parent,[19] slave master, and oppressor in order to play on the resentment of the creole faction. Many of his major grievances revolved around the Spanish repression of creole (and, eventually, American) political rights, an empire that deprived its colonies of participation in their own governance. Later, when Bolívar's concept of Pan-Americanism and desire for unity among Latin America's new nations is fully-formed, he even reneged on some of this divisive mentality to incorporate Spaniards into his model for a new America, allowing principles of unity to supersede previous enmity.

Much of Bolívar's initial rhetoric concerning the Spanish Crown reflects his experiences as a Venezuelan creole, one whose expectations for the function of government are based on the achievement – and, after the Bourbon Reforms, deprivation – of self-governance. In 1819, Bolívar delivered his Angostura Discourse in Venezuela, a speech to the newly formed Congress there which proposed a new form of independent government that would withstand the Spanish forces. Bolívar interpreted Spanish colonialism throughout this speech as the intentional withholding of creole self-sufficiency: "America…received everything from Spain, who, in effect, deprived her…[of taking] part in her own domestic affairs and administration…In brief, Gentlemen, we were deliberately kept in ignorance and cut off from the world in all matters relating to the science of government."[20] This idea of Venezuela being stuck in "a state of political infancy"[21] struck a chord with the creole aristocrats whose offices had been taken away under Bourbon orders and became a pillar of Bolívar's anti-Spanish crusade. Creole frustrations left unresolved (and indeed, aggravated) by Spanish colonial government were expressed quite publicly by the Liberator. And at first it is the creole population he speaks for, claiming in 1815 that "the Spaniards spare nothing that might enable them to subdue those who have had the misfortune of being born on this soil…"[22] In his later declarations, and with the solidification of Pan-Americanism, Bolívar addressed the population of Venezuela at large. Until then, however, the majority of his rhetoric was geared towards that familiar and most outspoken Venezuelan demographic to which he himself belonged.

A significant portion of Bolívar's language regarding Spanish oppression recalls the imagery of Spain and her colonies as master and slave, a metaphorical tactic that is later changed to address the immoral plight of actual slaves within Spanish America. In a show of poetic dismay, Bolívar refers to Venezuela's political situation in 1815 as even "a position lower than slavery," clarifying that "a people is therefore enslaved when the government, by its nature or its vices, infringes upon and usurps the rights of the citizen or subject."[23] Even non-creoles are addressed as the unfortunate slaves of Spanish rule, referring to a general population with "limbs

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Spanish-American Revolution (New York: Octagon Books, 1967): 119.

[19]This characterization falls well into Bolívar's own conception of a nation, which he frequently refers to in maternal terms; Collier, "Nationality…", 43.

[20]Simón Bolívar, "The Angostura Discourse" from *The Political Thought of Bolívar: Selected Writings* edited by Gerald E. Fitzgerald (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971): 48.

[21]Lynch, *Colony and Nation…,* 144.

[22]Bolívar, "The Jamaica Letter", *Political Thought,* 30.

[23]Ibid., 34.

benumbed by chains, their sight dimmed by the darkness of dungeons, and their strength sapped by the pestilence of servitude…"[24] Such language spoke to a generation of aristocrats whose hard-earned rights had been limited by monarchical power – and a foreign monarch at that. While at first this oppressed imagery was directed only to the creole elite, the language would eventually ease the introduction of abolition for legitimate slaves into Bolívarian thought.

At first it would seem such enmity towards Spain[25] could not be resolved, but over time Bolívar's wish for unified American states eventually outweighed his initial opposition. While at first reticent to include Spaniards and other immigrants in Latin America's new nations, Bolívar began to induct foreigners – or, in this case, royalist creoles – as new Americans. At the time of his earlier rhetoric, written from the outset of the war in 1810 to around 1819, Venezuela and indeed most of Spanish America was struggling to defeat the colonial crown, and often found themselves on the losing side of military confrontations. Once Bolívar's revolutionary armies began to win, however, and nations were liberated with increasing frequency, this kind of emphasis on liberty and brotherhood emerged. In a speech to Spanish troops in 1822, Bolívar even offered "If you want to be Colombians, you shall be Colombians."[26] The economic and political interests of the creole demographic were in large part the catalysts of revolution. But as the wars progressed, republican values and liberalism transcended the creoles' original grievances, replacing them instead with a need to acquire not just minor political responsibility but lofty goals like equality among all men, representative government, and the realization of the American identity. Bolívar's initial hatred of the Spanish, a pragmatic, military-minded contempt for one's enemy, was replaced with the idealism of one building a new, American nation.

Slavery: Economy and Equality

While a staunch abolitionist in his later years, it took a number of incentives and a significant amount of time before Bolívar's ideology could fully reject the practice of slavery. Like his creole contemporaries, Bolívar initially approved of the industry – or, at the least, harbored enough fear about potential race uprisings that he felt slavery was of relative importance to the safety of the white elites. As the demographic majority within colonial populations, slaves and non-whites[27] were an integral part of Venezuelan society and yet an unpredictable, potential threat for creole revolutionaries.

As was the case with many of his creole contemporaries, Bolívar initially viewed Afro-descendant peoples as an uncontrolled aspect of the revolution. At the end of the colonial period, "Creoles of elite status" comprised only 0.31% of the Venezuelan population, while *pardos*, blacks, and native peoples made up an overwhelming 73.75%.[28] Fear of slave uprisings and mobilization of the non-white lower classes plagued the creole elite, and many hardly wished to surrender their way of life by surrendering control of their slaves: "Slave owners rarely volunteer to give up their property or abandon their investments, and the Venezuelan aristocracy were no exception."[29] Bolívar himself was wary of racial uprising, so much so he often sounded more like a white supremacist than a freedom fighter; upset by the number of non-whites

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[24]Ibid., "Angostura", 49.
[25]In his Jamaica Letter, Bolívar claims: "The hatred that the Peninsula has inspired in us is greater than the ocean between us."; Bolívar, "Jamaica", *Political Thought,* 28.
[26]Collier, "Nationality…", 42.
[27]In Venezuela, Africans, Blacks, and indigenous populations.
[28]Lynch, *A Life*, 10.
[29]Ibid., 109.

fighting for Spain in the early years of the war, he claimed to be offended by "this revolution of the Negroes, free and slave, this inhuman and atrocious people, feeding on the blood and property of the patriots…"[30]

As a child, Bolívar's family plantations were worked by slaves;[31] and he himself owned slaves until Venezuela's official declaration of independence in 1810 when he freed those under his control. He often occupied a nebulous position of idealistic integrity and realistic skepticism; or, in words Lynch uses to describe the revolution, yet which apply as well to the Liberator himself, Bolívar was "prepared to abolish the slave trade but reluctant to release slaves into a free society, where they might not conform to creole rules on law and order…"[32] Lynch firmly believes that this position was not Bolívar's, claiming he had a "firmer moral instinct than Thomas Jefferson" and "thought it 'madness that a revolution for liberty should seek to maintain slavery.'[33] But this view was not consistent with the earlier years of Bolívar's political career. Only when the abolition of slavery was clearly beneficial to the revolution did it become an immutable aspect of Bolívar's ideology.

Combined with his position as revolutionary and nationalist, Bolívar's interpretation of Venezuelan race relations – as with much of his political thought – was comprised of a precarious balance between idealism and pragmatism. In the case of slavery, pragmatism was at first the overwhelming factor. While the moral right would support an unequivocal rejection of the slave trade, early nineteenth century elites would not.[34] When slaves started to become vital members of the revolution, however, the Liberator's views started to swing heavily in the opposite direction. In 1814, Bolívar "liberated his own slaves, first on condition of military service…then unconditionally in 1821...",[35] and for a significant period of time laws of manumission supplied slaves with their freedom by supplying the revolutionaries with conscripted soldiers.[36] During his 1816 exile in Haiti, Bolívar was only able to obtain substantial materiel from then-president Alexandre Pétion by agreeing to "proclaim the abolition of slavery in the territory he liberated in Venezuela."[37] Regardless of his moral stance on the issue, the abolition of slavery began to have tangible, positive effects on the revolutionaries' fight for independence.

With the solidification of Bolívar's political philosophy came the veneration of equality, a pillar of Bolívar's ideal government and, as a result, of his perception of slavery. He was cognizant of the racial ambiguity of the American people, referring to them in his Jamaica Letter – written in 1815 during exile from Spanish-controlled Venezuela – as "neither Indian nor European, but a species midway between the legitimate proprietors of this country and the Spanish usurpers. In short, though Americans by birth we derive our rights from Europe, and we have to assert these rights against the rights of the natives, and at the same time we must defend

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[30]Lester D. Langley, *The Americas in the Age of Revolution, 1750-1850,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996): 176.
[31]Castro-Klaren, "Framing Pan-Americanism…", 27.
[32]Lynch, *A Life,* 288.
[33]Ibid., 288
[34]In fact, even the highly liberal French Revolutionaries did not support abolition at first, persuaded only over time by the events of the revolution itself and the influence of anti-slavery nations like Haiti.
[35]Ibid., 151.
[36]Ibid., 109.
[37]Ibid., 97.

ourselves against the invaders."[38] Such racial differences that served to divide the members of the revolution could be united based on a shared experience of slavery. As Bolívar made clear in his accusations against the Spanish Crown, even creoles felt they had suffered as slaves under Spanish rule. Again at Angostura in 1819, Bolívar appealed to his fellow creoles' Spanish resentment: "those who were once slaves are now free: those who were once the embittered enemies of a stepmother are now the proud defenders of their own country…but I plead for the confirmation of the absolute freedom of the slaves, as I would plead for my very life and for the life of the Republic."[39]

The health of the new Venezuelan nation, one which Bolívar believed had to be built upon equality and liberty for all peoples, relied on the acceptance of non-whites into common society. And a truly equal nation was fundamentally incompatible with the practice of slavery; when speaking to the Congress of Bolivia on the ideal form of government in 1826, he declares, "No one can violate the sacred doctrine of *equality.* And can slavery exist where equality reigns supreme?"[40] With the prioritization of equality, slavery could no longer remain a part of Bolívar's perfect nation. Whether he still believed in creole supremacy or not, Bolívar was decidedly conscious of the importance of race in colonial society; that is, he was "naturally (and sometimes uneasily) aware of the ethnic mixture that underlay Latin American life."[41] And once it became clear that the abolition of slavery was an attainable and beneficial aspect of Latin American unity, he was a fervent advocate for abolition.

The Liberator's Legacy

The world's fascination with Bolívar is not particularly fascinating in and of itself. When listing his achievements, the man known as the Liberator seems larger than life, responsible for the unification and liberation of six Latin American nations and the promotion of republican ideals in the post-colonial era. A white creole, with no as of yet discovered multiracial heritage,[42] he played an instrumental role in the abolition of slavery and increased civil rights for non-white peoples. He led the charge in the realization of an American identity, and promoted "Unity, unity, unity"[43] as the motto for Latin America's future. In most respects, he was an incredible figure. As such a visionary, however, it is possible to overlook the evolution of his thought – that the ideologies one finds so impressive in a modern context underwent extensive changes over the course of Bolívar's life, and provide a greater understanding of the Liberator as both a politician and a person. He was at once practical, crafting his message to achieve Venezuela's independence, and idealistic, the foundation of his thought embracing equality and liberty to an extent unseen in contemporary revolutionary movements. Even after examining his changing perceptions of the world around him – the colonial yoke of the Spanish Crown, and the obstinate institution of slavery – his thoughts were still those of a great thinker, one whose ideas were complex even in early stages of development. But this characterization still does not touch on the most important facet of Bolívarian ideology.

Bolívar lived in an age of conflicting ideas. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw countries across the globe struggling to reconcile intellectual and political

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[38]Bolívar, "The Jamaica Letter", *Political Thought…,* 33.
[39]Ibid., "Angostura", 65.
[40]Bolivar, "Message to the Congress of Bolivia," *Political Thought,* 103.
[41]Collier, "Nationality…", 43.
[42]Lynch, *A Life,* 2.
[43]Bolívar, "Angostura", *Political Thought…,* 62.

advancement with tradition: equality and slavery, science and religion, social contract theory and absolutism, among others. These new and old ideologies fought for dominance on an international scale, and men with ambitions like Bolívar's played major roles in their promotion. Unlike many of his contemporaries, however, Bolívar saw the advantage to volatility. Flexible ideas, ones that could adapt to both the situation and the people to which he appealed, would be far more successful than forcing a stubborn opponent to surrender, ideologically and militarily. Venezuela's independence was not entirely due to the Liberator's efforts, but his willingness to rethink and rework his own ideology was a hallmark of his success as a revolutionary leader.

And yet, as revered as he is today, even Bolívar was not entirely successful in his goals. He may have helped emancipate the Spanish colonies, but many have been wracked by political discord and military rule since their independence. He himself was forced to resign his dictatorship of Gran Colombia – the very coalition state he wished to create – in 1830 after two years of uprisings and political gridlock limited his ability to govern. The last phase of his life was plagued with illness and defeat before his death from tuberculosis in 1830.

Even so, Latin America does not remember him as a broken, desperate commander. To much of the world, he is still El Libertador, his successes far outweighing his failures. It is this version of Bolívar which is most inspiring, which informs modern Latin American nationalism, which is the namesake of so many aspects of Latin American life. Like Bolívar himself, the world has, over time, chosen to embrace the ideals and principles of Bolívarian nationalism for its own benefit. It is only important to remember that our version of Bolívar reflects neither his beginnings nor his end. Even the Liberator is fallible, and the context of such a revered figure is integral to his complete understanding.

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