UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Citizens Without Borders:
American Identity And The Cultural Politics Of Globalization

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Literature

by

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The dissertation of Lynn M. Ta is approved, and it is

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family: my parents, Albert and Connie Ta, and my sisters, Lei, Monique, and Kimberly, for years of love and laughter, struggles and triumphs. You are all my heart and soul.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Citizens Without Borders:
American Identity And The Cultural Politics Of Globalization

by

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Professor Michael Davidson, Co-Chair
Professor Don Wayne, Co-Chair

In the liberal democratic tradition, dominant nationalist discourses articulate citizenship as the domain of the nation-state, functioning as a mechanism for dispensing rights and claims through political membership. However, in the wake of heightened globality, national paradigms are rapidly being altered by the increased transnational movement of people, capital, and culture. This phenomenon has resulted in the decline of the nation-state as the primary nucleus for cultural, political, and economic organization and undercuts the traditional power of the state to monitor citizenship and govern the conditions of cultural belonging. This project looks to examine how the changing role of the nation-state under the imperatives of globalizing cultural dynamics is impacting both the conceptualization and enactment of citizenship. I read citizenship as a contested site of identity that is being

simultaneously affected by the consolidating, centripetal force of the national, and the re-organizing, centrifugal force of the global.

Utilizing various genres of cultural production – novels, films, photographs, and speeches – my project analyzes the *cultural* meaning of American citizenship as it has been affected by the forces of globalization. I argue that new global formations are challenging the conceptualization of identity as it is situated in nationalist narratives of citizenship. I locate this tension within particular categories of American identity: race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality. I first consider how the reorganization of the global labor economy impacts gender at the intersection of race, focusing on transnational sweatshop labor among Asian and Mexican women. I go on to examine the ways in which configurations of queer globalization present a liberatory potential for sexual dissidence while also posing the threat of reifying heterosexist nationalist norms. Although these analyses demonstrate the increased permeability of national borders as they police citizenship and cultural identity, I also argue that the rise of post-9/11 nationalism in the U.S. reveals the persistent potency of the rhetoric of the nation-state, as well as evaluate the effect of increased globality on the processes of racialization among Arab and Muslim Americans. I conclude with a discussion of the (im)possibility of a universal citizenship beyond national boundaries, one that engages in questions of human rights theory.

Introduction:
The Age Of The Post-Citizen?

"You are…trying to run away in spite of the contracts…
by which you agreed to act as a member of our State…
Are we…not speaking the truth when we say that
you have undertaken, in deed and not in word,
to play the role of citizen in obedience to us?"
– Socrates, as the voice of the Law in "Crito"

"The world's shrunk. The planet was never smaller…
I do feel global. I feel like a citizen of the world."
– Shakira, international pop icon in *Blender* magazine

We Are The World: Situating Citizenship In The Global Moment

In December of 2001, John Walker Lindh was captured in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan by Northern Alliance forces, after nearly two years of serving as a Muslim fighter with the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and five years of practicing Islam and swearing allegiance to *jihad*. The then 20-year-old was "repatriated" to the United States where he eventually stood trial in a Virginia court, faced with eleven criminal counts against him, most of them related to terrorism. Rather than risk a life sentence, Walker Lindh accepted a plea bargain and was sentenced to twenty years in prison in exchange for cooperating with U.S. intelligence officials about his knowledge regarding the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Scorned in the media as the "American Taliban," Walker Lindh's position between U.S. nationalist imperatives and the obligations of fundamentalist Muslim regionalism raises powerful questions about the role of citizenship and identity in an increasingly globalizing world. Indeed, the impact of heightened globality is not new to contemporary discourse: as global processes continue to traverse national boundaries – either in the form of people, goods, capital, communication, ideas, or

culture – and thus re-organize our conception of spatiality and temporality, these new global formations not only mitigate the authority of the nation-state, they also dislodge the figure of the citizen from membership in the national community. Against the consolidating forces of the national, the image of a shrunken world – a borderless global world – suggests expanded avenues of identification beyond nation and territory, as well as greater planetary hybridization.

Thus, Walker Lindh found himself trapped between the competing forces of the national and the transnational: the ultra-nationalism of U.S. post-9/11 patriotism and al-Qaeda's rejection of state sovereignty in favor of a unified Islamic *umma*. Following his religious commitment to *jihad*, without regard for traditional boundaries – including national ones – Walker Lindh's capture represents the confrontation between the priorities and obligations of non-territorial identity on the one hand, and on the other, territorially-bound formulations of allegiance as they are entrenched in nationalist conceptions of citizenship. Given this tension that his situation presents, how are we to situate citizenship in the current global moment? As the epigraphs to this chapter suggest, do we follow, in the Socratic tradition, a contractual model of citizenship that demands exclusive obedience to – and identification with – the nation-state? Or has citizenship become so flexible that – as multi-lingual Latin-Arab-Carribean Shakira announces – we have become "citizens of the world?" Is the framework of citizenship still relevant, or are we in the age of the post-citizen?[1]

[1] I thank Daniel McLean for suggesting the use of this term.

In this project, I argue that citizenship remains a viable paradigm for the formation of identity, although the terms of this arrangement continue to be a key zone of contestation. If we understand citizenship to be a form of belonging, then the question of *what we belong to* troubles the fixed idea of citizenship as the exclusive domain of the nation-state. The liberal democratic tradition locates citizenship as a nationalist endeavor, requiring the flattening of identity and difference in the service of national cohesion and allegiance. In other words, according to these standards, the citizen belongs to the state. However, accelerated global processes have altered the landscape of belonging by re-organizing the relations (political, social, economic, cultural) that structure the lives of individuals all over the world; thus, by such a formulation, the citizen does not necessarily belong solely to the state. Although globality can signal feelings of uprootedness and loss of identity, it also offers new and varied frames of reference while diminishing the authority of the nation-state to police the boundaries of belonging and citizenship. I argue that despite their geographic positionings or the conditions of their territoriality, citizen-subjects increasingly imagine and articulate their citizenship in non-nationalist terms, often identifying more strongly with the particularities of their identity, such as country of origin, ethnic affiliations, class solidarity, gendered relationships, sexual membership, biomedical experiences, or, in Walker Lindh's case, religious commitment.

I also argue, however, that despite the challenges of globality, the national remains a potent force that still conditions the construction of citizenship through the regulation of the everyday lives of individuals and impacting the experiences of

subjectivization on a geo-political level. In this way, the national continues to be a viable referent of identity, in light of global forces that threaten to undermine its authority. The nation-state is not obsolete, and remains a central actor in international transactions. Thus, caught between the imperatives of competing forces, can we articulate the citizen-subject as both national *and* global? In answering this question, my project does not assume that globality is an entity that one can belong to[2] (one can only be a "citizen of the world" in the most liminal of senses), but rather insists that the overlapping trajectories of the national and the global necessarily influence and condition the production of citizenship.

Hence, my primary thesis is that contemporary citizenship is ultimately structured by the dual forces of the national and the global to produce the interstitial citizen who is marked by both national locality and increased globality. By "interstitial," I mean the citizen who occupies the space between national and global influences, although such an individual is also the product of the overlap of the two, thus constructing this position as *both* national and global, and yet *neither* fully characteristic of either.[3] Situating citizenship in the current global moment requires a conceptualization that goes beyond normative configurations of nationality, but it also necessitates an acknowledgement of the persistent rhetoric of the nation-state. Thus, citizenship is revealed as a constant negotiation of shifting allegiances brought on by

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[2] Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort argue that citizenship requires, in part, "territorial and historical fixity, cultural concreteness, and…the existence (at least potentially) of a political superstructure with which one can identify and which is the provenance…of communal solidarity. 'The globe' does not qualify in those respects…at least not yet." "Introduction," *The Postnational Self: Belonging And Identity* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 2002), xviii.

[3] This position can perhaps best be visualized as the overlapped space of a Venn diagram.

the interplay between national and global forces, trajectories that separately consolidate and re-organize.

Furthermore, in articulating the interstitial citizen, I do not mean to suggest a trendy, elite, or glamorous cosmopolitanism, but rather locate this experience in the lives of ordinary citizens whose existence often bears the inscription of national and global power, even as they attempt to narrate their own subjectivity as citizens between these forces. Therefore, in examining the everyday practices of citizen-subjects, my project privileges the cultural as a site of citizenship-formation that bypass more formal and institutional types of claim-making. As such, I utilize multiple genres of U.S. cultural texts as my primary mode of analysis, investigating the production of citizenship as it is situated in the context of an American perspective. This particular perspective is a useful one, as the U.S. functions as a contradictory site of hyper-hybridization (it is the state most commonly associated with dominating the agenda of globalization), as well as neo-nationalism (as witnessed in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 and the ensuing War On Terror).

In this chapter, I will first briefly explore the concept of citizenship as it has been rooted in the Western liberal democratic tradition of social contract theory. This overview establishes the normative understanding of citizenship as one that is based on identification with the nation-state; following this, I discuss modern critiques of the social contract model, including feminist and race-conscious positions. The next section extends this line of argument by complicating the contractarian/nationalist framework of citizenship with the politics of belonging. Such a complication exposes

the contradictions of citizenship, especially the misalignment between nation and territoriality on the one hand, and on the other, allegiances to the particularities of identity beyond nationality.

Next, I demonstrate the ways in which the processes of globalization have further exacerbated this misalignment by re-organizing social, political, economic, and cultural relations, and thus mitigate the authority of the nation-state and offer greater access to alternate forms of citizenship identification. I go on to explain my use of the cultural as the optic through which I will be examining citizenship in the larger context of this project. Rather than basing my analysis on more formal and institutional approaches, I choose instead to explore the daily, cultural practices of ordinary individuals in considering how they come to construct and conceive of their identities as citizens, at the same time that social nexuses of power structure the (non) production of their status as such. Finally, I conclude this introduction with a preview of the subsequent chapters of this project.

Citizenship And Social Contract Theory

Although the concept of citizenship can be traced back to the classical era, modern citizenship has been largely premised on Enlightenment ideas about the social contract. Whether derived from the Hobbesian problem of order, the Lockean conception of morality and private property, or Rousseau's notion of social inequalities, citizenship, as it has been understood and enacted, rests on the idea of the voluntary establishment of a covenant between individuals (citizens) and a justified

authority (government) as a means of preserving order within a civil society (the state). What this means, then, is that citizenship has traditionally resided in the nation-state, functioning as a mechanism for dispensing rights and claims through civic membership. Theoretically, it has meant that all citizens possess basic, universal rights and are therefore equal before the law. In turn, the citizen, best characterized by the Cartesian subject of rationality who has freely entered into the social contract, offers allegiance and civic participation to the state, the ostensible guarantor of her rights and membership. These basic tenets of social contract theory underwrite the modern conceptualization of citizenship, especially in the context of western liberal democracies.

Among the array of writing on citizenship in the past fifty years or so, there has been a significant expansion and critique of this contractarian model. For example, Thomas H. Marshall discusses citizenship primarily in terms of the contentious relationship between the subject as a sovereign individual and the nation-state as a governing agent, focusing on class formations and civil, political, and social rights. Admitting to a rough historicism, Marshall individually locates the development of the latter three in specific centuries: civil rights, those that are necessary for personal liberty, evolved in the eighteenth century; political rights, the rights needed to participate in the exercise of power, were formative in the nineteenth

century; and social rights, those that are granted by the welfare state and are needed for security and well-being in a civil society, developed during the twentieth century.[4]

Meanwhile, others have addressed the gap between the theoretical claims to universal rights in the democratic citizenship model on the one hand, and in the other, the material inequalities brought on by capitalistic practices of competition, exploitation, and exclusion. Marxist critics argue that citizenship is a bourgeois concept, implemented as a means of making political concessions in exchange for limiting class unrest. In other words, citizenship in general, and modern democracy in particular, can be seen as serving and perpetuating the demands of capitalism. Though both Marx and Marshall linked the concurrent rise of democratic citizenship and class inequality with the rise in the market economy, and thus saw class conflict as the primary vehicle for change, they diverged in their beliefs in the requirements for such a change to take place: Marx saw the proletariat overthrow of capitalism's superstructure as necessary, while Marshall believed the solution lie in the rights guaranteed by the welfare state under social citizenship.

Beyond an analysis of the structural components of citizenship, more recent approaches examine the subject of the social contract, the liberal individual of citizenship. Feminists regard contract theory as a patriarchal endeavor aimed at securing man's position at the top of the social hierarchy while dominating women via a shared contract among men. In other words, the role of the liberal individual is necessarily gendered male and it is his shared agreement with other (male) contractors

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[4] T.H. Marshall, *Citizenship And Social Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950).

that reinforces his dominion over (female) others.[5] Race-conscious scholars offer a similar critique, claiming that the liberal individual is not a raceless, sexless, classless, ageless individual who embodies universal humanity endowed with inalienable rights and freedoms, as Locke or Rousseau may have suggested. Instead, the person at the center of contract theory is socially and historically specific: only white males were regarded as citizens, and therefore subjects of the social contract, making them the only ones capable of being recognized as fully "human" and "moral." This delimiting of the category of "citizen" is key, as it not only circumscribes the conditions of membership, it also determines the bounds of full personhood. During the seventeenth century, this line of reasoning justified the genocide and enslavement of non-whites that was – and had already been – taking place as European white men viewed the natives they were encountering in their colonial pursuits as not fully human, and therefore subject to exploitation and annihilation.[6] More than calling into question the alleged universality of the liberal individual, these critiques also expose democratic citizenship as a historically exclusionary practice.

Although the evolution of citizenship has extended the parameters of its membership, the foundation of citizenship as the exclusive relationship between nation and citizen, bound by a social contract, remains a normative and persistent viewpoint, especially from the perspective of the state. In other words, traditional understandings of citizenship dictate that nationality is the primary referent of identity for citizens of

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[5] See Virginia Held, *The Feminist Morality: Transforming Culture, Society, And Politics* (Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press, 1993); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

[6] See Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

any given state. Particularly in the U.S., the induction of immigrants into the citizenry under the rubric of a "naturalization" process reaffirms the dominant narrative of nationality as the ultimate homogenizing marker of citizenship. However, with increased immigration and the hybridization of national space, this expansion of civic membership has resulted in heightened tension between individuals and their relationship to the state, largely because citizenship that is ostensibly premised on national cohesion requires the suppression of difference. As Richard Falk posits, "This bargain or implicit contract relating to citizenship meant that in exchange for subordinating particular identities and accepting the state as internally sovereign, the society as a whole would benefit from law and order, from larger markets, and from protection against external enemies."[7] In other words, the deal that is struck between the nation-state and its citizens demands a certain homogenization of the body politic, the necessity of "subordinating particular identities" in exchange for the assurance of order and protection in a civil society. In the context of the political developments in the past one hundred years, both globally and within the U.S., it becomes clear that the diversification of identity and the state management of those differences are often irreconcilable components of the social contract, revealing that citizenship, as a concept and practice, is far more contradictory than its contractarian – and nationalist – origins.

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[7] Richard Falk, *The Declining World Order: America's Imperial Geopolitics* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 172.

Citizenship And The Politics Of Belonging

The contradictions of citizenship are made most apparent when examined through the lens of belonging, particularly when the application of this concept exposes the misalignment between legal forms of citizenship and personal feelings of belonging. In the age of hybrid identities, it is impossible for citizenship to be solely a nationalist enterprise rooted in mutual contractual obligations, for an individual's civic attachment to a particular nation vis-à-vis citizenship can belie her allegiances to another country, group, or ideology. Likewise, individuals living within particular national borders may feel themselves more connected to the host country even though they may not be formally recognized as citizens there. In these instances, citizenship can best be described as a form of belonging. As Darren O'Byrne argues, "Citizenship is a form of belonging; but it is a specific form of belonging, reliant upon certain rights and duties which betray its contractarian assumptions. This remains true even if the notion of contract is not mentioned explicitly."[8] Even when we can parcel out the substantive elements of citizenship, as Marshall had with his categorization of rights, the more qualitative – and less quantitative – components such as a sense of belonging remain an important, if not paramount, measurement of citizenship. The interplay between the nation-state and its citizens, though perhaps partially contractual, does not alone represent the full picture of citizenship.

For the most part, nationalism had long been the organizing principle of people's understanding of citizenship and identity, and similar to the notion of

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[8] Darren J. O'Byrne, *The Dimensions Of Global Citizenship: Political Identity Beyond The Nation-State* (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd, 2003), 2.

belonging, it is a qualitative way of viewing the relationship between state and citizen. Under more purely contractarian conditions, the rhetoric of nationalism certainly assumes a more potent stance: in a society where individuals freely enter into a contract with a sovereign national government, what better rallying point than the common love, preservation, and advancement of the nation-state? After all, it is our national identification that dictates the circumstances of our participation in civil society. But again, the imperative of nationalism requires a flattening of difference in favor of advocating a singular national cause. One need only look at the Nazi regime in Germany, when nationalist fervor culminated in the promotion of Aryan supremacy at the expense of Jewish annihilation. And to draw a disturbing comparison, the rise in American nationalism after the attacks of September 11 advanced a narrow patriotism that, though not ethnically homogenous, demanded unanimity of thought and submitted all authority to the power of the executive.[9] In an era of increased diversity, nationalism cannot function as a stand-in for citizenship because it elides the underlying structures of competing allegiances.

Although a significant feature of citizenship involves the exercise of membership, duties, rights, and participation, the less institutional notion of citizenship-as-belonging is equally important, especially in underscoring the inadequacy of the mutual acknowledgement of citizenship between nation and subject. To offer an explanation by way of example, O'Byrne states, "Citizenship…is as much about identification with a society or social group as it is about such institutional

[9] This discussion of post-9/11 American nationalism is a point that I will return to in Chapter 4, where I relate U.S. neo-patriotism to Arab and Muslim American citizenship.

definitions. It is about belonging and social identity. Although the components of citizenship remain the same, the emphasis is different. To be a citizen, in this sense, you must consider yourself to be a member of your society, as well as be considered to be so" (5). While O'Byrne is astute in pointing out the dual significance of belonging and identification on the one hand, and their more formal and institutional counterparts on the other, it is interesting to note the reciprocal nature of his conceptualization of citizenship: "you must consider yourself to be a member of your society, *as well as be considered to be so*" (emphasis mine). This requirement of membership that necessitates the mutual recognition between citizen and state invokes Louis Althusser's model of ideological interpellation and in doing so, marks citizenship as a site of subject-formation.[10]

Althusser's 1969 essay on ideology and the state describes the process of subjectivization whereby individuals become subjects through the act of interpellation. Ideology, according to Althusser, has a material existence that exercises its power through concrete structural forces, what he refers to as ideological state apparatuses (ISAs). These ISAs "subjectify" individuals, essentially transform them into subjects, through the practice of interpellating, or "hailing." This hailing can be as basic as a police officer shouting out in the street, "Hey, you there!" The interpellating call becomes subjectivizing when the individual turns around in response, thereby returning and confirming the recognition of herself as a subject. Because, as Althusser

[10] Louis Althusser, "Ideology And Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Toward An Investigation," *Lenin And Philosophy And Other Essays*, Trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127-186.

claims, ideology is eternal and has no history, there is never a pre-ideological moment; we are always already in ideology and exist as subjects *a priori* because the existence of ideology and the interpellation of individuals as subjects are simultaneous. In critiquing this argument, the primary question that emerges is one that involves the seemingly unilateral transfer of power: if ideology and interpellation are coincident, does the individual passively accept her subjectivization or can she return the interpellating call? Scholars such as Judith Butler have extended the argument by attempting to locate agency within Althusser's paradigm, suggesting such strategies as appropriation through performativity.[11]

To return to O'Byrne's framework of citizenship that advocates mutual recognition between state and "citizen," the application of Althusser's theory of interpellation, as well as critiques of its unilateralism, expose the contradictions of citizenship and underscore the ambiguities of belonging. If the state hails an individual as a citizen, is she required to respond to, and thus verify, the interpellating call?[12] More importantly, if she does respond, does this automatically validate, essentially "consummate," the state-subject relationship as constitutive of "citizenship?" Under a contractarian definition, the answer to the latter question would almost be an unequivocal "yes," since the primary substance of this arrangement is the strict agreement between the state and subject, and thus the subject is first and foremost defined by her relationship to the state *as citizen*. However, if we

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[11] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On The Discursive Limits Of "Sex,"* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

[12] In many ways, she has no other choice but to respond, as failure to do so would result in punitive consequences, and hence the seemingly unilateral nature of this interpellative process.

take citizenship to include a sense of belonging, the mutual recognition of citizenship between state and subject alone is insufficient in accounting for the whole picture of citizenship, and further elides the complicated structures of difference that produce citizenship as a contested site of identity, rights, and "home-making." Thus, an individual may respond to the interpellating call, but she may also have allegiances and identifications elsewhere that betray her status as an interpellated citizen.

In less abstract terms, in the U.S., we have witnessed the ways in which traditional understandings of citizenship are being disrupted by more informal arrangements of citizenship that encompass, among other things, the notion of belonging. Domestic policy alone provides us with multiple examples of these ambiguities and contradictions, revealing that citizenship embodies both a collection of legal rights, as well as a more loosely conceived notion of membership involving a diversity of subjects, some of whom are not necessarily formal citizens. Saskia Sassen astutely sums up the contradictions of citizenship when she writes about individuals that are either "unauthorized yet recognized," or inversely, "authorized yet unrecognized."[13] In the former, Sassen explains how unauthorized individuals, such as unauthorized immigrants, who "demonstrate civic involvement, social deservedness, and national loyalty can argue that they merit legal residency" (50). In other words, unauthorized immigrants can lay claim to citizenship by virtue of their civic participation and national allegiance that models the behavior of the "authorized." For them, they belong to their country of residence, even though

[13] Saskia Sassen, "The Repositioning Of Citizenship: Emergent Subjects And Spaces For Politics," *The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 2 (2003): 41-66.

national policy may not regard them as such. To draw upon an example from the U.S., the granting of driver's licenses to illegal immigrants from Mexico has been a hotly contested debate in California, as these unauthorized individuals are recognized as participatory actors within the U.S. labor economy despite their exclusion from formal citizenship.

Meanwhile, Sassen argues that an "authorized yet unrecognized" individual is "the person who is a full citizen, yet not recognized as a political subject"(52-53). In this context, she references the experience of Japanese housewives who are citizens but are also non-political actors. I would argue that the same idea can be applied to not just political rights, but civil and social ones as well. In the case of the "authorized yet unrecognized" individual, she is formally authorized as a citizen but is denied participation in some facet of society. To highlight another U.S. example, fully authorized citizens, such as certain members of the queer community who possess formal U.S. citizenship, lack full recognition and are denied certain rights on the basis of their sexual orientation. More specifically, queer couples are denied marriage rights and therefore, are not recognized on a national level as full participants in the enjoyment of rights. Both examples of Sassen's arguments demonstrate that citizenship is inextricably bound to issues of identity and subjectivity, for a subject's identity is often the criterion that determines citizenship, in the same way that laying claim to civic membership is a form of subject-formation.

Given this, these illustrations seem to demonstrate a tension between one's sense of territoriality on the one hand, and one's sense of belonging on the other, as

though the two, despite inhabiting the same person, can move in different trajectories. As evidenced by the above examples, it is possible for individuals to occupy a particular territory, community, or state, and even be a full citizen of this space, but still feel a lack of belonging. As Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort articulately demonstrate, "But what, for instance, if where we feel we belong (our 'cultural' or 'ethnic' home) does not match objective ascriptions of membership (our 'political' or 'civic' home), because 'belonging' separates into its two constituent parts: 'being' in one place, and 'longing' for another?"[14] Indeed, the tension that arises from feeling "out-of-place" creates two different understandings of "home," and rends "belonging" into separate experiences of "being" and "longing." And as Hedetoft and Hjort go on to point out, for those who are in situations of either voluntarily or compulsory exile, the disparity between their new place of residence and the images and memories of their place of origin, forces them to rearrange these mismatched realities: their lack of home and belonging essentially becomes a "longing-to-be home."

Globalizing Citizenship: Death Of The Nation?

Hence, in establishing that citizenship is not a strictly contractarian arrangement but instead encompasses ideas of hybrid identities, misplaced belonging, and divided allegiances, what this means is that citizenship, as it has been embedded in narratives about nationality, is not necessarily bound to a nationalist identification, either in terms of residence, formal citizenship, or social identity. In the current global

[14] Hedetoft and Hjort, vii.

moment, this unhinging of citizenship from the nation-state is further exacerbated by globalizing processes that have re-organized traditional structures of identity by transgressing both state boundaries and state authority. In the wake of globalization, national paradigms are rapidly being altered by multiple forms of transnational movement, either in the form of people, goods, capital, or culture. Across the various fields of scholarship, one of the more leading positions argues that the spread of global capital has resulted in the steady decline of the nation-state as the primary nucleus for cultural, political, and economic organization. After all, in a world of increasing interplay among national markets, where "systems of commodity exchange are also systems of cultural exchange," the rapid movement of both goods and people across borders blurs the boundaries formerly contained by the geographical and ideological demarcations of the nation-state.[15]

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri reinforce this argument, claiming that the forces of globalization have mitigated the sovereignty of the nation-state: "The primary factors of production and exchange – money, technology, people, and goods – move with increasing ease across national boundaries; hence the nation-state has less and less power to regulate these flows and impose its authority over the economy."[16] Similarly, Linda Bosniak and Yasemin Soysal separately argue for the need to develop new forms of claiming rights and protections that move beyond the nation.[17] And Paul

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[15] Paul Jay, "Globalization And The Postcolonial Condition," http://home.comcast.net/~jay.paul/pc.htm (accessed October 27, 2004).
[16] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), xi.
[17] Linda Bosniak, "The State Of Citizenship: Citizenship Denationalized," *Indiana Journal Of Legal Studies* 7, no. 2 (2000): 447-510; Yasemin Nuhoólu Soysal, *Limits Of Citizenship:*

Jay posits that in contributing to the development of the "global community," globalizing forces continually undercut the traditional power of the nation-state to monitor citizenship and govern the conditions of cultural belonging.

In transforming the ways in which we come to identify as citizens, globality has not only raised our awareness and identification with the world at large, but it has enabled this process by creating avenues for greater global interdependence. O'Byrne argues that the events during and after WWII set this course in action as fear of global obliteration through world wars and nuclear destruction heightened our obligation to, and appreciation of, the world as a shared space. Combined with innovative advancements in technology and the explosion of global capital, our experiences of temporality and spatiality are radically altered as our sense of our relationship with the rest of the world is scaled down to much more accessible proportions. Politically, this has translated into the creation of supra-national entities such as the United Nations and the European Union. On an economic level, the development of transnational corporations has relocated the labor economy into various factories around the globe, subsequently shifting the flow – and terms – of immigration worldwide. The rise in technology, both in travel and communication, has enabled greater interpersonal interaction and networks of social participation, with the boom in Internet communities producing the "netizen." And the horrors of human atrocities in the twentieth century, such as the Holocaust and genocidal wars, have prompted a more

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Migrants And Postnational Membership In Europe (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1994).

aggressive approach to demanding international human rights standards and the need to conceive of a "global humanity."

So what does this increased transnationalization mean for citizenship? It means that while the era of the nation-state and nationalism imagined the national/political and citizenship/identity as one and the same thing, the era of globality challenges this consolidation by offering alternate forms of identification, thus demonstrating that the nation-state is not the sole source of identity and that people employ multiple factors to construct their sense of citizenship. However, as Hedetoft and Hjort point out, this detachment of citizenship, identity, and belonging from the nation-state has been happening for many years, but what is different about the current moment is that while this phenomenon used to be the exception, globalization is making it the rule.[18] On one level, this dislodging has resulted in increased participation and membership in non-state communities, as well as a heightened association with entities that lack territorial boundaries (non-governmental organizations and terrorist networks, though polar in goals and practice, are examples of this). On another level, it has revised identity politics by incorporating a more transnational component into a traditionally nationalist framework of citizenship. Hedetoft and Hjort argue, "In any event, it strengthens and reinvents the politics of identity as an increasingly transnational phenomenon, in the double sense of finding its way into all national contexts as a fairly uniform occurrence, and playing itself out as a substantively transnational politics of organization, platform, support, and

[18] Hedetoft and Hjort, xvi.

discourse: a 'McDonaldization' of cultural and political differences, one might call it" (xvi). Although the term "McDonaldization" misrepresents the less commercial and less western developments of globalization that are also taking place, it nonetheless captures the ways in which globality is increasingly altering the role of the nation-state as a primary organizing principle within discourses of identity and difference, as well as underscore the major role that global (western) capital plays in this displacement.

However, I want to point out that in light of these positions and the reality of the global re-organization that indeed diminishes the conventional power of national paradigms, the nation-state nevertheless remains a key zone of contestation. The encroachment of globalizing forces on traditional nationalist epistemologies is tempered by the use of the nation-state as an instrument in assisting the spread of global capital, as well as, from the post-9/11 American standpoint, U.S. unilateralism and neo-nationalism. The efforts that have been made to resist globalizing processes, or attempts to "save the nation," have taken different forms, from the imperative to preserve local culture from global capitalist infiltration, to more reactionary and fundamentalist nationalisms that are reminiscent of earlier versions of xenophobic nativism. In this way, the contested site of the nation-state discloses, to borrow Sassen's formulation, the tension between two competing forces over "territory, authority, and rights": the centripetal force of the national that consolidates, and the centrifugal force of the global that re-organizes.[19] Hence, it is important to view globality as a force that challenges the national, but not as an entity that replaces it:

[19] Saskia Sassen (lecture, University Of California, San Diego, February 24, 2005).

"'Globality'…spells significant changes in the cultural landscapes of belonging, not because it supplants the nation-state and the forms of homeness …, but because it changes the contexts (politically, culturally, and geographically) for them, situates national identity and belonging differently, and superimposes itself on 'nationality' as a novel frame of reference, values, and consciousness."[20] In this sense, the global displaces and superimposes the national, but does not replace nor discard it.

Moreover, while citizenship may transcend national boundaries, citizenship does not necessarily reside in the global. In other words, globalizing forces have differently impacted people all over the world and have reorganized discourses of identity by diminishing the rhetoric of the national, but globality is in no way a point of identification of which individuals feel they are citizens. Hedetoft and Hjort articulate this point most clearly when they write, "globality is either a curse (globality as rootlessness), a blessing (globality as help against repression), or an opportunity (globality as freedom and progress); but in none of these cases is globality imagined as something people belong *to*" (xx). The nation-state is in no way obsolete, and it is unlikely that a loosely conceived idea of global citizenship will trump a national one. Globality may have opened up the avenues for alternate forms of identification, but it is in and of itself not a marker of citizenship. In this way, globality has not killed the nation-state; instead, the trajectories of both forces differently discipline and construct the interstitial citizen, both against each other as well as against the citizen's own efforts of self-formation.

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[20] Hedetoft and Hjort, xv.

Cultural Citizenship

Thus far, I have established that an examination of citizenship through the optic of a politics of belonging discloses the contradictions of the traditional model of citizenship as it has been embedded in nationalist narratives. As such, citizenship does not operate exclusively within a formal and national framework; this is particularly truer now than ever before. I contend that as globalization continues to increasingly transgress state boundaries, such forces further dislodge citizenship from the nation-state by displacing the function and authority of national paradigms. Nonetheless, the nation-state remains a key actor in global transactions, as well as a potent referent of identity in the wake of neo-nationalisms that resist heightened globality. Given this, I now turn to the *mode* in which I will be analyzing citizenship as it negotiates its interstitial position between both national and global imperatives.

In my examination of citizenship, I privilege a cultural approach to understanding the varied ways in which individuals enact and are acted upon as citizens, particularly in the contemporary global moment. Sassen argues that the dynamics of globalization have "significantly alter[ed] those conditions that in the past fed the articulation between citizenship and the nation-state."[21] If these conditions have changed, what might the new articulation look like? Much of the previous scholarship on citizenship tends to focus on its legal and political components, namely

[21] Quoted in Alicia Schmitt Camacho, "Ciudana X: Gender Violence And The Denationalization Of Women's Rights In Ciudad Juárez, Mexico," *The New Centennial Review* 5, no. 1 (2005): 257.

the more formal institutional development of rights. However, the nation, as the sum of a multiplicity of material and discursive forms, also embodies a cultural dimension that is central to the citizenship project, especially in the context of increased international exchange. In this regard, the study of culture is important because citizenship does not exclusively involve the relationship between individual rights and socio-political institutions, it is also concerned with common experiences that are more immediate to the citizen-subject.

Therefore, the lens of cultural citizenship exposes citizenship as a *learned* process: individuals learn their identity, their role as (non) citizens, through everyday cultural practices. But citizenship is also an active process, and the cultural injects individuals with the power to create meaning, generate new forms of language, construct narratives, develop community relations and identifications, and lend themselves to personal expression, practices that are all integral to citizenship-formation. Thus, citizenship is also about the ways in which individuals interpret and articulate the world they live in, and their place in it. This conception of identity and belonging is not wholly disconnected from the legal-political, for it is often translated into discourses of rights and empowerment that eventually get actualized in social institutions. At the same time, because cultural citizenship enables a more informal, less institutionalized mode of citizenship-making, it can also be mobilized by unauthorized "citizens" of the state. Nevertheless, the idea of a cultural dimension of citizenship yielding a set of rights has received very little attention. In mapping the three primary groups of rights, Marshall certainly did not include any notion of

cultural rights, yet perhaps these will come to progressively characterize the next century.

Moreover, in deploying the use of cultural citizenship, I hope to underscore citizen-formation as not only a *process*, but also a *dual* process of forming the self and the self being formed, enacting and being acted upon. Hence, I find it useful to employ Aihwa Ong's definition of cultural citizenship to "refer to the cultural practices and beliefs produced out of negotiating the often ambivalent and contested relations with the state and its hegemonic forms that establish the criteria of belonging within a national population and territory. Cultural citizenship is a dual process of self-making and being-made within webs of power linked to the nation-state and civil society."[22] By such a formulation, the relationship between citizen and state is still intact, although it may not be a strictly bilateral one. If anything, the cultural opens more varied avenues for citizenship-making, engaging on a greater level with notions of belonging and enabling a rise in global modes of identification that bypass formal state configurations of citizenship. In short, cultural citizenship lends empowerment to cultural forms such as language, narrative, and discourse, and thus introduces a new course in demanding rights and claim-making. And yet, as a dual process, cultural citizenship also marks the cultural as a site of hegemonic inscription of power. Like other dimensions of citizenship, the cultural – in true Foucauldian fashion – is equally subject to the same disciplinary powers of subjectivization vis-à-vis modes of state-

[22] Aihwa Ong, "Cultural Citizenship As Subject-Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial And Cultural Boundaries In The United States," *Current Anthropology* 37, no. 5 (December 1996): 738.

sanctioned surveillance, management, and punishment. In this way, culture – as a site of discursive relations of power, either from above or below – becomes a revealing lens for the examination of citizenship.

Chapter Preview

In my first chapter, "Haunting The Nation: Global Labor And Grief In *Bone*," I argue that Fae Myenne Ng's *Bone* critiques the logic of both nationalism and globalization, even as the characters within the novel are disciplined by these competing trajectories. *Bone* tracks the experience of the Leongs, a Chinese-American immigrant family whose lives are interrupted by the suicide of the middle daughter, Ona. Her suicide further exacerbates the Leongs' toil as tenuous citizens working and living in the U.S., as well as fuels the pre-existing familial tension brought on by the hardships of immigrant life. Furthermore, the story of their grief is told in reverse chronological order and against the backdrop of San Francisco's Chinatown, a historical repository of racial exclusion. By employing these narrative techniques, I argue that Ng mimics the temporal displacement of globality and challenges the forward logic of progress, while simultaneously presenting spatiality as a site of hybridity, and as the residue of racist national policies. In this way, the Leongs' citizenship is marked by the intersection of the national and the global.

Chapter two, "Denationality, Gender Violence, And *Señorita Extraviada*," explores the consequences of denationality alongside the mass murders of young women in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. As a border town, Ciudad Juárez is a primary

contact zone between the U.S. and Mexico, and – with the help of NAFTA sanctions – has become a major export-processing region for transnational corporations. Utilizing Lourdes Portillo's documentary film *Señorita Extraviada*, I argue that Ciudad Juárez is essentially denationalized as multiple foreign economic actors infiltrate the city to take advantage of the large supply of cheap Mexican labor, particularly the recruitment of poor women to work in the factories, or *maquiladoras*. Hence, this paradoxically denationalized and over-nationalized space has been suspended from any meaningful sense of state sovereignty or local authority, thereby enabling rampant crime to take place, including the disappearance of nearly 600 women in ten years since 1993 (370 were found dead). However, my argument does not attribute the crimes solely to the economic developments of globalization, but instead contends that these global processes further intensify the already vulnerable citizenship of Mexican women whose lives continue to be governed by dominant cultural narratives about women as second-class citizens. I argue that the reification of these cultural myths in the form of sexist national policies intersect with the global exploitation of Mexican women as laborers to give rise to abhorrent crimes against the women of Ciudad Juárez.

In my third chapter, "At The Intersextion Of Gender: Biological Citizenship, Queer Globalization, And *Middlesex*," I examine the global challenge to heterosexist norms as they are entrenched in the rhetoric of the nation-state. I establish the persistence of sexuality as a site for the production of nationhood, as well as a means for population management and policing the boundaries of citizenship. Rooted in a

hetero-masculinist tradition, the nation-state, particularly the U.S., has historically excluded and disciplined sexually dissident members of the national community. However, the recent emergence of a global queer identity raises the possibility for the transcendence of sexual norms as they are embedded in nationalist discourses. I analyze this prospect in the context of queerness as it intersects with biological citizenship, noting the constraints on both sexual and gender identity in the case of a real-life California intersexual, as well as the possible liberation from these constraints via the transgression of national borders, as in Jeffrey Eugenides' novel, *Middlesex*, the story of a fictional intersexual. I conclude, however, that ostensibly progressive texts about the emancipatory potential of globality for sexual dissidence also harbor the possibility of reaffirming heterosexist norms.

My fourth and final chapter, "Team America: The War On Terror And The Return Of Orientalism," is a slight departure from my previous chapters in that it underscores the persistent rhetoric of the nation-state. I focus on U.S. nationalism immediately after 9/11, both among politicians in the media, as well as ordinary citizens, particularly Arab, South Asian, and Muslim Americans. Examining anecdotes, poster signs, photographs, interviews, and speeches, I argue that nationality continues to be a potent and viable referent of identity, so much so that the national fervor after 9/11 resulted in the compulsory need of Arab and South Asian Americans to foreground their patriotism at the expense of their own ethnic-religious identifications. I go on to tease out the particularities of this tension, most notably evident in the speech of a Harvard student who characterized his conflict as one

between “faith and citizenship,” suggesting that the two do not have to be mutually exclusive. Although I center much of my analysis on U.S. neo-nationalism, I nevertheless argue that increased globality has impacted the racialization of Arab Americans, especially in the post-9/11 moment. Through the combination of American self-consciousness of its own history of racism, and the geo-political developments that have relocated more Arabs to western countries, the threat of the racial “other” is no longer as legible as it had been before. Being politically unsavory to label all Arabs and Muslims as terrorists, the revised form of Orientalism recasts the old fear of the East – the Orient – as the new fear of the “bad” Muslim. Because globalizing processes have rendered the ability to discern the “good” ones from the “bad” ones more difficult, the efforts to make this distinction have ironically served the authority of the state in creating greater social control.

Chapter 1:
Haunting The Nation: Global Labor And Grief In *Bone*

"The tradition of all dead generations weighs like
a nightmare on the brains of the living."
– Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire Of*
Louis Napoleon

"Time felt like a shove or a jerk…This telling had a stillness,
not time stopping, but time hurting."
– from *Bone*

Introduction

Commenting on the rising demands for production in the efforts of multi-national corporations to increase profit margins, Isabel Reyes, a sweatshop worker in Honduras' garment industry, remarks, "There is always an acceleration…the goals are always increasing, but the pay stays the same."[23] Reyes' observation typifies the growing experiences of garment industry workers all over the world, the majority of whom are forced to work long hours in hazardous environments for low wages. But this race to the bottom is not just taking place in the "third world," it is also happening in so-called developed countries. Though the pressures of globalization link these various workers of different locales by the conditions of their labor, their circumstances are also affected by processes of subject-formation that are nationally specific. Hence, the dual forces of the local and the international simultaneously structure the experiences of these workers as citizens of both the nation, and of the world.

[23] Quoted in Joe Zacune, "ASDA Wal-Mart: Cutting Costs at any Cost," Corporate Watch, http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/?lid=2102 (accessed November 7, 2005).

Fae Myenne Ng's novel *Bone* demonstrates the ways in which transnational capital and national policies of subjectivization are linked by new global modes of production to construct the interstitial citizen who is both marked by national locality while simultaneously challenged by increasing globality. *Bone* brings together multiple themes of identity, haunting, temporality, and place; centered on the suicide of the middle daughter Ona, the story of the Leong family, an immigrant Chinese-American family living in San Francisco's Chinatown, unravels in reverse chronological order and is told through the perspective of Leila, the oldest daughter. Although never openly discussed, Ona's death remains the unspoken burden that haunts the family, and her suicidal jump comes to symbolize the fragmentation that characterizes the Leong's immigrant experience. As we progress into the narrative, we also move backward in time to learn of the mother's job in a sewing factory sweatshop, a gendered occupation that becomes central to structuring familial relationships as well as exposing the social, economic, and political consequences of immigrant life in the U.S. As Lisa Lowe writes, "Asian immigrant and Asian American women are not simply the most recent formation within the genealogy of Asian American racialization; they, along with women working in the 'third world,' are the 'new' workforce within the global reorganization of capitalism."[24] The tensions that arise from the pressures levied by the global economy, in addition to the strains of immigration, racialization, and civic exclusion, critique both globalization's increasing labor demands as well as the contradictions of the liberal nation-state.

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[24] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 158.

Furthermore, the use of Chinatown as a backdrop in the novel marks it as a globalized space, what Saskia Sassen would call "denationalized national territory."[25] San Francisco's Chinatown evolved from a history of national racialization, but it is this very same racialization that makes it a target of globalization's demands for a segmented labor force, thereby locating it as a site for multi-national corporate infiltration as well as gendered and racialized labor extraction.

Hence, it is through the backward tracking of Ona's death that discloses the multiple layers of the family's underlying dividedness, a dividedness whose source is not reducible to a single factor, but is instead conditioned by interlocking systems of marginalization and exploitation. By structuring the story around a spectral presence, Ona's death becomes the primary signifier whose absence the narrative revolves around. As such, her death becomes the optic through which the trauma and fragmentive nature of cultural displacement, civic membership, and globalized labor are exposed and made apparent. In this way, the consequences of national history and global capital likewise take on a ghostly presence. What is interesting about Ng's employment of the themes of death and haunting, though, is not only her use of these as a mechanism for disclosure, but also as a vehicle for theorizing resistance. *Bone* is a story of mourning, but it does not mourn the loss of some pre-existing wholeness. Rather, grief is mobilized as rupture, as coping, as *survival*. While we learn of Ona's death within the first few pages of the novel and expect to uncover the cause of her

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[25] Saskia Sassen, "Whose City Is It? Globalization And The Formation Of New Claims," http://www.ifs.tu-darmstadt.de/lopofo/ak-tagungen/bamberg_sassen.pdf (accessed October 26, 2005).

suicide as the narrative unravels, what we find instead is the hardship and endurance of a family whose suffering likewise has no singular cause. And like their suffering, the novel never achieves closure. But by deploying a politics of mourning, Ng is able to effectively expose and critique the exclusionary practices of national policies as well as the exploitative tactics of emerging global structures.

Ultimately, Ng's mobilization of the devices of haunting, reverse temporality, and palimpsestic space reminds us, against the insistence to "move on" in the name of progress, to keep alive the ghosts of national history as well as the living ghosts of globalization. Ng herself writes, "Remembering the past gives power to the present. Memories do add up."[26]

Synopsis

The story of the Leong family – mother (Mah), (step)father (Leon), three daughters (Leila, Ona, and Nina), and adopted grandfather (Grandpa Leong) – "begins" in the present time, with Leila's return from New York where she has just finished visiting Nina. During this trip, she has also eloped with her boyfriend Mason, and upon her return to San Francisco, she attempts to find Mah and Leon to tell them the news. The subsequent chapters are arranged in reverse chronological order such that the events of the following chapter take place in the moment before the preceding one. For example, we learn of Ona's death at the start of the novel, but later read about her, as a living person, and her relationship with Osvaldo Ong; Leon knows of

[26] Fae Myenne Ng, *Bone* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1993), 88-89.

Mah's affair with her boss, but Leila later explains Leon's reaction to the news; Leila is living with Mason, and describes towards the end of the novel how she is moving out of her family home on Salmon Alley; and we register Mah and Leon's hostility toward the Ong family, only to later read about how both family's joint business venture ended badly.

What we also learn in this backward unfolding is Mah's first marriage to Lyman Fu, whom she marries to escape her war-ravaged village in China. After relocating to the U.S., Lyman leaves Mah while she is pregnant with Leila. Abandoned, Mah takes a job as a seamstress in the garment industry, and she eventually marries another Chinese immigrant, Leon Leong, and gives birth to Ona and Nina. As Mah toils in the sweatshop, Leon's lack of employment causes him to ship out to sea for months at a time to find work both on board and in other countries. His continual absence leads Mah to have an affair with her boss and landlord, Tommie Hom. Mah and Leon ultimately start a laundry business with their friends, Luciano and Rosa Ong. While Leon ran the store and Luciano kept the books, Ona and Osvaldo, Luciano and Rosa's son, develop a close relationship and eventually fall in love with each other. However, when the business goes bad – the Leong's show up to the shop one morning only to learn that it has been repossessed and that Luciano had been withholding information about the poor state of their finances – the divide between their families puts a strain on Ona and Osvaldo's relationship as their parents forbid them to see each other. Ona and Osvaldo break up, and some time afterward,

Ona commits suicide by jumping off the thirteenth floor. Mah goes on to quit working at the factory and instead opens a shop called the Baby Store.

Family Ties: Immigration And The Land Of Lost Dreams

In *Bone*, the family becomes a site where the contradictions of the liberal nation-state are exposed, for the strained relations between members of the Leong family bear the weight of immigrant exclusion and labor exploitation in the face of the American promise of equality and civic membership. From the standpoint of the normative nuclear family where husband and wife adhere to their respective gender roles and children keep their "place," the Leong family is a failure: the family is fractured by Mah's two marriages (Leila and her sisters do not share the same last name); gender roles are reversed as Mah is the primary income-earner who holds a steady job while Leon is emasculated for his inability to consistently find work; Leila often occupies the parental role, such as the time she scours Chinatown looking for a lost Leon; and ultimately, the family cannot stay intact when Ona kills herself, which prompts Nina to move to New York. As Leila indicates in the first few lines of the novel, they were "a failed family" (3). This "failure," however, does not necessarily assign blame on the family members per se, but instead reveals the underlying reality of racialized labor exploitation, both at the national and global level. And while the Leong family's failure can be read literally as the direct product of the abusive practices of transnational capitalism, it can also be read as a metaphor for the failed promise of American inclusion and equality.

Leon's inability to fulfill his family responsibilities is framed within the immigrant narrative of the newcomer's hopes for success met by racial discrimination and unequal opportunity. In order to come to the U.S., Leon purchases a new identity that he rehearses with his friend, You Thin, on their way to America: "On the long voyage, they coached each other on their paper histories: Leon was the fourth son of a farm worker in the Sacramento valley, his mother had bound feet, her family was from Hoiping…After You Thin and Leon both passed the interrogation at Angel Island, they slapped each other's backs. Each called the other 'Brother' and predicted the good life" (9). This biographical rehearsal during the trip en route to the U.S. embodies immigrant dreams of prosperity in America, as well as functions as a site of self-(re)fashioning; Leon and You Thin take advantage of displacement to reinvent themselves and envision only "the good life" in America.

This good life, however, comes with a price. Leon buys his new identity for five thousand dollars from Grandpa Leong, who sponsors Leon as his "paper son." In fact, this was not an uncommon practice in San Francisco during the time. After the 1906 earthquake and subsequent fires destroyed municipal records, many young men in China purchased birth certificates from American citizens already living in the U.S. who were of Chinese ancestry. Claiming kinship, these young men took advantage of the U.S. law that stated that children of American citizens were automatically citizens, regardless of place of birth.[27] Leon's transaction situates him in this tradition of purchased citizenship. But in addition to monetary compensation, Leon promises to

[27] Lowe, 125.

send Grandpa Leong's bones back to China, a promise that he fails to keep. Leon is shipped out at sea when Grandpa Leong dies, and it is Mah who must make funeral arrangements. Grandpa Leong's remains eventually end up in a run-down graveyard, buried alongside other people of the same surname. Here, Leon's absence during Grandpa Leong's death signals the systemic constraints on the immigrant to secure employment "on land," forcing him to ship out in search of work. This economic strain prevents Leon from fulfilling the conditions of the agreement that ensures his citizenship; as a paper son, not only is his citizenship based on a false identity, but he also does not perform his filial duties to repatriate Grandpa Leong's remains, thereby contractually de-legitimizing his status as a legal citizen.

But it is not only Leon's tenuous legal standing as a citizen that marks his lack of civic membership, he is also prevented from full participation in other sectors of the American social body. In one scene, Leila takes Leon to the social security office, hoping to help him collect retirement funds. During the interview, however, Leon is unable to account for the inconsistencies in his name and age: "[The interviewer] asked Leon why he had so many aliases? So many different dates of birth? Did he have a passport? A birth certificate? A driver's license?"[28] Because he constantly used names and birth dates that were both real and fake, Leon cannot provide a unified narrative of his life. This illustrates his inability to reconcile his "real" identity, rooted in his Chinese nativism, with his false identity that has been dialectically constructed by him and the state. Moreover, it is interesting to note the ways in which the state, as

[28] Ng, 56.

represented by the social security officer, recognizes Leon's legitimacy – he asks for documents: passport, birth certificate, driver's license. Leon is unable to produce these, which is ironic, considering his status as a paper son. Furthermore, despite his years of participation in the U.S. economy as a laborer, Leon is excluded from receiving social security. As Leila put it, "It was as if all the years of work didn't count" (55). In this instance, Leon is interpellated, in the Althusserian sense, as both ineligible for government protection, and illegible as a legitimate citizen of the state.

Determined to secure another interview with the social security department, Leila goes to Leon's room to hunt down the required documents. She finds Leon's brick-colored suitcase, which is filled with papers, letters, and other random documents that he has been collecting over the years. As Leila rifles through the papers, the past emerges before her: "I only had to open the first few to know the story: 'We Don't Want You.' A rejection from the army: unfit. A job rejection: unskilled. An apartment unavailable" (57). Branded unfit, unskilled, and unavailable, Leon is excluded from military, economic, and social participation, marking his undesirability in multiple segments of American membership. Moreover, his suitcase functions as a kind of archival crypt that not only contains proof of his transformation from being Chinese to "American," but it also preserves his systemic denial from inclusion in the body politic. Leon's "crypt" is equivalent to that of Grandpa Leong's, but instead of bones, it is filled with paper. Grandpa Leong's bones are never returned to China, but they are not properly housed in the U.S. either. Re-buried in mass graves among the abandoned dead, Grandpa Leong is given a makeshift Chinese

communal burial on American soil. In the same way that Grandpa Leong's bones are never settled, Leon's vague intention to return to China is not reconciled by his lack of settledness and belonging in the U.S. Leila thinks to herself that "Leon was right to save everything. For a paper son, paper is blood" (61). Indeed, in America, paper proves to be more powerful than blood, but paper does not resolve the crisis of racial identity, nor does it replace notions of civic legitimacy that are based on biological racial purity. These papers construct Leon's identity as multi-positional, at once overlapping, interstitial, and marginalized.

Gendered Labor And The Global Economy

While Leon's experiences of exclusion and failure encrypt the broken promise of America as the promised land, Mah's toil likewise encodes the contradictions of this national myth. Mah's job as a seamstress typifies the growing experience of exploited Asian immigrant and Asian American women in the San Francisco garment industry. Not only does this exploitation take place locally – the recruitment of labor from poor, ethnic enclaves in large cities across America – it is also the product of the global restructuring of capitalism that enables multi-national corporations to transgress both national borders and government regulation in order to amass a cheap labor force consisting of workers from within the U.S., as well as overseas. Lowe calls this new social formation the "global racialized feminization of women's labor," a phenomenon that targets labor markets where women are either "disciplined by state-instituted traditional patriarchy" (often in third world countries), or where women are racially

marked by their immigrant status (in ethnically diverse cities in California, such as San Francisco or Los Angeles).[29] Such a gendered and racialized formation relies on a differentiation, and not a homogenization, of material resources, thereby linking women from different national and international locales by the conditions of their labor.

In *Bone*, we witness such conditions, as well as the magnitude of global capital in the ways that its expansion has infiltrated the space of the home. Leila describes the location of the sewing machine next to the television, and at one point, her room is also the sewing room. Later, she recalls a memory of Mah's work-at-home routine: "Saved to work. Mah sat down at her Singer with the dinner rice still in her mouth. When we pulled down the Murphy bed, she was still there, sewing. The hot lamp made all the stitches blur together; the street noises stopped long before she did. And in the morning, long before any of us awoke, she was already there, at work."[30] Mah's work is not confined solely to the sweatshop, but extends into the domestic sphere such that space and time in the home are structured around the image of the sewing machine, more specifically, Mah as a fixture at the sewing machine. Indeed, Mah is "saved to work," taking on a second shift of performing domestic chores for her family, as well as a third shift of sewing at home, but there is never really an end to her workday and she is not paid overtime for her overwork.

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[29] Lowe, 161.
[30] Ng, 34.

Lowe aptly comments on Mah's situation as one that is typical of female workers in this line of work, describing the conditions of Asian immigrant women working in the San Francisco Bay Area garment industry as

> low-wage or unpaid labor, forced increases in productivity through long workdays or speedups, repetitive manual labor, occupational hazards and environmental toxins, and no union or collective bargaining protections…Furthermore, the policy of paying the worker by piece exploits the immigrant women in ways that extend beyond the extraction of surplus value from hourly, low-wage factory labor. The incentive to complete as many pieces as possible makes certain that the sewing women will work overtime without compensation and will intensify her productivity even if it results in exhaustion or personal injury.[31]

Ng weaves these features of sweatshop labor into the novel, attaching a personal narrative to the seemingly faceless exploitation of transnational capital, and creating a backdrop that exposes the dual forces of the national and the global on the citizen-subject. Mah's civic membership is constituted by her inclusion in the workforce, but she is simultaneously excluded from normative – and even legal – participation, as witnessed by the unregulated demands made on her labor, time, and health. As Lowe points out, the principle of paying the worker per piece "rewards" women not for the time they have invested, but for their willingness to push the limits of their own productivity. In *Bone*, Leila describes the season of producing culottes in the sweatshops: "All the ladies were working overtime at the shop. Mah even had [her boss] Tommie deliver bundles to our apartment, and I helped sew them on our

[31] Lowe, 154-155.

Singer."[32] The competitive incentive to increase production prompts the site of the shop to move to the home, and the role of the worker to move to the family, as Mah recruits a young Leila to help her.

Moreover, not only does Mah work excessively for meager wages, but the conditions of her work prove dangerous to her physical health and results in a physical transformation of her body. While delivering Mah's lunch, Leila provides an account of the shop: "Walking into the factory felt like walking into the cable-car barn. Every machine was running at high speed: the Singers zoomed, the button machines clicked. The shop vibrated like a big engine. Everything blended: oil and metal and the eye-stinging heat of the presses. The ladies pushed their endurance, long hours and then longer nights, as they strained to slip one more seam under the stamping needle" (177). In this vivid description of the factory, everything is a threat to the body: high-speed Singers, eye-stinging heat, stamping needles. In an environment where "everything blended," Leila describes the factory as a merging of human and machine: machines pulse and vibrate in the same way that human labor is mechanized. At one point, Mah *is* injured when she breaks a needle and "its tip flew up and lodged so close to her eye that Luday and Soon-ping had to walk her over to Chinese Hospital" (179). In another instance, Leila describes the physical toll of sweatshop labor on Mah's body: "I'd watched the years of working in the sweatshops change her body. Her neck softened. Her shoulders grew heavy" (163). Mah's health is threatened, altered, and transformed, bearing the heavy burdens of her work through the years. In

[32] Ng, 177.

this way, the push of global capitalist accumulation has not only infiltrated the private life of the home, it has inscribed itself on the actual, physical body. And to add insult to literal injury, the sewing ladies are kept from collective bargaining practices and are therefore not entitled to worker's compensation benefits. Despite their participation as laboring citizens in the American – and global – economy, these women do not receive guaranteed state protections from the government. Lowe argues that, "For Asian immigrant women, the American contract of citizenship is quite evidently contradictory; if it proposes the state as the unified body in which all equal subjects are granted membership, it simultaneously asks that differences – of race, class, gender, and locality – be subordinated in order to qualify for membership in that democratic body."[33] In other words, the garment industry, located either internationally in Malaysia or locally in California, relies on a gendered and racial stratification of its labor force; this is in direct conflict with American claims of citizenship that guarantee equal access to inclusion, opportunity, and representation in exchange for a subsumation, even a homogenization, of difference.

The Next Generation

While Leon and Mah's multiple levels of exclusion from American membership disillusion their hopes for the future, their strained interpersonal family relationships further prove false the immigrant myth of success. This is captured most poignantly in the plot trajectories of Leila, Ona, and Nina. If the immigrant's hopes

[33] Lowe, 162.

for the future are embodied in their children, then Leon and Mah's disappointment with their three daughters exposes the American dream as stunted and illusory. For Leila, her eloped wedding to Mason angers Mah; in fact, if we are to reconstruct the reverse chronological order of the novel, the narrative "ends" with Mah's tirade at the Baby Store after Leila tells her about the wedding: "Just like that. Did it and didn't tell. Mother Who Raised You. Years of work, years of worry. Didn't! Even! Tell!"[34] It is interesting to note the way that Mah frames her anger in terms of Leila's filial obligation to honor Mah's "years of work." Here, marriage is understood to be connected to the idea of sacrifice. Leila at one point observes, "[Mah] married my father for a thrill and Leon for convenience…Mah and Leon forced themselves to live through the humiliation in this country so that we could have it better…They both worked too hard; it was as if their marriage was a marriage of toil – of toiling together. The idea was that the next generation would marry for love" (12, 33). Unlike the traditional heteronormative marriage plot where man and woman marry for love, Mah and Leon marry for practicality; in Mah's case, she also marries for the green card. Mah sacrifices love for citizenship, and both she and Leon sacrifice so that their children can be full citizens, capable of marrying for love. And while Leila *does* marry for love, her failure to include Mah in the ceremony signals a lack of recognition, much less appreciation, for that sacrifice. Mah's own aspirations to marry for love cannot be vicariously celebrated through Leila; in this way, the immigrant's dreams are not fulfilled by the next generation.

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[34] Ng, 22.

Similarly, Nina's pregnancy and subsequent abortion enrage Mah and Leon. Of the three daughters, Nina seems the least concerned with family and tradition; unlike Leila who could endure, "[Nina] yelled back. She said things. She left" (25). Nina's refusal to stay in San Francisco and deal with her family's grief signals her inability to deal with the larger burdens of immigration, assimilation, and hybridity. The most "Americanized" of the three girls, Nina moves to New York and becomes a tour guide in China. And although her abortion was the product of a liaison with a non-Chinese man, her current romantic relationship is with a fellow Chinese tour guide who can speak Spanish and play the flamenco guitar. During a visit, Leila and Nina go to a restaurant; Nina comments, "It's funny, but you know I hardly ever use chopsticks anymore. At home I eat my rice on a plate, with a fork. I only use chopsticks to hold my hair up" (27). Leila is disgusted with this, rolling her eyes and thinking, "Everything struck me as strange: Nina saying Guangzhou, Shanghai…in the northern dialect, Nina in China, Nina with a Chinese guy. I thought about our different worlds now; Nina had a whole map of China in her head; I had Chinatown, the Mission, the Tenderloin" (28). Nina's removal from her family is not just geographical, her distancing is also a cultural one. For Nina, China and Chinese culture are exotic commodities, to be viewed only in diorama-like fashion through the eyes of a tourist. Using chopsticks to hold her hair up, she regards her culture as decorative chinoiserie, and replaces tradition and utility with ornamentation. And despite the fact that Zhang, her boyfriend, is Chinese, she likes him for his European tendencies, because "he's different." In contrast, Leila must confront daily her

inherited legacy of hybridity. Rather than altogether disavowing her Chinese or "American" identities, Leila recognizes that the difficulties of immigration and displacement do not lead to easy assimilation, and that what she has – Chinatown, the Mission, the Tenderloin – are heterogeneous sites of negotiation. Hence, to the dismay of Mah and Leon, Nina's inclination towards over-assimilation threatens their own sense of cultural retention, and thereby disrupts their vision of immigrant success in America.

Grieving The Ghost

If Leila and Nina's decisions – both viewed as a failure to acknowledge the traditions and struggles of the previous generation – are a disappointment to Mah and Leon and thus represent the broken promise of America, then Ona's suicidal jump from the thirteenth floor of the Nam Ping Yuen building is the ultimate symbol of that failure. From the very first page of the novel, we learn of Ona's death, and her spectral presence continues to haunt the reverse chronology of the narrative, such that the reader anticipates the climactic revelation of the reason behind her suicide. The text does not climb toward this height, though, but moves in the direction of anti-climax: there is no singular, unified cause of Ona's death that would account for the tensions within the Leong family. In the plot's excavation, what we find instead is the unfolding of hardship and endurance, brought on by the interlocking systems of immigration, global capitalist exploitation, and civic exclusion. Ona's suicide functions as a catalyst for disclosing the trauma of racialization in America, and her

death comes to symbolize the death of immigrant dreams in the U.S. In the days following Ona's death, Leila describes Leon's erratic behavior:

> Leon was looking for someone to blame. All his old bosses. Every coworker that betrayed him. He blamed the whole maritime industry for keeping him out at sea for half his life. Finally he blamed all of America for making big promises and breaking every one. Where was the good job he'd heard about as a young man? Where was the successful business? He'd kept his end of the bargain: he'd worked hard. Two jobs, three. Day and night. Overtime. Assistant laundry presser. Prep cook. Busboy. Waiter. Porter. But where was his happiness? "America," he ranted, "this lie of a country!" (103)

This passage poignantly captures the connection Leon makes between Ona's death and his own toiling in America. Leon imagines his relationship with the U.S. to be a contractual one: in exchange for success and happiness, he would do his part, "he'd worked hard." Leon believes in the liberal myth of success, that one's time and labor invested would yield returns of the good life. This narrative is one that racialization in America naturalizes, constructing immigrant struggles as necessary for success in the future. As Leon's first child, Ona is the embodiment of this future, and her death exposes the fallacy and deception of this "bargain," rendering his hard work both futile and meaningless.

Similarly, Mah makes the same connection between Ona's suicide and America's broken promises. Leila considers what Mah will tell her relatives when she returns to Hong Kong: "Twenty-five years in the land of gold and good fortune, and then she returned to tell her story: the years spent in sweatshops, the prince of the Golden Mountain turned into a toad, and three daughters: one unmarried, another

who-cares-where, one dead" (24). In this abridged reconstruction of Mah's experiences in America, her aspirations are reduced to broken dreams; like the trajectory of the novel, Mah's story is anti-climactic, if not tragic. Tied to a marriage of toil, Mah's prince has transformed into a toad while her three daughters embody, as I previously discussed, the failure of America's promise: Leila is un(properly)married; Nina is geographically, culturally, and emotionally distant; and Ona, ultimately, is dead. But it is the latter, Ona's death, that is the most dramatic symbol of the death of immigrant hopes in the U.S. Beyond being symbol, Ona's actual demise, her very broken body, materializes this loss; as Juliana Chang puts it, her shattered body *demetaphorizes* – literalizes that which is figurative – the broken promise of America.[35] Hence, Ona's ghost must necessarily haunt the pages of the text in the same way that the history of immigration and exploitation continues to haunt the nation.

In this haunting, it is essential to read the Leong family's grief not just as a form of mourning, but as a melancholic negotiation of grief. More specifically, grief is not mobilized as a strategy to seek closure to loss, nor to find cohesion from brokenness; rather, it is utilized as a mechanism for keeping Ona's ghost alive. In other words, in grieving her death, the Leongs do not simply undergo a period of mourning and then "get over it." As Leila admits, "Ona still shaded everything we did."[36] Instead, the Leong family at once acknowledges her absence but

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[35] Juliana Chang, "Melancholic Remains: Domestic And National Secrets In Fae Myenne Ng's *Bone*," *Modern Fiction Studies* 51, no. 1 (2005): 110-133.
[36] Ng, 19.

simultaneously sustains her shadowy presence; in this way, from the very beginning of the novel, Ona is the ultimate absent presence. In understanding the mental and emotional state that the Leongs inhabit, psychoanalytic theory becomes useful here, for this psychic condition of retaining loss is what Sigmund Freud would term *melancholia*.[37] In "Mourning And Melancholia," Freud makes clear distinctions between these two conditions. Mourning is the state in which an individual reacts to the loss of "a loved person, or…the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as fatherland, liberty, an ideal, and so on."[38] In this instance, the individual experiences a real loss and must undergo a period of grieving; the understanding, though, is that after this period of time has passed, the individual will overcome this mourning and return to her/his "normal" condition prior to the loss. The melancholic subject, however, faces a loss of a different nature. Rather than declaring the lost object dead and removing attachment from it, the melancholic individual remains wholly connected to the lost object, attempting to keep it alive in the present and refusing to move on. Hence, melancholia signals not so much the state of loss, per se, but the individual's complicated relationship with grieving that loss. Moreover, both conditions embody distinct spatial and temporal dimensions: while mourning implies forward motion, elapsed time, advancement, in short, progress, melancholia in contrast suggests standstill, stalled time, suspension, and even

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[37] Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers, Volume 4*, trans. Joan Riviere (London: Hogarth Press Ltd., 1925).
[38] Ibid., 153.

regression. This is consistent with the temporal model of the narrative, a point I will return to later.

Therefore, the Leong family's psychic trauma and subsequent need to keep Ona alive while simultaneously recognizing her death is a vivid display of melancholic attachment to loss. Moreover, for the purposes of locating the site of trauma against the backdrop of exclusion, labor exploitation, and global capital, the image of Ona as a ghost becomes equally important to the figure of Ona as a living person. Globalization's lurch toward greater capitalist accumulation has resulted in the elision of collateral catastrophes, material losses, psychic deaths, and lives lain to waste. In the midst of this triumphant march, we must also examine its undersides, we must examine the ghosts. Avery Gordon argues, "The ghost is not simply a dead or a missing person, but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life."[39] Indeed, the specter of Ona becomes a social figure that not only haunts the Leongs, but also conjures an entire body of history that intersects with the national and global processes that subjectify herself and her family as Chinese and Chinese-American immigrants. In this séance, we witness Ona's demise not just as a metaphor for the death of immigrant dreams of opportunity in the face of denial from American social, economic, political, and civic membership, but also as a demetaphorized, material consequence of such exclusions. In this way, the concept of melancholic grief is both transindividual and intergenerational; psychic trauma does not operate solely at the level of the individual, but we can instead

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[39] Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting And The Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 1997), 8.

transfer this model to the collective level, to the level of groups and nations. On the individual level, the Leongs acknowledge Ona's death but their need to retain her ghost signals their insistence on also keeping alive the collective trauma of racial exploitation that precedes her death (and thus accounts for Mah and Leon's association of Ona's suicide with their own disillusionments with America). This is something that Leila understands. She recognizes that she inherits this grief, not just the grief over Ona, but also the grief of racialization in America. Writ large, the trauma that minority groups experience can be passed down from generation to generation. In contrast to the immigrant hopes of making life easier for the next generation, their legacy is often one of hardship, toil, and psychic damage.

In *The Melancholy Of Race*, Anne Cheng argues that Freud's model of melancholia can also be inverted, such that it is dominant, white America that experiences a melancholic attachment to a lost object.[40] If American nationality is constructed along the signifying narratives of freedom, equal opportunity, and inclusion, then the systematic exclusion of racial groups challenges this construction based on the inability of minorities to be absorbed into, to borrow psychoanalytic terminology, the order of national symbol. However, this process of symbolization also preserves these racial groups at the same time that it disavows them, thereby constructing them as lost objects, but always lost as attachments within the national paradigm. As Cheng argues, "Racialization in America may be said to operate through the institutional process of producing a dominant, standard, white national

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[40] Anne Cheng, *The Melancholy Of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, And Hidden Grief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

ideal, which is sustained by the exclusion-yet-retention of racialized others. The national topography of centrality and marginality legitimizes itself by retroactively positing the racial other as always Other and lost to the heart of the nation" (10). Hence, from the perspective of the nation as melancholic, the national symbolic expunges its excess – as we have seen through instances such as discriminatory state policies against racialized others – while simultaneously retaining them in its periphery, often in the form of low-wage laborers. This framework has its applications in *Bone* if we are to read Chinatown and the Asian immigrant community as the unassimilable excesses of mainstream America that, though marginal, are nonetheless retained within the national body.

Perhaps the most poignant demonstration of this excess in the novel is the theme of bones. The figure of bones comes to represent remains, what is left over by the processes of time. Leila recalls a childhood memory of Mah cooking pigeons for dinner. While Leila, Ona, and Nina got to eat the fleshy parts, Mah ate what was leftover: the bony neck, wings, and feet. Leila remembers Mah's response: "'Bones are sweeter than you know,' she always said. She came out to check the bag. 'Clean bones.' She shook it. 'No waste.'"[41] This idea of "no waste" suggests the attempt to make use of what remains, to be efficient in the wake of what is left out. The national economy of production and consumption will always produce its excess, the "waste" that cannot be assimilated into the national symbolic. Grandpa Leong's traveling bones metaphorizes the racial excess that can never find a resting ground in the U.S.,

[41] Ng, 31.

that can never achieve a sense of belonging. Meanwhile, Ona's shattered body demetaphorizes that excess, materializing and literalizing the lives that have been laid to waste by racialized exploitation. Thus, through Mah's pigeon bones, Grandpa Leong's lost bones, and Ona's broken bones, these images call attention to the excesses of American racialization that are simultaneously marginalized and preserved within the nation.

The National, The Global, The Temporal

This reading of *Bone* as an expression of racial melancholia also reflects the temporal structure of the narrative. If the Leongs sustain a melancholic attachment to Ona and attempt to keep her ghost alive, then the reverse chronology of the novel mimics the reverted psychic state of the family's grief. The text moves backward so that the past is always present, in the same way that Ona's ghost always maintains a spectral presence, even from the very beginning of the novel. As I mentioned previously, this backward movement is characteristic of the melancholic individual who cannot seem to move past loss, whereas the subject of mourning is capable of closure and suggests forward motion. In these formulations of movement, the reverse narrative calls into question notions of modernity that are predicated on the idea of advancement. Moreover, it challenges the concept of the nation as progress, of globalization as progress, for both have been developed in the context of teleological inevitability. Citing Walter Benjamin's description of modernity, Benedict Anderson observes that the conceptualization of national time has come to be "'homogeneous,

empty time,'…transverse…and measured by clock and calendar."[42] In other words, the ability to be calculated by clock and calendar implies succession, and that the modern conceptualization of time is understood to be calibrated time that can only advance horizontally in an additive model. Hence, if the nation-state measures its sense of history through a successive paradigm of progress, and globalization is often articulated as an unstoppable and inevitable force that is "bound to happen," then *Bone*'s temporal structure is a *subtractive* model that begins in the present and deducts its way into the past and in doing so, critiques the logic of development that both the nation-state and globalization are predicated on. However, this deduction does not work its way into clear resolution. As I mentioned previously, at the start of the novel, the tensions within the Leong family appear to be rooted in Ona's death, and the reader expects to read her way into the cause of the suicide that would account for the family's strained relationships. But this closure is never obtained, and what we discover instead is collective hardship and endurance as a product of an entire history of immigration, global capitalist exploitation, and civic exclusion, a history that Ng demands be kept alive through ghostly figures and the structure of regression.

Beyond the temporal arrangement of the narrative, time is a significant theme that is experienced differently by the various characters in the novel. For Leon, time is a way of claiming legitimacy in the U.S. When Leila goes through Leon's suitcase, she remarks, "Leon kept things because he believed time mattered…All the letters addressed to Leon should prove to the people at the social security office that this

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[42] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 24.

country was his place, too. Leon had paid; Leon had earned his rights. American dollars. American time. These letters marked his time and they marked his endurance."[43] In connection to his belief that hard work would yield returns of happiness and civic membership, Leon also believes that the time he invested "earned his rights." He keeps these random memorabilia as his version of citizenship papers that signal his time as a member and participant of the American civic body: as a worker (pay stubs, job rejections), as a family man (letters, photographs, diaries), as a traveler (maps, recipes), as a concerned citizen (newspaper clippings, application for the army). Leila wonders why Leon does not throw away the letters of rejection, but for Leon, even documents of denial are indications of his ability to endure, his ability to withstand time. In short, the evidence of his exclusion is also the evidence of his presence. Furthermore, Ona's death not only appears to motivate the reverse chronology of the novel, her suicide also structures the way her family experiences time. In her grief over the death of a child before the parent, Mah cries, "Everything's all turned around, all backward" (15). Indeed, Ona disrupts Mah's conceptualization of order, of proper succession. Leila comments on her own temporal displacement after Ona's suicide: "We lived with the ghost, with the guilt. But then it got too dark. Like that, we all just snapped apart. For me, it was as if time broke down: Before and After Ona Jumped" (15). Ona's death for Leila does not so much mark the disorder of time – in the way that it does for Mah – as it does signal a new means of organizing

[43] Ng, 58.

time. As the oldest, Leila finds she must take care of her parents and must therefore devise a schema to make sense of time in the wake of her sister's death.

But time still breaks down, not just for the reader, but for all members of the Leong family. This is perhaps due to Ona's role as a symbol of progress, and so her death must necessarily halt time, if not cause its collapse back to the past. In recalling memories of Ona, Leila observes, "Ona had always been the forward-looking one. She was always excited about the next day, the tomorrow…Ona was a counter. She counted the…times our pet rooster crowed…she tried to keep count of the number of culottes Mah sewed…She counted off the days till Leon was coming home" (88). In the same way that time can be "measured by clock and calendar," Ona anticipates the future and quantifies it. She is the gatekeeper of tomorrow, of progression. And as I discussed previously, Ona, as Mah and Leon's child, embodies their hopes for the future, for a forward-moving trajectory. But this movement is constantly stalled. When Ona jumps into Osvaldo's car and rides off with him, Leon "look[ed] after Ona as if he was watching everything he'd ever hoped for disappear" (175). In this instance, the equating of Ona with temporal standstill represents Leon's stalled dreams. And when Ona jumps off the thirteenth floor, the counting stops altogether. As a symbol of progress, Ona's death signals the immigrant's lack of advancement. This lies in stark contrast to the rhetoric of national history and globalization. If the struggles and hardships of the Leongs are a product of exclusion from the national body as well as the infiltration of global capitalist exploitation into the homes and bodies of racialized groups, then the family's lack of progress, even regression,

critiques American national claims to freedom, equality, and inclusion, as well as globalization's logic of development. Marginalized by racialization, the Leong family represents the collective outliers who are not included in the global project of progress, even as they live and work in the world's leading "first-world" country. Their existence is characterized by a temporal disruption that Leila describes as "*Forward and forward and then back, back*" (145).

In "Theses On The Philosophy Of History," Walter Benjamin provides a model of time through the figure of the Angel of History.[44] The Angel of History has his face turned toward the past as he witnesses the catastrophes that are piling before him as wreckage at his feet. Benjamin writes, "The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed" (257). But a storm begins to blow and becomes so violent that it gets caught in the angel's wings. Unable to stand firm against the strong wind, "This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress" (258). In *Bone*, the backward unfolding of the Leong family's grief allows us to see the catastrophes of national history. If Ona is the forward-looking one, then Ng designates the reader to be the backward-looking one, the Angel of History who must confront the unresolved debris of discarded people and global catastrophes at her feet, despite being propelled forward by the winds of progress.

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[44] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, Trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1968).

Othered Spaces

In *Bone*, while time breaks down and fails to conform to teleological temporality, the novel privileges the excavation of space as an alternate site of historical analysis. As Judith Butler argues, "Spatialization will emerge as a response to the loss of eschatology."[45] If the immigrant experiences a loss of history – either through the erasure of a native identity for the purchase of a paper one, or through exclusion from narrated national history – as well as the potential loss of both the present and future, then space becomes the repository of those traces that mark the immigrant's existence. In this way, *Bone*'s foregrounding of San Francisco's Chinatown offers, as Chang argues, a palimpsestic reading of the novel. The text as palimpsest is not only evident in the reverse chronology of the narrative, where the past always haunts the present, but also in the descriptions of Chinatown itself as a sedimented, multi-layered site of alterity. Michel Foucault calls these sites of alterity "heterotopias," spaces of crisis and deviance where the hierarchized arrangement of social space is "simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted."[46] In addition to being places of digression, heterotopias often join together incompatible spaces, thereby juxtaposing not just the objects, but also the relations, of local sites. San Francisco's Chinatown emerges as such a space that has been historically constructed as "other" to national space. Surfacing in the late nineteenth century as a diasporic locale for predominantly Chinese male immigrants as a result of anti-Chinese

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[45] Judith Butler, "Afterword: After Loss, What Then?" *Loss: The Politics Of Mourning*, Eds. David L. Eng and David Kazanjian (Berkeley: University Of California Press, 2003), 469.
[46] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16 (Spring 1986), 22-27.

violence, San Francisco's Chinatown marks the residue of the U.S. government's mobilization of a cheap labor force as well as its simultaneous denial of both citizenship – through limitations set on naturalization laws – and marriage – through legal bans against Chinese female immigration. Deemed both a foreign and bachelor society, the homosocial space of early Chinatown emerged in response to the national demands for labor, which in turn structured the subjectivization of these men as public (non) citizens, and as private (non) husbands and fathers. Given the new globalized demands for labor as well as the persistence of Chinatown as a racialized space, the modes of production continue to construct the public and private identities of Chinatown's inhabitants, as represented by the Leongs' struggles with civic inclusion and inverted family roles. Thus, as Lowe argues, Chinatown is constituted by the interrelation of spaces that testifies to its spatial demarcation and designation of otherness by dominant configurations of space, but at the same time signals its "resistant locality" that, in its disunity from national space, challenges the notion of a unified national identity. I would also submit that the globalizing forces being enacted on Chinatown marks it as a deterritorialized and embodied site of interstitial citizenship, whereby the civic exclusion from the national body is accompanied by the inscription and internalization of national policy on the immigrant body, and where the persistent locality of Chinatown is being challenged, transformed, and unmoored by the pressures of world markets.

To return to a reading of *Bone* as palimpsest, the various locations described in the narrative disclose San Francisco's Chinatown as a historically sedimented

community. The survival of several old stores, restaurants, barbershops, and family associations demonstrates the endurance of these buildings in the face of urban industrialization from without. For example, the novel begins with Leila's return from New York as she attempts to hunt down Leon and tell him about her marriage to Mason. In looking for him, Leila first checks the San Fran, the hotel Leon has moved into after leaving the family's apartment on Salmon Alley. She comments, "Leon's got a room at that old-man hotel on Clay Street, the San Fran…Leon's got the same room he had when he was a bachelor…Our Grandpa Leong lived his last days [there]…In this country, the San Fran is our family's oldest place, our beginning place, our new China. The way I see it, Leon's life's kind of made a circle."[47] Here, the San Fran is depicted as a sort of family heirloom, a site of origins that is continually inherited from one generation to the next. It is a container of history, as well as a reproductive site where family, in the case of Leon and Grandpa Leong, is expanded through purchased identity. Therefore, it is also described as a gendered site of inheritance, for it is only Chinese men that stay at the "old-man hotel." Leila later looks for Leon at Portsmouth Square, a place she is reluctant to go to because she hated "seeing [Leon] hanging around with those time wasters." When she eventually does arrive there, she comments on the Square: "A group of old men stood at the base of the stairs, playing cards…The men clustered close together at each table. They looked like scraps of dark remnant fabric. As I moved closer, the details become more distinct: tattered collars, missing buttons, safety-pinned seams, patch pockets full of

[47] Ng, 4.

fists" (8). Unable to find work and cast aside as the remainders of history, these men pass their time with each other and thereby occupy a homosocial space that is reminiscent of the early bachelor society of Chinatown. Indeed, it is not only Leon's life that has come full circle, but Chinatown itself has as well. The men at Portsmouth Square and at the San Fran represent the ghostly figures of the early bachelors, and in doing so, they call attention to the forces that repeatedly mark Chinatown as a repository space for the excesses of masculinity left over by the labor economy. For the Chinatown of the late nineteenth century, bachelor societies emerged out of the national demands for labor, in particular the building of national railroads. Coupled with anti-miscegenation laws, the subsequent immigration restrictions against Chinese women that eventually pushed Chinese male immigrants into performing "feminine" domestic work (i.e. laundry services) systematically emasculated, if not neutered, these men. Almost one hundred years later, it is the global demand for labor that has produced a similar homosociality. In this instance, many of these "time wasters" share Leon's position of being the spouse of one of the sewing ladies in the sweatshops. Hence, globalization's exploitation of a gendered and racially segmented labor force renders these Chinese immigrant men emasculated by unemployment and thus unable to be the primary income-earners for their families.

Other descriptions of local sites in *Bone* permit a palimpsestic reading of San Francisco's Chinatown. In attempting to locate Grandpa Leong's bones, Leila goes to the Hoy Sun Ning Yung Benevolent Association. As she ascends the five-story building at 41 Waverly Place, Leila describes the literal layering of time and function:

> I stepped aside on the first landing to let some Italian guys carrying white carnation wreaths pass. On the second floor, the rumble of the machines and the odor of hot steamed linen made my nostrils feel prickly; these sensations brought back memories of working in Tommie Hom's sweatshop…A racket of mah-jongg sounds, plastic tiles slapping and the trilling laughter of winners filled the third floor. The fourth smelled of sweat…Master Choy, White Crane Gung-Fu Club. The office of the Hoy Sun Ning Yung Benevolent Association was like many other Chinatown family-association offices: family and business mixed up. (75)

Here, the multiple spaces of a flower shop, a garment industry sweatshop, a community of mah-jongg players, a gung-fu club, and a family association are brought together in the stratification of a single building. Lowe argues that the simultaneity of functions marks Chinatown as a peripheral space of overlapping activities that is neither hierarchized nor temporalized. Because its activities are not organized toward a singular function of say, production in the work place, the building of the Benevolent Association exemplifies Foucault's heterotopic juxtaposition of incompatible relations. Furthermore, although Chinatown has intermittently expanded beyond its old borders, it is by and large constituted by, and circumscribed within, a central core area that signals its marginality. As such, the overlapping functions of family, business, exercise, leisure, and work in the family association building suggest not only the constraints on space, but also the reusability of space. The continual recycling of space for multiple activities allows for an archaeology of Chinatown as sedimented history.

While Chinatown functions as a container of historical residue, it is also marked as contemporary globalized space. The demands of globalization have

resulted in the increased penetration of de-regulated, multi-national corporations into American cities, but this demand has also yielded an influx of immigration into those same urban spaces in response to the need for labor. Though racial and ethnic spaces like Chinatown are inscribed with "otherness" by mainstream national discourse, and now by global corporate power, they nonetheless exist alongside dominant culture. According to Sassen, "Understanding [immigration and ethnicity] as a set of processes whereby global elements are localized, international labor markets are constituted, and cultures from all over the world are deterritorialized, puts them right there at the center of the stage along with the internationalization of capital as a fundamental aspect of globalization today."[48] In other words, dominant corporate culture can only canvas a part of the city, and spaces like Chinatown that bring together international corporations with immigrant and ethnic labor likewise link the cultures of the local and the global.

But beyond being read either as palimpsest or a site of globality, the depictions of space in *Bone* provide an image of Chinatown as a "resistant locality" that, though peripheral, fosters a strong sense of community. In this reading, I am not attempting to romanticize Chinatown as a site of internal wholeness or seamless unity in the face of outside adversarial forces, but rather demonstrate the ways in which a heterogeneous space of concentrated racialization, labor exploitation, civic exclusion, and global infiltration can also produce counter discourses of communal familiarity, safety, and belonging. Leila considers the paradox of both the anxiety and comfort of

[48] Sassen, 6.

living in Chinatown, especially in the context of Mah's continual fears of "what people inside Chinatown were saying." In the days following Ona's death, Mah could not be comforted in the least, and yet it is the sewing ladies from the sweatshop who knew what to say. Leila remarks, "I considered the odd course of our affinity: how often the sewing ladies were a gossiping pain and equally how often they were a comfort."[49] To use an uncomfortable analogy, the sewing ladies literally constitute a sewing circle where the exchange of gossip can be both damaging as well as a source of interpersonal bonding. Leila continues: "Bringing the right foods was as delicate as saying the right words. The sewing ladies knew, in ways I was still watching and learning from, how to draw out Mah's sadness and then take it away" (105). For Leila, her role as a daughter does not give her immediate and automatic access to understanding her mother. Instead, she must learn from the sewing ladies who have been able to forge a deep identification with Mah within the context of work place community.

This community is most clearly demonstrated in the close, yet transient, friendship between Mah and Rosa. As a new worker in the sweatshop, Rosa does not have any experience in doing sewing work. Hence, Mah takes Rosa under her wing and teaches her how to sew as well as the shortcuts she has learned along the way. In this tutelage, Mah and Rosa become extremely close: "Mah and Rosa were like sisters. They joked that they sewed more than they slept, and sewing side by side, they were more intimate with each other than with their husbands" (164). Out of their labor,

[49] Ng, 105.

these two women are able to develop a strong bond with each other, a bond that functions as a surrogate familial relationship: they were "like sisters" and their intimacy with each other superseded their intimacy with their own husbands.

Moreover, despite its historical ghettoization by dominant, mainstream America, Chinatown is portrayed as the first term of the insider/outsider binary, and thus it is the "outside" that is constructed as uneasy and unsafe. For example, during one of Leon's returns from an overseas trip, Leila overhears Mah and Leon discussing their finances, with Mah insisting that there is not enough money and that Leon must ship out again; he responds, "You don't know. You're inside Chinatown; it's safe. You don't know. Outside, it's different" (181). Here, Leon "knows" because he has been outside of Chinatown, and beyond. While he understands that Chinatown exists as a receptacle of his own exclusion, he also identifies a certain safety in that communal marginalization. Leila also considers Ona's own anxieties about leaving Chinatown: "The thing that stuck in my mind was what Ona told me about how she felt outside Chinatown. She never felt comfortable, even with the Chinese crowd that Osvaldo hung around with; she never felt like she fit in" (173). Despite the fact that she is with Osvaldo and other Chinese people, the spatial distance from Chinatown still makes her feel uneasy; here, belonging is not constituted by interpersonal familiarity nor intra-ethnic identification, but instead by geographical location. Ultimately, this insider/outsider dichotomy provides some comfort to Leila; riding in the backseat of Mason's car after telling her parents about Ona's suicide, Leila looks out the window and thinks, "So this is what Chinatown looks like from inside those

dark Greyhound buses…this is what tourists come to see. I felt a small lightening up inside, because I knew, no matter what people saw, no matter how close they looked, our inside story is something entirely different" (145). Here, Leila knows that although outsiders may penetrate the physical space of San Francisco's Chinatown, the community's heterogeneity and hybridity makes it impossible to univocally read the "inside story." The very same dynamics that denigrate Chinatown as foreign, othered, and marginal, also produce it as a site of illegibility, irreducibility, and recalcitrance.

Conclusion

Because of the temporal arrangement of the narrative, *Bone* has two "endings:" the one that the reconstructed chronology yields, and the one that concludes the text of the novel. In the former, Leila has just told Mah about her eloped marriage to Mason and Mah throws a fit at the Baby Store in front of customers who also happen to include the sewing ladies. Leila considers how these women will most likely go to Portsmouth Square and tell their version of what they heard and saw. And thus, the present, chronological narrative concludes with Leila's internal resolution: "Let them make it up, I thought. Let them talk" (23). Meanwhile, the actual novel ends with Leila moving out of her childhood home on Salmon Alley, and into Mason's apartment. Mason has teased Leila about the sign at the bottom of the stairs leading to the Leong family's apartment; it reads: "#2-4-6 UPDAIRE." As Leila is driving away with all her belongings, she turns to look at the sign and conjures the last thoughts of

the novel: “No one has ever corrected it; someone repaints it every year…[I]t reminded me to look back, to remember. I was reassured. I knew what I held in my heart would guide me. So I wasn’t worried when I turned that corner, leaving the old blue sign, Salmon Alley, Mah, and Leon – everything – backdaire” (193-194). Together, both “endings” evoke themes of speech, time, and space. Leila’s resolve to “let them talk” is consistent with her knowledge that the “inside story is something entirely different.” Despite the fact that the outside “threat” in this instance is the sewing ladies, people from her own community, Leila’s incitement to discourse stems from a place of reassurance that her family’s story exists beyond the limits of other people’s perception, comprehension, and articulation. Similarly, the conclusion of the novel with the word “backdaire” neologistically re-appropriates the use of dominant language forms. In mimicking the misspelled “updaire,” Leila calls attention to the legitimacy of this word in representing her place of residence, her home. And like her family, the word “updaire” may not be legible to those on the outside. Moreover, the use of “backdaire” as the final word of the novel underscores the importance of re-appropriated time (“back”) and space (“daire”). Unlike our obsessions with the here and now, with progress and development, Ng reminds us yet again to always look back, to always remember.

Chapter 2:
Denationality, Gender Violence, And *Señorita Extraviada*

"Petrified, she can't respond, her face caught between los intersticios*,*
the spaces between the different worlds she inhabits."
– Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*

"Juárez is a city of the future. As a model of globalization,
Juárez is spinning out of control."
– Lourdes Portillo

Introduction

When China's president Hu Jintao visited the United States in April 2006, his first stop was not the White House in the nation's capital; rather, Hu first flew to the west coast, to Seattle, Washington. There, he was greeted by Microsoft founder Bill Gates and Washington governor Christine Gregoire in a lavish 100-guest dinner hosted by the software mogul himself. This merging of corporate leaders and government figures is not an uncommon occurrence, especially for Gates who, when visiting the United Kingdom in 1997, was welcomed by prime minister Tony Blair with similar pomp and circumstance.

Allegorically speaking, the assembly of these figures does not merely represent a meeting of leaders from the economic and political sectors; instead, it suggests an increase in the wide-scale re-organization of power whereby business executives are easily conflated with politicians, and corporate dominance collides catastrophically with political authority. In the past thirty years or so, we have witnessed the impact this collision has had on people all over the world, particularly in under-developed countries of the supposed "third world." Here, newly state-sanctioned economic policies have allowed major corporations to outsource their production by penetrating

national borders, thereby creating a labor market drawn from a significant portion of the countries' poor population. Many international observers have claimed that these globalizing practices interfere with, and ultimately alter, the traditional role of the nation-state, especially in its relationship with its citizens.

In the wake of the increased global movement of capital, people, and goods across national boundaries, what does this new border-flexibility mean for both the dispensing and enactment of citizenship? In this chapter, I argue that economic globalization has created zones of denationality, particularly along border regions such as northern Mexico where the "third world" lies in stark contrast – and contact – with the giant of the "first world." In terms of nationality, these zones are so over-invested by multiple foreign industries that they are paradoxically unhinged from any concentrated sense of the nation-state; hence, nationality is diluted, it is essentially denationalized. This suspension of state sovereignty in favor of capitalist development has inevitably caused an erosion of democratic institutions that have been designed to guarantee rights, protections, and security for all citizens. Specifically in Mexico, the decline in the avenues for claim-making and political and civic participation has resulted in a lack of social control and has produced a certain form of local lawlessness, with devastating consequences for its female citizens.

This chapter's focus is on the mass murders of Mexican women that have been taking place for the past decade in Ciudad Juárez, a northern city in Mexico that borders the United States at El Paso, Texas. Using the model of denationalized territory, I argue that Ciudad Juárez is such a zone of both over-invested nationality

and contradictory citizenship that has failed to ensure the protection of its female inhabitants. The development of Ciudad Juárez as a major export-processing region for international corporations has facilitated the structural transformations that have rendered Mexican women's citizenship vulnerable; the subordination of "local" economies to global neo-liberal and neo-imperial forces, the lack of central state authority, the increase in border trafficking, the corruption of local law enforcement – these are all by-products of bordertown industrialization and factors that contribute to the inability of citizens to seek protection and redress for the crimes being committed.

The details of the murders, the "feminicide," are particularly harrowing. Since 1993, 600 women have gone missing, 370 of them have been murdered. For the most part, the women who have disappeared fit a specific profile: they were young girls and women from the *colonias*, poor shantytowns in the outskirts of Ciudad Juárez where migrants from Mexico's interior often lived as they moved northward in search of work; they were slim, dark, and had shoulder-length hair; and they held various occupations as students, sales clerks, *maquiladora* workers, sex workers, and drug traffickers.[50] The bodies were often found sexually assaulted and severely mutilated, indicating that the women had died extremely painful and horrific deaths; in one instance, a victim had been bled to death. Some of the bodies fit a pattern of killings, and many were dumped in the desert.

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[50] Alicia Schmidt Camacho, "Ciudana X: Gender Violence And The Denationalization Of Women's Rights In Ciudad Juárez, Mexico," *The New Centennial Review* 5, no. 1 (2005): 259.

For the victims' family members, the search for answers, leads, and clues to the murders has been both frustrating and infuriating. The families are often met with contempt and disrespect from local law enforcement officers as well as state officials. The police are careless about handling evidence such as clothing and remains. Crime scenes are often contaminated. Bones are misidentified, evidence is made up, and stories are never consistent. The repeated errors on the part of the authorities have caused the families to re-live the murders over and over again.[51] In many instances, the government's complicity in the killings is strongly implied, if not blatantly obvious.

I do not, however, want to suggest that the infiltration of multi-national corporations and the exponential growth of export factories on the border are directly responsible for the murders. Such a reading elides the more complicated structures of oppression that Mexican women experience as a product of state-endorsed patriarchal authority that governs the social narratives about the (lack of) value placed on the female body. In my analysis of the feminicide, I argue that the combination of suspended nationality and the devaluation of women's bodies in the cultural imaginary are responsible for both the murders and the inability of the victims' family members to bring the perpetrators to justice.

In the following, I will first discuss, somewhat abstractly, the notion of denationalized citizenship, both as a global phenomenon and more specifically and

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[51] Irasema Coronado and Kathleen Staudt, "Civic Action For Accountability: Anti-Violence Organizing In Cd. Juarez-El Paso," http://repositories.cdlib.org/usmex/prajm/staudt_coronado (accessed September 27, 2005).

concretely as a feature of Mexican modernization. Secondly, I consider the ways in which the feminicide has been articulated either as a local and state problem, or exclusively as a problem of globalizing forces. Next, I analyze the cultural narratives that have rendered Mexican women's bodies debased and without worth, thereby marking them as vulnerable targets for labor exploitation by foreign industries, as well as targets for murder by serial killers. Finally, utilizing the documentary *Señorita extraviada* ("Missing Young Woman," 2001) by Lourdes Portillo, I engage in an examination of the film as a form of female border activism that seeks to recover and restore female agency. I conclude with a discussion of how this agency has larger implications for exploding the crisis of gender violence onto the global stage as an international human rights problem, and how this affects the institution of citizenship, particularly an understanding of denationalized citizenship, in an increasingly global – and globalizing – age.

Denationalized Citizenship

Located at the Mexican-U.S. border where Texas, New Mexico, and the province of Chihuahua intersect, Ciudad Juárez is the junction of a multiplicity of economic, political, and cultural exchanges. As a bordertown, it not only functions as a dynamic site of movement of people and goods, it has also become a prime location for transnational corporate industrialization, development that is central to the globalization enterprise. During the mid-1990s, there were approximately 2000 export factories, or *maquiladoras*, employing 500,000 workers along the border; within a few

years, those numbers more than doubled.[52] Eighty percent of the *maquiladoras* are U.S.-owned and as an industry, they are a major business, generating roughly $16 billion in revenue per year. In contrast, workers in the factories are paid about $4-$5 per day in wages.[53]

Also owned by Japanese and European companies, *maquiladoras* have attracted migrants from the southern regions of Mexico in search of work, but this mixture of multi-nationality and migrant labor has problematized both the dispensing and enactment of citizenship in the bordertowns. In Ciudad Juárez, a majority of its residents are such migrants from the south, drawn northward by employment in the *maquiladoras*. But these residents are not merely deterritorialized migrants, they are citizens who inhabit contradictory sites of nationality and therefore, their condition is one of *denationalized* citizenship. As a result of increased globalism, both the legal and illegal movement of people, goods, and capital has significantly altered the role of the nation-state.

This notion of denationalized citizenship has gained significant circulation in recent scholarship. Although there is no clear, transdisciplinary definition of such a phenomenon, the general understanding of the term pivots on the idea of engagement in citizenship practices and identities that exceed not just the territorial bounds of the nation-state, but social, political, and economic ones as well. Here, I base my

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[52] "Maquiladoras In Mexico," http://geography.about.com/od/urbaneconomicgeography/a/maquiladoras.htm (accessed February 11, 2006).
[53] *Señorita extraviada*, Directed by Lourdes Portillo, 76 min., Women Make Films, 2001, film.

understanding of denationality on Saskia Sassen's distinction between denationalized citizenship and postnational citizenship.[54] Sassen argues that "specific transformations inside the national state have directly and indirectly altered particular features of the institution of citizenship. These transformations are not predicated necessarily on deterritorialization or locations for the institution outside the national state, as is key to conceptions of postnational citizenship" (42). In other words, though not mutually exclusive, postnational citizenship refers to the supra-national practices taking place internationally, while denationalized citizenship denotes the changes occurring within the nation-state. Sassen continues: "In considering denationalization, the focus moves on to the transformation of the national, including the national in its condition as foundational for citizenship" (56). Hence, denationality centers on the dialectical relationship between the nation-state and its citizens, and the ways in which alterations in national policy are affecting the dispensing and enactment of citizenship.[55]

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[54] Saskia Sassen, "The Repositioning Of Citizenship: Emergent Subjects And Spaces For Politics," *The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 2 (2003): 41-66.

[55] This formulation lies in contrast to Linda Basch, et. al's discussion of deterritorialized citizenship. Operating under Sassen's rubric of postnationality, deterritorialized citizenship is in reference to transmigrants who have moved from their homes and live in various parts of the globe, but are still considered citizens of their home country. However, this is not merely an instance of foreign citizens living abroad, but a sense of the home state expanding such that it is literally deterritorialized and transplanted in the host country. Citing examples from Grenada and Haiti, the authors argue that in the case of deterritorialized citizens and nation-states, "wherever its people go, their state goes too" (269). They are also clear in drawing a distinction between the deterritorialized nation-state and a diaspora: "Diasporas are populations that, while dispersed across boundaries and borders, salvage from their common loss and distance from home their identity and unity as 'a people'" (269). Diasporic peoples acknowledge a certain "national" and cultural preservation, even when they are stateless. Deterritorialized nationals, however, never regard themselves as living outside their state, despite their geographic relocations. Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, Cristina Szanton

In the context of the historicity of citizenship, the national has entered a new epoch of transformation whereby the dynamics of globalization have impacted the nation-state and subsequently, its relationship with its citizens. One such development is the increasing role of economic globalization, both in its effects on so-called first world countries that have extended their corporate reach, as well as on receiving countries that have had to adjust to corporate infiltration. For the purposes of this project, the latter phenomenon is more pertinent in understanding how the penetration of foreign capital is increasingly denationalizing the institution and enactment of citizenship in "third world" countries such as Mexico. Thus, it is important to examine how "the granting, by national states, of a whole range of 'rights' to foreign actors, largely and especially economic actors – foreign firms, foreign investors, international markets, foreign business people"[56] – is either limiting the rights of citizens, or expanding their channels to claim-making. The state remains pivotal in negotiating the triangulated relationship between itself, its own citizens, and foreign economic actors, even as it is undergoing its own transformations.

In the case of Ciudad Juárez, the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 enabled the Mexican government to launch experimental neo-liberal programs in response to the economic crises of the mid-1980s. These programs essentially privatized and deregulated the economy; subsequently, this suspension of national sovereignty transformed the northern border

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Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, And Deterritorialized Nation-States* (Langhorne: Gordon and Breach, 1994).

[56] Sassen, 56-57.

into a reservoir for cheap labor and a magnet for foreign corporate infiltration. Hence, Ciudad Juárez, and all U.S.-Mexican bordertowns in general, is both over-nationalized as a site of corporate multi-national development, as well as denationalized as state power increasingly defers to the demands of the world market.

Given this contradiction, citizens of Ciudad Juárez are doubly impacted by national and global policies. While the penetration of international capital has steadily unhinged citizenship from the protections of the state, citizenship still remains attached to the national. Hence, denationalized citizenship emerges as an appendage of the state; as Alicia Schmidt Camacho argues, "The denationalized exist as a supplement to the national; subjects are rarely fully stateless, but bear the imprint of state power on their subsequent movements."[57] Although they are divested of rights and protections from the state, denationalized people are nonetheless subject to the interpellating and disciplinary practices of both local and national authority. This partial inclusion of denationalized citizens renders their agency fragile, for their access to rights and representation is limited within both the national paradigm, as well as the emergent global polities that have come to reorganize their lives. Sassen comments, "[T]he question as to how citizens should handle these new concentrations of power and 'legitimacy' that attach to global firms and markets is a key to the future of democracy."[58] In determining this, it is possible that the appearance of these global actors in denationalized space enables new recourses for claim-making. But it is also probable, as with the case of *maquiladora* development in Ciudad Juárez, that

[57] Camacho, 258.
[58] Sassen, 57.

particular citizens are subjected to increased exploitation and disenfranchisement as appeals to local authority and national sovereignty are suspended in favor of global capital.

As citizen-laborers, Ciudad Juárez's inhabitants occupy a form of denationality that is what Sassen, in a different context, terms "authorized yet unrecognized" (52). This lack of recognition stems from the transient activities that are characteristic of the city's bordered location. In addition to transnational corporate development in the form of sweatshop factories, the continual movement of both legal and illegal goods across the bordertown not only denationalizes this region, but makes its governance and governability tenuous. Camacho argues that this particular brand of contradictory lawlessness creates a new class of "postnational elites," while simultaneously transforming marginalized people into "disposable non-citizens."[59] This polarity in informal citizenship status enables the conditions for local forms of corruption, violence, and uneven distributions of power that typify bordertowns like Ciudad Juárez. Hence, citizens are authorized as residents, workers, and consumers; they are even formal citizens of the nation-state. However, this status is limited by the unstable mixture of governance by the state and the new global corporate actors within the region. Moreover, local law enforcement is the only apparatus of authority in Ciudad Juárez, and yet their implementation of social control does not guarantee the security, goods, and services that are implicit in national citizenship.

[59] Camacho, 258.

In her discussion of citizens who are authorized yet unrecognized, Sassen cites the research done on Japanese housewives who are considered full citizens but lack political agency. However, Sassen also offers the possibility that these women, and their counterparts in various countries of the world, are able to mobilize their roles as mothers and wives to become political actors and make demands for social justice. From the context in which I speak, the status of Mexican citizens in the bordertowns is not such an optimistic one. Mexico is a major contributor to capitalist globalization by providing a large supply of cheap and productive laborers. However, despite their contributions, these citizen-laborers are authorized as members of the state, but are unrecognized as political actors with legitimate claims to justice and representation.

El Feminicidio

Given this tenuous state of denationality, I now turn to the feminicide taking place in Ciudad Juárez. In the larger context of this project, I argue that contemporary citizenship is becoming more interstitial, marked by both national and increasingly transnational forces. The feminicide is demonstrative of this trend, unfolding as the effect of interlocking systems of state control and global infiltration. Amidst the various narratives about the feminicide that attempt to interpret and explain its causes, I adopt Rosa Linda Fregoso's argument that the murders are the product of "multiple structures of oppression" in the lives of poor, dark women as they collide with the

economic, political, and social transformations that are taking place because of the penetration of global capital along the border.[60]

Fregoso posits that the explanations of the deaths have been twofold: either on the micro-level of the individual or the macro-level of globalization. The Mexican government and media have often articulated the killings in terms of the women's *doble vida* ("double life") – normative, respectable work by day, but sexually transgressive behavior by night (i.e. spending time at bars and clubs, engaging in sex work, etc.). Such accusations appear to explain – if not justify – the murders, implying that the victims placed themselves in dangerous settings to be attacked. This approach is obviously problematic because it assigns blame to the victims themselves, rationalizing their deaths as punishment for venturing outside of the domestic sphere and into the public spaces of work and unsupervised leisure. Rather than being useful, this "blaming the victim" attitude reveals the dominance of patriarchal authority and the state-sanctioning of gender terrorism in Mexico.

Meanwhile, because some of the victims were workers in the *maquiladoras*, critics of globalization have directly linked the deaths to the expansion of transnational capitalism, "equat[ing] *exploitation* with the *extermination* of gendered bodies, tracing both conditions to a single process: economic globalization."[61] This discourse of globalism articulates the murders in terms of "*maquiladora* killings," locating the global assembly line as the source of women's struggles, and ultimately, their deaths.

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[60] Rosa Linda Fregoso, *MeXicana Encounters: The Making Of Social Identities On The Borderlands* (Berkeley: University Of California Press, 2003).
[61] Ibid., 6.

Fregoso claims that this explanation is only partially useful: although this narrative is valid in underscoring the imbalance of power that globalization has wrought on the border region, it also elides the more local and insular factors that indirectly implicate the state's role in handling the killings, if not its direct complicity. Moreover, this discourse of globalism is somewhat factually inaccurate, as a majority of the victims are not necessarily *maquiladora* workers (8).

Using Fregoso's critique of both approaches, my own treatment of the feminicide examines the murders through the lens of denationalized space, highlighting Ciudad Juárez as a contested site where the global processes of modernization intersect with national practices of patriarchy, racism, and class to produce the conditions that make marginalized women more susceptible to gender violence. A significant mode of analysis that I will be using is the 2001 documentary film *Señorita extraviada* by Lourdes Portillo. In conducting a close reading of the film, I argue that Portillo's representation of the feminicide provides a nuanced portrayal of the killings that teases out the complex interplay between state control and global infiltration. Neither rendering the victims as alluring women whose transgression of sexual norms resulted in their collective demise, nor levying complete blame on the transnational development of Ciudad Juárez as a major export-processing zone, *Señorita extraviada* instead explores the feminicide as a multi-layered tragedy with no singular cause and no clear resolution. More importantly, Portillo utilizes her film as a point of agency for the victims and their families: by allowing the family members to narrate first-hand accounts of the disappearances and deaths, Portillo

empowers the victims and their families to speak for themselves and thus turns the critical gaze onto the national and global institutions that have enabled the crimes to take place.

Bodies That Matter: Gender On The Border

Portillo's documentary begins with a Mexican woman's profile; slowly, the profile fades into a scene of the bustling city of Ciudad Juárez, with images of people going about their daily lives: residents waiting in traffic, girls taking the bus, employees heading to work. This cinematic merging of woman and city is an apt one, for an investigation of the feminicide in Ciudad Juárez necessarily evokes a history of border culture that is intimately linked to the management of women, namely the management of women's bodies. In fact, the first account that is given in *Señorita extraviada* is that of Eva Arce who, many years ago, was betrayed into captivity by a girlfriend but was surprisingly released by her kidnappers. What is interesting is that during her abduction, Arce was pregnant with her daughter Silvia; almost twenty years later, Silvia is now missing. Portillo's placement of this account in the beginning of the documentary seems to underscore the continuity of crime against women, from one generation to the next. It also suggests that the legacy that Mexican women in the borderland inherit is one of violence and oppression. As a primary contact zone that functions as a major transit point into the U.S., Ciudad Juárez is the quintessential borderland, a contradictory site of nationality, culture, identity, and power relations. In this space of *la frontera*, Mexican women are subjected to both the traditional

patriarchal norms that relegate them to the domestic sphere, as well as the economic demands and opportunities that place them in factories as laborers, or on the streets as vendors or sex workers.

In the context of the feminicide, the tortured, mutilated, and sexually violated bodies of the victims come to signify what I call a "literal metaphor" for the tenuous state of the borderlands. As metaphor, their desecrated bodies symbolize the trespasses that have been wrought by contradictory forces that both levy discipline upon the border, while simultaneously extracting labor from its inhabitants. Gloria Anzaldúa poignantly describes the space of *la frontera* when she writes:

> The U.S.-Mexican border *es una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country – a border culture. Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants.[62]

Indeed, dominant U.S. cultural narratives about "crossing the border" suggest prohibition and deviance: bordertowns such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez are often imagined as peripheral and illegitimate spaces of rampant crime where sex, drugs, and illegal goods can be cheaply purchased. As Portillo states in the film's voice-over: "To some North Americans [Ciudad Juárez] is where everything illicit is available. To Mexicans it is their home and where they work." Like the violated victims' bodies,

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[62] Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute Book Company, 1987), 3.

Mexico's northern border is imagined as abject: easily penetrated and so without value that it can also be easily discarded.

However, the dead bodies also literalize – what Juliana Chang in a different context calls "demetaphorize" – the cultural imaginings of the border.[63] The bodies are the tangible products of the denationalized space of *la frontera* where, paradoxically, there is an over-investment in authority but a total lack of social control. More importantly, the *female* corporeality of violence calls attention to the very real problem of the exploitation of poor women's bodies in Mexico and their delimited citizenship. As Camacho argues, the border is more than just a demarcation of geopolitical space: "*La frontera*, in its combined operations for policing trade, cultural exchange, labor, and migration, also acts to regulate Mexican women's rights."[64] To be sure, the very term "*el feminicidio*" is pivotal in articulating the need for a women's rights campaign; the gendering of the term "genocide" is critical in framing the killings as linked to state patriarchal authority, and marking the murders as a gendered crime with distinctly female victims. Activists in Ciudad Juárez continue to provide a gendered visual of this term by painting public electric posts with black crosses against pink backgrounds.

The significance of bodily violence is not lost on Portillo who respectfully excludes graphic footage of corpses from the film, but nonetheless recaptures and communicates the horror of the killings. One lawyer describes how thirteen of the

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[63] Juliana Chang, "Melancholic Remains: Domestic And National Secrets In Fae Myenne Ng's *Bone*," *Modern Fiction Studies* 51, no. 1 (2005).
[64] Camacho, 277.

bodies found were young girls whose hands were tied; their abdomens were cut and an inverted "V" was carved into their backs, just above the buttocks. Beyond implying that the murders are not random but instead fit a pattern of serial killings, this description vividly underscores the way in which national and global institutions that have facilitated the devaluation of women's bodies are imprinted on the flesh. In this instance, the exercise of power is experienced at the corporeal level and authority is literally inscribed on the body.

This inscription of power on the bodies of poor Mexican women is effectively a silencing act, both in death and even in life. While the dead bodies cannot "talk back," cannot seek justice for the crimes done to them, the agency of live women living on the border is similarly constrained. In an attempt to resolve the national debt crisis of the 1980s, the Mexican government's transition from a state-controlled economy to an increasingly privatized one meant the scaling back of social reforms and welfare programs. It also meant the implementation of a neo-conservative social agenda that relegated women to the private sphere of the home, the family, and moral virtue. Not only did this re-gendered regime of patriarchy exclude women from civic participation, it restricted them from attaining protections from the state.

In the context of Mexican law, violence against women is only limitedly regarded as a personal violation of the woman as an individual invested with rights; instead, it becomes secondary to the potential crime committed against the honor of the family. Often dismissed by legal-judicial channels, women are supposed to seek protection from the patriarchal family, the ostensible guarantor of their welfare. This

proves particularly lethal in instances of domestic violence, incest, and familial pedophilia. In fact, one current Mexican law states that if injuries sustained during intra-familial violence heals within fifteen days, the woman cannot file charges against her aggressor/domestic partner; if they heal after fifteen days and are not permanent, she may file charges and her aggressor is merely fined.[65] Despite this impunity within the family, women are nevertheless expected to remain in the private sphere, while public spaces are deemed deviant and dangerous.

Hence, the economic necessity of poor Mexican women living in the *colonias* to enter the workforce – a public space – is a necessity that forces them to be subjected to the cultural fictions about "working women." According to this narrative, there is a direct relationship between employed women and hyper-sexual women; as one criminologist states, "[W]omen are joining the workforce at an earlier age and therefore discovering independence. This means young women could become more promiscuous."[66] Consequently, the linking of women's employed labor to sexual activity has resulted in equating *obreras* – female workers, particularly *maquiladora* workers – with prostitutes and other sex workers. In this feminization of labor, female work, regardless of the form it takes, is detached from any sense of labor power or utility and is instead always eroticized. In the context of the feminicide, the conflation of these non-normative behaviors provides an easy connection between female bodies: the laboring body, the sexual body, the dead body.

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[65] Fregoso, 18.
[66] Quoted in Fregoso, 4.

Rendered vulnerable by patriarchal authority, women's bodies are targeted by the feminicide as a site of death and violence because of their lack of political agency. The intersection of patriarchy and transnational capital has produced a pervasive representation of poor Mexican women as subject to commodification, appropriation, exploitation, and ultimately, annihilation. What is ironic is that the forces that attempt to regulate and discipline the female body – the state discourse of feminine virtue as circumscribed within the domestic space – has also created an economic situation where women are required to enter the workforce and thus transgress patriarchal norms. With such restricted access to citizenship claims and limited protections from the state, poor women of Ciudad Juárez have no other choice but to see their bodies as "a body made for violence."[67]

Denationality And Borderland Globalization

While the patriarchal authority of the state has facilitated the devaluation of women's bodies and failed to protect its female citizen-laborers, it is not wholly responsible for the feminicide. As I stated earlier, the serial murders must be analyzed as a product of overlapping power relations – gendered and classed, both national and global. Here, I turn to the second of the two explanations for the killings that Fregoso critiques: the discourse of globalism. While I agree with Fregoso that the penetration of transnational factories, corporations, and capital into the border region cannot completely account for the feminicide, the exponential growth of Ciudad Juárez as a

[67] Camacho, 280.

major export-processing zone has nevertheless made the city a breeding ground for lawlessness and has enabled the conditions for the mass murders that have been taking place for more than a decade. Globalization in the borderland, in conjunction with Mexican national policies, has created a denationalized situation whereby the granting of rights to foreign economic actors is increasingly trumping the guarantee of rights to actual citizens; in this case, the rights and protections of poor women in Ciudad Juárez.

Mexico's primary contribution to the globalization enterprise is undoubtedly its large supply of a cheap and highly productive labor force, but it is a labor force that has limited protection from the Mexican government; in fact, this very flexibility is what makes the border region so attractive to global corporate investors. The lack of government response to the serial murders is tied to its economic dependence on the U.S., for the Mexican economy relies on the revenues generated by the *maquiladoras*. As such, national sovereignty – as well as local law enforcement – is often suspended in the interest of capitalist accumulation. Moreover, women in particular are targeted as laborers in these new industries, what Sassen refers to as the "feminization of the new proletariat:" "The most obvious reason for the intensive recruitment of women is firms' desire to reduce costs, but there are other considerations as well: young women in patriarchal societies are seen by foreign employers as obedient and disciplined workers, willing to do tedious, high-precision work and to submit themselves to work conditions that would not be tolerated in the highly developed countries."[68] And as

[68] Saskia Sassen, *Globalization And Its Discontents* (New York: The New Press, 1998), 42.

discussed earlier, although the crimes are not simply a matter of "*maquiladora* killings," it is accurate to say that the feminicide targets a particular profile that is consistent with the pool of wage laborers that serve the *maquiladora* industry: poor female workers living in the *colonias*, many of whom are migrants from the south.

However, there are, of course, behaviors on the assembly line that more directly implicate the *maquiladoras*. Within the factories, there are reports of male supervisors flirting with female workers and asking them for dates; there are even industry-wide "Señorita Maquiladora" beauty contests.[69] Sometimes, the workers' schedules and locations are changed unexpectedly so that it is difficult for their families to keep track of them. In *Señorita extraviada*, Portillo interviews Judith Galarza, an activist with the Latin America Federation Families Of The Disappeared. She describes how photographers often take pictures of the workers at the *maquiladoras*; the girls pose like they are models. Galarza thinks that the victims are chosen through these photographs. Portillo cuts to these pictures of girls in dresses and miniskirts, wearing heavy make-up. What is interesting about these pictures is that Portillo uses them to consistently reproduce the theme of documentation throughout the film, a point I will return to later. But the connection between the murders and the *maquiladora* demographic cannot be overlooked. In fact, Portillo repeatedly cuts to shots of women's shoes or images of the victims' family members laying out clothing that belonged to their missing loved ones. And in the accounts of the disappearances, there is a recurring theme of clothing being found, but bodies still

[69] Fregoso, 10.

missing; in many instances, the recovered clothes are the only form of identification. The irony, of course, is that many of the missing women are workers in the clothing industry; their very production is ultimately the only remnant of their existence.

Hence, the suspension of national authority has limited the Mexican government's ability and willingness to protect its citizen-laborers. Galarza goes on to comment that "the *maquiladoras* are untouchable." She claims that nothing is investigated because they are the biggest investment for the Mexican government. In fact, President Vicente Fox ordered the attorney general to help with the investigation in 2001, but no significant leads have been made while the state of terror among citizens persists. As Camacho argues, "The transfer of major state operations to the market allowed commerce to assume the interpellative function of the nation-state."[70] Thus, instead of preceding global development along the border, the disappearances have taken place partly as a result of it: the demands for a cheap and unregulated labor force suspends national sovereignty – and state protection – in favor of capitalist gains. It is no coincidence that the victims of the serial murders – young women from poor communities – are the ones to be targeted by both globalization and the feminicide: devalued and denigrated by dominant cultural narratives, they are seen as both exploitable and disposable.

[70] Camacho, 270.

Missing Young Woman

If the victims of the feminicide have been appropriated, abused, violated, and stripped of all value, then Portillo's documentary re-invests them, and their families, with a discursive form of posthumous agency. As previously mentioned, Portillo allows the victims' family members to tell their own stories and thus provide a counter-narrative to the state authority's disjointed theories of street gang activities and claims of the women's *doble vida*. In the voice-over narration, she observes, "The facts and details of the cases seemed to be whimsically constructed. I find myself mistrusting everything I am told and everything I read. The only reliable sources of information are from the victims or their families." In attempting to construct a more accurate picture, Portillo utilizes a series of documentary formats to re-appropriate the authority of the spectator's gaze, and instead turn it onto national and global institutions, and ultimately, to the viewer herself.

In contrast to the families' first-hand account of the murders, Portillo uses the theme of documentation to critique dominant narratives by depicting the local and state authority's version of the killings through the vehicle of documentary media. When offering the "official story," Portillo utilizes newspaper headlines and clippings, television news reports, and press interviews. In this way, she does not lend a voice to these secondary sources but instead delivers the unfounded theories in the manner that the people of Mexico receive them. Moreover, she has prefaced these representations with her own experience of the whimsical constructions of "truth" and "mistrusting

everything…[she] read[s]." Through this strategy, Portillo challenges the notion of an "official" and authoritative voice that delivers information as undisputed fact. Furthermore, Portillo's multiple layers of documentation create a parallax that re-situates the spectator's gaze so as to recast the images of the feminicide in an empowering new light. Spectatorship, then, becomes a recurring and integral theme throughout *Señorita extraviada*. Most of the contemporary scholarship on filmic theories of spectatorship relies heavily on Jacques Lacan's notion of the gaze, which marks the primary interpellative point of the "mirror stage" when the subject first conceives of herself as an illusory unified self.[71] As Todd McGowan writes, "Being absent as perceived and present as perceiver affords the spectator an almost unqualified sense of mastery over the filmic experience. In this sense, the filmic experience provides a wholly imaginary pleasure, repeating the experience that Lacan sees occurring in the mirror stage."[72] In other words, in the scopic experience, the spectator derives pleasure from the mastery of seeing but not being seen; from this vantage point, she commands a particular authority of perceiver over the perceived.

In the context of representing the feminicide in *Señorita extraviada*, it initially appears as though the perpetrators of the murders are the ones that enjoy the mastery of the gaze: they cast a predatory watch over the women of Ciudad Juárez while they themselves are absent from the line of vision. And as previously mentioned, we learn of how female workers in the *maquiladoras* are often photographed and selected for

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[71] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1977).
[72] Todd McGowan, "Looking For The Gaze: Lacanian Film Theory And Its Vicissitudes," *Cinema Journal* 42, no. 3 (Spring 2003): 28.

assault based on these photos, a selection rooted in an exercise of scopic authority. However, despite this investment of power via spectatorship, Portillo demonstrates the ways in which the utilization of documentation can also be harnessed and appropriated to re-direct the gaze of mastery.

Perhaps the most significant technique that Portillo employs is her interspersing throughout the film of photographs of the victims, as well as the year of their disappearance. As the viewer listens to the accounts given by family members, images of the women stare back defiantly. Against the claims provided by the state government about the sexual deviance of the victims, the photographs render those narratives insignificant and instead return the authority of representation to the victims and their families. In contrast to the dominant cultural ideas about poor Mexican women as invisible, exploitable, and disposable, the pictures deliver the hypervisibility of the women, but always in the context of their potential agency as opposed to passive victimhood. The photographs of the victims are mostly headshots, with the women often looking strong or smiling vibrantly. In the first account of Eva Arce, the mother who had escaped her kidnapping only to have her daughter disappear years later, the captor who released her asks, "I could have killed you, and who would have known?" Portillo answers this question, re-directing the gaze onto the killers: the crimes do not go unnoticed and the women return a posthumous stare to their murderers.

Portillo continues to levy this gaze by representing the escaped victims and family members as active agents in exercising resistance and seeking justice. In one

particular interview, a woman named María recounts her grisly encounter with the local police and their suggested complicity in the crimes. One day, she and her husband are attacked by their neighbors who are trying to take away María's land. María and her husband go to the police station to report the crime but are instead forced to pay 250 pesos. Unable to pay, she and her husband are detained in prison where a female officer sexually harasses María, and she is later beaten and raped by a male officer. This same male officer, nicknamed "The Devil" (*El Diablo*), then takes María to a backroom where there are piles of women's clothing; he tells her that they belong to the women they have taken. He starts to take pictures of María.

"The Devil" then shows her a photo album filled with pictures of girls and young women being tortured. Through tears, María describes the graphic scenes:

> I looked at the photos. "Look at them, bitch!" and he grabbed my hair…I looked at the girl's faces. The ones with long hair they grabbed them by the hair and dragged them, dragged them through the bushes. They get in a circle. They lay her down in the middle and they rape her one after another. They beat them. Then they turn them over and rape them anally…one after the other. And they're all laughing. In the photos they're laughing. They look down and then laugh. They're laughing at what they're doing. They take photos of them. You can see them bite their nipples off. I saw it all very clearly in the photos. They were bruised. They had expressions of pain and suffering. You could see them cry and scream. Her face showed the pain she was feeling. They looked very sad. They did what they did to the young women. Then they poured gasoline on them and set them on fire. They burned but they were already dead. And they were making fun of them in the photos as they watched the young women burn.

Within Portillo's representation of María's horrific account, multiple layers of spectatorship are exercised vis-à-vis different forms of documentation. There is first

the predatory gaze of the perpetrators who allegedly select their victims from pictures taken at the *maquiladoras*, as well as photographically document the violence they commit against these young women. And in the actual crimes themselves, these men stand watching and laughing, occupying both roles of spectator and attacker.

But despite these scopic positionings, María commands a certain narrative authority that appropriates this gaze of mastery. For one, she is given a temporary glimpse into the violence of the crimes and reluctantly receives a visitor's pass into the world of murder and government corruption. This shared viewership allows María to turn the gaze onto her abusers. This is something Portillo is very careful to underscore; María is not represented in the film as merely an escaped victim, but is instead depicted as an empowered agent of justice that seeks redress for the crimes committed against her and the women in the photos. Upon the insistence of her husband – and against threats to her family – María goes public with her story and files criminal reports against the police officers. Although the officers are never sentenced, the message is still communicated: the violence against the women of Ciudad Juárez will not go unnoticed and unreported. This is echoed in the various scenes of female activism that Portillo consistently portrays, including Arce's persistent recording of facts and events in her notebook and her daily visits to the police station to ask for new leads. Portillo challenges the attackers' documentation with her own counter-documentary representation, re-directing the gaze of authority outward. The most poignant image of this is Portillo's repeated close-ups of a camera's lens and the sound of the shutter clicking. Through this technique, Portillo

transforms the murderers, state and global institutions, and ultimately, even the viewer herself, into objects of the photographic eye and subjects them to the mastery of the spectator's gaze.

Conclusion

By the end of Portillo's documentary, several activists and family members speculate about the individuals behind the murders. Some blame the corruption of police officers while others claim that narco-trafficking is responsible. One man recalls how he saw police officers apprehend a trafficker who wore a chain around his neck with a nipple attached to it. The cyclical connection between the women's deaths, underground organized crime, transnational capitalist development, and local law enforcement continually reproduces the conditions that render Mexican women's lives vulnerable to social practices of terror and aggression. Throughout the various speculations, however, one general consensus is clear: on some level, the national government is responsible.

When considering the state of denationality and its consequences on citizenship, the nation-state must necessarily learn to accommodate the new global re-organization of people, goods, and power in keeping with its role as the ostensible gatekeeper of rights for its citizens. The feminicide has demonstrated that the Mexican government has been unsuccessful in guaranteeing those rights to all its members. Galarza is adamant in stressing the state's complicity: "The government is, through its negligence, submissiveness, and participation, wholly responsible. They're

either covering it up, or they're doing it…They're violating the right to safety, the right to justice, the right to move around, the right to live peacefully. Here you're always in fear of an attack. All those rights are being violated and they're responsible." Rather than providing security and protection, the state has replaced a social welfare regime with corporatist goals and a form of social control premised on local fear.

The promotion of Mexico's economic programs after the market crisis of the mid-1980s has had strong implications for women in particular. Any type of progress made in terms of women's interests or female political participation has been supplanted by a rhetoric of female domesticity and moral virtue that significantly limits women's roles in civic life, effectively resulting in a large-scale masculinization of politics. Galarza sees a direct connection between this political campaigning and the murders themselves. Speaking about Mexico's two major political parties, *Partido Acción Nacional* (PAN) and *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), she argues, "Neither political party has solved this problem. Instead, they contributed to increase the violence against women, from the moment they said we were out at night and dressed provocatively. They blamed the women and the murders increased." The continual reiteration of the need to contain women's activities, especially women's sexual activities, reinforces the narrative of women's virtue and ultimately curtails any challenges to patriarchal norms. This has not only stripped women of their citizenship rights, but in the case of Ciudad Juárez, it has taken away their very right to life.

While it appears as though the Mexican government has failed in guaranteeing rights and protections for its women, it is also important to consider how gender

violence is not merely a product of that failure but is a primary feature of nation-building and capitalist development. This re-framing of the feminicide is pivotal in terms of articulating the need to see the lack of Mexican women's rights as an international problem. In making appeals to international human rights organizations, it is necessary to underscore the ways in which democratic institutions have buckled under the pressures of increased global capitalist infiltration. More specifically, the process of nation-formation – or even empire-building – via industrial modernization relies on a disciplining of particular groups of subordinated and marginalized bodies; oftentimes, this disciplining takes place at the expense of these very lives.

For many, the murders in Ciudad Juárez are often understood as the debased behavior of the "third world," the pitiable by-product of economic poverty, a lack of education, outdated sexist traditions, and a general need for "civilized" development. However, as Camacho argues, "While international observers commonly represent the gender violence in Juárez as a regressive cultural manifestation of masculine aggression, it is perhaps better understood as a *rational* expression of the contradictions arising from the gendered codes of neo-liberal governance and development."[73] Such an articulation of the feminicide represents the poor of Mexico not as anti-modern, backwards, and uncivilized, but instead depicts globalization as the harbinger of the potential violence that can be wrought when citizenship rights are sacrificed for economic "progress."

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[73] Camacho, 267.

If we view gender violence in these terms, the problem of women's rights in Mexico is necessarily an international problem because under current conditions, Mexican women exist without effective nationality, without effective citizenship. Scholars such as Sassen and Yasemin Soysal have contended that this unhinging of citizenship from the nation-state has the potential to produce new subjects, new spaces, and new formations for political mobilization and citizenship enactment. Sassen has talked about how appeals made at the individual-level at times bypass national governments and are instead directed to international organizations such as the United Nations.[74] Meanwhile Soysal has claimed that "the logic of personhood supersedes the logic of national citizenship."[75] If Soysal is correct, we must ask how a politics of personhood can be mobilized to seek redress and protections for victims of discrete particularities and localities. We must also look at the undersides of this unhinging, at the ways in which the detachment of citizenship from the nation-state has also produced new exercises of power that cut across the social spectrum, as well as new forms of social violence and exploitation for the most vulnerable communities: poor women of the third world. The goal of achieving effective citizenship depends on the re-accommodation of new forms of claim-making and promoting a greater sense of national and/or global belonging in the wake of an increasingly denationalized world.

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[74] Saskia Sassen (lecture, University Of California, San Diego, February 24, 2005).
[75] Yasemin Soysal, quoted in Camacho, 260.

Chapter 3:
At The Intersextion Of Gender: Biological Citizenship, Queer Globalization, And *Middlesex*

"This boy-girl, this never eternal masculine-feminine,
is nothing more than what passes at night
in the dreams, the desires, and the fears of everyone."
– Michel Foucault, introduction to *Herculine Barbin*

"I am a monster. I would like to join your monster club."
– "Thomas," letter to the
Intersex Society Of North America

Introduction

In 1838, Adelaide Herculine Barbin, also known as Alexina, was born in France and legally classified as a female. As an intersexual and an orphan, Alexina grew up in Catholic convents where she fell in love with various female classmates and teachers. By the age of 21, Alexina's "condition" was discovered and she was re-designated a male by the state, changing her name to Abel Barbin. Abel began to live his life as a man, but by then, French newspapers had caught wind of the story, calling him one of the certified monsters of the time. By 1868, living in poverty, Abel committed suicide, leaving behind only a diary that documented his misery. In it, Abel writes, "I have to speak of things that, for a number of people, will be nothing but incredible nonsense because, in fact, they go beyond the limits of what is possible."[76] For this "other Victorian," to borrow Michel Foucault's terminology, the "limits of what is possible" during the constraining social mores of Barbin's time provided only marginal space for biological anomalies or any form of sexual

[76] Herculine Barbin, *Herculine Barbin: being the recently discovered memoirs of a nineteenth-century French hermaphrodite*, Trans. Richard McDougall (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), 15.

dissidence attendant to them. More than one hundred years later, though to a different degree, the disciplinary technologies that interpellate sex and sexuality are still in place, underscoring the fixity of sexual norms as they are legitimized through state authority.

In this chapter, I focus on the issue of intersexuality as it intersects with biological citizenship and queer discourse. Using the novel *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides as my primary mode of analysis, I argue that although globalizing cultural dynamics appear to offer the potential to unhinge sexual norms from its entrenchment in the nation-state and thus become a liberatory site for queer discourse, such binary configurations that naturalize the national as heterosexual and align the global with the queer can also obfuscate hegemonic reinscriptions of heteronormativity within ostensibly progressive texts about queer globality. I contend that the conclusion of *Middlesex* is such a text that ultimately reaffirms masculinist and heterosexist constructions, despite its suggestion that queer discourse is capable of transcending both national boundaries and the constraints of sexual norms.

In the following, I will first discuss the embeddedness of heteronormativity within nationalist ideologies, policies, and practices. Citing contemporary American examples, I address the ways in which the disciplining of sexuality is central to state management of the national citizenry. Next, I demonstrate how biological discourses, and sexual discourse in particular, are key sites for the production of nationhood. Assigning citizens "bio-value," biomedical technologies are deployed by the state to police the boundaries of nationality by appraising who may constitute normative

citizenship, thereby giving way to the notion of "biological citizenship." I go on to discuss one such method of bio-political administration: legal gender classification. Examining the case study of a particular intersexual in the U.S., I consider the contemporary binary system of gender classification and the limits it places on sexual identification and the processes of subject-formation.

Following this, I discuss the recent emergence of the idea of a global queer identity. If the nation-state is the primary site of generating, enforcing, and reproducing sexual norms, many scholars contend that sexual dissidence finds its niche in globalizing cultural dynamics. However, I point to the ways in which such a binary model is reductive in limiting the potential for national queer activism, as well as the possibility of the global reinscription of heteronormative power.

Finally, I closely examine Eugenides' *Middlesex*. I read *Middlesex* as a queer text because it engages in discourses about sexual dissidence and centers on the life story of transgendered protagonist Cal. Though Cal's experience of intersexuality is not the standard transgendered narrative involving surgical sex reassignment, he nonetheless makes the sexual conversion – even if only in the sense of sexual identification and lifestyle – from female to male. I argue that for the most part, the novel adheres to the national/heterosexual and global/queer binary, suggesting that globality can transcend the sexual norms of the state. However, I conclude with a discussion of the ways in which *Middlesex* can also be read as a text that reaffirms heteronormativity.

Queering The Nation

In theorizing an emergent queer identity in the context of contemporary globalizing dynamics, it is imperative to first examine the relationship between the nation-state and sexual citizenship. Premised on a fixed common culture, the nation-state – and its attendant ideology of nationalism – finds its stability threatened by categories of difference that disrupt national narratives of homogeneity and cohesion. More specifically, sexual dissidence poses a particular threat to the development and survival of the nation; similar to racial others who symbolize the potential contamination of a "pure" national race, queer individuals signal the death of the nation through the representation of queer space as a site of non-reproductive desire. From a classed perspective, "proper" reproduction of the nation-state takes place exclusively within the boundaries of the bourgeois heteronormative family unit, thereby rendering sexuality central to class formation and the subsequent progress of the nation. As such, sexuality outside of heterosexual norms must be repressed as it comes in conflict with the social order; labeled perverse and dangerous, deviant sexuality becomes the Other of civilized society.

In more concrete terms, we have witnessed in the U.S. the exclusion of queers from membership and participation in the national citizenry. The passage of the Defense Of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1996 essentially delegitimized the ability of same-sex couples to enter into a marriage contract, thereby denying them economic, political, and social rights. More recently, only six states have passed laws that recognize same-sex marriage or civil unions while thirty-five states have passed laws

that ban gay marriage, twenty-seven of which are state constitutional amendments.[77] Furthermore, this overwhelming failure to legally recognize queer subjects as participating members of the national polity goes beyond policy and legislation; queers are also culturally excluded from the imagined space of the nation. For example, during the height of nationalist fervor after the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, a digitally altered photograph circulated, showing Osama bin Laden being sodomized by the Empire State building with the caption, "You like skyscrapers, huh bitch?" This photo is particularly telling as it frames U.S. nationalism in homophobic terms, representing sodomy as a denigrating and punitive consequence of anti-Americanism. Thus, in the American cultural imaginary, the nation-state is persistently narrated, conceived of, and normalized as masculinist and heterosexist.

The Genetic Citizen

Given this embeddedness of sexuality within the framework of the nationalist project, it becomes clear how intersexuality both engages in and complicates queer discourse. Before proceeding in this vein, however, I want to first discuss the role of a biologized understanding of citizenship as it highlights the intersexed subject as a genetic citizen of the state, imbued with "bio-value." Intimately connected, the sexual and the biological become key spaces for the production of nationhood. In particular, the concept of biological citizenship not only disrupts biological positivism's claim to

[77] Michael Foust, "Obama's Opposition To DOMA Differs With Other Democrats," *Baptist Press*, December 15, 2006, http://www.sbcbaptistpress.org/bpnews.asp?ID=24618

objectivity, it also functions as a site where the norms of the nation-state intersect with the norms of science. In this context, I use Rose and Novas' definition of biological citizenship as citizenship projects that "have linked their conceptions of citizens to beliefs about the biological existence of human beings, as individuals, as families and lineages, as communities, as population and races, and as a species."[78] Indeed, nation-states have long based their practices and policies of civic membership on biological criteria, from population management to eugenic campaigns to maintain racial purity. As mentioned previously, this maintenance of a unified and uniform national identity could only be ensured through the careful policing of inclusion and exclusion of difference; in other words, the monitoring of individuals who would or would not be citizens.

In the preservation of this citizenry, it was necessary to supervise the transmission of lineage and thus imperative to monitor sex, blood, health, vitality, in short, life. As a result, numerous and diverse techniques were developed and employed to obtain the goal of managing life through the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking an explosion of what Foucault terms "bio-power:" "what brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge-power an agent of transformation."[79] In other words, bio-power was the techniques of power that operated at the level of life and as a chief instrument of the state, it was utilized by diverse institutions at every level of the social body (i.e. the

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[78] Carlos Novas and Nikolas Rose, "Biological Citizenship," http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/sociology/pdf/RoseandNovasBiologicalCitizenship2002.pdf (accessed May 2005), 2.
[79] Michel Foucault, *The History Of Sexuality* (New York: Random House, 1978), 143.

family, the army, schools, medicine, the administration of collective bodies). Because it operated at the level of life, bio-power informed the act of living; it instructed citizens of the state on "how to live" and in doing so, set up the dichotomies of the "right" and "wrong" way to live. Foucault writes, "A normalizing society is the historical outcome of a technology of power centered on life" (144). Within a society of normalization, bio-power qualifies, measures, appraises, hierarchizes, and distributes individuals around the norm, distinguishing the rulers from the ruled, and the ruled from the unruleable. What this suggests is that biology, medicine, the life sciences, these were all normative discourses that were subject to bio-political administration and could be harnessed in the interest of state authority.

However, the wielding of bio-power is not a unilateral process. In the same way that state governments determine human worth by measuring the bio-value of its citizens, individuals "from below" can mobilize biological factors to make demands for reform: "[A]n analysis of biological citizenship cannot merely focus upon strategies for 'making up citizens' imposed from above…[these] strategies…tend to represent the science itself as unproblematic: they problematize the ways in which citizens misunderstand it."[80] Instead of this top-down approach, a bottom-up view provides a clearer contextualization of science: "But [the] vectors 'from below' pluralize biological and biomedical truth, introduce doubt and controversy, and re-locate science in the fields of experience, politics and capitalism."[81] This force "from below" operates as an accountability mechanism, not only by ensuring that particular

[80] Rose and Novas, 3.
[81] Ibid., 14.

protections are implemented (i.e. appeals to the Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health; public health care reform; reparations for those exposed to health risks, such as victims of the Chernobyl explosion; etc.), but it also renders science a discursive – and not objective – site by "speaking back." Rather than being the passive receptors of the authoritative "truth" of scientific and biomedical experts, individuals engage in a dialogue with the scientific community and in doing so, they exercise their ability to continually revise science as a field of study. In this way, they politicize the scientific process by situating it in relationship to its larger social and cultural context. Thus the biological is no longer inevitable or predictable, but rather mutable and manipulatable.

This dialectic relationship between individuals and biomedical science acquires particular significance when considering the process of citizen-making. Because of this dialogue, individual self-formation is increasingly coded in a biological vocabulary; individuals not only start to understand and define themselves in the context of a biological dialect, but they also participate as civic members in the same fashion: "[T]he languages that shape citizens' self-understandings and self-techniques are disseminated through authoritative channels…In engaging with such issues, the language with which citizens are coming to understand and describe themselves is increasingly biological."[82] In other words, a biomedical understanding of the self has so permeated the process of individual self-definition that even the everyday activities, behaviors, feelings, and thoughts of individuals are increasingly

[82] Ibid., 13.

conditioned by the biological, which in turn has translated into a particular type of citizenship activism.

The citizen, then, is not merely just a political citizen or a national citizen, s/he is also a genetic citizen with identifications and allegiances to communities that are defined by the experiences of the somatic individual. For example, Rose and Novas cite several instances of online support groups for rare medical conditions such as the Manic Depression Fellowship (MDF), Huntington's Disease Advocacy Center, and various AIDS/HIV, cancer, and eating disorder groups. They cite these programs as bio-social groupings that create a "political economy of hope;" in this politics of hope, citizenship is enacted in that members and their loved ones do not rely solely on doctors and medical experts to help them, but instead civically participate in their own healing and the healing of others.

Gender Classification And The Law

In the U.S., the discursivity of bio-political administration with regard to the intersexed community has necessitated the formation of such bio-social groupings. Unable – or unwilling – to accommodate a third gender category, the government requires intersexuals to be legally classified as either "male" or "female," thereby demonstrating that the construction of gender is still tied to the state's recognition of these binary categories. Moreover, the reliance on sex attendants to determine the official sex of an individual exhibiting ambiguous genitalia at birth has medicalized gender and sexuality politics, at the same time that it has politicized the field of

medicine. In the introduction to the memoirs of Barbin, perhaps one of history's more well-known hermaphrodites, Foucault briefly discusses the history of intersexuality in Europe, namely the transition from the legal acknowledgement of individuals with two sexes, to the compulsory designation of just one sex. The administrative ambition of the modern nation-state, informed by emergent theories of sexuality, resulted in the need to establish an indeterminate individual's "true sex;" he writes, "From the medical point of view, this meant that when confronted with a hermaphrodite, the doctor was no longer concerned with recognizing the presence of the two sexes…or with knowing which of the two prevailed over the other, but rather with deciphering the true sex that was hidden beneath ambiguous appearances."[83] For these intersexuals that Foucault speaks of, as well as intersexuals in contemporary American society, the juridical demand for medical experts to determine one's sex and/or gender signals the elimination of free choice for these individuals and demonstrates the ways in which sexual and/or gender identity is persistently conditioned by the state.

Perhaps the most pertinent example of the murky relationship between the state and the intersexed individual is the case of Lynn Edward Harris. Born Lynn Elizabeth Harris in 1950, Harris was raised and lived as a woman until the age of twenty-three, at which time he was diagnosed with "true hermaphroditism," a condition that entails a stunted penis, divided scrotum, vagina, and undescended, sub-sized ovotestes.[84] Following his decision to make the full conversion to the social gender role of a man

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[83] Michel Foucault, "Introduction," *Herculine Barbin: being the recently discovered memoirs of a nineteenth-century French hermaphrodite*, Herculine Barbin, Trans. Richard McDougall (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), viii.

[84] Lynn Edward Harris, "Born True Hermaphrodite," http://www.angelfire.com/ca2/BornHermaphrodite/ (accessed August 10, 2005).

at the age of twenty-nine, Harris lived in sexual limbo for four years, both socially and legally. While making the physical transformation into a man (clothing change, allowing beard growth, etc.), the only form of identification he possessed was a driver's license with a female classification that bore a picture of himself as a woman. As such, he was accused on many occasions of using a fraudulent, counterfeit, or stolen identification card. In order to remedy his legal status, Harris wrote his own petition and presented it to the Superior Court of the County of Los Angeles, making two specific requests: a change in his middle name from "Elizabeth" to "Edward," and a new, re-issued birth certificate that reflected a change in his sex designation from "female" to "male." The Court granted his requests in Case #437625; Lynn Elizabeth Harris no longer existed and had become a "legal non-entity."

Despite the Court's ruling, the State Registrar of Vital Statistics Board refused to comply with the filing, citing the California Health and Safety Code that stipulated that Harris' petition failed to be accompanied by the standard plastic surgeon's affidavit of "radical sex reassignment by surgery" that indicated the "manufactured characteristics of the opposite sex."[85] They were willing to issue an amended birth certificate with the changed middle name, but the document still classified him as a female. Harris considered the possibility of a surgical sex change, but decided against taking the risk of mutilation, disfigurement, and/or bodily rejection of prostheses or implants. Feeling demeaned by the lack of recognition of his desired civil status, Harris prepared to sue the state. Four months later, though, the chief of the Vital

[85] Quoted in Lynn Edward Harris, "Legal Sex Change, No Surgery," *Hermaphrodites With Attitude* (Spring 1995): 6.

Statistics Branch rescinded their previous statement and admitted that they had mishandled the case. On June 2, 1983, Harris was issued a new birth certificate with the changed middle name and a male sex designation. Harris' landmark case set the precedent in California, and possibly in the country, of an individual attaining a legal sex re-classification without the aid of any form of sex-reassignment surgery.

This case is significant because it teases out the problems involved with the government's current binary system of gender classification. Until recently, the law has operated under the assumption that gender distinction is a purely biological, fixed, and unambiguous phenomenon; from the legal standpoint, the categories of "male" and "female" are immutable indicators of sexual, and subsequently, gender, identity. This reasoning stems from both a physiological and chromosomal understanding of gender determination. For years, sex attendants have determined the sex designation on birth certificates via a medical examination of phenotypical characteristics (external appearance). In another instance, the Olympic Organizing Committee implemented a chromosomal test in 1968 to determine the eligibility of athletic participation (individuals with XX chromosomes were designated females while those with XY chromosomes were classified male).

For the purposes of examining the role that the biological plays in the dynamics of citizenship, the legal definitions of sex are crucial. If the relationship between the citizen and the state, in its distilled form, is based on a system of allegiance, rights, and claims, then sex classification becomes integral, not just for the more pedestrian reasons of official designations on driver's licenses and passports, but

for higher stakes such as marriage rights (intersexuals complicate the tenets put forth by DOMA), the ability to claim exemptions from military conscription, or appeals for state protection against sex discrimination under Title IX. In a law review on therapeutic jurisprudence and the "collision between law and biology," Julie Greenberg makes the argument for the need to create a legal option that allows for sex self-identification.[86] As is the case with Harris, Greenberg points to the ways in which intersexuals disrupt the binary gender paradigm employed by the state: "[D]espite medical and anthropological studies to the contrary, the law presumes a binary sex and gender model. The law ignores the millions of people who are intersexed. [This] does not reflect reality. Instead, sex and gender range across a spectrum. Male and female occupy the two ends of the poles, and a number of intersexed conditions exist between the two poles" (276). According to Greenberg, the difficulty of reconciling the law with biology is a product of the inability of the government to formally recognize a sex and gender spectrum.

Moreover, she acknowledges the various cultures outside the American legal system that do indeed accommodate a multi-sex/gender model. For example, villagers in the Dominican Republic are familiar with children who are born with external female genitalia and are subsequently raised as girls. However, at around the age of twelve, their internal testes descend, their voices grow deep, and their clitorises become penises; the villagers refer to these individuals as *guevodoche*. Similar occurrences can be found in Papua, New Guinea, Indian, Greek, Jewish and Native-

[86] Julie Greenberg, "Defining Male And Female: Intersexuality And The Collision Between Law And Biology," *Arizona Law Review* 41, no. 265 (1999): 265-316.

American cultures (the latter refers to these individuals as *berdache*, a term that Cal, the protagonist of *Middlesex*, at one point uses to describe himself). In all of these cultures, hermaphrodism is regarded as a third sex, or a third gender.[87] This contrasts sharply from the American legal system; while medicine and science have been able to acknowledge the existence of intersexuals, the law has lagged behind in establishing categories beyond male and female, as witnessed by the demands made on Harris to provide evidence of his "opposite sex." This dichotomous thinking leaves little room for intersexed individuals who do not fit neatly into these limited classifications, leaving them socially marginalized and legally disenfranchised.

Thus, it becomes clear that biology and medicine are not simply detached, objective, and circumscribed bodies of knowledge, but are instead deeply ensconced in the bio-political management and enactment of the nation-state. This entrenchment has significant bearing on intersexual identity, particularly as it intersects with queer discourse. Here, I return to my prior discussion of the engagement of intersexuality with queerness. Given the anxieties about the unchecked sexual urges of queers and their failure to contribute to the procreative nation-state, the directive for juridical classification as either "male" or "female" becomes a method of managing sexual behavior and a site of queer identity production. As Foucault argues, "the phantasmagorias of nature might be of service to licentious behavior."[88] The question of sexual orientation necessarily haunts the question of legal sex assignment because of the moral imperative that motivates it: for the intersexed individual, the choice of

[87] Ibid., 276, 277.
[88] Foucault, "Introduction," ix.

who your sexual partner is and the sexual acts you engage in must align with the normative behaviors of the sexual identity you have chosen. In addition to these moral investments, the stakes of sex/gender classification spill into other realms as well; as I have mentioned previously, access to rights and entitlements such as marriage, the military, and redress for sex discrimination all hinge on one's sex assignment within a system of binary classification and what the state considers to be the proper relations between those categories.

Queer Globalization

In the context of the U.S., if the state is continually configured as heterosexist and its sexual policies work to marginalize and limit the rights of queer subjects, it would appear as though globalization provides the necessary conditions to dislodge the fixity of sexual norms. Though the literature linking globalization with sexuality is limited, some scholars have argued that globalizing forces have enabled a queer movement on multiple levels. Speaking about California's Proposition 187, Ignatius Bau points to the increased immigration to the U.S. brought on by the global political economy, and the subsequent growing awareness that queers are unable to make claims to naturalization and citizenship via marriage rights.[89] Economically, Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin F. Manalansan argue that queer culture is becoming more and more commodified: "queerness has become both an object of consumption, an

[89] Ignatius Bau, "Queer Asian American Immigrants: Opening Borders And Closets," *Q&A: Queer In Asian America*, Eds. David Eng and Alice Hom (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 57-64.

object in which nonqueers invest their passions and purchasing power, and an object through which queers constitute their identities in our contemporary consumer-oriented globalized world."[90] In other words, the rise in global niche markets for queers has increased their visibility and representation. It is interesting to note that the very status of queer couples as non-reproductive consumers makes them ideal targets for corporate marketing; the emergence of so-called "DINKs," (Double Income No Kids) means that more income is available for consumerism without the economic strain of supporting children.

Moreover, the growth of the internet and cyber-communities has been able to break down national boundaries and create a "global queerness." For example, Greenberg's proposition for a self-identified multi-sex, multi-gender system is key in considering new forms of citizenship that are emerging in the face of globalizing cultural dynamics. With greater access to information via the internet and other technological advancements, the intersexed community is able to organize and participate in activism that calls for a revision in the way that intersexuals are medically and legally treated, including the right to choose their own sexual identity instead of having society or the law choose for them. When their own government does not recognize an integral part of their identity, intersexuals have no other choice but to seek recourse in support and advocacy groups where they feel a greater sense of

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[90] Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin F. Manalansan IV, "Introduction: Dissident Sexualities/Alternative Globalisms," *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship And The Afterlife Of Colonialism*, Eds. Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin F. Manalansan IV (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 1.

belonging and allegiance, groups such as the Intersex Society Of North America (ISNA) and the Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome Support Group (AISSG).

On a metaphorical level, the image of globalizing forces crossing national boundaries (in its various forms of communication, transportation, migration, capital, ideologies, etc.) finds its analogue in the idea of queer discourse transgressing normative sexual boundaries which have been traditionally embedded within national borders. Hence, queer subjectivity, assisted by globalizing dynamics, is no longer confined within the heterosexist norms of the nation-state. As James Allen poignantly points out, "The poet WH Auden invented a word for this international homo-culture, 'homointern,' meaning the life experiences and innate personality traits that connect gays more closely with gays from other countries than with the heterosexual citizens of their own country, or even their own family."[91] At the risk of essentializing a universal queer identity, Allen suggests that queerness holds the potential to cut across national differences and thus globalization, in its elimination of distance and scale, appears to promote difference and manage otherness.

Such a paradigm, however, of aligning the national with the heterosexual and the global with the queer is reductive in its dichotomous formulation. Despite the liberatory potential of globalization in unhinging sexuality from the disciplinary norms of the nation-state, such a view overlooks the ways in which queer activism can be mobilized through national channels, or the ways that global configurations of queerness reproduce nationalist models of hegemonic heterosexuality and masculinity.

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[91] Quoted in John Binnie, *The Globalization Of Sexuality* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2004), 37.

Discussing the relationship between queerness and diaspora, David Eng argues that the "coupling of the cultural nationalist project with the heterosexual is neither intrinsic nor determined."[92] He goes on to ask, how might we "denaturalize any claims on the nation-state and home as inevitable functions of the heterosexual?" (35). One way to begin to broach Eng's question is to examine the ways in which queerness has been deployed in relationship to the national and the global. Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan provide a partial answer to Eng when they contend that "queer sexualities and cultures have often been deployed negatively to allay anxieties about 'authentic' national belonging in our massively migratory contemporary world…and positively by nation-states in order to project an image of global modernness consistent with capitalist market exchange"[93] Here, Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan address the ways in which the nation-state has implemented exclusionary practices against queers so as to stabilize and coalesce the citizenry in the face of global movement and reorganization; meanwhile, the nation-state simultaneously utilizes queerness to represent itself as a symbol of modernity, fully capable of keeping with global ideologies and markets that serve queer consumers. Furthermore, not only does the contradictory deployment of queerness by the nation-state disrupt the dichotomous paradigm that aligns it with heterosexuality, but the global, despite its potential for promoting queer subjectivities, emerges as a possible site for the production of a "new

[92] David Eng, "Out Here And Over There: Queerness And Diaspora In Asian American Studies," *Social Text* 52/53 (1997): 35.
[93] Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan, 2.

global hetero-masculinity" that works to re-legitimate national heterosexualities and masculinities.[94]

Synopsis

It is here that I turn to the novel *Middlesex* by Eugenides. Before I begin my analysis, though, I will briefly provide a synopsis of the novel's storyline. The novel begins with Cal's claim that he was born twice, "first, as a baby girl on a remarkably smogless Detroit day…and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan."[95] He re-tells his story as a forty-one year old man working for the Foreign Service and living in Berlin, Germany. But given the immediate introduction to his condition as a hermaphrodite, Cal does not launch into his own story right away. Instead, he takes the reader back to the year 1922, back to the town of Bithynios on the border between Greece and Turkey. Desdemona and Lefty Stephanides, Cal's grandparents, are orphaned siblings in their early twenties, and having grown up together in a small village, they develop an uncommonly close bond. This bond eventually transforms into romantic love, and by the time they acknowledge their affections for each other, the Turkish army has already invaded the coastal villages of Greece. Desdemona and Lefty are able to flee the fires in Smyrna, and board a ship bound for the United States.

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[94] Joseba Gabilondo, "Like Blood For Chocolate, Like Queers For Vampires: Border And Global Consumption In Rodríguez, Tarantino, Arau, Esquivel, And Troyano (notes on baroque, camp, kitsch, and hybridization)," *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship And The Afterlife Of Colonialism*, Eds. Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin F. Manalansan IV (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 237.
[95] Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middlesex* (New York: Picador, 2002), 3.

Upon arriving in Detroit, they stay with their cousin Sourmelina and her Turkish husband Jimmy Zizmo. Now that they are in a different country, miles away from familiar faces in the village, Lefty and Desdemona are no longer brother and sister, and instead have re-fashioned themselves as husband and wife. Only Sourmelina knows their secret and agrees not to tell anyone. Both couples continue to live together and struggle with the difficulties of immigrant life. Living in Detroit, Lefty is able to find work in the assembly line of the Ford Motor Company, although he later makes his fortune as the owner of a bar called the Zebra Room. Eventually, Lefty and Desdemona give birth to two children, a boy name Milton and a girl name Zoe. Sourmelina and Jimmy also have a daughter whom they name Theodora, or Tessie. Following in the footsteps of Lefty and Desdemona, Milton and Tessie grow up together and form a close relationship. And like their predecessors, they eventually fall in love and marry, despite being second cousins. Milton and Tessie go on to have a son, Chapter Eleven, as well as a "girl" whom they name Calliope.

Cal's story starts here, more than midway through the novel. His account begins with a cataloguing of life in Detroit, particularly the divided racial tensions and the subsequent race riots of 1967. Because of Milton's more conservative politics, he enrolls Cal in an upscale, pre-dominantly white, all-girls high school. Cal continues to chronicle his life as a teenage girl and the problems he experiences as a result of his not-yet-discovered sexual condition: he is much taller than his peers, he is unable to develop womanly breasts and is therefore unable to wear bras, he starts to grow facial hair, he is unable to menstruate, and his voice is slightly deeper than the other girls.

As all of this is happening, Cal starts to sense that he is different somehow; he even notices that his clitoris is slightly enlarged, what he calls a crocus. Moreover, Cal has fallen in love with one of his fellow classmates, a vibrant and unruly girl he refers to as the Obscure Object. He and the Object become best friends and while on vacation with her family, Cal is involved in a tractor accident. It is when he is rushed to the hospital that doctors discover his ambiguous anatomy. From here, Cal's life changes dramatically.

Once notified of the news, Milton and Tessie take Cal to New York to see a sexologist named Dr. Luce. Luce conducts various medical and psychiatric exams on Cal, all the while trying to keep the truth from his young patient. However, Cal eventually discovers the truth on his own and at fourteen, makes the decision to become a man. Running away from home, he makes the physical transformation by getting his hair cut and buying a suit. He hitchhikes his way from New York to California, settling down in San Francisco. He finds work at a club that showcases sexual abnormalities and befriends another hermaphrodite name Zora who has Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome. Through Zora, Cal becomes educated not only about his medical condition, but the political dimensions of it and it is here that Eugenides demonstrates his knowledge of the social and political context of the intersex movement. Cal locates his experience at the cusp of the explosion in gender and sexuality awareness and activism; at this point, intersexed issues have not been brought to the fore in the U.S., much less on the international stage.

Eventually, Cal returns home to Detroit after receiving news that Milton has passed away in an automobile accident. Going home for the first time as a man, Cal feels uneasy, but Tessie, Chapter Eleven, and Desdemona, the only surviving members of his family, are accommodating. As he stands watch over the front door of his house in the Greek Orthodox funeral tradition, Cal looks ahead to his future and anticipates what his life will be like as a new type of being in the world.

Middlesex

Throughout most of the narrative about Cal's transgender experience as an intersexual, *Middlesex* appears to abide by the binary model that situates heterosexuality within national paradigms and queer discourse as a function of globalization. In the following, I will demonstrate the ways in which Eugenides structures his novel in such a fashion. However, I will also later argue that although *Middlesex* presents itself as a text about queer global modernity, it nevertheless reinforces heterosexist norms by the end of the storyline.

While the traditional understanding of citizenship has long pivoted on the national and an exclusive identification with, and allegiance to, a particular nation-state, the reorganization of communication networks under the imperatives of globalizing dynamics has resulted in a new form of identity construction that has reshaped a nationalized conception of citizenship and civic participation. In the case of *Middlesex*, Cal's experience registers the insufficiency of the nation to cultivate a sense of belonging and civic attachment. As a hermaphrodite, his identifications lie

elsewhere, in the cultural dimensions of his physiological composition. Citizenship, for Cal, is more about the biological than the national. This shift is not lost on Eugenides, who dedicates a third of the novel to the story of Lefty and Desdemona. To be sure, it is the very fact that Eugenides spends a significant portion of the book re-telling this account of Lefty and Desdemona's emmigration that draws attention to the importance of the national, and highlights the parallels between immigration and intersexuality. Indeed, the old world of national identification figures prominently in the emergence of Cal's new form of citizenship that is primarily biological and increasingly global.

After escaping the fires of Smyrna, Lefty and Desdemona board the *Giulia*, a ship carrying Greeks with political asylum to the United States. Once aboard the *Giulia*, Lefty is excited as he fantasizes about the new man he will become as an American: "He seized the opportunity of transatlantic travel to reinvent himself…Aware that whatever happened now would become the truth, that whatever he seemed to be would become what he was – already an American, in other words" (67). For Lefty, truth was a matter of construction, and a reconstruction of his identity immediately qualified him as an American. He and Desdemona are determined to rewrite their past and create a new future for themselves. Among a ship full of fellow Greeks who are not from their village, Lefty and Desdemona pretend not to know each other and begin their courtship before hundreds of unknowing witnesses. They are able to convince everyone, including themselves, that they had never met before,

much less were related; they are successful and cement their charade with a maritime wedding.

In fact, all the travelers on board share in this endeavor of re-creation; they have cast off their old identities, and willingly embrace their new lives as new people in America. Eugenides writes, "Sailing across the ocean among half a thousand perfect strangers conveyed an anonymity in which my grandparents could re-create themselves. The driving spirit on the *Giulia* was self-transformation. Staring out to sea, tobacco farmers imagined themselves as race car drivers, silk dyers as Wall Street tycoons…Europe and Asia Minor were dead behind them. Ahead lay America and new horizons" (68). Their hopes illustrate that the process of self-(trans)formation is one that is based on a nationalized understanding of identity. On the high seas that belong to no national jurisdiction, they are able to erase their identities as Europeans, Greeks, or Turks, and look to reinventing themselves as American citizens. The anticipation of both Lefty and Desdemona, and the other passengers aboard the *Giulia*, reinforce the notion of America as a land rife with opportunity and reinvention.

Moreover, America becomes the ultimate destination of sexual self-transformation. Leaving their village behind, the journey to the U.S. enables the heteronormative marriage plot to take place. Lefty and Desdemona have converted their identities as Greek brother and sister to that of American husband and wife. As the place where sexual deviance begins in the novel, the small town of Bithynios is configured as provincial and "pre-modern," thereby aligning normative heterosexuality with the "modern" nation-state, as embodied at large by the U.S, and

in particular by Detroit, the "Motor City" and home to the capitalist dream of Fordist assembly line production. This transatlantic passage parallels the plot trajectory of Sourmelina, the cousin whom Lefty and Desdemona move in with upon their arrival in Detroit. In fact, it is Sourmelina's own queerness that allows Lefty and Desdemona to entrust her with their secret. As a teenager, Sourmelina struggled with her gay sexuality in Bithynios, stating, "I went to church…praying to be different" (86). When she is finally discovered with another woman, her parents force her to move to America to marry Jimmy Zizmo, her current husband. Though not inwardly, Sourmelina is effectively "heterosexualized" by her immigration to the U.S. Together, Lefty, Desdemona, and Sourmelina keep each other's sexual dissidence a secret, thereby enabling one another to perform heteronormativity.

Eugenides continues to draw parallels between the normalization of sexuality and the normalization of national identity vis-à-vis the immigrant experience. Once at the threshold of America, it becomes apparent that opportunity and reinvention are contingent on a tiered system of membership and inclusion that is at once political, legal, cultural, and social. Eugenides situates the 1922 experience of the travelers aboard the *Giulia* against the backdrop of legal racial exclusion: "On the floor of the U.S. Senate, Henry Cabot Lodge thumped a copy of *On The Origin Of Species*, warning that the influx of inferior peoples from southern and eastern Europe threatened 'the very fabric of our race.' The Immigration Act of 1917 barred thirty-three kinds of undesirables from entering the United States, and so, in 1922, on the deck of the *Giulia*, passengers discussed how to escape the categories" (73).

Furthermore, entrance into the nation was determined by a medical examination that would measure the health and vigor of not only immigrants in general, but races in particular. As a result, members of the *Giulia*, as Eugenides points out, tried to figure out ways to bypass the categories that would render them "undesirable." By citing Darwin's concepts of evolution in the context of congressional legislation, Eugenides illustrates the ways in which biological ideas found their way into social theories about race and the nation. He evokes the discourse of biological citizenship that links science with state authority; more specifically, the bio-political management of sexuality.

Almost fifty years later, Cal, like his grandparents, would be subjected to a medical examination as well, but it would be an exam to gain admittance into a different kind of nation, a biological nation of normative gender desirability. Here on Ellis Island, though, he is able to evade the authorities: "But, no matter how well trained, medical eyes couldn't spot a recessive mutation hiding out on a fifth chromosome. Fingers couldn't feel it. Buttonhooks couldn't bring it to light…" (81). Despite the efforts of the U.S. government to weed out inferior foreign genes via a social evolutionary process, Cal's genetic mutation goes unnoticed. In deploying the image of smuggling a sexually deviant gene into the U.S. via immigration, Eugenides underscores the parallel anxieties about race and sexuality that haunts the policing of the border: intimately linked, both present the threat of national degeneration. As such, ethnicity and sexuality must be disciplined and normalized so as to ensure the homogenization of the nation-state.

Upon Lefty and Desdemona's arrival in Detroit, it appears as though this process of normalization is underway, at least for the first part of the novel; ethnic difference is disciplined through the process of cultural assimilation. After moving in with Sourmelina, they encounter obstacles that are typical of the immigrant experience: learning English, finding work, attempting to retain a native culture, and developing a desire to fit in. Living in Detroit, Lefty eventually finds work in the Ford Motor Company, where "people stopped being human" (95). While working during the day, he attends the Ford English School in the evenings and upon his graduation, Lefty is asked to participate in a performance at the ceremonies. He, along with his fellow immigrant workers from the factory, dress up in their native attire and walk across the stage, approaching a large cauldron with the words "Ford English School Melting Pot" emblazoned on the front. One by one – Syria, Italy, Poland, Greece – each descends into the large pot. Once inside the pot, they change clothes and emerge wearing American suits and waving American flags. For Henry Ford, such propaganda suggests that Ford Motors was helping to contribute to the American fantasy of homogeny and assimilation, but if this is to be the case, the Ford Melting Pot also represents an American identity that is premised on the merging of Fordist capitalism with immigrant labor. In fact, despite the pageant's depiction of hard work as the social equalizer that erases difference, it is those very markers of cultural distinction upon which the Ford Motor Company depends for its profit-making ventures. In this orgiastic display of the fusion of capitalism and citizenship, Ford does not just generate automobiles, it also generates Americans.

As the novel progresses into Cal's teenage years, the embeddedness of social norms within the national body is replicated in the social stratification of Cal's youth. Eugenides continues to foreshadow Cal's impending sexual identity crisis by drawing parallels with ethnic marginalization. Once in high school, Cal and his "exotic" friends learn that difference is the criterion for social categories, and feel the subsequent sting of exclusion. Observing the Charm Bracelets, the waspy popular girls at school, Cal muses about this social hierarchy: "Until we came to Baker & Inglis my friends and I had always felt completely American. But now the Bracelets' upturned noses suggested that there was another America to which we could never gain admittance" (298). With friends like Reetika Churaswami, Norma Abdow, Tina Kubek, and Linda Ramirez, Cal and his "ethnic" friends experience high school as a microcosm of American society. Here, Americanness is a relative experience, defined in relation to another's degree of membership and sense of belonging. Unlike the vision of the Ford English School, America is not a melting pot where old identities get cooked away and new ones emerge; rather, it is a country that is driven by an appraisal of those very differences.

In Cal's situation, this process of appraisal is regulated by the authority of the bio-political state. Upon the discovery of Cal's "deviant" anatomy, Milton and Tessie take Cal to New York to see Dr. Luce, a sexologist. His parents are determined to get to the bottom of things and "fix" Cal's "problem;" Cal himself is amazed at his parent's dogged resolve, describing it as "typif[ying] the American belief that everything can be solved by doctors" (426). As Dr. Luce conducts a series of tests on

Cal in the following days, Cal begins to become increasingly aware of his "condition." During a free moment, Cal is able to sneak away to the public library; he has heard the doctors using the term "hermaphrodite" and decides to look it up in Webster's Dictionary. The entry comes up: "1. One having the sex organs and many of the secondary sex characteristics of both male and female. 2. Anything comprised of a combination of diverse or contradictory elements. See synonyms at MONSTER" (430). In this moment of horror at being defined as a "monster" Cal flees the library, his parents, New York, and ultimately, his body and life as a girl. From that point on, Cal re-claims his sexual and gender identity and begins his transformation from woman to man. This sequence of events is very telling of the power that is granted to epistemological authority: gender norms get reified through the circumscription of normative knowledge. In the first instance, Milton and Tessie's determination to "fix" Cal's "disorder" suggests their appeal to doctors as a means of conforming their child's biological anomaly to social standards of sexual acceptability. Meanwhile, Cal's discovery at the library marks his first acknowledgement of difference (that is, his sexual dissidence as *disorder*) as measured against the bastion of semantic authority: the dictionary. Both examples depict the juxtaposition of deviation against the norm, and reveal the former's inexorable concession to the latter.

Eugenides' demonstration of the entrenchment of sexual norms within national ideologies and state policies is further elaborated in the character of Zora. When Cal finally hitchhikes all the way to San Francisco, he is coaxed into being a part of a sex "freak" show by Bob Presto, a club owner who is able to recognize Cal's transgender

transformation. Seeing this as a way to make money, Cal agrees to be a part of the show and he eventually befriends Zora, another intersexual. Cal describes Zora as a politicized figure, an early activist for the intersex movement: "Even back in 1974 she was using the term 'intersexual,' which was rare then. Stonewall was only five years in the past. The Gay Rights Movement was under way. It was paving a path for all the identity struggles that followed, including ours…So I think of Zora…as a sort of John the Baptist crying in the wilderness…that wilderness was America" (488). Citing various social movements and situating Cal's experience in its historical context, Eugenides underscores the linkages he has been making throughout the novel between the identity struggles of groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. More specifically, he locates the intersex movement against the backdrop of the struggle between grassroots activism and the state disciplining and normalization of sexuality. In this way, the norms of gender and sexuality are invariably delimited by the authority of the nation-state.

For those whom the heterosexist norms of the nation-state are unyielding and unaccommodating, the possibility of transcending the national – of globalizing – seems to be the solution to the state's failure to generate a sense of national belonging among its sexual dissidents. Throughout *Middlesex*, Eugenides makes many metaphorical linkages between the nation and the sexualized and gendered body, suggesting that globalization has the liberatory potential to dislodge the fixity of sexual norms. Again, a strategy he employs to accomplish this is the linking of sexuality with immigration. If Cal's family's sense of alienation, assimilation, and

cultural dividedness stems from the tensions that are common among peoples of exile and displacement, then Cal's intersexed body parallels the immigrant experience. In the same way that émigrés struggle to identify culturally, politically, and nationally with either their country of origin or the host country, Cal's de-gendered and over-gendered body locates him in the interstices, making it difficult to align himself with either genders, or sexes for that matter.

Therefore, it is no surprise that as an adult male, Cal chooses the option to globalize, to resist being contained within national boundaries. As a worker for the Foreign Service living in Berlin, he writes, "I've never wanted to stay in one place" (106). Motivated by his inability to ever feel "at home," Cal stays on the move, never settling down in one place for very long. Much of his nomadism also stems from the fact that he is unable to have children, thus keeping him from being accountable to familial attachments. Moreover, it is key to note that Cal's sterile body prevents him from reproducing the nation, both in rhetoric and actual offspring, and therefore his need for transnational movement is consistent with the embeddedness of heteronormativity within the nation-state. For Cal, his transgendered sexual identity does not find solace in the cohesion of the state but instead runs parallel to territorial fracture. This is evident when he cites particular geographic regions of significance to him; for example, he writes of Berlin, "This once-divided city reminds me of myself. My struggle for unification, for *Einheit*. Coming from a city still cut in half by racial hatred, I feel hopeful here in Berlin;" and later when Turkey is being attacked: "Cyprus was being cut in half like Berlin, like Korea, like all the other places in the

world that were no longer one thing or the other" (106, 363). As an intersexual, Cal is neither "one thing or the other." In these two passages, Cal parallels his body with those places in the world that are as divided as he is. His body is a nation within itself.

It is interesting that Eugenides employs the nation as a metaphor for Cal's intersexed body. In the same way that national boundaries can be, and have been, divided and delimited, the hermaphroditic body is likewise subject to demarcation; and like state borders of a globalized era, the body can also be transgressive. When Cal decides to make the conversion to a man, he starts hitchhiking his way from New York to California; as he does this, he starts to think about his family:

> My grandparents had fled their home because of a war. Now, some fifty-two years later, I was fleeing myself. I felt that I was saving myself just as definitely. I was fleeing without much money in my pocket and under the alias of my new gender. A ship didn't carry me across the ocean; instead, a series of cars conveyed me across continent. I was becoming a new person, too, just like Lefty and Desdemona, and I didn't know what would happen to me in this new world to which I'd come. (443)

Here, Cal makes an explicit connection between his own experiences and those of Lefty and Desdemona's. His grandparents, as Greek immigrants, attempted to re-fashion themselves by grounding their new identity as citizens of a different nationality. In the accelerated globalized world of Cal's generation – a world where nationalities are more flexible – identity re-fashioning involves a citizenship of a different kind. In Cal's case, such a citizenship is a biological one, rooted in the gender construction of his physiology. Speaking of the house he grew up in, the futuristic house on Middlesex Street, Cal looks ahead to his new life and observes:

"[Middlesex] was still the beacon it was intended to be…a place designed for a new type of human being, who would inhabit a new world. I couldn't help feeling, of course, that that person was me, me and all the others like me" (529). Like his grandparents, Cal looks to his future with anticipation, that he too will become a new type of citizen in a new type of world. Given the framing of his sexual identity and physiology throughout the novel in terms of territory, immigration, and national boundaries, this "new world" appears to be a more global one, marking a departure from a prior form of citizenship based on national paradigms, and suggesting an emergent queer global citizenship. In this way, the forces of globalization seem to offer a liberatory alternative to the constraining sexual norms of the nation-state.

Despite the potential of globalization to promote sexual otherness in the face of nationalist heteronormativity, such binary paradigms both limit the possibility of de-naturalizing the heterosexual from the national, as well as overlook the ways in which the global can be a site for reproducing hegemonic configurations of the heteronormative. As Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan argue, it is important to examine the ways in which queer discourse has been deployed both positively and negatively. From the outset, *Middlesex* seems to offer a progressive queer narrative, depicting Cal as a sympathetic protagonist whose anomalous anatomy and dissident sexuality are constrained by the biomedical and sexual norms of the nation-state. And while the novel does indeed promote queerness as a form of globality that is capable of transgressing national borders and heteronormative fixities, I would nonetheless argue

that the conclusion of *Middlesex* can also be read as a storyline that ultimately reinforces heterosexist norms.

As the novel alternates between Cal's adult life as a male living in Berlin and his retelling of his family's history, the narrative seeks its teleological resolution in Cal's relationship with Julie Kikuchi, a woman he meets on the subway in Berlin. In fact, if we are to reconstruct the chronology, the novel concludes with the sexual consummation of their relationship, an act Cal has been unable to perform because of his shame about his body. As an Asian American photographer in Berlin on a grant, Julie is someone that Cal finds himself extremely drawn to. It is interesting to note, however, the way that Cal describes her: Julie, though small in stature, possesses no overwhelming feminine qualities. The first time he encounters her, she is wearing cycling gear and boards the subway carrying a bicycle. Moreover, Cal notices her dirty fingernails and observes her "unemphasized body."

After Cal kisses her for the first time, Julie makes a revealing comment; she confesses, "My gay-dar went off completely…I'm always suspicious, being the last stop…Haven't you ever heard of that? Asian chicks are the last stop. If a guy's in the closet, he goes for an Asian because their bodies are more like boys" (184). This suspicion of being "the last stop" merges race and sexuality by generalizing the anatomy of all Asian women and using stereotype to account for queer attraction. Julie questions Cal's sexuality by virtue of her own racial background that ostensibly renders her unfeminine and "boyish." Here, the novel flirts with a queer narrative by

suggesting that Cal's attraction to Julie stems from a possible latent homosexuality, or also by implying that perhaps Julie *is* Cal's last stop before outing himself.

The novel, however, does not continue in this trajectory but instead concludes neatly with a heterosexual love scene. In the moment immediately preceding their sexual consummation, Cal finally tells Julie about his intersexuality, something he has not been able to tell any woman he has dated. Julie accepts it, but jokingly claims that it is in the same category as being "the last stop." Cal responds defensively, stating, "What I told you about myself has nothing whatsoever to do with being gay or closeted. I've always liked girls. I liked girls when I *was* a girl" (513). In this scene, Cal "outs" himself to Julie but must still defend his heterosexuality, even going so far as to employ his former queered position as a girl desiring other girls to prove his attraction to women. I am not positing that *Middlesex*, in order to achieve some sort of queer progressiveness, should conclude with Cal becoming a gay character or be left incapable of successful heterosexual relationships. Rather, I think it is interesting that a novel obsessed with sexual dissidence would end with such a staunch defense of compulsory heterosexuality. Gabilondo argues, "In the past, the task of legitimizing hetero-masculinity had been assigned to the national heterosexual woman through the technology of the modern novel."[96] Though Julie is not the typical hyper-feminine heterosexual woman, she occupies the role of ultimately legitimizing Cal's hetero-masculinity. In this way, *Middlesex* concludes with an affirmation of heterosexual norms.

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[96] Gabilondo, 237.

Conclusion

In the midst of the debates surrounding the national and the global as legitimate sites for queer discourse, a recurring question continues to haunt the subtext of these discussions. This question is the question of "home:" will queer subjectivity ever arrive at (or return to?) a place it can call "home?" On a metaphorical level, home has always been imagined as the domain of the nation-state, functioning as the privileged space of citizenship. Beyond issues of political membership, social recognition, and other forms of structural inclusion, home operates as a site of validation, a trope that negotiates the limits of cultural belonging.

Hence, for the queer subject who "belongs" nowhere, home becomes a discourse of perpetual dispossession. As Eng points out, queers not only experience political, social, and cultural marginalization at the hands of structural forces, they are often literally ejected from their homes and into interstitial spaces between identity and difference, self and other: "Suspended between an 'in' and 'out' of the closet – between origin and destination, and between private and public space – queer entitlements to home and a nation-state remain doubtful as well."[97] When bids for acceptance into the national imaginary fail, both the literal and symbolic expulsion from the home – from the nation-state – forces us to consider how we might theorize queer discourse in terms of diasporic formations. This, as I have argued, has often

[97] Eng, 32.

been configured as the global reorganization of queer identity by way of transgressing the sexual norms of the nation-state.

I would like to further this analysis by suggesting the possibility of viewing "home" as a site of belonging that defies spatial and territorial fixity. While I have offered critiques of the paradigm that aligns the heterosexual with the national and the queer with the global, how might we also critique the notion of home as the exclusive domain of the nation-state? Such a theorization can be significant in viewing queer diasporas not as arrivals, but perhaps as origins. Eng argues that despite queer dismissals of it, affiliations to home and anxieties about its loss are still central to queer cultural projects and social agendas (32). As such, to theorize a mobile concept of home might alter the ways in which diasporic arrivals can be understood as a new form of belonging, a new way for queer individuals to finally feel "at home."

Chapter 4:
Team America: The War On Terror And The Return Of Orientalism

"I am confronted with the assumption that because of my name I came from some other country,…that I'm not American or, if I am American, that I'm not as good an American or as true an American or as trustworthy an American… and that's something that…I resent very much."
– Zayed Yasin, Harvard University alumnus

"In the pursuit of our own interests, we have pitted clans against one another, drawn arbitrary borders around multiple cultures and multiple peoples for the exact purpose of being able to manage them better from a colonialist perspective. We've really sown the seeds of the discord and chaos that is taking place… in the Middle East."
– Reza Aslan, interview with Alternet.org.

Introduction

Two months after the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, NPR's "Talk Of The Nation" featured a series of Arab and Islamic scholars and public figures who went on air to discuss what it meant to negotiate being American with an Arab and/or Muslim identity. Dr. Maher Hatout, leader of the Islamic Center Of Southern California, shared a particularly revealing position: "We'd like to be here as full-fledged American citizens, part of the American pluralism…And so we were very keen to say that American Muslim identity is not attached organically to any other country…we deliberately chose America to be home, to join those who have been born in America as Muslims, and we felt that this is an identity of its own."[98] What is interesting about Hatout's statement is that in articulating a discrete American Muslim category, he not only places America at the center of this identification, but

[98] Maher Hatout, "Talk Of The Nation," National Public Radio, radio interview, November 15, 2001.

marks it as the primary signifier – and goal – of identity. For one, Hatout underscores the fact that he *chose* to move to the U.S., a point that stresses both agency and intentionality in constructing America as "home." Secondly, he very explicitly dissociates an American Muslim identity from any other national affiliation. And finally, the very syntax of the phrase "American Muslim" foregrounds an American identification and is a departure from past nominal arrangements of ethnic identity that places minority identification at the fore (among them, the well-known "hyphenated American"). In sum, Hatout's comment reveals not only a strong allegiance to the U.S., but also the weight of the nation-state as a primary referent of self-identification.

In my previous chapters, I argue that the forces of globalization have significantly undermined the role of the nation-state as a primary identifier of citizenship. I demonstrate the ways in which the increased movement of people, goods, and ideas across national borders, coupled with the conglomeration of multi-national bodies of power such as governments and corporations, have rendered nationality more flexible and have impacted both the dispensing and enactment of cultural citizenship in the United States. In my preceding chapters, we have seen how this dynamic has affected issues of identity such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and labor. However, despite this process of denationalization, I would argue that there also exists a competing force of nationalization and homogenization, an opposition that Saskia Sassen refers to as the centrifugal force of the global versus the centripetal force of the national.[99] In this chapter, I focus on the tension between these two

[99] Saskia Sassen (lecture, University Of California, San Diego, February 24, 2005).

forces, paying particular attention to the national and its impact on Arab, South Asian, and Muslim American citizenship after September 11, 2001.

Although the world in the 21st century is increasingly connected by global networks of communication, commerce, transportation, and government, the nation-state is far from being obsolete. America's hyper-patriotic response to the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 demonstrates the persistent potency of the rhetoric of nationalism, a point that is underscored by the fact that the U.S. is the leader in transnational expansion and belongs to the ostensibly more "cosmopolitan" West. This is not to say that post-9/11 patriotism in the U.S. is the *only* contemporary demonstration of nationalistic fervor, but given the scope of my study, the current American situation – particularly in relationship to the country's history of racial pluralism – provides an illuminating example of the ways in which difference is subverted by the forces of national homogenization. More specifically, the experiences of Arab, South Asian, and Muslim Americans after 9/11 tease out the complicated interplay between national and global forces.

In the following, I argue that while the development of an Arab, South Asian, and Muslim American citizenship after 9/11 can be seen as part of the American legacy of racial discrimination and assimilation, its historical situation within the larger context of the cultural and geopolitical framework of globalization registers this moment of acculturation as a shift in the relationship between the nation-state and its (racialized) citizens. I argue that while the experiences of Arab, South Asian, and Muslim Americans after 9/11 demonstrate that nationality is still a potent and viable

point of identification, the impact of globalizing forces nevertheless renders the legibility of identity more ambiguous than ever, marking them as interstitial citizens interpellated by both the national and the global.

In this chapter, I first analyze the rise in nationalism after the 9/11 attacks, focusing on the Bush administration's creation of a crisis state and the subsequent demand for what Steven Salaita terms "imperative patriotism." Secondly, I examine the personal experiences of select Arab, South Asian, and Muslim Americans. Utilizing various genres of cultural representation – anecdotes, interviews, community vigil signs, speeches, clothing, and photographs – I discuss the negotiation of identity after 9/11, a process that includes the exercise of what I call "compulsory patriotism" – the need to defend one's identity by foregrounding a meta-American status. Finally, I focus on the impact of globalization on Middle Eastern geopolitics and the subsequent circulation of a revised form of Orientalism.

American Neo-Nationalism

On the day of the September 11 attacks, Mayor Rudy Guliani and President Bush encouraged Americans to refrain from racial violence and to prevent any sort of active hostility aimed against Arab Americans. This sentiment was echoed by politicians and television journalists in hundreds of news reports across the country. As Steven Salaita observes, "For every racist comment and report of harassment, there were ten stories about 'average' Americans going out of their way to make their Arab

neighbors feel safe and welcome."[100] And in that first week, I personally recall television commercials in which Americans of all genders, all ages, and all ethnicities – including, and especially, Arab Americans – would individually claim and affirm their allegiances by making the statement, "I am an American." This common denominator of being "an American" was further made visible by the ubiquity of the American flag that hung in front of every home and appeared on car stickers and billboards everywhere, a symbol of fixed identity that defied and ultimately trumped any notion of difference.

Despite these displays of national unity, whereby the melting pot was finally indeed melting into a harmonious soup of interethnic altruism, the ensuing months would prove otherwise. Americans engaged in racial violence against people of Arab descent; Arab Americans across the country, or at least those appearing so, were both physically and verbally harassed. In Mesa, Arizona, Indian American Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh, was shot and killed at the gas station that he owned. The same gunman then went to a second gas station where he fired rounds into a cashier's window but failed to kill the clerk inside, a Lebanese American. And in a particularly heinous crime in Queens, New York, a Muslim American man was beaten by a group of ten men. When he saw a police car and ran to it, the police officer laughed and drove away, leaving the man to his assailants who returned. Meanwhile, legislatively, Congress passed the Patriot Act that legalized racial profiling and silenced civil liberties. And globally, the wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq continue to alienate

[100] Steven Salaita, "Ethnic Identity And Imperative Patriotism: Arab Americans Before And After 9/11," *College Literature* 32, no. 2 (2005): 151.

Arab Americans and polarize the American polity as well as the international community.

But these responses are not shocking. The U.S. has had a long history of antagonism against ethnic Others, an antagonism rooted in nativist tendencies and xenophobic fears. This is evident in the various moments of anti-immigrant backlash in the U.S. as a response to the different waves of immigration, and especially in the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. And like the attack on Pearl Harbor, the destruction of the World Trade Center has enabled the manufacture of a national consensus that has granted what seems to be unlimited power to the presidential regime. In particular, Bush's use of the phrase "patriotic Arab Americans" the day after the attacks is very telling of this history. His very need to qualify Arab Americans as "patriotic" both evokes the American legacy of questioning the loyalties of its citizens, namely its immigrant citizens, as well as suggests the imminent difficulty that lay ahead in discerning the "good" and "patriotic" Arab Americans from the "bad" and "disloyal" terrorists. A week after the attacks, Bush reiterated this distinction he had made; in a speech to a Joint Session of Congress, he issued the call, "either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."[101] Although he was speaking of other nations, Bush's ultimatum could very well have applied to the many dissenters living within the U.S.; such polar demands leave little room for intermediary discussions or positions.

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[101] George W. Bush, "Address To A Joint Session Of Congress And The American People," (Washington D.C., September 20, 2001) http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html.

This requirement to squelch opposition has been masked under the discourse of patriotism, or what Salaita terms "imperative patriotism:" "Imperative patriotism assumes (or demands) that dissent in matters of governance and foreign affairs is unpatriotic and therefore unsavory."[102] Under this rubric, opinions that run counter to the meta-narrative of the War On Terror are rendered "subversive" or "unpatriotic," positions that are antithetical to the national homogeneity – and hegemony – of manufactured consensus. But beyond being mere trend, imperative patriotism achieves overwhelming popularity by circulating in the language of morality. As Barbara Franz argues, "The media created an ideological apparatus perpetuating the dominance of this grammar of morality – that it is one's ethical duty to support one's country against terrorist elements that threaten the American way of life…The…surge of popular patriotism provided the Bush administration with the insurance of moral infallibility."[103] By casting patriotism as a moral imperative, one's (op)position on government policy, both domestic and foreign, is no longer just an issue of partisan politics, but a matter of national survival and personal ethical responsibility. Indeed, by representing the war in Iraq as a "war for civilization" or claiming that "God is on America's side," Bush recycles the colonist rhetoric of Manifest Destiny rooted in an American morality.

Inevitably, this culture of imperative patriotism has had dire effects on American citizenship. To return to Bush's use of the phrase "patriotic Arab

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[102] Salaita, 154.
[103] Barbara Franz, "American Patriotism And Nativist Fears After September 11: A Historical Perspective," *AWR Bulletin: Quarterly On Refugee Problems* 1-2 (2003): 7.

Americans," this marker of identity suggests that, at least at the level of public discourse and political correctness, we have learned our lesson from making accusations of national disloyalty based on ethnic descent. However, it also suggests that there are still *un*patriotic Arab Americans on the loose, potential terrorists and fifth columnists in our midst who are planning the next attack, the next sabotage. The day after the attacks, Bush stated that, "This enemy hides in shadows and has no regard for human life. This is an enemy who preys on innocent and unsuspecting people, then runs for cover, but it won't be able to run for cover forever."[104] So while the lines have been drawn (either you are with us or against us), the War On Terror is also characterized by a certain ambiguity, an ambiguity about just who the enemy is. On the frontlines in Iraq, this has taken the form of an obdurate insurgency. Within the U.S., the enemy lurks as a slippery, shape-shifting shadow that is at once everywhere and nowhere (but who nonetheless fits an Arab profile). And the Bush administration has been quick in capitalizing on this ambiguity and using it to its advantage. Because of the difficulty in determining the patriotic-ness of the average American (your Arab neighbor very well could be plotting the next suicide attack), this haziness has enabled the current executive regime to heighten what Walter Benjamin calls the "state of emergency."[105] In this instance, mass panic, paranoia, and urgency are mobilized as mechanisms of social control that cast the current regime as the only authority capable of saving the country from violence, hunger, disease, or any

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[104] Quoted in Henry Jenkins, "Shadows," *re:Constructions*, September 16, 2001, http://web.mit.edu/cms/reconstructions/definitions/shadows.html.
[105] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1968), 257.

form of danger, imminent or projected. Giorgio Agamben underscores this point when he writes, "Power no longer has today any form of legitimation other than emergency, and because power everywhere and continuously refers and appeals to emergency as well as labouring secretly to produce it."[106]

The months and years following the traumatizing events of September 11 have demonstrated that the Bush administration has indeed been successful in the production of a crisis state, resulting in a disproportionate distribution of power between government authority and a targeted group of discrete minorities. As Franz points out, "[The state of emergency] is what legitimizes national authority and state power. It is also what legitimizes the legislation providing the president with broad new powers…The current crisis…reinscribes the notion of difference in the national community, personified in Middle Eastern immigrants and refugees."[107] From the Patriot Act, to the war in Iraq, to the holding facilities in GTMO, the extension of executive power has consolidated itself around the rhetoric of morality and has gained momentum through a culture of fear; for Arab, South Asian, and Muslim Americans, this has meant harassment, a loss of civil liberties, and social and cultural exclusions. Their plight in the post-9/11 world is illustrative of the contradictory narrative that celebrates "patriotic Arab Americans" under the discourse of national unity, at the same time that it attacks and alienates that very difference as the source of national dissent and subversion.

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[106] Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End: Notes on Politics*, Trans.Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 6.
[107] Franz, 12.

As Salaita argues, "To various degrees, [Arab Americans'] positioning in the United States has been highly complex for some time, but 9/11 exacerbated the complexities by simultaneously endowing the community with sympathetic gestures and amplifying xenophobic outpourings of imperative patriotism."[108] At a peace march in Brooklyn just days after the attacks, Moustafa Bayoumi observed that many people were wearing stickers that read "We Support Our Arab Neighbors." Bayoumi powerfully notes, "Has it really come to this?…Is our existence so precarious here? I want to show solidarity with the people wearing the stickers, so how can I possibly explain to them how those stickers scare me?"[109] Though intended to be a show of support, these stickers also signal the imminently dangerous climate that necessitates their distribution. Increasingly, these "sympathetic gestures" that Salaita refers to appear to be little more than just that, gestures; legislation such as the Patriot Act and those at the local level seem to be contributing more to the insecurity of Arab Americans than to the security of the nation as a whole. American neo-nationalism, then, emerges as the encryption of coercive state control, unbound executive power, and a growing fear and suspicion of the Arab Other.

Compulsory Patriotism

If America's responses to the attacks on September 11 demonstrate that the nation-state is still a relevant and viable referent in articulating a mode of self-

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[108] Salaita, 156.
[109] Moustafa Bayoumi, "How Does It Feel To Be A Problem?," *Amerasia Journal Double Issue* 27, no. 3 (2001)/28, no. 1 (2002): 70.

identification, the experiences of Arab Americans (or Muslims and South Asians) reveal that exclusions from participation in political, social, and cultural citizenship are elements that are almost always attendant to efforts at national homogenization. As such, the acts of violence, harassment, and discrimination against Arab Americans in the aftermath of the attacks expose the contradictions of the neo-liberal state and bring to light the complex position of Arab American citizenship in a post-September 11 world. Theirs is one caught between both a surge in American nationalism, and the tenuous geopolitics galvanizing in the Middle East; therefore, their role and identity as American citizens are increasingly complicated by both national and global forces.

While the War On Terror overseas is slowed down by the difficulty in ascribing hostility to a particular national government and containing the "enemy" within geographic borders (i.e. insurgency, sectarian violence, and international terrorist organizations), this ambiguity is reflected domestically in the nexus of political, social, and cultural policies and practices to weed out the "unpatriotic" Arabs, as well as the efforts to defend one's identity from accusations of terrorism or "unpatriotism." This tension manifests itself in a crisis of identity, both for those who advocate terrorist witch hunts and those who feel compelled to repeatedly prove their patriotism; in the following, I will focus on instances of the latter.

The anti-Arab backlash after September 11 has had a particularly strong impact on the Muslim American community. As a Pakistani woman in Queens, New York observed, other Pakistani women pre-empted harassment on the streets by wearing western clothing instead of their traditional *kurta shalwars*; these precautions were

taken even before the wave of anti-Muslim violence began. Meanwhile, Islamic organizations discussed strategies for stemming the harassments once they started. Rameen, a volunteer at the Islamic Center of Westbury noted the cultural-religious modifications: "If women feel uncomfortable about shedding their *hijabs* they can change the way they cover their heads; they can wear hats or scarves tied at the back instead."[110] In a different instance, another Pakistani woman rushed out to the grocery store to stock up on groceries immediately after watching the planes crash into the towers on television, ensuring that her family would not have to leave the house later. Additionally, she displayed an American flag outside of her house as a final safeguard, despite the fact that her neighborhood was calm and showed no signs of hostility.

In these examples, one could argue that these instances represent an over-display of patriotism – whether it be putting the flag outside of one's home or wearing western clothing, both are part of the same impulse to blend in, to prove that one is just as American as the next person. However, I would also add that these are also instances of what I call "compulsory patriotism," the need – or even the demand – to prove one's Americanness at the expense of one's customary ethnic-religious identifications. The women mentioned in the above examples do not necessarily disavow being Muslim (or Arab), but they must mitigate their identification as such (*hijabs* transform into truncated western scarves) so as to foreground their identity as an American. This is similar to the television commercials that I had alluded to

[110] Quoted in Syeda Sara Abbas, "A Continuing Nightmare," *Newsline*, October 2001, http://www.newsline.com.pk/NewsOct2001/cover7.htm.

previously, where the proclamations of "I am an American" trump the very visible and obvious diversity of the individuals making that claim.

Perhaps the most ironic example of this "defense of identity" is the experience of the Sikh community after September 11. Sikhs across the country suffered harassment, violence, and even death in the wake of the anti-Arab and anti-Muslim hostilities. The irony stems from the fact that Sikhs are neither Arab nor Muslim. They are a religious community originating from the Punjab region in northern India. With roots reaching as far back as the 16th century, Sikhism today boasts 20 million followers and is the world's fifth largest religion.[111] Nevertheless, because Sikhs wear turbans and grow out their beards, they strongly resemble Arabs in the East, and are therefore subject to the same antagonisms as Arab and Muslim Americans.

Following the attacks on the World Trade Center, Sikhs in New York held a candlelight vigil in Central Park on September 15, 2001 to mourn the thousands killed (see Figure 1). The gathering was typical in its hyper-display of American paraphernalia, but what is interesting are the speeches that were made and the various messages painted on signs. One leader announced over a PA system, "It would be easy to say we're not Muslim, but this isn't about what we're not. It's about what we are. We're Americans."[112] And Dimple Kaur, a young Sikh who passed out educational pamphlets about Sikhism, made the statement, "We want to focus on people who have been injured and who've lost loved ones. We don't want to focus on

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[111] Neela Banerjee and Adrian Leung, "South Asians Face Violent Backlash After WTC Attacks," *AsianWeek*, September 21, 2001, http://www.asianweek.com/2001_09_21/news_backlash.html.
[112] Ibid.

Sikh candlelight vigil in Central Park on September 15, 2001.

Figure 1

Sikh wearing American flag. Photo by Corky Lee © Corky Lee, 2001.

Figure 2

us. People shouldn't focus on us."[113] The covers of Kaur's pamphlets were emblazoned with the words "We Love America." Meanwhile, others held signs with messages such as "Sikhs Condemn Terrorism" and "Sikhs support America."[114]

For a gathering that was about what its attendants were ("It's about what we are."), there also existed a simultaneous directive to *not* fixate on them ("People shouldn't focus on us."). Although open to the public, the candlelight vigil was organized and attended largely by Sikhs in the community, so to make the claim that their own identities should be peripheralized seems somewhat ironic given the concentration of Sikhs at the event. But perhaps the convergence of mixed meanings is not so contradictory after all; both the assertion and deflection of identity created the effect – whether intended or not – of drawing attention to their Sikhism, but it is an attention meant to subvert that very identity. The statements made by Kaur and the leader over the PA system are seemingly conflicting, but both reveal the same underlying intention of foregrounding their Americanism before their Sikhism. The message behind their comments, then, can be clarified with some modifications: it's about what we are *as Americans*, and people shouldn't focus on us *as Sikhs*.

This compulsory patriotism on display at the vigil is perhaps best represented (and popularized) by a photograph taken by Corky Lee. In this photo, a heavily-bearded Sikh man is wearing a red turban and stands with his hands clasped before him (see Figure 2). He has wrapped an American flag around his shoulders such that arm movement would be constrained; the flag is secured around his body by the post

[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid

of another, smaller American flag. In terms of identificatory apparel, the use of the American flag in this image is strikingly juxtaposed with the turban on his head; but given the manner in which the flag wraps around his body so as to be constricting – engulfing almost – this attire selection nonetheless suggests that his ethnic-religious identification is only secondary to his national allegiance to the U.S. Hence, to prove his patriotism, the Sikh man is compelled to overwrite his own Sikhism and must literally enshroud himself in Americanness.

An American Jihad

Indeed, if one can transform the American flag into an article of clothing, into a garment of defense that backgrounds his ethnic identity for an American one, then perhaps the ultimate apparel that one can don as a symbol of patriotism is a military uniform. Within the U.S. armed forces, an estimated 3500 Arab Americans serve, less than 1% of the total 2.6 million in the military.[115] But for these Arab Americans, theirs is a double bind, as many of them have experienced suspicion and hostility from both fellow Arab Americans, as well as from the outside community at large. During the first week of the September 11 attacks, Gunnery Sgt. Jamal Baadani, who was born in Egypt and served twelve years active duty and three years in the Reserve with the Marines, established the Association For Patriotic Arab Americans (APAA) as a means of raising awareness about Arab Americans in the armed forces, in addition to

[115] Kamal Nawash, "Don't Ask Me To Take Off The Uniform," *Parade Magazine*, April 23, 2005, Free Muslims Coalition, http://www.freemuslims.org/news/article.php?article=597.

celebrating a long history of military service that dates back to the American Revolution, with as many as 12,000 Arab Americans serving during World War II.[116]

Spurned by members of their community as traitors who kill their own kind, and suspected of disloyalty by other Americans, Arab Americans in the military are forced to navigate a tenuous citizenship. For Baadani, this tension is evident when he says, "We have to keep proving our patriotism,"[117] at the same time that he complains, "We have to defend ourselves to our own community. We have to explain why we're proud of serving."[118] Both comments register dual processes of a "defense of identity," one that must continually prove patriotic integration into the national body, and another that must explain and justify that assimilation. Nonetheless, Baadani is adamant about his position: "My family was given a home in America. I joined the military to thank America. There are parts of Middle East policy that I disagree with. But just because you're angry over policies, don't ask me to take off the uniform."[119] Here, he expresses an interesting relationship with the nation-state, one that is contingent on an understanding of citizenship built on service and retribution. America has given, so now he must serve. For Baadani, demonstrations of gratitude override his personal opinions on U.S. foreign policy (and becomes almost a blind acceptance and enactment of those policies), and despite the geopolitics in the Middle East that have increasingly interpellated him as a soldier overseas and complicated his

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[116] Jennifer Brooks, "Arab Americans in military juggle patriotism, suspicion," *The Detroit News*, December 15, 2004, http://www.patrioticapaam.org/DetroitNews1204.htm.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Nawash.
[119] Ibid.

citizenship at home, Baadani has chosen his primary point of identification: don't ask him to take off the uniform.

In fact, Baadani's founding of APAA originates in this refusal to take off his uniform. After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, Baadani's uncle began to receive negative reactions from his co-workers; many of the people whom he had worked with for decades started to avoid him. His uncle begged Baadani to send a picture of himself in uniform to prove that his nephew was a Marine; the military uniform therefore functioned as a shield that attempted to validate his uncle's status as an American, a gesture not unlike wrapping one's torso in an American flag. For Baadani, though, this allegiance is paramount, a point he underscores in the face of criticism from the Arab American community for being in the military, and for fighting on Arab land in particular: "[They] need to understand that we have a duty and an obligation to serve…They also have to understand the difference between policy and duty."[120] Again, he reiterates a position that divorces the idea of foreign policy from notions of duty to nation. In fact, policy is almost irrelevant since Baadani has made it clear that despite his own individual dissension, commitment to serve one's country will inexorably trump the government's war decisions. Baadani espouses a communitarian, anti-libertarian position that views citizenship as a prioritization of social responsibility and institutions over individual rights. It is also interesting that Baadani frames service in terms of "obligation," recasting the

[120] Brooks.

immigrant's status in the U.S. as one of indebtedness, without regard to the larger geopolitical conditions that have interpellated the immigrant as such.

While Baadani has declared his unqualified allegiance to the nation-state as the ultimate referent of his identity, the experience of Zayed Yasin expresses a more complicated relationship with his citizenship in a post-9/11 world. Yasin, a Muslim American, was one of three graduating seniors who spoke at Harvard University's commencement ceremony on June 6, 2002. But even before he spoke, Yasin incited controversy when the title of his speech, "American Jihad," was published in *The Harvard Crimson* in the lineup of speakers. Immediately, students protested, circulating a petition to have his speech withdrawn, or demanding that he explicitly condemn *jihad* and suicide bombers. Yasin himself received hundreds of hate e-mails, a death threat, and was accused of sympathizing with terrorists and supporting the Holy Land Foundation, an organization with ties to Hamas. The campus controversy eventually gained national media attention and under extreme pressure from his detractors, including part of the university's administration, Yasin changed the title of his speech to "Of Faith And Citizenship: My American Jihad," though he did not change its content.

On the day of commencement, students protested Yasin's speech by wearing red, white, and blue ribbons. Citing this as a "dishonest abuse of patriotism," Yasin pinned one of the ribbons onto his own graduation gown, bothered by the implication

that he was un-American.[121] He began his speech by posing questions to the problem of identity that confronts Arab and Muslim Americans after 9/11:

> I am one of you. But I am also one of "them." What do I mean? When I am told that this is a world at war, a war between the great civilizations and religions of the earth, I don't know whether to laugh or cry. "What about me?" I ask. As a practicing Muslim and a registered voter in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, am I, through the combination of my faith and citizenship, an inherent contradiction?[122]

With echoes of Samuel Huntington's reductive model of the "clash of civilizations," he presents his dilemma as an ostensibly dichotomous one, where the West collides disastrously with the East, and religion and citizenship are incommensurate entities. Asking how to situate himself between these two binaries of being both a Muslim and an American, Yasin answers his own question: "Both the Qu'ran and the Constitution teach ideals of peace, justice, and compassion, ideals that command my love, and my belief. Each of these texts, one the heart of my religion, the other that of my country, demand a constant struggle to do what is right."[123] He goes on to define this "struggle" in terms of *jihad*:

> I choose the word "struggle" very deliberately…Jihad, in its truest form…is the determination to do right, to do justice even against your own interests. It is an individual struggle for personal moral behavior…The true American Dream is a universal dream, and it is more than a set of materialistic

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[121] Quoted in Mucahit Bilici, "'American Jihad:' Representations Of Islam In The United States After 9/11," University Of Michigan, http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&lr=&q=cache:35XHm4XrhG4J:sitemaker.umich.edu/mbilici/files/bilici-new-pdf.pdf (accessed July 16, 2006).
[122] Zayed Yasin, "Of Faith And Citizenship: My American Jihad," (speech, Harvard University, Boston, June 6, 2002).
[123] Ibid.

> aspirations. It is the power and opportunity to shape one's own life: to house and feed a family with security and dignity, and to practice your faith in peace. This is our American Jihad.[124]

The efficacy of Yasin's speech stems first from his affirmation of the compatibility between his "faith and citizenship," a reconciliation that not only dismantles their binary positioning, but also renders them a harmony of values. More importantly, as Mucahit Bilici points out, Yasin re-appropriates the word *jihad*, and redeploys it in the context of the American Dream, thereby linking both principles as universal concepts.[125] Against forces that attempted to "other" him, Yasin aligns both *jihad* and the American Dream under the rubric of a common humanity.

America's Next Top Minority

I now shift my focus to a discussion of the inter-ethnic responses to Arab and Muslim Americans after September 11, and how to situate this particular citizenship in the history of acculturation and racial formation in the U.S. Both Baadani and Yasin's experiences of negotiating the competing forces of American pluralism and a dominant homogenizing national culture is not a new occurrence in the history of U.S. racialization. As early as 1897, W.E.B. duBois commented on this "twoness:" "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of…measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-

[124] Ibid.
[125] Bilici.

ness, – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings."[126] Since then, this notion of a "double-consciousness" has evolved into a more complicated study of critical race theory, with the "minority rights revolution"[127] of the 1960s and 1970s exploding this evolution onto the national scene in the form of political discussions, scholarly debates, and cultural productions.

This struggle to understand an American identity, an American citizenship, has been raging for years, but perhaps what is most sobering is the realization that for as long as this struggle has been going on, the U.S. has exercised policies and practices of racial denigration rooted in xenophobia and nativist fears. Both within and outside of academic circles, many drew parallels between Pearl Harbor and the attacks on the World Trade Center, speculating on whether or not Arab Americans would be interned the way Japanese Americans had been during World War II. Discrimination against Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians after 9/11 reminds us of this history – a history of discriminatory U.S. immigration policy, racial profiling, exclusion from citizenship and belonging, and an overall framework of racial subordination. In fact, this discrimination is the condition on which immigrants and ethnic minorities are inaugurated into the American community of citizenship. Toni Morrison has famously argued that the immigrant in the U.S. is not fully American until s/he has learned and exercised racism against African Americans; this, according to Morrison,

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[126] W.E.B. DuBois, "The 'Veil' Of Self-Consciousness," *The Atlantic Monthly* (March 2006): 55.
[127] John Skrentny, *The Minority Rights Revolution* (Boston: Belknap Press, 2004).

is inherent to being and becoming American.[128] Muneer Ahmad has taken this argument one step further and, taking into account the influx of Asian and Latino immigration after 1965, adds that immigrants become Americans when they are racialized as subordinate as well; in this way, Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians have become more American after 9/11, having participated in the initiation ceremony into the community of ethnic American citizenship.[129]

Both Morrison and Ahmad's observations ring eerily true. The response to 9/11 from other ethnic minorities has been mixed; while organizations such as the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) has rallied to raise awareness about civil rights and prevent anti-Arab violence, often times experiencing harassment themselves, there has also been an equal impulse to condone the post-9/11 racial profiling taking place. In a *New York Times* article entitled "Americans Give In To Racial Profiling," a black man and a Latino man were interviewed and both approved of racial profiling in this instance, despite admitting that they have been victims of it themselves. The tactic is simple: the two communities most affected by racial profiling were deployed to defend it; racial profiling is somehow no longer racist if we have the blessing of the black and Latino communities. What these examples demonstrate is that citizenship is predicated on a precarious racial hierarchy, such that minority groups feel compelled to subordinate another group in order to ensure their own advancement: "The felt inadequacy, incompleteness, and

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[128] Toni Morrison, "On The Backs Of Blacks," *Arguing Immigration: The Debate Over The Changing Face Of America*, Ed. Nicolaus Mills (New York: Touchstone, 1994), 97-100.
[129] Muneer Ahmad, "Homeland Insecurities: Racial Violence The Day After September 11," *Social Text* 20, no. 3 (2002): 101-115.

dispossession created by white supremacy is mitigated through the rendering of others still more inadequate, incomplete, and dispossessed."[130] As Ahmad argues, this becomes a sophisticated form of dividing and conquering – Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians did not address racial profiling when blacks and Latinos were targeted and now blacks and Latinos are abandoning Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians. Jockeying for position – for their place on the racial ladder – minorities must "other" more others so as to elevate their own sense of belonging to the nation-state; all the while, this pushing and shoving among minorities serves only to affirm a "White super-citizen status"[131] while dissolving possibilities for inter-ethnic coalition-building.

Orientalism Re-dux: Globalization And The War On Terror

In an article on racial triangulation, Claire Jean Kim argues that although minority groups in the U.S. have been racialized in relationship to one another, their processes of racialization nonetheless play out differently for each group.[132] For example, Asians were excluded from citizenship and immigration, Native Americans faced genocide, Mexicans were colonized, and blacks endured slavery. Given Morrison and Ahmad's formulations of inter-ethnic relations, Arab, South Asian, and Muslim Americans find a place in this national legacy of discrimination, and thus the struggle to claim an Arab or Muslim American identity – for individuals such as

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[130] Ibid., 106.
[131] Ibid., 106.
[132] Claire Jean Kim, "The Racial Triangulation Of Asian Americans," *Politics And Society* 27, no. 1 (March 1999): 105-138.

Baadani or Yasin – follows a social trajectory that is typical of acculturation in America. However, I would contend that the current phase of the racialization of Arab Americans is unique in that globalization has arguably had the greatest impact on this category of minorities, particularly Muslim Americans. For one, globalization has played a prominent role in the changing relationship between the United States and Arab and Muslim communities in the Middle East, especially in the Western perception of Islam, a point I will return to shortly. Secondly, the attacks on September 11, in many ways a product of globalizing forces, has resulted in the War On Terror which has had subsequently dire effects on Arab and Muslim American citizenship; the difficulty in attempting to outline the contours of this citizenship – either by Arab and Muslim Americans or Homeland Security – reflects the ambiguity of identity that typifies the cultural dynamics of globalization.

While the relationship between the West and Islam has changed significantly in the past few decades, it has by and large been characterized by an Orientalist impulse. In 1979, Edward Said popularized this concept when he wrote, "Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point, Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."[133] This ideological strategy for European colonialism and domination over Muslim societies during the

[133] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1978), 3.

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries created the binary oppositions of the West versus the East, the Occident versus the Orient, Christianity versus Islam; in short, the framework for Huntington's clash of civilizations. This opposition, however, always framed the West as the primary signifier of meaning, and the East as the empty "other," who lacked any signification except for the ones that the West infused it with. Hence, for decades, the Christian West continued to levy its imperial gaze on the Muslim East.

With the increasingly rapid development of globalization, however, the landscape of this Manichean struggle has likewise changed, both literally and ideologically. As Bilici argues, resistance to Western modernization during the post-colonial era in the Middle East often took the form of either secular or Muslim nationalism, with nation-states solidifying insular communities based on local ethnic, linguistic, and religious identifications.[134] However, globalization's increase of transnational flows of people, goods, and ideas has undermined the ability of the nation-state to control the cultural developments taking place across its borders, among them the de-nationalization of the Muslim community as a result of increased contact with non-Muslims and Muslims from other countries. Islam – as a religion, a people, and a cultural phenomenon – is now mobile and has taken on a more migratory characteristic. What this means, then, is that there is also a significant rise in the number of Muslim communities within Europe and the United States, and hence, "'covering Islam' is no longer an issue of covering 'others' in the Middle East.

[134] Bilici.

The question of representing Islam needs to be rethought in light of the Muslim presence in American society."[135]

Given this transformation of the Muslim community by globalizing forces, Orientalism returns, but not without its revisions. With the rise of diasporic Muslim communities in Euro-America, traditional Orientalism cannot rely anymore on the West's spatial distance from the East. Hence, since Islam is no longer an external phenomenon that exists "over there," the Manichean struggle between East and West must geographically and ideologically take place on an internal level: "If the language of classical Orientalism was *crusade*, the language of neo-Orientalism is one that battles the soul of Islam."[136] In other words, the West cannot dominate Islam any longer through mere exclusion and territorial invasion, as accomplished vis-à-vis colonialism and campaigns such as the Crusades. Instead, the goals of neo-Orientalism are to infiltrate and redefine Islam, making distinctions between "good" and "bad" Muslims, as opposed to dichotomies of the "West" and the "East;" the battle between good and evil still wages, but the characters have changed.

Neo-Orientalist discourse has gained wide circulation in the media as well as in academic circles, particularly in the days following the September 11 attacks. As I discussed in the beginning of this chapter, President Bush has been careful to differentiate "good" and "patriotic" Arab American citizens from "bad" and "disloyal" terrorists. He also espouses a neo-Orientalist rhetoric when he issues the ultimatum that "either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists." Moreover, there has been a

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[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.

rise in what Bilici refers to as "alarmist literature," literature that demonizes Muslims and perpetuates "Islamophobia."[137] Furthermore, within the realm of academia, there have been attacks on Middle Eastern studies in universities across the country and movements to have this area of study subsumed under "safer" disciplines such as American foreign policy. Bolstered by the tragedies of 9/11, these invective representations of Islam fly low enough below radar to not be picked up as discriminatory or racist. After all, it is not all Arab and Muslim Americans who are being condemned, just the "evil" ones. What this means for Arab and Muslim American citizenship is that although the racial markers that have traditionally enabled the legibility of "the enemy" are now blurred, this ambiguity only serves to depict the threat as more sinister, and the need for state control even greater. Given the creation of this national crisis state, there is the simultaneous fervor to reclaim an Arab and/or Muslim American identity in the face of imperative patriotism on the one hand, and on the other, the impulse to foreground the primacy of an exclusively American identity.

In many ways, this need to discern one type of Muslim from another represents the crisis of identity that has come to characterize the cultural politics of globalization. The impulse to make distinctions according to race, nationality, ethnicity, etc. has existed for centuries, but the increased transnational movement of people, ideas, and goods, coupled with the undermining of national borders and institutions as a result of globalization, has complicated the task of delimiting these categories. When U.S. troops launched its first attacks on Afghanistan after 9/11, many commented on how

[137] Ibid.

this war – and the subsequent war in Iraq – was being fought not among nations but against groups that function outside of national borders. Unable to hold state governments responsible for 9/11 or contain terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda or the Taliban within territorial boundaries, the nature of the War On Terror – both overseas and at home – reflects the denationality of globalization and its subsequent impact on the (in)discernability of identity.

Conclusion

In the years following the World Trade Center attacks, critics have commented on the parallels that can be drawn between "12/7 and 9/11," even characterizing the current historical moment as "Pearl Harbor revisited."[138] This exercise in the "relational nature of categories" – the way in which "the same practices, policies, and discourses directed at one group can also be used with another group"[139] – points to the tenuous state of minority citizenship in the U.S., particularly in instances of national crisis. Just as the attack on Pearl Harbor prompted the internment of Japanese Americans on the west coast, so have the World Trade Center attacks resulted in the targeted harassment, death, and detention of thousands of Arab, South Asian, and Muslim Americans. Of course, although we can make these parallels, the experience of Arab Americans today is vastly different from that of Japanese Americans during World War II. Though incriminations based on appearance, ideas, or affiliation have

[138] Frank Chin, "Pearl Harbor Revisited," *Amerasia Journal Double Issue* 27, no. 3 (2001)/28, no. 1 (2002): 63-67.
[139] Natalia Molina (lecture, University Of California, San Diego, September 27, 2006).

taken place, it is unlikely that the government can effectively round up the seven or eight million Arabs living within the country and place them in concentration camps, largely due to demographic distribution and the sheer political incorrectness that our national memory reminds us of. If anything, this new wave of national surveillance operates less overtly and resembles more the witch hunts of McCarthyism, with organizations such as Campus Watch establishing "blacklists" in the academic community and acting as the infallible evaluator of who is "with us" and who is "against us." In many ways, this subtlety is equally dangerous, if not more so, precisely because it plays on fears of an enemy with no contours. As Henry Jenkins pointed out just days after the World Trade Center attacks, "In a context where the enemy is a specter, a ghost, a shadow, it is very easy to imagine enemies where they do not exist and especially easy to direct those suspicions towards strangers in our midst, people who come from other cultures, who have other values."[140] This metaphor of a shadow is an apt one, for it suggests the fear of something that is both part of the self, but still separate from it; part of the national body, but still excluded from it. Furthermore, shadows are difficult to define and apprehend, which makes their threat all the more sinister.

Informed by a history of Western Orientalism, the current administration has capitalized on this ambiguity to expand executive power and to levy a new, postmodern and neo-imperial war on the Middle East, for reasons that are equally ambiguous. Moreover, what we are witnessing domestically is a revisionist recycling

[140] Jenkins.

of the same rhetoric and practice of racial otherization, demonization, and exclusion, thereby ushering in a new phase of racialization in the U.S. – one that repackages old forms of discrimination to re-inject into a new generation, and one that manipulates the blurred legibility of identity. In 1941, *Life Magazine* advertised images that distinguished "Japs" from the Chinese; today, while individuals of Arab descent are primarily targeted, those same distinctions are smudged so that everyone may be suspect. Ultimately, what this demonstrates is not only the decline of civil liberties in the U.S., but their very fragility in the context of an ostensibly free and democratic country. We must be vigilant about updated forms of racism that mask themselves as serving the interest of national security and additionally, promote ways of understanding difference that do not erode personal freedoms. In the midst of the centripetal force of the national and the centrifugal force of the global, a citizenship of fundamental liberties is at stake in this balance.

Conclusion:
Towards Universal Personhood And A Theory Of Human Rights

"The conception of human rights…broke down at the very moment
when those who professed to believe in it were for the first time
confronted with people who had indeed lost all other qualities
and specific relationships – except that they were still human.
The world found nothing sacred in the abstract nakedness of being human."
– Hannah Arendt, *The Origins Of Totalitarianism*

"Mister, he looked so…free. Better than me…Mister was allowed
to be and stay what he was. But I wasn't allowed to be and
stay what I was…I was something else and that something
was less than a chicken sitting in the sun on the tub."
– Paul D from Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

In sum, my project provides an analysis of citizenship that problematizes its entrenchment in nationalist narratives of identity by situating it in the contemporary global moment. Through an examination of the ways in which citizenship is produced, disciplined, contested, and articulated within the cultural realm of the U.S. imaginary, I demonstrate how competing forces construct the interstitial citizen who is marked by both national consolidation and global re-organization. Though increased globality continues to threaten the nation-state as it polices the boundaries of citizenship and belonging, the intersection of these two trajectories reveals the persistence of nationalist discourses against global challenges from without. I situate contemporary citizenship at the interstices of this tension.

In place of a conclusion that would reiterate the specificities of my chapters, I would like to redirect my concluding remarks towards the implications of this project as a launching pad for ways to critique, expand, and theorize formulations of citizenship for future research. In particular, I want to focus on the notion of

"universal personhood" in the context of the human rights regime. Undoubtedly, the literature on human rights is vast; its tenets continue to be contested in national and international venues, and the reach of rights discourse has extended into fields as diverse as politics, sociology, cultural studies, philosophy, law, and history. Because of this expansiveness, I will confine my study to a more theoretical discussion of human rights as it troubles the relationship between the individual and the state, specifically "the perplexities of the rights of man" as outlined by Hannah Arendt.

If the encroachment of globalizing dynamics presents an alteration in – or as some would argue, the dissolution of – the role of the nation-state, does this shift signify a move towards global citizenship? As I discussed briefly in my introduction chapter, it is unlikely that a loosely conceived idea of a global citizen will become the meta-referent of citizenship despite the increase in globality, at least not anytime soon. This is due in large part to the potency of the particularities of identity – including nationality – that trump a pan- or supra-national identification. Moreover, on a logistical level, although the United Nations exists as a multinational entity, there is no real overriding global structure that is capable of supplanting individual state governments. Hence, the notion of a "citizen of the world" remains an abstract conception and the unfeasibility of global citizenship is distilled in Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort's claim that globality is not necessarily an entity that people feel they belong *to*.[141]

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[141] Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort, "Introduction," *The Postnational Self: Belonging And Identity* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 2002), vii-xxxii.

Nonetheless, absent of a structure of "world government," does the logic of personhood, as Yasemin Soysal argues, still supersede the logic of the nation?[142] In other words, is it possible, on a conceptual level, to formulate a model of "universal personhood" that extends beyond national boundaries? In many ways, the human rights regime has attempted to create this sort of framework, the idea of an abstract individual whose very existence immediately endows her with a set of inalienable rights. In the spirit of comparable documents such as the Declaration Of The Rights Of Man And Of The Citizen, the U.N.'s Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (UDHR) has become the basis for establishing and enforcing international human rights law since its ratification by the General Assembly in 1948.

However, the problem with the idea of human rights or the "rights of man" is that these rights are always bound to the state. As Jack Donnelly explains, "natural or human rights theorists have always viewed government as an instrument for the protection and greater realization (enjoyment) of human rights; a government is morally legitimate largely to the extent that it protects human rights…the individual and the state form one another through the practice of (human) rights."[143] In other words, state governments function as the guarantor of human rights at the same time that these rights were developed, ironically, to protect the people from state abuse. Hence, a very fundamental yet significant question emerges from this relationship between individual and state: who is the subject of human rights?

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[142] Yasemin Nuhoólu Soysal, *Limits Of Citizenship: Migrants And Postnational Membership In Europe* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1994).
[143] Jack Donnelly, *The Concept Of Human Rights* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1985), 31, 32.

For Arendt, and later Giorgio Agamben, the answer is the national citizen. Both Arendt and Agamben complicate the model of human rights by calling attention to the figure of the refugee: what happens to human rights when people become stateless? Arendt's critique is premised primarily on her study of the millions of displaced peoples in Eastern Europe after the first World War. Citing the inadequacies of the Peace Treaties and Minorities Treaties, she argues that refugees living in the post-war succession states had essentially become "rightless" because they did not belong to any political community that would ensure their rights. Resistant to accepting an imposed nationality and lacking the ability (or desire) to return to their country of origin, these refugees required the intervention of outside institutions (i.e. the League Of Nations) to mediate their status and the rights attendant to it, only to be confronted with the continual failure of that task. Thus, as Arendt posits, "The Rights of Man, after all, had been defined as 'inalienable' because they were supposed to be independent of all governments; but it turned out that the moment human beings lacked their own government and had to fall back upon their minimum rights, no authority was left to protect them and no institution was willing to guarantee them."[144] Stripped of everything – except for the bare fact of being human – these refugees found that in the moment when they were more the embodiment of human rights than any other figure, the rights of man were untenable and utterly inapplicable to the very nakedness of their humanity.

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[144] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins Of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), 291-292.

Similarly, Agamben underscores the inviability of human rights outside of a national community: "[T]here is no autonomous space in the political order of the nation-state for something like the pure human itself…A stable statute for the human in itself is inconceivable in the law of the nation-state."[145] Citing the formal denationalization of Jews and Gypsies before they were exterminated in the concentration camps of the Nazi regime, he marks the fate of the refugee – or the non-citizen – as one that is condemned to death: "When their rights are no longer the rights of the citizen, that is when human beings are truly *sacred*, in the sense that this term used to have in the Roman law of the archaic period: doomed to death" (8). In other words, referencing his own study of *homo sacer* (a point I will return to later), Agamben claims that the individuals who exist outside of the law of the nation-state are also the individuals who are most vulnerable to death, not only because they have no rights to protect them, but because there are no consequences for this lack of protection.

While Arendt emphasizes the deprivation of the refugee's "right to have rights," Agamben complicates her paradox further by focusing on human rights in the context of Carl Schmitt's concept of the "state of exception."[146] According to Schmitt, in any government, only the sovereign can decide on the exception, the moment of stepping outside the rule of law. Moreover, this state of exception is often characterized by violence, as executive authority is free from any legal restrictions. In

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[145] Giorgio Agamben, "Beyond Human Rights," *Cities Without Citizens*, Eds. Eduardo Cadava and Aaron Levy (Philadelphia: Slought Books, 2003), 6-7.
[146] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters On The Concept Of Sovereignty*, Trans. George Schwab (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985).

this state, the powers of the sovereign are unrestrained while the rights of individuals are reduced to what Agamben refers to as "bare life."[147] Agamben parallels the individual in the state of exception with *homo sacer* ("sacred man"), an enigmatic figure of Roman law who is banned into exile outside of the law and can be killed by anyone with impunity, but cannot be sacrificed for religious ritual; in this way, this individual is deemed "sacred." For Agamben, this proved to be contradictory, for the very law that authorizes the sacred man's exclusion is also the law that grants his identity as such.

Thus, in the context of rights discourse, how might an analysis of the state of exception facilitate an understanding of who gets to be considered "human?" In modern times, documents such as the American Declaration Of Independence and the UDHR indicate a set of natural, universal, and inalienable rights that every individual is imbued with at birth. However, during instances of human rights crises – the Holocaust, decolonization movements, genocide, and the status of refugees and stateless nationals – normal state power has been suspended in favor of absolute sovereign authority. As a result, the victims of these crimes against humanity exist external to the law and possess no other quality or property except for their "bare life," the very pure fact of being human. In other words, they live in a state of exception. What this suggests, then, is that human rights, as they have been conceived and practiced, are not necessarily a birthright, but are instead a state right, guaranteeing protection only to citizens who belong to a national community.

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[147] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power And Bare Life*, Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

For Arendt and Agamben, and Edmund Burke who opposed the French Declaration Of The Rights Of Man before either of them, individuals who embody human rights – that is, individuals who exist in the state of exception and have nothing to fall back on except for the minimum fact of being human – find that their very humanity is their greatest danger. For Burke, only savages exist outside of the "civilized" contours of the nation-state, and hence to be only human is to be only savage.[148] Borrowing from Michel Foucault's theory of biopower, Agamben argues that it is in this moment that the individual, stripped of all nationality and civility, is paradoxically external to the law but whose life is subject to the over-investment of power.[149] Without nationality and without a governing body to grant and ensure rights and protections, it is this ideal subject of human rights who is subjected to the most inhuman acts of humanity.

Thus, to return to the original question raised in the beginning of this chapter: is it possible to conceive of a universal personhood beyond national boundaries? On a theoretical level, it is certainly possible, but it is when this abstractness meets concrete reality that the difficulty of realizing a universal set of rights becomes apparent. By Arendt and Agamben's (and Burke's) formulation, the absence of a state structure to guarantee rights signifies the immediate disappearance of rights. Perhaps then, the title of this project, *Citizens Without Borders*, is somewhat of a faulty misnomer, as

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[148] Edmund Burke, *Reflections On The Revolution In France*, Ed. J.G.A. Pocock (Indianapolis: Hacket, 1987).

[149] In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben bifurcates life into two categories: *zoe*, or natural biological life (similar to Arendt's "nakedness of being human"), and *bios*, or political life, form of life. By using Schmitt's state of exception as a point of analysis, Agamben merges sovereign power with Foucault's notion of biopower, the technologies of power that form a biopolitical program to manage biological life.

citizens cannot exist without national borders. As the women of Ciudad Juárez demonstrate, without a clearly delineated sense of nationality, citizenship is rendered vulnerable and ineffective; this, however, does not mean that the state is always the reliable guarantor of rights. I use the title, nonetheless, to signal the growing impact of a more global sensibility. If the cultural politics of globalization continue to alter the role of the nation-state, this may have wider implications for the development of human rights. In the contemporary moment, human rights appear to be more about the "rights of victims,"[150] the rights of the dispossessed. Perhaps we need to rethink this conceptualization of human rights in attempting to achieve the goal of a common citizenship of global humanity.

[150] Jacques Ranciere, "Who Is The Subject Of The Rights Of Man?" *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103, no. 2/3 (2004): 297-310.

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