

The Political-Emotional Economy of Interwar Fascism and Authoritarianism, With a Focus on
the KKK and the Bund

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

In
History

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

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Abstract

This thesis examines the KKK and its fascist friends from 1915-1945 as a means of analyzing the changing role of the Klan in an also changing American and international order. The KKK often claimed to be, and is represented as, the defender of nativism, guardian of the white Protestantism, keeper of racial purity, and the vanguard of the white American way of life, but as an organization it was less unified than is often understood. Part of this can be attributed to domestic decentralization across various U.S. states. What this thesis contends, however, is that there was a growing "affect economy", to use Sara Ahmed's term, within the transatlantic Euromerican community. Even as it declined in organizational coherence in the 1930s, the Klan was involved in a larger conversation than simply American nativism. It came to identify with local and international these fascist organizations and embrace terminology, and some of the same conspiracies, while always rejecting close comparisons to retain its exceptionalist credentials. Its return to nativism during the Second World War allowed its survival in the aftermath, even while continuing to participate in the affective language it once shared with fascism.

Disclaimer

First and foremost, I am a White person studying white supremacy. There is always more work to do in unpacking one's privilege and life experiences that could result in this dissertation falling short to some. It is constant work and not one that I have always succeed at. Second, this dissertation's aim is not meant to needlessly slander American troops or soldiers and those who died to stop Nazi fascism, and those committed to the double victory campaign. This paper is written in the vein of James Whitman's "*Hitler's American Model*" and will undoubtedly raise some uncomfortable questions, comments, and comparisons. The goal is to better understand

how hate movements and fascism came to be well-established and continue to exist in the United States.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Andrew Johnston, who listened and worked through some of my wilder ideas. Your mentorship and advice throughout every step of the research, writing, and editing process has led to a far better final project than I could have ever hoped for. Thank you to everyone in the Carleton History from whom I have had the privilege of learning the past two years: Dr. Audra Diptee and Dr. Jenifer Evans, whose thoughts helped shape the theories and methods I used. My work has been profoundly inspired by the discussions in their graduate seminars. I would also like to thank Dr. Jill St. Germain for her mentorship throughout my two years as a teaching assistant for American History. I must also thank Graduate Administrator Joan White for her kindness and patience in putting up with some of the duplicate emails from the GSA, and there were many. Finally, Dr. Paul Nelles helped in organizing accommodations to help me complete this in a timely manner. Susan Tudin's research aid proved to be invaluable; librarians and archivists are, as always, the unsung heroes. Outside of Carleton, I would like to thank Hoover Institute in helping me to access newspapers through document delivery. I would also like to thank Dr. Robert Teigrob, Dr. Farzin Vejdani, and Dr. Arne Kislenko of the Toronto Metropolitan University. Their mentorship in my undergraduate degree will always be some of my most cherished memories. Outside academia, I would have taken much longer to complete this work if it had not been for my tireless editor, Ashley Lachance. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my friends and family: Ryan Vopni, who listened to me blather on about theory and the KKK, was vital to my sanity in these Covid-19 times. Zaarin Bushra, whose understanding and kindness allowed for this work to be completed. Last but not least, my parents and my sister to whom I am eternally grateful. They took the time

to discover my learning disability and pushed me to follow my passion. I would not be here without them.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Appendix – Illustrations.....	vii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Thesis Overview.....	3
1.2 Theory and Method: Historical Frames and Limitations	8
1.3 The First Wave 1865–1871 and Wave Theory	20
1.4 Historiography.....	24
2 Historical Context.....	28
2.1 King, Lindbergh, and Hitler Makes Three: The International Order of Friends.....	28
2.2 The Domestic Klan and Its International Inspiration	35
2.3 International Order, the Feeling of the Threat, and the Other Guys	44
3 An Unintended Birth: <i>The Birth of a Nation</i> in a Wider, Whiter World.....	52
3.1 Primary Documentation, the American Legacy, and Bund Camps	65
3.2 The Anti as Social Connection.....	83
3.3 A New World Order.....	93
Bibliography	101
Primary Sources	101
Archives	104
Secondary Sources	106
Illustrations	112

Appendix – Illustrations

Figure 1. “Destroy the Mad Brute: Enlist—US Army,” Francisco Army Recruiting District, San Francisco, Apr. 4, 1918, Hopps Harry. Accessed by Library of Congress. Pg. 112

Figure 2. D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation* movie poster, image taken from Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *Stony the Road*, New York, 180 (Public Domain). Pg.113

Figure 3. Postcard printed in German. Image taken from *Stony the Road* (New York), 180. Credit: Jim Crow Museum. Pg.114

Figure 4. “Sambo” caricature, Harry I. Robinson, and Will J Harris, *Cannibal Love* (Chicago: Will Rossiter, 1909), <https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.100008697/>. Pg. 115

Figure 5. Image taken from Jurgen Zimmerer, Joachim Zeller, and E. J. Neather, *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and Its Aftermath* (Merlin Press, 2007), 186. Source: WikiCommons (Public Domain, original dated 1908). Pg. 116

Figure 6. “Der schwarze Terror in deutschen Landen” (“The black terror in German lands”), unknown artist, May 10, 1920, *Kladderadatsch* 73/22, p. 317. In Julia Roos, “Schwarze Schmach,” May 28, 2015, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/schwarze_schmach. Pg.117

Figure 7. German poster by the “Deutsche Notbund gegen die schwarze Schmach” (German Emergency League against the Black Horror) accusing African colonial soldiers of rape in the occupied territories of Germany and calling for people to volunteer and donate. In Julia Roos, “Schwarze Schmach,” May 28, 2015, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/schwarze_schmach. Pg.118

Figure 8. *Kladderadatsch*, Satirical German magazine from July 1914 mocking French colonial soldiers, <https://www.alamy.com/kladderadatsch-satirical-german-magazine-from-july-1914-mocking-french-colonial-soldiers-image434331651.html>. Pg.119

Figure 9. Illustration from *Indigenous Races of the Earth*, Josiah Clark Nott and George Gliddon, 1857. Accessed by WikiCommons (Public Domain). Pg. 120

Figure 10. Medal Die Wacht Am Rhein!! (The Watch on the Rhine!!), by Karl Goetz, Germany, 1921, <https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/ww1-imperial-german-black-shame-medal-karl-goetz-52-c-9d94dea824>. Also found at the British Museum. Pg.121

Figure 11. “Remember League!” Seventh Year, Number 1, January 1923. Public Domain accessed by WikiCommons. Scan from National Library of France. Pg.122

Figure 12. Cover of *Kladderadatsch* in 1934, issue number 23. Caption: “America for the ‘Americans’! The extraordinary increase in the population of Negroes and Jews is causing

headaches for the more established Americans.” Retrieved from <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/kl1934/0368/image.in> Pg. 123

Introduction

New Jersey offers much in the way of escape from the hustle and bustle of New York City. August 18th, 1940, was no exception to the glee-filled passengers of the train lines and private coach buses eagerly awaiting a day full of activities at Camp Norland. These passengers, whose joy was motivated by racial hate, had come to join their fellow fascists in a carefully constructed day of official and unofficial unity. According to Paramount Grinberg, newsclips, and reports, the press was controlled, and the speeches given did their best to avoid the subject of Nazi Germany.¹ However, there were speakers from the Ku Klux Klan who did mention that the pro-Nazi, German-American Bund was facing persecution. As the KKK members spoke, protesters could be heard shouting, “Burn Hitler on your cross.” As band music was used to drown out those protesters, the Klan would continue their day at the park with a wedding.² Some undercover reporting claims that, when asked why the Bund and Klan agreed to host this joint event, the leaders said that the two groups’ values were the same. Some have argued that this event signalled the Klan’s entrance into a larger international fascist sphere and, in this paper’s opinion, the white supremacist diasporic community.³ I am not the first to observe that American domestic politics ever-increasingly mirrored the international political landscape. But while this one event is a microcosm of the global events unfolding at the time, there were also powerful domestic factors at work within the Klan.

¹ Paramount Grinberg, “Camp Nordland by Lake / Man in Ku Klux Klan HOOD Stands By ‘Private...’” Getty Images.

² “Klan Has ‘Americanism’ Rally at Bund Camp; Members of Both Orders Mingle in Jersey,” *New York Times*, August 19, 1940, <https://www.nytimes.com/1940/08/19/archives/klan-has-americanism-rally-at-bund-camp-members-of-both-orders.html>.

³ David Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the KKK* (New York: Duke University Press, 2017), 323. Chalmers is more explicit here, quoting his sources as a book by a former undercover officer. There have been scandals regarding the accuracy of the accounts. If interested, see Stetson Kennedy. I do not doubt the bravery or the overall accuracy of the statements, just perhaps not verbatim.

Thus, the Klan holds a unique place in American history. It does not fit neatly into the confines of a single historical narrative at any turn. Even so, historians have had to sectionalize the Klan into reasonable historical blocks or waves.⁴ By breaking the Klan down in this way, historians set dates from which to conduct historical analysis. Yet Thomas Pegram, in *One Hundred Percent American*, warns historians examining the Klan that its ideological frameworks and actions are not consistent from one klavern⁵ to the next.⁶ As Pegram puts it, “Historical understanding ... requires attention to specificity, acknowledgment of the peculiar uniqueness of the historical context the willingness to accept contradictions.”⁷ Many of the sweeping histories of the Klan, like Nancy MacLean’s *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, mirror issues with global histories, reducing narratives of complexity and specificity to some general understanding and racial animosity.⁸ Historians of individual nation-states naturally find fault in this reduction that treats America as merely a chapter of Europe. Similarly, these historians decry national narratives that lump nations together and treat them as the same. Yet, in the wake of the explosion of interest in global and transnational history, these larger narratives, understandably, tend to be more influential. Pegram notes *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*’s influence as a definitive go-to history of the 1920s Klan in 2011, and it still holds a place of esteem for many examining national histories not necessarily focused on the Klan or the State.⁹ The tension between micro and macro histories is always at work when looking at making larger connections. This thesis seeks to expand and build upon works that have already started to draw out global connections

⁴ Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation 2017), 2.

⁵ Simply put, this is the smallest unit of the Klan, organized at the local level.

⁶ Thomas Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 2011), 225–226.

⁷ Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American*, 228.

⁸ Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 15.

⁹ Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American*, 227.

while being conscious of countries' various political ideologies and their similarities and differences.

Drawing the Global Colour Line by Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds was the first real attempt to expand on the ideas of W. E. B. Du Bois's concept of the colour line to an international level. Lake and Reynolds draw out how different government agencies from a British colonial past used each other as models to construct laws to limit the capacity of people of colour. Examining white supremacy and fascism, like examining any number of transnational movements, bears some seemingly counterintuitive points. First and foremost, while the movement is international, its goals are fundamentally national with the aim of controlling states. White brotherhood, yes, but each White man entitled to the part of the world they had taken, growing out of their European fathers' tutelage to become part of a White colonial world.¹⁰ While global histories are important, actions taken by individuals, klaverns, and even varying national figures in the Klan as a social movement will not line up on every single point. These inconsistencies will undoubtedly leave those to disagree with this paper, and that is more than alright. The Klan is not a straightforward organization and neither is its history. There really cannot be one accepted history of the Klan. Before going into the depth and details of an international Klan and its domestic friends, it is important to go over what this paper seeks to add to the conversations regarding the Klan.

Thesis Overview

In the first section, I borrow from Sara Ahmed's theories on affective economies as my primary analytical approach. Her theories allow for a more in-depth analysis of the emotional

¹⁰ M. Lake and H. Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 4.

element connected to political economies.¹¹ Her work is derived from a Marxist critique of the logic of capitalism and liberal democracies, in which she posits that affect and emotions do not reside in a singular commodity but in their role in social relations. Commodities, for this paper's purpose, include Nazi flags, fascist salutes, the burning cross, and copies of the protocols of Zion, and so on, but the list of fascist accoutrements can be endless. These items gain their influence through use and circulation rather than intrinsically on their own. The circulation of these items and theories as an expression of hate leading to feelings and actions is the base unit of analysis. As can be seen in the opening scenario at Camp Norland, the symbol of the burning cross carries with it negative emotion because of how it had been used to terrify. Similarly, the Bund flag could not help but invoke Nazi Germany and the Klan renting their space brought this all into focus with the chanters saying, "Burn Hitler on your fiery cross." Thus, emotion plays a critical role in moving those from passively supporting or ignoring an idea to actively joining or resisting a movement. In this way, understanding what event and regalia is used, and how they function to create an emotional economy around these organizations and events, helps us to understand the actions these groups and others would take.

Emotions further play an important role within a fascist economy in a few ways. First, emotion is closely tied to right-wing historical revisionism. As Ahmed explains, white supremacist groups, like the Aryan Brotherhood, use the narrative that White men built this land as a racial brotherhood to deny other aspects of history, or that Indigenous people were here first and that they had any claim to the land, or that any other groups contributed to the building of the United States.¹² By doing so, they invoke an emotional need to defend oneself and the country they live in. This is also, in part, a methodological approach by examining the linguistic

¹¹ Sara Ahmed, *Affective Economies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 121–122.

¹² Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 118.

connection between these groups that use similar language with the hopes of drawing out a hateful and defensive emotional response from its reader. By addressing how they understood each others' writings, films, and leaders, we can get a better sense of how these groups saw each and their connection, as well as how they each reimagined their national and international place in the world.

There is still a need, however, to address how this approach differs from past ideological interpretations of the Klan. While the paraphernalia above are easily attributed to fascism and white supremacist thought, they are not the only ones. Fascism as action and theory takes and borrows from each other but also from the already well-established forms of nationalism and patriotism. While nationalism has had lots of critics, patriotism is often represented as a healthy alternative. In this paper, I will argue that patriotism is largely responsible for the Klan's survival. This is, as I stated at the start, not meant to diminish the achievement or sacrifice of so many soldiers. The goal is to start a conversation about how patriotism is understood, how it can be appropriated into a fascist system, and how this continues to the present day. By linking affect to the economy, we can see how emotions surrounding patriotism and nationalism can be exploited in a fascist economy. The linking of these various economies is what I am referring to as a political-emotional economy. This is part of how the Klan was able to set up internationally and how fascism was able to share ideas, actions, and feeling.

The two political economies that this paper seeks to define and understand are a vision of a domestic American fascist economy (domestic market) that was dominating by the time of the second Klan until the mid-1930s, and the international fascist economy (international market). This will allow for an examination of this Euromerican relationship. By examining the Klan through this lens, we can see how international fascism developed, and how it impacted the

American affect economy and vice versa. In many cases, like with the beliefs about biological superiority or grand Catholic or Jewish conspiracies presented in the film, *The Birth of a Nation* (BON), the *feeling* of truth is more important than hard, empirical facts. National boundaries are physical and, in the minds of individuals, are often the limiting factor of a transnational connection. However, through Ahmed's affective theories and analysis, this paper attempts to go beyond these physical boundaries that have limited our understanding of these groups. By using affective theories as a way of understanding where these groups felt emotionally connected, yet nationally separated, we get a better understanding of what these groups hoped to gain from each other.

Altogether, this will allow for a better examination of the international connection of what we come to define today as the far-right. This manifested in a few ways as I will argue in the first chapter that America joined this conversation more aggressively after *The Birth of a Nation*'s release in 1915. The film's international acclaim set important precedents of what the Klan would be known for and what would be expected in future films.¹³ The theme of European connection is present throughout the film and later Klan newspapers would also draw the comparison to British organizations like the Orange Order.¹⁴ The film serves to reconfirm America's dedication to white supremacy and Protestant Anglo-Saxonism, as well as drawing on the Klan's connection to Europe. The film would also set standards and show common fears between the two countries, the easiest connection being the fear of mixed-race children,

¹³ Jonathan Wright, "Re-Reading Birth of a Nation: European Contexts and the War Film," *Black Camera: The Newsletter of the Black Film Center*, April 1, 2019, p. 36.

¹⁴ Wright, "Re-Reading Birth of a Nation," 45.

derogatorily referred to as *mulatto*. Cultural artifacts like *BON* remain an important part of maintaining an economy of hate in both the domestic and international spheres.¹⁵

In the second chapter, I will scrutinize the link between these fascist organizations. Of course, many of them believed similar things. However, there is one central idea that would seem to make them clash: national identity. The Klan frequently used the idea of 100 percent American to distinguish and defend itself from any comparison with Nazism.¹⁶ However, America was not special in this but often went along with global understandings of whiteness. That being the case, there was room for disagreement between these fascist parties over how best to define themselves. Each in their own way saw themselves as similar yet different based almost solely off the national character of these groups. With only a national line as a difference they were able to draw inspiration from each other in a few ways. Much of the journalistic language used to understand Turkish nationalism and Atatürk would become commonplace in fascist circles and is still present in right-wing journalism.¹⁷ Even while connecting with others, the Klan could still cling to old forms of hate. Central to the Klan's original identity was, of course, an anti-Catholic sentiment. Even as the rest of the world moved away from some of these forms of hate, this sentiment remained. This would come to affect their self-identity as fascism in Italy would rise and others, like the *New York Times*, would make the connection between them. While admitting some similarities, the Klan clung to the notion that the national line was enough to keep them separate, even as Catholics started to make up larger portions of their membership in northern states.¹⁸ Thus, the Klan could keep its rhetoric and identity as anti-Catholic while, in

¹⁵ Maria Diedrich, *Cultural Crossovers Between African America and Germany* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2001), 227.

¹⁶ *The Fiery Cross*, Indianapolis: Advertising Service of Ernest W. Reichard, January 5th, 1923. Pg. 4 article titled "The Ku Klux and Fascisti" .

¹⁷ Stefan Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 152.

¹⁸ Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American*, 50.

action, accepting the new understanding of the global colour line. By claiming a tradition of American hate, the Klan could also dispute claims that it was an American fascist organization. Common to this defence of past and current actions is the detachment of truth in favour of emotion. While anti-Catholic sentiment would lose some of its ideological hold, anti-Semitism would become more prominent, and thus a binding force for these groups. Anti-Semitism, while always present, became an increasingly important connection in the lead up to the Second World War.

Finally, this paper examines more explicitly some of the shared events and the complex international laws that were at work before the war and how white supremacy and the KKK could survive the American entry into the war, keeping in mind that we will be discussing the historiography and the role of American isolationism in preventing or limiting connections between America and the far right. Even after the war, there was still a great deal of sympathy to be had in official places. This included future Senator Joseph McCarthy and J. Edgar Hoover.¹⁹ McCarthy's sympathy would run deep, and Hoover would always fundamentally be more worried about the left than the right. When policing failed to contend with white supremacy and cultural institutions failed to address the long-standing traditions of supremacy, it would continue to survive and to thrive the further time passed since the end of the Second World War.

1.2 Theory and Method: Historical Frames and Limitations

First, I start with Sara Ahmed's affective economies, political economies, and how these contributed to the emotional narrative, and then the tangible connection within nationalist and fascist movements. Ahmed's approach helps to move the study of the Klan beyond its traditional

¹⁹ Bradley Hart, *Hitler's American Friends: The Third Reich's Supports in the United States* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2018), 13.

national borders. The idea of *global* affective economies allows for the placement of the Klan past the domestic and into an international political economy. Second, I will tackle some of the frames that have been used to understand the Klan and the limitations these impose. Specifically, by examining how the Klan has been represented as limited, both in time and space, we get a better understanding of how the modern conceptualization of the Klan has come to be. Finally, I explain how I intend to define *political-emotional economy* for this paper, and the ideological consequences of this, before moving to a brief historiography of the Klan and a closer look at transnational fascism.

The easiest way to understand the legacy of the Klan while embracing its adaptation to new eras and regionality is to understand it as part of a hate or fear economy, as Ahmed defines these terms.²⁰ (I am modifying some of the terms involved to better fit the regions in question.) Global affect economies, in particular, need some clarification. The term “global” in both “drawing the global colour line” and “global affective economies” bears the same issue in terms of sources. “Global,” in both cases, mostly to refer to previous English colonies. The authors of these works favour the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada, and a limited amount of South Asia, which tends to define the limits of what “global” means in some literature.²¹ Missing from this notion are obviously other colonial powers such as France, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, and other non-English sections of the world. My work here has a similar failing. More work could have been done to include Jewish and Black voices given they

²⁰ Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 119. I will be using the same basic principles but relabelling it as a fascist economy. This will fit better with the terms used to describe the Klan at this time.

²¹ Lake, and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 9–11; Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 136–139. This is by no means to say that this is the intention of these authors. This is just a side effect of doing global history in many ways, choosing what goes into a theorized approach can be impacted by several factors. It is often tough to include sources of those that have to live with the consequences of colonized power or to include their narratives, if they can be found at all. Missing these perspective and regional differences is often the largest criticism of global histories. Others adding to the work versus outright disagreeing, see *Arise Africa, Roar China* by Yunxiang Gao as an example of how this work is being built upon.

were often the targets of attacks. This work overall, then lies somewhere between a Transnational History and a Global History. For my purposes, I will generally be working within an Anglosphere economy. The United States will still be a major focal point, along with the United Kingdom and Canada, but I will also include some analysis from France, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire.²²

Ahmed offers a few places to start the examination of how an economy of fear begins and causes people to act. Fear and hatred are twin factors that exist on the individual level and can be worked into larger political actions. Ahmed's focus is on 9/11 and its capacity to mobilize emotion and how it leads to actions like the War on Terror.²³ Furthermore, she draws on the language of economics: "things" gain new meanings, "buying domestic"—or, in the case of this thesis, only buying from Bund, Klan, and Silver Legion-endorsed stores—becomes an act of patriotism and gains the emotional weight of defence and love. Large-scale intervention of boycotting the "bad economy," that is Catholic or Jewish stores, becomes a noble act of patriotism.

Lastly, I examine the language used by those in power, and how their words and actions affect how the greater populace reacts to threats of fascism and White supremacy. Even in allyship—trying to combat racism or fascism—it can cause a linkage of terminology and add imagery to the perceived threat. My argument is that this global system—or rather former, White

²² Conrad, *What Is Global History?* The introduction should be read to cover the origins of global history as I will just recount a few key concepts of the term. Nineteenth-century European historians were no longer satisfied with historical narratives centred around nation-states. In order to go beyond "methodological nationalism," the traditional frames needed challenging. It was also an attempt to include non-European narratives and their importance to history. While meant to be revisionist, global histories still struggle to decentralize national or Euro-American narratives. "The case for global history is thus also a plea to overcome such fragmentation and to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the interactions and connections that have made the modern world." Conrad further breaks down global histories into three categories. For a fuller account of the tensions in global history, see Immanuel Wallerstein, "Eurocentrism and Its Avatars: The Dilemmas of Social Science," *Semantic Scholar*, March 1, 1997, doi: 10.1177/0038022919970102.

²³ Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 128.

colonial system—while taking place in different countries, impacted a global economy of ideas and sentiments worldwide.²⁴

The events of 9/11 took place eighty-six years after the rise of the second Klan and so the contours of her theory have to be recontextualized around the events of the interwar period. While there is no direct equivalency in the past, there were similarly traumatic and global-level events impacting lives across the planet. The Klan's unintentional first global outing was the film, *The Birth of a Nation*, simultaneous with the world being engulfed in the First World War. The aftermath of that war had global ramifications in and around fascist circles.²⁵ As time passed, the post-war period would give way to an unstable economy and most affected countries developed experienced a significant rise in virulent nationalism. I will examine both before and after First World War and how the United States was more connected to the development of fascism in this era than prevailing ideologies and narratives about isolationism allows.

The second term to define is “fascism.” This might seem simple, but it has a long, complex history of its own. Even standard dictionary definitions can be broad.²⁶ However there is something of a “partial consensus” around these organizing features:

fascism [is] a revolutionary form of nationalism bent on regenerating a nation's political culture and create a “new man” in order to help resolve a pervasive crisis in contemporary history. However this shared ideological matrix can generate a wide range of specific theories, policies, forms of organization and tactics. For one thing, being ultranationalist in

²⁴ Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 129, 132.

²⁵ Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 131. Ahmed refers mostly to crisis events and how they are imagined and codified into a society. Each event has been imagined or reimagined, nationally and internationally, by various nationalist and fascist movements.

²⁶ For example in Webster's, Fascism is defined as a “political philosophy, movement, or regime (such as that of the Fascisti) that exalts nation and often race above the individual and that stands for a centralized autocratic government headed by a dictatorial leader, severe economic and social regimentation, and forcible suppression of opposition.” Merriam-Webster, “Fascism,” Merriam-Webster (Merriam-Webster), accessed September 12, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/news-trend-watch/fascism-2015-12-04#:~:text=Fascism%20means%20%E2%80%9Ca%20political%20philosophy,and%20forcible%20suppression%20of%20opposition.%E2%80%9D>.

inspiration, each fascism will inevitably draw on the history and culture of the country in which it arises so as to legitimate its assault on the status quo.²⁷

Using such definitions, it is potentially easy to include many organizations and actions.

While not disagreeing with them, I focus on a few points of similarity between groups that help bring the second Klan into greater comparison with established fascist organizations.

I borrow from Giuseppe Antonio Borgese and Joseph Fronczak. Borgese will get a proper introduction in my section on the Dies Committee, but as he testified, fascism is the ideology of Nazi Germany and Italy was in its practices. For this paper, “fascism is the idea but the practice bears many names.”²⁸ Thus, fascism can not be codified into a single ideological framework but must always be understood as both ideological and by actions. Furthering this point, as Fronczak notes, fascism cannot be given a single set of characteristics but a chain of “radicalization fed radicalization, left and right.”²⁹ This great chain is part of this paper’s examination. While the whole chain cannot be accounted for, I will provide case studies and elements that have been given less attention. The Klan represents the American link in this great chain and, as can be seen, was actively trying to associate itself with Nazi Germany. I start with a case study surrounding the Orange Order, as it played a small part in the chain but an important one.

Another feature of fascism is its consciousness of its formal and ritual activities. In particular with the Klan, few people at the time, or few Americans, made the connection to fascism. As Fronczak notes, there was a growing understanding of what fascism was, and there was not a hard connection in a lot of cases where tactics emerged, meaning much of what we

²⁷ William Outhwaite, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Modern Social Thought*. 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 232.

²⁸ “Borgese Testimony,” John C. Metcalfe Papers, Box 5, Friends of New Germany, p. 20, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²⁹ Joseph Fronczak, “The Fascist Game: Transnational Political Transmission and the Genesis of the U.S. Modern Right,” *Journal of American History* 105, no. 3 (December 1, 2018): 583.

now see surrounding the discussion has only been retroactively applied. However, it is still fitting. It might also mean that, at times, this paper may draw comparisons across global lines even if there is no direct connection. In this way, we can compare Klan leaders' actions to that of Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler to see how fascism was developing even if they were not directly corresponding or even reading each other's biographies or exploits.³⁰

The third issue revolves around defining the term "patriotism." This is a term with a deep historic underpinning and, at times, like in both World Wars and interwar years, has close associations with nationalism. Historically, the term "patriotism" developed to define those who had the right to rule over a given space. This starts to cause a problem of who is included in "those people." It is tempting to view patriotism and nationalism on a spectrum. That is, however, difficult as the parameters of patriotism are always in flux. What is patriotic for one generation is not guaranteed to be patriotic for the next or even for others within that society. For example, lynching, or specifically the lynching of Robert Prager in 1918, fits this problem. A year into the US phase of the war, with patriotic sentiment at an all-time high, Prager was thought to be a German spy by the citizens of his town in southern Illinois. There was no evidence that he was. He was forced to kiss the American flag, then walk barefoot through the town of Maryville, where he was eventually hanged from a tree until dead. His killers, all of whom confessed, showed up to court wearing American Flag attire. The jury took less than thirty minutes to decide their fate: not guilty. As the verdict was read, "The Star-Spangled Banner" played. Years later, a resident of the town would tell historians that the rope made Prager's skin turn red, white, and blue.³¹ While there were some objections to the method, newspapers seemed

³⁰ Fronczak, "The Fascist Game," 584.

³¹ E. A. Schwartz, "The Lynching of Robert Prager, the United Mine Workers, and the Problems of Patriotism in 1918." *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 95, no. 4 (2002), 420.

to have agreed that it was good for the spirit of the country. The crowd was recorded as saying that at least now they cannot be suspected of being traitors. The town was over 50 percent first- and second-generation immigrants from Italy and Germany.³²

For much of the nineteenth century, “patriotism” carried more positive connotations, at least for the forces of democracy. It stood for the will of the people. But as ethno-nationalism became more of a stand-in for “the people,” patriotism and the idea of the nation became the first links in a domestic fascist economy. This was another observation Borgese made in his testimony to the Dies Committee. He was referring to Italy and Germany but America equally applies.³³ If this lynching is considered a patriotic act, then it is only because of the long history of mob violence—in defence of social groups, but notable races—made it patriotic. While these actions for us in the present might fit what we would call “nationalism,” the language used to describe the events was, in context of the time, patriotic, and the actions were done by patriots.

In more contemporary writing, the change from patriotism to nationalism is difficult to distinguish; for this paper, this distinction matters somewhat less. The language of the era, as the Prager case shows, used patriotism and nation often but rarely nationalism.³⁴ Second, the affect economy of patriotism is what this paper cares about, in order to add to the study of fascist movements. For example, prior to the lynching, the city had put together a local fraternity to police anti-patriotic activity, like unionized workers striking against employers and union leaders. This same volunteer group organized and executed Robert Prager’s lynching.³⁵ The Klan would later take over that role in numerous small towns across America. Not every act of

³² Schwartz, “The Lynching of Robert Prager,” 422.

³³ “Borgese Testimony,” John C. Metcalfe papers.

³⁴ Leonie Huddy and Nadia Khatib, “American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement,” *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 1 (2007): 63–64.

³⁵ Schwartz, “The Lynching of Robert Prager,” 431

violence by this local group or the Klan would lead to death as in Prager's case. The violence in this and in many Klan attacks was retaliation for infringing on their understanding of patriotism. In a similar fashion, more recent studies try to address the left and right versions of patriotism.

While this paper focuses on an era of right-wing populism, the difference here is limited. The right has traditionally been associated with patriotic symbols and listening to establishments where the left finds patriotism in its criticism of national institutions. For fascism, and later authoritarianism, the difference does not matter. The willingness to adopt the tactic that will work is more important than a strict adherence to an ideological side. The Klan and the Bund were willing to use portraits of George Washington to invoke patriotism; they were not above criticizing Franklin D. Roosevelt or asking their readers to question the cultural shifts happening in America.³⁶ If patriotism is simply reasonable thought and actions aligned with a concept of a nation, then what is reasonable changes depending on how one defines the nation, who is part of that nation, and the context that nation is in.

Finally, the term "political-emotional economy" is one that I am creating to help describe the historical underpinnings of all these ideas working together, but I am also modifying it considerably to create the ideological stance of this paper. It closely resembles the concept of a marketplace of ideas but is narrowed to cover those ideas surrounding political organizations. I am combining Ahmed's notion of a fear economy with the development of fascism to produce an understanding of politics that better fits the development of the Klan in the 1920s–1940s. Simply put, political markets are the political systems in place in a country and the groups that want to change them. This includes hardened members of mainstream democratic parties and fringe or not-so-fringe groups, like communist and fascist parties, that want to radically change the

³⁶ Huddy and Khatib, "American Patriotism," 64.

system. This, in theory, can be everyone that participates but few have long-standing or meaningful impact. The only valuable pieces are active political voices and those willing to engage and circulate beliefs beyond dinner table conversation. The currency of these groups, like any other, is people and their willingness to act by voting (least valuable) or going to more extreme measures to affect the country or countries and effect change.³⁷

For example, voting for who the Klan wanted in power in an election was certainly important, but less so than organizing meetings or engaging in community work. The more people engaging in this higher level of civic responsibility the better. Thus, in a political market where all political systems are seemingly possible, very few are viable. In order for a new ideology, in this case fascism, to grow into a practical system, constant growth and change are necessary in both method and ideology. As a result, all authoritarian and fascist parties can pull from outside their ideological stance and employ tactical, emotional, and political states from already established ideas. This can include ideas surrounding patriotism, nationalism, Anglo-Saxonism, etc. Thus, while having different national goals, different fascist groups can impact each other in both action and ideology as each individual group draws from different parts of the market.

This paper is mainly concerned with the effect these groups have had on one another and the emotional response this invokes through their connections. By examining these groups this way, we gain a better understanding of the limitation of government; as mentioned, the Dies Committee had a limited investigation and Borgese further argued how, at some level, governments provide the building blocks for fascist frameworks to develop. We also gain an understanding how this affect economy (political-emotional markets) can detach from each other

³⁷ Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 117.

and allow for their survival in the case of the Klan. We can get an image of self from these groups based on shared connections and how they understand each other among equals. It will also help explain fluctuations in group identities. Each of these groups brings with them ideas on fascism, adding to a collective understanding. If concepts like race or other social constructs like gender are constructed and reconstructed so, too, is fascism. Fascism did not need to link to concepts of white supremacy, anti-Semitism, nationalism, and patriotism, yet it did and continues in many cases to do just that. By using Ahmed's and Fronczak's work as a basis for analysis, we can connect these groups in a deeper way.

As Thomas Pegram has noted, the Klan was not usually understood as monolithic even when it tried to present itself as a true center of national leadership. Here again, emotion plays a defining role in how communities in each U.S. state differed in terms of hatred or what the perceived threat was and how best to defend against. Thus, national and international ideologies are far too difficult to draw out or give meaning to.³⁸ What is important for bringing this to the national level is that the Klan became the language in which American fascism expressed itself. No other organization filled this role in such a large way even after its near collapse in the 1930s. Not all members had to agree, or all right-wing newspapers had to sound the same, to function in a "domestic economy." As noted in my introduction, the Bund and the Klan saw themselves as in line enough to form a tangible connection and even a joint ceremony.³⁹ While some State leadership might not have liked the Bund, they were definitely willing to stay in line with general policy.⁴⁰ Thus, we can look on some of the tangible similarities and differences these groups had and get a sense of how they viewed themselves in a Euromerican fascist economy.

³⁸ Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American*, 50, 187.

³⁹ Paramount Grinberg, "Camp Nordland by Lake."

⁴⁰ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 322.

For this paper, the role of fear, hate, and love will be broken down into two categories: The first, and the easiest to understand, is growth and loss. Cultural events, like *The Birth of Nation*, can have an impact on people's willingness to accept and be part of an ideological group. When Gunnar Myrdal noted in 1944 that the white supremacist movement might be at an end, this is exactly what was going on, seeing and reading the political landscape of laws and emotions to predict their end.⁴¹ Political, cultural, and international events can also cause growth, demise, or changes to what is part of the emotional economy of fascists. Ahmed provides some of the language used by elected officials and more mainstream sources that can mirror that of hate groups.⁴² Historians like Pegram and others have noticed this, too, when examining the Klan's actions. Pegram and other historians have noted that the Klan was not officially present at some of the worst moments of racial violence, like the burning of Black Wall Street for example. The Klan's absence from some of these major events made this generation of historians less likely to write about the Klan at national levels, preferring to focus on state or city actions.

For Pegram, and others, American society was already heavily entrenched in racial thoughts and practices. The Klan's ideas were not new and could be found in newspapers and public life outside the Klan. Examples of this can be found exhaustively in Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s *Stony the Road* or at the Jim Crow Museum. There are countless examples of advertisements, songs, and various elements of Americana that reinforce racial thought. Thus, it was considered too large an argument to make that the Klan had a lasting impact on national politics. This also seems to be the underlying reason historians of the second Klan wave look both at the North and at the Klan's broader impact on White populations. Its popularity in the

⁴¹ Stanford M. Lyman, "Gunnar Myrdal's 'An American Dilemma' after a Half Century: Critics and Anticritics," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* (1998), 327.

⁴² Ahmed, *Affective Economies*, 130–131.

north seems more flabbergasting in a supposedly more progressive, liberal part of the country. With this juxtaposition, it is far easier to observe changes the second Klan made when looking specifically at White populations outside the Deep South.⁴³ This is a fair criticism of those taking aim at smaller state histories. If everyone was similarly racist, what value is there to be had outside of state histories? Ahmed offers the idea of lateral movement, by which I argue that looking beyond the state level can give us a few insights besides those already mentioned. Ahmed uses the example of how a domestic case of home invasion can mirror the language of foreign invaders and local defenders. At a bare minimum, the Klan contributed to this line of thought in America and furthered its circulation.⁴⁴ Addressing this issue means changing some preconceived notions about how national lines function.

My addition to affective economies draws on the work of Barbara Jeanne Fields, in particular her notion that ideas about race have to be reinvented or maintained both in the past and in the present. Fields noted in her seminal work, *Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America*, that race is an ideology in a constant state of flux. We reinvent and reinforce it like any other ideological unit at play in society. Part of this enables us to have both passive and active emotional responses to academic writings, laws, and cultural marks. The role of culture, if viewed this way, has an active role in changing or maintaining societal perspectives. This view of culture will clash a bit with the nature of “hard” power versus “soft,” and the concept of Klan waves. Meaning, the Klan does not need to be the progenitor of an idea, just act as a member of the affective economy and circulate it, and continually do so. I will address this in further detail

⁴³ Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American*, 59.

⁴⁴ Barbara J. Fields, “Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America,” *New Left Review*, no. 181 (1990), 99–100.

later, but it is worth bearing in mind because this can shape our understanding of a fascist political economy.

I argue that the re-emergence of the Klan had an emotional and mental impact on those it terrorized. When only examining the “hard power” of Klan politics, we can end up ignoring the long-term psychological harm to communities perpetually being harassed and targeted, or at least giving it less attention. Some of this can be attributed to understanding the Klan as being defined as waves. These waves were used as historical shorthand for dealing with the various perceived eras of the Klan’s organizational history. By focusing on limited set dates, we only get a limited few of Klan activities. For example, in the aftermath of the Civil War, violence against the Black community was highlighted. In its rebirth, more attention was paid to its impact on White communities. Each wave then seemed like a contained unit in time, separated from a past wave by some different social or political condition. This had the effect of favouring the new target group of study and the regions they were more prominent in.⁴⁵ I will address wave theory in the next section and how it can limit historical interpretations of the Klan.

1.3 The First Wave 1865–1871 and Wave Theory

Frames in time:

- First Klan 1865–1871: members unknown
- Second Klan 1915–1944: Three million to six million, peaking in 1924–1925 (overestimation at the time put supporters as high as ten million)⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Fields, “Slavery, Race and Ideology.”

⁴⁶ John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 8, Folder Ku Klux Klan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. Letter by E. F. Rudeen. He is restating some of Metcalfe’s words along with the new estimate of close to a million members, despite Klan claims of two million.

- Third Klan 1950–present: lows of three thousand and highs of perhaps ten thousand (if all broadly defined “neofascists” counted, four million)

The Klan has been represented by historians as going through a series of waves. Each wave represents a start or emergence of the group, a climax in membership (the wave’s crest), followed by its collapse, a lull where the Klan, in terms of formal members, does not seem to exist at all. Technically, what I have lumped into the third wave had two crests within it. These waves—I will call them four and five—differ from the pattern of the first two as there are no clear breaks. Waves are important historical shorthand to create a limited or general time frame for academics to conduct investigations and to connect surges in membership with other historical conditions. However necessary for making research manageable and plots intelligible, it prevents us from seeing the interconnected nature of the Klan’s entire history.⁴⁷ Even in this thesis, I was forced to focus on the second wave to make my research pertinent to the rise of fascism in the 1920s and 1930s; there still has to be a defined limitation. But in doing so, I also try to escape the limitations implied by the rising-and-receding narrative structure of conventional histories. The impact of wave theory and framing cannot be understated.

While it might seem as though the dates are arbitrary, each date helped to shape the eventual and growing narrative of the Klan, often by the Klan itself. It bears repeating that the Klan started in the wake of the Civil War and quickly grew into an unorganized organization.⁴⁸ Its six founding members, including the first “imperial wizard,” Confederate General Nathan

⁴⁷ Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 24.

⁴⁸ Terms like this tend to be frowned upon. I am borrowing modeling this term after, “leaderless leadership.” See Belew, *Bring the War Home*. This modification just seems best to describe how, while having technical leadership, it was not in control. Each attack could spring up and dissipate, based on community perception not called on by southern leadership. Additionally, in Elaine Parsons, *Ku-Klux the Birth of the Klan During Reconstruction* (University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 17: “There is little doubt that the Klan contained organized and unorganized elements.” It is generally accepted that the first Klan was mostly unorganized.

Bedford Forrest, did not have a plan in place, except to antagonize the newly freed. Things quickly grew out of control and unplanned attacks were happening in the former Confederate states, leading to a critical question of just how far the South was willing to go to re-establish its political and racial order. Wrapped in this was the making of “lost cause” narratives and assorted defenses of Southern actions. While state officials were moving into a period of re-entering the union, Klan action indicated something else was taking place: a protest for the right to lynch.⁴⁹

While this paper deals with the latter part of the second wave, one change to wave theory comes from the focus on legal violence throughout American history. Within the longer lens of American history, violence has largely been legally justified and even state-sanctioned in many instances. First, after the American Revolution, the United States gave citizens the right to bear arms to repel the British and then later in the expansion of the colonies westward. When violence was turned to suppressing Black populations and uprisings, nothing became more infamous than lynching.⁵⁰ Lynching, even though not officially a right, past or present, was assumed to be a right of citizens, as long as it was carried out in agreement with other citizens and did not directly challenge state or federal law. In *Rough Justice* and *Roots of Rough Justice*, Michael Pfeifer addresses a large portion of the issues surrounding lynching. A notable point he makes is that lynching developed prior to the Civil War, and despite Northern or Republican efforts to curtail its practice, it continued to flourish. Additionally, part of the justification for tough laws on the books comes from the hope that a justice system that could mimic the brutality of lynching and would stop the public from doing so.⁵¹ By some accounts, this has led to the current

⁴⁹ Martin A. Miller, *The Foundations of Modern Terrorism: State, Society and the Dynamics of Political Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 153.

⁵⁰ Miller, *The Foundations of Modern Terrorism*, 147.

⁵¹ Michael Pfeifer, *The Roots of Rough Justice: Origins of American Lynching*. (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 11.

policing practices in the United States being nearly as brutal as the informal lynching system. From the British colonial era through the 1950s, while neither traditional authorities' powers of policing nor ruling bodies are anything new to descendants of British common law. Pfeifer uses the example of Irish immigrants. While not identical to lynching, new European immigrants understood the practice of mob violence and were willing to be both participants, and at times, victims of the lynching system.⁵² In this way, the Klan's first wave can be seen as a second challenge to the North for the right to organized-yet-unsanctioned violence as a means of restoring the old social order of the former slaveholders.⁵³

Some in the North would try to limit the tyranny on this level, but it was almost never enforced or it was defanged at the state level. Lynching was nevertheless controversial and would go through periods of extreme use, then disappear, but it would often return. Lynching took place all over the United States and cannot be tied geographically to one section of the country.⁵⁴ National attempts to limit lynching by Black activists remained dead in US Congress till 2020. The right to slavery lost, but the right to lynching was preserved, the need for the Klan's existence faded. Thus, while dates associated with Klan waves can appear arbitrary on the surface, they do connect with the Klan's own narrative and that of Southern integration.

The second wave of the Klan saw itself as having to continue the work of the first and become an American organization versus a Southern one and, thus, one that would police White behaviour more vigorously.⁵⁵ Thus, for this paper's purpose, we can understand that the Klan was both the extension of an American version of fascism and one of its methods would be

⁵² Pfeifer, *The Roots of Rough Justice*, 69.

⁵³ Miller, *The Foundations of Modern Terrorism*, 152.

⁵⁴ Pfeifer, *The Roots of Rough Justice*, 12–15, 71. It is important to remember not all victims were Black. Mexicans, Asians, and other White groups could be lynched for ethnic or religious reasons.

⁵⁵ Miller, *The Foundations of Modern Terrorism*, 148–149.

violence against perceived others seen to be falling outside of 100 percent Americanism or patriotism in order to communicate that desire and restore patriotic American values.

1.4 Historiography

The history of the Klan dates to the end of the American Civil War. For this reason, its historiography can be divided between its reconstruction and interwar iterations. On the latter point, some early contemporary studies were conducted by social scientists, but the historical interpretation of the “1920s Klan” began in earnest only in the 1960s, not coincidentally around the time the new Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts were passed. The best of these, David M. Chalmers’s *Hooded Americanism*, was first published in 1965 and is now in its third edition. It is generally considered the definitive book of the modern understanding of the Klan. The author, a lifelong historian from the University of Florida, painstakingly covered the Klan on all levels, including state, national, and international, as well as providing a few chapters on its general cultural impact in the United States. The effect of compiling all this information into one space moved the Klan from a regional movement to a national one. The book has some limitations in terms of resources. Chalmers, like many state-based historians he cites, had only newspapers to use as his primary sources. Even with these limitations, he and *Hooded Americanism* became the founding scholar and text in the study of the Klan. The book has near biblical status in the field.⁵⁶ Chalmers, who died in 2020, wrote his final book, *Backfire*, in 2003, to show just how the Klan’s use of violence helped to shape the very laws that would limit them in the Civil Rights era.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 1–15.

⁵⁷ David Cunningham. *Klansville, U.S.A.: The Rise of the Civil Rights-Era Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 10–15.

What has changed more recently is the availability of more documentation from the Klan and from FBI declassification processes, as well as impact of the cultural turn in American history generally. While the relationship between the Klan and the FBI has thus come to dominate contemporary scholarship, historians and sociologists began re-examining the Klan's relationship with the American State more broadly. David Cunningham's *There's Something Happening Here* (2005) and *Klansville U.S.A.: The Rise and Fall of the Civil Rights-Era Ku Klux Klan* (2012) follow this tradition but also further enforce a divided narrative.⁵⁸ Since the Klan of the 1920s failed to establish itself as an enduring organization, its legacy is often found, and studied, indirectly; first, in how the Klan shaped law enforcement, and second, in terms of its enduring legacy as a symbol of hate within society and American popular culture. This latter point has been picked up in various forms. Kathleen Blee's *Women of the Klan* (1991) established the important role women played in the Klan's rise, authority, and popularity, if not respectability. Likewise, Kelly Baker's *The Gospel According to the Klan* (2011) convincingly argues that the Klan tried to appeal to Protestant Americans across the states in the north and south. Felix Harcourt's *Ku Klux Kulture* (2017) seeks to establish the Klan as a social movement that penetrated popular American culture in the 1920s and 1930s. Linda Gordon's 2017 book, *The Second Coming of the KKK*, takes a more general approach, focusing on the gains the Klan could make, in terms of laws and elected officials, and the role of women in organizing these successes. While not directly at odds, of course, these calls compete for claims over the legacy and importance of the Klan.⁵⁹ Clearly, by the 1920s, while still claiming to be an expression of American nativism, it also saw its struggle as part of something larger.

⁵⁸ Cunningham, *Klansville U.S.A.*, 150–155.

⁵⁹ Rick Bowers, *Superman versus the Ku Klux Klan* (Washington, DC: National Geographic Press, 2012), 20–25.

This something larger deviates from the traditional narrative of waves. The first person to examine this in a full-length publication was Nancy MacLean. While still built on other works, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry* pushed the bonds in space and somewhat in time, as noted in my introduction. Thus, Pegram's *One Hundred Percent American* can be read as a defence of the traditional understanding of Klan history, even from just the title.⁶⁰ As time has passed, both books have remained important to the field but the spirit of what MacLean started has arguably spawned more widely resaleable influences. Harcourt's book somewhat breaks from traditional dates and connects the second Klan to the propaganda war the South waged to rephrase the role of the Confederacy and the KKK. Kathleen Belew's *Bringing the War Home* (2018) covers the impact of the Vietnam War on white supremacy and the Klan, with a departure from the limited geographical space for which the Klan is traditionally known.⁶¹

Belew deals with the Klan in a different time and space but is still ideologically descended from MacLean's work. Her work and this thesis will bear a few similarities in method and theory, as Belew updates, argues, and follows through on some of the ideas MacLean began to work out. Because she focuses on the Cold War era, she does not have to compete with general helper notions like the non-interventionism of the interwar period. This prevailing notion of America's role in liberating Europe has often made it difficult to have the international connection of the American right taken seriously. However, there has been a growing literature of the United States' connection to Nazi Germany, fascism, and criticism of American prewar actions. The most well-known being James Whitman's *Hitler's American Model*. His book draws on the legal connections between the United States' policies of (indigenous) ethnic cleansing and racial segregation that were taken as a guide for Hitler's Nuremberg Laws. Further

⁶⁰ Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American*.

⁶¹ Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 1–5.

connecting the two countries are Bradley Hart's *Hitler's American Friends* which examines numerous domestic groups that came to support fascism and Nazism in the United States. Thus, while isolation or non-interference or the Neutrality Acts were in place, there was a growing and considerable relationship through immigration, film, universities, and businesses. All of this provides the intellectual backing on which my thesis stands.

2 Historical Context

2.1 King, Lindbergh, and Hitler Makes Three: The International Order of Friends

As mentioned by Thomas Pegram, the United States was already heavily entrenched in racist thought and practice. A similar argument could be made for Canada and Germany and most other countries involved in the political-emotional economy of global imperialism that this paper is trying to better establish. Where Pegram and others took the broader sense of racism in society to downplay the Klan's special impact, I see this as the basis for its capacity to spread ideas and chapters to Canada and Great Britain and even to Germany which had its own Klan chapter. Hitler even mentions the Klan in *Mein Kampf* and how it was absorbed into the Nazi party.⁶² Beyond these direct connections, though, was the political-emotional economy that was already in place between "Anglo-Saxon" Europe and North America. These bonds bridged the two economies and interwove racial and patriotic themes between them. The following case sample is the interaction and comparison of Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King and Charles Lindbergh. While on opposite sides of the political spectrum, in principle, the two men show how fascism can grow out of patriotism and, further, how fascism can find a home on both the liberal left and the right. The reason I am picking these two men is not just for their differences but also for a few of their similarities. Both men encountered each other prior to the Second World War and would be the most notable visitors to Nazi Germany prior to its start.

In late May 1927, King was busy preparing the Diamond Jubilee of Canadian independence and greater freedom from the United Kingdom. The crown jewel of this royal

⁶² Andrew Bryant, "'Yesterday, Today, and Forever': The Mythic Foundations of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States and Canada," MA thesis (University of Ottawa, 2004), 53. I also suggest reading, Frederik bermaier, and Schulz Tanjev. *Kapuzenmänner: der Ku-Klux-Klan in Deutschland*. (München: Dtv, 2017) They cover the Klan in Germany in greater detail.

festivity would be a visit from an American: Charles Lindbergh. Lindbergh recently rose to fame completing a non-stop flight from New York to Paris; as King gushed in his diary, this was the “single greatest exploit in world history.”⁶³ The Diamond Jubilee went smoothly enough for King’s liking, even if the visit on July 2nd, 1927, was marked by an unexpected tragedy. Lindbergh arrived on July 1st to much fanfare and was increasingly viewed, not just as a major celebrity, but as King says, as a hero to the empire(s) and as an unofficial ambassador of good will from America to the world.⁶⁴ Lindbergh, by now an international star, was just at the cusp of his political life which would include a failed bid at the US presidency. King, still enjoying the roaring 1920s (such as they were in Canada), was also enjoying popularity and prosperity. For a long time, King was regarded as one of the greatest prime ministers that has ever lived by Canadian historians. The declassification of his diary though, particularly revelations regarding his occult beliefs, meant that his legacy never reached that of Churchill and Roosevelt.⁶⁵ But in 1927, King and Lindbergh seemed destined for greatness. King even referred to Lindbergh as a godly figure, much like British royalty.

The whole event could have turned foul when one of Lindbergh’s support-pilots crashed. The death of Lieutenant John Thad Johnson, however tragic, proved to be something of a bonding moment, as King noted in his diary, for Britain, America, and Canada. Canada was still part of the British empire, and soon to be commonwealth, and so still linked to Britain legally through its shared monarch, but gradually moving more into its own national and international identity. Canada would have its nationalism and celebrate its independence, while bringing the

⁶³ William Lyon Mackenzie, 1973, *The Mackenzie King Diaries, 1893-1931*, May 21, 1927. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/prime-ministers/william-lyon-mackenzie-king/Pages/diaries-william-lyon-mackenzie-king.aspx>

⁶⁴ William Lyon Mackenzie, 1973, *The Mackenzie King Diaries, 1893-1931*, July 2, 1927, p. 2 continued on 132.

⁶⁵ Robert Teigrob, *Four Days in Hitler’s Germany: Mackenzie King’s Mission to Avert a Second World War* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2019), 14–16.

former most powerful empire into conversation with its rising, wayward son. King reflected on how it was Canada's duty, and perhaps people like Lindbergh's, to bring America into the world as well. King could not help but feel the connection being made and the international comradery.

King, therefore, framed Johnson's death as a sacrifice to help better build the moment into a national and international one. He was most impressed and personally touched as Lindbergh flew over the funeral procession, attended by thousands, and dropped flowers over Lieutenant Johnson's casket.⁶⁶ Lindbergh would not be the American ambassador so many Canadians hoped; instead, thirteen years later, he would go on to lead the America First Committee, one of the staunchest supporters of American isolationism. It would not be the last international figure King misjudged. In 1937, he met Hitler on his trip to Nazi Germany and was, by his own private account, enthralled. Part of the reason these two men failed to see the threat that was Nazi Germany has to do with the similar yet different political-emotional economy. Lindbergh would come to embrace many of the ideologies that the Nazis embraced and, in turn the Klan, The Bund, the Black Shirts, the Silver Legion, and American business that wanted to remain out of the war would embrace him.⁶⁷

It also demonstrates much of what Borgese has argued. Each time fascism moves from a continent or country, it takes practices that can be adapted to the next. While it might be easy to blame solely the movement of fascist actors across these borders and political spectrums, this example highlights its most dangerous quality. Fascism and authoritarianism are fundamentally unkillable if patriotism exists. Fascist do not merely copy each other but also assume a patriotic character based on the national self. As noted in my example above, King needed moments to galvanise the country around a way to create a collective identity. Part of the Canadian identity is

⁶⁶ William Lyon Mackenzie, *The Mackenzie King Diaries, 1893-1931*, Online, July 3, 1973, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 160–161.

the idea that it can be the middle ground for the United States and the United Kingdom. As Borgese noted in March of 1937, fascist salutes and other actions individuals take can be seen as being done to align the self with the state. A salute is not just a gesture but gains meaning as a sign of respect and conforming to the collective will.⁶⁸ Much like the crowds showing up to take in the spectacle of the anniversary, individuals use such actions as the basis of their shared identities. The state promoting the nation is the first link in a chain to fascism, a chain that does not always need to be forged but one that always can be.⁶⁹

In this sense, Canada and King might seem a curious example for a paper focused on the development of international fascism both in action, thought, and circulation. Canada retained its democracy but was indeed part of this cycle and, as a result, bears inclusion into the transatlantic context. In a broader sense, though, the pathway from patriotism to violence helps to explain why soldiers continue to be a target to far-right ideas and fascism. They are, by their very nature, the stand-in for patriotism violently defended. Thus, it is important that each organization, fascist and authoritarian, gain a footing within the army. Indeed, it was the soldier class of immigrants that both Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy targeted for recruitment abroad.⁷⁰ Fascist countries never stopped looking at diasporic populations as sources of power, while the internationalist West had stopped engaging with them in larger political ways.

In the aftermath of the First World War, of course, many global leaders were not in a mind to cooperate. Even in the "roaring" 1920s, cooperation between Britain, France, and the

⁶⁸ Antonio Borgese, *Goliath: The March of Fascism* (New York: The Viking Press, 1937), 79. He is referencing the connections on the individual to the universal and the state. He is speaking to the Italian context. I am making what he has outlined more general, less based on the idea of race.

⁶⁹ I explore this further in the next section with the attempt of the KKK to spread to Canada.

⁷⁰ John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 5, Folder, "Friends of New Germany," Hoover Institution Library and Archives, p. 4, Franco Fontana, Italian Consulate General. He mentions the link to the Bund (trying to recruit former soldiers) but denies it. He also denies any connection back to Rome. Further testimonies would prove him false. Either he was left out of some of the conversation or knowingly lied.

United States, over enforcing the Paris peace system broke down. The Great Depression only made this worse, leading to a period of international isolationism or at least political isolationism. Yet, the world had already grown far too connected to truly ever be separated; even as greater tariffs were put in place, money kept trading hands. This resulted in a few interesting developments. While countries were engaging in protectionism and nationalist politics at home, companies were still investing internationally. Famously, Ford and Coke both made substantial profits in Germany; even if they could not extract those profits from Germany, they did aid the “Nazi Miracle.”⁷¹ American university students continued to visit Germany; and intellectual exchanges in general never truly stopped until war was properly declared. This is not to say protesting was not happening. Various Jewish newspapers reported on the Nuremburg Laws, but those in power were not listening. Money aligned with popular sentiments of hate.⁷² This was also not a uniquely American problem. Canada signed new trade deals with Nazi Germany in 1936 and worked to establish its own embassy, part of its goal to be seen as an independent nation. The Nazi regime was not openly criticized even as it started to act bolder and enacting increasingly tighter restriction on the Jewish population.⁷³

Worse still, global leaders visited Nazi Germany and met Hitler before the start of the war, sometimes to determine whether German rearmament threatened peace but often to take stock of German’s political reconstruction. Mackenzie King only spent a total of four days in Germany, and only one hour with Hitler himself. The trip has been brilliantly recounted in Robert Teigrob’s *Four Days in Hitler’s Germany*. King got along well with his German hosts on various levels; personally, and publicly, he quite liked Hitler, even advising Neville Chamberlain

⁷¹ Hart, *Hitler’s American Friends*, 138–139.

⁷² Hart, *Hitler’s American Friends*, 158–159.

⁷³ Teigrob, *Four Days in Hitler’s Germany*, 20, 37.

that there was little to fear from the Führer. The greater threat, according to King, was the British and American press making him out to be the villain, advice Chamberlain definitely did not need to hear.⁷⁴ King's trip, however, was somewhat of an underreported story. Francisco Franco was surging to victory in Spain and taking some of the attention away from reporting on Nazi activities; a diplomatic trip of a middle-power leader was likely viewed as less headline grabbing. The Canadian media was quiet at worst, indifferent at best; their silence may have been due to the hope that the prime minister's trip could help prevent a war.⁷⁵ Not at the same political level as King, the Americans had their own representative visit Nazi Germany—a man with presidential ambition whom King had met a few years earlier at a funeral. There to write a report, Charles Lindbergh would take away much the same impression as King.

Lindbergh, still famous from his flight career and his son's kidnapping, visited a year before King. His first of two trips happened close to the Berlin Games, and both proved to be successful propaganda moments for the Nazis. Lindbergh and King, both as men and as politically active members of their respective countries, shared a few similarities. They both seemed to have had a considerable appreciation for the "Nazi Miracle." The Nazis, in a short time, had seemingly managed to rebuild Germany into an economic powerhouse of Europe. This great feat, probably best known for the origins of the Autobahn now, seemed to have pulled the country out of a greater depression than even faced by America.⁷⁶ Canada's economic recovery had been steady but not in the same league as Nazi Germany. Americans had mixed feelings about Roosevelt's New Deal, but even its most sympathetic supporters worried that it had not reached the level of success of Germany.

⁷⁴ Teigrob, *Four Days in Hitler's Germany*, 10–11, 33–37.

⁷⁵ Teigrob, *Four Days in Hitler's Germany*, 135–136.

⁷⁶ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 158–159.

That being said, King and Lindbergh were on very different ends of the political spectrum, in theory, showing how fascist ideals can infiltrate the left and right of any nation. King was a progressive liberal politician who had studied at the University of Chicago and even lived at Jane Addams's Hull House, and who, at least in principle, should have been opposed to Nazi Germany's policies. King, in his diary, showed little concern for Nazi indoctrination. Lindbergh, likewise, seemed to be onboard with the Nazi agenda, remarking how much he actually agreed with its policies. King and Lindbergh both wanted their trips to remain somewhat private but only King's seems to have been forgotten. There are probably a few reasons for this. An American celebrity going to Berlin was probably destined to receive more attention than a Canadian prime minister. Both trips nonetheless show the effectiveness at limiting the negative press and hostile interpretations of Nazi Germany.⁷⁷

At their heart, both men's assessments show an emotional connection to a European heritage and ideas about race. Lindbergh went further and, in some of his speeches for the America First Committee in 1940, decided to name names and argued that the British, the Jews, and the Roosevelts were the drivers of war, not Nazi Germany. While King did not reach anywhere near Lindbergh in terms of passion, until 1939 at least, he sympathized greatly with a beaten Germany and the idea of keeping Hitler's country as a German Aryan nation.⁷⁸ In the same speech, Lindbergh insisted that war with Europe would be a mistake as it had nothing to do with protecting racial purity. Both men on the left and right of the political spectrum showed a level of tolerance for fascism, if not fascism internationally, and some form of white supremacy. Elements of fascist ideas, in other words, were being accepted by various powerful figures, from Lindbergh to King showing, in effect, that until war actually forced each nation to decide where

⁷⁷ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 166–167.

⁷⁸ Teigrob, *Four Days in Hitler's Germany*, 73–74.

its loyalty lay, a wide range of ideological views could accommodate the racial patriotism that was at the heart of fascism.

Both these trips show the power of Nazi Germany's understanding of the "White man's order" and the appeal of the political-emotional economy at work. Hermann Göring's expertise at manipulating both British, Canadian, and American diplomats, celebrities, presidential aspirants, and prime ministers alike seems to have come from his understanding of the emotional underpinning of the Nazis' rise. Lindbergh and King each found things to admire and things to ignore. King left thinking that Hitler was no threat and paid little attention to the youth camps he visited, even though he publicly hated Canadian militarism and thought it needed to be stamped out in Canada. Yet he seemed to be drawn to the idea that each country could be a White man's own kingdom, with this kind of fraternity in the world order regardless of whether it was fascist or a democracy. The similar takeaway by both men also indicates the strength of, and admiration for, the German's rebuilding and they were not alone. Many others from various countries had similar views as the prime minister of Canada and Lindbergh.⁷⁹ While it is important to understand the connection and the power of national lines, it is equally important to understand its limitations and implications. White supremacy and fascism continued to be strengthened as other nations proved to be limited in their capacity to repress it across national lines and as countries became run by fascist or overly nationalist leaders.⁸⁰

2.2 The Domestic Klan and Its International Inspiration

⁷⁹ Andrew Nagorski, *Hitlerland: American Eyewitnesses to the Nazi Rise to Power* (Riverside, NJ: Simon and Schuster, 2013). Nagorski goes through a lot of Americans who contacted Hitler; however, few would be as important as King.

⁸⁰ This is not to undermine the resistance movements that developed intentionally to fight Nazism in the United States and in Europe. There were considerable resistance movements and many would lose their lives as Nazism and these various fascist groups would rise. I cover a bit of the push back in Spain, however, much of it fell outside the scope of this paper.

The first Klan had painfully been laid to rest but not outside of memory as “Colonel” William Joseph Simmons would often talk about. It had become part of the American myths and folklore: White knights riding to protect and save helpless Southerners from enfranchised (former) slaves and the Northern carpetbaggers. While untrue, it was a commonly told story among Southern Euro-Americans. This reimagining of the Confederacy, paradoxically passed into a grand spirit of American national pride, would add in the Klan’s rebirth. Simmons, the founder of the new Klan, often loved to tell the stories his grandfather and father would tell him about the heroic, if short-lived, deeds of Reconstruction-era Klansmen. It left an impression on his mind and would form the founding elements of his new Klan.⁸¹

I will cover *The Birth of a Nation* in greater detail in the following section, but it, of course, coincides with Simmons’s attempt to revive the Klan. The Klan was already in some ways making a come back. As noted by Pfeifer, towns were policing themselves, creating some of these bands that were already going by various forms of Klan names. The Klan would not truly get going until deals were made with two publicists, Edward Clarke and Elizabeth Tyler, by which the Klan would gain an important component to its daily operations and start to recruit like other political campaigns and activist groups. Recruiters were given membership roles and, state by state, the message of the Klan would spread again in varying degrees. Each state would then collect dues, sell merchandise, and provide a sense of community in order to continue to function. This was not new in America. Abolitionists would make money in a similar fashion and both Clarke and Tyler had worked for the Anti-Saloon League. As the Klan grew in strength, and each state became a fiefdom paying money to the main chapter, Simmons’s alcoholism grew, and his ability to remain in control faltered. The Klan, and his earlier self, had made

⁸¹ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 28–29.

prohibition a main tenet of the Klan's world of moral reform. Receiving dues for the rest of his life, he stepped back as others competed for a larger share of the profits and political control. Hiram Wesley Evans would emerge as the victor, but he was not uncontested. D. C. Stephenson of Indiana had built up a considerable following; he would also largely be the reason for the Klan's downfall. Stephenson took power of the Indiana Klan in 1921 just as its popularity was rising to all-time highs. Stephenson often acted in a way we now associate with a cult of personality; he lived larger than life. He loved arriving to large Klan rallies all over the United States, showing up in his private plane, literally descending from on high and leaving via train. Stephenson violently assaulted Madge Oberholtzer and, when she refused to have sex with him, kidnapped her on a train. She later refused to eat and intentionally drank poison to force her captors to let her go. After a trial—and her death—and a series of government probes around the Klan, its national leadership almost fully collapsed, and its paying members disappeared by the start of the 1930s.⁸²

Like many other institutions, the Klan borrowed its methods and structure from far older organizations. Several notable fraternal organizations can be credited for working out the schemes of recruitment and engagement the Klan would employ, many of which were international organizations having chapters in many countries. The Orange Order and the Free Masons and others were targets of Klan recruitment, as they were seen to have experience in managing and recruiting for these social orders.⁸³ Historians have looked at the collective collapse of these fraternal orders rather than linking a specific one. I focus on the Orange Order as a case study. The Klan always had a few targets of comparison in its own newspapers: the

⁸² Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK*, 192–194. Important to note is the jury decided its verdict on the fact he ruined her capacity to marry, not on the violence he had done to her body.

⁸³ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 32–33.

Free Masons, the Odd Fellows, and the Knights of Columbus were all brought up as comparisons in *The Fiery Cross*, a newspaper run by them for most of the 1920s.⁸⁴ This paper and others the Klan ran gave them the opportunity to address the media coverage they had gained around the world. In one article, titled “England Has Order Similar to Klan: The Nobel Order of the Crusader,” they drew attention to their similar ritualistic nature, while also using it as a retaliatory critique aimed at the British press who were mocking the Klan. The Crusaders were a relatively peaceful organization much like the Knights of Columbus.⁸⁵

This was a common tactic taken by Klan press in order to make the group seem less extreme. A more apt comparison to the Klan was the Orange Order. The Klan and the Orange Order are by no means directly parallel, but in so far as I am looking at tactical matters that were shared by fascist groups, the comparison is productive. That the Klan did not make a connection here speaks volumes: It never liked to invite comparisons between themselves and other more violent groups (the Nazis, Black Shirts, and the Orange Order). Thus, the absence of a formal tie should not be that surprising. The link was perhaps only more open between these organizations in Canada, where, in particular, Ontario Orange Lodges and Protestants had a well-documented history of hosting the KKK.

For the Klan, this is where we start to see the international connection to Canada and Europe. After all, it had described England as “Blood of my Blood and Bone of our Bone.”⁸⁶ Both the Masons and the Orange Order had long histories of their own in America and outside. Conspiracy theories often mention that the Founding Fathers were Masons and the organization, while now a pale reflection of its former self, was a vibrant part of American life until the 1920s.

⁸⁴ *The Fiery Cross*, Indianapolis: Advertising Service of Ernest W. Reichard, December 8, 1922. Page 2 of the article is complete but column 3 contains the language that was commonplace till the end of the Second World War.

⁸⁵ *The Fiery Cross*, February 2, 1923, p. 1.

⁸⁶ “Britain Humiliated,” *The Fiery Cross*, December 8, 1922, p. 1.

Similarly, the Orange Order originated in Northern Ireland but immigrated to America with its Protestant population; it never grew to the same scale as its British predecessor in the United States but became extremely powerful in Canada.⁸⁷ In turn, the Orange Order in Canada supported the Klan's attempts to grow domestically, linking the two as part of unintentionally founding an international fascist chain. It was this relationship that further established a transatlantic, political-emotional economy for fascism.

As mentioned, King and other progressive liberals wanted to foster patriotism. This patriotism, while considered a good thing generally, was also viewed as a way of fighting more radical, Bolshevik tendencies.⁸⁸ Thus, while fascism and militarism were antithetical to democracy, they were also potentially helpful to the patriotic cause. Major politicians were not the only ones who understood the emotional and political power of patriotism; the Klan was increasingly well-versed in these tactics. This is in part how the Klan, despite its domestic motto of "100 percent Americanism," was able to spread successfully into Canada in the 1920s. The Canadian chapter of the Klan was the strongest Klan outside of the United States in the interwar era. That being said, total numbers were nowhere near as high as the United States. In the early 1920s, when Canada's population was around eight million, Klan membership likely peaked at sixty thousand nationally. The majority of these were in Ontario and Saskatchewan, and almost forty thousand members were in the prairie province. These numbers might seem low but they were competing with the Orange Order, which boasted one hundred thousand, again constrained in a few major cities.⁸⁹ Asking already paying Orangemen to pay to be Klan members was a tall

⁸⁷ William Myth, *Toronto, the Belfast of Canada: The Orange Order and the Shaping of Municipal Culture* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 65–66.

⁸⁸ Borgese, *Goliath*, 123.

⁸⁹ Michael Wilcox, "Orange Order in Canada," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Historica Canada. Article published June 6, 2007, last edited November 30, 2016.

ask, particularly as American Klan leaders' scandals made headlines and as the Great Depression hit. Nonetheless, the connection to the Orange Order allowed the Klan to have a chance in Canada. Its iconography and anti-immigrant ideology better fit the emotional and political context of Canada.

The Klan was able to adapt itself in a few ways. First was determining the active targets of their bigotry or who patriotic Canadians could defend the nation against. This led to a period of trial and error similar to that in the United States. The Klan attacked French Catholic Canada, Jewish people, and Asian Canadians. As assaults on properties took place, the Klan shifted some of its slogan and messaging. First was realizing the tension between English and French Canada. The Klan failed at first in Québec but succeeded in Ontario and out west, drawing out tension along the Protestant and Catholic divide.⁹⁰ The Orange Order in Canada was going through a transformation of its own. While never as violent as its European counterpart, it was responsible for a fair amount of bloodshed at the turn of the century. With its increasing popularity, it tried to expand and appeal more broadly, by moving away from overt violence which, however, created a void for the Klan to fill.⁹¹ In this context, the Orange Order across the province actually invited American Klan members to lodge meetings to recruit, some Protestant churches did the same. Thus, the Klan tried to pull from a similar population base as in America.

The Klan made a few adaptations to its regalia as well. While its slogan of “100 percent Americanism” could apply, as they argued it could be used for all the Americas, a “100 percent Canadianism” became far more common.⁹² And as in America, when trying to grow the ranks of Klan members, Canadian recruiters went after soldiers, soldiers being an important line of

⁹⁰ Allan Bartley, *Ku Klux Klan in Canada: A Century of Promoting Racism and Hate in the Peaceable Kingdom* (Toronto, ON: FORMAC, 2021), 30–31.

⁹¹ Myth, *Toronto, the Belfast of Canada*, 48.

⁹² Bryant, “Yesterday, Today, and Forever” 52.

defence for the Klan. It was hard to label the Klan un-American or un-Canadian if its membership was made up of former soldiers. While in the United States connections to the Civil War and the First World War were prized, in Canada that was replaced with the Boer War (South African) and later the Great War. The difference conflicts were not important: It makes sense as fascism follows patriotism. Moreover, Canadian patriotism was based on serving a special hinge between the United States and the United Kingdom. So, it makes sense that even the Klan could appeal to British colonial roots. This feeling carried over to Klan accoutrements as well. Canadian Klan members often carried Union Jack flags at events while having the maple leaf sewn into Klan robes.⁹³ Many of the provincial chapters of Klan even spelled Canada with a “K.” Thus, the Klan found that it could grow on foreign soils, while remaining its own organization.

At the same time, the Klan was clearly willing to engage in violent action. In Canada, the Klan’s reputation had preceded them and the Canadian government was watching. Local police were primarily responsible for keeping track of Klan activities. Being a foreign organization, the Canadian government had more reach on how to address its behaviour once it committed a crime.⁹⁴ The Klan, as King noted, had the potential to upset the linguistic balance of power in Canada’s eastern provinces. After that the Klan would remain in Canada much as it has in America—fractured beyond repair, limping on but never truly dying out—while doing significant damage to the idea of fraternal orders in Canada and the United States.

⁹³ Bartley, *Ku Klux Klan in Canada*, 41, 61, 65.

⁹⁴ Bartley, *Ku Klux Klan in Canada*, 66. Like the Klan in the United States, they could get away with a slap on the wrist. The RCMP and local police were known to let cross burnings happen.

The Klan would actually be the final blow to the Orange Order, and numerous other fraternities in the United States.⁹⁵ Nationally, very few Orange Order halls remain. The Masons fared a little better, limping on to the present day. Never the largest in the United States, the Orange Order, more than the Masons, was often used as a political tool, helping to maintain cultural festivals and to campaign for languages like German to be taught in schools.⁹⁶ The Klan's capacity to take organizational and social programs from these organizations and brand themselves as a "100 percent American" created the condition for Klan growth following the First World War.⁹⁷ The Klan, the Orange Order, and the Free Masons all became the focal point of understanding why there was no regulation or policies in place to handle the second Klan. They engaged civilly and often had enough political strength to hold off government oversight even when their civic engagements turned to violence against others. This local culture also helps to explain why, in Canada and the United States, fascism was unable to make a bigger move for political power. The Klan still wanted to work with a democracy; it just wanted to restrict who could be a member of that democracy. This can be attributed to their linkage to the political-emotional economy. The need for a more radical authoritarianism in America was simply not at the same point that Italy and Germany had arrived at in the 1920s, although they came perilously close a few times with the March on Washington and New York.

In summation, if the first Klan represented an emerging terrorist rebellion against Republican Reconstruction, the second was a terror-based social movement which also attempted to be a political organization within a well-established Euro-American tradition. Other countries with affiliations included the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, but

⁹⁵ Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 7–8.

⁹⁶ MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, 8–9.

⁹⁷ Bartley, *Ku Klux Klan in Canada*, 27–28.

each also had trouble with this style of social agency when it began to engage in radical violence.⁹⁸ Canada is probably the most comparable in terms of population, but it would also struggle to develop social policy to limit the power and authority of organizations like the Klan, the Orange Order, or the Free Masons. The Orange Order fared better and lasted longer in Canada but seemed to be the harbinger of the KKK.⁹⁹ The two of them, while at odds in the United States, had something of a tacit union in Canada. Klan members were invited up to speak at Orange Order events and various supportive parishes across Canada, thus, showing a political and emotional connection even when embedded in a different country with a different historical context. Whether in Canada or the United States, the Klan sought a similar balance of power that its predecessors had achieved with varying degrees of success, becoming a fascist voice within the countries it operated in. The Klan differed only slightly from other fascist and ultra-patriotic organizations, rhetorically believing that the government could be restored from within rather than being overthrown. The patriotic thing was to try and re-establish power and privileges lost to foreigners who, only on paper, were American but not truly patriots in their hearts, not 100 percent American (or Canadian). This began to change in the late 1930s as Klan allies launched their own march, but not on Washington. Patriotism was still aligned with support of the government and not overthrowing it, notwithstanding its open hostility towards the New Deal. The 1930s would be tough years for the Klan, and despite its early popularity, a similar fate awaited the Orange Order in England.

The Orange Order's influence, even in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Canada, eventually waned. It also divided, making clear distinctions between radical and social wings of

⁹⁸ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 216–218, 279–280.

⁹⁹ Bartley, *Ku Klux Klan in Canada*.279

the organization.¹⁰⁰ Even with this in mind, in the 1920s, the Klan and the Orange Order bore an uncomfortable similarity. This early Orange Order was already well-established in the Euro-American way of life, so it is possible to argue that its disintegration left room for an American social, political, fascist, and terrorist organization to rise. This is also what separated these organizations from each other: a strong sense of the national line. After all, even the United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada developed Klans of their own in the interwar period. Each failed to fully develop into proper organizations and eventually collapsed back into the Orange Order or, in Germany's case, other more dangerous fascist groups. The intense, xenophobic nationalism of the Klan has led us to believe that there was little international connection between these groups. After all, they did develop in different countries. Even internally, most of these groups understood that they might play a role in establishing fascist and sympathetic governments but probably never take control. That, accompanied with often indirect inspiration or rather the adaptation of similar policies to fit a different social, economical, and legal climate, has been key to denying their own internationalism.

2.3 International Order, the Feeling of the Threat, and the Other Guys

A final modification needs to be added to the understanding of the international order. In this section, I focus on Turkey and Spain and the role they played in fascist and democratic imaginations. These two countries, often given less attention in the dramas of the interwar, played a surprisingly important role in the European march towards fascism. These examples were, of course, not just an imaginary place Nazis could work out their ideas (and military

¹⁰⁰ Myth, *Toronto, the Belfast of Canada*, 48.

equipment), but conflicts from which they could model their own revolution. They were experimental places for the Germans and the Italians to form their understanding of the world, their place in it, and what forces they would align themselves with. While fascism had a strong domestic front, the leaders of these movements sought like-minded individuals. As I stated earlier, the world had become too economically and academically connected to ever really be pulled apart. Isolation is more in reference to a focus on national borders over international concerns, which still holds true in some respects.¹⁰¹

The two international forces of concern for the political-emotional economy were communism and fascism. It is well-documented that countries in Europe and North America feared a fate similar to that of Russia falling into communism. For Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco the lesson of Russia was that revolution was possible, but it did not need to end in communism.¹⁰² This was the lesson Giuseppe Antonio Borgese made in his 1937 book, *Goliath: The March of Fascism*. Borgese was a native of Turin and professor of German literature turned anti-fascist writer. Forced into exile after Mussolini's rise to power, he immigrated to the United States. He then taught at the University of Chicago and tried to warn the university that it was accepting propaganda into its library.¹⁰³ This act would lead to him being called in front of the Dies Committee. *Goliath* claimed that the development of fascism had a racial and religious basis. Borgese stated that fascism came from a uniquely Italian mind and was more easily transferable through Catholics.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, Germany, with a Catholic minority, fell prey to the Italian infection. He argued that the structure of the Church made Catholics more likely to

¹⁰¹ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 235.

¹⁰² Borgese, *Goliath*, 197.

¹⁰³ "Borgese testimony," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 5, Friends of New Germany, p. 18, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁰⁴ Borgese, *Goliath*, 4.

fall in line with fascism. This might seem reasonable in regard to Spain and France. However, this theory did not hold up well when it came to the rise of militarism in Turkey. Limited in language and scope, Borgese found it difficult to place Japan's impact outside of the League of Nations. Yet Atatürk and Turkey bear a surprising mention, even suggesting he was another Mussolini or Hitler. Given that Atatürk's rise was before Hitler or Mussolini, it could serve as a guide for the would-be dictators. Borgese published his book before the end of the Spanish Civil War. He had hoped Franco would lose the civil war and bring an end to fascist victories.¹⁰⁵ Thus, the Russian Revolution was far from the only populist movement during this era. Regimes were in a state of flux. Some of these in Spain, Turkey, and Japan, all made an impact on the development of a political-emotional economy; Europe and Asia had recent fascist victories to use as examples. Hindsight has made their impact easier to gauge. For some, like Borgese and other experts on fascism who testified to the Dies Committee, they did not know how to place Franco and Atatürk within a fascist context where Italy and Germany were seen as paradigmatic examples.

Franco's regime can be linked to the fascist chain in a few obvious ways. In Fronczak's research, method and action matter more than rhetoric. The Nazis and the Klan started by union busting. So, too, did Franco's forces, creating tensions before the war broke out. When a conservative coalition won the 1933 election, the provincial miners took to the streets and socialist movements rose throughout the province of Asturias, Spain. With a political revolution on the horizon (and a limited communist influence), the military under Franco went in to repress

¹⁰⁵ Borgese, *Goliath*, 482. A small aside, he seems to place Turkey as European and, at the same time, Asian. Turkey operates as a go-between geographically as well as ideologically.

it.¹⁰⁶ Patriotism quickly became fascism in Spain.¹⁰⁷ Franco often used the word “patriots” when describing his soldiers and his actions. Again, for the fascist or authoritarian, the difference between patriot and nationalist is minimal. Socialist and fascist tensions were far closer to a fever pitch in Europe, as increasingly worrying reports were coming out of Germany and Italy. The workers revolt being crushed did not start the civil war, but it did point to more troubles ahead. When the socialist-democratic Popular Front Coalition took power in 1936, Spain’s military went into revolt.¹⁰⁸ The civil war thus became a proxy war for communism and fascism, one, in the end, Franco and authoritarianism would win.

By 1936, there were many fires raging in Europe. Both communism and fascism appeared to be a growing threat generally. This fear led a wave of communist immigrants and anti-fascists to go to Spain to help fight for a wider democratic cause. As many as 1,500 Canadians, 2,800 Americans, and 2,100 British joined with 33,600 other foreign fighters to defend Spain’s democratic enterprise.¹⁰⁹ Further, extensive news coverage of Spain, Germany, and Italy linked them internationally, and they were being covered more and more by the worldwide press. However, the global response was somewhat lax.¹¹⁰ While the number of volunteers seems impressive, opinion polls tell a different story, especially for Britain and the United States. In the United States, two-thirds of the country had no opinion on the war and the rest were divided: 22 percent were pro-loyalist and 12 percent were pro-Franco.¹¹¹ This number

¹⁰⁶ José E. Álvarez, “The Spanish Foreign Legion during the Asturian Uprising of October 1934,” *War in History* 18, no. 2 (2011): 202.

¹⁰⁷ Stuart Leslie, *The Formation of Foreign Public Opinion in the Spanish Civil War* (Newton, MA: Boston College, 2004), 5.

¹⁰⁸ Álvarez, “The Spanish Foreign Legion,” 202.

¹⁰⁹ Samuël Kruizinga, “Fear and Loathing in Spain. Dutch Foreign Fighters in the Spanish Civil War,” *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d’histoire* 27, no. 1-2 (March 3, 2020): 135. Not the main point but one of those was Norman Bethune. A famed Canadian surgeon who went to fight for communism in China, Bethune became a national hero in China while remaining in relative obscurity till the 1980s.

¹¹⁰ Stuart, *The Formation of Foreign Public Opinion*, 7.

¹¹¹ George Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971* (New York: Random House, 1972), 49, 80.

is five million more than Metcalfe's estimate of the ten million American Klan (pro-Klan and pro-fascist) numbers. Britain fared a little better in that only a third of them held no strong opinion. In either case, both governments refused to assist the elected Republican government, as both had forms of non-intervention acts, broadly supported in the United States by conservatives (like Lindbergh).¹¹² Here, the US Congress was unwilling to modify their Neutrality Acts in order to help the elected side. The results, even if unintended, favoured Franco who was drawing most of his support from a conservative and military base. In short, the world was not willing to go to war over Spain and appeasement still had lots of popular support. In later Gallup polls in 1939, over 74 percent of Americans favoured peaceful negotiations with Italy and Germany.¹¹³ Thus, suggesting that a majority in the United States and Europe continued to want to live with, as opposed to fight, fascism in this era.

The idea that Spain was a proxy war for the looming Second World War is revealing in a few ways. While drawing out tensions of fascism and communism internally, it also showed international reluctance to stop its spread. The failure of international agencies and actors were a fundamental component to the strength of fascist movements. This was in part, of course, because of the long shadow of the First World War. It created a political-emotional economy of mistrust in the old internationalist order. The unwillingness to get involved in another country's domestic affairs helped to create the connections for fascists to grow in number. Noticeably absent from any international regime of neutrality was Italy and Germany, both of whom tremendously supported Franco. The willingness to get involved in foreign countries to push fascism would be policy in both Italy and Germany. I will address them in greater detail and their relation to the Dies Committee in the next section.

¹¹² Stuart, *The Formation of Foreign Public Opinion*, 8.

¹¹³ Gallup, *The Gallup Poll*, 85.

Finally, let us examine the role of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of Turkey. In truth, more could be done to include Atatürk into a nationalist and fascist movement as his historic exclusion has been linked to controversy surrounding the Armenian Genocide. However, for this paper, the language surrounding Atatürk is what I want to draw importance to. If we can accept Borgese's idea that, at a bare minimum, the Russian Revolution had connections to fascist movements as inspiration, then we can accept that fascist examples were being set across political and even racial lines. This does not mean the Nazis were right to see themselves as in line with revolutionists or nationalists, but our goal is to examine the consequences of this imagined alignment. Borgese argues along these terms. Fascist authoritarianism may have come from an Italian mind, but it was, in turn, inspired by the likes of Bismarck and Atatürk, great nation builders who modernized while taming socialist-democratic elements. I am simply adding another link in the fascist chain, that of Atatürk and the Young Turks.

This argument draws on Stefan Ihrig's *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*. Ihrig sought to place Atatürk in relationship to the development of Nazi thought. I am not arguing that the Nazis were right to understand things this way, just that they saw Turkey and Atatürk as a fundamental inspiration to their future goals. Hitler, defending himself in court from charges of treason, had to articulate the origins of fascism stated, "It could have only come from the farmers country ... Another example you can find in the Young Turk Revolution. Enver Pasha marched on Constantinople and established a new state there."¹¹⁴ Many others have noted the role of Enver Pasha and the importance of this first march to revitalizing the Ottoman state. Pasha and the Young Turks' march took place in 1909 long before Mussolini's march on Rome. Ihrig explores this how this was interpreted newspapers from the far right in Germany. The events of Turkey

¹¹⁴ Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 97.

were so heavily covered in mainstream German news that the right never needed to explain who it was or the events taking place.¹¹⁵ The right saw the Young Turk Rebellion as an inspiration for how to renew their own empire.

Notable in the study, as well, is the connection of several top Nazi figures to Turkey, many of whom had served in the Ottoman army during the First World War. Ihrig notes how Ernst Röhm, for example, made a pilgrimage to both Italy and Turkey to pay respects to his inspirations.¹¹⁶ A year before Röhm's journey, on the tenth anniversary of Atatürk's victory, the Storm Detachment (Sturmabteilung, or SA) threw a party with the Turkish embassy, even hosting an SA parade.¹¹⁷ When the Turkish ambassador died, a full parade through Berlin was made to honour his passing.¹¹⁸ All of this established a link between Turkish nationalism and Nazism that bridged the emotional appeal of militarized nation building. It also seems likely that German officials knew of the Armenian genocide and more so the Greek expulsion. While the former is still debated, the latter definitely provided a model for early Nazi Germany.¹¹⁹ Moreover, much of the language used to describe Hitler was developed around Atatürk. The imagined similarity, whether real or not, is what matters. A key component was the conditions in postwar Turkey and the Treaty of Sèvres.¹²⁰ The Ottoman Empire was initially subjected to a peace treaty similar to the way that the Treaty of Versailles carved up the former German empire. Atatürk's war against that treaty established the ethnic frontiers of modern Turkey. It was far easier for German writers to see similarities between their two nations, even more so than to Italy.

¹¹⁵ Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 3–4.

¹¹⁶ Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 108.

¹¹⁷ Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 118–119.

¹¹⁸ Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 125–126.

¹¹⁹ Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 183.

¹²⁰ Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 11.

Therefore, we can conclude a few things from these two often left out of other studies. First, that Germany and Italy were both willing to interfere in other countries' politics, to an even greater degree than the West's "internationalists." Working with Franco, the German and Italian efforts helped secure a fascist victory. This, in turn, helped to confirm Nazi suspicions that the West was still willing to err on the side of appeasement, not confrontation. With communism on the rise and the fears of class conflict, each country was left to its own devices. This left room for fascist threats to emerge into each country. While the old allies refused to get involved, a "new" or younger generation emerged on the scene. Supported by an intense sense of patriotism, each movement had its own path to authoritarian and fascist control. While no two were identical, each worked as part of a great network to create a fascist political-emotional economy. In this way, Turkey and Atatürk played a role in inspiring Nazi and Black Shirt action and thought. To the Nazis, Atatürk was a strongman who pulled his country out of an unfair treaty and expelled unwanted elements (Greeks and Armenians) in order to make his country strong again. Far-right newspapers would later describe Hitler in a near-identical fashion. Part of this fascist chain, with its cult of strongman leadership, would find a home across the pond in the United States and Canada.

Kurt Lüdecke, in *I Knew Hitler*, made a case that Americans were willing to appropriate Nazi ideas on race and were open to fascism. However, this fascist leader would have to be an American. Before all this led to the Dies investigation, there is also one other possible connection, namely the extraordinary role played by D. W. Griffith's 1915 film, *The Birth of Nation (BON)*. *BON* would be the first time the Klan would be put on display for the world to see. Thus, it bears inclusion, and a deeper look into the film and its reception across the pond.

3 An Unintended Birth: *The Birth of a Nation* in a Wider, Whiter World

In America, D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (*BON*) continues to have relevance as a dominant force in film-cultural history and film studies. It is the first major motion picture and the first major domestic box office success that changed the very nature of what a film could be globally. In most historical writing dealing with the rise of the second Klan, the film is represented as a symptom of underlying hatred rather than the cause of its rebirth.¹²¹ Yet, in the popular documentary *13th*, *BON* is given almost full credit for the second rise of the Klan, leading to a new wave of terror against Black people and foreign threats such as Catholics.¹²² The documentary argues that America was already a white supremacist nation and the movie only served to expose what was already there. This retelling is still common in narratives around the film in popular culture, silencing some of the nuance historians have tried to argue for in the past.¹²³ In these accounts, the role of orders or societies used to be given more attention, but as the film has remained and the various orders have turned to husks of their former selves, their mention in histories has diminished. This gained renewed importance when trying to understand the Klan in the broader context of white supremacist movements and that a political-emotional economy of "White rule" had already been established. J. Simmions built on the legacy of the orders to try and establish the Klan as part of the American way of life. He was trying to bring it back and was failing miserably. Griffith created for Simmions the perfect advertisement, and membership soared, according to legend.¹²⁴ While the film helped, the second Klan would have,

¹²¹ David Cunningham, *Klansville, U.S.A.: The Rise of the Civil Rights-Era Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹²² Ava DuVernay, dir. *13th*. 2016; US: Kandoo Films, <https://www.netflix.com/watch/80091741?trackId=13752289>.

¹²³ Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994), 7–8.

¹²⁴ Cunningham, *Klansville, U.S.A.*, 24–25. It still took a few years and some marketing experts to truly get the Klan going. It seemed to really balloon after the First World War. It is also important to note that if the film had not travelled, it would not have been shown all over the United States at once.

as Simmions said, a few other things going for it. First, the United States has a long history with societies. As covered in my earlier chapter, they provided every state with a sense that having a “society” that operated politically was normal; so, they were never that far away from the Klan.¹²⁵ Additionally, each group that landed in America brought its own ideas on race and society. Themes of white supremacy from back in Europe would slip from one community into the American melting pot which, despite the Civil War, had challenged American ideas of racial hierarchy.

These early societies often preserved ideological notions and built communities not just in the south but also in the north. Thus, ideas of white supremacy and anti-Semitism had been maintained and supported across the nation in both Protestant and Catholic circles.¹²⁶ What these orders did not always do so explicitly was maintain a strong sense of heritage in the United States; the Klan would fill that space. This nativism, the Klan advertised, had not just the backing of the film but also of cementing one’s place in America, becoming American or reaffirming it.¹²⁷ However, this shows that, while the Klan’s brand of bigotry had a nativist lean, it was not entirely original; many of its major themes were also central to imperialist ideas of empire, races, and eugenics. The film, if understood only as American, causes a blindness to its wider connection to the European understanding of race. It should not then be so surprising that the film would also do well overseas and contribute to an economy of transatlantic white supremacy.

¹²⁵ MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, 8.

¹²⁶ Pfeifer, *Roots of Rough Justice*, 69

¹²⁷ MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, 10–11.

Excluding Canada, *BON* fared best overall in Britain, turning a profit of around a £100,000 in its first theatrical run.¹²⁸ At £0.25 to £1.00 a ticket, that is a considerable number of tickets. While that number has been called into question as possibly inflated, box office records of today are not what they were then. In any case, it *was* undeniably a commercial success for those who screened it across England. This was especially impressive given that the film debuted in the middle of the First World War.¹²⁹ The film was successful for all the reasons it did so well in America. The show was a spectacle on and off the screen. Playing only in premiere theaters with huge orchestras and a massive marketing campaign like the circus in 1915, it was a far better place to be than the frontlines. In this way, Michael Hammond and Jonathan Wright assert that *BON* could even be understood as a stand-in for the First World War.¹³⁰ While acknowledging a shared sense of white superiority, their focus was on possible themes of confusion between Black people, blackface, and the German enemy. Campaign posters had already been showing Germans as the “Hun” and Hammond and Wright postulated that that was how the Black characters in *BON* were being understood.¹³¹ Their argument, though plausible, is heavily reliant on analyzing the film and its reviews.¹³² This risks ignoring Britain’s society, both more generally and its connection to America as its colonial parent. Recent attempts to find English protests have revealed that the British government had already created a vast network of

¹²⁸ Roughly £10.4 million today or US\$18.1 million. Michael Hammond, “‘A Soul Stirring Appeal to Every Briton’: The Reception of ‘The Birth of a Nation’ in Britain (1915-1916),” *Film History* 11, no. 3 (1999): 353. For more information on reception, see Ku Klux in Canada. Canadians starred in the film and were common members of the crew. Similar to America the film did well but faced protests in varying intensity a cross the country. It would be an understatement to say it was popular.

¹²⁹ Hammond, "A Soul Stirring Appeal," 355.

¹³⁰ Wright, “Re-Reading Birth of a Nation,” 36.

¹³¹ Hammond, "A Soul Stirring Appeal," 356.

¹³² Wright, “Re-Reading Birth of a Nation,” 43. Wright discusses the general theme but does not connect it to anything outside the film, only noting that the cross of the Klan came from Northern England and allowing the reader to read between the lines.

control, particularly in the British Isles.¹³³ Much of the economy of white supremacy had begun and was maintained through immigration and successive generational teaching.¹³⁴ By looking at the war as well as the film, an easier explanation might be that the British people understood racist imagery all too well. This is still the “empire of the White man’s burden” and still near global its supremacy. The nation’s ego had yet to be knocked down by the war, and ideologies of racial superiority still ran rampant within society. The only way these images worked was with this cultural context: the Hun (Germans) was reinvented and built off an old colonial trope, one that was not gone itself.

So, in *BON*, the scenes do not cause confusion but reinforce both narratives, as one is built on the other. The Hun can only be a mindless monster capable of raping and pillaging, because it is built on the narrative that that is what Black and colonized people are. This is probably best exhibited in the famous propaganda poster, “Destroy the Mad Brute” (Figure 1). The brute as a “Black archetype” had been in circulation for quite some time after the end of Jim Crow and was often linked with Black men being closely related to apes.¹³⁵ Thus, the average British audience member did not need the most intimate knowledge of blackface in order to understand the original message of the film. Further, the potential of seeing the Germans in the black-faced actors seems reasonable given the levels of propaganda during the war. This is not to say the message worked perfectly; Germans were after all the Saxon in Anglo-Saxon.

In fact, Thomas Dixon Jr. himself did not approve of the Klan being reborn. For him, the KKK represented an older form of racism that should not be used, given new threats to whiteness

¹³³ Brian Willan, “‘Cinematographic Calamity’ or ‘Soul-Stirring Appeal to Every Briton’: Birth of a Nation in England and South Africa, 1915-1931,” *Journal of Southern African studies* 39, no. 3 (2013): 628–629.

¹³⁴ Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK*, 10–14. I do not mean that American racism never developed its own character out of slavery, just that it also developed alongside various other colonial forms of supremacy.

¹³⁵ David Pilgrim, “The Brute Caricature,” Ferris State University, 2012, <https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/brute/homepage.htm>.

and the West. He did not like the new Klan's exclusions based perceived different national and racial lines or religion (Catholic and Protestant). He preferred the dominant views of white supremacy, that most Europeans were White and needed to unite to fight against a communist (often depicted as Jewish) menace, Black people, Asian people, Muslims, Jewish people, and all other non-White immigrants.¹³⁶ Given Dixon's own understanding of the film, it is possible to understand it as showing an older white supremacist thought; a thought that excluded certain European races from whiteness and, for the purpose of the war, included the Germans too much. However, given the level of other propaganda during and after the war that argued Germans were a fallen race, little action was taken to regulate film. Writing about the film in Britain further shows the connection between certain themes and images. For Jonathan Wright, the connection to Britain is central. A hint of this appears in both advertising—as it was described as an “Anglo-Saxon masterpiece”—and in the imagery of the burning cross of the Klan, a symbol adopted from an old Scottish rite.¹³⁷

These images of the Klan in the film dramatically affected the second wave of the Klan in terms of its look and its most infamous method of causing terror—the burning of a cross. While the film is often given credit for the cross burning, this act first appeared in novels.¹³⁸ The original Klan never burned crosses, but Griffith liked the potent visual it created. This was even shown in advertising for the film. In British advertisements, drawings of the film show the lighting of the cross captioned with “the Scottish cross.” It was understood as a call to arms. Further, the change to the hooded figures to more of medieval knights was also an addition of the film. The themes of martyrdom and crusade would not be lost on British reviewers or the general

¹³⁶ Michele K. Gillespie, and Randal L. Hall, “Introduction,” in *Thomas Dixon Jr. and the Birth of Modern America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009).

¹³⁷ Wright, “Re-Reading Birth of a Nation,” 36.

¹³⁸ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 22–25.

audiences (See Figure 2).¹³⁹ The call to arms of the burning cross signals a declaration of war, first against the Germans, and second to address the great collective fear of the mixing of races, the “mulatto.”¹⁴⁰

There is still debate over *BON*'s early release in Germany. It might have released during the war, and we can speculate on how the film played in proto-Nazi imaginations.¹⁴¹ *BON* was the first film of its kind, but Germany and the Nazis would be obsessed with the settling of the American West long before the film *BON* was a box office hit. Lüdecke believed that all German boys grew up on Karl May and tales of the American frontier.¹⁴² In this way, stories of frontier violence fit comfortably into mainstream German culture. To this day, Germany still has a large “powwow culture.”¹⁴³ Ironically, as Lüdecke notes, it was common for boys to play “American Indian” which included recreating acts of scalping and burning captives at the stake. For many in Germany, he argues, the Apache were their heroes, a romanticized, pre-modern figure of a warrior-hero.¹⁴⁴ Here again, as with the powwows of today, I am not arguing May and German boys were right to do this, only that they did it and it spoke to a mythic desire to rekindle a primitivist human ideal. With images of the “Wild West” as part of the German childhood and, by the very nature of its connection to America, it is tantalizingly to draw deeper connections along this front. However, there is unfortunately not enough evidence that *BON* was shown during the war.

¹³⁹ Hammond, “A Soul Stirring Appeal,” 358.

¹⁴⁰ Wright, “Re-Reading Birth of a Nation,” 43.

¹⁴¹ Melvyn Stokes, “D. W. Griffith’s The Birth of a Nation Transnational and Historical Perspectives,” *The Birth of a Nation the Cinematic Past in the Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, August 1, 2019) <https://iu.pressbooks.pub/thebirthofanation/chapter/dw-griffiths-the-birth-of-a-nation/>.

¹⁴² Kurt Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler* (London: Jarrold Publishers, 1938), 26.

¹⁴³ CBC, “Teepees, Powwows and ‘Indianer’ Camps: Germany’s Long Fascination with Indigenous Culture,” *CBC News*, <https://www.cbc.ca/cbcdocs/pov/features/teepees-powwows-and-indianer-camps-germanys-long-and-some-say-weird-fascina>.

¹⁴⁴ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 26. I bring this up as Lüdecke added the following, “Small things float to the surface of my memory which must have helped to set the pattern of a life, at least its ... Loyalties, its lasting antipathies.”

There are still some further connections to be drawn along the lines of race. Germany had taken part in some of the stereotyping of Black people present in America. A postcard (Figure 3) offers a glimpse into a shared network of racist imagery in English to German. Further, Germany from 1904–1907 committed what is known as the Herero and Namaqua genocide in German South West Africa.¹⁴⁵ Germans had adapted Black and Indigenous American stereotypes to, in part, justify their continued occupation and genocide, producing an extensive visual culture, that those familiar with American anti-Black stereotyping can easily read even if you cannot understand German.¹⁴⁶ Figure 5 shows an often-reproduced theme in German colonial advertisement and propaganda. It depicts Black natives as rapists of White German women, this was a common trope during the conflict and a common justification for military action. Given the German public’s exposure to racially charged stereotypes, it is reasonable to assume that similar themes in *BON* would resonate with a German public, and that they understood the trope of “the Brute.” *BON* was certainly screened during the interwar era and it carried a similar message to those who opposed French occupation of the Rhineland under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

France had a large host of Black African soldiers from its colonies that were used in the final assault on Germany and subsequent occupation of the Rhineland. This triggered a moral panic in Germany—eagerly exploited by Weimar officials—and in White countries over “mulatto Rhineland bastard” children.¹⁴⁷ The narrative of Black men as rapists, as beasts, as

¹⁴⁵ Robert Hitchcock, and Samuel Totten, *Genocide of Indigenous Peoples* (New Brunswick, N2011), 38–39.

¹⁴⁶ For more information on the visual culture created see Jürgen Zimmerer, and Joachim Zeller, *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War (1904-1908) in Namibia and Its Aftermath* (Monmouth, Wales: Merlin Press, 2008). Going into further detail, while tempting, is a little outside the range of this paper. About eighty thousand people died in the genocide, roughly 80 percent of the Herero and 50 percent of the Nama populations.

¹⁴⁷ Iris Wigger, “‘Against the Laws of Civilisation’: Race, Gender and Nation in the International Racist Campaign Against the ‘Black Shame,’” (Berkeley journal of sociology) 113. She explores some of these themes in greater detail in her book *The ‘Black Horror on the Rhine’ Intersections of Race, Nation, Gender and Class in 1920s Germany* (London: Macmillan, 2017).

“brutes” present in *BON* was present in the German descriptions of French-African soldiers. This concern, called the “Black Shame” in Germany, or “the Black Horror on the Rhine” in Britain, was a tool of postwar German propaganda prevalent in Canada, Australia, and Great Britain.¹⁴⁸ Since then, significant scholarship has looked into the accusations and has found that there were, in all likelihood, very few cases of rape, and certainly no more involving African troops than White French troops. This did not stop American commentators at the time from encouraging lynching. In this way, German imagery of Black soldiers mirrored what was present in *BON* and in American depreciation of Black people. This can be further exhibited in a few images from German magazine, *Kladderadatsch* (Figure 6). This is a bit of a play on the brute image used in “Destroy the Mad Brute.” However, the features are made to resemble that of a Sambo character even more so (see a Sambo example in Figure 4). The slogan translated to English is “Black Horror on the Rhine,” making it near impossible to read this artwork in any other way. Still further a German advertisement (Figure 7) at this time assumed rape and violence would ensue and wanted to collect funds, arguing that this was a threat to the White race everywhere. Earlier in the war, *Kladderadatsch*, in July 1916, also used a Sambo soldier to mock French troops as incompetent (see Figure 8). Connected to the German understanding of the “brute” is a Karl Goetz medal titled, “Black Shame.” The front features a Black French soldier, the head exaggeratedly shaped more akin to a Nott and Gilden illustration (Figure 9). The skull of a Black man is between a Greek man and a chimpanzee, with marked similarities to the chimpanzee’s skull. The front of the coin has “liberty, equality, fraternity.” The French motto brought into alignment with the image of the brute, suggests the French are free to act the same as the brute. If there is any doubt of this, on back of the coin contains a pretty obvious reference to the alleged

¹⁴⁸ Stokes, “D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation* Transnational and Historical Perspectives.”

rape of the Rhine. A woman, presumably German but all White women could be presented here, is tied to a French phallus as it can be identified by the helmet on the tip, and the words “die schwarze Schande” (Figure 10, “the Black Disgrace”).

The coin, as late as 2020, can still represent the lie of Black men as rapists. While all scholarship has highlighted that these rapes are a fabrication for the justification of racism as noted above, the legend can live on in expected places. The back image proved to be a challenge to find. While looking for it, I stumbled across an American auction site. It allowed the buyers to include a description of the object. The essay attached is nearly a thousand words and I encourage a read, but I have selected this quotation:

The history of the French occupation of the Rhineland is replete with horrific stories of cruelty and wanton murder ... But by far the most-often-repeated crimes of those savages was rape. French use of Black Troops was nothing short of a national insult cast at a nation that the French hated with a passion ... It has been admitted the French were engaged in a blatant and obvious kind of psychological warfare against the Germans ... To the Germans, these African soldiers were symbols of barbarous savagery as this was Germany's first domestic encounter with Negroids within its national boundaries ... Negroid troops were left there longer to shame the German people ... After this, the London Daily Herald published an article entitled 'The Black Scourge in Europe: Sexual Horror Let Loose by France on the Rhine' which marked the beginning of an international outcry against the sexual misconduct of Negroid troops in Germany ... In fact, six parliamentary delegations petitioned the British and German governments for investigation and inquiry into rapes and assaults by Black Soldiers on civilians in the occupied territory. The cry was ... the Rhineland was being disgraced and polluted, the dignity of the Germans and the white race was implied ... The uncontained sexual proclivities of the savages was doing irreversible damages to the German women victims, but no thoughts of miscegenation is hardly imaginable.¹⁴⁹

It goes on to defame Black soldiers more and suggests that the image on the coin was accurate up until the Second World War. On average, it seems that this item still sells for about US\$300–500. Hate has value. Further, on the seller's auction page, past the images of guns, it is possible

¹⁴⁹ Milestone Auction, “WW1 IMPERIAL GERMAN BLACK SHAME MEDAL KARL GOETZ,” 2020.

to find all sorts of Nazi and Klan accoutrements. While museums do store these items and historians rewrite narratives, the coins can be viewed as their original creators intended them to be. The continued circulation of historical artifacts in communities of Nazis, Klansmen, and others reinforces a political-emotional economy that is perhaps beyond the grasp of academics to influence. Playing to fears of replacement, this theory continues to take lives. The occupation was not forgotten and, of the few thousand mixed children born at the time, hundreds would be forcefully sterilized.¹⁵⁰ Black Germans found themselves the target of state-supported hatred even after Hitler fell.

We can also see an example of this imagery in a postcard from the era connecting these points in Figure 11. What matters for the postcard is the complex way race is equated. Aside from the stereotype figure of a Black man in the postcard, there are the words: “Brutality, Bestiality, Equality,” a play on the French Revolutionary slogan. I will focus on “equality.” The French and Czech people are brought into comparison with Black people and “brutality, bestiality.” While this is a German use of this trope to attack the French, it is important to remember it was used by both sides, as well as across party lines. This message of comparing humanity to animals and to Black people was a common theme through *BON* that all sides could try and exploit, in Britain’s case, during the war, and in the case of the right-wing, Germans after it.

Angelica Fenner insists that *BON* was especially influential in Nazi Germany. Nazi films borrowed on themes first established in *BON* and, further, even after Second World War in the film, *Toxi*. Fenner asserts the film shows the continued fear of “mulatto” children in Germany. While the film’s message is one of acceptance, it reproduced many of the ideas that *BON* had

¹⁵⁰ Tina M. Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 6–7.

embraced, namely that “mixed” children are a violation of the natural order of things and that they come into being through a failure of the individual morality of their parents. This message was one that the British public would likely not have missed. All of this points to the awkward silence that surrounds the overly positive reviews in Canada, France, England, the United States, and likely Germany.¹⁵¹ Black voices are missing on this subject, particularly in the European context; however, their absence may be explained in a few ways.

A few different forces were at play in silencing Black resistance to the film. The United States is by far the best documented. *BON*'s release incurred criticism from start to finish in Black and anti-Jim Crow circles. To probably no surprise, these communities saw this movie as a gross misrepresentation of the era of Reconstruction.¹⁵² The film might have even been banned at the state level in various places if it was not for the positive presidential attention it received. Famously, *BON* was shown at the White House and President Woodrow Wilson was misquoted in the film's script as saying, “It's like writing history with lightning. My only regret is that it is all so terribly true.”¹⁵³ While the film would continue to be protested—notably by the NAACP in a campaign that brought it national attention—its legacy was cemented in that moment.¹⁵⁴ The president, the spectacle, and the general underlying white supremacy running rampant through the north and south made it a blockbuster. The Klan's rebirth would turn into a legend that is still very much part of the film's story.¹⁵⁵ In the case of Britain, however, there are a few reasons protests might not have been actively recorded. First, the sources used to construct the history of

¹⁵¹ Diedrich, *Cultural Crossovers*, 227–228.

¹⁵² Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 22–25.

¹⁵³ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 22–25. The veracity of this quotation has been challenged. However, it is true that the presidential viewing was used to justify its continued viewing across the states.

¹⁵⁴ Stephen Weinberger, “The Birth of a Nation and the Making of the NAACP,” *Journal of American Studies* 45, no. 1 (2011): 77–93.

¹⁵⁵ Cunningham, *Klansville, U.S.A.*, 30–32.

the film in the United Kingdom are from all largely staple newspapers in the United Kingdom. Given that the reviewers of the film in each case were White, it might not have occurred to them to record a demonstration.¹⁵⁶ In *A Soul Stirring Appeal*, Hammond was only able to find one review that suggested the story was leaning in favor of the Klan. Today, the film has found a niche in film history and, most often, the focus on specific scenes has come to dominate the narrative about its international showing. Slowly, painstakingly, as archives are digitized, more stories of rebellion have been uncovered, and narratives of protest from farther parts of the empire regain new force.

The missing reviews and the difficulty in locating protest, in turn, points to the new social political powers the war gave the British government. Many resources became scarce and the movements that were threatening the social order before the war were put on hold for the war. In short, anti-racist and anti-colonial movements may not have wanted to, or were not able to, produce their own reviews in the wartime political climate of Britain.¹⁵⁷ This seems to be the case for *The African Times* and *Orient Review*. The review published through the empire was halted right before the first showing of the film, and never covered its American screening. The fear was never of “Imposter Klans” but of protests from the “colonial others,” suggesting that even imperial governments understood how their global racial order connected to the Klan’s story. The second showing of *BON* in 1918 also did significantly worse. The easiest explanation for this is that the theme of rebirth in the movie did not fit the mood in Britain that year. It could

¹⁵⁶ Hammond, “A Soul Stirring Appeal,” 358. He notes that this did not happen in a public way. It appears as though he did not look for smaller publications.

¹⁵⁷ Sheri Berman, *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe’s Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 10–15.

also have meant that it was simply not worth protesting. The British population had had enough of war, and, unlike the Klan, the British Empire was not headed to a popular rebirth.¹⁵⁸

Similarly, in France, the film was loved by critics but had limited commercial success.¹⁵⁹ After trouble with both the war and translation, the film would not show till after the end of the First World War. The French government was also not sure how the audience would understand the film. Some evidence suggests the racial nature of the film was a concern, as it might affect Black African soldiers who served in large numbers in the French army. Jonathan Wright suggested this is perhaps a departure from Britain and America. However, it shows a connection between the economy and white supremacy even if the film was not shown. The film board seemed to understand its own population well and race riots were simply not welcome during a war. Worries of who would see themselves in the film and concerns over the racial themes led to the film being edited down from three hours to one. For those reasons, the film lacked the environment to flourish in France.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, Australia and South Africa would edit the film and limit its release.¹⁶¹

BON was the first part of an American mythos. It is often presented as an example of the power of pop culture. However, this only applies to the American context. By looking at how the film was received internationally, we gain a new meaning of it, not just as a work of cinema that would force other countries to respond to it with larger productions but also to reflect on the film's message. Released during the early stages of the war, it is clear that the British hoped it would work as propaganda. Black-faced characters would be both enemy Germans and

¹⁵⁸ Hammond, "A Soul Stirring Appeal," 360.

¹⁵⁹ Some loved it for its technical elements not its racial messaging.

¹⁶⁰ Wright, "Re-Reading Birth of a Nation," 38.

¹⁶¹ Willan, "Cinematographic Calamity," 628, 637.

colonized peoples, and the film's heroes, the Klan, would be the British White people. But the First World War did not end with a European rebirth as *BON* did. While the interwar period saw popular films move away from themes of war and racism, the idea of white supremacy was far from gone in the minds of politicians and everyday citizens alike.¹⁶² The all-American story of bigotry and fascism seemed like it was going to meet its final end in the aftermath of Second World War and certainly numerous examples of anti-hate would spring up across the globe. Yet, it has never been truly defeated.

3.1 Primary Documentation, the American Legacy, and Bund Camps

As is probably clear, this paper relies on various forms of documentation. Including postcards, newsreels, articles, diary entries, and documentation produced for the Dies Committee, I have used a wide range of available materials. I have also used secondary sources as primary ones. This is a common criticism of large histories but necessary for reinventing some of the more commonplace ideas of transnational influences. I am guilty of this sin largely because of my own language limitations and access to documentation. By going global, as it were, I have made the argument that elements of fascism can comfortably live in a democratic society and can always be reborn out of the ideals of nationhood, nationalism, and patriotism. Furthermore, it is often difficult for the majority to recognize it as such precisely because citizens always embrace some sense of collective belonging, allowing supremacist and fascist movements to develop domestically. This process is connected to and is embedded in a political emotional fascist economy that criss-crossed the Atlantic. Finally, despite isolationist ideas of the

¹⁶² Hammond, "A Soul Stirring Appeal," 368.

time, fascist thought and action moved with relative ease through Europe to America and vice versa. It also drew some of its inspirations and support from established democratic institutions.

In this way, it is not surprising that what is and is not a fascist act might depend on perspective. The Sixties Scoop in Canada and the legacy of residential schools across North America, the Jim Crow laws inspiring Nazi laws, and Madeline Albright's comments on the deaths of Iraqi children, may all fall under the label of a fascist act.¹⁶³ This may make the liberals, or the democratic left feel uncomfortable, but nonetheless it is important to recognize fascism and some of the more problematic elements about its relationship with democratic society. Racist and discriminatory laws with the tolerance of authoritarian theory allows for the rebirth of fascist ideas and later reactions. This might also explain why some have paradoxically viewed authoritarian action as still consistent with democracy. After all, acts, deeds, and policies enacted through a democratic process and institutions can be restricting and likely will in the future. It seems more than reasonable to assume that undemocratic policies in the past will inspire authoritarianism in the present and future. Even if laws are struck down, or policies made to address past wrongs, authoritarianism, racism, anti-Semitism, islamophobia, and so many more, can live in in the realm of any culture. The continued promotion of anti-Black racism from the horror on the Rhine and *BON* is part of this connection. Similarly, Mackenzie King's and Charles Lindbergh's admiration for Nazi Germany shows that fascists can and would make credible connections to democratic political circles. King again, while hating nationalisms, still had to engage in nation-building. Hate and racial identity is what drew Lindbergh to Nazism. Thus, fascist policies applied to both sides of the political spectrum even in a democracy.

¹⁶³ A. Twaij, "Let's Remember Madeleine Albright for Who She Really Was," March 25, 2022, *Al Jazeera*.

From here, my paper follows the nature of the themes outlined from the start, but now looks more closely at events coming back to America. While the first part of this paper examined the cultural aftermath of the Civil War and the First World War as well as the interconnectivity of patriotic narratives, nationalism, and general forms of anti-Black racism, the second half focuses on what drew attention in the United States to this growing phenomenon. Central to this was public perception of a march to Madison Square Garden in 1939 by the German American Bund. This event was the crescendo of a day of activities for the Bund.¹⁶⁴ Not unlike our Bund-KKK meeting described at the start of this paper, it would be a day of joy and hope for many attending the rally, starting with parades and marches at Andover and Long Island. The Bund's most infamous leader, Fritz Kuhn, took center stage at the event and later at trial. Kuhn, a German-born immigrant to the United States, tried to do his best where others had failed in turning the German community into a Nazi one. Eventually, he was caught embezzling money and was sent back to Germany.¹⁶⁵ However, from the start the Bund and other fascist groups were already under a great deal of suspicion in the 1930s. That came not from the United States but from fascist countries.¹⁶⁶ Lüdecke, one of Hitler's men in America, noted that they could cause problems for Germany, which was always the first priority of Germans in America. This, however, did not come to pass. As the Bund and others organized, their goal would be to spread fascism in the United States not fully caring about the repercussions in Germany. Additionally, as Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco took power, American fascists were in clearer view of the

¹⁶⁴ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 30–31.

¹⁶⁵ "Folder two of various Associated Press articles," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 6, Criminal Records of the Bund, p. 18, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁶⁶ "Memo interview with Franco Fontana, Italian Consul General," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 5, Friends of New Germany, p.4, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

American people and government. Between the Bund's rally and rising fascist power abroad, America acted against a looming problem through the Dies Committee.

The Dies Committee has a complex history of its own as its official name reveals its infamy: the House Committee on Un-American Activities. With it comes the later baggage of McCarthyism and the yellow and white papers. Founded to investigate communism, fascism, and the influence of propaganda in America, the committee is more often remembered for subsequent witch hunts.¹⁶⁷ However, it did act as the most public-facing government body that examined the threat of fascism. J. Edgar Hoover also led investigations, but he was a little late to the party, even allowing the right to commit greater acts of violence than the left.¹⁶⁸ However, eventually he, too, would recognize the threat. From the outset, we can already see a troubling pattern. The investigation did not truly get going until after the Bund staged its largest rally in New York where violence broke out. How this happened in America seems to be the real question the committee was asking, as well as what could be done about it. The rally caused a moment of crisis and self-questioning. Groups once thought unrelated or not part of fascism were brought into proximity with each other, by their own actions. Many attended the rally, including the Klan, the Bund, Black Shirts, and the Silver Legion, and were all brought into close proximity to each other by their own volition. The Bund's actions fit an American tradition well, large-scale protests have been part of the American tradition going back to the Boston Tea Party. Additionally, the Klan was known to parade through the streets of various US cities. The Klan had numerous marches throughout the early 1920s from Washington to small towns across the United States; it made its presence known throughout America.¹⁶⁹ The largest marches had an

¹⁶⁷ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 14–15.

¹⁶⁸ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 13.

¹⁶⁹ Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK*, 19.

attendance of up to thirty thousand participants. This speaks to the incapacity of the nation to see a domestic nationalist movement as fascism. Though Klan leaders had been called to testify in front of Congress, the Dies Committee never opened a full investigation into the Klan. It was proposed in 1946, but the committee members allegedly said that the Klan was an old American institution that should not be investigated.¹⁷⁰ However, in light of the Klan's actions, it became impossible to exclude the Klan from examination. It was at least put on a list of organizations suspect of "un-American activities."¹⁷¹ That said, on the list of a hundred or so organizations to be investigated, the KKK is missing their investigated check mark.¹⁷² The evidence suggests that the Klan was never fully looked into, certainly not with any of the seriousness the state directed towards groups with overt foreign ties, political parties on the right, or domestic socialist, anti-racists, and communist groups on the left.

This leads to the question of what did the committee investigate, and what could be found in their files linking these international and national forces?¹⁷³ Captured in the undercover notes of John Metcalfe is what he saw as common ground for these groups. From these notes and the evidence collected through the committee, the political and emotional landscape was ripe for these groups to connect. Each file contained various forms of evidence, the most common of which was hearing transcripts from witnesses. Based on sheer volume, it would seem the biggest worry was first foreign interference, then the Silver Legion, and lastly, the Klan (which had the smallest file in terms of types of evidence and only one box dedicated to it). The Dies Committee

¹⁷⁰ Michael Newton. *The Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi: A History* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland., 2010), 102.

¹⁷¹ "Folder three subversive organizations list," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 6, p. 5, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁷² "Folder two various Associated Press articles," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 6, p.5 Criminal records of the Bund, p. 18, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁷³ Covid-19 prevented full in-person access to these files. I requested scans of numerous boxes and received six boxes of scanned folders each with a few thousand pages. This certainly gave a sense of how the community hoped to link these groups to each other and to crime.

records on the Klan focused less on the actual night in New York than on the possible American wedding of the Bund to the Klan. The files contain newspaper clippings from *Lincoln Postman* and correspondence to its editor from Metcalfe, his conversation with the *New York Times* (late 1930s–early 1940s) and a copy of a 1940s issue of a Drew Pearson speech from 1946. Metcalfe and others seem to worry about the rise in popularity of the Klan in the early forties, claiming that their numbers far outpaced that of all the other fascist organizations combined again.¹⁷⁴ Further, the New Jersey meeting of Klan and Bund had sprung a child, the New Jersey–based “Legion of Death.”¹⁷⁵ This brings into question how big of an actual threat were these groups to the United States? At this time, the Klan seemed to have active support in the hundreds of thousands; however, the Klan was not always seen as the best ally for other far-right groups.

As Lüdecke notes, the Klan of the 1920s could have been America’s savior. He met with them at midway through the twenties, at the height of their power. The issue he noted was the fact that they were happy being newspaper men and had seemingly no interest in a full revolution.¹⁷⁶ Further, he struggled to gain funds in these years from them and from other Nazi sympathizers, like Henry Ford.¹⁷⁷ The issue seems to be with fascist dysphoria to a large extent. Hitler, though rising in the 1920s, was still something of a joke. Linking Hitler to Mussolini was still not that common and he had only just risen to power in 1922. Hitler’s turbulent twenties and thirties would mean Lüdecke would have to work odd jobs in order to support himself as he could not rely on Germany for aid. From there, Lüdecke had understood that Americans were not

¹⁷⁴ “The Dies Federal Investigation Committee Regards the Ku Klux Klan of Greater Menace to Americanism Than Communism and Fascism Combined,” John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 8, Ku Klux Klan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁷⁵ New York Post dated March 26, 1941, “The Latest thing in Klanishness: The Legion of Death in Jersey” John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 8, Ku Klux Klan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. The article points to some similarities to the Black Legion which according to the article was responsible for several murders.

¹⁷⁶ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 193–94.

¹⁷⁷ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 189–190, 206.

yet ready for a full movement towards fascism. What was needed to bring America into the fold was better internal pressure—and a little external would not hurt.¹⁷⁸ “Americanism” was not on the same level as the Nordic and folk movement of Germany. Interestingly, “Nordic,” to Lüdecke, referred to most White Europeans (he describes Britain as Nordic as well) in his book; however, Americans are Anglo-Saxon, not being fully Germanic, with English and French, preventing a strong belief in an “American bloodline” similar to the “German bloodline.” Further, after the end of the Civil War, the new migrants “dirtied” America’s purity, according to Lüdecke.¹⁷⁹ This was something of a shared held belief among the right wing of the party. *Kladderadatsch* in 1934 reflected this as well (Figure 12). With a cartoon that depicted White Americans having a problem with Black Americans and Jewish immigrants, the image speaks to fears of replacement by these groups. While upholding stereotypes of Jewish and Black physicality, it also upholds the Black man as a predator. One of the men who gazes at a White woman embodies all the stereotypes of a sexual lecher, cane and all.¹⁸⁰ Additionally, Lüdecke cited the First World War and subsequent depression not as being as socially disruptive for Americans as a possible reason the Klan did not turn against the state or try to create its own political party.¹⁸¹

There are two other missing pieces from this standard understanding of the Klan. One is the presence of Jim Crow laws. The United States had already implemented restrictive and authoritarian policies in places against its Black population. After all, as *Hitler’s American Model* noted, even some Nazis thought the Jim Crow laws were too extreme for the average

¹⁷⁸ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 407.

¹⁷⁹ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 295–297.

¹⁸⁰ Henry Louis Gates, *Stony the Road* (London: Penguin, 2019), 149–150.

¹⁸¹ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 295.

German to accept.¹⁸² This, coupled with an informal culture that often could already act in mob violence in selected moments, means America was viewed as already having White authoritarian policies in place. There simply might not have been the need to be more fascist so long as the current racial dimensions of political-emotional economy was maintained. The second factor is the unintended consequences of American anti-bolshevism. In some regards, the Nazi rise to power needed the menace of the left to willing participate in civil disobedience, or rather a willingness to call for revolution.¹⁸³ This is something that did not happen in the United States as the first Red Scare of 1919 had largely been clamped down upon on the left. Thus, it is not surprising that the Klan and Americanism were simply not viewed as fascist but as patriotic. Radical “Americanism” was then seen by Lüdecke and Kuhn as a rejection of fascist politics in America. Additionally, if Americanism and phrases like “100 percent American” were deemed too un-American and as a form of unconstitutional hate speech, a large part of their defence would fall apart. There was little incentive for these groups to claim Americanism as being connected to the authoritarianism of Europe. Americanism was addressed in other documentation as well by speakers that were anti-fascist. What might be surprising is that few of these speakers turned on Americanism or the Klan.

The Klan and Americanism was addressed in Borgese’s testimony. He and others had come to testify about the state of anti-American activities within the fascist communities. In other documentation and testimonies, Americanism was rarely viewed as being in line with fascist forces.¹⁸⁴ This was taken as a given right from the start. Much of what was talked about,

¹⁸² Whitman, *Hitler’s American Model*, 3.

¹⁸³ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 420.

¹⁸⁴ Folder one Stefano Caminti, John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 5, p. 4 Fascists, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. In the telegraph to the Dies Committee, he encourages an investigation into various academics and newspapers giving the “charge he is a menace to Americanism.” The title of the Dies report states this openly, “The Dies Federal Investigation Committee Regards the Ku Klux Klan of Greater Menace to Americanism Than

argued, or described fell into three categories. The first category was about the appeal of fascism and why Germans and Italians and other Americans might be swayed by it. Second, was the impact of fear of communism and if this makes Americans blind to the fascist threat. Third was a personal inquisition, for most testimonies, the issue of loyalty was brought up, each witness asked about their patriotism and how long they had been in the country. In general, most witnesses appeared to be new or first-generation immigrants to the United States. The diasporic nature created an interesting pattern to Metcalfe's questions when interviewing non-fascist sympathisers. Usually asking about their focus of study or work, then its relation to fascist sympathies, there was thus a moment where they must confirm their loyalty to the United States, followed by a statement about not being affiliated with communism.¹⁸⁵ This pattern in some ways mirrored the example of lynching that took place through American history. The oath is forced out by some threat, and if the committee finds you to be honest, you emerge truly American on the other side. This might be why no one questioned Americanism; to question the inquisitors was to go against the system and open up room for suspicion of not being American. Borgese, in *Goliath*, argued that the spread of Americanism was precisely what the world needed to stop fascism. In the hearing, he reconfirmed his theory on Catholics and the Italian community being susceptible to fascist influencers; however, he does note, "that one must take into account the particular conditions of poverty and isolation in which ... Italian immigration has developed or not developed during the last 50 years."¹⁸⁶ Borgese is addressing continuing stigma and feeling rather than hard law. In this way, we can better understand the issue of community

Communism and Fascism Combined" (see footnote 167 for citation). Americanism is viewed as a third option. There are numerous examples of this.

¹⁸⁵ Based on questions asked of Girolamo Vaenti, Dr. A. Borgese, and Dr. Ronzo Serono, John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 5, p. 5 Fascists, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁸⁶ "Statement of questions and Answers by Prof. G. A. Borgese," Box 5, p.25 Fascists, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

memory. While no longer discriminated by law, memories of past trauma play to the feeling—and the role of the Italian community—and the fear of not being considered American enough. This fear may not represent the laws on the books, but simply the anxiety of *not* belonging, one that can be elevated during a time of looming conflict with their former homeland.

Borgese and Dr. Ronzo Serono noted this poor treatment of Italians and Germans following the war as a possible reason for disloyalty to the United States. Borgese did not go into detail about why former soldiers were targeted by fascists, but it seems logical to assume their connection to nationalism would be deeper entrenched, more loyal to the “Motherland,” than in the average immigrant to the United States. Thus, both Germany and Italy in particular made efforts to reach out to their respective veteran groups despite formally promising not to in the 1920s and 1930s. Particularly, in the case of Italy, fascists were willing to be a little more connected to fascist groups in the United States. Metcalfe’s investigation noted a few close ties between the Italian Consul and Italian Veteran Groups.¹⁸⁷ After infiltration, these groups changed their leadership and sometimes their names to the likes of the Dante Alighieri Literary Group or the Lincoln Club. Further, the Consulate tried to exercise influence over Italian-American newspapers. Others in the Italian newspaper business, like Girolamo Vaenti who testified to the committee, argued that at times agents from the Consulate would work in these newsrooms across the country. He noted that many of these papers were sympathetic to Mussolini, and would often reprint fascist speeches. He claimed that some of these papers had direct contact with members of the Italian propaganda bureau. After his second testimony, three of the people he accused fled the country.¹⁸⁸ Dr. Serono, an expert in propaganda, largely

¹⁸⁷ “Report on Fascist Italians September 29th, 1939,” Box 5, Fascists, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁸⁸ “Statement of questions and Answers by Girolamo Vaenti,” Box 5, p. 9–12 Fascists, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. Fleeing is not proof of guilt but often meant the stoppage of investigation leaving allegations unresolved. Vaenti was killed a few days after his testimonies. Its inclusion in the box hints to seeing these as

confirmed for the committee that the Italian Consulate was going beyond the cultural development that should be allowed. For example, while Italian language classes should be taught, he argued that the Italian teachers flown in were often teaching the proponents of fascism alongside the language. Another issue for committee was embassies sending children back to Italy and Germany to participate in youth camps.¹⁸⁹

The German and Italians communities both had fascist summer camps back in their homelands. However, only the Bund seems to have full German cultural parks in the United States. The Bund, as mentioned, had amassed a stunningly large amount of property around New York but also major spaces throughout the United States.¹⁹⁰ Some of these camps were built as German parks before the Nazi takeover or rented from various landlords across the United States. The number of these camps is hard to say, but by Hart's estimate it may have been ten or so owned by the Bund, while renting-to-own another twenty or so.¹⁹¹ These camps offered a safe space to organize away from unfriendly eyes. Part of the Bund speech was the idea of persecution they faced in America. Unable to rally in public and persecuted by Jewish forces in America, they rose and created these open community spaces. Thus, out of the basements and into the community, the Bund now had spaces to rally and openly celebrate German cultural events.¹⁹² The camps were viewed as a fantastic place of propaganda for the Bund and Nazism in general. The general idea was to use them to build a larger German community first, then, slowly introduce certain individuals to Hitlerism. Thus, they organized numerous events that did not display the Swastika openly and only handed out pamphlets, the goal being to lure people into

connected. Most of the newspapers made it seem like just Italians killing Italians; no one seems to have been arrested for the murder.

¹⁸⁹ "Statement of Questions and Answers by Ronzo Serono," Box 5, p.7-11 Fascists, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁹⁰ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 34. Hart accounts for 24 camps but could be as high as 30.

¹⁹¹ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 34.

¹⁹² Metcalfe Diary, Box 1, July 13th, 1937, Manhattan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

German-American Society, and then the Bund.¹⁹³ Thus, the camps could be whatever the Bund needed them to be. They were both a place to create a good image of Nazism in America and a place they could talk freely about their thoughts on Jews, Blacks, Asians, and the Roosevelts.

Unless the press was invited in. On the day of the joint rally, or the lead up to the New York rally, the Bund tried to use the parks to control its image. Its membership numbered twenty thousand at the time of the Madison Square Garden event. The camps offered a romanticized glimpse into Nazi Germany for those willing to attend. In the summers, they also ran their version of the Hitler Youth. Some years, when international pressures were not at extremes, they even sent some students over to Germany for visits.¹⁹⁴ The Black Shirts helped do this as well in the Italian community. But these summer camps were increasingly fraught with scandals as the years went by. Camp Siegfried on Long Island in particular developed a reputation. From New York, kids could go participate in a full day of Nazi events. This included handling guns, which was done with the support of the NRA. At night, a party was organized, and alcoholic drinks provide for the young teens. Sexual abuse scandals followed, and after the park's seizure by the government, the land was sold off and made into a German community, that, as late as 2015, still had issues with allowing minority groups to buy property in what had appropriately become a gated community.¹⁹⁵

For this account of the Dies Committee, I have been using sources that can be found in the John C. Metcalfe files of the Hoover Archives, all materials he collected during his investigation of fascists in the United States. Given that I will be using his diary and the evidence

¹⁹³ Metcalfe Diary, Box 1, July 9th, 1937, Manhattan, Ad-2, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. Conversation with Papa Colay. Colay was supposedly the unofficial-official Nazi representative to the Bund; he fled before he could be called as a witness.

¹⁹⁴ Metcalfe Diary, Box 1, July 9th, 1937, Manhattan.

¹⁹⁵ Hart, *Hitler's American Friends*, 33.

he collected, it is important to understand who he was and what led him to his role on the Dies Committee. Metcalfe had earned his place as inquisitor for the committee. Often responsible for organizing witness testimonies, collecting evidence, and receiving letters from concerned citizens, he started with undercover work. According to his own account, he was never asked to go undercover. He volunteered to investigate the Bund to try and expose the evils of fascism.¹⁹⁶ During his time in the Bund, he befriended most of its main leadership across the United States. He did this by getting to know Kuhn personally and agreeing to be a speaker at each location he went to.¹⁹⁷ Metcalfe had already attended the opening of the park and attended the last leadership vote making him a familiar face to leadership. Giving the excuse he was on a business trip, Metcalfe used his connections to tour across the United States. Kuhn, now trusting Metcalfe, also tasked him with surveying the various parks and camps that belonged to the Bund and review membership rosters.¹⁹⁸ Metcalfe was welcomed into most inner circles wherever he went and was able to have private chats with each local Führer. In general, his work can be split into two components: (1) witnessing and participating in meeting to learn about connections and possible crimes, and (2) recording the speeches of Bund speakers. Metcalfe's undercover work and testimony were a key component of the Bund's collapse.

It is fair here to criticize his memory, and that of the Bund members talking to him. While there is not any reason to believe they lied, there are the usual issues of memory and a game of broken telephone, along with grandiose boasting that could skew the testimony and recognition in place. Given his undercover work, it was fitting that he took up this responsibility

¹⁹⁶ "Metcalfe Statement to Dies committee," Box 7, July 13th, 1937, Manhattan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

¹⁹⁷ Metcalfe Diary, Box 1, July 19th–23rd, 1937, Manhattan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. This covers his story from the establishing a reputation with Colay to attending the election and making the write connection in order to get a list of contacts.

¹⁹⁸ Metcalfe Diary, Box 1, July 23rd, 1937, Manhattan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

for the Dies Committee. He immigrated to the United States when he was young, which might have caused some suspicion, but the committee was always more worried about a communist connection. But Metcalfe was no communist sympathiser. In 1935, he wrote an article arguing Nazism and fascism were preferable to communism in Germany.¹⁹⁹ Further, after the reveal of his undercover work, the Bund leadership accused him of fabricating or inflating the stories he had heard for the news.²⁰⁰ Because of the complex play of censoring free speech and labelling actors as un-American, the committee attempted to be cautious about who they accused officially. Thus, criminal activity required a considerable amount of proof in order for the committee to make a public statement regarding individuals and actual felonious activity. Witness statements by Metcalfe, made while undercover, were not enough. Proof required official testimony from other members of the Bund and of a paper trail of criminal activity.

As early as 1930, the Bund and Black Shirts were not meant to have members that were foreigners. Each member, in short, had to be an American citizen to avoid being in violation of American law and have to register as an official foreign operative.²⁰¹ This law was a key component of dismembering the Bund. (As the committee's only real goal was to expose these groups and offer recommendations, it never pressed criminal charges.) A few other charges like money laundering were used as well. The biggest speakers would have fines levied for hate speech.²⁰² However, they countered these charges with the common defence of Americanism.

¹⁹⁹ Metcalfe article Southwest News article titled Germany Versus Communism, Box 7, correspondents, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. Included as well is a letter from the German Consul General Dr. R. L. Jaeger thanking him for the article.

²⁰⁰ Metcalfe Statement to Dies Committee, Box 7, July 13th, 1937, Manhattan, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. He is defending himself from these accusations.

²⁰¹ Based on memo from Consul General, John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 5, p.4 Friend of New Germany, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²⁰² Washington Post 9 Bund Chiefs Jailed under Hatred Laws 1940, John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 6, p.5 Criminal Records of the Bund, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. They were fined under New Jersey state law, limiting hate speech.

Further, they defended their speeches by arguing they were not being anti-Semitic in these public fora but were only bringing up facts about congressmen like Samuel Dickstein.²⁰³ Knowing that the committee results could end in social stigma and possible charges, the committee argued it required a high level of proof before committing names to its reports. With that in mind, I will be examining some of the information that was gathered that did not quite meet the bar to be published in a congressional report. I will go over some final themes of anti-Semitism and anti-Catholic hate as a unifying force within these movements, but first I will address a few of the sources from outside the Dies Committee, including some information from published firsthand accounts by a Nazi.

I have referenced Lüdecke a few times but will go into a little more detail. Lüdecke was one of Hitler's top lobbyists when the Nazi party was starting and spent considerable time working for the party and analysing Mussolini, Henry Ford, and the KKK. His work is widely anti-Semitic right down to its core beliefs and while some credit his book as balanced, it does demonstrate the level of devotion Hitler could instill in others, as well as explain some of the appeal of Nazism. His book, *I Knew Hitler: The Story of a Nazi Who Escaped the Blood Plague*, published in 1938, was regarded as the authority on Nazism. When taking from a firsthand account, some caution is necessary. Lüdecke appears to have done his homework on dates, names, and timelines that match up well with other accounts. The risk here might be overemphasizing his importance to Hitler and the usual issues of memory regarding key events. Given that he and Hitler had a falling out over the horrors of Nazi Germany, it is fair to say he gave a balanced white supremacist and Nazi view of the Führer. The other sources to also have

²⁰³ Based on official statements of Peter Gissibl, and George Froboese, John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 6, p.7, Criminal Records of the Bund, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

the same shortcomings of personal accounts are Mackenzie King's diary and Antonio Borgese's *Goliath*.

In a similar vein, Borgese could be said to have a similar retelling problem. Published before the fall of Spain, Borgese was more hopeful about fascism running its course. *Goliath* was an account of the rise of fascism that very much leaned into his own personal experience. He even argues that historians do not write histories like him, but they should. However, given his testimony and the appeal of the book, it would be wrong to exclude some of the ideas about fascism he was toying with. Since his style bounces between literary and literal, theory and feeling, and fact and figures, it is easy to see why historians did not write like him. Experimental and personal, his book like his testimony bears importance to a felt reality. Both these authors also understood that their works were to be sold in America and might have tailored some of their writings to better fit the market. This source will be used a bit more going forward, keeping in mind facts matter. The third personal account in this paper is that of Mackenzie King. Of the three, King's diary is the odd one out. All diaries or works of autobiography suffer from a similar fault: that of the writer and that of memory. In most cases, I went for ideas, thoughts, and feelings that did not necessarily need to be tied to a correct date and time.²⁰⁴ For King's diary, I used the pages to see where he might have found common ground with Hitler and Lindbergh. Further still on what he did not take issue with. What I am examining here is feeling and the power of that feeling to move those to action and allow others to accept the actions taken. In this vein, media and propaganda have played a large role in this paper by connecting feeling to imagery.

²⁰⁴ Teigrob, *Four Days in Hitler's Germany*. Chapter 9 has for more detail on King's anti-Semitism and how this connected to Germany.

I dedicated a large section already to *The Birth of a Nation* and I will only mention the Karl Gowtz Coin, the cartoons, and the newspapers that used them. Generally, I have used *BON* and various German images to expand the concept of the brute to Germany. The coin and other images were used to justify racist action and link Black people to animals, and thus race mixing and the fear of mulatto children, a fear stretching across the Atlantic. This imagery became well-settled into the German populace through the coin and their newspapers like *Kladderadatsch*. *Kladderadatsch* started as left-wing satire and drifted to the right as the years went on. Its ownership changed fairly often and each new owner was also increasingly pro-nationalist. As it drifted to the right, its readership changed. It was also an early support of Hitler. Its popularity went through various highs and lows and some issues sold as many as fifty thousand copies.²⁰⁵ Given the nature of the imagery and the text under it, it does not leave much room for imagination as to the meaning.

Finally, Karl Gowtz's coin was created from private sale bills and the British Museum. The artist was famous for marking the wrong date on the sinking of the *Lusitania*, causing conspiracy theories that the attack was planned. He would produce numerous propaganda coins for the Third Reich. These included commemorating the beer hall coin which bears an anti-Semitic depiction of a Jewish person being run out of the hall and the list could go on.²⁰⁶ The issue for this coin is that there is nothing disputing the facts this coin claims to represent. This is a slight problem with these coins; according to the British Museum's website, these coins are not on display but a little better interpretation of the coins online would help to limit

²⁰⁵ Ann Taylor Allen, *Satire and Society in Wilhelmine Germany: Kladderadatsch and Simplicissimus, 1890-1914*. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 1-10.

²⁰⁶ Available to view through the Met online. "Hitler's Putsch in Munich," like other places with these medals, they are not on display but are available on line with little to no context. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/236731>.

misinterpretation.²⁰⁷ Additionally, I added some right-wing newspapers to show how these connotations existed within far-right circles.

The main paper I added was the *Fiery Cross*. Each issue of these served to reinforce Klan beliefs and actions in the early part of the 1920s to the 1930s. Yet the *Fiery Cross* bears a little more unpacking. Klan papers were often the domain of the individual state and less attributed to one national newspaper. That being the case, some were more popular and widely read than others. The Ohio-based *Fiery Cross* sold respectable numbers in the 1920s (numerous issues are available online). Tracing authorship of individual articles is challenging as authors are frequently uncredited. Others have also pointed out that the Klan reprinted much of the same editorials and articles found in their other newspapers or right-wing papers of the time. Using the Klan's own words bears some challenges in this way. At best, it is reasonable to assume that if it was printed in their papers, there was some agreement over the nature of the articles. Much of the *Fiery Cross* was devoted to addressing criticism of the Klan and praising its good deeds. Even with that as a focus, the Klan did respond to criticism it had received as being a fascist organization. Again here, the Klan argued that while some similarity could be found, Americanism made them different. Further, the *Fiery Cross* and much like *Kladderadatsch* would draw on Jewish world order conspiracy theories for inspiration.²⁰⁸ Moreover, the mainstream media's role in spreading awareness of these groups has been called into question.

The Klan and those who persecuted them made headlines in the 1920s. Many mainstay papers like the *New York Times*, *Chicago Times*, *Washington Post*, etc., covered the Klan relentlessly. The papers within Italian and German communities also wrote about the Klan's

²⁰⁷ British Museum, "Medal: British Museum Karl Gowtz," https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_1949-0302-5.

²⁰⁸ Austin Carter Hall, "Swastikas and silver shirts: The dawn of American Nazism," Ph.D. diss., Miami University (2019), 2.

activities. Given the sheer exposure the Klan received, historians have called into question main stream newspapers role in overexposing these groups to the average person. This criticism was raised again with the Bund and, seemingly, with each far-right wave. While the newspapers that hounded them did help get the Klan, the Silver Legion, the Bund, and the Christian Front publicity, blame cannot be solely put on the papers. Keeping in mind, the Bund and the Klan, as so many others, had hoped this publicity would help revive their fortunes; it also backfired as more eyes meant more government officials investigating. In a similar sense, the Bund did not hate the publicity when Representative Dickstein attacked it; the more the left and Jewish groups attacked, the more membership rose.²⁰⁹ Indeed, Dickstein was a perfect antagonist for Bund and Klan forces. He was himself an immigrant and the three things the Klan hated most: he was Russian, anti-fascist to an extreme, and he was Jewish.²¹⁰

3.2 The Anti as Social Connection

Anti-Catholicism and anti-Semitism were two of the binding factors for all these groups even if this, in theory, could cause tension between them. The easiest way to draw connection is through anti-Semitism. Each of these groups had to a varying degree placed importance on grand Jewish conspiracy. While in film history, *BON* is often credited with the start of the second Klan, it was not the film that inspired Simmions: It was the lynching of Leo Frank in 1915.²¹¹ Frank's trial was in the press starting from 1913 when the body of Mary Phagan was found in the basement of Atlanta pencil factory. She had been violently beaten to death and sexually assaulted. Two notes were found around her body claiming that the night watchmen did the

²⁰⁹ Detroit, August 21st Diary entry ad 2, Box 1, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²¹⁰ Later on in life, Dickstein would turn out to be a Soviet spy.

²¹¹ Belew, *Bringing the War Home*, 36

crime. By a twist of fate, the night watchmen found the body and the notes, he still reported to his supervisor Leo Frank.²¹² The trial immediately drew criticism as the evidence surrounding Frank's guilt was all circumstantial and based on witness testimony.

The case hinged on the testimony of various member of the Black community, including the nightwatchmen "Newt Lee," Frank's cook, and Jim Conley. The first two testified to the odd behaviour of Frank the day of and after the murder. Jim, a fellow employee, claimed that Frank had called on him and paid him \$200 to write the notes. Frank had killed her in his office and was trying to force him to help take the body downstairs. Jim had written the notes but that was all he admitted to; he claimed he had not played a larger role than that. Given the relatively weak evidence to connect Frank to the murder, not to mention the timetable only made sense if he had killed her in the basement and not in his office, many assumed he would walk away free.²¹³ He was found guilty and sentenced to death. He and his legal team continued to refute the charges. Each time the guilty verdict was upheld. Eventually, Governor John M. Slaton commuted his sentence to life imprisonment as the witness testimonies came under further scrutiny.²¹⁴

To start, the cook who testified to Frank's foul mood recanted and agreed that Frank was home and did not know how long he stayed but was acting normal despite not eating. The reason she gave for the false testimony was that she did not want to go against the police. Further, the key testimony of Jim Conley was the police's third attempt at extracting a confession. Conley's first confession made the murder seem like it was planned by Frank the day before. This did not work with the evidence at all. Each version that the cops got from Jim came after day-long

²¹² John Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision by Governor John M. Slaton 1915: Governor John M. Slaton. Law Firm Partner of the Leo M. Frank Defense Team," Internet Archive, June 21, 1915, 4-6. The document here was uploaded by a white supremacist. Hence why they edited the title to fit with in an anti-Semitic narrative.

²¹³ John Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision by Governor John M. Slaton, 1915," 7-9.

²¹⁴ Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision," 29.

periods of intense interrogation.²¹⁵ Each new confession worked better with their theory of Frank committing the murder. When asked why the changes, Jim said he did not want the police to think he was responsible.²¹⁶ One key piece of evidence that Governor John M. Slaton noted was Jim's penmanship matched the notes penmanship and he, in fact, could write. Other private letters of his also showed he used some of the same colloquialisms found in the letter matched the note. Jim had argued that Frank dictated the letter; this seemed to contradict that.²¹⁷ Additionally, no one could find the alleged \$200 Frank kept in his desk. Further, even the trial judge was not convinced that Frank was guilty, merely that he had lied about seeing her that day and leaving his office.

Frank's defence used the inconsistencies of the testimonies to argue that, not only was Frank not the killer, but one of the other men was. While Jim who wrote the notes is considered now to be the likely killer, the case brought to light various tensions between races.²¹⁸ In Frank's case, the Jewish community, still not integrated into White America, pushed against the Black community. In the press, many papers on the liberal side, including the *New York Times*, came to Frank's defence and accused the state of engaging in anti-Semitism, a charge that Governor Slaton denied when communicating his sentence.²¹⁹ This inflamed right-wing newspapers which countered by accusing Jewish influence in the newspapers of distorting justice. Shortly after the sentence was commuted, Frank was taken from the prison by a mob and hanged. The men who did it called themselves the Knights of Mary Phagan, referring to the original Knights of the

²¹⁵ Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision," 16.

²¹⁶ Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision," 20.

²¹⁷ John Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision by Governor John M. Slaton 1915, p. 21–22.

²¹⁸ There was a death bed confession of another worker Alonzo Mann in his eighties and, during the 1980s, revealed he had seen Jim kill Mary. He believed it was over money as Jim had asked Alonzo for cash earlier that day and he just saw Mary leave Franks office alone and with her pay. Additionally, he describes her attack as "Mulatto". As describe in BON and the brute stereotype, Alonzo is implying Jim is of the type of people who commit these crimes.

²¹⁹ John Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision by Governor John M. Slaton 1915," 1–2, 4.

Klan.²²⁰ The case proves that the first Klan never really perished and, as mentioned, Simmons would found the second Klan or, more accurately, the first *national* Klan prior to *BON*. In attendance at his founding meeting were members of the Knights of Phagan. And fittingly, none of the men who hanged Frank ever faced charges despite public complaints.

Frank, eighty-six years after his death, was acquitted on all charges. This is not to say he was proven innocent.²²¹ The conspiracy theories about the case have not gone away. Today, most of the organizations responsible for putting up scans of articles, and primary court documents, are right-wing websites. Because they did the work of scanning and uploading the documents, they are attempting to control the narrative on places like Internet Archive.²²² For example, accompanying the governor's decision to mitigate the sentence is a simple and unsubstantiated accusation of corruption beside the document noted by the uploader.²²³ Similarly, in a document titled, "Leo M. Frank, Plaintiff in Error, vs. State of Georgia, Defendant in Error ... 1913," the uploaders point to parts of Frank's testimony they claim point to self-incriminating evidence.²²⁴ The website, which appears to have been maintained until 2021, is still functioning and, on its surface, appears reputable; but almost every document has comments similar to the above mentioned. It also has links to the *American Mercury* online, which produced an hour-long video documentary in 1970 confirming Frank's guilt.²²⁵

²²⁰ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 71.

²²¹ Philip St. Raymond, "Mary Phagan's Family Opposes Exoneration of Sex Killer Leo Frank," *The American Mercury*, last updated July 19, 2021.

²²² Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision by Governor John M. Slaton 1915: Governor John M. Slaton. Law Firm Partner of the Leo M. Frank Defense Team," The title here points to the conspiracy theory. Internet archive and Archive online are different section of the same online archiving site,

²²³ Slaton, "Leo Frank Clemency Decision."

²²⁴ State of Georgia, "Leo M. Frank, Plaintiff in Error, vs. State of Georgia, Defendant in Error. In Error from Fulton Superior Court at the July Term 1913. Brief of Evidence 1913: Internet Archive, January 1, 1914.

²²⁵ E. C. Ashenden, "New Video: Leo Frank Is Guilty," *The American Mercury*, September 30, 1970, <https://theamericanmercury.org/2021/09/new-video-leo-frank-is-guilty/>.

The website also tries to raise old wounds by pointing out the attempt to clear Frank's name with making the two Black men guilty.²²⁶ While it is tempting to blame Jim for the murder, given he did put notes on her body, it remains impossible to know for sure.²²⁷ What at best can be concluded is the case's relation to a political-emotional economy. Frank's behaviour after being accused of murder seems fitting given that he was a Jewish man in the 1920s. Likewise, the Black men involved may do or say what they have to in order to survive a system that habitually uses them as scapegoats for other people's actions. Avoiding confrontation with a violently oppressive force was practiced by many in minority communities. The Jewish community used this method with fascist diasporic groups as well. The Bund reported that, while some city's Jewish populations were hostile to the Bund, others seemingly got along well with them. A few even reportedly sent tin foil to the Bund when one of their campaign drives involved send tin scraps to Germany to help the German war effort.²²⁸ While this seems improbable, to survive a system of pervasive and latently violent racism sometimes meant participation rather than rebellion is necessary, particularly in states of heightened tension like before and after a war. In this way, Frank's lynching made the Klan's men noble, patriotic, American avengers of an evil Jewish outsider. Further, they were even protectors of the hapless Black accomplice and spared him from false imprisonment. In this way, the Klan was connected to the concept of the grand Jewish conspiracy trying to control America right from its first birth while a defender of Blacks, as long as those Blacks knew their place.

²²⁶ Philip St. Raymond, "Mary Phagan's Family Opposes Exoneration of Sex Killer Leo Frank," *The American Mercury*, last updated July 19, 2021

²²⁷ Brown Reporting Inc, "Alonzo Mann's Tall Tale Testimony about the 1913 Leo Frank Case, 69 Years Too Late." "Alonzo Mann: Testimony of Alonzo Mann" was added around the time Frank had the charges waived. As mentioned on Internet Archive here, too, it labels it as a tall tale because the uploader is associated with leofrank.org. The interview was conducted under a lie detector test.

²²⁸ "Cincinnati ad-3 conversation with Bun Leader Albert Zimmerman," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1 Criminal Records of the Bund, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

The Bund also supported this conspiracy and that is, perhaps, not so surprising; many public officials and celebrities held such views. Thus, most of these far to the right groups understood their best political hope were patriotic Americans that had popular appeal and who shared their values. The Bund, and the growing contingent of 125 right-wing radicals, placed their political hopes on a few individuals like Charles Lindbergh and Henry Ford. Each of these three men came o play part of the fascist political culture of America. Their involvement, to this day, is still something that is brought into question. Hearst and Lindbergh, in particular, have not fared well in the aftermath of the Second World War. The reputations of those who openly supported and organized the “America First” movement did not easily recover.²²⁹ I will be focusing on two potential connections on the outset of this. I wish to make it clear that this is not proof that was raised to the bar of reasonable doubt, but strong enough to raise eyebrows and call for investigation. Additionally, this is the Bund’s version of the story, speaking to their hopes for these great men.

Ford become a person of interest as Metcalfe and others were hearing rumours of him being pro-Bund from fascist sources. A few of these scandals involving the German Consul in San Francisco even made newspaper headlines around the United States. In 1941, Alice Crockett confessed that she was involved in a scandal to spy for the Germans, and subsequently alleged that Ford and Lindbergh were meant to help her. The case levelled by the state was never pursued as the German Consul fled the United States before his court date. But the accusation,

²²⁹ That being said, during the Cold War, the right-wing of the Republican Party sheltered a number of anti-internationalists who redefined themselves as “unilateralists”. Herbert Hoover, Robert Taft, Bourke Hickenlooper, William Knowland, the China Lobby, etc. They hated Truman’s Cold War policies, they hated Britain, the UN, etc. But they used the term “Americanism.” For more information Read Justus Doenecke, *Not to the swift: the old isolationists in the Cold War era* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1979); Norman Graebner, *The new isolationism: a study in politics and foreign policy since 1950* (New York: Ronald Press, 1956); Richard Freeland, *The Truman doctrine and the origins of McCarthyism: foreign Policy, domestic Politics, and internal security, 1946–1948* (New York: Knopf, 1971).

and tabloid rumours, led to increased suspicion surrounding Ford and the reason Detroit became a place of interest for the investigation. On his trip to Detroit, Metcalfe met with Rudolph Heupel (a close friend of Kuhn), who had named himself “Führer for Detroit,” and was an employee of the Ford Motor Company.²³⁰ That is how Heupel and Kuhn met in America. He went on to describe how easy it was for people with Nazi and fascist leanings to work in Detroit. Given Ford’s known anti-Semitism, this was probably not surprising. At most, one could openly be a Nazi and not be subject to harassment. Kuhn worked at the Ford plant and helped organized the Bund in the city. As he took over national leadership, he could no longer keep doing both jobs and quit the company. Heupel argued that Kuhn and Ensel Ford should meet in Germany during the Olympics. When Kuhn resigned from Ford, he did so to Ensel, personally. Heupel argued that not only was Ford Sr. pro-Bund so, too, was the younger son, Ensel, even promising Kuhn a return to work if the Bund should ever fall apart. He would provide financial support if things ever became desperate. Metcalfe tried to push a little further and get Heupel to say if either Ford had donated, and although Heupel implied it, he was unable or unwilling to provide the smoking gun.²³¹

This fits with what we already know about Henry Ford. He had a long-held reputation for anti-Semitism and was one of the few Americans Hitler complimented in *Mein Kampf*.²³² Lüdecke noted that he used a Ford newspaper (*The Dearborn Independent*) and ideas about Jews as a way to find out who was more radical among the various nationalist movements.²³³ When he talked to Ford in the 1930s, he was still openly anti-Semitic and sympathetic to the Nazi cause,

²³⁰ “Detroit August 21,” John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1 Undercover Dairy, Metcalfe, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²³¹ “Detroit August 21 ad 1,” John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives. Ford motors put out a statement claiming Ford did not know Kuhn and he had been fired for speechmaking on company time.

²³² He mentions Ford twice. Overall he seemed impressed with his antisemitism.

²³³ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 18.

but he could not get Ford to donate.²³⁴ Further still, Ford's retraction statement became proof for people like Lüdecke of the Jewish conspiracy to control the press. This connection is one of the reasons the Bund could find a home in America, anti-Semitic ideas were already well-established.²³⁵ Heupel conceded that there was sometimes a little bit of trouble at the Dearborn plant, that it was harder to be a Nazi there, but overall, it was still receptive. It is probable, too, that Ford's anti-union position closely aligned him with the Bund on economic matters. If Ford Motors and Ford company officials tolerated the Bund, Ford could guarantee that some anti-union protesters would show up to union strikes. Anti-union forces also seem to have had an ally in their fight on unionists in the police force and with the Legion.²³⁶

The police in Detroit, as well as in most of the cities Metcalfe visited, were strongly anti-union and willing to help the Bund in that direction. Indeed, Bund leaders mostly reported a good relationship with the local police. This is not all that surprising given the Bund was meant to do "good" in most communities. However, almost all the leadership that he met with talked of violent clashes with both unions and communists in almost every city. Almost all Bund leaders said that they had engaged in a form of union busting or substantial violence.²³⁷ Heupel believed that unions made men lazy and were a communist scheme.²³⁸ Stories of clashes with unions always followed a similar pattern true or not. The Bund and friends would fight with who they deemed to be communist or Jewish agitators and would be detained and usually released immediately. A few Bund leaders reported that even when arrested their stay was not as long and

²³⁴ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 186–187.

²³⁵ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 188.

²³⁶ "Detroit August 21 ad 2," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²³⁷ "Detroit August 21 ad 1," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²³⁸ "Detroit August 21 ad 3," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

charges were never made formally.²³⁹ In order to avoid official suspicion or connection with Nazi Germany, they would not wear their swastikas.²⁴⁰ Moreover, a few leaders expressed how they believed, in these conflicts, the police had joined them.²⁴¹ The Bund learned that, in order to avoid a scandal, they could not act as representatives of the Nazis, but rather as allies of the forces of conservative order in the United States. Heupel also reported that the Canadian and American Legions sometimes got in on the violence against the unions and even joined them for shooting practice.²⁴² Thus, it made their actions patriotic and 100 percent American.

This supports events Lüdecke reported on in his book during the early days of Hitler's rise. He and Hitler attended a rally in Coburg to break up a union protest in which the police had joined on the side of the Nazis.²⁴³ Hitler used these early street victories against the communist unionists and socialist to secure praise even from some of his critics. Again, even Metcalfe thought Hitler's unification of Germany was positive. These early victories eventually led to the Beer Hall Putsch, a failed attempt to overthrow the German government when Lüdecke happened to be out of the country. This period, and the Hitler he returned to, was a lot more restrained in using violence as a means to take power. Lüdecke counselled Hitler to be more aggressive, but Hitler had learned his lesson on his own.²⁴⁴ Violence came with a price. The balancing of these forces was required for the rise of fascism in Germany, and it seems as though

²³⁹ "Memo on Gilssibe dated 7-13-38," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²⁴⁰ "Detroit August 21 ad 2," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²⁴¹ "Detroit August 21 ad 2," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²⁴² "Detroit August 21 ad 2," John C. Metcalfe papers, Box 1, Metcalfe undercover diary, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

²⁴³ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 88–90.

²⁴⁴ Lüdecke, *I Knew Hitler*, 412–415.

top members of Germany and Italy realised America still required a gentler hand and someone who knew how to balance these forces of a political-emotional economy.

Kuhn appears to not have been that man. While it is true many of the Bund members visited Nazi Germany and had talked to its leading figures, they found Kuhn incompetent. He apparently telegraphed Berlin to ask who to support in the American election. The Nazis did not reply. He was far from the perfect person to oversee operations in America, a realization that, in part, was not lost on him. When organizing counter boycotts to the Jewish boycotts of Nazi Germany, the Bund used the Silver Legion and the Klan as proof that their cause was justly American. Thus, we are at an interesting conclusion that insists being American was the best defence from persecution; that, while Americans were not tolerant of Nazis and Black Shirts, they would tolerate groups like the Klan who were easier to reconcile with America's unique landscape. In this domestic political-emotional economy, these groups could often find common ground and then outwardly deny their shared beliefs. Further, used the "nationalist" character of the other groups to deny that they were the same. That is exactly what the Italian ambassador did when Black Shirts were seen protesting with the Bund. The need to be seen as separate entities became more necessary after all the Italian and German embassies were closed.

In the summer of 1940, the Klan held its joint rally with the Bund and immediately regretted its decision. America entered the war and with it the international political-emotional economy of fascism became too costly for the Klan. Yet it remained connected too. The Klan was carefully able to dissociate from its fascist friends and never be investigated by for un-American activities. However damaged the concept of fascism and hate movements was, they survive in a racial Americanism shielded by patriotism. The freedom to hate would easily live

on, even if was pushed to the fringe by its association with an increasingly discredited global colour line.

3.3 A New World Order

After the war, even with hate and authoritarian movements being pushed to the brink, they would survive in the house of un-American activities. A Nazi sympathiser, Joseph McCarthy made it easier for ex-Nazis to enter the United States. The era after the war left room for the survival of the far right of authoritarianism and hate. The formal network might have disappeared for a time, but its impact could be felt. Wesley Swift, a Klan preacher, become a key player in establishing Christian beliefs for white supremacist groups, along with Gerald L. K. Smith and his America First Party. While the Klan might have been formally gone, the rhetoric they embodied and the fascist worldview they propounded, survives well into the present. At some of his speeches, Metcalfe heard that the swastika was not just for Germans but for all Aryans. The Klan and the Bund were linked through their shared hatreds and joys. This connection, hidden briefly by the war, slowly re-emerged during the Cold War, and into the 1960s. The far-right of the Klan and the Nazis reunited in various marginal political forms. However, as time passed, some of their conspiracy theories gained popularity and some of the groups they helped inspire, such as the Proud Boys, found a home close to the Republican party.

If we think of the Klan as waves, like the waves of the ocean, the retreat leaves out part of the story. The long fraught connections of nationalism and patriotism to authoritarianism and hate seems less apparent. What matters along with action, though, is feeling. Affect, perhaps best described as an emotional impression of a place and time, can be buried in often unexpected places. It can lead to recognizing how some things are ingrained and entrenched, even when they

are often presumed have passed away in the mists of history, or conversely have been expunged from an ideology. But as with the floating term “Americanism,” when the wave of extremism passes, the water is not completely gone in those moments of in-between, and the makings of a new wave can develop. This can take many forms and there is no single method for a fascist to rise to power. Each case will bear something unique to it, based on a nation’s peculiar affective constitution. This, while more or less unique to a country, can still be affected by others, creating an economy of emotion that moves from one country to another. It is somewhat paradoxical, given that the feeling of a country’s nationalism is, by its nature, an exclusionary force. The clear divide between who is one of us and who is not, is just the condition of the state. For community to exist, there needs to be the other, the outsider; but this is what crosses borders: a shared sense of the importance of borders.

These outsiders can take on many forms and can change based on internal and external factors. In this way, fascism, and to a lesser extent racism, found its way to the fringes of American society. Much like the great waves of ideological movements, it serves us better to remember that, while it might appear to have come from nowhere, there remains places for these ideas to remain, to survive until the next wave. There might always be a fascist affect within our society and it always remains a threat that can be linked with supremacist ideals. Never entirely gone, these ideas are part of the American character and can coexist with democracy. The great test of any generation is to keep these forces at bay.

Through this paper, I have argued that a fascist political-emotional economy is not just a product of national actors but can be influenced by international forces as well. Part of this acceptance is because we create a network to group and support fascist authoritarian thought. For the United States, this grew out of the practice of lynching, a practice that was also closely tied to

race. While frowned upon by the left, it was part of an informal American tradition. It was used to enforce social norms and could be used to create and maintain the idea of who the outsiders were in American society, even if this practice (or its outsiders) was not agreed upon by everyone within that society. In this way, lynching those who broke the apparent norms of American society brought them and society back into alignment. However, as America cast Black, Jewish, and racialized immigrants into this role of “other” or “outsider,” others in Europe were doing the same.

Part of the problem can be seen with the need to generate a sense of self, as in the peculiar case study of Canada and Mackenzie King. King hated overtly nationalist, militarized groups on Canadian soil. But it was a posture that had much to do with King’s perception of American nationalism. It was the United States’ job to enforce and create patriotism as was done with the funeral at the jubilee. However, the line between patriotism and nationalism is often dependent on the affect of the country. King saw no problem with trying to use the death of an American pilot to instill patriotism. Furthermore, on his trip to Nazi Germany, he did not see a problem with the Hitler Youth. Likewise, Charles Lindbergh found much to admire in Nazi Germany. Both men admired what Hitler was doing to rebuild his country (although ironically King’s Depression-era policies were far more laissez-faire).

A connection was put in place between Germany and America (and others) by an understanding with the political elite of these countries, forged with themes of anti-Black and anti-Jewish hatred, and held in place with an acceptance of a degree of authoritarianism. While *The Birth of a Nation* might not have been shown until the interwar period in Germany, viewers would have easily understood its themes. Imperial Germany had engaged in genocide in Africa before being stripped of their colonies in 1919. These violent practices drew on and produced

anti-Black stereotypes that were common in both these countries, particularly in America. Both countries depicted Black men as rapists in the “brute” stereotype, and both built laws based on the fear of mulatto (mixed race) children, and the protection of White women in need of saving. This story is the affective core of *The Birth of a Nation*. Further, both sides tried to use the brute stereotype to caricature other White races. Both the German and the British compared their opponent to “blackness” to make the argument that they were lesser. A colonial trope was used to make each other seem like an outsider, unworthy of moral sympathy. And in the case of Nazi Germany, they used the fear of mixed-race children to justify sterilization.

While I have focused on the American, British, and Canadian connection to authoritarianism and Nazism, they are not the only connection to this economy. Turkish nationalist leader Atatürk, and the other ethno-religious movements, were also a point of inspiration for authoritarians across Europe. Much of the writing at that time put Atatürk in the same category as Hitler and Mussolini. Meanwhile, Franco in Spain helped fascists argue that they were not slowing down in the 1930s but still had the potential to move all of Europe to the right. Spain proved to Nazi Germany and fascist Italy that other Western forces were unwilling to engage in armed combat when faced with aggression. Italy and Germany were far more willing to aid a fascist leaning nationalist movement than democracy was willing to help defend elected governments. While not directly connected to the North American economy, they were important factors for increasing an active, international, fascist economy.

This fertile, fascist political-emotional economy made it easy enough for Germans to integrate into the edges of American society when they immigrated. German-American societies were a vibrant part of the country’s cultural life, and some of the oldest ones were tied to the liberal veterans of the revolutions of 1848. As Germany fell under Nazi control so, too, did many

of these cultural societies. While not officially connected, there was often ideological overlap and a base hope that these societies would reflect well on fascism and possibly help it grow. This was the main goal of the Bund, the Black Shirts, and other diasporic fascists living in the United States. In turn, they sought out likeminded groups in the United States to run events, engage in union busting, and share and spread anti-Semitic beliefs. Hoping that an American Führer would rise to power, when the conditions were right, they would be waiting to assist them through force if need be. Thankfully the war, a rebounding economy, and the scale and scope of Nazi war crimes pushed the fascist political-emotional economy far beyond the core of American political values. However, to the extent that it existed on the fumes of nationalist worldviews, and to various hate movements, it retained the capacity to spread and reinvigorate an economy of hate.

All this makes it tempting to draw comparisons from the 1920s to present. The comparisons are too good to pass up: Charles Lindbergh to Donald Trump and the Bund, the Klan, and the Silver Legion to the Proud Boys, neo-Nazis, and MAGA. Recently, the invasion of Ukraine has triggered faint hope that the right-wing wave might recede. But Fox News and other right-wing organizations continue to defend Vladimir Putin and Viktor Orbán as models of conservative moral and religious counterrevolution, suggesting otherwise. If lessons from the past can be understood or rather increase our awareness of affect and a political-emotional economy, some conclusions for the present can be drawn.

First, for the issue of the authoritarian, we (NATO and the European Union at least) have not engaged Putin in a direct conflict. Emotions, thus, are not angled against him in the same capacity. Further, the political right wing is far more invisible in the American right than it has been in decades. The rebirth of the far-right into a bigger composite of society has a long history itself, starting in the sixties and moving forward. Its gradual reconstruction is, of course, part of

this story, as it was never really gone. If the 1960s seemed to show the triumph of progressive economics and the final democratization of the nation, it was to that same extent the moment of rebirth for the racist wing of American politics. This mirrors the idea of the Klan waves through history and this can create the illusion that it is defeated. Domestically, this can have the consequence of non-confrontation, as in the case of the “shame coins.” The British Museum displays the artifact online with no explanation of the racism behind it. Similarly with the case surrounding Leo Frank, the documentation around it should be better contextualized when it appears in places like the Internet Archive.

The biggest comparison comes from the rise of the right under Donald Trump and the first of the tiki torch rallies in Charlottesville in 2016. Looking through the day-long event, joy is present when they occupied the space, much as the Bund and Klan marches of old. Anti-Semitism does not claim lives as it did with Leo Frank, but an old familiar chant of the “Jews will not replace us” emerges. This rally, like so many of the past Bund and Klan rallies, connected the themes of hatred, anti-Semitism, anti-blackness, and anti-immigrant much as the past rallies did. Made up of common folk, small business owners, the Klan, neo-Nazis and so on, all channelled for a single moment, organized not on a single political program, but on a shared emotional ethos. In this way, they are not all that different from the fascist movement and its sympathisers of the past, keeping in mind they had to organize at least 126 small groups for any one large event. Each group its own history, its own code, and its own goals, sometimes counter to each but united in protest, as the Klan once said, in-line enough to be seen together. The same could be said of January 6th. While some on Fox News claimed that this is not what the right does, it really is part of their political-emotional economy. If you trace its development through Klan and Bund rallies and further still to the American tradition of lynching, the right of

America has often been able to engage in violent protest with few repercussions until the Second World War.

Each of these groups who participated along with these protests have put democracy to the test as the authoritarian wave continues to bash against a system that is, at present, struggling against the forces of Fox News, Breitbart, and the Supreme Court. The January 6th Committee proved a connection between Trump and the voter fraud conspiracies within a reasonable doubt. Failure to act will, in all likelihood, raise the odds of another serious incursion in Washington. Watching the January 6th insurrection live was an event that bears consideration and will be unpacked by historians and political scientists to come. However, one image remains burned somewhat into my mind: Eugene Goodman, the military officer who used his body and position as cop to bait the mob long enough to allow Congress members to escape. This reminded me of a picture from Henry Louis Gates's book on Jim Crow, *Stony the Road*. He shows readers old postcards from 1907–1940s, depicting dark-skinned bodies used as alligator food. Only this time, like so many times before, it was a White mob. On January 6th, a thin line of police stopped what could have been a coup. Part of this mob were members of the Proud Boys. The Proud Boys, a familiar name to protesters in the United States, started in Canada. It easily, indeed seamlessly, crossed the border as the Klan once did so long ago. This will not be the end of such movements, as the Canadian trucker or “freedom convoy” also had its day in the sun in the United States. The connection between these hate groups will continue to be linked through a political-emotional economy.

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Illustrations

Figure 1. "Destroy the Mad Brute: Enlist—US Army," Francisco Army Recruiting District, San Francisco, Apr. 4, 1918, Hopps Harry. Accessed by Library of Congress.

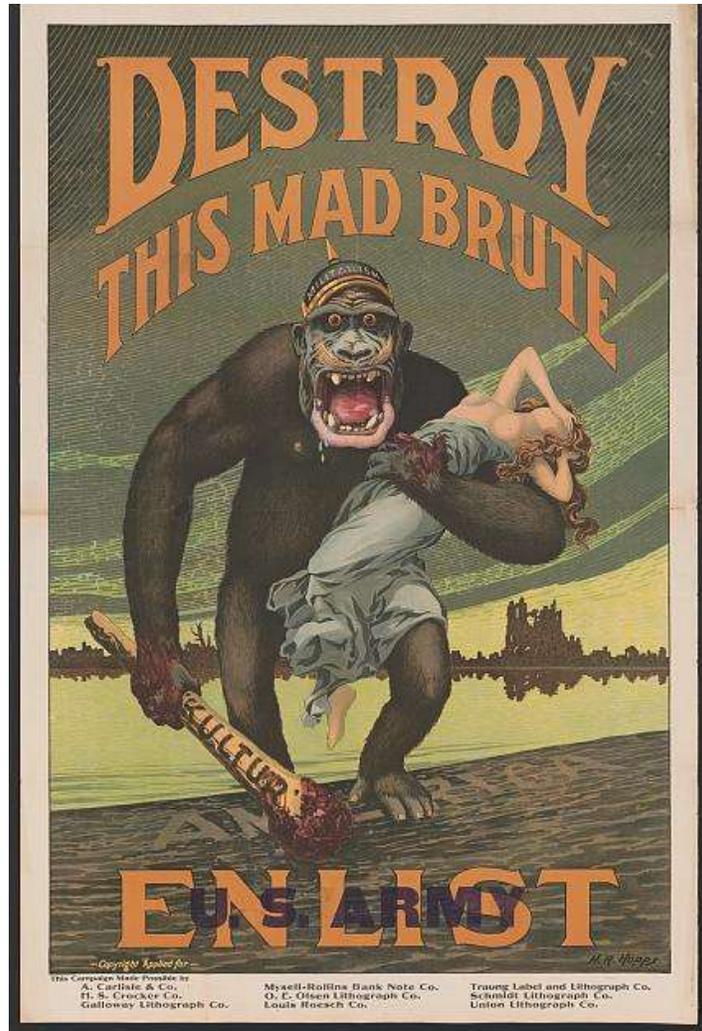


Figure 2. D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* movie poster, image taken from Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *Stony the Road*, New York, 180 (Public Domain).

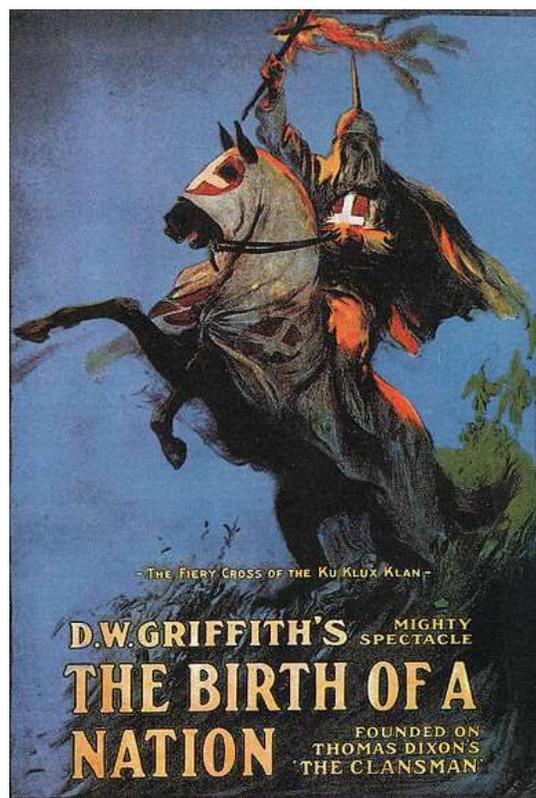


Figure 3. Postcard printed in Germany. Image taken from *Stony the Road* (New York), 180. Credit: Jim Crow Museum.



Figure 4. "Sambo" caricature, Harry I. Robinson, and Will J Harris, *Cannibal Love* (Chicago: Will Rossiter, 1909), <https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.100008697/>.

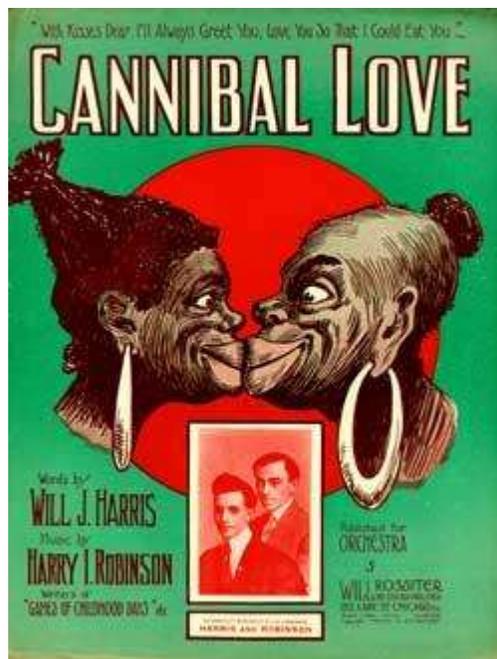


Figure 5. Image taken from Jurgen Zimmerer, Joachim Zeller, and E. J. Neather, *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War of 1904-1908 and Its Aftermath* (Merlin Press, 2007), 186. Source: WikiCommons (Public Domain, original dated 1908).



Description on page “Pictures such as this are to be found in contemporary colonial books and show German women as victims of the war. However, although four White women lost their lives at the beginning of the war, it was well-known that Herero fighters spared women and children and even, on occasion, gave them protection. Thus, horrific pictures such as this served above all for propaganda purposes in the context of a war which caused heavy losses, was expensive and was more and more subject to public criticism.”

Figure 6. "Der schwarze Terror in deutschen Landen" ("The black terror in German lands"), unknown artist, May 10, 1920, *Kladderadatsch* 73/22, p. 317. In Julia Roos, "Schwarze Schmach," May 28, 2015, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/schwarze_schmach.

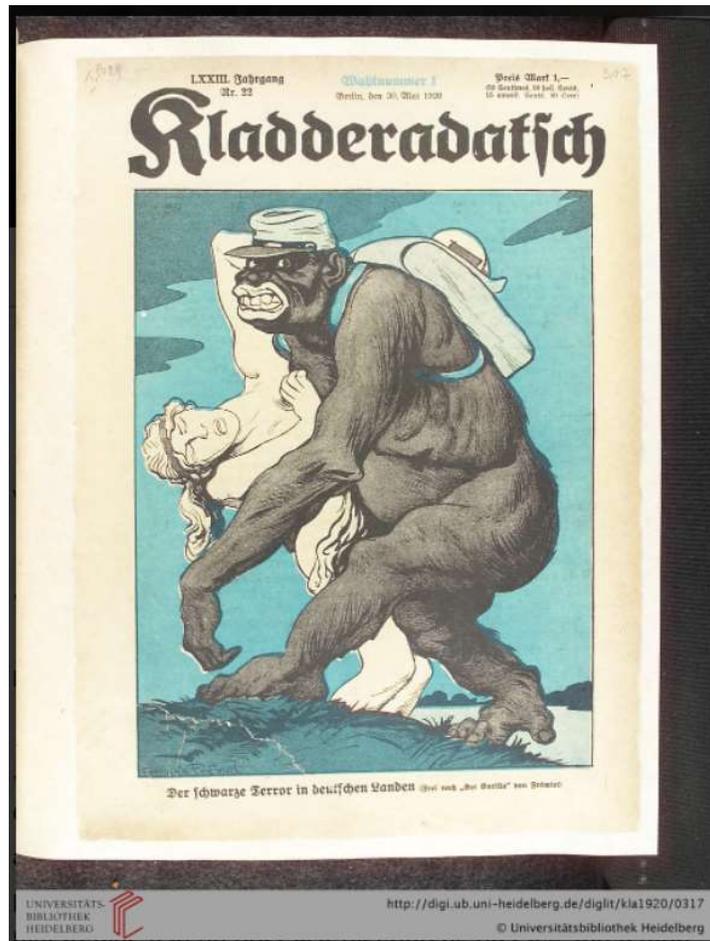


Figure 7. German poster by the "Deutscher Notbund gegen die schwarze Schmach" (German Emergency League against the Black Horror) accusing African colonial soldiers of rape in the occupied territories of Germany and calling for people to volunteer and donate. In Julia Roos, "Schwarze Schmach," May 28, 2015, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/schwarze_schmach.



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 Permalink: <http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/plink/?f=1-108111-1>
<http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/nutzungsbedingungen>

Figure 8. Kladderadatsch, Satirical German magazine from July 1914 mocking French colonial soldiers, <https://www.alamy.com/kladderadatsch-satirical-german-magazine-from-july-1914-mocking-french-colonial-soldiers-image434331651.html>. Also available from <https://diai.ub.uni->



Figure 9. Illustration from *Indigenous Races of the Earth*, Josiah Clark Nott and George Gliddon, 1857. Accessed by WikiCommons (Public Domain).

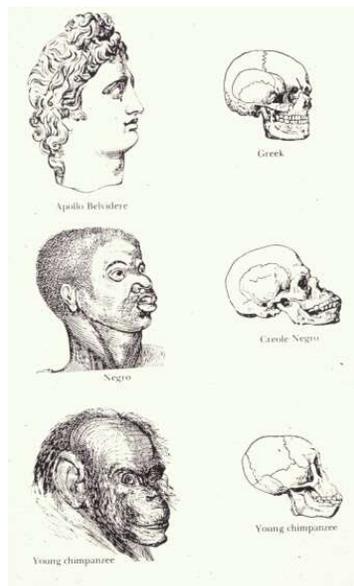


Figure 10. Medal Die Wacht Am Rhein!! (The Watch on the Rhine!!), by Karl Goetz, Germany, 1921, <https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/ww1-imperial-german-black-shame-medal-karl-goetz-52-c-9d94dea824>. Also found at the British Museum.



Figure 11. "Remember League!" Seventh Year, Number 1, January 1923. Public Domain accessed by WikiCommons. Scan from National Library of France.

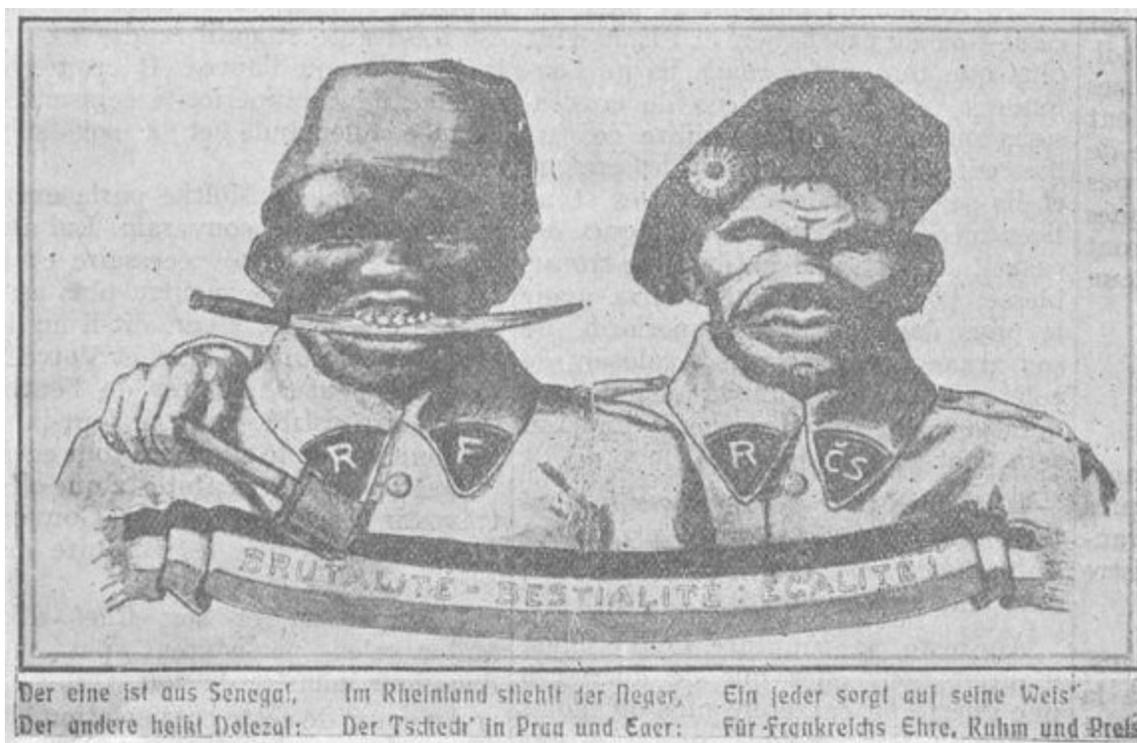


Figure 12. Kladderadatsch in 1934 issue number 23. Caption: "America for the 'Americans'! The extraordinary increase in the population of Negroes and Jews is causing headaches for the more established Americans." Retrieved from <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/kla1934/0368/image,info>

