THE RISE OF FANATICISM AND THE IMPACT ON SOCIETY

By

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B.A. (Hood College) 2018

Portfolio

Submitted in satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

HUMANITIES

in the

GRADUATE SCHOOL

of

HOOD COLLEGE

May 2021

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Introduction

Revolution and progress, genocide and destruction, death and rebirth are spurred by the radical ideas of people, movements, and ideologies. Ferdinand Foch, a French general who served as the Supreme Allied Commander during World War I once remarked that, " the most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire."[1] Fanaticism is the outcome of a human soul on fire through which it can be used to progress society or destroy it. This project will largely focus on how fanaticism negatively impacts individuals and society and how it leads directly to violence, genocide, terrorism, and the destruction of culture and identity. This occurs because the fanatic blindly follows their ideological system and uses it to justify their quest to gain power and a sense of self importance. It also serves as a misguided justification to correct what they deem as past wrongs.

This portfolio raises a number of questions. I ask if there is a specific environment or chain of events that leads to the creation of a fanatic? What does the fanatic hope to achieve? What are the outcomes of fanatical behavior and what effect does it have on society? What causes individuals or society as a whole to support the ideas of a radical leader or group even when it is to their own detriment? The three papers that I will use for my project are "Obedience and Authority*"*, "The Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933 Exposed*"*, and "The Suppression of the Cistercian Monasteries*".*[2] These papers will be used as specific examples to attempt to answer these questions by exploring different environments and periods as well as different leaders and groups throughout history, mostly in the early modern era and modern era. They will also

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[1]Ferdinand Foch, "A Quote by Ferdinand Foch," Goodreads (Goodreads),
https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/32911-the-most-powerful-weapon-on-earth-is-the-human-soul.
[2] "Obedience and Authority" was written in 2018 for PHLR 501, "The Suppression of the Cistercian Monasteries" in 2018 for HIST 570, AND " The Ukrainian Famine 1932-1933 Exposed" was written in 2020 for ENG 501.

highlight the different motivations for radical behavior based on the region and society that these events occurred in, these motivations differ vastly from Europe to other parts of the world such as Africa and the Middle East. In looking at the topic of fanaticism and its application to my papers, I have attempted to take a scholarly stance but I acknowledge that I have also included my personal stance as this topic is complex.

These three papers explore different aspects of fanaticism. My three papers are connected by the fact that they each analyze how various leaders and groups have used political, cultural, or religious ideology to justify their actions regardless of the negative impact on society. In "Obedience and Authority", I examined how an individual could be extremely obedient to an idea or leader despite knowing that they were going against their own moral code and beliefs in order to commit atrocious acts. In this paper I will present three different different cases, the first focuses on the Holocaust and Nuremberg Trials, the second on The Rwandan Genocide and the third on, terrorism and suicide bombers. I will look at authority figures as well as their followers to explore their motivations for becoming fanatics. I believe this can help answer why certain groups of people or a society as a whole are willing to support a fanatic.   Specifically, I looked at interviews with Nazi officials during the Nuremberg Trials from 1945-1946 and at some accounts of several men who were involved in the extermination of Tutsi villages during the Rwandan Genocide.   In "The Ukrainain Famine 1932-1933 Exposed", I explored how Stalin used the foreign press and media to cover up how he used a forced famine to gain control of Ukraine based on his own political and personal motivations such as Russian Nationalism. For over thirty years, the famine was covered up. I looked at some of the potential reasons why the survivors kept quiet and why the U.S chose to uncover it.   In my final paper, "The Suppression of the Cistercian Monasteries," I looked at how Henry VIII used the dissolution of the Cistercian

Monasteries in England to validate his desire for wealth and power. He believed completely in his divine right to rule the kingdom as he wished without opposition, which proved detrimental to society.

The general characteristics that can be traced in all three papers is that there are powerful men who are in a position of authority, who believe that they are saving society from a corrupting force whether that was the Jews or other ethnic groups, Ukrianian Nationalists, or monastic orders. Each society in these specific cases was going through tremendous change, which allowed the fanatical leader to be able to express their ideological views with little dispute. Wealth, politics, inequality, and environment each play a vital role in increasing the power of the leader as well as drawing followers to their cause. The cultural identity of the people in each society presented in this portfolio were extremely altered and in some cases almost destroyed. These papers overall will demonstrate the negative outcomes of fanaticism and what gives rise to those situations.

Before delving into the specific papers, I will examine the meaning of fanaticism, the different views of it, the various reasons and motivations that spark a desire for radical thinking and action, and specific outcomes that are a direct result of that thinking. This will help to create a proper basis for the specific examples in the papers. The term fanatic first appeared in the Early Modern period in Europe around the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. It was first used to describe religious fanatics.[3] According to the Dictionaire de L'Academie of 1694 a fanatic was defined as a, "extravagant madman, person of alienated mind, who believes he has visions, inspirations. This word is hardly used outside the context of religion."[4] According to the Oxford Learners Dictionary, fanaticism has also been defined as, "holding, expressing or

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[3] Dominique Colas, *Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories*, trans. Amy Jacobs (Stanford , CT: Stanford University Press , 1997), 41.
[4] Colas *Civil Society and Fanaticism*, 207.

connected with extreme or dangerous opinions."[5] William Cavanaugh further illustrates the

connection between fanaticism, religion, and the public sphere. In his article on fanaticism, he

makes two important arguments that are central to the theme of this portfolio. The first argument

that Cavanaugh highlights is the shift of power from the religious institutions to the state and

how this shift created a misguided justification to demonize those institutions in order for the

state to achieve the support of the people and to hold total control over the society.[6] The second

argument that Cavanaugh makes is that:

> The creation of religion and its secular twin accompanied the attempts of colonial powers
> and indigenous modernizing elites to marginalize certain aspects of non-Western cultures
> and create public space for the smooth functioning of state and market interests.[7]

Religion is a tool that can be used to justify the goals and motivation of the leader, group, or

state. Henry VIII would use this tool to take power away from the church and to change the

social dynamics and to exert his own wishes and desires for wealth and power. Fanaticism can

take on different forms both based on religious and political reasons, but it all starts with an idea.

That idea is used to justify violence and the destruction of society.   It can also be argued that it

has a way of advancing society and creating lasting reforms through revolution; this is evident

with the leaders of various human rights movements such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton or Malcolm

X. There has to be a measure to determine whether a fanatic and their beliefs are harmful or

beneficial to society. In the majority of cases, it seems that fanaticism is detrimental to both the

individual and the society.

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[5] Oxford Learner's Dictionaries. "Fanatic." Oxford University Press
https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/fanatic_1?q=fanatic.

[6] William T Cavanaugh, "The Invention of Fanaticism ," *Modern Theology* 27, no. 2 (April 2011), 228.
[7] Cavanaugh, The Invention of Fanaticism, 228.

For most of history, fanatical or radical behavior has been seen as a danger to society and government. Plato argued that, "extremes of spirit or desire inevitably corrupt the polis."[8] The fanatic has the ultimate goal of creating change or an existing perception and it is subjective depending on the ideals of the government, society, and the individual. Geography, past history, and legacy seems to create an intense loyalty and obedience to a specific cause or ideology. Radicalization in the West is due mostly to politics and environment according to Mitchell Silbar who led a team for the Council of Foreign Relations Task Force on Post 9/11 Terorrism. He argues that radicalization in the Middle East and other parts of the World is in response to triggers such as a desire to change their circumstances.[9] When a society is on the pinnacle of change, an environment is created that enables people to be more susceptible to fantical ideas. The International Society of Political Society in their journal article, "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism", they argue that the quest for personal significance highlights one route to fanatical behavior both in leaders and in followers.[10] This quest for self significance and identity can be tied to culture, land, possessions, and beliefs, but this quest must be triggered in order for the individual to be set on that path. The individual most likely believes that society has failed them. This desire for importance has to be triggered:

> Through a loss of significance or humiliation of some sort, corresponding to the
> psychological construct of deprivation, through an anticipated(or threatened) significant
> loss, corresponding to the psychological construct of avoidance, and through an
> opportunity for significance gain, representing the psychological concept of incentive.[11]

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[8]Joel Olson, "The Freshness of Fanaticism: The Abolitionist Defense of Zealotry," *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 4 (2007), 685.
[9] Mitchell Silber and Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat: The NYPD Jihadist Report* (New York City, Ny: New York City Police Department , 2015), 7.
[10] Arie Kruglanski et al, "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism," *Advances in Political Psychology* 35, no. S1 (February 2014), 69.
[11] Kruglanski et al, "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization", 74.

Once this quest is triggered, the individual tries to achieve their goal through violence, genocide, terrorism, war, coercion and brainwashing.

Humiliation as well as identity issues, past trauma, nationalism, imperialism, power, as well as adherence to a specific belief system provides justification for violence and force against another group. Two cases can be presented here to help define this concept, first being that of Shaka who was King of the Zulu tribe from 1816-1828 and the second being, the Germans in South Africa. Shaka fostered an environment that was solely based on violence. Status and social hierarchy was determined by amount and type of kill, there was no sense of community. Shaka's mentor, Dingiswayo was killed in battle and Shaka killed all of the women and children on the opposing side. It is also believed by Henry Francis Fynn, who wrote Shaka's biography, that Shaka suffered from a childhood trauma. He was bullied for his genital size and that this created an intense concentration and regulation of his followers sex lives.[12] Shaka developed into a fantical leader because of his past traumas; the society he created was devoid of regular growth and development.

The second case, being that of the Germans in South Africa. In the German quest to colonize South Africa, they stripped away the cultural identity of the native people. Imperialism and a drive to create a German homeland in the African subcontinent propelled them to subjugate the native people to their cultural and social beliefs. They did this through violence and force. In *The Genocidal Gaze* by Elizabeth Baer, she gives an example of various postcards that were sent by German settlers back to Germany. They were filled with images of the triumph saviour over the uncivilized savages:

> One of these...showed a line of ten Hottentots dangling from a single gallows, some still standing on the packing cases with a noose round their necks, waiting for the soldiers to

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[12] Matthew White, *Atrocities: The 100 Deadliest Episodes in Human History* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 278.

kick their last standing place away; some kicking and writhing in the death struggle...each and every German soldier in the photo was striking an attitude and smirking towards the camera in the pleasurable anticipation of the fine figure he would cut when the photo was published.[13]

By deeming the native people of South Africa as savages, it gave the Germans a justification to commit atrocities. Photography played an important role in creating propaganda to support the German mission in South Africa and contributing to the idea of the native people as subhuman. There are photographs of native women with torn clothing indicating the rape and fetishization of those women.[14] It can be argued that Germany's geography, history, and political environment helped to set them on this radical path and that their goal was to gain power. This case can help when looking at the Nuremberg Trials and why the Holocaust was supported by many individuals and leaders in the society. As Mitchell Silbar remarked, "the majority of the individuals involved in these plots[terrorist] began as 'unremarkable' they had 'ordinary' jobs, had lived 'ordinary' lives and had little if any criminal history."[15] This can be applied to the Rwandan Genocide and the Holdomor. There has to be a trigger in every situation to create a fanatic.

According to Bart Schuurman, "Reconsidering Radicalization: Fanaticism and the Link Between Ideas and Violence" there are several characteristics that most fanatics exhibit:

> [There is] excessive focusing on issues of concern. A world view that is solely based on ideological convictions. An insensitivity to others and to normal social pressures. A loss of critical judgement in that the fanatic...tolerance for inconsistency and incompatibility in the beliefs held. Great certainty in the appropriateness of the actions taken. A simplified view of the world and a disdain for the victims of the fanatics behavior. [Lastly], the construction of a social environment that makes it easier to sustain fanatical views.[16]

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[13] Elizabeth R Baer, *The Genocidal Gaze: From German Southwest Africa to the Third Reich* (Detroit , MI: Wayne State University Press, 2017), 39.

[14] Baer, *The Genocidal Gaze,* 41.

[15] Silber and Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West,* 7.

[16] Bart Schuurman and Max Taylor, "Reconsidering Radicalization: Fanaticism and the Link Between Ideas and Violence," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, no. 1 (2018), 178.

As the fanatic delves deeper into their ideological beliefs and their quest for personal significance, they become more radical in their behavior. Outside the traditional Western world, fanaticism is tied to a desire to improve the circumstances of the individual and society, while also trying to recreate that society based on past ideals and perceptions. When looking at terrorist groups especially in the Middle East, they use religion to justify their desire to establish control over the region. This concept goes back to when the Ottoman Empire had control over the region, there was a sense of unity and stability.[17] When the Europeans arrived in the region, they divided the territory based on artificial lines. For example, Iraq was divided in three regions, Mosul, Baghdad, and Sumer. In drawing these artificial lines, it forced people of different backgrounds and cultural beliefs to reside in the same space thus creating tension and hostility between the groups.[18] In having a lack of stability in the region, it allows terrorist groups to more easily attract followers and create their own version of social norms. This can also be applied to the Rwandan Genocide with the problems created by European imperialism and the restructuring of the social order.

Terrorism is an outcome of fanaticism; terroirst groups want to achieve social and political change. It has less to do with the actual religious doctrine that is a justification to gain power and to create their own community. There are two cases, Al-Qaeda and ISIS. According to Michael Doran in his article, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of Al-Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in Middle Eastern Politics", Al-Qaeda main objective was to take back control of the region. They wanted to remove the US presence in the Persian Gulf.[19] Throughout history,

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[17] Tim Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Explain Everything About the World* (New York, NY: Scribner , 2016), 144.
[18] Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography,* 147.
[19] Michael Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of Al Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in Middle Eastern Politics," *Political Science Quarterly* 117, no. 2 (2002), 178.

muslims were encouraged to eliminate any threats to Islamic society and culture in order to avoid jahili, which was a "state of barbarousness and idolatry".[20] As society is changing and being influenced by Western ideas, there is a desire to eliminate that threat. Due to the instability and conflicts in the region, it has desterously affected the lives of many people in the region. People seek opportunities to improve their lives and ISIS as well as other groups have been able to take advantage of that desperation. There is the case of ISIS and the al-Hawl refugee camp in Syria. The camp conditions are horrendous, it is overpopulated and unsanitary, there are no opportunities to get basic education and training to help create a life outside the camp. It is mostly women and children.[21] ISIS created opportunities for these women and children to escape from the miserable conditions that they were residing in by giving them a new society to join in return they expected complete loyalty to the cause despite the violence it was advocating for. This can be seen in an interview by an NBC news reporter of a young boy in the camp, "he asked [the] young boy...if he wanted to be an inghimasi: (a fighter until the end who blows himself up before being caught). He then asked whom he would kill, to which the boy answered, "you, if you were not a Muslim."[22] The circumstances of life in the camp and destruction of the society and culture led this child as well as others in the camp to commit to a radical ideology. Fanatics in the West are somewhat similar, there is a desire to create a space in society that gives them a purpose.

The key difference is that fanaticism in the West starts with an individual who responds to a problem or problems that have affected the society, while in other parts of the world it is more about the ideas and wants of a specific group.. In the case of Stalin and the Holodomor, he

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[20] Doran, The Pragmatic Fanaticism of Al Qaeda", 180.
[21] Aaron Y. Zelin, "Wilayat Al-Hawl: 'Remaining' and Incubating the Next Islamic State Generation," *Policy Notes* , October 2019, 4.
[22] Zelin, "Wilayat Al-Hawl", 5.

orchestrated everything from the news media to laws and policies to reflect what he wanted people to see. I will argue in the main section of the paper that Stalin had inherited the remnants of the Russian Revolution and wanted to establish a powerful Soviet State. That desire would be his justification for the destruction of Ukrianian society and culture. A fantaical or radical ideology only becomes successful if it has a strong leader:

> In order for a group of people with a grievance to turn into a terrorist cell, they need an effective leader. This leadership comes in two forms: operational and charismatic. These two qualities are sometimes in one person. Operational and charismatic leadership are vital in providing training, motivation, and discipline and group cohesiveness. Leadership within the group in the key determinant in terrorist "success".[23]

Even though this quoted text applies to terrorist groups, it can still be applied to any fantical group or individual. For example, Hitler was able to gain the support of many followers to his cause and perhaps he was able to do this because of the suffering and damages that Germany went through after World War I. In the paper on "The Suppression of the Cistercian Monasteries", it can be seen that Henry VIII lived a lavish lifestyle and wanted to be a powerful ruler. There was a desire to justify his position and this meant constructing society to his desires. In order to change the religious system, he had to be a "charismatic and operational" ruler. What makes people drawn to these leaders and stay loyal and obedient to their cause? I will examine more of this concept in detail in the main section of the project, but I will briefly address two of the potential reasons.

Individuals are loyal and obedient to a leader and ideological system when they see that the authority figure is trying to create the change that they want to see in the society, but also there is a sense of fear of retribution and punishment. As I will attempt to explicate in the "Obedience and Authority" paper, there are two types of obedience, deferential and coerced.[24]

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[23] Silber and Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West,* 50.
[24] Michael Kenneth I Isenman , "Crimes of Obedience: Toward Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility ," *Michigan Law Review* 88, no. 6 (1990), 60-63.

Many of the Nazi leaders who were interviewed during the Nuremberg Trials would claim that they were coerced into being obedient and that they were not at fault. This is relative to the individual and the role that they inhabit in the group. For example, terrorist groups offer poor youth the ability to take a place in society. When there is a lack of access to basic needs such as education, housing, and food, it is easier to obtain the complete obedience of a person.[25] In the case of the FATA region in Pakistan which is mostly a tribal area, the society has not been given the opportunity to progress and change compared with the rest of Pakistan. The military occupies educational institutions as bases for basic operations and the overall literacy rate for the region is between seventeen to eighteen percent due to the military presence and constant conflict. There is a desperate need and desire to improve the social conditions.[26] Ultimately, when these youth and individuals join radical groups, they lose their sense of self, community, and culture:

> Family and relationships are forgotten in that place. There was no place for love...that means a passion and loyalty to that group, to those in charge, to those who sacrificed their lives for the group. Then I came to a stage where I had no value for my life. I was ready to give myself fully, even destroy myself, in order to destroy another person.[27]

If the society is allowed to return to a stable state then the creation of fanatics would be less likely as radical ideology has little place in a community when the majority of people have their basic needs and rights covered.

When a fanatic is taken away from the source of radical behavior, they can be readjusted to the society. This can be seen in the "Obedience and Authority" paper with several of the perpetrators after the Rwandan Genocide. There is a shift to reaccept those individuals into society as a means to deradicalize them. Simon Winchester in his book presents the example of

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[25] Kruglanski et al, "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization", 73-74.
[26] Kruglanski et al, "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization", 76-78.
[27] Kruglanski et al, The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization", 71.

a couple from Belfast, Ireland who grew up there in the 1970s. Gerald and Mary were from opposing sides. Gerald was ardently loyal to his land and would have died fighting for it. They met in Vancouver and the bond that they had to their beliefs were not as strong as when they were in Ireland. Winchester argues, "distance the people from the land and the argument diminished; return them, and all the old fighting would resume."[28] This shows that for a fanatic they can be attached to certain objects or ideas that fuel their passions. In the case of the above example, it was land. In the Rwandan Genocide, it goes back to colonialism and the perceived imbalance of power within the society, which created a sub-community that felt marginalized. In the paper on the "Suppression of the Cistercian Monasteries", Henry VIII inherited a monarchy that was founded on war. This created a desire to have complete control over society. In order to maintain power, he needed wealth and the complete loyalty of his subjects which meant removing any sources of conflict or contention. As each of the groups or individualized that are mentioned are seeking to create a society based on their ideals it makes the deradicalization process more complicated and almost impossible depending on whether the fanatic is a leader or follower.

Each of the societies in the papers being used for this portfolio are a combination of the both the fanatics and the victims. How are the victims affected by the behavior of the fanatics? Does this create a new imbalance of power? For example in the "Ukrianian Famime 1932-1933 Exposed" paper, the survivors of the genocide were pyschologically scarred and lived in a state of constant fear. They were reluctant to share their stories and experiences out of fear of punishment and retaliation by the Soviet Union. The past experiences were kept hidden from their children. In order for a society to function it has to have stability. As more societies around

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[28] Simon Winchester , *Land: How the Hunger for Ownership Shaped the Modern World* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2021), 265-266.

the world are faced with increased instability due to increased social pressures, environmental

and political issues this creates a likelihood of a fanatic or fanatical group to form in response.

The specific cases in the papers for this project will illustrate many of the ideas presented in this

introduction and help to explore the different views of fanaticism through different periods of

time and place.

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The Suppression of the Cistercian Monasteries

For much of England's medieval past, monasteries and nunneries played a vital role in society by caring for the souls and wellbeing of the people. Numerous monastic movements were formed each with their own ideal for living the best life as servants of God. As time went on, religious men received criticism for their involvement in secular affairs leading to corruption and contempt in some cases. In the 16th century, King Henry VIII would bring tremendous change to England, one of the most significant being the Dissolution of the Monasteries. There seems to be a general consensus that the monastic system had already been in a state of decline and was prone to corruption leading to a loss in popularity among the people making it easier for Henry to use the monasteries to his advantage. Despite the problems that the monastic system was undergoing, they provided support to the community and society. The Dissolution of the Monasteries shows the manifestation of Henry VIII into a fanatical ruler. There are three traits that Henry VIII exhibits, the first being that of the desire to gain self worth and importance. That idea is directly connected to maintaining the prestige and power of the Tudors; this was done through obtaining the obedience of the people, complete control over the society, and creating a fixed source of revenue. The monasteries especially the Cistercian houses were sources of wealth and representations of the Church's power in the society. As the Dissolution of the Monasteries progressed, Henry VIII shifted from appearing to be rational and consolatory to creating a demonizing mentality. This "us versus them" mentality justified the actions taken by Henry VIII. Lastly, any objection or differing opinion to the decision of the monarchy was held liable as a crime against the king. This established a pattern of distrust and instability in the society.   While there is a good amount of research on the Dissolution of the Monasteries, there

is less specifically on the individual monastic orders. By examining one of the orders, it helps to provide a case study.

In this paper, I want to examine how and why the Cistercian monastic order was dissolved under Henry VIII and what were the potential consequences to the economy and society because of this? Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries for his own monetary gain as well as showing his dominance and power over the english church and people, which only served to exacerbate the economy more and create undue pressure on the society. First, I will examine how the Cistercian Order developed in England and some of the problems surrounding the order leading up to the Dissolution. Next, I will focus on how the Cistercians were suppressed and the various responses surrounding it. Thirdly, I want to show how the suppression of the Cistercian monasteries were a result of Henry and Cromwell's ambitions and created more economic and social distress that could have been solved better through reforms.

The Cistercian Order was founded in France around 1098 in Burgundy; the first abbey was known as Citeaux.[29] This order formed at a time when there was controversy surrounding the more lavish lifestyles of the Augustine and Benedictine orders; the Cistercians hoped to return to a simpler way of life. The establishment of the Cistercians in England can be attributed to Bernard Clairvaux. He wanted to expand the Cistercian Order outside of France and fortunately in 1131, King Henry I granted him land on which Rievaulx Abbey would be built.[30] As Rievaulx developed, two other abbeys were established, Fountains and Melrose who along with Rievaulx would become the mother houses to all future abbeys in England.[31] Rievaulx was

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[29] Janet Burton and Julie Kerr. *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages*. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 1.
[30] Glyn Coppack, *The White Monks: The Cistercians in Britain 1128-1540*. (Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing Limited, 1998), 18-19.
[31] Coppack, *The White Monks*, 41.

a daughter house to Citeaux thus creating a strong bond between the houses. The Cistercian movement within England gained popularity rather quickly.

The monks were given strict guidelines on where and how they could form a community. They were to limit their communication and interactions with the secular world, working by the sweat of their own brow. Ideal locations for potential monastic sites were ones that were far away from other communities. This allowed for the cultivation of wasteland and creation of large agricultural settlements.[32] Restrictions were placed on the amount of material items that a monastery could own; they could only have coffers made out of wood and silver chalices.[33] The monks and nuns were to only wear habits made out of undyed wool and to eat a plant based diet. Lay Brothers were hired later on to work the land and keep the monks from having direct interactions with the outside world.[34]

To ensure that the monasteries were running according to the law, a commission was made up of two or more abbots from the local mother houses to conduct visitations. The abbot at Citeaux would approve the selected commissioners; in extreme cases, the abbot himself would come. The commission was required to collect a tax that would be sent back to Citeaux.[35] The local bishops in England were not permitted to conduct the visitations as the Cistercians did not want any outside influences. This added greater security to the network of monasteries and made them more accountable for their actions when judged by their own brethren.[36] Henry VIII would later use a similar system with his own commissioners to create havoc and disorganization

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[32]Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages,* 184-5.
[33] William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum; a History of the Abbies and Other Monasteries, Hospitals, Frieries, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, with Their Dependencies, in England and Wales; Also of All Such Scotch, Irish and French Monasteries, as Were in Any Manner Connected with Religious Houses in England. Together with a Particular Account of Their Respective Foundations, Grants, and Donations, and a Full Statement of Their Possessions, as Well Temporal as Spiritual.* (London: Bohn, 1846), 88.
[34] Coppack, *The White Monks,* 18.
[35]David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England.* Vol. III. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 28.
[36] Coppack,*The White Monks,* 20.

among the Cistercian monasteries. To understand how Henry VIII was able to dismantle the monasteries within a short five years, it is important to understand what duties the Cistercian monks were expected to fulfil.

Cistercian monks and nuns had three main duties, praying, hospitality, and alms. Many of the lay people who donated to the monasteries provided specific instructions for the monks. An example of this comes from Coombe Abbey. A local squire donated money to the abbey to help rebuild part of it in return for prayers to be said every year for him and his wife.[37] The monks were expected not only to pray for the souls of the people, but to take care of their physical needs as well. Hospitality was a more complicated duty for the monks to complete as they risked being influenced by outsiders. In order to remove the threat of influence, they built a seperate building in the monastery for the lodging of travellers and guests. Many of the guests were pilgrims who came to see holy relics and shrines. The donations received from them, helped with the upkeep of the monastery.[38] Providing for the poor was an essential part of Cistercian doctrine, "the canons were ordered under pain of the greater excommunication, not to say divine wrath, to distribute to the poor according, to the will of the founders and benefactors; the fragments left from the meals were also to be given to the poor; so were the canons' old clothes."[39] These ideals were never completely abandoned by the Cistercians even at the time of the Suppression, but leading up to the mid-16th century, the Order went through significant changes that weakened them overall.

Up until the 14th century, the Cistercians had experienced relative popularity among the lay people, large numbers of lay brothers and sisters were working on the monastic granges.

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[37]Geoffrey Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries*. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), 19-20.

[38] Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 22-24.

[39] Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 30.

Donations were plenty allowing for the spread of monasteries across England, but the success did not last long, all that changed with the arrival of the Black Death in 1348.[40] The monasteries were hit particularly hard; the amount of lay brothers and sisters were reduced by more than half. The monks could no longer rely on them to do the labor for them. [41] The inhabitants of the monasteries were affected as well; it was recorded in 1381 that Rievaulx, one of the largest Cistercian monasteries in England, had gone from over 200 monks down to fifteen.[42] With a smaller monastic population, changes were implemented into the layouts and structures of the monasteries. It can be seen that the abbots and monks became more self aware and the overall community was less important. The monks started to lease out portions of their land and took on tenants instead of lay brothers. They started leasing their land for money instead of cash crops.[43]

Cistercian monasteries were having a hard time getting the monks to observe the rules. At Warden Abbey, the abbot complained that none of the monks understood the rules of the Cistercian Order.[44] In 1486, the Cistercian visitation commission was under control of the abbots from Stratford Langthorne, Combe, and Cleeve.[45] They observed on their visitation of Warden abbey that, "[there was] bad attendance at choir, hasty recitation, failure to observe the rules of diet and of the closure of the dormitory at night...women of questionable character were allowed into the monastic buildings and even reside there."[46] Several of the monasteries like Warden had reached such a bad state that, Marmaduke Huby was the abbot of Fountains abbey from 1494-1526 who had requested that the abbot of Citeaux come to conduct a visitation but he could not obtain a "safe conduct".[47] Despite the problems that were occuring, Marmaduke Huby was

[40] Coppack,*The White Monks,* 95.
[41] J. Greene, *Medieval Monasteries*. (London: Leicester University Press, 1994), 106.
[42] Coppack,*The White Monks,* 123.
[43] Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages,* 176.
[44] Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 39.
[45] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* 29.
[46] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* 33.
[47] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* 34.

able to calm the tensions brewing between the monasteries and bring about order during his time as abbot and on the commission. Abbot Huby was well liked by the community, bringing about a revival in the order. In 1495, "there were only 22 monks at Fountains, whereas when he wrote (c.1520) there were 52 professed, of whom 41 were priests and the others in major orders."[48] After the death of Huby it seems that the Cistercians had lost the unity that they had gained under his supervision. Not more than twenty years later, all the Cistercian monasteries would be dissolved leading to the assumption that no capable leader stepped forward to push for the survival of the community.

Upon Henry VIII's ascension to the throne, he had the goal of establishing a powerful and prestigious monarchy. One of the precursors to the Dissolution of the Monasteries was the inability of the Catholic Church to grant Henry is Divorce to Catherine of Aragon.[49] Henry VIII used this pivotal moment to claim complete control over the society. As Arie Kruglanski illustrated, a moment of humiliation can spur the individual to start their fanatical quest and I would argue that the inability of the Church to grant his divorce was that moment and his justification for his future actions.[50] Several of his advisors such as Cardinal Wolsey and Cromwell would help him to achieve that goal by dissolving the monasteries in England. Without his advisors and followers, Henry VIII would not have been able to achieve his goals. The process started with Cardinal Wolsey threatening to dissolve several monasteries, one of them being the Cistercian Abbey of Bruerne. The abbot of Bruerne had to bribe Wolsey into keeping the abbey. Wolsey used the threat of suppression to gain money and power, which Henry VIII's other advisor, Thomas Cromwell would end up doing as well.[51] In July of 1535,

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[48] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* 36.
[49] Robert Bucholz and Newton Key, *Early Modern England 1485-1714: A Narrative History* (West Sussex : Wiley-Blackwell , 2009), 65.
[50] Arie Kruglanski et al., "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism," *Advances in Political Psychology* 35, no. S1 (February 2014), 69
[51] Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries* 106.

Thomas Cromwell conducted a visitation of all the monasteries in England. During this period, they took inventory of all the houses and provided an estimate of their worth.[52] In April of 1536, the First Act of Suppression went to effect, all monastic houses that earned below 200 pounds a year were dissolved. There were three different groups of people that responded to this law, the pensioned abbots or prioresses, monks who wanted to become secular clergy, and the monks or nuns who wanted to be transferred to the bigger houses.[53] In the case of the Cistercian monasteries, the majority of the monks and nuns wanted to be transferred to the bigger houses.[54] Knowles points out in his book, *The Religious Orders in England* that, "the percentage (8.6%) of the white monks who wished to leave when compared with that of Austin canons (48.5%)."[55] This percentage speaks to the loyalty that the Cistercian monks and nuns had for their religious order. Under the First Act of Succession, the majority of the Cistercian houses were forcibly dissolved. Dr. Richard Layton, Thomas Legh, Dr. John London, and John Ap Rice were the agents of the crown who forced the monasteries to surrender. After they conducted one of their visits to Wardon abbey, which was not dissolved under the first act, the abbot wrote to Cromwell asking to resign from the monastery. The abbot complained in his letter that the monks in his monastery were disobeying and harassing him. He said that many of them were keeping in the company of women and bringing lay brothers into the dormitory.[56] In the case of the abbot of Wardon, it appears that he did not want to be in charge of the abbey because he was not willing to fight to preserve it and keep it out of the hands of the government. There was a fear of the consequences of not presenting what Henry VIII wanted to see hence making himself look like a incompetent leader in order to receive mercy. When looking at the monks, they may have been

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[52] Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 123.
[53] Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 144-46.
[54] Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 148.
[55] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* 310.
[56] G.H Cook, *Letters to Cromwell on the Suppression of the Monasteries*. (London: John Baker Publishers, 1965), 59.

involved in sacrilegious affairs, but it is most likely that the abbot had fabricated the crimes of the monks. There was a tremendous amount of uncertainty and hostility created by Henry VIII and Cromwell's policies. According to Eamon Duffy, "as early as March 1534 Cromwell had made a memorandum to have substantial persons in every good town to discover all who speak or preach against the Henrician religious revolution."[57] This could have also been a potential reason for why the abbot reported all the supposed crimes of the monks in his abbey. The monks and lay brothers distraught at the idea of their lives being uprooted would have complained against the Henrician Religious Revolution. Henry VIII saw himself as doing what was best for the society and extinguishing opposing opinions. Stanley Milgrim worte:

> The fanatic may be aware that others decry his behavior, he sees himself acting out of noble motives...the majority thinks that the fanatic's deviant beliefs and behavior constitute a problem, but unlike the penitent or the criminal who knows he is committing crimes, the fanatic sees the problem residing in the majority.[58]

Henry VIII determined that all the monastic houses and their occupants were corrupting society. By creating distrust and incohesiveness within the overall society the people were more focused on keeping a watch on their local communities rather than Henry VIII's actions. In the beginning of the Suppression, numerous Cistercian houses and abbeys were able to gain a temporary reprieve from Henry VIII.

The Suppression of the Cistercian monasteries and houses depended on their size and influence within the community. Smaller Cistercian houses tended to get exemptions in the beginning of the Suppression while bigger abbeys and houses were forced to surrender their assets. In the fall of 1535, Cromwell's agents reported that Catesby nunnery was free from

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[57] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press , 1992), 385.
[58] Stanley Milgrim , "The Social Meaning Of Fanaticism," *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 34, no. 1 (March 1977), 59.

suspicion which granted them an exemption for a short period of time.[59] In April 1537, Furness Abbey was suppressed. Abbot Rodger at the time seeing that he had no choice surrendered the monastery. It was reported that, "Rodger abbot of Furness, knowing the misorder and evil life of the brethren there, surrender all my interest in the house and lands to the king…"[60] The abbot of Rewley Abbey provides an example for one of the houses that did not want to surrender. He was desperate to save the abbey and he offered Henry VIII almost the abbey's entire income for a year even though it meant that they would have nothing to live on.[61]   This example shows that the wealth that the monasteries produced was not Henry VIII's main concern. He wanted to abolish the position of power they held within the society and to get rid of any connection to the Pope and Rome. According to Duffy in a letter Henry VIII wrote to the bishops in 1536, " the King complained that he sought to ensure the people should be fed with wholesome doctrine, not seduced with filthy and corrupt abominations of the bishop of Rome or adherents…"[62] The removal of the monasteries took away the people's culture and way of life which created more resentment towards Henry VIII instead of the peace and obedience he craved. Henry VIII exhibited no compassion towards the monasteries. He had them dismantled and everything of value taken away. This was seen as a slight against the people as many of the holy objects were used by pilgrims for their mystic powers in healing and other ailments.[63] Michael Sherbrook provides an account of what happened during the suppression of Roche Abbey. His uncle was there on the day Roche Abbey was suppressed. According to him everything of value was taken such as the iron hooks in the walls and the lead off the roof, nothing was spared.[64]

[59] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 1, 1509-1514*. Edited by J S Brewer. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office 1920. *British History Online*, 26-30.
[60] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 1, 1509-1514*. Edited by J S Brewer. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office 1920. *British History Online*, 1-5.
[61] Cook, *Letters to Cromwell on the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 118.
[62] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 387.
[63] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 384.
[64]A. G Dickens, *Tudor Treatises*. Vol. 125. (Wakefield: West Yorkshire Printing Company, 1960), 123.

Several descendants of the founding families attempted to lay claim to the monastic holdings. The case of Hulton Priory is an example of this. When Hulton was suppressed in 1538, Sir Brian Tuke wrote on behalf of his son-in-law, Mr. Audely whose family had made significant contributions to the priory at its founding. He hoped that the priory would be granted to Mr. Audely because he was in dire circumstances and hoped it would provide him with a livelihood. The priory was granted to Sir Edward Aston.[65] Despite Mr. Audely being a descendant of one of the founders of the priory, he was not granted the land. Henry VIII distributed the monastic lands to people that he could gain money and loyalty from. The redistribution of the monastic lands along with Henry VIII's other policies created strain on the society and economy. Henry VIII and his followers were not concerned with the well-being of the people maintaining their positions of power and their ideological goals were most important.

Henry VIII and Cromwell were both ambitious men who had similar goals in obtaining wealth, prestige, and power. There are two sides to Henry VIII's Suppression of the Monasteries, the first presenting Henry as a godlike hero to the public and the second being the private side of him showcasing his rapacious appetite for wealth and power. In order to justify his actions perhaps in an attempt to make himself look like a hero to the people, he condemned the monasteries. Edward Hall in his chronicle states the reasons for Henry's suppression of the monasteries. He said that the suppression was agreed upon by Parliament and it was necessary due to all the corrupt monks who were not focused on their god-given tasks such as helping the poor and saving the souls of the lay people.[66] Hall even specifically states that not all the monasteries were going to be dissolved, only the ones, "where most vice, mischief, and abbominacion of liuyng was vsed."[67] Layton, Legh, London, and Rice, Cromwell's agents

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[65] Cook, *Letters to Cromwell on the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 191-92.
[66] Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle* (London: J. Johnson, 1809), 821.
[67] Hall, *Hall's Chronicle,* 821.

reported that most of the Cistercian monastic houses had an abbot that had committed some overt sexual act or stolen church property.[68] It seems unlikely that every monastery was filled with corruption. As head of the Church of England, Henry VIII made it seem like he was doing his divine duty by removing the corruption from the society.

In reality, it was less about the corruption of the monasteries but the tremendous amount of land and of money that could be made from them and Henry VIII's desire to remove all sources of papal influence . Henry extorted as much money as he could from the monasteries; Stixwold Priory is an example of this. The nuns had already given their cattle and crops to the crown along with paying, "nine hundred marks, their annual income of 150 pounds and a pension of 34 pounds per year that priory stayed in service."[69] The nuns were left in a state of destitution. There was no evidence of corruption. Henry VIII was using the money to help fund the Franco-Scottish War as well as his other endeavours such as building castles and forts along the coast and trying to intimidate France.[70] He had a competitive relationship with France, he was always looking for an opportunity to invade the continent. From 1518-1522, Henry VIII and King Francis I maintained a close friendship.[71] After 1525, Francis I developed an alliance with the Holy Roman Emperor thus creating tensions with the English monarchy. The ultimate betrayal came when Francis I did not support his marriage to Anne Boleyn and was developing a closer liance with the Pope.[72] It is possible that Henry was especially vindictive in dissolving the Cistercian monasteries as they represented a connection to France. This idea goes back to the fanatics quest for self-worth. The Cistercian monasteries became the visual representation of Henry VIII's contempt for the Pope and France. Until he destroyed what caused him the most

[68] Dickens, *Tudor Treatises,* 106.
[69] Cook, *Letters to Cromwell on the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 126.
[70] Dickens, *Tudor Treatises,* 121.
[71]Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson. *Tudor England and Its Neighbours*. (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan 2005), 46.
[72] Doran and Richardson, *Tudor England and Its Neighbours,* 55-57.

humiliation there was no desire for anything else. Without the instability that was already in place due to the emergence of conflicting religious beliefs and practices, Henry VIII would not have been able to justify beliefs and actions. Most likely because of this tense relationship, it would have made it harder for the Abbot at Citeaux to intercede on behalf of the Cistercian monasteries in England.

Henry VIII's desire to dissolve the Cistercian monasteries was not beneficial to the economy and he ultimately lost the potential to use the monasteries to gain more revenue. The Cistercian monasteries in particular were the most obvious choices to gain quick money from as they were among the only monastic orders to have not hidden or sold off their animals and other property.[73] Starting in the late 15th century, the population was increasing steadily while agricultural production was decreasing. This led to a rise in prices and a higher poverty rate that hit an all time high by the mid-16th century.[74] The Dissolution of the Monasteries put more strain on the economy. One of the reasons for that was because there was a sudden influx of people from the monasteries into the society. The former monks and nuns were given pensions that did not provide enough relief and funds to support themselves in the society.   For monks, the only real job opportunity that was available to take was a position at the local parish church. They also had to conform to the Henrician religious system if not they faced punishment.[75]

The monasteries provided benefits to the society such as providing for the poor as well as represented a formation of a popular culture in the use of icons and relics. Henry VIII saw those benefits and cultural aspects as a threat to his ideal image of society. He wanted the people and religious system to operate within his control. Under Henry VIII's system there was no

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[73] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* 313.
[74] Neal Wood, *Foundations of Political Economy : Some Early Tudor Views on State and Society*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 15.
[75] Janet Burton and Karen Stober, *Monasteries and Society in the British Isles in the Later Middle Ages*. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), 234.

established system to deal with the poor and destitute. The monasteries originally took care of

the poor as well as provided lodging. Hospitality was a specialty of the Cistercian order. When

Beaulieu Abbey was suppressed in 1538, Dr. Layton had found that there were over thirty-two

men living there with their families.[76] The Cistercian monastic houses helped to lessen the strain

of poverty on society.

Several reformers from the early Tudor period such as Thomas More, pointed out that,

"poverty, idleness, and waste were among the most urgent problems."[77] The monks and nuns as

well as lay brothers and sisters were pushed out of their occupations and their lands were taken,

which pointed to the vast amount of waste this caused. Sherbrook in his account of Roche

Abbey, argues that there were more people suffering because the monastery was gone and that

people did not really care about the supposed corruption but that its destruction gave them a

chance to make some money to live another day.[78] Sherbrooke father was there at the suppression

of Roche Abbey when Sherbrooke asked him:

> Whether he thought well of the Religious Persons and of the religion then used? [His
> father said] 'yea I did see no cause to the contrary...what should I do might I not as well
> as others have some profit of the spoil of the abbey? For I did see all would away; and
> therefore I did as others did.[79]

Since people were already suffering because of the high prices, they felt like they needed to do

what they had to survive. The monasteries gave the poor people a sense of purpose. They

provided them with food, lodging, and possibly work within the monastery. Henry VIII

indirectly with the removal of the monastic structure took away the self worth of these

individuals. They were excluded from the society and they turned to criminal behavior and

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[76] Cook, *Letters to Cromwell on the Suppression of the Monasteries,* 167-68.
[77] Wood, *Foundations of Political Economy : Some Early Tudor Views on State and Society,* 37.
[78] Dickens, *Tudor Treatises,* 133-37.
[79] Dickens, *Tudor Treatises,* 123.

begging as a means to support themselves. This would have contributed to the instability in the society. These economic problems could have been possibly solved by the Cistercian monasteries.

New Paragraph Monasteries played an important role in the creation of a pop culture with pilgrimages and the use of relics. According to Eamon Duffy, pilgrims would flock to the monasteries for various purposes but three of the most significant reasons were for healing, childbirth, and other superstitious maladies. They used the relics to help alleviate their suffering. Pilgrimages to the monastic sites also provided a source of revenue for the monasteries.[80] Cromwell and Henry VIII went to extremes to put an end to those religious practices, which were a highly important aspect of the society. Duffy gives an example from a report to Cromwell:

> On a single day that month the pilgrims to the shrine of Darvelgadarn amounted to 'fyve or syxe hundrethe...to a man's estimacion'. When one of Cromwell's agents stripped the shrine of St. Anne at Buxton not only of its image, but of the 'cruchys, schertes, and schetes, with wax offeryd' which were the testimonies of the people's devotion, he found it necessary to 'lokk...upp and seal...the bathys and welles...thatt non schall enter to washe them.'[81]

Destroying and taking away these sites and relics came at the cost of the people's beliefs and wellbeing. Henry VIII did not gain any significant advantages by removing the monastic sites; he did it for the sole purpose of taking the power away from the Church with little regard to the people. This can be seen with the measures he put in place to stop discourse.

The Cistercians contributed to the economic market with products from their granges and the specialty items they produced. While wool production was one of their biggest exports they also were known for selling their surplus grains to the local market.[82] In Yorkshire, Cistercian

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[80] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 385.
[81] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* 385.
[82] Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages,* 174.

granges were much bigger and more efficient than other monastic orders in the area, such as the Augustinians and Gilbertines.[83] Besides agricultural products they produced other items. Fountains was known for producing fish as well as lead from their mines in Nidderdale, Yorkshire. Only a few years before the Suppression, merchants in Yorkshire were angry at the involvement of Fountains in the trade, it was said that "the Fellowship of Merchants at York feared for it monopoly and wrote to Abbot Huby asking that Fountains cease trading. The abbot duly ignored this request and Fountains continued its commercial activities."[84] Another example is of Rievaulx Abbey, at the end of the Suppression they were developing the blast furnace as well as selling and producing tiles for the area.[85] If the monasteries had been reformed in such a way, the land could have been used to increase the overall agricultural production, given more people jobs to raise them out of poverty, and create a high exporting network of goods. After Henry dissolved the monasteries, most of them were turned into private homes.[86]

`   A medieval proverb said, "the wolf was not terrified by sheep, however numerous they might be."[87] This was true of Henry VIII, he saw all the Cistercian monasteries and despite the benefits that the society gained from having these institutions in place; he dissolved them rapidly. The Dissolution of the Monasteries led to more poverty and further problems with agricultural production. As the disposed monks and nuns were thrown back into society, there was an influx of people who had no skills or trade, only contributing to the pressure on the economy. The monastic lands went into the hands of whoever could pay with little attention to the descendents of the founding families. The monastic structure represented the power of the Church and Rome. By toppling what Henry VIII deemed as a threat to his image and power; he was able to create a

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[83] T. A. M. Bishop. "Monastic Granges in Yorkshire." *The English Historical Review*, no. 202 (1936), 208.
[84] Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages,* 182.
[85] Burton and Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages,* 178.
[86] Greene, *Medieval Monasteries,* 187.
[87] Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England,* 38.

society based completely on his beliefs.   The people were forced to change a significant aspect of their life and were punished for disagreeing with Henry VIII's system. A fantic creates discord in the society with little concern of how their beliefs will affect the rest of the populace. The focus and attention is spent on vanquishing the threat to their perceived perception of reality. The monastic structure was that threat to Henry VIII.   Henry VIII directly caused the social structure to change, he created instability in the society, and he put undue pressure on the economy.   The money that he gained from the monasteries only provided short term gains. The Dissolution of the Monasteries was an inefficient process that illustrated Henry VIII's instability as a ruler and his desire to maintain absolute control over the society which resulted in increased social issues.

Obedience and Authority: The Moral Consequences of Obeying

Obedience is multifaceted and can take on a variety of meanings, but when it is connected to authority it can progress into fanaticism rapidly.   In this paper, I argue that obedience requires a person to give away part of their freedom of choice and regardless of their other morals, the desire to comply with an authority figure overrides the character of said person. I believe that because an individual chooses to give up their freedom of choice in order to be obedient that it can have unforetold consequences on their moral character and can cause them to commit unjust acts. This is one of the foundations for the creation of a fanatic. The individual in giving all their autonomy to the authority figure justifies their actions by putting all of the blame on their superior. Obedience helps society to run properly, but that does not mean that it can be considered a virtue. Aristotle and Plato, as well as Thomas Aquinas and others would argue that obedience is a virtue, but I believe that while obedience is an important trait to have that it can lead to violence and suffering. When obedience leads to a negative outcome that also affects the stability of the individual and society then it is a vice.

One of my main goals is to understand the relationship between obedience and authority. Looking at several cases from the Nazis and the Holocaust to the Rwandan Genocide, the most common response from the perpetrators is that they were just following orders. Many of the individuals involved in these events were ordinary people. I would argue that they either went through traumatic experiences that caused pain and humiliation or were propelled by charismatic leaders to believe that they had been affected by those experiences. When an individual becomes immersed in their beliefs or a group, they are less likely to listen to outside opinions and that is how a fanatic is created.   Obedience to an idea not just an authority "figure" shapes the morality of the individual.   I think people are inherently obedient,

Milgram's experiment is an example of that concept. With most virtues, the person is making a decision to be a certain way in order to be kind, brave, compassionate, etc. but except in a few situations, obedience follows a different path. Aristotle, Plato as well as Aquinas and others tend to focus on the moral obligation the person has to comply with the authority figure that is why it is important to focus on that relationship.   It can be seen that when people are faced with a superior whether in rank or knowledge, they tend to comply with what that person says. Obedience does not always mean that a person is being forced to commit an act. Most of the time the person is being made to believe that they want to commit that act. Whenever there is risk of harm or punishment to the individual that is when the person is faced with the choice of disobeying or obeying.[88] I believe obedience can easily be corrupted and taint a person's morality. There is a fine line between just and immoral behaviour. Aquinas and other Medieval thinkers saw obedience as a virtue from God and a determiner on which society is run.

In understanding the relationship between obedience and authority, both terms have to be defined.   In defining these terms, we can better understand what it means for a person to be obedient. According to the Webster dictionary, obedience means, "an act or instance of obeying, the quality or state of being obedient, a sphere of jurisdiction, or ecclesiastical or sometimes secular dominion."[89] This definition sets the parameters that obedience falls within. From that obedience is split into two types, deferential and coerced. Deferential obedience is when a person recognizes the authority figure and acts in accordance with their demands. Examples of this can be seen in Eastern cultural beliefs as shown in Asian based corporations. More will be said about this later in the paper. Coerced obedience is when a person obeys because of the

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[88] Herbert C. Kelman, and V. Lee. Hamilton. *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 60-63.
[89] "Obedience." *Merriam-Webster*, Merriam-Webster, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/obedience.

potentially harmful consequences if they do not.[90] This brings us to the question of who and

what is considered to be an authority figure.   Authority has various types, but the basic

definition of it according to Herbert Kelman in *Crimes of Obedience* is, "authority is the right to

command others and the power to do so."[91] There are two different types of authority,

bureaucratic and professional. The bureaucratic authority figure is expected to possess either

superior knowledge or skills, while the professional is someone who uses persuasive tactics and

character to assert their power. The legitimacy of the authority figure is important when it comes

to a person being obedient or not.[92]

What made Hitler into an authority figure and what was his justification for the creation

of his radical ideals? In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler had a fascination with war especially the

Franco-German War of 1870-1871. This moment sparked his desire to determine whether

Austria belonged to the German Nation since they did not take part in the war.[93] This moment

shows what Hitler believed to be exclusion from the German society. There were a series of

events that made Hilter feel that he was humiliated or excluded from the general society. First,

he was bitter that his father pushed him to be a civil servant, which is ironic due to the profession

he would take on later in life. The death of both his mother and father made him more isolated.

Second, his rejection from the Academy's School of Painting in Vienna served as the tipping

point into his involvement in social issues.[94] Hitler had high expectations for himself and his

excessive zeal for nationalistic pride created an overwhelinng desire to create a German society

based on his ideals:

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[90] Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility,* 63.
[91]Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility,* 53.
[92] Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility,* 54-55.
[93] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* , trans. Ralph Manheim (New York, NY: First Mariner Books , 1999), 6.
[94] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 18-19.

> The question of the 'nationalization' of a people is, among other things, primarily a question of creating healthy social conditions as a foundation for the possibility of educating the individual...above all the political, greatness of their own fatherland can and will achieve the inner pride in the privilege of being a member of such people.[95]

Hitler was focused on the desire to create a fatherland that he felt accepted into. He had to create a common enemy. The Jewish people became a representation of that exclusion from society. In *Mein Kampf,* Hitler focuses on the involvement of Jews in the artistic and literary sphere and his disgust with the positions they held in the society.[96] I would argue that Hitler blamed his rejection from the art world on the Jews thus not allowing him to become a part of the great German society. The Jews became the manifestation of what prevented German society from becoming a powerful and united nation. A fanatic always has to find another to blame because that provides the justification to gain power but also to commit atrocities in the name of social justice.

In order to understand how Hitler was able to take on this position of authority, the society has to be examined to understand what made the people obedient to extremist beliefs and social structures. In *Mein Kampf,* Hitler believed that the German state and society was in a precarious situation not due to solely an economic collapse after World War I:

> That this should be so among the broad masses may still pass, but for even the circles of the intelligentsia to regard the German collapse as primarily an 'economic catastrophe,' which can therefore be cured by economic means...only when it is understood that here, too economics is only of second or third-rate importance, and the primary role falls to factors of politics, ethics, morality, and blood, will we arrive at an understanding of the present calamity...[97]

I would argue that the German state and society did have social, political, and cultural problems, but it was the economic collapse that allowed for radical ideologies to be supported. People

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[95] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 34.
[96] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 58.
[97] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 227.

were looking for solutions to improve their livelihoods. According to Alan de Bromhead, Barry

Eichengreen, and Kevin H. O'Rourke, argues that support for extremist groups occurs when there

are economic problems and there is not an established democratic structure in place. In Germany

this was particularly true due to high levels of inflation and the mismanagement by the different

political parties. Alan de Bromhead, Barry Eichengreen, and Kevin H. O'Rourke also recognized

Hitler's observation that there were social and cultural problems that prevented the nation from

coming together.[98] These issues helped to create a reliance on a fanatical leader such as Hitler

because the majority of the individuals in the society were affected negatively by the war and

they looked for somewhere to place the blame. Hitler was engrossed in the idea of creating a

unified German homeland. Germany's geography helped to create instability and tension within

the nation. Germany was always in a state of defense because it was surrounded by hostile

neighbors on either side mainly France and Russia. It was to the advantage of the other nations

to keep Germany stratified so it could not become a powerful block on the continent.[99]   Hitler

was able to justify his goals to unite Germany and create a German homeland by placing the

blame for the society's problems on the Jews but also on France and other countries.

The leaders of the Rwandan Genocide much like Hitler were able to gain the support of

the people due to social, political, and cultural problems that had divided the society and created

contempt for the opposing side. According to Helen M. Hintjens, through most of Rwanda's

history there was a social divide between the Tutsis and the Hutus, but it was the desire of the

Hutu elites to keep their regime in power. Leading up to the genocide, the Hutu elites created

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[98] Alan de Bromhead, Barry Eichengreen, and Kevin H. O'Rourke, "Political Extremism in the 1920s and 1930s: Do German Lessons Generalize?," *The Journal of Economic History* 73, no. 2 (June 2013), 374.
[99] Tim Marshall , *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Explain Everything About the World* (New York, NY: Scribner , 2016), 103.

propaganda that was designed to place blame on the Tutsis.[100] Rwanda was colonized by

Germany and later Belgium. I would argue in order to establish control over the people and

society, it was vital for the colonial powers to create a strict social structure to maintain power.

In creating a strict social structure, ethinic identity became the most important factor when it

came to determining employment, social status, and potential marriage partners.[101] This social

structure caused instability in the society and it provided justification for social elites to use the

ethnic tensions to accomplish their political goals.

According to people who fought on the side on the interhamwe, a Hutu

paramilitary group, there was one apparent goal for them to complete and that was to kill every

Tutsi that they came across. The people would attend training sessions in the months leading up

to the Genocide. This was a premeditated event.[102] Several of the men who were interviewed

made it sound like they were attending a job:

> After the plane crash, we no longer worried about who had followed the teachings of the
> presidential party or the teachings of a rival party...we had to work to do, and we were
> doing our best. We didn't care one way or the other who preferred to take his orders from
> the burgomaster, the interhamwe, or our well known municipal judge...suddenly all Hutus
> of every kind were patriotic brothers without any partisan discord...we were doing a job
> to order...[103]

In the case of the Rwandan Genocide there was not just one charismatic leader; it was the

indoctrination of an ideological system that created justification to get rid of the Tutsis in order

to rearrange society and to gain wealth. The ultimate goal was to do a job and to reap the

rewards.

This leads me to my next questions, what exactly does it mean for a person to be obedient

to an authority figure or idea and how does that influence their judgement if they are otherwise a

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[100] Helen M. Hintjens, "Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 37, no. 2 (June 1999), 248-249.
[101] Hintjens, "Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda", 250.
[102] Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak: A Report*. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), 10.
[103] Hatzfeld, *Machete Season,* 15-16.

moral person? What are the potential problems of being obedient? According to the Medieval

scholar Bonaventure, to be obedient means giving up what is most valuable to a person, namely

their freedom of choice and the ability to act in accordance with their own moral desires. He

goes on to say that to be obedient is an admiral quality.[104] When I think of being obedient, I

think of obeying the law or doing what my professor/parents/doctor/ etc. ask. I do not consider

that to necessarily reflect my moral character.   Obedience helps to determine how society is run

by creating a hierarchy of people based on their superiority.[105] What determines if that

hierarchical system is beneficial or detrimental to society? In being obedient, moral judgement

is taken out of the situation. If the society is unstable, a radical leader or group is able to take

advantage of the obedience of individuals in the society. There is the possibility that the person

could avoid "bad obedience", but in many cases the person gets caught up in the authority figure

and the potential consequences of their actions.

The obedience experiment by Stanley Milgram highlights some of the problems that

come from being obedient. Milgram began his experiment in 1963. In each session he had three

participants. There was an overseer of the experiment and then a teacher and a student/learner.

The teacher was taken into another room and was required to ask the student a variety of words

and for every word that the student got wrong, the teacher was required to use an electrical shock

on them. The electrical voltage ranged from low to fatal. The majority of the participants

shocked the student with a fatal amount of electricity.[106] I would assume that most people would

have been able to realize the potential moral and physical implications of the situation. This

sentiment was echoed by outside readers of the study who predicted that most people would not

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[104]Jean Porter , "Natural Equality: Freedom, Authority and Obedience in Two Medieval Thinkers ." *Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics,* vol. 21, 2001, 286.

[105] Porter, "Natural Equality", 285.

[106] Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1997), 20-23.

be obedient because they were "good people".[107] Shouldn't the participants have acted

accordingly if they had the virtue of obedience? One of the participants said after the study that,

"I should have stopped the first time. I did want to stop at that time. I turned around and looked

at the [overseer]. I guess it's a matter of authority, if you want to call it that; my being impressed

by the thing and going on although I didn't want to."[108] This participant went through a moral

dilemma, but he still went ahead with what the overseer said. In this example, the test subject

went against his morals even though he knew that he was doing something wrong. According to

Herbert Kelman, this would be a crime of obedience because he knew the consequences of his

actions.[109] By being compliant, I would consider this person to be open to following the ideas of

a radical leader.. Kelman further argues that the person who is obedient is acting as an extension

of the authority figure making it easier to follow orders when they believe that the authority

figure will take the responsibility.[110] When being obedient, the person is not always thinking

about the moral implications of following through on the action, they are more concerned with

the person in charge. By putting all the responsibility on the authority figure, what prevents

individuals from committing atrocious acts? Individuals are more likely to obey the authority

figure because they do not want to be isolated from society. That could be a potential

consequence in disobeying the authority figure. On the flip side, in Milgram's study there were a

few people who were not obedient.

Some of the participants in the study refused to continue shocking the person and walked

out. Milgram believed that those participants were looking at the consequences for the person on

the receiving end of the command. They relied on other virtues such as empathy and

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[107] Milgram, *Obedience to Authority,* 24.
[108] Milgram, *Obedience to Authority,* 51.
[109] Kelman & Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility,* 46-47.
[110] Kelman & Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility*, 51.

compassion to be disobedient because of their concern for the person.[111] Yet only a small amount

of people responded in that way, which shows that the person being obedient is mostly concerned

with the authority figure and the benefits and consequences of obeying them. They did not

consider whether or not the authority figure shared their same moral code and if it was the right

thing to do. Trust is an essential part of being obedient, but if that trust is put into a fanatical

authority figure then that figure can motivate them to do whatever they desire. It all depends on

how well the authority figure is able to create a belief in the other person, that they are doing the

right thing.[112] Jean Hatzfeld gives an example of a man who was involved in the Rwandan

Genocide that illustrates this total reliance on the authority figure and the moral implications that

it has:

> Killing is very discouraging if you yourself must decide to do it, even to an animal. But
> if you must obey the orders of the authorities, if you have been properly, if you feel
> yourself pushed and pulled, if you see that the killing will be total and without disastrous
> consequences for yourself, you feel soothed and reassured. You go off to it with no more
> worry.[113]

This has disastrous consequences for society. When that authority figure is able to give their

followers that justification to inflict pain and suffering, the society is not able to function

properly.

It is important to see other examples of what obedience looks like in different places and

circumstances. I chose examples from the Nuremberg Trials and the Rwandan Genocide to help

illustrate what obedience means and how it is used to justify the support of a radical leader or

ideological system. I would argue that the majority of the individuals involved in these cases

were motivated by either the belief they had in the authority figure or ideological system, they

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[111] Milgram, *Obedience to Authority,* 29-30.
[112]Benjamin McMyler,"Obedience and Believing a Person." *Philosophical Investigations* 39, no. 1 (2015), 71 .
[113] Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 48-49.

felt marginalized by the society or were coerced by the authority figure.   What does this say

about the people who went against that authority figure or ideological system? When looking

specifically at the German people who chose to be disobedient by hiding Jews in their houses,

would they have been examples of obedience as a virtue because they were following their moral

beliefs or would they have been even morally worse because they endangered their whole

family? I would argue that in being disobedient they were taking the right action to prevent the

support of the fanatical ruler even though it put their livelihoods in danger. The ability to be

morally obedient in situations where society is greatly affected comes with consequences that

affect human flourishing.

Leon Goldensohn was an American psychologist and doctor who conducted a series of

interviews of several of the war criminals at the Nuremberg Trials. These interviews do not just

focus on the crime itself, but also on the individual's background and life, which helps

understand why they did what they did.[114]   One of the prisoners interviewed by Goldensohn was

a man named Wilhelm Keitel. His official job position was as stated, general, field marshal, and

chief of staff of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces.[115] This man worked with Hitler,

but never really spoke to him. He grew up in Prussia on a farm and had always planned on being

a farmer but his family was in extreme debt so he had to find a different career. It was more

lucrative for him to join the army, yet he always wanted to return to his homeland to farm.

During World War II, all his belongings were burned and at least two of his children died. In

giving the information about his life, he wanted Goldensohn to know that he was not worried

about being convicted, but that he wanted to take full responsibility so that none of the troops

under him would be punished.[116] This shows that he was at least human that he wanted to

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[114] Leon Goldensohn, *The Nuremberg Interviews*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), VIII.
[115] Goldensohn, *The Nuremberg Interviews,* 157.
[116] Goldensohn, *The Nuremberg Interviews,* 158-163.

provide for his family and was willing to take the blame for others despite how much or little he

may have been involved himself.

Keitel had the ability to make a morally just decision but claimed that he was influenced

by the power of the authority figure in this case Hitler and Nazi party He later said that:

> I was in it up to my neck by the time I realized the way things were going. What could I
> do? I could not resign in time of war; if I refused to obey I would be killed. Or I could
> commit suicide. On three different occasions I thought of resigning, but it was
> impossible...I was weak and let myself be talked into things."[117]

This man could have been lying about what happened, but I would argue that resigning would

have been seen as anti-loyal and disobedient to the state and that he most likely would have been

punished. As Keitel said earlier, he had joined the army to make money. In being aligned with

Hitler and the Nazi party, he mostly likely had more access to money and power which would

would help ensure that he was compliant. In a way being obedient more than likely protected the

family he had left from harm. That is why obedience can not be a virtue because in this case, he

was contributing to something that was bringing vast amounts of people to their deaths, but at the

same time he was protecting himself and his family. He did not really have a choice. How can

obedience be a choice or a character characteristic when you have no other option but to obey or

face the consequences? The Rwandan Genocide is another important example, of how

obedience can force people to become morally unhinged.

Jean Hatzfeld interviewed a group of friends who were participants in the Rwandan

Genocide. The group of Hutu men lived in an area of Rwanda called Kibungo alongside their

Tutsi neighbors. They worked as farmers as their families had done for generations; neighbors

described them as being hardworking, helpful, nice, among other qualities.[118] How could

seemingly normal people be obedient to an ideological system that brought about death and

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[117] Goldensohn, *The Nuremberg Interviews,* 159.
[118]Hatzfeld, *Machete Season,* 31-32.

destruction in the society? There are two examples that help to answer this question, the first

being from Gulawa Khan and Manzoor Ahmed who give an example from the FATA region in

Pakistan. It is similar to the conditions Rwanda suffered from before the genocide. The society

was not able to develop normally due to increased military presence and internal conflict. Poor

governance was a huge issue[119] Khan and Ahmed argued that the inability to access basic social

needs causes obedience to a system that supports fanatical behavior such as:

> Lack of income, housing, denial to access basic amenities, dearth of political voice and
> democratic rights, being unable to read and write, being at risk and uncertainty about the
> future course of life.[120]

In the FATA region in Pakistan, many of the youth were drawn to terrorism as a solution and the

youth and others in Rwanda were drawn to a radical means as well.   Rwanda had similar issues

in terms of access to basic amenities and democratic rights and these were further exacerbated by

ethnic tensions. When it appeared that the Tutsis had an unfair advantage in the society, it gave

the Hutus the justification to be obedient to a fanatical ideological system. They saw the

opportunity to improve their lives.

The second example that helps to answer why ordinary people are obedient to a radical

ideological system is from Hatzfeld, one member of the Hutu group that Hatzfeld interviewed

was named Jean-Baptiste, he killed a fellow Hutu who did not agree with eliminating Tutsis. If

he did not kill the man then he was threatened by others in the group that they would kill his

Tutsi wife. He knew that killing that man was not right, yet he did not want to lose his wife

either.[121] People are motivated to be obedient to a radical ideological system or authority figure

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[119] Gulawar Khan and Manzoor Ahmed, "Socioeconomic Deprivation, Fanaticism and Terrorism: A Case of Waziristan, Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of History & Culture* 38, no. 2 (July 2017), 68.
[120] Khan andAhmed, "Socioeconomic Deprivation, Fanaticism and Terrorism: A Case of Waziristan, Pakistan," 77.
[121] Hatzfeld, *Machete Season,* 23.

because they do not want to be punished or face some type of retribution for disobeying. One of

the other members of the group said about the killing that:

> When you receive a new order, you hesitate but you obey, or else you're taking a
> risk...when he shows you that the act will be total and have no grave consequences for
> anyone left alive, you obey more easily, you don't worry about anything. You forget your
> misgivings and fears of punishment. You obey freely.[122]

When the responsibility is put on someone else, it is easier to go along with the order because the

moral consequences do not affect the individual because the authority figure has convinced them

otherwise. The men in this group killed people that they had grown up with and in turn robbed

themselves of their humanity. Being obedient in this case was necessary to survive in the

society, but the moral consequences were high. It was easier to kill and obey because it gave

them access to an easier life, they had plenty of food and stole what they wanted. They did not

have to toil themselves to death in the fields. Was the access to a potentially better life worth

tearing society apart and killing children, raping mothers, and betraying friends?[123] In all these

cases if obedience was a virtue, the people involved should have been able to have the judgement

to know who to trust and who to obey, but in reality obedience has consequences that forces

people to make a choice that may not be morally right. It can prevent the person from

developing all their other moral characteristics because their freedom of choice is taken away.

Yet there are some philosophers that would argue that obedience is a virtue in its own right.

Aristotle, Plato , as well as Aquinas and Novature give examples of the importance of obedience

in a society as well as on an individual level.

   According to Aristotle, obedience is a virtue and a necessary part of society. In

developing obedience, the person is able to become a good citizen. He does recognize that there

is another form of obedience of a more master/slave relationship, but he does not consider that

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[122] Hatzfeld, *Machete Season,* 71.
[123] Hatzfeld, *Machete Season,* 62.

virtuous but just necessary.[124] Plato has a similar idea and praises obedience above all else in the

Crito. He said:

> Any of you who does not like us and the city, and who wants to go to a colony or to any other city, may go where he likes, and take his goods with him. But he who has experience of the manner in which we order justice and administer the State, and still remains, has entered into an implied contract that he will do as we command him.[125]

In the *Crito*, Socrates refuses to escape from the prison even though his follower begs him to.

He believed that being obedient to the state is the most honorable thing he can do. He even

points out that State and citizens have a parent-child type relationship and in order for the

government to function it must have obedient citizens.[126] Both Aristotle and Plato see obedience

as important to the development of one's rational self and ultimately believe that it is a highly

moral characteristic to possess. I disagree with their arguments to an extent. If I am an Athenian

citizen, I can not just choose to disobey the State if I have decided to stay within the society. In

being obedient to my own self this reasoning can still prove to be detrimental to myself and

others. If Plato and Aristolte would say that obedience is a virtue when there can be a critical

thought process, I would argue in the cases that I present that critical thought is not possible or is

hindered due to external influences.   This can be seen with Hitler and the Holocaust and the

Rwandan Genocide choosing to be disobedient came at great risk of not only exclusion from the

society but a danger to the peoples' well-beings and livelihoods.

In being obedient to the State even if they request a person to do something that is

morally wrong, they have no choice but to obey. Plato and Aristotle would see that as being

destructive to human flourishing. In many cases, the person is prevented from listening to their

rational self therefore enabling the State to convince them to unjust acts with little regard to the

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[124]Richard Kraut and Steven Skultety. *Aristotle's Politics: Critical Essays*. (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 174.

[125] Plato, *Plato's Five Dialogues*. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub., 2002), 17.

[126] Plato, *Plato's Five Dialogues,* 15-16.

moral consequences of their actions. I would say it is important to obey the laws of the government, but not to blindly follow them without question. Especially in cases when the society is unstable then the government is less trustworthy because they have not been able to provide for its citizenry. That allows a potentially fanatical ruler or group to take over. If I had to classify the means of obedience as a virtue based on looking at it from a government point of view, I would say the mean would be obeying the law/government, but being able to speak out or disobey when something is not morally right. The excess point would be blindly following every law without question. While being deficient in obedience would mean that the person obeys no laws and has no respect for the government. Yet, is obedience really a virtue even towards the government? For example, we are told to wear a seatbelt in the car and to follow the speed limit. Most of the time, many of us probably follow the law, but why do we do it? There is no moral choice in the matter. I am thinking if I do not follow the law, I might get hurt in an accident or be pulled over by the police. I am being influenced by outside forces and am not necessarily thinking of the morality of it.

If the government is not a proper source of obedience, maybe God is. Aquinas and Bonaventure were both Medieval philosophers who believed that obedience was an inherent part of society and that being obedient to God was a virtue.[127] Bonaventure argues about the merits of obedience and how it is the ultimate vow to Christ, as every christian should seek to imitate him[128] He provides an answer to the question of being obedient to an authority figure and whether they can be trusted saying:

> If someone were to commit himself [to obey another] in any eventuality, presupposing no law, norm, or rule, without doubt this would be foolish. When, however, someone vows obedience in accordance with the rule, there is no danger in this, because certain things

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[127] Porter, "Natural Equality", 283-284.
[128] Porter, "Natural Equality", 286.

are in accordance with the rule...no one incurs danger by undertaking a vow in
accordance with the established mode.[129]

I make the assumption that the rule in this case is the rule of God. If according to Bonaventure

that a person in their obedience is acting in a christian way then their obedience can have no

moral consequences. Aquinas who also agrees on the point that obedience is a virtue, but makes

a point to mention who and what a person should obey saying, "With respect to those things

which pertain to the nature of the body, a human person is not obliged to obey another human

person, but only god because human persons are equal by nature."[130] Both Aquinas and

Bonaventure argue similar things and look at god as the ultimate authority figure. Since God is

perfect, all his laws should be just so being obedient to him should create a moral righteousness

within each person. I do not agree with even God being a proper source of obedience. People

commit terrible acts in the name of God; people who believe that they are carrying out God's

will. Take the example of suicide bombers, some believe that by blowing up any infidels that

they are fulfilling God's commands.

In the *Telegraph*, an article on child suicide bombers was posted a few years ago. Abdul

Samat was only around thirteen years old when he was told by the Taliban to walk into a crowd

in Afghanistan with a bomb strapped to his chest.[131] Gul Khan, another child that was recruited

said, " each day they were preaching that we would tie bombs on to our bodies and attack

foreigners in Afghanistan. They told us that the bombs would not kill us, only the Americans

would die and you can come back to us."[132]   It is not that Allah is not trustworthy or evil, but he

can not be a legitimate authority to obey because of how his laws can be twisted to fit each

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[129] Porter, "Natural Equality", 286.
[130] Porter, "Natural Equality", 288.
[131] Ben Farmer, "Afghan Boy Suicide Bombers Tell How They Are Brainwashed into Believing They Will Survive." The Telegraph. January 13, 2012. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/9014282/Afghan-boy-suicide-bombers-tell-how-they-are-brainwashed-into-believing-they-will-survive.html.
[132] Farmer, "Afghan Boy Suicide Bombers".

person's goals.   I think emulating the life of Christ, God, Allah or whatever spiritually divine

presence that a person may subscribe to is a good way to develop good moral habits, but if

believing that a person does not have to obey anyone but God upsets the basic foundation of

society.

I believe that obedience is not a virtue, authority figures have too much control and

influence on a person leading them to put their morality on someone else and to commit

atrocious acts. Obedience is necessary to run a society and people need to obey the laws in order

for there to be peace and happiness, but I would not call that a virtue. Authority figures control

how and whether a person will obey leading to the person being in a state of compromised

morality. Not only does that person have a compromised state of morality, but obedience can

affect society in a negative way. Obedience does not always guarantee that a society will

function properly. Obedience in an unstable society can create unfavorable outcomes. The

government and God are examples of things that require obedience to a degree so that they can

function, but the moral choice in the matter is small. In giving up a part of yourself, the ability to

choose right and wrong is almost impossible and is reliant on the authority figure. All the other

virtues are requiring a person to be aware of their moral state at all times so they are able to

flourish, but obedience does not require that.

The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-33 Exposed

The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 is a highly controversial topic due to the survivors, western journalists and the political bureau of the Soviet Union, obfuscating information regarding the event for over fifty years. The majority of academics in the international sphere hold the premise that the Ukrianian Famine of 1932-1933 or Holodomor was a gencodial event caused by a man-made famine in order for Stalin to establish control over the region. Another prevailing opinion regarding the topic is that the Ukrianian Famine was not man-made but a natural occurrence caused by environmental and social factors that were further exacerbated by a poor government structure. Four questions underscore the reasons underlying why this event has been reshaped to fit these different versions: Why would Stalin and the Soviet Union want to rewrite the experience of famine in the Ukraine during 1932-1933? Why were western journalists compelled to hide the reality of the situation? Why did the U.S take such an extreme interest in uncovering the truth behind the famine more than fifty years later? Why did survivors and their descendants not come forward with their version of the event before official studies and commissions were being launched in the 1980s and 90s?

Eugene Lyons' book titled *Assignment in Utopia* illustrates his experience in the Soviet Union and how he grew disillusioned with their ideologies. In 1928, U.S journalist Eugene Lyons was sent to Russia for a period of six years to report on the success of the Soviet system. He originally was optimistic and supportive of the communist way of life, but as time went on he grew to be wary of Stalin and his policies towards industrial progression and the concept of unity throughout the Soviet Union.[133] While residing in Moscow, Lyons spoke with a Russian newspaperman about how the news and press was covered under Soviet directives and said:

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[133]Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937), 35-37.

But how about truth and facts? I prodded him. Here I am a stranger in your midst. What you print is my chief source of information. Can I believe it? [Russian Newspaperman] If its printed, it's truth for us. We don't know and don't care about bourgeois notions of facts. We Soviet journalists are not just reporters. We don't boast of standing above the turmoil like recording angels...As far as we are concerned, it is neither news or truth. It becomes plain counter-revolution.[134]

A connection can be perceived between Lyons' argument and John Fiske's revelations in his chapter called "Popular Texts" in *Understanding Popular Culture.* According to Fiske, a popular text is something that the consumer can easily fit to their own interpretation as it does not follow the rules of traditional culture and society. The source is created for an audience and it is the audience who helps to spread the ideas.[135] While this conversation is specifically about the Soviet Press, the basic ideas apply to this idea of a "popular text". Stalin used this concept of a popular text to spread his own ideological system and used it to garner support.

The general premise of a "popular text" is to spread a concept or idea that can easily change and be applied to other things. Lyons was concerned about how he as the consumer would be able to trust the information being given; the reality is that any information presented to the consumer whether in the form of news, documentaries, books, or other miscellaneous texts are always slanted towards a prevailing view. Whether it was the Soviet Government, the people who believe it was or was not considered a genocide, western journalists, the Survivors, or U.S. government each of these groups of people have taken the various reports, images, first hand accounts, and other sources about the Holodomer and given them their own meaning to support a certain ideal.

The Holodomer has been revised with three ideas in mind, those being a push for a certain ideological view whether that is communist or anti-communist, the process and impact of genocide, and a push to reveal the "truth". Falling under the first category and the answer to the

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[134] Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, 106.
[135] John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture.* (London: Routledge, 2011), "Popular Texts".

first question is that Stalin had a relentless desire to show the power and prestige of the Soviet Union and wanted to uphold Russain Nationalistic pride and the Communist ideological system even if it resulted in the deaths of millions of people.[136]   The characteristics of a fanatical leader can be applied to Stalin. When Stalin came to power, he inherited a nation and numerous satellite states that were in the midst of enormous social, economic, and political changes. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, Stalin was pressured to maintain what the Soviets had built. In order to do this, he needed to have absolute power over the nation and satellite states such as Ukraine.   Western journalists who were residing in the Soviet Union at the time of the famine were encouraged to conceal the reality of the situation by downplaying the severity of it to the public.

Censorship, general access to the Soviet Union, and diplomatic pressures were some of the main reasons that the western journalists were compelled to cover up the brutality and devastation suffered by the people in Ukraine.[137] Without the help of the western journalists and the Soviet Press, Stalin would not have been able to create a positive image of Soviet power and progress. It was increasingly important for Stalin to present himself as a hero to the people in order to justify his actions. In general, many people in the U.S wanted to know if the Soviet System was working especially as more intellectuals were debating the ideological concepts of communism.[138]

The majority of research that has been conducted portrays the Holodomor as a genocide, however, there are academics such as Mark Tauger and people who believe that there was a famine in the Ukraine from 1932-1933, but it was not a man-made famine created by the Soviet

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[136]Whitman Bassow, "Concealing Stalin's Famine." Essay. In *The Moscow Correspondents: Reporting on Russia from the Revolution to Glasnost*. (New York: Paragon House, 1989), 66.
[137]James E. Mace, "The American Press And The Ukrainian Famine." (*Genocide Watch*, 1992), 114.
[138] Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, 401-403.

Regime. Within this secondary view of the Holodomor, there is the argument that the famine was not anything unusual; there may have been some environmental factors that contributed to the severity of it.[139] On the other side, there is the belief that the Ukrainian Nationalists extended the effects of the famine and led to more devastating circumstances. They also tie this to an allegiance with Nazis and facism.[140]

In looking at the last question of why the survivors and their descendants did not open up about the Holodomer before the 1980s and 1990s, there seemed to be an overwhelming effort to pretend the famine had never existed. This was done for a variety of reasons, but mostly because they feared punishment from the Soviet Government if they spoke out about their experience.[141] This silence helped to promote the Soviet's view of the famine, but also spoke to the severity of the event. If it had just been another year of famine as the Soviets and other academics had said, the survivors would have been more willing to talk about the events that had occured. The psychological effects and trauma suffered during this period of time underscore the reality of the situation. It is also important to note that during the 1980s and 90s, many of the Soviet documents regarding the famine were being declassified, more people had access to the official statistics and reports to bring more awareness to this event. A historian, Robert Conquest released his book, *Harvest of Sorrow* in 1986 that brought the experience of the famine to the general public for the first time.[142] As more awareness was brought to the event, more eyewitnesses came forward and shared their stories.

Stalin inherited a nation that was on the point of collapse. He was committed to bringing wealth and power to the Soviet state. He was driven by a paranoia of what would happen if he

[139]Mark B. Tauger, "The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933." *Slavic Review* 50, no. 1 (1991)
[140]Douglas Tottle, *Fraud, Famine and Fascism: the Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard*. (Toronto: Progress Books, 1987), 92-93.
[141] *Harvest of Despair: The Unknown Holocaust*. The Ukrainian Famine Research Committee, 1985.

[142] Naimark, "How the Holodomor Can Be Integrated into Our Understanding of Genocide.", 121-122.

did not establish and maintain the image of a great Communist state that he and the Bolsheviks had fought for in the revolution. This meant that he had to establish complete control and to destroy anyone that could be considered an enemy to the State. The people were willing to support Stalin and his ideological system because they wanted to improve their livelihoods. Neil Faulkner provides an example from a secret "testament" that Lenin wrote to the top party leaders right before his death saying Stalin had unlimited authority in his hands:

> Think about a way of removing Stalin from that post and appointing another man in his stead who in all other respects differs from Comrade Stalin in having only one advantage, namely, that of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite, and more considerate to comrades, less capricious, etc.[143]

This shows that Stalin was becoming too radical for the Bolsheviks and a warning that he could damage the Soviet system and way of life. It also highlights the internal conflict within the party, which would have created further instability within the society.

Stalin and the Soviet government were committed to making the Soviet Union into a modern and industrialized entity that required the defeat and compliance of anyone who rebelled against this system. According to the *Harvest of Despair* documentary, Stalin wanted to strengthen the Communist System and increase Russian nationalism in the region.[144] In 1928, Stalin launched the Five Year Plan, his main goals were to increase productivity by collectivizing agriculture and boosting industrial power by over 250 percent.[145] In order to accomplish these goals, Stalin needed to have complete control over Ukraine which supplied the majority of natural resources to the Soviet Union. Volodymry Kosyk, a Ukrainian Historian stated that, "in 1927, Ukraine contributed 80% coal, 85% iron ore, 70% metals and played a vital role in

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[143] Neil Faulkner, "Stalinism," in *A People's History of the Russian Revolution* (Pluto Press , 2017), 241.
[144] *Harvest of Despair: The Unknown Holocaust*. The Ukrainian Famine Research Committee, 1985.

[145]"Collectivization and Industrialization." Library of Congress , August 31, 2016.

machinery manufacturing and in providing raw materials to a wide range of food processing and light industries in the U.S.S.R."[146] Before the famine occured, Ukraine was already providing a huge amount of their natural resources to the Soviet State. A further push for collectivization and industrialization would have caused rebellion and conflict. Stalin was overly ambitious and he saw the Ukraianian peasants, the Kulaks, as a threat to his control of the region. The Kulaks would have had more incentive to fight back against Stalin's policies because they would lose their land and wealth to the collective farms. Anyone who was willing to against Stalin's policies would have automatically been an enemy of the state.[147] The resistance to the collectivization process would have been seen as a personal insult to Stalin. He had no compassion or desire to include the Ukrainian people into the Soviet Federation. His goal was to maintain control over the region and in order to do this, he had to demonize the Ukrianian people namely the peasants. A person becomes a fanatical leader when they feel they have been humiliated and their goal is to create a common enemy in order to justify their actions.[148] This particular situation would highlight one aspect of his radical views and behavior. Stalin was able to use the existing famine and the press to his advantage.

The foreign press agents helped to create an alternative reality of the Ukrianian Famine, while also presenting Stalin and the Soviet Government in a progressive light. Stalin was a vain person and willing to go to extreme lengths to promote his vision, but he knew the importance of using the news and the press to achieve this. As he wrote in a letter to Eugene Lyons about , "I am sorry that I cannot at the present time grant your request for an interview. Motives: (a) interviews do not destroy legends but rather create an unhealthy atmosphere for new sensations

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[146] Commission on the Ukraine Famine, 54.
[147] Naimark, "How the Holodomor Can Be Integrated into Our Understanding of Genocide.", 123.
[148] Arie Kruglanski et al., "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism," *Advances in Political Psychology* 35, no. S1 (February 2014), 74.

and legends…"[149] This was a power play on Stalin's part, by keeping the journalists extremely

interested in himself, it stopped them from focusing on his policies. He wanted to create an

illusion of mystery and power.

One of the most profound images that was propagated through the press was the image of

Stalin as a hero. According to Anita Pisch, he was the image of Communist Russia:

> In the eyes of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., Stalin is the incarnation of their heroism, their
> love of their country, their patriotism. Stalin's name is a symbol of the courage and the
> renown of the Soviet people, and a call to heroic deeds for the welfare of their great
> country. The name of Stalin is a symbol of the moral and political unity of Soviet
> Society.[150]

This was one of Stalin's ways to establish control over society. In creating a positive image of

himself, it was easier for him to create a justification for his policies and actions. According to

Mitchell Silbar and Arvin Bhatt, in order for an ideological goal to be achieved there has to be

effective leadership.[151] Stalin had to make the people believe that he was doing everything that

he could for the benefit of the society and nation. While he was using his power as the leader of

the Communist party and Soviet Union to achieve respect and power in the global community

with little regard to the wellbeing of the people. This resulted in the press being heavily

regulated and controlled to maintain Stalin's image.

According to Eugene Lyons, the press had no freedom in Russia, it was heavily

controlled by the Communist party.[152] This meant that anything that the foreign or local press

wrote was approved by the government. As the forced agricultural collectivization was increased

in 1929, there were problems with food production and the shortages could be seen in Moscow

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[149] Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, 264.
[150] Anita Pisch , "Stalin Is like a Fairytale Sycamore Tree — Stalin as a Symbol," in *The Personality Cult of Stalin in Soviet Posters, 1929–1953* (Acton , Australia: Anu Press , 2016), 194.
[151] Mitchell Silber and Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat: The NYPD Jihadist Report* (New York City, Ny: New York City Police Department , 2015), 2.
[152] Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, 105.

and other areas of the Soviet Union. The majority of the grain that was collected was being sold abroad to acquire foreign technology.[153] Even though the foreign journalists were starting to see that the Soviet system had a multiplicity of flaws, they were kept busy with distractions such as lavish dinner parties and were force fed information.[154] One of the main slogans that started to appear in the papers was, "Plot!".[155] The purpose of this was to shift the attention away from the Soviet policies and to put the blame on the Ukrainian peasants The Ukrianian peasants were projected as the common enemy to the State and people. The whole Soviet system rested on convincing the populace and foreign journalists that their system was the most beneficial means to support the communist way of life, but Stalin had to make sure that no one was aware of the extent that he was going to achieve his goals.

When looking at the sequencing of events as the famine progressed, Stalin became more manic in covering up what was occurring as the peasants were restricted to surviving heinous circumstances. This meant that he started campaigns across the region to convince people that the situation was not as bad as it appeared. The campaigns tried to create an illusion of normalcy, "starving peasant children were told by their schoolteachers that any mention of the everyday reality of the starvation around them was anti-soviet propaganda; they were taught to sing 'thank you Comrade Stalin for a Happy Childhood".[156] The only reason that the people accepted this alternative reality was because they already were suffering from starvation and there was nothing they could do to change it. Any attempt at improving their lives was seen as anti-soviet.

It was most likely that no one was fooled by the coverup except for the general public in the U.S and other countries because the journalists were able to twist the facts to present an

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[153] Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia,* 177-179.
[154] Bassow, "Concealing Stalin's Famine," 83.
[155] Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia,* 364.
[156] Mace, "The American Press And The Ukrainian Famine.", 114.

unfortunate occurrence rather than a malicious plot. Most of the journalists were torn between

supporting what they had once believed was a progressive ideological system and their moral

conscience to report what was the "truth". The other side to this issue was that no one really

knew what was real and what was fake. The correspondents could make up their own stories

about the situation as long as it passed Soviet censorship. An example of this comes from Robin

Kinkead who worked as an assistant to the journalist, Walter Duranty while he resided in Russia.

Wiley Post and Harold Gatty were two pilots who were making a round the world flight and

landed in Moscow. Post was expected to interview them and write a report; he was not able to

get them to speak to him. He was advised by other journalists to make a story up about the

landing, which he did and published.[157] In essence, this shows how people give new meaning to

events regardless of whether they are true or not.

Walter Duranty was one of the foreign journalists for *The New York Times* who sided

explicitly with the Soviet opinion in his articles. In 1932 and 1933 on two separate occasions he

made note that:

> Enemies and foreign critics can say what they please. Weaklings and despondents at home may groan under the burden, but the youth and strength of the Russian people is essentially at one with the Kremlin's program, believes it worthwhile and supports it, however hard be the sledding...There is no actual starvation or deaths from starvation but there is widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition.[158]

Another journalist, Louis Fischer reported something similar:

> It seemed that whole villages had been contaminated by such men[Ukrianian Nationalists], who had to be deported to lumbering camps and mining areas in distant agricultural areas which are just now entering upon their pioneering stage. These steps were forced upon the Kremlin, but the Soviets were, nonetheless, learning how to rule wisely.[159]

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[157] Bassow, "Concealing Stalin's Famine," 79.

[158] Arnold Beichman, "Pulitzer-Winning Lies." Washington Examiner, June 12, 2003.

[159] Mace, "The American Press And The Ukrainian Famine.", 122.

These articles indicate that the journalists were aware of the situation in Ukraine, but chose to project the Soviet opinion. They were living rather well in Moscow by being given special benefits as foreigners, they were more closely associated to the bourgeois than the proletariat. The Stalinist view of the famine was not a true communist view, but one of a totalitarian dictator.

In the 1980s, the U.S. took an interest in the Holodomor; it gave a way to discredit and shame the Soviet Union. While Stalin sought to cover up the atrocities in Ukraine during the famine, the U.S. sought to expose those secrets more than fifty years later. The U.S. created a commission to do research into the Holodomor; they ultimately determined that the Soviet regime was using food as a weapon to make the Ukranians submit to their will. At the time of the commission, the Soviet Union was using similar tactics in Ethiopia and Afghanistan.[160] The commission interviewed several witnesses, but some of the key testimonies they used were ones where people suffered or witnessed extremely vile things. An example of this comes from the testimony of Ms. Tatiana Pawlichka:

> There was cannibalism in our village. On my farmstead, an 18 year old boy, Danylo Hukhlib died, and his mother and younger sisters and brothers cut him up and ate him. The Communists came and took them away, and we never saw them again. People said they took them a little ways off and shot them right away-the little ones and the older ones together.[161]

The likelihood of cannibalism and other similar atrocious acts most likely occurred, but probably did not happen the majority of the time. The commission may have taken the worst of the testimonies to make the Holodomer look even more terrible than it already was perceived. It is interesting that this woman says the Communists came and took them away and shot them for committing a cannibalistic act; how did the Communists know that they committed an act of

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[160] Commission on the Ukraine Famine. *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932-1933: Report to Congress.* (Washington: United States Government Publishing Office 1988),10-16.
[161] Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine,* 86.

cannibalism? Why would they have shot them instead of sending them to a labor camp? This sounds similar to how the Nazis disposed of people, Stalin wanted to crush what he perceived as resistance to his plans.[162]

The documentary, *Harvest of Despair* was released around the same time that commission was being done. The film concentrates on the brutality of the Soviet Union and the suffering of Ukrainian peasants. Over a million peasants were rounded up and sent to gulags, while the rest were made to work on the collectivized farms while being starved to death. Houses were ransacked to make sure that no food was hidden; mothers threw their children onto trains with the hope that someone would take care of them. Bodies lined the streets of Kiev; these are some of the images presented by the film.[163] Much like the Commission, the film was created to serve a certain purpose and that was to show the devastation of the famine with a visual element. In showing this to the public, the reaction was supposed to be one of animosity towards the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union wanted to be the most powerful an progressive country, this helped to make them look ruthless and backwards.

When looking at what genocide means, it can be applied to the Ukrianian Famine, but there are different opinions surrounding this issue. In the article, "How the Holodomer can be Integrated into Our Understanding of Genocide" by Norman Naimark, he states that the destruction of the Ukrianian nation happened in four stages:

> First, the attacks on the Ukrainian intelligentsia, when teachers, artists, thinkers, political leaders were liquidated, imprisoned, deported; Second, the attack on the Ukrianian churches, priests, and hierarchy...Third, the assault on the villages through an artificial famine...Last...the diminishing and dispersal of the Ukrianian population, while bringing Russians and other nationalities into Ukraine.[164]

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[162] Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine,* 76.

[163] *Harvest of Despair: The Unknown Holocaust*. The Ukrainian Famine Research Committee, 1985.

[164] Naimark, "How the Holodomor Can Be Integrated into Our Understanding of Genocide.", 120.

This process can qualify as a genocide because the amount of people who died and suffered severe consequences from living through this event. The U.S especially in the Commission report wanted to inflate the amount of suffering and the causes to suit their needs. In the report, it was estimated that over 14 million people died.[165] It is possible that since many of the official documents were becoming unclassified that the mortality rate was estimated, but it is more likely that the U.S government was trying to slander the Soviets. Douglas Tottle in his book, *Fraud, Famine, and Fascism: The Ukranian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard* argues that the mortality rate given by the Commission was too high as the total population of Ukraine at the time was estimated around 25 million. Ukraine could have not lost more than half of its population and still be able to bring in a successful harvest in 1933 and have over 5 million Ukrainian men serve in WWII. It is likely that anywhere between 3-5 million people died.[166] Journalist Jeff Coplon wrote in an article in the "Village Voice", that much of the imagery that was being shown to the public was from the Volga famine in 1920-21.[167] That would mean that the point was not to be accurate in the facts and exposing the truth, but to spread a certain message. Though the difference with the Ukrainian Famine that makes it qualify as a genocide is that Stalin intended to make his plan work by controlling the region and he needed to have the population under his control and that meant subjecting them to physical suffering. It is similar to the Nazi Holocaust. Stalin and Hitler were similar in their ideological views; they both wanted to create an ideal state. In order to do that, they needed to create a common enemy in order to mould the society to their views.

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[165] Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine,* 82.
[166] Tottle, *Fraud, Famine and Fascism*, 74, 101.
[167] Jeff Coplon, "In Search of a Soviet Holocaust: A 55-Year-Old Famine Feeds the Right." Village Voice , January 12, 1988.

In order to answer the second question of why the U.S took an interest in exploring the truth behind the Holodomor more than fifty years later, the ideological views such as an anti-communist and anti-soviet have to be explored as well as the emerging interest in genocide studies. In the 1980s and 90s, the U.S. was approaching the end of the Cold War, some of the incentive for creating a commission to conduct research on the Holodomor was to create a negative view of the Soviet Union.[168] The Nazi Holocaust and the introduction of genocide studies prompted the U.S to do more research into the Ukranian Famine of 1932-1933.[169] When the famine was occuring during this period, creating and maintaining positive diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union was more important than the U.S. becoming involved in their personal affairs.[170]

The last view of the Holodomer comes from the survivors and their descendants; the survivors kept their silence for over fifty years. This speaks to the views one that the circumstances surrounding the famine both politically and emotionally caused them to hide it. According to the Commission report done by the U.S government 2/3rds of witnesses declined to be interviewed for several reasons:

> Fear of the Soviet Reprisal against relatives still living in the U.S.S.R, the events are too traumatic to recall, the feeling that what they have to say is 'uninteresting' or 'not worthwhile', and poor health.[171]

The silence of the majority of the survivors speaks to the traumatic circumstances of the event. While the U.S government may have exaggerated some of the facts, the amount of suffering because of Stalin's policies cannot be ignored. Mark Tauger and some of his contemporaries argue that there was a famine in the Ukraine, but it was nothing new that famines occurred every

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[168] Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine,* 16.

[169] Norman M. Naimark, "How the Holodomor Can Be Integrated into Our Understanding of Genocide." *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 2, no. 1 (2015), 118-120.

[170] Mace, "The American Press And The Ukrainian Famine.", 130.

[171] Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine,* 82.

couple of years.[172] Even though famine was common to the region there would have been no need for the survivors to try to erase the memory of the event, the pressure from the Soviet Government speaks to the dire consequences of what occured.

Douglas Tottle believes that the Ukrianian people are to blame for the famine because he suspects them to be Nazi sympathizers. Due to the Nazi's occupation of Western Ukraine and the fact that many Ukrianian Nationalists supported Hitler.[173] Perhaps the Ukrianian Nationalists sided with Hitler because they saw that he had the power to free them from the Soviet Union. Jewish Historian, Lucy Dawidowicz wrote about some of the crimes Ukrianian Nationalists committed against Jewish people:

> In Lwow, the Germans and Ukrainian(Nationalists), in house-to-house hunts for Jews, shot them randomly on the spot. Belatedly, avenging the assasination...of Petliura, notorious anti-semite...the Ukrianians staged mammoth programs, slaughtering thousands of Jews and carrying off other thousands of Jews to Einsatzgruppen headquarters.[174]

It is far fetched to say that the Ukrianian Holodomer is a giant Fascist plot to discredit the Soviet genius. If the Ukrianian Nationalists did side with Hitler, there may have been hatred towards the Jewish people because they were one of the main perpetrators under Stalin to cause them suffering during the Famine. According to Israeli Journalist, Sever Plocker, over 40 percent of the Soviet Security force was run by Jews. CHEKA(The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage) was run by Genrikh Yagoda who used terror tactics to help instill obedience and compliance with Stalin's objectives.[175] Tauger, Tottle and their contemporaries who believe in this Fasicst plot idea are attempting to justify Stalin's actions in the Ukraine. This completely disregards the trauma and suffering that the Ukrianian people

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[172]Grover Furr, "The 'Holodomor' and the Film 'Bitter Harvest' Are Fascist Lies." CounterPunch.org, March 3, 2017.
[173] Tottle, *Fraud, Famine and Fascism,* 103.
[174] Tottle, *Fraud, Famine and Fascism*, 105.
[175]Sever Plocker, "Stalin's Jews." Ynetnews, October 15, 2010.

went through. They did not choose to forget the Famine and keep its silence because they were co-conspirators with the Nazis but did want to suffer from the consequences of not going along with the Soviet system.

In conclusion, the history and circumstances behind the Holodomer have been modified to fit the ideological views of whoever is seeking to either erase it or bring it to light. As it can be seen with Stalin, he chose to cover it up because he did not want to show that there was resistance to the Soviet way of life and the means that he had to go to create change and progress with little regard for human life. He was fanatical in his approach, he wanted to project himself as a hero to the people. The Ukrianian people and society were greatly affected under Stalin's policies which resulted in destitution, death, and paranoia. The rapid industrialization and progression of the Soviet came at the destruction of a society. The U.S chose to expose the sins of the Soviet Union for their own gain in the battle of Capitalism and Communism. The survivors of the famine were a pawn in this game, it was better to forget and live then to die and remember. Any historical event that can be studied has multiple sides and this concept can be applied to understanding how and why fanatical leaders and their followers exist. It is the creation of a prevailing perceptive that can either hide or reveal the fanatic's actions. In the case of Stalin and the Holodomer, the image he created of himself and the policies taken towards the Ukraine were accepted for a long period of time.

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