

BEFORE THE BLAZE, THE SPARK: THE NATURE OF ARMED RESISTANCE AND ITS  
MOTIVATIONS IN WORLD WAR II

By

CYNTHIA ROSS

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the thesis of CYNTHIA ROSS find it satisfactory and recommend it be accepted.

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Chair

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Abstract

By Cynthia Ross, MA  
Washington State University  
May 2006

Chair: Heather Streets

One of the often-overlooked areas in the otherwise vibrant field of World War II historical research is the study of motivations of resistance groups that formed throughout the world in response to occupation by the primary Axis powers – Germany, Italy, and Japan. In response, millions of civilians worldwide took up arms in anti-Axis resistance. Indeed, the harshness and intrusive quality of the Axis occupation, carried out to achieve dominance and control, worked against the occupation forces by creating a sea of opposition. Since resistance occurred in all occupied countries, encompassing a diverse political, religious, social, and cultural community the question arises, did this widely varying group of people all choose resistance based on common motivations that cut across all differences? In examining this topic, this paper approaches anti-Axis resistance motivations from a world history perspective through selection of four case study countries – France, Yugoslavia, Burma, and the Philippines.

One key to resistance was the amount of coercive or aggressive force used by the occupation to exert control, termed here as intensity of occupation; meaning, the higher the intensity, the more likely resistance was to occur. Yet if motivations related *only* to the intensity of occupation, resistance would be a variable as the occupation itself. Thus, while intensity of

occupation is *part* of the key to understanding resistance motivations, other, more fundamental themes also play important roles. Therefore, this paper argues that resisters made their choices based on concepts of human dignity and identity that the experience of occupation sharpened. Severe attacks on these shared and possibly universal concepts, at the individual and collective level, created a sustained resistance response. Indeed, although intensity is important, repeated attacks on dignity and identity are the very foundation of *all* resistance motivations.

In an ever-expanding world of global connections and human interaction, the study of resistance from a world history perspective is critical. For that reason, this study rests on the assumption that a comparative and thematic study of resistance as a worldwide phenomenon is the most fruitful approach rather than reliance on a narrow national perspective that might obscure its global significance.

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## **Dedication**

For my parents, William Payne and Mary Ann Ross



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*Why choose World War II resistance history?*

World War II was one of the most devastating and pivotal conflicts in human history, spreading to involve almost every country and people across the globe including Europe, Asia, Russia, Africa, North America, Australia, and South America. As the massive armies of the ‘Axis’ and ‘Allied’ powers quickly became continental and then super-continental in scope, battlefields included millions of civilians and vital infrastructure, such as buildings and transportation routes.<sup>1</sup> In every theater of warfare, villages, cities, and individuals existed who were not willing to become passive bystanders to the destruction of their lives and homes. In fact, resistance arose in every Axis occupied country, carried out by those who called those regions ‘home’. Although World War II is a vibrant field in historical research, some elements receive more scholarly attention than others do. One of these often-overlooked areas of study within the history of the conflict are the motivations of resistance groups that formed throughout the world, specifically against the primary Axis powers - Germany, Japan, and Italy.

In an ever-expanding world of global connections and human interaction, the study of resistance from a world history perspective is critical. Millions of civilians worldwide took up arms in anti-Axis resistance in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific. Indeed, resistance occurred in so many locations, carried out by such a diverse community of people, within a very short span of time suggesting the presence of possible universals within the choice of resistance and its

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<sup>1</sup> The Axis countries included Germany, Italy, and Japan as the primary members within the Tripartite Pact with Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania as secondary powers. Among the twenty-six countries included in the Allied forces, the three largest countries were Great Britain (including the crown colonies and the Commonwealth – Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, and India), the United States, and the Soviet Union. Other countries were Poland, France, Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Yugoslavia, Greece, China, and Brazil.

motivations. This study explores those similarities to uncover continuity among global populations, even in the midst of war and the ensuing social and cultural upheaval.

Many of the resistance groups, along with their fundamental motivations, did not cease with the end of the war in 1945, but continued to affect their countries and interactions with the world. Some of the resisters proved vital to the liberation efforts of their countries during the war or during the period of post-war decolonization. Others were catalysts for generating a significant amount of moral support among peoples enduring long occupations under genocidal conditions. As a central element of political change, revolutions, independence movements, and warfare, studying resistance allows a glimpse into the fundamental social needs and desires of a people.

These needs can be very similar across time and regions, or they can be quite different. For instance, indignation, humiliation, and anger were widespread during the war and occupation, providing impetus for resistance and other violent activities. Some resistance was also based on identities with liberal political foundations that later became dominant as more conservative political elements lost favor among the population through the application of war guilt and accusations of collaboration. In other situations, especially those that involved imperial possessions, resistance groups continued to evolve after the initial period of war, transforming themselves into movements aligned with decolonization and independence.

Examining motivations for resistance during World War II provides an opportunity to explore the global phenomenon of resistance as it relates to these fundamental needs during wartime and to the post-war role of these motivations in later political developments. It sheds light on the many implications of resistance for post-war rebuilding efforts and subsequent independence movements in former colonies. Equally important are the widespread social and ideological changes that occurred when societies attempted the reintegration of resisters. Political

revolutions spurred on by former resisters, terrorist and insurgent activity that sporadically developed as a by-product of mobilizing an irregular army behind highly idealistic concepts, are critical factors in understanding the forces shaping the modern world. Moreover, the study of resistance during World War II brings ordinary people back into the story of war. Indeed, resistance history places marginalized people at the center of the story as active subjects instead of treating them as collateral or human resources to feed the war machine.

The questions in this study are concerned primarily with the motivations of resisters rather than with specific strategies or levels of battlefield success against opposing forces. Exploring this facet of resistance is of great importance both academically and pragmatically, as motivations resting on political or ideological frameworks are symbolically more powerful among average people within a society than victories on the battlefield. Indeed, resistance motivations were integral elements of individual and collective identities, philosophically, politically, and socially. This study examines motivations with universal qualities that existed outside of the war experience but required the catalyst of occupation as a traumatic and significant event that became a spark for action. The primary questions explored in this study are: 1) What counts as resistance in war? 2) Who were the resisters and why did they do so? 3) Did resistance motivations rely on the immediate experience of war or did pre-existing social and ideological structures matter more? 4) What is the legacy of these resistance motivations both regionally and globally?

This study rests on the assumption that a comparative and thematic study of resistance as a worldwide phenomenon is the most fruitful approach rather than reliance on a narrow national perspective that might obscure its global significance. The global scale provides a more complete canvas on which to group those elements of possibly universal continuity that appear in multiple

areas yet may seem to have little in common on the surface. After all, strict concentration on the French experience of resistance precludes any room to explore the similarities between their situation and that of the resisters in the Philippines. Finally, this style of examination through the global lens allows inquiry into the experience of those regions in pre-war positions of power as well as those that were imperial holdings, thrust into the war through association with Great Power states. This distinction cannot be over-stressed, as it is crucial for understanding the very nature of the development and implementation of resistance within the context of world history.

### *Defining Resistance*

In order to begin any study of resistance during World War II the elusive term itself needs definition, generally and in terms of this project. ‘Resistance’ seems straightforward at first glance; it is the act of stopping or impeding something objectionable. It is part of biological science discourse as well as social sciences and humanities; meaning, one can discuss ‘resistance’ against a dominant state power or ‘resistance’ of bacteria to antibiotics.

Resistance in the human realm often receives other names such as mutiny, warfare, revolution, insurgency, terrorism, rebellion, insurrection, partisanship, guerrilla warfare, irregular warfare, rioting, and so on. In many respects, all of these terms fit comfortably under the broad umbrella of ‘resistance’ as a framework. However, none of these terms *defines* resistance; rather, they are all expressions of resistance just as a portrait or sculpture is an expression of artistic ideas. In the historical field, attempts to define resistance generally through purpose or action run the gamut between considering only violent actions, including non-violent activities, or delimitating according to purpose or rate of success. ‘Armed’ or ‘active’ resistance refers to

violent actions whereas non-violent activities are ‘administrative’ or ‘passive’ resistance; this study uses ‘armed’ and ‘administrative’ to denote these two types of resistance.

At its core, resistance does not carry a connotation of right or wrong but obtains these within a political structure. Therefore, historically, examples of resistance may include the Polish *Solidarność* (Solidarity) movement in the 1980s as well as the decades-long struggle in Colombia between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), each viewed differently in terms of legitimacy. Concerning World War II, Jewish and French resistance are frequently cited examples and many definitions use them as a guide for determining component elements. While these examples from the era are useful, this study attempts a more complete definition by also incorporating examples from other eras, situations, and regions. It is important however not to set the boundaries of the definition too broadly, which allows the term resistance to apply to simple survival or other individual goals not related to the purpose of defeating an enemy or ending occupation.<sup>2</sup> In order to explore global commonalities in resistance, it is necessary to review some of the more important general definitions.

Many researchers used their knowledge of specific acts of resistance and generalized them to create a single, unified definition of resistance based on type of action. For example, some historians define ‘resistance’ as collective activity, whereas individual acts of non-cooperation are ‘dissidence’ or ‘disobedience’.<sup>3</sup> Bob Moore, a historian of resistance in Western Europe defined resistance as “sabotage actions, assassinations, escape lines and secret agents risking their lives in pursuit of an ultimate Allied victory” but “these high-profile activities...were only

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<sup>2</sup> The issue of actions taken to survive during occupation, such as theft to name only one example, is currently in contention. Some scholars put forward the idea that anything whatsoever that does not completely comply with the occupation force is resistance, even if it has no significant future goal for a group of people or the state.

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Semelin (trans. Suzan Husserl-Kapit), *Unarmed Against Hitler: Civilian Resistance in Europe, 1939-1943* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 27.

part of a much larger story involving layers of non-cooperation, disobedience, and opposition...to the foreign invader.”<sup>4</sup>

Conversely, others limit legitimate and effective resistance to armed resistance.<sup>5</sup> A group of historians researching Polish involvement in resistance for several centuries termed resistance as “the spontaneous manner of action against an organized force, chiefly against the state authority which abuses its powers, violates the basic human rights or is guilty of glaring negligence of its obligations.”<sup>6</sup> While this definition contains specifics that detract somewhat from its global usefulness such as references to ‘spontaneous’ action and ‘state’ authority, neither of which are present in all resistance, the authors did recognize similar patterns of resistance among Western populations. Using the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a temporal lens, they noted “North-American minutemen of the war-of-independence vintage, the Spanish guerrilla of 1808, the Prussian *Freischärler* of 1813, the Polish insurgent of 1863 and the French *franc-tireur* of 1871 all belong in the same family.”<sup>7</sup> Others have attempted to construct similar specific components of resistance.

One historian argued that: “preparation is the essence of defense, this is not the case with resistance” because “resistance implies adapting to the present, whereas defense implies anticipating the future.”<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, restrictions such as this cannot apply universally to resistance as many groups discussed in this study had definite plans for the future and planned activities over a considerable length of time. Definitions that are too reliant on a particular society or time, however effective they may be in that narrow focus, are problematic in global

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<sup>4</sup> Bob Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe* (Oxford & New York: Berg, 2000), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Yehuda Bauer, *The Jewish Emergence from Powerlessness* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 27.

<sup>6</sup> Witold Bieganski, et al., *Polish Resistance Movement in Poland and Abroad 1939-1945* (Warsaw: Polish Scientific Publishers, 1987), 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Semelin, 27.

comparative research focused far more broadly on interregional commonalities and differences. James Scott, a prominent scholar of imperialism in Southeast Asia, offered a concept of resistance that proves much more practicable for historians working in a global context. By examining a variety of temporal and geographic locations throughout the world, Scott determined the existence of various levels of resistance in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*; the public resistance of violent action or collective outcry and its “silent partner” he termed “infrapolitics” of “disguised, low-profile, undeclared resistance.”<sup>9</sup>

Armed resistance usually involved groups, although individual armed resistance also existed early in the World War II occupation periods. Common terms that refer to this type of resistance are ‘active’, ‘guerrilla war’, ‘irregular warfare’ and ‘partisan war’. General definitions of armed resistance tend to follow common themes. For example, the U.S. Army Field Manual of 1974 officially defined resistance movements as an “organized effort by some portion of the civil population of a country to resist the established government or an occupying power”; adding that they were usually “composed of a hardcore resistance leadership, clandestine element (underground), overt military element (guerrilla force), and a supporting civilian population (auxiliary).”<sup>10</sup> Further, the success of this type of resistance rested on structuring these elements into an “efficient and effective organization.”<sup>11</sup> This definition is too highly structured to be useful for anything beyond a narrow focus. Resistance, as examined herein, is broader than these ‘formal movements’ which have more fully developed hierarchies and organizational structure than the small clandestine groups also existent in the occupied countries of Europe and Asia.

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<sup>9</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 198-199.

<sup>10</sup> John B. Haseman, *The Thai Resistance Movement During the Second World War* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University; Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1978), 3. Officially cited in the author’s text as U.S. Department of the Army, FM 31-21. 1974: 3-2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

Furthermore, this ‘formal’ definition wholly ignores motivation, only focusing on activity, thus excluding a whole range of significant resistance features.

In the first few decades after the end of World War II, historians focused heavily on armed resistance, relegating administrative resistance to the background. Henri Michel, a distinguished resistance historian of the mid-twentieth century, attempted several different definitions of armed resistance and the elements that must be present for resistance to occur. For instance, in discussing the necessary social and geographical environment for resistance, Michel noted,

...partisan warfare, in order to maintain itself, requires space...large enough for it to vanish into and sufficiently mountainous and covered with forests to provide refuge, hiding-place and natural defences. They [partisans] must be supplied with food, clothing and various equipment by the population amidst which they live. The population must provide them with shelter, conceal them and take care of their sick and wounded. And the partisans, in times of grave danger, must be able to mix like innocent workers, among the inhabitants. They must also be able to recruit, as from a constantly replenished fish-pond, the volunteers they require to replace their losses or increase the number and scope of their operations. In short, partisan warfare necessitates a tightly-knit and varied network of accomplices.<sup>12</sup>

Although the author described the conditions of European resistance, the same elements were pertinent to resistance in other regions, particularly Burma and the Philippines. In fact, this description of some essential elements necessary for resistance appears to be one of the few ‘universals’ in warfare history as argued in later parts of this study.

Some scholars base resistance on certain types of activities, while the individuals who were actually involved may disagree with those definitions. Indeed, former resisters writing memoirs or histories after the war directly addressed some historical interpretations of resistance propounded by peer resisters or scholars, particularly regarding what counted as resistance. For example, Ernesto Espaldon, a former resister in the Philippines, noted that widespread violent resistance began as Japanese atrocities against civilians increased. The author stated that many

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<sup>12</sup> Henri Michel, “Jewish Resistance and the European Resistance Movement,” *Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust*, Michael Robert Marrus (ed.), Volume 7 (Westport, CT: Meckler Corp., 1989), 7-8.



were acquiescent about the Japanese occupation and installation of a puppet government until widespread attacks on civilians occurred. As the occupation carried out systematic rape, torture, and execution in villages, people turned to resistance groups for aid, protection, or enlistment. The non-violent resistance activities certainly existent prior to that time did not correspond with his definition of resistance as inherently violent.<sup>13</sup>

Contrast Espaldon's definition of resistance with that of James Scott, who provided a broad definition of resistance based on Malaysian peasant society's response to British imperialism. These individuals did not resist British policies with violence in the early stages of imperialism as they lacked weapons and the agency to acquire them. Instead, they used a system of mostly non-violent actions to reject demands placed on their communities. In his book *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, Scott included, "foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on" in addition to armed revolt as resistance.<sup>14</sup> Many of these activities, carried out by individuals or small groups, required little advanced planning. The author went on to note that administrative resistance in this context was often the most effective because of its slow, steady nature. Thus, when more "quixotic" action took place it was a sign of great desperation.<sup>15</sup>

Indeed, administrative resistance occurred frequently during the Axis occupations of World War II and was most likely far more common than armed resistance. Small groups and individuals carried out these non-violent activities designed to frustrate or impede the Axis powers with comparatively less danger involved.<sup>16</sup> Some of the activities included evasion by

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<sup>13</sup> Ernesto M. Espaldon, *With The Bravest: The Untold Story of the Sulu Freedom Fighters of World War II* (Makati City, Philippines: Espaldon-Virata Foundation, Inc., 1997), 16.

<sup>14</sup> James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 29.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 29.

<sup>16</sup> The relative nature of danger here is very important. Those resisters who carried out administrative resistance activities were still subject to harsh penalties, imprisonment, torture, and sometimes execution if caught but this was

hiding in forests or jungles, hiding food to deny fulfilling quotas, and continuing to practice traditions outlawed by the occupation. Rescue efforts to save European Jews from the Holocaust, economic exclusion of the Japanese among Chinese immigrants in the Philippines, and rescue of downed Allied pilots in occupied territories are also termed administrative resistance.

Based on this exploration of resistance by a host of other scholars, a definition of *resistance* appropriate in general terms and for this study, is *opposition to an oppressive or aggressively coercive dominant power*. At its fundamental level, the opposition may be violent or non-violent. The collective violent opposition that is the focus of this study took the form of raids, attacks against enemy personnel (both occupying and collaborating) and supporting civilians, sabotage, assassinations, bombings, et cetera; activities such as intelligence gathering, creating escape routes, subterfuge, identity document falsification, and the clandestine press directly supported the violent opposition and are also included to some degree in this examination.<sup>17</sup> Other non-violent forms of resistance such as work stoppages, religious observances, and feigned ignorance are not included - due in part to their often indirect links to armed resistance and their predominantly individualist nature.

Because the ultimate focus of this study is not on *actions* that comprise resistance itself but on those *motivations* behind the choice of resistance, the limitation to armed resistance requires explanation. To begin, armed resistance has not received a large amount of scholarly attention as of late. Administrative or non-violent resistance, in addition to war and memory creating a ‘usable past’, are among the most frequently explored topics of the previous two decades. This

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highly dependent on the situational context and occupational force in the particular situation. Resisters who carried out activities related to violence were more frequently tortured, imprisoned, and executed if caught since the occupation recognized them as a direct danger to the occupying regime.

<sup>17</sup> Frequently armed resistance groups enlisted members to perform these activities, organizing specific ‘offices’ or ‘departments’ in the more organized groups, pointing to their vital contribution to the violent operations.

study argues that armed resistance is significant and requires new exploration because of its extreme nature and limited membership.

Armed resistance is perhaps easier to observe than administrative resistance because of its organization and inherent violence. Those involved in armed resistance were relatively few in number and willingly placed themselves in lethal situations. The decision to take up arms in resistance immediately segregated those resisters from others who chose non-violent forms of resistance. The public, especially in the early stages of the war, often viewed the choice of armed resistance as foolhardy at best and frequently treated it as a form of suicide. Only in those cases where occupation conditions grew increasingly unacceptable did public opinion shift to one of widespread support for violent resistance. Armed groups were often more aware of their specific motivations for resistance than administrative or non-violent resisters, although many different, and often competing, motivations coexisted even within individuals. Perhaps because of this armed resisters received more emphasis in the earlier historical record; likewise, the extreme nature of the decision to take up arms threw the individual resister's own motivations into sharp relief, clearly defining the process leading up to the decision for armed resistance.

This study is further limited to those groups aligned against the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan in order to assist the Allies in claiming victory in either a specific region or within the larger war fought between 1939 and 1945. Here 'resisters' refers to those groups of people not serving in formal official or military capacities at the time of the effort; they are not of regular Allied armies but autonomous or semi-autonomous irregular forces comprised of local majorities, although several issues existed regarding interaction with regular and foreign forces. In many instances, resisters declared multiple targets to eliminate, foreign enemies as well as

those enemies at home therefore civil conflict during the war is included in this resistance exploration as it pertains to those internal groups of acknowledged or accused collaborators.

Although administrative activities were important, as noted throughout the section, to explore them in addition to armed resistance would prove daunting. To examine all armed resistance groups and motivations during World War II would also require several lengthy volumes and years to perform. Instead, for this research, a careful selection of case study countries illustrates the prevailing themes, motivations, and groupings present in Europe and Southeast Asia during the war.

### *Case Studies*

I have chosen four countries as case studies for this work: France, Yugoslavia, Burma, and the Philippines. These four cases provide an opportunity to examine the similarities of resistance from a global perspective. Each case shares certain commonalities, such as the effect of ideologies; including outside influences as well as elements of identity central to the resistance. Many ideologies, such as nationalism, communism, humanism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, created identities unique to the region in question but linked communities with similar resistance motivations. As evidenced in chapter two, the very nature of occupation and its intensity elicited these similar responses, such as indignation coupled with threats to identity, among occupied people, regardless of cultural or national differences. While similar motivations existed, each region also maintained its own distinctive qualities that created differences in membership and activities as well as conflict among competing groups.

France is an ideal example for examining resistance in Western Europe as its resistance membership was highly developed, organized around a nationalist identity, and many resisters discuss resistance motivations in personal accounts. Other motivations worked in conjunction

with nationalism such as cultural or ethnic identity and indignation based partly on the historical conflict between France and Germany. Hundreds of small groups and several large official movements usually operated independently but formed loose alliances with the Allied armies on the eve of French liberation. While the Axis occupation was the prime target of the French resistance, so too was the collaborationist government located in Vichy; considered by some resisters as the ultimate traitor to its own people.

Yugoslavian resistance was comprised of two competing politically-based groups of differing organizational levels waging a vicious and effective irregular war, not only against the Axis but also against each other. Foreign countries also heavily influenced the resistance in this area through material and personnel support and transmission of ideas. Considering the volatile twentieth century history of the region, from its centrality in World War I to the Balkan crisis of the late 1990s, it is also no surprise that ethnic and religious minorities played a role in the Yugoslav resistance. However, while issues of ethnic identity certainly fed resistance motivations, Yugoslavian resisters most often self-identified along lines of political ideology.

Resistance in Burma contained a mixture of dominant ethnic Burmese and historically suppressed ethnic and religious minorities such as Karen, Kachin, Naga, and Shan tribes from the rugged northern mountains. Also included in their numbers were ethnic Chinese from the border region as well as Indians. In some cases, Allied officers trained and led the Burman resisters, while other groups operated independently. Resistance formed along both pre-existing ethnic and political identities, frequently introduced or fostered by the Allies. Historical conflict among the so-called 'northern tribes' and the ethnic Burmese in the urbanized south also exhibited itself in the resistance motivations and operations of the different groups. This

frequently exacerbated conflict among groups, and civil war became an additional component of the resistance in Burma.

The Philippines provide the most complex picture of resistance of the four case studies. Within these hundreds of islands, dozens of resistance groups aligned themselves in a multitude of patterns. Different ethnicities and religions abounded. Typically, historical work on the Philippine resistance has portrayed it as a small number of white Americans and a large number of Filipinos. However, the picture is far more complicated, with Christian and Muslim tribes from the southern islands and temporary Chinese immigrants in the northern cities included in the resistance. As in Burma, some groups operated under the direction of Allied officers while others were completely independent. Communists, nationalists of all stripes, and anti-Japanese sentiment building for over a decade -- not to mention individual cultural identities and indignation under occupation -- all contributed to motivations for resistance.

In many respects, these four countries combine in a number of ways to explore the experience of occupation and resistance globally. Rather than a constant grouping of European countries together while maintaining a separate sphere for examining Southeast Asian countries, each frequently parallels another outside of any regional scope. For instance, Yugoslavia and the Philippines had widespread violent and sustained resistance from the outset of Axis occupation; indeed, for many areas within those countries 'peaceful' occupation never existed. France and Burma relate to one another in the significant presence of outside support agencies working with the resistance, predominantly British in both cases. Yugoslavia also received outside support from the British, but received additional aid from the United States in 1943; the Americans also provided the bulk of assistance to Philippine resisters as well. Burma and the Philippines are unique in their status as territories of imperial powers but in truth, neither Yugoslavia nor France

maintained any real sovereignty after occupation. Undoubtedly there are more ways to examine these case study countries as evidenced throughout the study, this being only a sampling of comparisons within the theme of resistance.

The choice of these four case study countries is certainly more than a representative sample of Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asian mainland and island countries. Indeed, the question arises: in an exploration of similar, if not possibly universal, resistance motivations, is it feasible to choose countries at random for case studies? Could other countries such as the Soviet Union, Greece, Poland, or China also provide a powerful framework for investigations of resistance motivations in a world history perspective? In theory the answer is yes, however, France, Yugoslavia, Burma, and the Philippines combine to make one of the strongest cases for the premise of this study based on their diversity outside the element of resistance; not only in terms of ethnicity, religion, and culture, but also in terms of pre-war situations within the countries. Among the chosen case study countries are a world power (France), a country devastated from the First World War but in the midst of recovery (Yugoslavia), a long held imperial territory with growing independence movements (Burma), and one on its way to a scheduled transfer of power interrupted by the outbreak of war (Philippines). Most, with the exception of Yugoslavia and France, did not have any close contact prior to the war and none shared borders with any other case study country. It would prove difficult to construct another series of case study countries with the same factors although other groupings would certainly provide additional distinctively unique and faceted views of resistance and motivations.

#### *Issues related to personal narratives, memoirs, and diaries as primary sources*

Personal accounts of resistance and war experiences are common after any conflict and World War II was no exception. The majority of primary sources appeared at the end of the war

continuing until the present, with a peak during the 1960s and 1970s then a gradual decline since the end of the 1980s. This decline in publication seems to be a byproduct of resisters and eyewitnesses growing older and passing away rather than a decline in interest. Because resistance is by nature clandestine and often unofficial, administrative documents from government archives provide far less information than personal narratives, memoirs, and diaries. This study relies on these types of primary sources, collected from libraries and special collections around the world.<sup>18</sup> However, firsthand accounts of occupation and resistance during war can be problematic. Most of these sources are, in essence, subjective; as a result, corroborating certain elements is difficult.

Personal accounts about World War II, usually published for a local popular audience, exist for a variety of reasons. They were sometimes tools for distributing information on wartime experiences or at other times, acted as a means to rebuild or reshape national or other identities. Efforts to evoke emotion, to create a sense of identity, and to justify the actions or political position of resisters could influence the accuracy of texts. For example, certain events and motivations could be inaccurate, either accidentally or purposefully. Authors frequently moralized their actions or constructed apologetic accounts of their own role in events. Moreover, personal narratives sometimes provided accounts of atrocities for later political or legal action, or performed other functions that were not immediately apparent to the author. Temporal interference is also an issue as events, people, and places fade into the memories of authors writing years later.

This study addresses problems related to subjectivity by consulting additional sources if a notable discrepancy occurs that may significantly counter other arguments within this work. It may often be necessary to compare a variety of sources, such as a memoir and diary of one

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<sup>18</sup> See bibliography for all consulted primary sources.



person with the personal narrative of another if available. That said, however, since this research focuses on motivations, rather than on statistical data or the minutia of resistance warfare tactics and movements, the more problematic technical issues related to these firsthand accounts will hopefully be kept to a minimum. This does not eliminate the possibility of resistance motivations changing over time, shaped by the intervening years or changing global cultural and social climates. Consultation of additional sources when available also works as a control, though not a perfect solution, for this type of subjectivity.

Historians also have different motivations for producing works detailing the history of resistance. Just as firsthand accounts of such an emotionally charged issue as occupation and resistance during a world war can be problematic, so too can secondary sources have issues of veracity because of post-war political considerations. It is in this way that resisters and studies of resistance often become a political tool. Resistance studies can be constructed with particular political or nation building functions in mind – as in the creation of a ‘useable past’ by a number of political actors, the assignment or refutation of war guilt, or in the development of national or ethnic identities; all of which can change over time. For instance, Charles de Gaulle and others helped to construct France as a ‘nation of resisters’ after the war to wipe away the contentious history of the collaborating Vichy regime and its own atrocities against the population in efforts to rebuild the unity of France as a nation. Conversely, the *soixante-huitards*, young social revolutionaries that dated their activities to 1968, rejected this national tradition and the establishment that created it. During this climate of social revolution in France, films such as *Le Chagrin et la pitié* (*The Sorrow and the Pity*) and Robert Paxton’s book on Vichy France painted the country as a ‘nation of collaborators’ that avoided conflict with the occupation, even as

increasingly authoritarian measures threatened Jews and other deportable groups.<sup>19</sup> In the 1980s and 1990s, a second wave of reexamination occurred as Henry Rousso and John Sweets both published works examining and refuting these two extremes of historical interpretation, settling on a middle ground that included *some* collaborators and *some* resisters within a population whose majority was neither.<sup>20</sup>

The temporal and geographic location of the researcher is also an important consideration and helps determine the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of a particular focus. For instance, armed resistance was a topic of concern during the 1960s and 1970s not only for historians but also for political scientists, economists, and others involved in statecraft. With many unstable regions across the globe, the Cold War, and increasing guerrilla warfare in places like Vietnam, Columbia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Honduras, Imphal, Burma, and Indonesia, studying resistance seemed critical to understanding and, in some cases, attempting to change the contemporary world. Many of today’s resistance historians also research their particular topic with a presentist agenda, whether it is to understand the history behind violent insurgency in regions today, to examine forces that shape the development of post-colonial independent states, or other historical and political concerns.

### *Historiography of Resistance*

The majority of research carried out in the general field of resistance is dated, much of it published in the late 1960s to the early 1980s. It often follows the same paths of historical

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<sup>19</sup> Marcel Ophuls, *Le Chagrin et la pitié [The Sorrow and the Pity]* (Paris: Alain Moreau, 1980); Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944* (First Edition, New York: Knopf, 1972).

<sup>20</sup> Henry Rousso (trans. Arthur Goldhammer), *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); John F. Sweets, *Choices in Vichy France: The French Under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); John F. Sweets, “Hold That Pendulum! Redefining Fascism, Collaborationism and Resistance in France,” *French Historical Studies* (Vol. 15, No. 4, Autumn, 1988), 731-758.

research trends that pitted nationalism against communism in the Cold War era, particularly in countries considered as buffers against communists or their sympathizers such as Burma and the Philippines. Additionally, resistance history focuses on the ‘effectiveness’ of particular resistance groups, such as those in France and Yugoslavia, with little in-depth examination about what underlying causes attributed to ‘effectiveness’. There is also considerable debate on what constitutes ‘effectiveness’ itself. Global conditions and historians’ perspectives in the twenty-first century are different from those in the decades that produced the majority of these studies. Perspectives on political ideologies, cultural identity, economics, technology, and war itself can change dramatically over time and necessitates a fresh perspective from time to time.

Many of the sources consulted for this study are not typical military history texts focusing on specific strategies, technologies, or battlefield successes. Rather, most of the works come from non-traditional military historians or from other fields of historical inquiry such as social, political, or cultural history. They examine other aspects of resistance such as perceived and actual roles within the larger war effort, political or religious considerations, and motivations. Other individualized aspects, such as resistance membership, ethnicity, or gender, are also subjects of these texts.

Training and widely accepted practices in the field of military history can be very different from other historical approaches. For example, military historians have only recently accepted a handful of available texts on gender. Additionally, many prominent military historians view cultural history as problematic because of a lack of applicable data. Moreover, until recently, those involved in military history tended to receive inadequate training in cultural history.

In a recent article published in the *Journal of Military History*, Jeremy Black, a prominent historian in the field of European and world military history, noted the comparative lag suffered

within his own field regarding the incorporation of cultural history but also noted slow yet marked changes in recent twenty-first century scholarship. Works produced by most military historians, even if they are unconcerned with battlefield minutia tend to be Eurocentric, mono-causal, and determinist in their approach. Often focused on technological innovation as a determinate factor, these works also effectively create a historical lens of superiority/inferiority. Indeed, Black argues that military historians strive for “assertive and prescriptive” outcomes in their scholarship which leaves little room for the more “suggestive and descriptive” techniques of cultural history.<sup>21</sup> For this reason, and the combination of multiple schools of thought, many of the categories applied within this historiography defy the accepted ‘norms’ of traditional historiographic categorization such as social, cultural, Marxist, or otherwise.<sup>22</sup>

Many historians have examined the role of resistance in the past. Some of the best available works focus on resistance during the age of imperialism and the independence movements of the post-World War II period. As previously noted, James Scott provided valuable insight into different types of administrative resistance, such as work stoppages or feigned ignorance as practiced by peasants in Malaysia, and their effectiveness in limiting the control of an imperial power in his seminal work, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*.<sup>23</sup> Other scholars of empire have written about a wide variety of resistance activities, from Philip Curtin’s study of millennial movements within indigenous societies to Cora Ann Presley’s

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<sup>21</sup> Jeremy Black, “Determinisms and Other Issues (A think piece that addresses how to consider military history for the twenty-first century),” *The Journal of Military History* (October 2004, Issue 68), 1230.

<sup>22</sup> For an examination of the primary European and American schools of historical inquiry, see Georg Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1997); Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The ‘Objectivity Question’ and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>23</sup> See also, James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

exploration of the Mau Mau Rebellion in Kenya and its effect on gender roles in Kikuyu society.<sup>24</sup>

In contrast to the resistance literature on the Age of Empire, studies of resistance during World War II are not as fully developed. As a general topic of historical research, while resistance is not absent from the historiography of World War II it does receive comparatively less attention than other aspects of the war. Books dedicated to the study of resistance itself are not as common as one may think; rather what is common is resistance history scattered throughout works that focus on the larger war, campaigns, military planning, et cetera.

Among those books dedicated to resistance, however, works on resistance in Western Europe are the most numerous, as are careful examinations of specific countries like France, Italy, and the Soviet Union; resistance groups composed of one specific population, such as communists or Jews, also have a few volumes of study already available. There are, however, countries or themes within resistance that receive very little attention. Most importantly, the study of resistance from a global comparative or thematic approach is very sparse among those books produced on the topic, with only a handful attempting this approach even in a limited way.

Prominent European historians organized several conferences on World War II resistance following the war, which resulted in two significant meetings: one in Liège, Belgium (1958), and the other in Milan, Italy (1961). These conferences produced excellent compilations written in French and English that continue to prove useful to resistance scholars today.<sup>25</sup> Henri Michel presented at these conferences and wrote some of the most important and influential works on

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<sup>24</sup> Philip D. Curtin, *The World and the West: The European Challenge and the Overseas Response in the Age of Empire* (Revised Edition, Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Cora Ann Presley, *Kikuyu Women, The Mau Mau Rebellion and Social Change in Kenya* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992).

<sup>25</sup> International Conference on the History of the Resistance Movements, *European Resistance Movements, 1939-1945* (Conference in Liège, Belgium, 1958) (New York: Pergamon Press, 1960); International Conference on the History of the Resistance Movements, *European Resistance Movements, 1939-1945* (Conference in Milan, Italy, 1961) (New York: Pergamon Press, 1964).

resistance history and theory in the last four decades. In fact, he was one of the very first historians to direct attention to the historical study of World War II resistance.

Michel wrote the majority of his works in French, only later were English translations published. However, some of his research remains only available in the original French, such as a small but noteworthy book on the French resistance.<sup>26</sup> This is an important factor within the historiography. It may appear the examination of major historical works in this study only begins with the 1970s but some research in its original form dates back to the late 1940s and 1950s. As former resister turned French historian who began researching the French resistance in particular, Michel's later work not only examined nationalist and communist resistance movements throughout Europe but brought attention to the significant contributions of resistance to the larger Allied war effort by illustrating its role as a vital 'shadow war' that operated alongside the official armies.<sup>27</sup> Many of Michel's works fall into the category of technological and political histories because of his special focus on the resources and affiliations of the resistance members.

Two other noted scholars of European resistance during the war include M.R.D. Foot and Jørgen Hæstrup.<sup>28</sup> Both historians produced valuable works on Europe that contain elements of social, economic, and political history as well as created new typologies and classifications defining resistance. Both authors attempted a brief discussion of motivations for resistance based on political ideology. In addition, both attempted to expand their focus to include brief sojourns into the Russian and Asian experience of resistance. Their efforts to include non-European

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<sup>26</sup> Henri Michel, *Histoire de la Résistance en France, 1940-1944* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1950).

<sup>27</sup> Henri Michel (trans. Richard Barry), *The Shadow War: European Resistance, 1939-1945* (First U.S. Edition, New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

<sup>28</sup> M.R.D. Foot, *Resistance: An Analysis of European Resistance to Nazism 1940-1945* (London: Methuen, 1976); Jørgen Hæstrup, *Europe Ablaze: An Analysis of the European Resistance Movements, 1939-1945* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1978).

regions were admirable, since Cold War era trends in scholarship tended to distance Russia from Europe and frequently overlooked the civilian war experience in Asia.

More recently, Bob Moore's anthology on Western European resistance provided an analysis grouped by country.<sup>29</sup> The maturity of resistance history and theory within regional fields is evident in each author's treatment of a particular European country's resistance effort; however, the strict focus on Western Europe echoes the regional scope of many other texts.<sup>30</sup> It is also indicative of the recent trend towards a narrow focus to ever-smaller regional analyses. Within European resistance, Eastern Europe receives much less attention but begs for more comparative and thematic exploration.<sup>31</sup> Yet, limiting the focus of research to what lies within political borders with no reference to events outside those borders impedes the exploration of global trends that certainly influenced twentieth century Europe.

Current developments in the historiography of resistance focus primarily on groups contained within national boundaries. This applies not only to Europe but to Asia as well. For example, there are no comparable works to Michel, Foot, or Hæstrup that explore the history of World War II resistance in Asia. In addition, the few works that do explain Asian resistance, however limited are primarily political histories encompassing a familiar 'top-down' approach. For example, a general anthology on the Japanese empire includes an article by Goto Ken'ichi,

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<sup>29</sup> Moore.

<sup>30</sup> This is true even for those texts that do not specifically limit their study to Western Europe in their titles. See also Stephen Hawes and Ralph White (ed.), *Resistance in Europe, 1939-1945: Based on the Proceedings of a Symposium Held at the University of Salford, March, 1973* (London: A. Lane, 1975); Werner Rings (trans. J. Maxwell Littlejohn), *Life With the Enemy: Collaboration and Resistance in Hitler's Europe, 1939-1945* (First Edition, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982); Semelin; David Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance, 1940-1945: A Survey of the Special Operations Executive, With Documents* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

<sup>31</sup> Some of the limited resources on resistance in Eastern Europe are frequently contained in more specific studies, particularly that of Polish resistance history. See Bieganski, et al.; Mieczyslaw Juchniewicz, *Poles in the European Resistance Movement 1939-1945* (Warsaw: Interpress Publishers, 1972).

which explored resistance against the Japanese Empire among elites in Southeast Asia.<sup>32</sup> Two of the best books available examine resistance as it intersected with the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia and Burma.<sup>33</sup> Both however, are somewhat dated in that they focus mainly on the communist element of resistance (due most likely to the effects of Cold War scholarship).

The lack of *recent* works on World War II resistance movements does not appear to be because of a paucity of data. Rather, the topic may simply have fallen out of favor as a research interest. This could be due to a variety of reasons, such as the shift in focus to issues of war and memory, or because scholars may have believed research in resistance history to be exhausted after a number of books appeared in the 1960s and 1970s. Contemporary guerrilla activity or other political considerations, such as the decline of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, could have come to the forefront and pushed World War II era resistance to the background. Resistance history may also have been included in the general decline in popularity of military history among academia during the 1980s and 1990s. Interestingly, published diaries, personal narratives, and memoirs of resistance experiences did not seem to suffer the same decline in popularity among popular audiences, leaving many of these recently published primary resources with little academic examination.

The French example may be the most well known resistance movement to both the lay public and scholars not working directly in the field of resistance and underground movements. Indeed, French resistance movements were highly developed and organized around nationalist identities. The resisters aligned themselves by political ideology, such as nationalism and communism, and

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<sup>32</sup> Goto Ken'ichi, "Cooperation, Submission, and Resistance of Indigenous Elites of Southeast Asia in the Wartime Empire" in Peter Duus, et al. (ed.), *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>33</sup> Alfred W. McCoy (ed.), *Southeast Asia Under Japanese Occupation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1980); Dorothy Guyot, *The Political Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Burma* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1966).



the historiography of their resistance follows in the same manner, with most historians choosing to focus on one group representing a particular ideology.<sup>34</sup> Memoirs, diaries, personal narratives, and reflections written by participants also abound in both French and English. Although there are a substantial number of primary sources written by former resisters, secondary source material in English is not as prolific.

Most common is the inclusion of the French example in works related to European resistance in general. As previously noted, the most useful and accepted of these general works is Henri Michel's, *The Shadow War: European Resistance, 1939-1945*, published in 1972.<sup>35</sup> Translated into English by Richard Barry, this book is the most important resource as both an overview and a reference for many resistance movements. Components examined include organizational structures, conflicts between various groups, collaboration, punishment of traitors, intelligence gathering, administrative resistance, as well as raiding and sabotage parties. Michel's treatment of the French example also includes an exploration into the social aspects of class and political representations. Also examined are the role of religious organizations, women in resistance, and the aftermath of resistance influence on nationalism, social revolution, and post-war civil strife. Motivations for resistance are an integral part of the book with special focus on political identity motivations such as communism, socialism, and nationalism.

As one of the most studied regions of World War II resistance, the French example began to receive scholarly attention in the 1950s, but historians produced some of the best available works two decades later. Vichy France was the subject of numerous works, including general European studies, but the most influential were H.R. Kedward's *Resistance in Vichy France: A Study of*

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<sup>34</sup> As an example of this, see Claude Chambard (trans. Elaine P. Halperin), *The Maquis: A History of the French Resistance Movement* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1976); David Wingate Pike, "Between the Junes: The French Communists from the Collapse of France to the Invasion of Russia," *Journal of Contemporary History* (Vol. 28, No. 3, July 1993), 465-485.

<sup>35</sup> Michel.

*Ideas and Motivation in the Southern Zone, 1940-1942* and John Sweets' *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*.<sup>36</sup> Sweets' work is the more useful of the two in an examination of resistance motivations as each of the seven major resistance groups received attention individually in much greater depth than in Kedward's text.<sup>37</sup> Both books are political histories and reflect the popular mode of historical writing for the 1970s. Neither has a strong narrative format but instead resembles a social science approach – complete with graphs, charts, and tables that outline resistance motivations in a systematic and statistical fashion.

Resistance history and motivations are also contained within other works on French political history, particularly those that examine the political 'left' during wartime. Of particular importance to the world historian are Edward Francis Rice-Maximin's book and the work of George Lichtheim.<sup>38</sup> Both authors examined the French communist and socialist resistance groups and their subsequent intellectual influence on Indochinese resistance movements during wartime and the post-war period.

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<sup>36</sup> H. R. Kedward, *Resistance in Vichy France: A Study of Ideas and Motivation in the Southern Zone, 1940-1942* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); John F. Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976). See also Milton Dank, *The French Against the French: Collaboration and Resistance* (First Edition, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974); H.R. Kedward, *In Search of the Maquis: Rural Resistance in Southern France, 1942-1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); H.R. Kedward and Roger Austin (ed.), *Vichy France and the Resistance: Culture & Ideology* (London: Croom Helm, 1985); Paula Schwartz, "Partisanes and Gender Politics in Vichy France," *French Historical Studies* (Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring, 1989), 126-151; Sweets, *Choices in Vichy France: The French Under Nazi Occupation*.

<sup>37</sup> The seven primary French resistance groups – *Le Musée de l'Homme*, The Alliance, Combat, *Libération*, *Franc-Tireur*, Socialist Resistance Leaders, *Gaullists*, *Franc-Tireurs et Partisans Français* (National Front, communists), *Conseil National de la Résistance*, Paris Liberation Committee (CPL), and The Secret Army (Free France, *Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur*, FFI). David Schoenbrun, *Soldiers of the Night: The Story of the French Resistance* (First Meridian Printing, New York: New American Library, 1981).

<sup>38</sup> Edward Francis Rice-Maximin, *Accommodation and resistance: the French Left, Indochina, and the Cold War, 1944-1954* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986); George Lichtheim, *Marxism in modern France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966). Some noteworthy articles also exist on communist resistance in France. See Sarah Farmer, "The Communist Resistance in the Haute-Vienne," *French Historical Studies* (Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring, 1985), 89-116; J.C. Don Simmonds, "The French Communist Party and the Beginnings of Resistance," *European Studies Review* (1981), 517-542; Henry H. Weinberg, "The Debate over Jewish Communist Resistance in France," *Contemporary French Civilization* (XV/1, 1991), 1-17.

Specialized studies in the experience of women resisters as perceived through a gendered lens are much less common than other resistance related topics, with most examinations in the form of anthologies, articles, or in books focused on the war experience.<sup>39</sup> The field of gendered resistance history, however, culminated in the groundbreaking work of Margaret Rossiter.<sup>40</sup> In her work, Rossiter examined the experience of women in resistance, and concluded that existing gendered stereotypes helped remove suspicion from women's activities and allowed them to be more effective liaisons and couriers. The author also explored motivations for resistance through ample amounts of primary sources included in her study.

In recent years, attention has focused away from motivations and has moved to an examination of resistance as it relates to French national memory, collaboration, and the Holocaust. The best work on the subject is Henry Rousso's, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944*.<sup>41</sup> In this important cultural and political history, the author examined the political uses of resistance and collaboration during the post-war era. He effectively showed the efforts to both suppress certain wartime memories, such as the acquiescence of the Vichy regime to allow the deportation of French Jews, and the aggrandizement of resistance memories to rebuild a national identity that forged Vichy and Occupied France into a single unit after the war.

Though not as prevalent as works on France, Yugoslavian resistance received a fair amount of attention from scholars during the post-war period because of its relative successes against the Axis powers and the bitter civil war that ensued. However, in comparison to other European

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<sup>39</sup> Hanna Diamond, *Women and the Second World War in France, 1939-1948: Choices and Constraints* (New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 1999); Margaret Collins Weitz, "As I Was Then. Women in the French Resistance," *Contemporary French Civilisation* (XV/1, 1991); Margaret Collins Weitz (ed.), *Mémoire et Oubli: Women of the French Resistance, Contemporary French Civilisation* (XVIII/1, 1994); Margaret Collins Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945* (New York: J. Wiley, 1995).

<sup>40</sup> Margaret L. Rossiter, *Women in the Resistance* (New York: Praeger, 1986).

<sup>41</sup> Rousso; See also Sarah Fishman, et al. (ed.) (trans. David Drake), *France at War: Vichy and the Historians* (New York: Berg, 2000).

resistance movements Yugoslavia lacks an abundance of scholarly works published in English.<sup>42</sup> Although it is considered to be only one of two efforts that “confronted [Hitler] with such effective guerilla resistance” it is not widely discussed in works on resistance in general or in overview studies of the war, which tend to concentrate on the official military campaigns in the Balkans.<sup>43</sup> John Keegan, an eminent military historian who attempted to cover as many elements of the war as possible, devoted three pages to ‘The Yugoslavian Partisans’ in his chapter on ‘Resistance and Espionage’ in *The Second World War* and Henri Michel provided a limited but fruitful examination of Yugoslavian resistance in *The Shadow War*.<sup>44</sup> These two authors produced two of the more significant contributions to the study of Yugoslav resistance within works dedicated to an overview of the war.

The Yugoslav resisters aligned themselves by political identity, such as nationalism and communism and like France, the historiography of their resistance often followed one of these identities as a framework. For example, some studies explored the early role of the Chetniks, a Serbian nationalist group that quickly fell out of favor with the Allies.<sup>45</sup> Others examined governmental institutional histories, such as that of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) or American Office of Strategic Services (OSS), both of which had extensive dealings with the resistance movements.<sup>46</sup> In her very recent book on the subject of Yugoslav resistance,

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<sup>42</sup> One general book on the war in Yugoslavia, however, does contain a good amount of information on resistance. See Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

<sup>43</sup> John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 490. The two effective efforts discussed by Keegan are Yugoslavia and at the rear of the Eastern Front by Soviet partisans.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, 492-495; Michel.

<sup>45</sup> Matteo J. Milazzo, *The Chetnik Movement & The Yugoslav Resistance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975); Jozo Tomasevich, *The Chetniks* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975).

<sup>46</sup> Phyllis Auty and Richard Clogg (ed.), *British Policy Towards Wartime Resistance in Yugoslavia and Greece* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1975); Kirk Ford, Jr., *OSS and the Yugoslav Resistance, 1943-1945* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992); Simon Trew, *Britain, Mihailovic and the Chetniks, 1941-1942* (Basingstoke: Macmillan in Association with King’s College, London, 1998); Heather Williams, *Parachutes, Patriots and Partisans: The Special Operations Executive and Yugoslavia, 1941-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

Heather Williams detailed many of the political and diplomatic considerations of the American and British intelligence apparatuses and their dealings with the nationalist and communist resistance leaders.

One intriguing study by Paul Hehn examined the Yugoslav resistance from the German military perspective of treating the Chetniks and Partisans as an insurgency against a “legitimate” government, rather than as resistance against foreign occupying forces.<sup>47</sup> Other research containing information on the Yugoslavian resistance relates to the prominent post-war role of the communist and socialist resistance factions previously led by Josip Broz Tito, focusing heavily on political events during World War II and the subsequent Cold War.<sup>48</sup>

Historical works on resistance in Burma, in contrast to works on European resistance, are rare. Two of the best general narrative works are *The Longest War, 1941-1945* by Louis Allen and Dorothy Guyot’s treatment of Burma under Japanese occupation.<sup>49</sup> As general works on the wartime Burma experience, both authors address resistance and motivations but these topics are not central components of the works. More often, to locate information on Burman resistance one usually has to search in general histories of the country related to earlier imperialism or the official Burma campaign within the greater conflict of World War II.<sup>50</sup> Other sources that contain information on resistance groups and political identities related to motivation are works

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<sup>47</sup> Paul N. Hehn, *The German Struggle Against Yugoslav Guerillas in World War II. German Counter-Insurgency in Yugoslavia 1941-1943* (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, Distributed by New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

<sup>48</sup> V. Vlasov, “The Mounting Struggle of the Yugoslav Peoples,” *World Survey* (Jan 1942, New York: Workers Library Publishers), 58-62; Ivan Jelic, et al. (ed. Novak Strugar, trans. Margot and Bosko Milosavljevic), *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-1945* (Belgrade: Socialist Thought and Practice, 1985).

<sup>49</sup> Louis Allen, *Burma: The Longest War 1941-1945* (London: J.M. Dent, 1984); Dorothy Guyot, *The Political Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Burma*. See also, Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Armies: The Fall of British Asia, 1941-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>50</sup> Those works focused on resistance to the British that provide information, which links to the experience under Japanese occupation are: Parimal Ghosh, *Brave Men of the Hills: Resistance and Rebellion in Burma, 1825-1932* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); Albert D. Moscotti, *British Policy and the Nationalist Movement in Burma, 1917-1937* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1974); Thant Myint-U, *The Making of Modern Burma* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); U Htin Aung, *The Stricken Peacock; Anglo-Burmese Relations, 1752-1948* (Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1965).

such as Jan Becka's *Historical Dictionary of Myanmar*.<sup>51</sup> Sources such as this pose a problem for scholars, as encyclopedic entries are often temporally and contextually suspended with little frame of reference.<sup>52</sup>

Andrew Selth, an Australian historian, published a small but pivotal work on World War II resistance in Burma and its racial component in an issue of *Modern Asian Studies*.<sup>53</sup> This political history addressed the formation of resistance along ethnic lines and explored how pre-existing divisions in the population related to motivations for resistance. Growing political and ethnic tensions, directly related to the wartime resistance experience, led to an ethnic secessionist war after 1945 that continues to be unresolved.

Because of the political boundary disputes still raging in Burma, which relate to the formation of World War II resistance groups comprised of anti-Burmese nationalist ethnic minorities, secondary resources useful to this thesis are more current than those of France and Yugoslavia. One of the most current works is by Donovan Webster; produced by a journalist rather than a historian, the work remains one of the few cultural histories on the Burma wartime experience.<sup>54</sup> The author's prose is concise yet paints a vivid picture of how life in twenty-first century Burma follows down the same paths; both literally, as the Ledo road remains the lifeline of central Burma and abstractly, as different struggles for independence that surged during the period of Japanese occupation and resistance continue.

Although there are a number of works written as secondary resources by American or British officers who served in Burma, only one stands out as a fair and practical treatment of the

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<sup>51</sup> Jan Becka, *Historical Dictionary of Myanmar* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1995).

<sup>52</sup> Similar issues exist with other texts constructed in a reference format. See U Maung Maung, *Burmese Nationalist Movements, 1940-1948* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990).

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Selth, "Race and Resistance in Burma, 1942-1945," *Modern Asian Studies* (Vol. 20, No. 3, 1986), 483-507.

<sup>54</sup> Donovan Webster, *The Burma Road: The Epic Story of the China-Burma-India Theater in World War II* (First Edition, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).

resistance.<sup>55</sup> William Peers' examination of the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Detachment 101, a clandestine organization made up of international volunteers from Burma, China, India, America, and Europe, provided substantial detail on northern tribes in Burma that made up the bulk of active resisters. The author also explored some of their motivations as perceived within the northern tribes as well as by outsiders.

Political histories of wartime Burma are also excellent sources, as resistance groups played an essential role in post-war independence and the lucrative opium trade that gave the region the dubious title of 'the golden triangle' in the 1990s.<sup>56</sup> Two political histories in particular stand as the most comprehensive and insightful on the history of Burman resistance. Robert Taylor focused on the role of Marxism in the establishment of resistance in his introductory explanation of the translated *Wartime Traveler* originally written by Thein Pe Myint.<sup>57</sup> U Maung Maung, a leading figure in the newly independent government after the war and a prominent nationalist leader, detailed the rise of Burmese nationalist groups during the 1940s.<sup>58</sup> The work is particularly interesting to scholars studying resistance and its relation to post-war events because the nationalists initially allied with Japan as the Burma National Army (BNA) and only later realigned themselves with the Allies in 1943, when it was evident that Burman independence under the Japanese was impossible.

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<sup>55</sup> The best example of typical works written about the Burma campaign is William Slim, *Defeat into Victory* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1961); A work that stands alone in its fair treatment of resistance is William Peers, *Behind the Burma Road, The Story of America's Most Successful Guerrilla Force* (Boston:, Little, Brown and Company, 1963).

<sup>56</sup> Angelene Naw, *Aung San and the Struggle for Burmese Independence* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books, 2001); Jan Becka, *The National Liberation Movement in Burma During the Japanese Occupation Period, 1941-1945* (Prague: Oriental Institute in Academia, 1983); Bertil Lintner, *Burma in Revolt: Opium and Insurgency Since 1948* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press; Bangkok, [Thailand]: White Lotus, 1994); Moshe Yegar, *Between Integration and Secession: The Muslim Communities of the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, and Western Burma/Myanmar* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002).

<sup>57</sup> Robert H. Taylor, *Marxism and Resistance in Burma, 1942-1945. Thein Pe Myint's Wartime Traveler* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1984).

<sup>58</sup> U Maung Maung.

In contrast to Burma, there are far more English language historical studies of Philippine resistance during World War II. This region provides a more complex historiographic picture of resistance and motivations, most likely due to the large numbers of resisters operating by the end of the war, as well as America's direct involvement. Typically, historical work on the Philippine resistance portrayed it as a small number of white Americans leading or working together with a large number of Filipinos.<sup>59</sup> This is probably because Americans who participated in the resistance at some level, in fact, wrote the majority of secondary sources on this subject, including both critical and laudatory works. However, the picture is far more complicated, with various political and apolitical identity groups, Muslim tribes from the southern islands and temporary Chinese immigrants in the northern cities included in the resistance.

While not pertaining solely to the Philippine resistance itself, one work stands out as forming the backbone to understanding Philippine resistance during the war. Theodore Friend's *Between Two Empires: The Ordeal of the Philippines, 1929-1946* sheds important light on various political realities that informed Filipino resistance, although resistance history itself is lacking throughout the text.<sup>60</sup> It is primarily a 'top-down' political history focused on the role of three political leaders – Quezon, Osmeña, and Roxas – but the political connections between America, the Philippines, and Japan are a valuable component to understanding some of the resistance motivations. In addition, a six-volume set published by the Veterans Federation of the Philippines presented a comprehensive view of the war with relation to battles, the civilian

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<sup>59</sup> See Southwest Pacific Area Allied Forces, *Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines* (Melbourne, 1945); William B. Breuer, *Retaking the Philippines: America's Return to Corregidor and Bataan, October 1944-March 1945* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986); Charles Andrew Willoughby, *The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines: 1941-1945* (First Edition, New York: Vantage Press, 1972).

<sup>60</sup> Theodore Friend, *Between Two Empires: The Ordeal of the Philippines, 1929-1946* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965). See also Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (First Edition, New York: Random House, 1989).



experience, and the detailed information on resistance groups operating on each island.<sup>61</sup> Any scholar researching the Philippines during World War II would benefit from these massive but difficult to obtain volumes, which provide a foundation of carefully researched material, gleaned from a variety of primary sources including several national archives.

William Pomeroy was an American member of the Philippine resistance and later active in the Philippine Communist Party and its military instrument, the Army of National Liberation (ANL), which staged an unsuccessful and bloody civil war also known as the Huk rebellion. His book, *The Philippines: Colonialism, Collaboration, and Resistance*, is an economic and political history of the Philippine experience from the 1890s to the 1990s including both resistance and collaboration with internal and external political players.<sup>62</sup> Although the Philippine resistance only comprised thirty-four pages in the book, it is worthwhile to examine, as many histories of this particular resistance are not from a Marxist perspective. The more common American historical perspective is that of Robert Silliman who wrote a short work praising the resistance movement and battle skills of local resisters on the island of Negros.<sup>63</sup>

Robert Lapham and Bernard Norling are perhaps the best-known officer-scholars to chronicle the operations of North Luzon guerrillas, and both included some discussion of Filipino motivations for resistance.<sup>64</sup> Both authors approached the subject of resistance from a technological and organizational model common in standard military histories. However, there are elements of both works that stand out as unique from typical histories written by officer-

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<sup>61</sup> Generoso P. Salazar, Fernando R. Reyes, Leonardo Q. Nuval, *World War II in the Philippines*, 6 Volumes (Manila: Veterans Federation of the Philippines, 1993).

<sup>62</sup> William J. Pomeroy, *The Philippines: Colonialism, Collaboration, and Resistance* (New York: International Publishers, 1992).

<sup>63</sup> Robert Benton Silliman, *Pocket of Resistance: Guerrilla Warfare in Negros Island, The Philippines* (Philippines: s.n.; Detroit, Mich: Distributed by Cellar Book Shop, 1980).

<sup>64</sup> Robert Lapham and Bernard Norling, *Lapham's Raiders: Guerillas in the Philippines, 1942-1945* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Bernard Norling, *The Intrepid Guerrillas of North Luzon* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999).

scholars in that civilians and local resisters were not in an inferior position within the text. Instead, they received virtually equal treatment throughout both texts while highlighting the suffering of civilians and refugees.

Similar to Silliman but without the overt emphasis on battle tactics, other works on Philippine resistance focus on either one prominent island or one group of resisters such as the Chinese, Christians, Muslims, or specific tribal groups. Resistance occurred on almost every strip of land in the Philippines, from the large island of Luzon with its densely populated urban centers, to Mindanao in the south, and even on the small archipelago of the Sulu islands that stretch to the southwest. Uldarico Baclagon examined the guerrillas of Mindanao, often considered a 'wild' and 'untamed' island by the Spanish and American colonial powers, as well as those resistance movements in Negros and Siquijor islands in two separate works.<sup>65</sup> Both books focus on experiences and motivations of several individuals as well as resistance groups themselves. Other authors, such as Yuk-wai Yung Li from Hong Kong University, explored resistance groups comprised of non-natives in the Philippines.<sup>66</sup> This book provided a wealth of information in both narrative and statistical form that details membership patterns, geographical occurrence, and motivations of Chinese resisters in the Philippines.

### *Conclusion*

In an era that references a 'global community' and the effects of 'globalization', the similarity of human experience in the face of adversity directly engages the world historian to find those patterns of connection and continuity. The historical trends of resistance, particularly

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<sup>65</sup> Uldarico S. Baclagon, *Christian-Moslem Guerrillas of Mindanao* (Manila: s.n.; Metro Manila: Lord Ave Print Press, 1988); Uldarico S. Baclagon, *They Chose to Fight: The Story of the Resistance Movement in Negros and Siquijor Islands* (Manila, Philippines: s.n., 1962).

<sup>66</sup> Yuk-wai Yung Li, *The Huaqiao Warriors: Chinese Resistance Movement in the Philippines, 1942-1945* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1995). See also Marciano R. de Borja, *Basques in the Philippines* (First Edition, Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 2005); Irene Khin Khin Myint Jensen, *The Chinese in the Philippines During the American Regime, 1898-1946* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1975).

during the watershed event of World War II, are critical components to understanding the overall war experience itself, outside of the massive official armies of world powers. Infused within resistance motivation history are ideological and philosophical elements that shed light on the post-war era of independence, civil war, and insurgency activities that continue to shape the world. The global perspective of a world historian is critical in this examination. Equally important is a general revival of resistance history, even from a regional approach, as new information continues to be gathered and participants who remember their individual experiences pass away daily in increasing numbers. However, to treat resistance and resisters as somehow individually confined examples with no reference to other regions or events, denies its global significance.

In order to continue the process of examining World War II resistance motivations, it is necessary to provide a brief description of the wartime experience in the case study countries. This includes war and the nature of occupation.

## CHAPTER 2: WAR AND THE NATURE OF OCCUPATION

### *Introduction*

The study of resistance adds an important dimension to World War II when it is included alongside the experiences of war and occupation. In each of the countries studied here, the specific experience of war and occupation informed the creation of resistance groups. Further, resistance continued to operate directly in response to the intensity of occupation. For example, in areas where daily life continued much as it had before the war, resistance activities were less often violent.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, those regions increasingly destabilized by occupation tended to be centers for resistance organization and operations.

It is, therefore, useful to explore the experience of invasion, war, defeat, and occupation in France, Yugoslavia, Burma, and the Philippines. In each example, there exists both continuity and difference in wartime experience and, consequently, resistance. Using a combination of personal accounts and secondary sources is necessary in this task as the generally accepted historical record and individual experiences woven together provide a strong background to move into the motivations of resistance.

This chapter will begin with a brief history of the Axis invasion and defeat of the case study countries. It will then explore the occupation experience through the lens of ‘intensity’ giving specific examples.

### *Axis invasion and defeat*

The Second World War officially began for France on 3 September 1939 after the German invasion of Poland. Yet, the declaration of war against Germany did not immediately

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<sup>1</sup> Administrative resistance, as noted in the first chapter, most likely occurred in all occupied regions regardless of the intensity of the occupation.

lead to volatile confrontations. Indeed, life for most people in France remained relatively normal considering the enemy shared the long eastern border. The border, specifically the Maginot Line of stationary defensive positions constructed during World War I, operated as a near impenetrable wall in the minds of French governmental officials and military strategists.

However, after the German Army consolidated holdings in Poland and neighboring countries in Eastern Europe, it turned its military sights on France. This was not simply an invasion based on France's status as an ally of defeated Poland. Germany and France had a long history of conflict stretching into the nineteenth century with the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815) and the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). More importantly, the sting of defeat in World War I coupled with the humiliating loss of Alsace-Lorraine to France, years of high war indemnity payments, and successive disputes related to rearmament and industrialized border regions all worked to make France an early target of an aggressive German government.

The invasion of France began in earnest on 10 May 1940 and the Maginot Line proved no more than a momentary inconvenience to the highly mechanized and motivated German Army. Without the protection of the Maginot Line, the French Army was ill prepared to counter the enemy with any success; exhaustion and low morale quickly set in among the troops.<sup>2</sup> Italy then declared war on France as well on 10 June 1940, and sent in troops to add to the large German contingency. It was, most likely, unnecessary. The same day, the government fled Paris for Bordeaux and millions of women, children, and the elderly – approximately 10% of the Parisian population plus refugees from surrounding areas - crowded the roads in their flight out of the bombarded cities.<sup>3</sup> After six weeks of hard fighting, 100,000 French people, mostly soldiers, lay

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<sup>2</sup> Witold Bieganski, et al., *Polish Resistance Movement in Poland and Abroad 1939-1945* (Warsaw: Polish Scientific Publishers, 1987), 194-195.

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Collins Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945* (New York: J. Wiley, 1995), 23. Another historian estimates ten million people in this mass exodus, “a migration of people

dead, 200,000 French received injuries, but after little advance, France signed an armistice with Germany on 22 June 1940.<sup>4</sup> After the German division of France into zones of control, the period of Axis occupation set in.

Yugoslavia, like France, was also not prepared to withstand the German attack when it came.<sup>5</sup> Initially, the threat of war seemed to abate when Hitler persuaded the ruling monarch, Prince Paul, to sign the Tripartite Pact on 26 March 1941 by making empty promises that Yugoslavia would not become a corridor for Axis military movements.<sup>6</sup> The Prince did not take the decision lightly since Yugoslavia had long-standing economic and cultural ties to Britain.<sup>7</sup> The following day, 27 March 1941, a military coup d'état led by Serbian air force general Boja Mirković nullified the treaty and installed the eighteen year old King Peter as monarch. After the successful coup in Yugoslavia stymied Germany's secretly planned blockade against the Soviet Union, the Axis powers invaded without declaration on 6 April 1941.<sup>8</sup>

Yugoslavia had clear strategic value for Germany. Rail lines stretching across the country linked it with Greece and other neighboring countries as well as Africa and Asia. These were necessary for the transportation of Axis troops and materiel to the Eastern Front. Axis control of the Balkans would also hinder the flow of oil from the British Empire in the Middle East and make the ongoing North Africa campaign more difficult.<sup>9</sup> The region was also significant for its

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unknown in Europe since the Dark Ages.” H.R. Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944* (New York: B. Blackwell, 1985), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Weitz. *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945*, 27.

<sup>5</sup> Germany attacked Greece on the same day as part of its efforts to secure the Balkans and facilitate overall war aims.

<sup>6</sup> At this time, the Tripartite Pact allied Germany, Italy, Japan, Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria into a mutual protection agreement.

<sup>7</sup> The Prince himself received his education from Oxford and had ties to the British royal household through marriage.

<sup>8</sup> Operation Barbarossa was the secretly planned invasion of the Soviet Union by Germany to create *Lebensraum*, or living space, in the east for ethnic Germans. This obvious maneuvering to extend the Reich into Soviet territory developed despite the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact signed between the two countries on 23 August 1939. 22 June 1941 marked the beginning of this long and brutal war between Germany and the Soviet Union.

<sup>9</sup> Bieganski, et al., 294.

raw materials and food supplies for Axis troops. According to German sources, 50% of Germany's oil, 100% of its chrome, 60% of its bauxite (aluminum-necessary for airplane construction), 24% of its antimony (used in metal alloys), and 21% of its copper came from the Balkans.<sup>10</sup> To gain free access to these resources, it was imperative that Yugoslavia quickly fall under Axis occupation.

German planes dropped bombs on the capital, Belgrade, on the morning of 7 April 1941. Because of the extensive damage, exact figures are impossible but estimates are that 4,000 to 20,000 people died in Belgrade that day, mostly civilians.<sup>11</sup> In the coming days, more cities burned and villages became desolate as people fled the invasion.

The initial advance of the German Army through Yugoslavia was so swift that the Yugoslav military never fully mobilized; in any case, despite having over one million soldiers, mobilization of outdated horse-drawn equipment meant for a quick defeat.<sup>12</sup> Eleven days after the invasion began, on 17 April 1941, the once autonomous Yugoslavian state lay in ruins, the government was in exile in London, and a host of puppet regimes began to implement Axis policies. The occupation of Yugoslavia not only affected the people within its borders but also provided an excellent pretense for Germany to move hundreds of thousands more Axis troops into Eastern Europe, closer to Soviet borders.

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<sup>10</sup> Paul N. Hehn, *The German Struggle Against Yugoslav Guerrillas in World War II. German Counter-Insurgency in Yugoslavia 1941-1943* (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, Distributed by New York: Columbia University Press, 1979) 4.

<sup>11</sup> The estimate of 4,000 comes from Werner Rings (trans.J. Maxwell Brownjohn), *Life With the Enemy: Collaboration and Resistance in Hitler's Europe, 1939-1945* (First Edition, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982), 35. An estimate of 5,000 occurs in a Serbian resister autobiography; see Zvonimir Vuckovic, *A Balkan Tragedy--Yugoslavia, 1941-1946: Memoirs of a Guerilla Fighter* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs; New York: Distributed by Columbia University Press, 2004), 28. For an estimate of 20,000 people killed, see Boris J. Todorovich (ed. J. Stryder and Andrew Karp), *Last Words: A Memoir of World War II and the Yugoslav Tragedy* (New York: Walker, 1989), 74. While the statistic itself is not as important as other elements of this research, it serves as an example of the widely disparate information that abounds in all wars.

<sup>12</sup> John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 156.

As the war in Europe spread toward the east, encompassing country after country, Asia experienced its own wars, invasions, and defeats. Since the invasion and occupation of Manchuria by Japan in 1931, the Japanese embarked on an aggressive imperial policy of expansion.<sup>13</sup> Many European countries, particularly those with imperial or colonial ties to Asia, and the United States were in negotiation with the burgeoning Japanese empire over Western imperial holdings on the Asian mainland and in the Pacific but diplomatic solutions to Japan's territorial expansion stalled throughout 1940 and 1941. In early December 1941, a second global war truly began.

Beginning on 7 December 1941, the Japanese Imperial Army and Navy simultaneously attacked British, American, and Dutch imperial holdings in Asia and the Pacific. In response, Britain and the United States declared war on Japan the following day. Japanese attacks on places like Siam (an independent 'buffer' state between British and French possessions), Shanghai (China, strong British presence), Hong Kong (British), Borneo (British), Burma (British), Singapore (British), Malaya (British), Hawaii (US), Wake Island (US), Guam (US), and the Philippine Islands (US), were meant to send a clear message to the world and particularly the West.<sup>14</sup> With this highly coordinated strategic operation, Japan signaled its next step in territorial and economic expansion, known as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere (GEACS). This concerted effort destabilized Western power in Asia and allowed for the quick installation of

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<sup>13</sup> The Japanese government in the 1930s and 1940s as referred to in this study is termed imperialist and militarist throughout these chapters. During the war, resisters against the Japanese and the Allies often referred to the Japanese government as fascist; this relates to their close alliance with Germany and Italy and some similarities in governmental structure. The Japanese government, however, self-identified as imperialist. Most academic work since the 1960s does not refer to the Japanese government as fascist because of the Japanese self-identification and it contained little populist rhetoric (see chapter 3 for definition) but contentious debate continues on the subject.

<sup>14</sup> French imperial holdings were not part of this coordinated attack. They were committed to a policy of non-aggression toward Japan and other Tripartite Pact partners since defeat and occupation in 1940. However, French forces under control of the Vichy government stationed in Indochina attacked British forces in Malaya and Singapore.



Japanese imperialism under a policy of ‘Asia for Asians’.<sup>15</sup> The speed and number of all these attacks at once virtually destroyed the US and British naval presence in the Pacific and the communication chaos that ensued among the Allies provided Japan with a number of initial successes.

Japan attacked Burma on 11 December 1941 in a two-pronged invasion by sea and land from the north through Siam, catching the military off-guard.<sup>16</sup> Burma was not the primary strategic possession within the British Empire in Southeast Asia; Malaya was far more important to British shipping and military concerns in Asia. The strength gained by the Japanese empire in taking Malaya led, in part, to the invasion of Burma. The initial intention was to take only Tenasserim to facilitate the capture of Malaya but because of the relative ease in driving back the unprepared British forces, the Japanese military leadership quickly made the decision to take all of Burma.<sup>17</sup>

Burma’s status as a British imperial possession in Asia was not the only reason for Japanese invasion. Within the China-Burma-India Theater, the Allies assisted China in its war with Japan by providing equipment, supplies, and some air support through one of two ways; ‘flying the hump’ across the Himalayas or overland from Rangoon into Kunming in southern China. Japanese military strategists considered the closing of the ‘Burma Road’ as integral to winning

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<sup>15</sup> Combined with Manchuria, the invasion and occupation of these Western imperial territories in Asia and the Pacific provided the first routes to vital economic and industrial expansion that Japan sought. It also expressed the Japanese imperialists’ desire to rid Asia of Western imperial encroachment. Many texts focus on autarky –economic self-sufficiency – and Japanese militarism taking the ‘path to war’. For an in-depth discussion, see Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security 1919-1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987); Harry Wray and Hilary Conroy (ed.), *Japan Examined: Perspectives on Modern Japanese History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983).

<sup>16</sup> The Thirty Comrades, nationalists calling for independence from British rule, led fellow members of the Burmese Independence Army, at the head of the Japanese invasion.

<sup>17</sup> Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Armies: The Fall of British Asia, 1941-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 156.

their war in China.<sup>18</sup> It was also, in the event of a Japanese invasion, far too close to India for the British government not to be concerned.

In this case, Burma became a sort of last-stand battleground on the Asian mainland. The Japanese believed it was the key to victory in China; so much the better if they happened to advance all the way to India, driving Britain completely out of Asia. For the British, the ‘jewel of the empire’, India, must be safeguarded at all costs, leaving Burma as the main line of resistance.<sup>19</sup> The Japanese invasion forced the Indian Army and Burma Corps into almost constant retreat; the Allied assistance provided by the Chinese and British militaries in the region also proved ineffective in stopping the Japanese advance.

Evacuations of Indians, Anglo-Indians, Anglo-Burmans, and Anglo-British from Burma into India began in March 1942, sending thousands of families overland during monsoon season.<sup>20</sup> Some Burmans in civil services positions and considered loyal to the British imperial authority, also joined the evacuation to India, no doubt fearing for their lives. The vast majority of Burmans employed by the government, however, returned to their homes to prepare for the eventual Japanese occupation of the entire country. William Slim’s account of the war in Burma, *Defeat into Victory*, chronicles the evacuation to India, noting that civilians as well as soldiers faced another common enemy: disease. During that thousand-mile trek, 80% of those who made it to India arrived with dysentery, jungle typhus, malaria, and jungle rot; high fatalities plagued the

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<sup>18</sup> Louis Allen, *Burma: The Longest War 1941-1945* (London: Dent, 1984), 6-7. For an excellent treatment of the importance of the Burma Road, see Donovan Webster, *The Burma Road: The Epic Story of the China-Burma-India Theater in World War II* (First Edition, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).

<sup>19</sup> Economic interests in India largely funded the British Empire’s war effort against the European Axis; lose India, lose the war.

<sup>20</sup> Beginning with the first bombs and continuing until the autumn of 1942, these groups, including some indigenous civil servants, began their exodus to India. One historian notes this was the largest mass migration in history at the time with 600,000 people fleeing over land and sea. Bayly and Harper, 167.

entire route.<sup>21</sup> Starvation and malnourishment were other factors in the final stages of defeat; no supplies arrived by air or truck because of shortages and a lack of viable transportation routes during the monsoon.

The Japanese fought their way north, occupying Mandalay on 1 May 1942. The entire country was under Japanese occupation a little less than three weeks later, on 20 May. The same day, the British Empire looked apprehensively towards the boundary between India and Burma as the Japanese Army advance threatened Imphal and Kohima across the border.

Perhaps more than the British imperial presence in Burma, the status of the Philippines as an American territorial possession threatened the 'Asia for Asians' plan of Japanese imperialists. After the United States acquired the Philippines following the Spanish-American War (1898-1902) in the Treaty of Paris, this moved a Western imperialist power closer to the home islands of Japan and fed a growing sense of apprehension among the burgeoning number of Japanese imperialists. A combination of anger and indignation at the aggressive racism perceived in interactions with the West and fear of imperial encroachment leading to the possible loss of Japanese independence, increased as militarism swept through the Japanese government in the 1930s.

In the late 1930s and 1940s, diplomatic envoys failed consistently between the United States and Japan as American embargos on oil and steel, in response to the Japanese occupation of Indochina, endangered the long-sought victory in Manchuria and the planned Japanese extension into more Asian mainland and island nations. A solution to Japan's problem of oil shortages lay to the south of the Philippines; the rich oil fields in the Dutch East Indies could provide enough fuel for the Imperial Navy and Army combined. Yet, the United States military presence in the

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<sup>21</sup> William Slim, *Defeat into Victory* (Second Edition, New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1961), 90. As many as 80,000 evacuees may have died along the way from starvation, disease, accidents, and continued attacks against them. Bayly and Harper, 167.

Philippines and its entire Pacific fleet in Hawaii, so close to the Japanese home islands, were a quandary.

On the same day as the attack on Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941, Japanese bombs fell on the urbanized northern Philippine island of Luzon. Three days later a full-scale invasion was underway on all of the primary islands. The American military retreated to the Bataan peninsula and declared the capital, Manila, an open city by the end of December in attempts to save it from further destruction by Japanese bombs and artillery. As the only major American imperial possession in Asia, the Philippine islands were of prime importance to US economic and strategic interests in the area. The struggle against Japanese invasion was, therefore, the most prolonged in Southeast Asia because of the importance of the Philippines.

Again, however, as in Burma, the orchestrated swiftness of the Japanese attack meant that combined American and Filipino forces in the area could not defend the islands for more than a few months. Quickly pushed into Bataan and finally Corregidor, those military personnel who remained active and unable to evacuate became prisoners of war in May 1942. Soldiers and civilians alike fought hard to push back the Japanese attacks. Manila, even after the open city declaration by retreating Allied command, suffered aerial bombing but escaped large-scale destruction until the final days of the war.<sup>22</sup>

As evidenced from the case study countries, World War II occurred on land, across thousands of miles of open sea, in small harbors, jungles and rain forests, across high mountain passes, and in cities and towns. Likewise, the occupation touched everyone where it occurred.

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<sup>22</sup> Allied forces retook the capital city in 1944 but intense urban fighting between Japanese and Filipinos, combined with a long list of Japanese atrocities such as murdering civilians and bombing buildings during retreat, destroyed the city and killed almost 100,000 civilians in Manila alone. Warsaw, also a site of urban warfare in addition to bombing, was the only other city more extensively destroyed in the war. Keegan, 561.

### *The occupation experience*

Not all occupations are the same. It may be obvious to point out that occupation differs because of special cultural issues, ideologies, racism, goals, expectations, and so on. Yet, what may not be so obvious are the differences or similarities in *intensity* of occupation. This differing level of contact between the occupier and occupied populations profoundly shaped both the war experience and resistance.

Intensity of occupation is the amount of coercive and aggressive force applied by the occupying country to the people under subjugation, and the perception of that force among occupied populations. The applied force can be physical, as in controlling the movements of a population by establishing zones or ghettos; it can also be symbolic or psychological such as banning social or cultural expressions that contradict the occupying country's ideology. Moreover, the term 'occupation' defined here consists of several components, including governmental occupation, economic occupation, ideological and racial occupation, social occupation, and cultural occupation. The occupying power implements these components with a range of coercive force (or not at all; some components are absent in certain occupations) and, in turn, the occupied people perceive each of these with varying significance to their lives. For instance, a country made up largely of peasants rather than factory workers, such as Burma, might view industrial quotas as a less significant component of the Japanese economic occupation than that of rice quotas, which threatened their livelihood with artificially low fixed prices and mass starvation became more common as rice quotas increased throughout the occupation. The implementation of occupation components through force, combined with the number of people affected by the components, leads to a measurement of the occupation intensity along a spectrum of high to low intensity. Further, the intensity is not only relative but

also dynamic; changing conditions within the occupied areas, political maneuvering in the occupying country, or events related to the war regionally or globally alter the intensity.

### *Governmental occupation*

Governmental occupation mainly concerned the division of territory and the installation of collaborating regimes. In the European case studies, territorial division not only gave spoils to the occupiers but also divided large countries into manageable administration areas. For example, the Axis occupation divided control of France between Italy, Germany, and a collaborating French government in the south. Additionally, territorial partitioning often succeeded in exacerbating divisions among the occupied population for ease of domination. Collaborating regimes assisted in the implementation and enforcement of occupation policies and operated as a liaison between the population and occupier. In terms of governmental occupation intensity, the European examples and Burma fall into the high range while the Philippines experienced a moderately intense governmental occupation.

In France, the Occupied Zone in the north consisted of two-thirds of French territory and population.<sup>23</sup> The southern area, known as the Free Zone, remained nominally independent, with the new capital installed in Vichy.<sup>24</sup> The territorial division of France continued with the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine by the German Reich, Italian occupation along the Franco-Italian border, and a Prohibited Zone along the Atlantic coast and the Belgian border as part of the continuing military operations against Britain.

The collaborating authoritarian regime in Vichy, led by Marshal Philippe Pétain, embarked on the National Revolution, a plan of national renewal focused on three new symbolic

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<sup>23</sup> The Occupied Zone included Paris, the Atlantic coast, Tours, through Bordeaux down to the Spanish border.

<sup>24</sup> The Free Zone included Lyon, Grenoble, and other areas south of the Loire to the Alps and Mediterranean coast. It also retained control of the overseas empire in Africa and Indochina.

populist ideals – *Travail, Famille, Patrie* (Work, Family, Country).<sup>25</sup> Additionally, Vichy worked to implement the policies of the Axis and to abide by the terms of the armistice; the French Army was limited to 100,000 men; the Navy continued to exist but in demilitarized capacity; and all French prisoners of war remained under German control. The Vichy government, officially unoccupied, remained under an agreement of collaboration with the Germans in exchange for a certain amount of state autonomy and protection from Italian and Spanish territorial demands.<sup>26</sup>

The Axis plan to control Yugoslavia relied primarily on divisions, both in terms of territory and people. The occupation forces hoped territorial divisions would feed existing ethnic, political, social, and religious strife in the region, allowing the Axis to ‘divide and conquer’.<sup>27</sup> Since the formation of Yugoslavia after World War I, Serbs dominated politics in the region.<sup>28</sup> Thus, it was imperative that the occupation destroy the veneer of unity created by the Serb government and any hopes of Yugoslavian unanimity against the Axis.

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<sup>25</sup> Prime Minister Reynaud gave power to Commander-in-Chief Weygand and Pétain on 16 June 1940 in order to form a new government. Pétain approached the Germans with an offer of armistice on 17 June 1941. The new National Assembly voted itself out of existence on 10 July 1941 and gave Pétain full governmental powers, ending parliamentary democracy. See Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944*, 2. Although similar movements existed in Germany and Italy, the Axis did not fully endorse all elements of the National Revolution. Pétain’s call for women to limit themselves to work in the home jeopardized German plans to use them as forced labor.

<sup>26</sup> This changed with the German occupation of the Free Zone in 1942. Although Vichy technically remained the civil administrative authority until liberation in 1944, German officials approved or rejected all decisions.

<sup>27</sup> Several different ethnic and religious groups made up the population of Yugoslavia. Serbs, some Bosnians, Macedonians (ethnically Serbian and Greek), and Montenegrins (ethnically Serbs as well) were Eastern Orthodox; other Bosnians were Roman Catholic or belonged to the schism Bosnian Church; Croats and Slovenes were Roman Catholic. Bosnia also contained Muslim populations from the former Ottoman period.

<sup>28</sup> Those countries drawing up the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 believed Serb domination was the key to controlling the ongoing “tendencies that...racked the Habsburg monarchy’s Slav dominions before 1914 and sought to check them merely by imposing Serb dominance over those minorities which had always preferred Vienna to Belgrade”. Keegan, 156. The Black Hand, an ethnic minority nationalist group of Bosnian Serbs, orchestrated the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in 1914, making all similar groups a dangerous threat to the world powers constructing the Treaty of Versailles. This idea constructed the original borders of Yugoslavia to encompass all of the tenacious peoples under one powerful, centralized government dominated by one ethnic group that was more or less friendly to the Western world powers.

Germany and Italy separated the country into two zones of occupation in April 1941 and then parceled out the rest of the territory to fellow Axis members.<sup>29</sup> Albania, Hungary, and Bulgaria claimed border regions in Bosnia and the Banat. Multiple puppet governments and collaborationist regimes nominally controlled newly created states. Milan Acimović in Serbia reported directly to the German occupation forces until his replacement by a notorious collaborator, General Milan Nedić in August 1941. Ante Pavelić (fellow Croatian nationalists) and Ustashi members led an independent Croatia that included parts of Bosnia.<sup>30</sup>

Governmental occupation includes the military personnel operating within the occupied territories in addition to the policies enacted by the occupation government at all levels of administration. The Axis used large numbers of soldiers, officers, officials, and special police forces to implement policies in the case study countries, all of which increased the intensity of governmental occupation. Collaborating governments often had their own officials and special police, such as the *Milice* in Vichy, which carried out duties alongside the occupation.<sup>31</sup> Nowhere was the effect of using military personnel to increase the governmental occupation intensity more evident than in Yugoslavia; as a corridor of troop movements to the Eastern Front and continued resistance in the region against the occupation, Axis military personnel, occupation police, and other “violence specialists” operated throughout Yugoslavia.<sup>32</sup>

In contrast to German policy in Europe, Japanese occupation plans did not rely on territorial divisions in Southeast Asia but the governmental occupation intensity remained a significant component of the overall occupation. This lack of territorial division does not mean

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<sup>29</sup> The German zone included northern Slovenia, eastern Vojvodina, and Serbia. The Italian zone encompassed western Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Dalmatia.

<sup>30</sup> Ustashi were extreme right-wing (often identified as fascist) Croatian nationalists, previously involved in the assassination of King Alexander I of Yugoslavia in 1934. An Italian Duke was the official ruler of the new Croatian state but never visited the country, leaving power completely in the hands of Pavelić.

<sup>31</sup> *Milice* was the Vichy regime’s version of secret police, similar to the Gestapo.

<sup>32</sup> For further reading on “violence specialists” and political applications see, Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 34-41.



the Japanese occupation always sought to unify *all* the people in the territory. Indeed, the Japanese occupation administration avoided the separation of territory into different governmental administrations in order to reject the Western imperial methods of rule and create a pan-Asian identity, but only among certain groups such as the Christianized Filipinos or ethnic Burmese but not the hill tribes in northern Burma or Muslim tribes in the southern Philippines. Imperial policies frequently instructed occupation forces to “take advantage of enmity and jealousy” among groups and pursue tactics of “divide-and-rule” but also warned against trusting “mixed-blood offspring”, whites, or overseas Chinese.<sup>33</sup>

In Burma and the Philippines, areas administered separately under British or American authority became single entities under the Japanese Military Authority. For example, throughout the British period the government in Rangoon did not control much of the rugged northern mountains of Burma.<sup>34</sup> Instead, the Burmese Frontier Areas Administration loosely governed the area and rarely made incursions into ‘the hills’ of the Kachin tribes. This changed under Japanese occupation with some governmental involvement and large military operations conducted in the area. A similar situation occurred in the Philippine Commonwealth. Southern islands in the archipelago, Mindanao being the largest, received less attention from the pre-war authorities than urban industrialized islands like Luzon in the north.<sup>35</sup> Rather than intense governmental occupation policies, however, the Japanese occupation worked more through social, cultural, and

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<sup>33</sup> See John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (First Edition, New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 289.

<sup>34</sup> In 1936, Britain separated India from Burma and introduced limited self-rule to Burma to placate growing independence movements. Prior to the war, two ethnic Burmese leaders, U Saw and Dr. Ba Maw ruled the parliamentary democracy but the Empire continued to control the political structure by gerrymandering seats of governmental representatives based on ethnicity. For more information on the politics of gerrymandering based on ethnicity, see Andrew Selth, “Race and Resistance in Burma, 1942-1945,” *Modern Asian Studies* (Vol. 20, No. 3, 1986), 483-507 and Bayly and Harper, 197.

<sup>35</sup> The Americans abandoned attempts to ‘pacify’ the populations in Mindanao and neighboring islands several decades before due to a long history of successful resistance among the local tribal populations.

economic policy in addition to frequent military incursions in most regions to unify all the Philippines administrations under GEACS policy.

In Burma, the Japanese installed the Cambridge educated Dr. Ba Maw, a well-known and charismatic former prime minister, to lead the collaborating regime and enlisted the Burmese Independence Army (BIA) to assist in the full occupation of the country.<sup>36</sup> In a climate of growing calls for self-determination, some in Burma looked to the Japanese to assist them; alliance with the BIA made this group of mostly ethnic Burmese nationalists the “effective government away from the Japanese gaze.”<sup>37</sup> Efforts to elicit greater Burman cooperation in GEACS culminated in the Japanese granting nominal independence to Burma on August 1, 1943.<sup>38</sup> The Philippines did not have a similar collaborating army but the occupation did install a president who offered compliance with Japanese demands.

Philippine president Manuel Quezon, exiled in the United States during Japanese occupation, had political links to those considered by the Japanese as candidates for collaborating leaders, including then-Secretary of Justice José Laurel. Quezon instructed those who remained in the Philippines to feign cooperation with the Japanese in order to afford

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<sup>36</sup> During the Japanese defeat of Burma, the British governor, Reginald Dorman-Smith, evacuated to India. The BIA went through many name changes including Burma Defense Army, Burma National Army, and Anti-Fascist Peoples’ Freedom League. See the List of Abbreviations in the Appendix.

<sup>37</sup> Many people in south Burma greeted the BIA as heroes, particularly in Tavoy where heavy resistance against the British occurred in 1886 and 1931. At the head of a Japanese force of 300,000, the BIA gathered more recruits along the way, culminating in 18,000 by the end of 1941. Bayly and Harper, 173. Additionally, Robert Taylor notes that, although the BIA was powerful in many areas, people from various groups not linked to the BIA took leadership positions making the situation less straightforward than usually indicated. See Robert H. Taylor, “*Burma in the Anti-Fascist War*” in Alfred W. McCoy (ed.), *Southeast Asia Under Japanese Occupation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1980), 167.

<sup>38</sup> This limited independence and its reality directly relates to growing resistance against the Japanese in Burma after 1943. The independent government still existed under the complete control of the military occupation and none of the democratic procedures of the pre-war period applied. More discussion occurs later in this study. See U Hla Pe, *Narrative of the Japanese Occupation of Burma* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Dept. of Far Eastern Studies, Cornell University, 1961), 34. The BIA became the Burma National Army (BNA) upon declaring independence.

Filipinos some protection from abuses occurring elsewhere.<sup>39</sup> Laurel, however, was enthusiastic about the possibility of GEACS and ‘Asia for Asians’.<sup>40</sup> The Japanese installed Laurel as president on 28 January 1942, who assured them about Filipino compliance with occupation policies.<sup>41</sup> As in Burma, the collaborating government in the Philippines ostensibly declared independence on 14 October 1942.<sup>42</sup>

Another significant component of all Axis occupations examined here was the dissolution and outlawing of all political parties not aligned with the occupation ideologies. Those in direct opposition often went underground but continued to operate, although they were dangerously illegal. In some cases, such as the Philippines, the occupation created a ‘non-political’ service organization called the *Kalibapi* to absorb all approved parties that agreed to support GEACS.<sup>43</sup>

The territorial divisions of France and the persistent presence of military personnel and violence in Yugoslavia point to high intensity governmental occupation in both countries. Likewise, the governmental occupation of Burma was equally high in intensity; not because of territorial divisions but rather because of the shift to incorporate historically marginalized areas in the ‘frontier’ and forced unification of these tribal areas under the Japanese, both of which created disruption among the population. Among the case study countries, governmental occupation of the Philippines was the least intense but certainly not absent, especially

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<sup>39</sup> Senator Manuel Roxas, Secretary of Justice José Laurel, Secretary to the President Jorge B. Vargas, and others remained in the Philippines; the Japanese occupation imprisoned or executed many of those who offered non-compliance for the duration of the war.

<sup>40</sup> Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (First Edition, New York: Random House, 1989), 307.

<sup>41</sup> For Quezon's reaction to a collaborating government led by Laurel, see Manuel Luis Quezon, *The Good Fight* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1946), 257-258.

<sup>42</sup> The Japanese occupation believed Philippine independence would shift allegiance among Filipinos from the Americans to Japan, reducing any resistance to GEACS inclusion. See Theodore Friend, *Between Two Empires: The Ordeal of the Philippines, 1929-1946* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965), 233-234. In reality, Japan still controlled both countries through direct military administration; independence existed only on paper.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 238.

considering that the Japanese outlawed many political freedoms allowed under the previous administration. Additionally, the Axis occupation in all the case study countries counted on collaborating elements within the occupied governments whether it was the Vichy regime in France, the Croatian Ustashi in Yugoslavia, the Burman government and the BIA prior to 1943, and the Philippine administration of José Laurel.

### *Economic occupation*

Going hand in hand with governmental occupation, economic occupation often resulted in increasing the intensity of occupation as well. Economic occupation consisted of policies and practices executed by the occupying power within the occupied countries to enhance the Axis' international economic standing, further the war effort against the Allies, or debilitate a once thriving and economically viable occupied country. Some occupations viewed the economic component as the most important part of controlling the regions because it allowed for the continuation of war and fueled the home economy. The first item to contend with was the destruction of markets, infrastructure, and commerce from the war itself.<sup>44</sup> Japan had a vital interest in not only maintaining order but also supporting currency, reviving markets, and sustaining economies for profit exploitation.<sup>45</sup>

Germany also carried out many exploitive policies in Europe but relied more on market destabilization for their own means. For example, German soldiers, officers, and civilians in France purchased products not immediately shipped to their home country. The 'occupation

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<sup>44</sup> The invasion and war in Burma, as one example, led to the destruction of almost all oil extraction capabilities, mining facilities, and tens of thousands of commercial boats and automobiles due to the Japanese bombing and the 'scorched earth' policy of retreat by British forces. Burma also remained within the range of Allied bombers from China and India throughout the war.

<sup>45</sup> See "General Plan of Economic Policies for the Southern Areas (Nampo Keizai Taisaku Yoko) Submitted to the Liaison Conference Between Imperial General Headquarters and the Government. December 12, 1941" in Frank N. Trager (trans. Zoon Yoon Won and Thomas T. Winant), *Burma: Japanese Military Administration, Selected Documents, 1941-1945* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 38-45.

costs' of 400 million francs per day levied by Germany, the artificially low exchange rate in German favor, and the requirement that French merchants could not decline a sale to Germans assisted in destabilizing the previously strong French market, allowing the occupation greater control of its mechanisms.<sup>46</sup> By weakening the French economy, which was stronger than that of Germany prior to the war, the occupation easily took control and then exploited the French economic power-house; both as an economic measure to bolster the home country and as part of a vendetta for the post-World War I economic policies that indebted Germany to France. The need for market destabilization was not necessarily required in Yugoslavia, however. Before the war, Germany and Yugoslavia enjoyed a close trading partnership. The economic occupation allowed Germany to continue this relationship, particularly regarding industrial minerals and coal, but in terms more favorable for itself.<sup>47</sup>

Rather than any immediate collapse of economies in the case study countries, mounting demands for commodities, raw materials, industrial products, agricultural products, payouts, and market manipulations coalesced into difficulties for the population. For instance, the Occupied Zone in France was the most important economic area with three-quarters of all French industry and two-thirds of viable agricultural land. The south relied on the Occupied Zone for almost all products with the exception of wine and some fruits. Transportation difficulties or shipment delays often meant increased chances of starvation for many in the Free Zone.

Issuance of ration cards did not alleviate the problem of possible starvation because long lines and shortages frequently made the cards useless. Claire Chevrillon remembered the

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<sup>46</sup> The exchange rate favored the Germans by as much as 63%. Keegan, 283. This also occurred in Burma despite its independence on paper. Japanese firms assisted the military police in commandeering products for their own use and the Japanese fixed prices so that farmer were often forced to sell at a loss; if they refused, the farmers were "beaten, insulted, and mauled." Daw Khin Myo Chit, *Three Years Under the Japs* (Sanchaung: Khin Myo Chit, 1945), 22.

<sup>47</sup> The reduced cost applied when transports actually made it to Germany. Sabotage of railways in Yugoslavia occurred frequently. For an extensive analysis of the German economic occupation of Yugoslavia, see Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 611-717.

difficulties of obtaining food in her autobiography: “A ration ticket didn’t mean there was food to be bought...By the end of the first year [1940], my father had lost thirty-six pounds; my mother’s weight dropped to eighty-four pounds. However, after a few months, most Parisians managed to supplement their rations either through people they knew in the country...or through the black market.”<sup>48</sup>

The reliance of urbanites on those in the countryside for supplemental food was not exclusive to France but also occurred in Yugoslavia and the Philippines. Additionally, concentration of occupation soldiers in French and Burman cities, for example, rather than rural areas led to increasing tensions between the towns and the countryside.<sup>49</sup> In the French illustration, city-dwellers believed they carried most of the burden of occupation, whereas most of the prisoners of war came from the rural areas and the peasant communities believed they contributed more to the war effort.<sup>50</sup>

Food shortages and imposed rationing occurred everywhere as occupation continued. All of the Axis powers, particularly Germany and Japan, required large quotas of food, medicine, textiles, and fuel from the occupied countries. These supplies went to the home countries or to the various military fronts. As an example, Japan’s economic interests in Burma included rice, substantial oil reserves, and minerals such as lead, zinc, copper, and tungsten.<sup>51</sup> The occupation also planned to extract a good deal from the Philippines, such as sugar, lumber, rice, and tobacco,

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<sup>48</sup> Claire Chevrillon (trans. Jane Kielty Stott), *Code Name Christine Clouet: A Woman in the French Resistance* (First Edition, College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), 23.

<sup>49</sup> See Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944*, 7; Trager, *passim*.

<sup>50</sup> This division between rural ‘giving’ and urban ‘taking’ populations holds true for Burma as well. See U Hla Pe, 77.

<sup>51</sup> At times, the Japanese empire had more rice than it could manage with imports coming in from the Philippines, Siam, Malaya, and the East Indies. In some areas of Burma, they attempted to switch from rice to cotton but the results were disastrous. For policy see, “General Plan For the Control of the Occupied Areas Under the Hayashi Army Group (Hayashi Shudan Senryochi Tochi Yoko) Issued by Iida Shojiro, the Commander of the Hayashi Army Group. March 15, 1942” in Trager, 49; for the operation of the policy in reality, documented by a Burman government official during the occupation see, U Hla Pe, 22.

while also continuing to receive abaca, soap, and flour; according to economic policy, the role of the Philippines in GEACS was imperative.<sup>52</sup> The Japanese military administration expected forces on the ground to remain self-sufficient through pillage or any other means and to ship any commodities directly to the home islands.<sup>53</sup> Along with quotas, pillage depleted the food supplies of many communities. In response, some occupied people resorted to hoarding as their last hope of feeding themselves, leaving those without means to succumb more quickly to hunger.

Though often absent in many personal narratives because of a focus on war brutalities, Yugoslavians also faced hardships because of occupation quotas on foodstuffs.<sup>54</sup> The German occupation frequently ordered a livestock census taken on cattle and chickens to determine their requisition amount. Even in the early stages of the occupation, one resident of Belgrade noted, “The struggle for the everyday necessities of life filled the available hours, which were sparse – a curfew having been imposed from sunset to sunrise. Women in babushkas scurried around in the streets. Only a few men were about; most kept in hiding from fear of being taken to a labor camp.”<sup>55</sup>

Forced labor was certainly a key economic occupation policy. The Axis powers required millions of foreign workers to continue the war and maintain acceptable conditions in their home countries. To this end, both Germany and Japan forcibly gathered workers, usually young physically viable men but women and children as well, for slave labor.<sup>56</sup> Destinations included labor camps, factories in the occupying country, farms, and infrastructure projects such as bridge,

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<sup>52</sup> Friend, 231.

<sup>53</sup> Dorothy Guyot, *The Political Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Burma* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 170-171.

<sup>54</sup> The destruction of official records due to bombings or deliberate intention also makes it difficult to determine the extent of economic occupation in Yugoslavia as it actually occurred, rather than the expectations of policy writers prior to the Axis invasion.

<sup>55</sup> Vuckovic, 30.

<sup>56</sup> In France, men between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five as well as single women from twenty-one to thirty-five were targets for forced labor. See John F. Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), 26.

road, or airstrip construction for the Axis war effort. In the case of Yugoslavia, more than 43,000 men and women worked as forced laborers in Germany along with 92,000 prisoners of war (almost exclusively Serbs).<sup>57</sup> Some also went to work in Germany willingly. Indeed, one historian noted that, “Many young people, especially those not ideologically committed one way or another, thought that their chances of surviving the war were greater by going to work in Germany than by remaining in Yugoslavia, where a multifaceted civil war and ruthless Axis operations against the rebels put human life in great danger.”<sup>58</sup>

French prisoners of war, remaining in Germany under the terms of the armistice, also became a forced labor pool. This amounted to almost two million French men working in farming, mining, and factories in Germany between 1940 and 1945 along with millions more Poles, Yugoslavs, and others. With the bulk of Germany’s own labor force in the military and German women dissuaded from working outside the home, Vichy created the *Service de Travail Obligatoire* (Obligatory Labor Service) to accommodate the German foreign labor quota not met by the prisoners.<sup>59</sup>

In Burma, the occupation conscripted locals into labor corps frequently called the ‘sweat army’ where harsh conditions and insufficient rations often meant death to the workers.<sup>60</sup> The use of forced labor in constructing the Burma-Siam railway, known as the ‘railroad of death’, led to incredibly high casualty rates. People throughout occupied Asia - Javanese, Tamils, Malays, Burmans, and Chinese laborers - worked on the railroad construction between October 1942 and November 1943. Common estimates assert that out of the 300,000 workers, 60,000 died in the jungles from starvation, disease, and mistreatment. Additionally, 60,000 to 70,000 Australian,

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<sup>57</sup> Tomasevich, 655.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 660.

<sup>59</sup> Official policy in France and Yugoslavia required young men not already gainfully employed or otherwise exempt to report for deportation to labor camps and subsequent distribution throughout Germany.

<sup>60</sup> Daw Khin Myo Chit, 21; U Hla Pe, 18.



British, Indian, and Dutch prisoners of war became forced labor pools for projects such as the Burma-Siam railway and others.<sup>61</sup>

Economic occupation not only fueled the occupying powers but also directly led to the deaths of millions worldwide. Food shortages coupled with the lack of available medical care, harsh labor conditions, and disease killed hundreds of thousands in the case study countries. Estimates of deaths directly related to the Japanese occupation of the Philippines caused by starvation and disease alone may number 310,000.<sup>62</sup> In the border regions between Burma and Bengal, a famine related to the war added to the death toll. Estimates of those killed in Burma due to war, starvation and disease is 150,000; added to this are approximately one and a half million Burman famine deaths; in Bengal, the number may be almost two million dead from famine.<sup>63</sup> In contrast, Yugoslavia and France were fortunate that millions of people did not starve to death. Their fate, however, was not devoid of scattered starvation and there were certainly other ways to die at the hands of the occupation.

All of the case study countries endured some economic occupation, as it seemed logical to the Axis occupation that economic exploitation should follow the establishment of territorial control. Economic occupation was, indeed, a vital part of the Axis powers' goals of domination in Europe and Asia. France and Burma seem to have the highest intensity of economic occupation, as evidenced from the market and commodity figures in secondary resources and details of daily life contained in personal narratives. The Philippines also suffered an intense

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<sup>61</sup> Dower, 47-48.

<sup>62</sup> See data from Werner Gruhl, *Japan's War*, (Unpublished) in Haruo Tohmatsu and H.P. Willmott, *A Gathering Darkness: The Coming of War to the Far East and the Pacific, 1921-1942* (Lanham, MD: SR Books, 2004), 144. In some cases, starvation of certain occupied groups was a policy of the Axis powers in terms of genocide, mass killing, or simply as an economic strategy to keep costs to a minimum. This applies to forced labor as well as purchases made within occupied countries. In Burma and the Philippines, the Japanese wanted food, raw materials, and other supplies as cheaply as possible so compensation and food supplies for paid labor were minimal. Ibid, 145. Similar death rates are in Dower, 295-298.

<sup>63</sup> For a discussion of the Burma-Bengal famine and contentions surrounding its relation to the war see, Haruo Tohmatsu and Willmott, 155 and Dower, 297.

economic occupation but the duration was not as long as the other countries and the population did not feel its effects uniformly across all the islands. Yugoslavia appeared to have the lowest intensity economic occupation even though tens of thousands became forced laborers for the Axis powers. However, many of the trade relationships with Germany continued, albeit with better terms for the occupying power, and most of the Yugoslav population avoided mass starvation.

### *Ideological (racial) and cultural occupation*

German plans for the ‘thousand year Reich’ and Japan’s GEACS both rested on a foundation of racial and cultural ideology.<sup>64</sup> Different groups - ethnic, religious, or otherwise - fit into a hierarchical scale of ‘race’.<sup>65</sup> Ethnic Germans, or ‘Aryans’, existed at the top of the Nazi scale, followed by the Anglo populations of Britain and America and then the French; Slavs existed at the lower end of the scale, followed by Africans. Finally, gypsies and Jews were at the bottom of the scale, considered ‘undesirables’.

In Japan, ideas of racial superiority existed for centuries but imperial expansion deepened these notions and created a hierarchy of Asian ‘races’. People in Asia fell into categories of ‘master races’, ‘friendly races’ and ‘guest races’. According to the Japanese model, the ethnic Japanese were destined to rule their fellow Asians who fell into the two subordinate hierarchical

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<sup>64</sup> The Italian government did not adopt a strict racial view of occupied peoples, nor did they harshly implement ideological occupation in any concerted way. Therefore, the Italian component of the European Axis receives less attention in this section.

<sup>65</sup> ‘Race’ appears in quotation because it does not always refer exclusively to ethnicity, nor is it an accurate accepted classification of human diversity in a contemporary sense. Rather, for Germany and Japan ‘race’ became a catchall term of designation.

positions.<sup>66</sup> It is important to note that both German and Japanese ‘racial’ ideologies left little possibility of moving up the scale, those on the scale remained fixed in position.

There was, however, a marked difference in Asia; the occupation insisted on an enculturation program of ‘Japanization’ in all GEACS countries, including Burma and the Philippines. This program attempted to cultivate Japan-friendly Asian identities among the occupied populations, forcibly if necessary, whereas references to ‘Aryanization’ or ‘Germanization’ in German occupied countries only meant that businesses owned by ‘undesirables’ were confiscated and appropriated to those more suitable according to the ‘racial’ hierarchy.<sup>67</sup> This concoction of ‘racial’ hierarchy coupled with designated roles and forced cultural change made for an intensity of occupation that infiltrated life at its fundamental level in all case study countries.

Areas occupied by the Germans and Japanese were subject to conditions dependent on these ideas of racial superiority or inferiority. ‘Inferior’ people, according to the ideologies of the occupation, faced extremely harsh conditions. Slavs, including Yugoslavian, Polish and some Russian populations, were considered fit only for slave labor; ‘undesirables’ served no purpose in the Reich and could destroy ‘racial’ unity so they faced extermination. Under the Japanese, Asian ‘races’ such as Koreans and other ‘guest races’ in Southeast Asia provided slave labor pools and ‘comfort women’.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> The Japanese became caught up in a “web of contradictions: creating new colonial hierarchies while preaching liberation; signing the glories of their unique Imperial Way while professing to support a broad and all-embracing Pan-Asianism.” Dower, 8.

<sup>67</sup> In this research, only one prominent German example of cultural occupation occurred. After the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, ‘Germanization’ became the policy. Those who exhibited their French culture or language found themselves forcefully deported to the Free Zone without money or belongings. Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944*, 9.

<sup>68</sup> In addition to harsh working conditions, many forced laborers in Asia became victims again during the Japanese retreat in 1944-1945. Occupation forces frequently killed prisoners and laborers as Allied forces approached. See Haruo Tohmatsu and Willmott, 145.

Occupying administrations also developed plans for strengthening their home countries including specific roles for occupied peoples based on eugenic ideas of race, strength, intelligence, trustworthiness, and ingenuity. Germany planned to empty Poland and Yugoslavia for *Lebensraum* (living space) for ‘racially pure’ ethnic Germans, either by sending the former inhabitants into forced labor or by elimination. Those designated ‘undesirable’ would first have all their possessions appropriated for the Reich including homes, belongings, and clothes before being killed. Other groups posed ideological threats to Germany that did not necessarily fit into one of the ‘racial’ categories; these included communists, homosexuals, and freemasons. Considering the strict Nazi views favoring strong authoritarian politics, a united ethnically homogenous state, and the operation of a corporatist economic system it is not surprising that such people were among the first victims of the ideology. Indeed, those identifying with any of these groups were subject to the same treatments as ‘racial’ enemies including deportation and execution.

Japanese imperialism also gave some specific ‘races’ special positions within GEACS. They envisioned the Philippines as a merchant area supporting the economy of the home islands while hundred of millions of agricultural workers in China made up the empire’s ‘bread basket’.<sup>69</sup> Overseas Chinese, prominent minorities in both Burma and the Philippines, carried a reputation of business expertise deemed as a valuable addition to the GEACS. The recommended policy, however, was “that the Japanese ‘utilize’ them for the time being, ‘but gradually expel them’.”<sup>70</sup> The occupation classified Burmans and other ‘southern people’ as lazy; their inclusion

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<sup>69</sup> Yuk-wai Yung Li, *The Huaqiao Warriors: Chinese Resistance Movement in the Philippines, 1942-1945* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1995), 30.

<sup>70</sup> Dower, 288.

into the ranks of forced labor with the ‘lazy’ stereotype guaranteed harsh treatment at the hands of the occupation to overcome this ‘flaw’.<sup>71</sup>

In these ‘racial’ ideologies, there also existed growing numbers targeted for harassment, imprisonment, mass murder and genocide.<sup>72</sup> In the case of Germany’s domination of Europe, one historian notes genocide carried out against Jews and gypsies was “a German war aim for which it made military and economic sacrifices.”<sup>73</sup> Collaborators, denouncement, arrest, and deportation became a constant source of fear for many occupied subjects.

In France, the German occupation in the northern zone and the Vichy regime in the south instituted an extension of the 1937 Nuremberg Laws that applied first to foreign and then to native Jews in France.<sup>74</sup> Throughout the occupation, deportations, property seizure, and ‘Aryanization’ of Jewish businesses occurred.<sup>75</sup> Significantly, many French people did not readily comply with some of the extreme anti-Semitic policies, saving two-thirds of the Jewish population from death in extermination camps and limiting appropriation of businesses to less than one third. A Holocaust historian notes this was due in part to rescue, resistance activities, and Vichy’s attitude toward the Jews “vacillating between xenophobic anti-Semitism and a

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<sup>71</sup> One historian notes, “The Japanese characterization of the Burmese as lazy, undisciplined, and tradition-bound was not far from early British assessments. However, where the British were delighted to find a happy, carefree people, the Japanese were determined to strip away this frivolity in order to let the Burmese know ‘their true selves’.” While this statement may misrepresent the British history of Burma, notably the three Anglo-Burman Wars when the local population was not “happy” or “carefree”, it is a significant identification of the ‘Japanization’ and pan-Asian component of Japanese imperialism. Guyot, 201.

<sup>72</sup> For excellent treatises on racial ideologies, genocide, and wartime atrocities, see Toshiyuki Tanaka, *Hidden Horrors: Japanese War Crimes in World War II* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996); Leni Yahil (trans. Ina Friedman and Haya Galai), *Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

<sup>73</sup> Christon I. Archer, et al., *World History of Warfare* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 520.

<sup>74</sup> The Nuremberg Laws limited Jewish participation in business and society, prevented relations between Jewish and non-Jewish populations, and provided ‘scientific’ methods to determine Jewish *ethnic* status. In Vichy, this extension was the *Statut des Juifs* (Jewish Statute) of October 1940. French Jews actually made up only one third of the Parisian Jewish population and all of France received large numbers of Jewish refugees fleeing from countries in Eastern Europe, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, and recently annexed Alsace-Lorraine.

<sup>75</sup> ‘Aryanization’, rather than an enculturation project, was the takeover of Jewish businesses by German, but in this case French, administrators. The deportation of foreign Jews began in July 1942 as 12,844 people boarded trains heading east; French Jews soon followed. Chevrillon, 58.

democratic tradition that stood for offering refuge to the persecuted; a sense of loyalty to French citizens, but also greed for Jewish property; the fact of capitulation to the Germans – out of both desire and necessity – and finally a desire to maintain independence.”<sup>76</sup>

In Yugoslavia, not only the 80,000 Yugoslavian Jews became targets of ideological and racial occupation; Serbs, once dominant politically as well as demographically, became prey as well.<sup>77</sup> The Ustashi, in its collaboration with the Axis, proved enthusiastic partners and began its own reign of terror against its ideological and racial enemies - Jews, gypsies, communists, and Serbs living in Croatia.<sup>78</sup> Their leader, Ante Pavelić, set up concentration camps at Jasenovc and Stara-Gadićoka, where prisoners were routinely murdered.<sup>79</sup> Through early collaboration between the Croat Ustashi, large Muslim populations, and the Germans, within a few months from the beginning of occupation hundreds of thousands of Serbs lay dead, killed by guns, knives, axes, hammers, and gas vans. In some cases, German soldiers and their collaborators massacred entire Serb villages. For those who survived, local collaborators forced conversions, from Christian Orthodox to Catholicism; in addition, they also looted Serb businesses and households, committed widespread rape, and razed villages.

Many historians echo the words of Henri Michel in his observation of Western and Eastern Europe under occupation. While Western Europe did indeed suffer under a high intensity occupation according to their historical perspective, Germany was “ruthless and cynical in Eastern Europe”; brutality existed from the beginning.<sup>80</sup> Another historian included collaborating regimes in this assessment by stating, “Croatian acts of cruelty were among the most barbaric

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<sup>76</sup> Yahil, 173 (statistics) and 590.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 349.

<sup>78</sup> The Independent State of Croatia instituted its own racial laws built from the Nuremberg Laws just a few days after the Yugoslavian capitulation. On several occasions, Italian occupation troops defended Serbs and Jews fleeing the Ustashi, several thousand fled to Italian-occupied Dalmatia to find refuge.

<sup>79</sup> Henri Michel (trans. Douglas Parmeé), *The Second World War* (New York: Praeger, 1975), 284. One historian states the victims of one camp alone approaches 200,000. See Yahil, 431.

<sup>80</sup> Michel. *The Second World War*, 249.

committed in this era of horrors. The literature is filled with descriptions of mass murders by the most savage means, mutilation of corpses, murder of women and children.”<sup>81</sup> Thus, in terms of ideological and cultural occupation carried out by the Germans and collaborating locals, the intensity suffered by Yugoslavians was the highest among the case study countries.

Japanese occupied areas did not seem to have official policies ordering the destruction of entire populations based on ‘race’. However, the policy of ‘Japanization’ sought to create millions of people who believed and supported the Japanese imperial ideology. Instructions to the occupying authorities often called for the respect of local customs and traditions that did not conflict with the occupation ideology but in effect, grass roots ‘Japanization’ policies sought to remove a large amount of cultural distinctiveness.<sup>82</sup>

The first part of this process entailed the establishment of pan-Asianism and unity, focused specifically on the dominant ethnic group. Like the European countries within this study, internal groups in Burma and the Philippines had histories of antagonism and strife. In Burma, this became obvious early in the occupation as the BIA attacked other ethnic groups. Indian workers and professionals suffered attacks in the Irrawaddy delta, as did the ‘hill tribes’ scattered throughout the eastern and northern regions.<sup>83</sup> The Japanese military authority attempted to stop the killing of Indians since they were potential allies in the Indian independence movements and possible future members of GEACS.

Many ethnic Burmese were antagonistic to Indians and the local ethnic minority groups, “whom they believed had been specially privileged under British rule.”<sup>84</sup> In fact, the BIA and

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<sup>81</sup> Yahil, 431.

<sup>82</sup> Dower, 287.

<sup>83</sup> The ‘hill tribes’ are separate ethnicities that have different languages, customs, and traditions. They are Mon, Karen, Kachin, Shan, Chin, and in the west, Muslim Arakanese.

<sup>84</sup> Bayly and Harper, 171. This also concerns resistance group formation and motivation. More discussion on this topic appears throughout the study.

ethnic Burmese gangs associated with it were responsible for some of the worst massacres in Burma.<sup>85</sup> Some BIA officers carried out reprisal killings against the Christian Karen population in the lowlands.<sup>86</sup> In one of many cases during the initial occupation, the Karen Law Minister of Burma and his wife elected not to evacuate to India with the British. Instead, they went into the Irrawaddy delta to form a Karen anti-Japanese strong point; the BIA killed them and hundreds of other local Karens.<sup>87</sup>

The Japanese occupation forces did not stop this sort of reprisal killing. Divisions between the ethnic majority and minorities did not concern the Japanese as much as fostering a pan-Asian identity with the majority ethnic Burmese. Indeed, the Japanese agreed with the position of the ethnic Burmese against the ‘hill tribes’, particularly as applied to the Karen, Chin, and Kachin, who dominated the military and enjoyed guaranteed representation through reserved seats in Parliament.<sup>88</sup> The Japanese attempted to foster this division by identifying the ethnic Burmese as fellow ‘Asiatics’ as well as fellow Buddhists, even though deep differences existed between the two styles of Buddhism; Burmans practiced Theravada Buddhism while the Japanese predominantly practiced Mahayana Buddhism, both with different philosophical traditions and texts.<sup>89</sup>

Pan-Asian identity proved more difficult to build in the Philippines. Centuries of colonialism and imperialism by Spain and then the United States meant that most of the

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<sup>85</sup> Bayly and Harper, 172. For an eyewitness account of the massacres and chaos of the early occupation, see U Hla Pe, 5.

<sup>86</sup> Beginning in the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries, predominantly Baptists and other Protestants, set up missions in the remote northern mountains of Burma. Over the decades, some of the ‘hill tribes’ converted to Christianity but the majority of the Burman population remained Buddhist, with Muslim and animist minorities.

<sup>87</sup> Bayly and Harper, 172.

<sup>88</sup> Selth, 486. The British Empire viewed these three groups as ‘martial races’, loyal to the Raj, even against other Burmans. This concept receives considerable attention and clear definition in the next chapter because of its close ties to resistance motivations.

<sup>89</sup> Some Buddhist monks supportive of GEACS and the Japanese driving Western imperial powers out of Southeast Asia identified with the unity in Buddhism, carrying out some forcible conversions; this worked to increase antagonisms and animosity between ethnicities. See Bayly and Harper, 180.



population held Christian and Westernized cultural traditions and identities. General Masaharu Homma, the military commander in Luzon, said policies of ‘Japanization’ and pan-Asianism worked to, “‘eliminate the blind dependence upon Anglo-American culture and civilization,’ and to promote among the Filipinos the ‘consciousness that they are Orientals’.”<sup>90</sup> However, many Filipino sources took pride in their Westernization; thoroughly ingrained Roman Catholic identities permeated daily life so the occupation’s efforts to force a ‘pure’ Asian identity on them received poor reception.<sup>91</sup> From his exile in up-state New York, President Quezon wrote that Filipinos “should be in a position to profit by the rich cultures of both the West and East” but noted the Japanese would not succeed in “the absorption of the Filipino race into their body politic. The differences between us are too profound and too long established.”<sup>92</sup>

Despite the existence of the BIA, the process of ‘Japanization’ did not proceed smoothly among all Burmans either. Although Burmans identified themselves as Asians, many differences in culture existed, also limiting the possibilities for a pan-Asian identity. One author echoed others in noting how mundane events such as Japanese soldiers and administrators publicly bathing, remained in sharp contrast to the culturally accepted norms of many urban Burmans. Westernized traditions of the British Empire, traditional Burman and Theravada Buddhist social customs all precluded physical nudity or immodesty in public settings. She also noted that throughout the occupation, “civil liberties were outrageously encroached upon”; particularly

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<sup>90</sup> As quoted in Quezon, 293-294. John Dower goes on to explain the typical view of Filipinos according to the Japanese. Although the Filipinos were superior to other Asians in their ‘racial’ hierarchy, American influence among them was profound. This created a rather unflattering mix of qualities including “materialistic, extravagant, duplicitous, imitative, litigious, poor at figures, weak in analytical skills, and, at the ruling-class level, hopelessly corrupt and dependent on the United States.” In the Japanese imperialist view, Americans shared many of the same qualities. See Dower, 288.

<sup>91</sup> As a few examples see, Dorothy Dore Dowlen (ed. Theresa Kaminski), *Enduring What Cannot Be Endured: Memoir of a Woman Medical Aide in the Philippines in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001); Puan Seng (James) Go, *Refuge and Strength* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970); Jesus A. Villamor, *They Never Surrendered: A True Story of Resistance in World War II* (Quezon City, Philippines: Vera-Reyes, 1982).

<sup>92</sup> Quezon, 294.

upsetting was the banning of English language books, enjoyed for decades by many Burmans in the educated and civil servant classes.<sup>93</sup>

Amid early attempts to create a pan-Asian identity, extensive ‘Japanization’ programs restructured education and made Japanese the *lingua franca*. In Burman and Philippine schools, the occupation ordered the beginning of Japanese language instruction and banned English reading materials. Additionally, the occupation in the Philippines required schools to teach Tagalog, a local Filipino dialect, in order to foster an Asian identity separate from Westernizing influences.<sup>94</sup> In Rangoon, Japanese civilians and military officials approached ethnic Burmese for reciprocal language instruction. Daw Khin Myo Chit observed in her autobiography written before the end of the war, “many respectable families, out of sheer delicacy of feeling, accepted [the arrangement]..., little dreaming that they were sacrificing their fair reputation” for the brand of collaborator.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to language, other Japanese customs and traditions became obligatory under occupation. The Japanese dating system replaced local calendars so that 1942 became 2602; Japanese holidays became GEACS holidays; collaborating government officials traveled to Tokyo for training and conferences; local populations bowed to all Japanese, regardless of status, and performed the *saikeirei* - a ritual bow toward the seat of the emperor in Tokyo - during public assemblies.<sup>96</sup> One element of ‘Japanization’, at least as practiced by the military occupation administrations, was slapping the faces of occupied populations as punishment for infractions. Many narratives recount instances of this, noting the deep humiliation of physical

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<sup>93</sup> See Daw Khin Myo Chit, 18. English translations of books also fed the Burmese nationalist movements as several leaders like Ba Maw and the Thirty Comrades received inspiration from early Sinn Fein writings in Ireland.

<sup>94</sup> Instruction in Tagalog began six weeks after the occupation began. Prior to the occupation, Tagalog was already the national language but higher education used English and Spanish. See Quezon, 293.

<sup>95</sup> Daw Khin Myo Chit, 26.

<sup>96</sup> Dower, 286-287.

punishment.<sup>97</sup> Rather than simple control of the occupied people, this acted as a “transfer of oppression” within militarist ideology, since slapping and physical beatings were common forms of punishment within Japanese military ranks, and an expression of racial arrogance in practice.<sup>98</sup>

The amount of coercive force combined with the harshness and cruelty of these policies as perceived by the occupied people meant that the ideological, racial, and cultural occupation intensity in all the case study countries, indeed in all Axis occupied countries, pushed the upper limits of the intensity scale. Among all the elements of occupation thus far examined, this part of the Axis occupation was the most widespread across the occupied populations. ‘Racial’ hierarchy, ‘racially’ designated roles, labels of ‘inferior’ status including those deemed ‘undesirable’, genocidal policies, and attempts to alter or erase existing cultures in the quest for pan-Asian identities meant that everyone in the case study countries somehow intersected with this element of occupation. Indeed, as explored in the next chapter, the intensity of ideological and cultural occupation coupled with social occupation directly led to motivations for resistance.

### *Social occupation*

Ideological occupation affected many people within targeted groups; however, under very high intensity occupations that practiced strict control of the entire society, millions more faced constant intrusions into daily life and a growing sense of terror. In fact, in the occupation’s attempts to establish domination, terror was an often-used weapon. In all the case study countries here, Axis occupation authorities and collaborating regimes used intense surveillance, arrests,

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<sup>97</sup> See Dowlen, 82; “The lowest Burmese menial will suffer his entire wages to be cut or to be expelled altogether from work rather than suffer to have any hand laid on him for punishment.” Daw Khin Myo Chit, 5.

<sup>98</sup> Dower, 46.

harassment, beatings, torture, rape, deportations, executions, and massacres in establishing and maintaining control.

In the case of France, reliance on these tactics operated differently in the city and in the countryside. Fearing the possibility of continued aggression after the armistice, many urban French noted with relief the absence of raping or pillaging during the early occupation. However, Jean Moulin, later a national resistance leader, witnessed ample evidence of torture and mutilation in small rural villages.<sup>99</sup> The German occupation refrained from these terror tactics in urban areas during the early occupation so as not to arouse any widespread resistance, internally or otherwise, to the full occupation to come. They also relied on the idea that French citizens were “brought up to respect legal authority.”<sup>100</sup> In Vichy, the Axis counted on Pétain as a highly regarded heroic figure from the First World War; because of his national status, little open hostility to the collaborationist regime initially existed. Indeed, many throughout France hoped to spare the country from a repeat of the carnage of World War I. “The French people looked forward to stability, to a return to normal life.”<sup>101</sup> This normalcy, however, lasted only a few weeks, and early acceptance changed with the progression of the war and occupation.

In the case of the Philippines and Burma, the Japanese occupation did not differ much in intensity based on urban or rural location. In many occupied countries, the Japanese military continued use of a policy constructed during the war and ‘pacification’ in Manchuria called ‘*sanko seisaku*’; this ‘three-all’ policy of ‘kill all, burn all, destroy all’ targeted anyone not

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<sup>99</sup> Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944*, 3; Excerpts from the diary of Jean Moulin in Milton Dank, *The French Against the French: Collaboration and Resistance* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974), 15-16.

<sup>100</sup> Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945*, 26. As the occupation intensity increased, however, harsher methods of control became more widespread; within two years, Axis occupation forces carried out similar actions against French and Yugoslavian populations.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, 27. For more on the promise of normalcy and relief embodied in Pétain’s leadership, see also Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944*, 17. A Burman noted similar feelings after the war and constant bombing; “Like all ordinary people we wished the whole thing were over whoever may come in – British or the Japanese.” Daw Khin Myo Chit, 3.

wholly committed to supporting the new regime.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, razed villages dotted the rural landscape. Meanwhile, cities like Manila became death traps as the University of the Philippines became a concentration camp for ‘racial’, economic, and political enemies; torture and executions of Filipinos, Chinese, and Americans were common behind the guarded gates.<sup>103</sup> Many people became refugees as they attempted to flee continued violence in the region. For many families, rural areas that were difficult to access became vast hiding places where occupation patrols constantly searched for escapees from the cities.

All occupied areas, including the Free Zone in southern France, remained under constant surveillance by the Gestapo and similar local organizations. Ordinary citizens and undercover operatives supplied information to these secret police for a variety of reasons, including reward, revenge, or approval of the occupation ideology. Arrest and questioning, often under torture, usually followed denouncement, but the process was not always the same. In theory, many offenses against the occupation including treason, sabotage, espionage, and resistance (violent or non-violent), carried the punishment of either deportation or execution.<sup>104</sup> In reality, the fate of the accused was in the hands of often capricious, sometimes sadistic, and occasionally sympathetic authorities.<sup>105</sup> This seemingly arbitrary system worked to further increase terror among all the occupied peoples.

Yugoslavia suffered some of the harshest and longest-lasting social occupation in Europe. The German occupation (and the Italian occupation to a lesser extent) maintained constant

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<sup>102</sup> At the end of the war, it operated as a scorched earth policy as well. Dower, 43.

<sup>103</sup> A similar situation existed in Burma despite the ready collaboration of the government. One account noted that Burma itself became a concentration camp where one had to be careful of not only actions but of “thought and feelings” since any silence was non-cooperation. The Kimpetai Camp, or Japanese Military Police Camp, became the destination for offenders where they were also tortured and executed. Daw Khin Myo Chit, 18; see also, U Hla Pe, 22.

<sup>104</sup> Keegan, 286.

<sup>105</sup> For the increasing terror, even when the occupation authority was sympathetic and ‘kind’ see the author’s experience of arrest and repeated questioning in the Philippines. Alice Taylor Furman, *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun* (First Edition, New York: Vantage Press, 2002), 63-82.

pressure on the population. In addition to the massacres of 'racial' and ideological enemies continuing in various degrees until 1945, the occupation faced large numbers of resistant Yugoslavs in the region. In addition to using surveillance and intelligence networks like the Gestapo to stop resistance, German announcements soon appeared in Yugoslavian cities declaring reprisal killings; this policy also appeared in France and other occupied countries. The ratio of one hundred Yugoslavs (almost exclusively Serbs) murdered for every German officer killed and fifty killed for every soldier sent many people into hiding, fearful for themselves and their families.<sup>106</sup>

In carrying out the reprisals, the occupation gathered groups of people, predominantly men, who happened to be out running errands or on their way to work, and publicly hung them along the roads and city squares. When the occupation managed to catch supposed resisters, signs describing them as criminals or murderers hung around the necks of the men and women as German soldiers paraded them to a public execution by firing squad. Reprisal killings also occurred in Burma and the Philippines, though not always as official policy. In the early occupation of the Philippines, for example, Japanese soldiers bayoneted hundreds of sick and straggling Filipinos and American prisoners in the Bataan Death March of April 1942. William Slim's army, in the Allied operations to retake Burma in 1943, found Burman villagers who supported resisters with shelter, food, and information tied to trees, again bayoneted.<sup>107</sup>

Other tactics of social occupation, though not expressly official policy, also bred fear into the occupied people. Rape, always a reality in war, was certainly one of these tactics, though not

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<sup>106</sup> In France, the ratio was sometimes as low as 10:1 French lives for German lives, most likely due to French lives being worth more than Slav lives according to Nazi 'racial' hierarchy.

<sup>107</sup> Slim, 405. See also, Dower, 43-45 for an examination of the bayonet's symbolic importance in Japanese militarist ideology.

always officially endorsed by the occupation administration.<sup>108</sup> In all occupied countries, men became increasingly aware of these gendered dangers faced by women under occupation. Many personal narratives of men and women mention rape, or attempted rape, as a common part of occupation. Women involved in any activities that put them into positions of danger, such as dissidence or resistance, encountered rape as a possible element of arrest. Fear within the greater occupied population frequently fed on rumors of rape. Communities suffering through successive victimizations left many wondering when they or their families would be next to experience the indignity. Indeed, because of the humiliation and stigma many of the Filipino and Burman accounts of rape ended with the victim's suicides.<sup>109</sup> One personal account of the occupation of Burma noted rape of local women as well as of Anglo women by a member of the occupation police. They remained "under house arrest so that he could come and go at will and insult or outrage them at leisure," exhibiting the intensity of occupation down to the individual level.<sup>110</sup>

Although not as violent as beatings, reprisals, and executions, other elements of the occupation infiltrated the crevices of daily life making it more unbearable. The swastika and rising sun flags of the occupation replaced the national flags of occupied countries. Traveling within occupied countries required a series of permits and checkpoints.<sup>111</sup> Strictly enforced curfews assisted the occupation forces in surveillance and control of the population by limiting movement. Additionally, most fuel went directly to the Axis militaries, leaving most cars in the

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<sup>108</sup> It is true that some motivations behind rape may relate to ideological occupation, such as 'comfort women'. In this study, rape is part of both ideological and social occupation but its examination falls under this category as it relates to social control of the entire population by cultivating fear.

<sup>109</sup> One of several discussions of rape in Dorothy Dore Dowlen's book indicated three young girls, *dalagas* (virgin women), became victims of several drunken Japanese soldiers and officers. Several community members complained to the administration in the area that quickly reassigned them elsewhere. All three girls, however, "committed suicide rather than become pregnant with Japanese bastard children-they felt dirty and ugly over their misfortune, and they did not want to be the talk of the town." Dowlen, 82; her own experience of attempted rape, 68. In the exiled president's book, there is no mention of suicide but, "Many of the girls died from this treatment [rape] and nothing could have been more certain to leave a permanent scar of deep hatred among the Filipinos against the conquerors than this awful crime." Quezon, 292.

<sup>110</sup> U Hla Pe, 8.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 9.

occupied countries garaged until liberation.<sup>112</sup> Coupled with propaganda campaigns, fatigue, endless ration lines, blackouts, and rampant censorship that disconnected occupied countries from the outside world, hope seemed to grow more distant in the early years of occupation.<sup>113</sup>

It is true that social occupation did not always follow the same form in all occupied countries. Mass rape, as occurred in Burma and the Philippines, does not frequently appear in the personal narratives of Yugoslavians that endured Axis occupation. The tens of thousands of civilians massacred in Yugoslavia did not have many counterparts among French civilians. Finally, the constant symbolic presence of the German occupation felt in the swastika-lined streets of Paris did not have a Japanese occupation equivalent among the secluded plantations scattered across the southern Philippine islands of Mindanao or Visayan. The occupied peoples' *perception* of brutal and intensifying control, however, rather than any statistical measurement of arrests, beatings, or executions, was the deciding factor in determining the intensity of social occupation among all the case study countries. Certainly, the combined elements of social occupation so deeply affected the populations of the case study countries that all occupied people became casualties of this high intensity part of the Axis occupation.

### *Conclusion*

H.R. Kedward outlined three stages of French understanding of the occupation. "First, it was the consequence of French defeat and French failures; second, it was the heavy presence of

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<sup>112</sup> See, Eliseo D. Rio, *Rays of a Setting Sun: Recollections of World War II* (Malate, Manila, Philippines: De La Salle University Press, 1999), 143.

<sup>113</sup> As one example of the intense propaganda campaigns in Axis occupied countries, German propaganda painted the occupation forces as protectors of the French against the historical enemy across the Channel; according to one Parisian, a billboard in Paris depicted a tattered French soldier and his young family amid the ruins of a burning house. A smirking British soldier loomed over them and, "The caption read, 'The English have done this to us!' As if we could forget who had really done it." Chevillon, 25. As an additional ideological component, German propaganda often laid the blame of France's defeat on the "Jewish politicians and financiers of the Third Republic" and "machinations from the City of London". See Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944*, 3.



Germans with all their national characteristics; and third, it was an ideological domination by a tyrannical Nazism. Not all French people moved through the three stages: some stayed in stage one or stage two and some started in stage three.”<sup>114</sup> These stages of understanding the occupation easily apply to Yugoslavia, Burma, and the Philippines as well; each suffered the shock of defeat and failure in such a short time; national characteristics, or rather the political, social, and cultural characteristics of the occupier exerted an extreme amount of force on the populations; and finally, fascism, Nazism, and Japanese militarism and imperialism ideologically dominated each occupied country.

Certainly, the intensity of occupation did not lead everyone to become resisters nor was an intense occupation the only impetus for resistance. In fact, millions of people accepted the occupation, or at least did not exhibit violent opposition to it, and others embraced collaboration for promised sanctuary or special privileges. Most people simply concerned themselves with maintaining a secure job, finding enough food to feed their families, and hoping for a better future. The choice of resistance, and armed resistance at that, involved a very small number of people considering the hundreds of millions living under occupation.<sup>115</sup>

Due to the relatively small number of resisters, themselves numbering in the millions, the decision to resist must be something that cuts across cultural specificity, language barriers, religious differences, and social class construction. It must be something similar that occurs during the period of intense occupation in all the case study countries. In other words, the *intensity* of occupation provides the *spark* for resistance motivations that apply on a global scale. Political affiliation, survival, patriotism, or revenge is not sufficient in itself to explain resistance

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<sup>114</sup> Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944*, 11.

<sup>115</sup> The estimated number of people worldwide living under Japanese and German occupation at the height of their power was 297 million not including the home islands of Japan and 129 million not including Germany and Austria. See Haruo Tohmatsu and Willmott, 143.

on a global level, although all of these elements exist in the choice of resistance. The next chapter explores the sculpting and experience of resistance, and the construction of identity and dignity among resisters, including ideas of inherent and historic aspects of humanity in the case study countries. This study ultimately argues that resistance motivations are reactions against extreme threats to the human identity and dignity of the resister.

## CHAPTER 3: RESISTANCE AND ITS MOTIVATIONS

### *Introduction*

As explored in the previous chapter, each case study country experienced varying degrees of occupation intensity. The high intensity elements of occupation led many to make the choice of resistance in opposition to aggressive attempts by the Axis to control the occupied populations. Therefore, this chapter begins with an exploration of how the most intense elements of the Axis occupation sculpted resistance and the experience of resisters.

Since resistance occurred in all occupied countries and encompassed a diverse community in terms of political ideology, religious ideology, social class, language, and occupation experience, the question remains, why did such a widely varying group of people all choose resistance? Did they share common motivations that cut across all differences? One key seems to have been the intensity of occupation as we have seen, the higher the intensity of occupation, the more likely resistance was to occur. Yet if motivations related *only* to the intensity of occupation, resistance would be as variable as the occupation itself. In other words, groups formed directly in response to a period of intense economic occupation, for example, would very likely disband after the crisis ended since they fulfilled their intended purpose. This was not the case, however. Instead, resistance grew in all locations until the end of the war and occupation. Thus, while intensity of occupation is *part* of the key to understanding resistance motivations, other, more fundamental themes also play important roles. Therefore, this study continues with an exploration of two resistance motivations that have global application.

This chapter argues that resisters made their choices based on their concepts of human dignity and identity that the experience of occupation sharpened. Severe attacks on these shared concepts, at the individual and the collective level, created a resistance response. Indeed,

although intensity is important, repeated attacks on dignity and identity are the very foundation of *all* resistance motivations.

### *Sculpting Resistance*

It logically follows that in order for resistance to occur, there must be something to resist; in the case of all the case study countries, the occupation and its collaborators became the objective. The harshness and intrusive quality of the Axis occupation, carried out to achieve dominance and control, worked against the Germans, Italians, and Japanese by creating a sea of opposition. Even those who initially complied or, in some cases, welcomed the foreign power soon found life under occupation cruel and brutal. As the nature of Axis occupation illustrates, many occupation components existent in the case study countries were in the high range of the intensity spectrum. This high intensity occupation quickly put stress on the population, driving many to make the choice of resistance based on this encroachment. Indeed, such choices intimately sculpt the formation and direction of resistance.

Most people did not form resistance groups in opposition to only one component of the occupation. To be sure, many components easily mingled together in operations carried out by the occupation and in the resisters decisions.<sup>1</sup> For instance, some resisters confronted the economic policies of the occupation that led to hunger and privation by ‘organizing’ food and supplies for distribution to their group and families.<sup>2</sup> The same resisters also confronted social occupation by refusing to acquiesce to domination, simply by making the decision of action.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This included perhaps less dignified reasons of becoming a resister such as individual economic or political gain.

<sup>2</sup> As a euphemism for theft in many European resistance groups, ‘organizing’ supplies became a vital component of resister activities.

<sup>3</sup> At the onset of France’s occupation, Henri Frenay, the founder of the resistance group Combat, expressed concern that the people were “settling into defeat” while Marc Bloch believed he belonged to a “generation with a bad conscience” as a by-product of the World War I experience. Both made the choice of resistance early in France’s

Still, some resistance did mobilize due to one overwhelming factor.<sup>4</sup> As wartime atrocities increased, many resistance groups found ample recruits who had either nothing else to lose or who sought revenge. As one historian noted, “The sight of one’s countrymen hanging from lampposts and gibbets does not generally inspire feelings of endearment toward the foreign occupiers.”<sup>5</sup>

It makes sense that individual actions carried out against such an intense occupation as those in the case study countries inflicted little real unrecoverable damage on the Axis powers. One section of railway demolished in the night by a resister’s high explosive charge took only a few hours, or a day at most, to rebuild. As the occupation intensified, however, individual attacks increased and more groups came into existence, creating a potentially detrimental situation for the Axis. At that point, one destroyed railroad multiplied into several, perhaps dozens in one night, slowing occupation transportation to a crawl sometimes for several days at a time.

More important than collateral damage against the occupation, however, was the psychological effect of resistance on much of the occupied population. Immediate action against the occupation bolstered morale for many people and gave them increasing hope as the war progressed and the fortunes of the enemy dwindled. Before ever receiving an assignment, one resister noted after joining a group in Lyon, “My life continued without apparent change...but everything had changed. I now possessed a secret joy that was constant and intense. No matter what was going on, I could return to it in my thoughts. At last I was part of a great network,

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occupation as a refusal to submit. Margaret Collins Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945* (New York: J. Wiley, 1995), 24.

<sup>4</sup> These overwhelming factors were often part of ideological occupation such as the ‘racial’ hierarchy and treatment of ‘undesirable’ populations, mass rape, massacres, or other atrocities that horrified the collective population. The current state of the war also led many to choose resistance; once the ‘invincible’ Japanese or German armies suffered substantial blows or setbacks, more people thought of resistance as a viable effort.

<sup>5</sup> Paul N. Hehn, *The German Struggle Against Yugoslav Guerilla in World War II. German Counter-Insurgency in Yugoslavia 1941-1943* (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, Distributed by New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 143.

unknown but long suspected, of those who fought the Enemy.”<sup>6</sup> Still, resistance carried a heavy price and was not a decision devoid of consequences. John Sweets noted, “The Resistance was a dangerous game; the stakes often were life itself. By joining, one endangered not only himself but family and friends as well. It is not surprising that few possessed the uncommon courage required for such a commitment, particularly at first, when all logical estimates condemned such enterprises to futility.”<sup>7</sup>

The collaborating governments did not escape targeting by resisters. Indeed, in many situations, the national collaborating governments often became an enemy more reviled than the foreign occupation; for resisters, collaborators were traitors to their own people.<sup>8</sup> Instances of heated civil conflict between resisters and collaborators including assassination, massacres, beatings, and denunciations commonly occurred in the historic record of the occupied countries. For instance, resisters in the Philippines shot and gravely wounded a Filipino official in the collaborating government during a game of golf; in Burma, resisters relentlessly targeted any BIA members before they realigned themselves with the Allies in 1943, and attempted several assassinations of local leaders; resisters in France and the *Milice* engaged in constant warfare as did the Yugoslavian resisters against the Ustashi.

### *The Resistance Experience*

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<sup>6</sup> Claire Chevrillon (trans. Jane Kieley Stott), *Code Name Christine Clouet: A Woman in the French Resistance* (First Edition, College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), 74.

<sup>7</sup> John F. Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), 30.

<sup>8</sup> An historian of the French resistance noted however, that early in the division of France matters were much more ambiguous because of the unprecedented armistice with Germany and Italy. In the south, Pétain was such a respected hero of World War I it was difficult and unglamorous to join the resistance. There was also a myth in the north that Pétain was a “grand old man playing a double game and doing his best to save France” in addition to continuously dealing with the German occupation presence there. For this reason, very early resistance was urban and directed specifically at the German occupation. Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945*, 27; for an agreeing argument see Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 8-9.

By broadly examining some of the experiences of active resistance in the case study countries, patterns and similarities begin to emerge. This naturally leads into the construction of resistance motivations and begins to highlight many elements of continuity critical for this study. Before this examination, it is important to provide working definitions of some key political concepts so that placement of these resisters remains clear.

Many of the political ideologies and alignments represented by resisters took on a global significance well before World War II; indeed, by the 1920s most were well developed. Those ideologies initially born in Europe, including modern nationalism, fascism, and communism, raced around the globe leaving many countries feeling their effects. Others, such as imperialism, were policies of expansion that facilitated the spread of such ideologies.

Nationalism, as defined here, is a set of ideas reflecting a feeling of shared political community among a population, linked to a continuity of traditions and beliefs over time, often including self-determination and independence as the desired outcome. This community may be located within a specific geographic region defined by political borders (called territorial nationalism), or it may relate to a shared political ethnic identity (called ethnic nationalism).<sup>9</sup>

Imperialism is the political, cultural, or economic domination of one country by another with the intention of enhancing the power of the dominant country on a global scale. The domination may not be expressly official and there is sometimes an effort to enhance the position of the

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<sup>9</sup> Consulted texts for the definition of nationalism include Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* (New York: Verso, 1998); John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Second Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); John Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005); John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (ed.), *Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2002).

imperialized country as long as the empire ultimately benefits through a complex system of policies that spreads nationalism or other ideologies throughout the globe.<sup>10</sup>

Fascism, as defined in this study, is a totalitarian form of militant nationalist government. Based on a populist rhetoric that exerts control over social, political, economic, and cultural life, the intention of its adherents is the forceful initiation of a national rebirth through the refutation of intellectual reason and reliance on vitality. Internally and in expansionist foreign policy, fascism identifies communism, liberalism, and individualism as enemies, and in some cases contains a racial component.<sup>11</sup>

For the purposes of this study communism exists in at least two political forms, international communism and nationalist communism. In its ideal form, communism is a socio-economic system that advocates revolution, violent if necessary, so that producers (i.e., the working class) control the state and means of production, leading to the equal distribution of wealth and a classless egalitarian society. In historical reality, communist ideology often relates to totalitarian forms of government under the control of one aggressive political party. International communism is this political ideology of struggle applied globally to all members of the working class in order to extend the revolution into a world-system. Nationalist communism seeks to

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<sup>10</sup> Consulted texts for the definition of imperialism include W. G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism, 1894-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (New York: Longman, 2002); J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism, A Study* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965); Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Wolfgang J. Mommsen (trans. P.S. Falla), *Theories of Imperialism* (First American Edition, New York: Random House, 1980); Bernard Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism, 1850-2004* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004); Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (First Edition, New York: Knopf, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> Consulted texts for the definition of fascism include Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); Roger Griffin, *International Fascism: Theories, Causes and the New Consensus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); George L. Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution: Toward a General Theory of Fascism* (First Edition, New York: H. Fertig, 1999); Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (First Edition, New York: Knopf, 2004); Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995); Zeev Sternhell (trans. David Maisel), *Neither Right nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Richard Wolin, *The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism From Nietzsche to Postmodernism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).



implement the ideology in both political and socio-economic forms but only within the political boundaries of one state.<sup>12</sup>

Many of the case study countries developed resistance groups soon after occupation began. Many of these early groups were devoted to hiding people accused of resistance and downed Allied pilots from the occupation authorities. These resisters did not usually identify with any particular political party or strict ideology. In France and the Philippines, for example, most early resisters created groups based on a small circle of close friends or family members, which included men, women, and children. These small groups grew significantly over time, but in the early days of occupation, they operated primarily as a form of psychological, morale boosting support for those involved.

These loosely organized and often fractious groups carried out few initial operations; lack of people, supplies, arms, and considerable disagreement over methods precluded many from sustaining any effective resistance. Issues of survival and protection of the group also dominated their early existence. However, the impetus to form a powerful resistance beyond that of small groups existed, particularly in the form of patriotism based on the idea of national freedom.<sup>13</sup> In France, Charles de Gaulle, a young French general who fled to London with a few others from

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<sup>12</sup> Consulted texts for the definition of communism include Stephane Courtois, et al. (trans. Mark Kramer and Jonathan Murphy), *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Leszek Kolakowski, *My Correct Views on Everything* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2005); János Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Joseph Alois Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (Third Edition, New York: Harper, 1950); Peter Singer, *Marx: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Robert G. Wesson, *Communism and Communist Systems* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978).

<sup>13</sup> Henri Michel, "The Psychology of the French Resister," *Journal of Contemporary History* (Volume 5, number 3, 1970), 159-175; 168-169. Patriotism in this example is not nationalism per se but rather an intense love for one's country.

the *metropole* and from the French colonies in North Africa, transmitted via the BBC on 18 June 1940 that “Whatever happens, the flame of the French resistance must not and shall not die.”<sup>14</sup>

In most cases, people in the occupied countries created their own resistance groups, but some groups were the product of exterior forces. In Europe and Southeast Asia, resisters from other countries, such as Poland, Spain, Britain, and China traveled to the case study countries to help construct more resistance in the hopes of destroying all Axis occupations.<sup>15</sup> Although their numbers were small - amounting to only a few thousand in any given occupied country – they helped to recruit more people into resistance activities. Many of these outside groups, such as Poles or Chinese, often identified themselves as communist or socialist to align with existent groups within the country and made direct appeals to the patriotic and nationalist sentiments among potential resisters.

Other external forces created and assisted resistance as well. The British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS), created in 1940 and 1941 respectively, gathered intelligence on the Axis powers, provided supplies and weapons to resisting groups, made contacts with potential resisters, organized resisters, and led certain groups in the occupied countries. Even though SOE and OSS administrators may not have viewed their operations as global since they had separate offices and policies for European

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<sup>14</sup> Charles de Gaulle, *Mémoires de Guerre*, Volume 1 (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1954), 74 as quoted in Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 10. Few responded to de Gaulle at the time but as the occupation intensified in the coming months, more people rallied to him. In London, de Gaulle organized the *Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur* – FFI (Free French Forces) and received the moral, and more important, financial support of Churchill and later the other Allies.

<sup>15</sup> See Witold Bieganski, et al., *Polish Resistance Movement in Poland and Abroad 1939-1945* (Warsaw: Polish Scientific Publishers, 1987); Mieczyslaw Juchniewicz, *Poles in the European Resistance Movement 1939-1945* (Warsaw: Interpress Publishers, 1972); Shang Wan Liang (trans. Joaquin Sy), *The Wha Chi Memoirs* (Manila: Kaisa Para sa Kaunlaran, 1998); Henri Michel, “Jewish Resistance and the European Resistance Movement,” *Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust*, Michael Robert Marrus (ed.), Volume 7 (Westport, CT: Meckler Corp., 1989); Yuk-wai Yung Li, *The Huaqiao Warriors: Chinese Resistance Movement in the Philippines, 1942-1945* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1995). It is important to note that some of these resisters resided in the occupied countries prior to the war but based their resistance on external factors such as the brutal occupation of Poland, global anti-fascism, or the ongoing war in Manchuria.

and Asian theaters, their far-reaching influence shaped resistance in all of the case study countries. It is, however, unclear whether resistance in some cases, such as groups in northern Burma, directly relied on governmental organizations like the SOE and OSS to actually build and maintain resistance groups. What is certain is that supply lines and intelligence provided by these external organizations made sustained resistance possible for many people.<sup>16</sup>

Rather than the romantic image of resisters in black berets, moving from shadow to shadow stalking their Gestapo prey or in continuous pitched battles with bullets scattered throughout empty streets, resistance for most people in France was rarely a full time job. Those resisters who did have armed confrontations with the occupation or engaged in deadly intrigue needed vast support networks for supply, false papers, and information. This type of work went on after hours; people in active networks tried to keep their legal status, jobs, and family together for as long as possible. Those who went completely underground, by taking an assumed name, removing themselves from society, and often changing their appearance, were rare; such drastic

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<sup>16</sup> These organizations appear frequently in the historical record of resistance and the development of resistance motivations. A selection of the best primary sources on the topic includes Basil Davidson, *Scenes From the Anti-Nazi War* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1981); F.W. Deakin, *The Embattled Mountain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); Roger Hilsman, *American Guerrilla: My War Behind Japanese Lines* (First Memories of War Edition, Washington, DC: Potomac, 2005); Robert Lapham and Bernard Norling, *Lapham's Raiders: Guerillas in the Philippines, 1942-1945* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Franklin Lindsay, *Beacons in the Night: With the OSS and Tito's Partisans in Wartime Yugoslavia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993); Fitzroy Maclean, *Eastern Approaches* (New York: Time Incorporated, 1964); William Peers and Dean Breilis, *Behind the Burma Road, The Story of America's Most Successful Guerrilla Force* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1963). Excellent secondary resources include Gerald Astor, *The Jungle War: Mavericks, Marauders, and Madmen in the China-Burma-India Theater of World War II* (Hoboken, NJ: J. Wiley & Sons, 2004); Phyllis Auty and Richard Clogg (ed.), *British Policy Towards Wartime Resistance in Yugoslavia and Greece* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1975); M.R.D. Foot, *SOE in France: An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France, 1940-1944* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984); Kirk Ford, Jr., *OSS and the Yugoslav Resistance, 1943-1945* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992); Arthur Layton Funk, *Hidden Ally: The French Resistance, Special Operations, and the Landings in Southern France, 1944* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992); Jørgen Hæstrup, *Europe Ablaze: An Analysis of the History of the European Resistance Movements 1939-1945* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1978); David Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance, 1940-1945: A Survey of the Special Operations Executive, With Documents* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980); David Stafford, "The Detonator Concept: British Strategy, SOE and European Resistance after the Fall of France," *Journal of Contemporary History* (Vol. 10, No. 2, April 1975), 185-217; Simon Trew, *Britain, Mihailovic and the Chetniks, 1941-1942* (Basingstoke: Macmillan in Association with King's College, London, 1998); Heather Williams, *Parachutes, Patriots and Partisans: The Special Operations Executive and Yugoslavia, 1941-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

action was usually necessitated by the infiltration of a collaborator or someone within the resistance being arrested and tortured by the authorities.<sup>17</sup>

Most resistance groups had military-based hierarchies and structure that identified leadership positions and special technical positions such as instructor, saboteur, or courier. The largest number of active armed resisters fit a demographic of young (16-30), predominately single, physically fit men. Women also carried out armed resistance in all the case study countries but in much smaller numbers.<sup>18</sup> That being said however, resistance groups also reflected the larger population. The vast support network required for armed resistance meant that older people, married couples, widows, religious functionaries, those with physical challenges, and entire communities in some cases, operated as part of the wider resistance effort.<sup>19</sup>

The social and economic classes represented in resistance also illustrate its inclusiveness. Men and women from a variety of social classes and ideologies were present in early resistance groups, from elites to peasants and the working class. Included among them were writers, schoolteachers, middle class professionals, journalists, editors, professors, and students. As resistance grew, others like administrators, bank officials, and inspectors became involved. One class of professionals, however, differed in their resistance involvement across the case study countries.

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<sup>17</sup> Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 45.

<sup>18</sup> The Yugoslavian Partisans appear to have the largest number of armed women resisters with estimates ranging from 100,000 to 1/5 of the total number of resisters (800,000 according to one estimate), 25,000 of whom died by the end of the war. Total number of resisters: Ivan Jelic, et al. (ed. Novak Strugar, trans. Margot and Bosko Milosavljevic), *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-1945* (Belgrade: Socialist Thought and Practice, 1985), 7; for women see Ronald H. Bailey, *Partisans and Guerrillas* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1978), 93. The numbers in France are much more representative of the situation in other occupied countries, although women resisters in Burma and the Philippines were still fewer. Data collected by the *Combattants Volontaires de la Résistance* (CVR) estimated the percentage of resisters who were women between 7% and 12%. Hanna Diamond, *Women and the Second World War in France, 1939-1948: Choices and Constraints* (New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 1999), 99.

<sup>19</sup> For a personal memoir of a blind resister that explains his role in the French resistance see, Jacques Lusseyran (trans. Elizabeth R. Cameron), *And There Was Light: Autobiography of Jacques Lusseyran, Blind Hero of the French Resistance* (Second Edition, New York: Parabola Books, 1998).

In the Philippines, Burma, and Yugoslavia, a large percentage of resisters came from the military ranks dissolved by the occupation. Many of these soldiers refused any demobilization or conscription into the ranks of the collaboration forces, viewing it as a traitorous turn against their country. Filipino and Anglo-Americans from USAFFE, Serb officers in many Yugoslavian provinces, and many ethnic minorities, Anglo-Burmese, and others from the Burma Army of the British controlled administration became some of the first people to disappear into the rugged landscape of mountains or jungles to stage resistance efforts. Others accepted initial demobilization early in the occupation then took up resistance with the Allies, SOE, and OSS during the Allied push after 1942.<sup>20</sup>

In the Occupied Zone of northern France, a similar situation existed with some military members joining de Gaulle in London or creating interior resistance groups. In the Free Zone, however, soldiery did not join the resistance in very high numbers even though years of training emphasized Germany as an historic enemy of France; for the most part, they remained faithful to Pétain.<sup>21</sup> Even after the German occupation of the south in 1942, many remained unable to “overcome their distaste for irregular units organized for guerrilla warfare or their suspicions about leftist political influence in the Resistance.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> When the loss of Burma became evident, those in the Burma Army that did not evacuate to India received orders from William Slim, commander of the Fourteenth Army – Burma Corp, to return to their villages in order to protect their families from the rumored abuses following the Japanese and BIA movements deeper into the country. Upon demobilization, each soldier received his rifle, fifty rounds of ammunition, and three months pay with instructions to report again when called on by the British or Allied forces. William Slim, *Defeat into Victory* (Second Edition, New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1961). One historian of the Japanese occupation period believed this decision was in response to large numbers of desertions and fears among the Karens, Kachins, and Chins rather than having to do with any definite plans of later resistance. Dorothy Guyot, *The Political Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Burma* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1966), 82-83.

<sup>21</sup> At least one notable exception was Henri Frenay, a former officer of the French Army who formed the resistance group, Combat, shortly after occupation. Additionally, the absence of German soldiers in the south until 1942, coupled with the few former French military members as resisters made for a resistance centered more on political condemnations of the collaborating regime rather than a strict militarist anti-German stance. Until the German occupation of the entire country, attacks in the southern zone focused primarily on the Vichy authorities. Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 22.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

As evidenced in the quote above, different resistance philosophies abounded in all the case study countries. Many resistance groups were apprehensive about the ultimate goals of fellow resisters. Some feared a communist revolution after the war while others wanted to avoid any return to pre-war oppression, regardless of political affiliation. Indeed, many resisters had no desire to return the country to its exact pre-war state. Regardless of resisters' political persuasions, they applied labels of national naiveté, appeasement, blindness, and weakness to the pre-war governments; in this climate, a post-liberation revolution was a common goal in France, Yugoslavia, and Burma.<sup>23</sup> Fears related to the establishment of new governmental structures among groups vying for power and favor combined with sporadic communication common to war led to several instances of bloody civil confrontations during the occupation.<sup>24</sup> Even when conflicting resistance groups did not engage in open warfare with each other, these underlying issues of mistrust made negotiations and cooperation difficult.<sup>25</sup> Added to this potentially volatile situation, resistance groups did not always share one mind regarding the approach to resistance.

In all regions, there existed groups who took a 'delayed strike' policy, such as the FFI based in London, Yugoslavian Chetniks, some USAFFE groups, and some groups organized in Burma by the SOE. They quietly gathered weapons and trained for the eventuality of assisting the Allied armies in retaking their country from the occupation. Choosing to hold off on

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<sup>23</sup> The situation in the Philippines was slightly different. Many of the resisters there did not want to return to the pre-war government of American imperial or colonial rule for its own sake. Prior to the war, the United States and the Philippines came to an agreement that the scheduled transfer of power would take place in 1946. Many feared the war and occupation might delay Philippine independence further, especially when some small but dynamic groups began to call for revolution. The desire of many resisters, therefore, became to return to the pre-war system to remain on schedule for national independence.

<sup>24</sup> A recent study of British involvement in Yugoslav resistance during World War II estimates that more Yugoslavs died at the hands of one another than were killed by the Axis powers. See Williams, vii.

<sup>25</sup> This lack of cooperation existed even in France, often considered one of the most harmonious national resistance efforts during the war. Large unifying groups like *Mouvements Unis de la Résistance* (MUR), which united the three major groups in the southern zone, had tenuous existences. Constant disagreement, factionalism, and friction haunted most resistance groups that all believed themselves the 'soul' of France. After the emergency and cooperation ended, united groups often broke down.

widespread resistance activities or only carrying them out sporadically had two motivations. These resisters wanted to spare the population from brutal reprisal killings sure to come from the occupation after a resistance operation, and they wanted to be in a stronger position in terms of numbers, training, and arms to have a better rate of success.

Other resistance groups attempted to stage continuous attacks against the occupation and collaborating forces in a ‘strike now’ policy of constant harassment to wear down the resources and morale of the enemy.<sup>26</sup> These groups included some in the Occupied Zone of France, Yugoslavian Partisans, the Huk, small USAFFE groups, most of the resisters in the southern islands of the Philippines, as well as the groups often identified in Burma as ‘martial races’ by the British. Groups adhering to both the ‘delayed strike’ and the ‘strike now’ resistance approaches, however, also worked to maintain order in the areas free from occupation and continue contact with the Allied representatives and other resistance groups for possible cooperation.

Though the resistance experience in each case study country depended on a variety of factors – geography, resister demographics, skill and organization level, not to mention issues of supply and personnel – all resistance sprung from similar motivations. Not reliant on any one facet of resisters’ lives or experiences, motivations related to dignity and shared identity were the spark of resistance. The remainder of this chapter defines and then explores these motivations for resistance.

### *Identifying Dignity*

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<sup>26</sup> Additionally, continuous action also kept up morale among the resisters more so than tactics of ‘delayed strike’. See Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 92.

Resisters often refer to dignity when reflecting on their experiences of occupation and resistance. Indeed, “the loss of dignity and...the very meaning of dignity are issues over which many human beings are wont to fight and willing to die.”<sup>27</sup> At its Aristotelian root, *dignitas*, means ‘worth’ but it meant more to resisters than this one simple word.<sup>28</sup>

The concept of dignity, often used in everyday life, consists of multiple components.<sup>29</sup> In recent decades, thoughts about ‘aging with dignity’ and ‘dying with dignity’ are common subjects for discussion. However, the idea of ‘dignity’ itself rarely receives examination outside of small circles of academics in fields of psychology, philosophy, and theology.<sup>30</sup> Historians engaged in the study of catastrophic human events such as war and genocide frequently refer to dignity but seldom define it, either in their own terms or in terms of their subjects.<sup>31</sup>

Judeo-Christian-Muslim traditions, the European Enlightenment, and Theravada Buddhist traditions define human dignity in similar ways: as the inherent worth within all human life, that is not dependent on a person’s behavior or action since it is a basic part of existence.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Jurgen Moltmann (trans. M. Douglas Meeks), *On Human Dignity: Political Theology and Ethics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), ix.

<sup>28</sup> Texts consulted in the construction of ‘dignity’ include Alan Clements and Leslie Kean, *Burma’s Revolution of the Spirit: The Struggle for Democratic Freedom and Dignity* (First Edition, New York: Aperture, 1994); E. Rae Harcum, *A Psychology of Freedom and Dignity: The Last Train to Survival* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994); John Clifford Holt, et al. (ed.), *Constituting Communities: Theravada Buddhism and the Religious Cultures of South and Southeast Asia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003); Winston L. King, *In the Hope of Nibbana: An Essay on Theravada Buddhist Ethics* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1964); Moltmann; Nathan Rotenstreich, *Man and His Dignity* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1983).

<sup>29</sup> Related to some concepts of dignity is the idea of universal human rights. This study does not explore universal human rights in its contemporary sense (as written into the United Nations Charter) since the idea was in developmental stages during the early twentieth century, particularly in the immediate post-war period. For a recent examination of the possible universality of human rights and issues arisen from Kantian philosophy, see Alexander Moseley and Richard Norman (ed.), *Human Rights and Military Intervention* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002).

<sup>30</sup> The definition of dignity in this study comes primarily from philosophical sources.

<sup>31</sup> For example, a notable Holocaust historian referred to “moral reasons” for Jewish resistance in Europe with no discussion of dignity; see, Leni Yahil (trans. Ina Friedman and Haya Galai), *Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 457-459, 498. James Scott often referred to dignity in his discussion of resistance but did not explore it outside of linking it to autonomy; see, James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance, Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), xi, 7.

<sup>32</sup> The Buddhist traditions referred to here take into account the Theravada sect since this is the predominant form of Buddhism practiced in Burma. In addition to Buddhism in Burma, the acculturation influence into the earlier British



Instead, humans have dignity based on the possession of intelligence, self-awareness, and autonomy.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, dignity is not only an internal conception but also projects from one person to another; illustrating this concept, the psychologist E. Rae Harcum argued that:

The word dignity...means to have intrinsic worth, or excellence, or to be esteemed by others...Because dignity is the totality of those qualities that make a person valuable, esteemed, or useful to someone else, the number of different bases on which it can be accorded is limitless. No matter how ineffective a person may be in coping with life circumstances, that person has a measure of dignity if even one person perceives him or her as having it. In sum, one human being can value another even though that person has not performed a meritorious service in order to warrant it, but merely exists as a person.<sup>34</sup>

This is not to say these world traditions agree that all humans have the same amount of dignity; many posit that the foundational level can increase or decrease due to certain types of behaviors, practices, and works.<sup>35</sup> They do agree, however, that every human is born with human dignity even if actions carried out later may alter that inherent dignity.<sup>36</sup>

Human dignity carries with it partner concepts of self-evaluation, self-reflection, and responsibility to uphold one's own dignity and respect that of others. If all humans have dignity, then all humans should recognize and support that dignity.<sup>37</sup> In *Man and His Dignity*, the author noted that if responsibility to uphold dignity fails, then there is no confidence or reliance on others and the distinctions that separate the human realm from the animal realm break down,

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imperial structure also adhere a large percentage of the population to many Western philosophical traditions. France and Yugoslavia share the Judeo-Christian-Muslim and Enlightenment traditions as do the Philippines through centuries of Westernization, early Muslim influences, and Christianization beginning with the Spanish period.

<sup>33</sup> Moseley and Norman, 55.

<sup>34</sup> Harcum, 101-102.

<sup>35</sup> For one example, see K.M. de Silva, et al. (ed.), *Ethnic Conflict in Buddhist Societies: Sri Lanka, Thailand and Burma* (London: Pinter, 1988), 46.

<sup>36</sup> Some psychologists in the twentieth century disputed the idea of inherent dignity, saying it was a mechanized construct of stimulus-response connections for contingent rewards. For the most influential text on the construction of dignity, see B.F. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2002). This study does not explore this theory of dignity. Regardless of construction or inherency, resisters seem to suggest, although they do not define the term either, that they thought of human dignity as inherent.

<sup>37</sup> Clements and Kean, 50.

creating a threat to human dignity.<sup>38</sup> Thus, atrocities, brutality, and cruelty become synonymous with ‘inhuman’ actions. Jurgen Moltmann explained this linguistic turn by positing that dignity describes the “fundamental meaning of being human...The human being is a human being, and ought to be a human being...With the *hominitas*, the *humanitas* is at stake...Only of a human being do we say that he or she acts ‘inhumanly’...With a dig it is not even linguistically possible to say something like this.”<sup>39</sup> Further, though the concept of dignity resides in the consciousness of individuals it is not about them, but their representation of humanity.<sup>40</sup>

A logical question concerning shared concepts of dignity arises. If all of the groups in this study shared similar ideas on human dignity based on similar world philosophical and religious traditions, why did dignity become so routinely violated during the various occupations?<sup>41</sup> The succinct answer is that dignity encountered competing, and often opposing, concepts constructed over time. Ideologies and traditions borne out of centuries-long processes related to Westernization, modernization, and imperialism negated or altered these fundamental beliefs about human dignity in exchange for rapid gain – material, national, or otherwise. This is of course not exclusive to the Axis occupations of World War II; throughout history ideologies of, for instance, nationalism or prejudice often “prepares the way for definitions of human dignity determined by the strong and excluding the weak”.<sup>42</sup> In their efforts to achieve dominance over their subject populations, occupation administrations often removed the status of ‘human’ from certain groups, entirely removing their dignity and allowing great latitude for atrocities to occur.

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<sup>38</sup> Rotenstreich, 10-11.

<sup>39</sup> Moltmann, ix, 9.

<sup>40</sup> Rotenstreich, 16.

<sup>41</sup> It is important to note that Germany as a country shared many of the Judeo-Christian-Muslim and Enlightenment traditions as those populations under its occupation. Nazism attempted to sculpt many of these for their own purposes but centuries of belief proved difficult to discard out-right. Japanese traditions included the ancient Shinto religion, Confucianism, and Mahayana Buddhism. In terms of Japanese Buddhism, it also held beliefs on human dignity at its fundamental core.

<sup>42</sup> Moltmann, xiv.

Indeed, ideologies like fascism thrived on the denial of dignity in establishing control over millions of people.

Whether dignity is *truly* inherent to the human condition or whether it is constructed by Judeo-Christian-Muslim, European Enlightenment, and Theravada Buddhist traditions, the effect of lost dignity and indignation on individual or collective human consciousness during the occupations tended to be the same. Personal narratives, whether from France, Burma, Yugoslavia, or the Philippines, tell a similar story: the main effect of lost dignity was the transference of indignation to resistance, both in spirit and in action.

One historian of the French resistance noted the preoccupation with dignity among resisters writing during the war and in its immediate aftermath. In response to historians removed from the war events by several decades, John Sweets noted, “A later generation conditioned to scoff at idealism might be tempted to discount such an explanation [of humanism and dignity], but without it no valid understanding of the original Resistance is possible.”<sup>43</sup> Therefore, going beyond the simple reexamination of the power of idealism to resisters, we must unite the idealist motivation (dignity) with the realist motivation (identity), as explored later in this chapter.

### *Dignity Motivations*

As seen in the previous chapter, occupation in all the case study countries frequently attacked the dignity of the occupied populations. The defeat and early occupation itself often served as the first loss of dignity, sparking immediate indignation and, frequently, resistance. Rémy, a resister who joined de Gaulle in England on the eve of the armistice recounted his words to his wife, Edith, on his departure. “We don’t have the right to let ourselves be taken...If

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<sup>43</sup> Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 13.

we give in, if Germany becomes mistress of Europe, life won't be worth living... Wouldn't it be better to die?"<sup>44</sup>

A twenty-eight year old officer defending a small city in Yugoslavia echoed a similar sense of indignation after he learned of the armistice between his country and Germany: "I was stunned. I couldn't believe it. I had been ready to sacrifice my battery for the good of others, but this...this was capitulation. This was beyond endurance. I refused to budge."<sup>45</sup> Boris Todorovich instructed his men that they no longer had military obligations and were free to do as they wished, including demobilize and go home; he, however, decided to make his way into the forests along with thousands of others to take up resistance. "To return home," he argued, "is to surrender voluntarily to slavery."<sup>46</sup>

Even among those groups initially compliant with the Axis in order to achieve independence from Western imperialism, such as the BIA leader, Aung San, the indignities under occupation quickly translated into plans for resistance. Within months of the Japanese occupation, Aung San bitterly noted, "I went to Japan to save my people who were struggling like bullocks under the British. But, now we are treated like dogs. We are far from our hope of reaching the human stage, and even to get back to the bullock stage we need to struggle more."<sup>47</sup> Indeed, widespread resistance against the Japanese occupation in Burma began in the early months of 1942 and lasted until the summer of 1945. And while not every resister counted the

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<sup>44</sup> Rémy [pseudo.] (trans. Lancelot C. Sheppard), *Memoirs of a Secret Agent of Free France*, Volume 1 (New York: Whittlesey House, 1948), 4.

<sup>45</sup> Boris J. Todorovich (ed. J. Stryder and Andrew Karp), *Last Words: A Memoir of World War II and the Yugoslav Tragedy* (New York: Walker, 1989), 21.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 23. See also Uldarico S. Baclagon, *Christian-Moslem Guerrillas of Mindanao* (Manila: s.n.; Metro Manila: Lord Ave Print Press, 1988), 33.

<sup>47</sup> Thutaythana Ye Baw, *Ye Baw Thone Keik Hnint Ba Ma Lut Lat Ye Tat Ma Taw Sit Kyaung Mya [The Thirty Comrades and the Military Campaign Routes of the Burma Independence Army]* (Rangoon: Ye Baw Yargyaw, 1975), 217 as quoted in Angelene Naw, *Aung San and the Struggle for Burmese Independence* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books, 2001), 91. See also, U Htin Aung, *A History of Burma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 301.

loss of dignity brought about by the occupation as their *only* motivation, their words nevertheless point to loss of dignity as at least the first spark of resistance.<sup>48</sup>

Another resister, Marie-Antoinette Morat (*nom de guerre*, Lucienne Guezennec) provided a more nuanced indication of her feelings regarding France's occupation. "My reaction to the Occupation," she recounted, "was...not ideological or whatever [just] – out-and-out anti-German. The invasion was like a rape. To this day when I read about a rape trial, I am reminded of the Occupation. This was really violation – violation of my country. It was impossible to remain passive."<sup>49</sup>

Morat's equating of the occupation and rape, apart from being a clearly gendered response, is a clear sign of the indignity felt by occupied populations both individually and collectively. Indeed, her statement alludes to a breach of respect between human beings as well as the responsibility to resist after violation. Equally important was her reaction upon beginning resistance activities; "When asked to distribute a few dozen tracts, I was elated. I felt like a new Joan of Arc. At last I could do something."<sup>50</sup> This simple action in service to a resistance organization gave the author a renewed purpose, rebuilt her sense of human dignity, and created an inspirational heroic quality (Joan of Arc) that many other resisters also identified after undertaking resistance activities.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> This selection of quotes ranges over time from soon after the choice of resistance to several decades later. As indicated in chapter 1, there are often special issues involved in using memoirs, diaries, etc; using several examples spread over multiple historical actors, locations, and timeframes, however, points to the robustness of dignity motivations.

<sup>49</sup> Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945*, 2. Also within her statement is her identity as a French citizen, which receives attention later in this chapter.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>51</sup> Women resisters and observers throughout Europe often identified their actions with the persona of Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans. Emmanuel Ringelblum, a historian within the Warsaw ghetto in Poland wrote about women resisters who took part in the ghetto uprising of 1943. "The legend about the Jewish Maid of Orleans had its origin in the fact that Jewish girls took part in combat alongside the men. I knew these heroic girls from the period preceding the 'action' [liquidation of the ghetto]... Altogether they completely outdid the men in courage, alertness and daring. I myself saw Jewish women firing a machine gun from a roof. Clearly one of these heroic girls must have distinguished herself in the heavy fighting...and that was probably the origin of the story of the Jewish Maid of

To be sure, the responsibility to resist against the destruction of dignity provided another frequent motive for resisters. Even before the policies of collaborating governments took full form, some resisters began to organize in response to the indignity of collaboration; defeat after a difficult struggle was acceptable to some but collaborating after defeat denied the responsibility to maintain dignity and brought shame to the entire population.<sup>52</sup> A pacifist before the Axis occupation of his country, Albert Camus pointed out the responsibility to resist in 1940, a few months after the fall of France:

Nothing is less excusable than war and the recourse to national hatreds. But once the war is here, it is vain and cowardly to stand aside under the pretext that one is not responsible for it. The ivory towers have fallen. Complacency is forbidden for oneself and for others.<sup>53</sup>

It is not surprising that the majority of French resisters noted in this section stressed their motivation as dignity, somewhat more than resisters in the other case studies. French resisters attempting to explain their actions returned repeatedly to the themes of patriotism and humanism, both embodied by France according to their view. Indeed, many people, whether involved in resistance or not, saw France as both the symbolic and actual birthplace of modern ‘dignity’ – as developed in the Revolution, Enlightenment and through influences of Kantian philosophy.<sup>54</sup> Alban Vistel, a resistance leader in Lyon, spoke for many when he said resistance was not only a “reaction of individual honor” and a “victorious refusal of any historical determinism,” but also that resistance affirmed that France embodied the principles of liberty and dignity as the

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Orleans”. See Joseph Kermish (ed.), *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor! Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives “O.S.” [“Oneg Shabbath”]* (Yad Vashem, 1986), 602.

<sup>52</sup> Chevrillon, 53, 71. See also, Zvonimir Vuckovic, *A Balkan Tragedy--Yugoslavia, 1941-1946: Memoirs of a Guerilla Fighter* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs; New York: Distributed by Columbia University Press, 2004), 354.

<sup>53</sup> Albert Camus, *Carnets (May 1935-1942)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), 172 as quoted in Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 11.

<sup>54</sup> See Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945*, 8.

“traditional champion of individual human worth.”<sup>55</sup> Still, French resisters were far from the only ones to refer to the loss of dignity as a motivation for resistance. Nevertheless, other resisters in the case study countries required even further action on the part of the occupiers, beyond the initial defeat and occupation, to motivate the populace behind a sense of a loss of collective dignity.

Escalating violence against civilians and widespread atrocities such as rape, mass killings, torture, and restrictions against particular groups proved to be a deciding factor for many resisters; their dignity suffered attack under the occupation, but witnessing or becoming victims of wartime atrocities proved the final catalyst for choosing resistance. In France, the anti-Semitic measures against Jews in the Occupied and Free Zones motivated resisters.<sup>56</sup> Likewise, violence against Serbs in Yugoslavia provided motivation for resistance among sympathetic groups there.<sup>57</sup> Notably, this applied primarily to those areas under German occupation, rather than Italian controlled areas, considered milder by some resisters.<sup>58</sup> Although Italian forces conducted some of the same activities as other Axis members, the intensity of governmental occupation was less than that of its Axis partners.

Resisters in many of the case study countries shared similar sentiments to the Archbishop of Toulouse who wrote, “There is a Christian morality, there is a human morality which imposes duties and recognizes rights. These duties and rights are derived from the nature of man...It is in

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<sup>55</sup> Alban Vistel, *Héritage spirituel de la Résistance* (Lyon: éditions Lug, 1955), 31, 80, 81 as quoted in Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 11. “Traditional champion...” is from the author, see Ibid, 11.

<sup>56</sup> The large working class populations of France also suffered indignation under occupation as unions and workers’ political agitation groups became outlawed. See Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 23; H.R. Kedward, *Resistance in Vichy France: A Study of Ideas and Motivation in the Southern Zone, 1940-1942* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 182.

<sup>57</sup> Vuckovic, *passim*.

<sup>58</sup> Chevillon, 26.

the power of no mortal to suppress them.”<sup>59</sup> Maung Thein Pe escaped from Burma in 1943 and brought with him an account of an occupation that subverted similar traditional concepts of humanity. Writing in India that same year, he described the Burman reaction to the Japanese occupation’s brutality was desperation, confusion, and often panic. He noted that through the exploitation of Buddhism “to consolidate Japanese power in Burma,” the occupation propagated the Japanese Mahayana Buddhist *dharma* (teachings) rather than those of Burman Theravada Buddhist *dharma*.<sup>60</sup> The Japanese occupation also reorganized and controlled all Burma Buddhist Associations, one of the most powerful organizations in a country made up of 90% Buddhists. Furthermore, the Japanese imprisoned or otherwise silenced any monks who spoke out against the indignity of the occupation. These attacks against Buddhist monks, as well as the leaders of Burman Christian and Muslim communities more generally, convinced much of the population of the need to resist, particularly as the protectors of these respected and revered leaders of society.

Ernesto Espaldon, a resister in a Christian-Muslim group in the southern Philippine islands, also witnessed the growth of resistance after attacks on villagers. Mindanao and smaller islands in the south, including the Sulu archipelago, had a history of warfare against various foreign incursions such as the Chinese, Muslim Arabs, Spanish explorers like Magellan, and the Americans.<sup>61</sup> Some resisters followed this tradition of warfare against the Japanese immediately upon occupation, and took to the jungles to organize resistance alongside American soldiers in

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<sup>59</sup> Jules-Geraud Saliège, Letter composed August 28, 1942 ordered to be read by all parishes, reproduced in *Ville de Toulouse Bulletin Municipal (Numéro special consacré à la liberation de Toulouse)*, October 1944 (Marseille: Imprimerie Gausssel & Cie.), 28 as quoted in Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 11-12.

<sup>60</sup> Maung Thein Pe, *What Happened in Burma: The Frank Revelations of a Young Burmese Revolutionary Leader Who Has Recently Escaped from Burma to India* (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1943), 42.

<sup>61</sup> See Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Second Edition, Quezon City: Published for the Asian Center by the University of the Philippines Press, 1973); Sixto Y. Orosa, *The Sulu Archipelago and its People* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World book company, 1923); Baclagon, *Christian-Moslem Guerrillas of Mindanao*.



the area who refused to surrender.<sup>62</sup> Others in the small villages and the few cities scattered throughout the islands remained acquiescent to the occupation since the Japanese made few excursions into the region early on. However, Japanese efforts at intensifying the occupation to stop the attacks carried out by resisters and opportunistic criminal elements increased civilian intimidation and humiliation. Japanese military tactics to elicit information, like terror, rape, torture, and execution, provided a recipe for the destruction of dignity and, not surprisingly, resulted in a dramatic increase in resistance.<sup>63</sup> Others in the case study countries shared this motivation of resistance, based on the treatment of civilians by Axis occupation.

As noted previously, the brutalities carried out against civilians during the occupation of Yugoslavia waged almost constant attacks against the human dignity of the population there as well. Hundreds of thousands joined resistance groups in the area based on the loss of dignity (in addition to identity politics, as explored later). One resister who joined the communist group commonly known as the Partisans declared his intention to recover the collective dignity of his people when he argued: “I’m *not* fighting for Tito and I’m certainly *not* fighting for King Peter. I’m fighting for these poor people.”<sup>64</sup>

Shame and humiliation, from repeated injustices to brutal attacks, also left untold numbers in the case study countries with a feeling of indignity that translated into resistance motivations. A Burman woman, both a socialist and a member of the Anti-Fascist People’s Freedom League (AFPFL) led by Aung San, noted various rationales that led to loss of dignity,

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<sup>62</sup> Many of these Filipino and American resisters quickly banded together, creating groups often recognized by the Allies though most did not receive any material aid until well into 1944. For a personal account of this type of resistance, and its often haphazard nature, in the Visayan Islands see Ira Wolfert, *American Guerrilla in the Philippines* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945).

<sup>63</sup> Ernesto M. Espaldon, *With the Bravest: The Untold Story of the Sulu Freedom Fighters of World War II* (Quezon City: Espaldon-Virata Foundation; Exclusively distributed by the Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1997), 16. See also Daniel B. Schirmer and Stephen Roskamm Shalom, *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance* (First Edition, Boston: South End Press, 1987), 69.

<sup>64</sup> Emphasis in the original. David Martin, *Ally Betrayed, The Uncensored Story of Tito and Mihailovich* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1946), 193.

although this is not to say all such instances also led to armed resistance. “In villages young women committed suicide for shame as they had literally nothing to wear. Standard of living went lower every day and many people became morally depraved...I wish I could tear off this chapter of shame in Burma’s history.”<sup>65</sup> Other narratives of Burma and the Philippines offer similar references to indignation, exemplified by occupation practices that ran counter to traditional mores in the region – publicly slapping someone as a punishment for a small infraction or bathing in public as practiced by Japanese soldiers.<sup>66</sup>

U Hla Pe remembered soon after occupation began, that the Japanese announced to each community encountered they were liberated from the Western imperialists, but then proceeded to loot these same Burman cities and villages. The occupiers razed the author’s encampment, destroying almost everything his village had brought with them to the jungle after fleeing from aerial bombardment and artillery, leaving him with only two pairs of shorts, some shirts and cooking utensils. The author’s loss of dignity and anger is clearly present in his statement: “Tales of the friendly manner with which our ‘Liberators’ had ‘freed’ the people from being encumbered with their personal belongings and *self respect*, reached the camp [a makeshift refugee station for former residents of Shwebo] and it was found impossible to return home.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Daw Khin Myo Chit, *Three Years Under the Japs* (Sanchaung: Khin Myo Chit, 1945), 22-23. Although the focus of this study is armed resistance, in some ways suicide is also form of resistance through the denial to subject oneself to the loss of dignity. Some resisters also killed their own people to stop indignities against those they knew. In one case, the occupation forces captured a Filipino resister’s girlfriend in order to persuade him to surrender. Accounts filtered back to the resister’s encampment that the Japanese paraded her nude around the city square. After attempts to rescue her failed, the resister chose to shoot her to death “to prevent the enemy from heaping further humiliation on her.” Subsequently, the Japanese “denounced him as an animal, not a *tao* (man), and put a reward on his head.” This account, and others like it, problematizes the extension of resistance ideals and motivations among non-resister populations, leaving many questions regarding the possible limits of justification for future research. See Bernard Norling, *The Intrepid Guerrillas of North Luzon* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 184.

<sup>66</sup> For two of many similar examples, see Manuel Quezon, *The Good Fight* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1946), 293; U Vum Ko Hau, *Profile of a Burma Frontier Man, An Autobiographical Memoirs [sic] Including Resistance Movements, Formation of the Union and the Independence of Burma, Together with Some Chapters on Oriental Books, Paintings, Coins, Porcelain and Objects d'Art* (Bandung, Indonesia: Kilatmadju Press, 1963), 28, 159.

<sup>67</sup> Emphasis added. U Hla Pe, 7.

Such beliefs led him and others to choose resistance to regain both those possessions required to survive as well as their dignity.

Underlying much of the sense of resistance as a result of a loss of dignity was the notion of what James Scott termed a ‘hidden transcript’ between those in power (the occupation) and those with less power (the occupied). The ‘hidden transcript’ is the veiled expression of opposition to those wielding power. Usually occurring out of view of the dominant group, thereby reducing any direct threat to the dominating group, but at the same time working to create a sense of unity among the subordinate group; the ‘hidden transcript’ derives most of its power when used by the subordinate group in a public setting. This allows a vent for frustrations, an avenue of resistance, under the nose, as it were, of the dominant group. However, the ‘hidden transcript’ often remains veiled enough to prevent the dominant group from carrying out direct attacks against the subordinate group. Dominant groups also have a ‘hidden transcript’ out of view of the subordinate group, however, this study does not address this element.<sup>68</sup>

Often, ‘hidden transcripts’ addressed the loss of dignity occurring through “domination and exploitation” that “generate the insults and slights to human dignity that in turn foster a hidden transcript of indignation.”<sup>69</sup> Before the choice of armed resistance presented itself, ‘hidden transcripts’ provided an outlet for early non-violent resistance that became part of the growing resistance movement. Eventually the resisters referred back to the original ‘hidden transcript’ for inspiration. Resistance against the Japanese in Burma and the Philippines frequently relied on the ‘hidden transcript’ originally produced during the previous periods of

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<sup>68</sup> Although Scott discussed those with power and those who were ‘powerless’, resistance itself illustrates that no group represented here was completely powerless, only less powerful. See Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance, Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), xii, 7.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

Western imperialism. The anti-imperial actions and utterances once covertly directed at the Western powers then targeted the Japanese occupation.<sup>70</sup>

Perhaps one of the most influential illustrations of the ‘hidden transcript’ underlying the loss of dignity and the resistance response was that of *Le Silence de Mer*, a clandestine novel written by Vercors (Jean Bruller) in 1942.<sup>71</sup> Several historians note the importance of the novel’s message to the later resistance, both armed and unarmed, and in increasing the overall morale of the population.<sup>72</sup> According to the story, the preferred attitude to take toward the occupation, no matter how benign or even friendly it might seem at times, should be silence and denial of interaction.<sup>73</sup> This novel was the public voicing of the ‘hidden transcript’ already existent for two years, echoing the sentiment of perhaps millions of silent French citizens that, “these men will disappear under the weight of our contempt, and we shall not even trouble to rejoice when they are dead.”<sup>74</sup> The preface, written by Maurice Druon, clearly explained that the publication of this book assisted France in regaining its dignity. He wrote:

Ah non! Ce n’est pas un peuple diminué, ce n’est pas un peuple absent, celui où à toutes les hauteurs de la société des hommes sont capables d’offrir leur liberté et leur vie pour la chose écrite. Que personne ne dise du mal d’un pays où le sang coule pour la primauté de l’esprit. La France n’abdique pas ; et les grandeurs qu’elle semblait avoir perdues, elle les retrouve.

[Oh, no! This is not a reduced people, this is not an absent people, the one from which come all the advances of human society are capable of offering their liberty and their lives for the written word. No one will speak badly of countries where

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 15; U Ba Maw, *Breakthrough in Burma; Memoirs of a Revolution, 1939-1946* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), xviii, xix; Jesus A. Villamor, *They Never Surrendered: A True Story of Resistance in World War II* (Quezon City, Philippines: Vera-Reyes, 1982), 238-239.

<sup>71</sup> Vercors, *Le Silence de Mer [The Silence of the Sea], Les Cahiers de Silence* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1944).

<sup>72</sup> Milton Dank, *The French Against the French: Collaboration and Resistance* (First Edition, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974), 178-179; H.R. Kedward and Roger Austin (ed.), *Vichy France and the Resistance: Culture & Ideology* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 199; H.R. Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944* (New York: B. Blackwell, 1985), 11.

<sup>73</sup> This message was often more poignant in Vichy than in the occupied northern zone. Philippe Burrin (trans. Janet Lloyd), *Living With Defeat: France under the German Occupation, 1940-1944* (London: Arnold, 1996), 193.

<sup>74</sup> Vercors, vii as quoted in Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 21.

the blood flows for the primacy of the spirit. France has not abdicated; and the greatness that it seemed to lose, it has found again.]<sup>75</sup>

Two other resisters in particular noticed the unity of purpose that cut across all artificial barriers erected between peoples. In her memoirs, Lucie Aubrac reflected on the primacy of her groups' motivations that even outlasted the war itself saying,

We had enlisted in the resistance as a voluntary move, aimed at recovering our freedom and confirming the dignity of the human being. Mission fulfilled...those of us who had served kept a spirit of solidarity, even a sense of still being united in a mission, which sometimes surprised our society, so divided by politics, ideology, religion, or social class.<sup>76</sup>

Soon after the war, Jasper Rootham also wrote of his conviction that resistance to the loss of dignity was paramount stating:

I am strengthened in this belief...not only by my own experiences, but also by the testimony of friends who served with the Partisans [in Yugoslavia], with both arms of the resistance in Greece, and with the Maquis in France. They all agree that, whatever the antics of the leaders, the ordinary men – the ones who got killed – were, mostly, animated by something which was neither mass hysteria or pure desire for revenge, but a queer unexplained feeling that they had a right to be somebody, and that the Germans wanted them to be nobody – just a breathing bag of bones and flesh. And this feeling, in its turn, led to the feeling that if I have the right to be somebody, the other fellow has too.<sup>77</sup>

The loss of dignity and attempts to regain it, as examined here, provided such powerful motivations for resistance that it overcame any differences in culture, language, religion, or ethnicity to unite resisters in a global common purpose. Traditions existent for generations, or sometimes centuries, prior to the Axis occupation instilled concepts of human dignity into the case study populations, providing a key motivation for nascent resistance groups. One other overarching resistance motivation also overrides the barriers between occupied peoples. The

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<sup>75</sup> Maurice Druon, 'Preface', *Les Cahiers de Silence*, Number one, (London, 1943), 5 as quoted in Kedward and Austin, 224. Translation provided by the author of this study.

<sup>76</sup> Lucie Aubrac (trans. Konrad Bieber and Betsy Wing), *Outwitting the Gestapo* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 233.

<sup>77</sup> Jasper Rootham, *Miss Fire: The Chronicle of a British Mission to Mihailovich, 1943-1944* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1946), 224.

individual and collective sense of identity, often comprised of multiple facets, also provided motivation for resistance after extreme threats or attempted destruction by the occupation. The following sections explore what ‘identity’ means for the purpose of this study and how identity and resistance motivations interacted.

### *Constructing Identity*

Identity is both self-definition and collective definition resting on a foundation of cultural, ethnic, religious, political, social, and economic factors in addition to other more nuanced elements particular to a person’s or group’s particular situation and environment. Indeed, no set number or types of components make up identity; they can be as varied as human populations. Rather than an abstract examination of identity, an example rooted in concrete reality provides a better framework for exploring some of the facets of identity.

For instance, a person in Manila could have an identity that includes being male, young, married, middle-class, urban, an industrial manager, Roman Catholic, Filipino nationalist, with anti-Japanese sentiment prior to the outbreak of war. Additionally, identity also constructs what a person is not; meaning, in keeping with the example, the man in Manila is not old, impoverished, nor does he have many of the skills required for living in a rurally based, peasant environment. If his identity is threatened or destroyed to the extent that he is forced to relinquish important elements of his identity, the urban-based businessman in Manila may accept this and create a new identity, possibly assuming identity roles once counter to his original identity (such as impoverishment or pro-Japanese sentiment).

Another available choice is to oppose the destruction of the most important identity elements, in other words, resistance. Paradoxically, resistance itself creates a new identity that may also destroy parts of the original identity. Although still deeply disrupting to people who

choose resistance, they tend to accept the new ‘resister’ identity as an autonomous choice even if forced by the experience of occupation. Because of this evident diversity of identity, this study only examines a small but highly significant sampling of resister identities and related motivations.<sup>78</sup>

In addition to being a self-perception, identity is also a definition placed on individuals or groups by others. For instance, British administrators and officers in Burma identified some of the ethnic and religious minorities as ‘martial races,’ an identity explored in some depth in the next section. Some members of these minorities accepted this identity as valid while others denied it.<sup>79</sup> Identity and dignity certainly interact and, indeed, some people may believe dignity changes based on identity. For example, those noted in the previous section who chose resistance to protect the dignity of others, such as religious or community leaders, perhaps believed those entrusted with the spiritual and material livelihood of the community possessed more dignity than the basic level inherent in all humans. To other resisters, such as those motivated by the treatment of Serbs or Jews, only their concept of shared human dignity across all populations mattered in their choice of resistance.

### *Identity Motivations*

Elements of the occupation often operated at such intense levels that the previous observation, that the Axis intended for its occupied subjects to be “just a breathing bag of bone and flesh,” is appropriate in terms of identity as well.<sup>80</sup> Development or maintenance of identity during Axis occupation often seemed impossible. To exert one’s identity as nationalist French,

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<sup>78</sup> In order to gain understanding of the major identity components that motivated resistance, while still striving for brevity, a few examples from select case study countries appear, rather than an exhaustive exploration of each component in each country.

<sup>79</sup> Smith Dun, *Memoirs of the Four-Foot Colonel* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Dept. of Asian Studies, Cornell University, 1980), passim.

<sup>80</sup> Rootham, 224.

Yugoslavian, Burman, or Filipino became equally as difficult as continuing to publicly live as a communist or anti-fascist. Religious, cultural, and ethnic identities were targets of destruction as well if they conflicted with the Axis occupation's ideology. Neither did the basic identity of being a man or woman escape attacks as more deportations to labor facilities separated people from family and communities and women faced the ever-present fear and possibility of rape. Indeed, identity as a motivation for resistance occurred directly in response to the threats created through governmental, economic, ideological, cultural, and social occupation. Certainly, the occupation destroyed not only physical life but also the internal, complex sense of self for millions of people.

Unlike dignity motivations, which often emerged clearly in personal narratives, identity motivations appear piecemeal among resisters focused on only a few aspects of their identity. For instance, politically based propaganda called for nationalist or communist groups to resist the Axis occupation based on patriotic, anti-fascist or anti-imperialist sentiment. Rather than appeal to potential resisters to resist based on their *whole* identity (as say, an Eastern orthodox and royalist ethnic Serb Yugoslavian man with affinity for the French based on the shared experience of the Salonika Front in World War I, in addition to being a peasant financially destroyed by war spreading across the countryside), the clandestine groups produced literature only focused on one or two elements of threatened identity.<sup>81</sup> The identity motivations of resisters were always very personal, having motivated each individual resister to take up arms. Yet, at the same time, the individual joined groups of likeminded resisters motivated by similar identities.

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<sup>81</sup> In the example here, it is plausible that resistance literature focused on the Serb identity and historical connections to the French embodied in the sample resister. Yugoslavian nationalists frequently identified with a historical connection to France during World War I. At the Salonika Front, the French and British forces came to the aid of the Serbian army, leading to a successful breakthrough in the region. See Vuckovic, 3. After that time, traditions related to the event fostered close bonds between those who remembered the last world war. Many resisters recount stories that upon the fall of France, "people burst into tears in the streets of Belgrade" and with the armistice between France and Germany, there was "a feeling of baffled rage, coupled with shame, in millions of [Yugoslavian] hearts." See Rootham, 7.



## *Nationalisms and Communism*

Foremost among the shared identities that became resistance motivations were patriotic nationalism, ethnic-nationalism, and communist-nationalism.<sup>82</sup> As ideologies, none of these sprung from the war period itself, but existed long before the coalescence of Axis powers. The intensity of occupation, particularly regarding governmental and ideological components, played a role in leading people committed to such identities to become resisters. Attacks on these elements of identity by the occupation, whether it be the denial of traditional freedoms, destruction of traditional forms of government, or the attempts to alter the very concept of citizenship, fostered both the indignation explored in the previous section and threatened the loss of identity. These components of individual and collective political identity proved for some to be the deciding factor in the choice of resistance.

Resistance groups in France, considered the historical home of modern nationalism, signified early on that they resisted the Axis occupation in order to maintain institutions of democracy, liberty, and equality that came to define the French identity after the Napoleonic period.<sup>83</sup> In his personal account of being a resister, Pierre Guillain de Bénouville pointed to a nationalist and patriotic identity as a primary motivator stating,

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<sup>82</sup> Also included in this identity motivation are monarchists in Yugoslavia. While the other case study countries did not share in the monarchist identity, it operated in much the same way as nationalism. One British liaison to the nationalist resistance in Yugoslavia wrote about the dual motivations of his Serbian contact stating, “He [Petrovich] was, as I have said, a Royalist. This was his first loyalty. And this meant two things. First, that as long as Mihailovich was the Commander-in-Chief, appointed by the King [to lead the resistance], he, Petrovich, as a regular soldier could do nothing but obey him, however much he might disagree with, or try to persuade him. And secondly, that he was bitterly opposed to the Partisans [communist resistance] because of their current policy of not allowing the King to return to Yugoslavia, as expressed at the recent Assembly of the National Liberation Movement and in their printed propaganda.” Ibid, 186-187.

<sup>83</sup> Diamond, 113. Some Jewish resisters in France formed specific groups with only Jewish members but Philip Rosen estimates that Jews comprised at least 25% of the French *maquis*, resisting for nationalist motivations. Bernard Mednick and Ken Wachsberger, *Never be Afraid: A Jew in the Maquis* (Madison: Mica Press, 1997), 192. The underground paper, *Cahier*, often implored its readers, “France, prends garde de perdre ton âme (France be careful not to lose your soul)”. See, Bob Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe* (Oxford & New York: Berg, 2000), 127. Interestingly, some French fascists from *Action Française* were among the founding members of

The Motherland was not an abstract idea. It was a living, dreaming thing that stirred in our hearts...They [the resisters] remembered the words of Michelet: 'The defensive does not fit France. France is not a shield; she is a living sword, carried by its own momentum to the throat of the enemy'. These were the bywords of those who girded themselves to carry on the battle – these and the savage, peremptory 'No' which Frenchmen hurled into the face of the Germans.<sup>84</sup>

Nationalist identities based on tradition as well as on Western ideologies existed in Burma as well. The Burman nationalist movement grew rapidly after the 1917 reforms in India and, after the end of World War I, young Burman nationalists fully embraced principles of independence and self-determination as expressed in the Treaty of Versailles.<sup>85</sup> By the late 1930s, nationalist student movements centered in Rangoon influenced British policy decisions regarding its empire in Asia.<sup>86</sup> Coupled with this increasing nationalism was a strong Buddhist identity among the majority of those involved, which became the spiritual foundation for the independence movements.<sup>87</sup> This same combination of Burman nationalism and Theravada Buddhist identities also intersected and opposed the Japanese occupation's attempts to subvert previous promises of full Burman independence and policies of Japanization.

Aung San, leader of the student nationalist movement in the 1930s, led one of the primary resistance groups when it became obvious that independence under the Japanese

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resistance groups like *Combat*. Although they shared the fascist identity with the occupation, their nationalist sentiment and denial of foreign control became motivations for resistance. See Henri Michel (trans. Richard Barry), *The Shadow War: European Resistance, 1939-1945* (First American Edition, New York, Harper & Row, 1972), 151. Profile of M. Louis de la Bardonnie in Kedward, *Resistance in Vichy France: A Study of Ideas and Motivation in the Southern Zone, 1940-1942*, 250.

<sup>84</sup> Pierre Guillain de Bénouville (trans. Lawrence G. Blochman), *The Unknown Warriors, A Personal Account of the French Resistance* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1949), 4.

<sup>85</sup> U Ba Maw, 16-17; Guyot, 111, 266.

<sup>86</sup> For an excellent and often cited text on this, see Albert D. Moscotti, *British Policy and the Nationalist Movement in Burma, 1917-1937* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1974).

<sup>87</sup> Since the 1920s, monks or *pongyi*, who did not live completely sequestered from the larger population, were politically active in the nationalist movement. In both the resistance against the British and later against the Japanese, they "embodied the old respect for tradition and the new demand for self-determination." Ibid, 39.

envisioned GEACS was illusory.<sup>88</sup> One historian noted that the early months of the Japanese occupation worked to recreate the previously fragmented Burman society that existed under British rule since 1886.<sup>89</sup> Links developed between the army and Burman nationalist politics and between the villages and the Buddhist priesthood, creating an identity strong enough to become a powerful resistance motivation within a year. In reality, however, the resistance sparked by Burman nationalist identities did not include those ethnic minorities aligned with the British and other Allies in separate resistance groups. The Karen, Kachin, and Arakanese had different and frequently competing identities and motivations than those of ethnic Burmese nationalists, as explored below.

Ethnic nationalist identities also became a resistance motivation as resisters identified ‘French-ness’, or being anti-Croatian Serbs as important parts of their resistance decision.<sup>90</sup> Resisters in the Philippines overwhelmingly identified themselves as being Asian based on their ethnicity, but culturally identified themselves as Westernized.<sup>91</sup> Their Westernized nationalist identity, in which many Filipinos took pride, often worked as a motivation against policies of Japanization that threatened the uniqueness of Filipino identities.<sup>92</sup> Many resisters and their supporters, including the exiled president Manuel Quezon believed the ethnic nationalist identity

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<sup>88</sup> Dr. Ba Maw, the Prime Minister installed by the Japanese Military Administration, although initially enthusiastic about the Japanese slogan of ‘Asia for Asian’ and its promise of independence from Western imperialism, became quickly disillusioned by the Japanese militarists, “brutality, arrogance, and racial pretensions” that “remained among the deepest Burmese memories of the war years; for a great many people in Southeast Asia these are all they remember of the war.” U Ba Maw, 180.

<sup>89</sup> Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Armies: The Fall of British Asia, 1941-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 173.

<sup>90</sup> Even in countries like Yugoslavia, where patriotic nationalism and communist-nationalism often took precedent among resister identities, ethnic nationalism also existed as a parallel motivation. Rodoljub Colakovic (trans. Alec Brown), *Winning Freedom* (London: Lincolns-Prager, 1962), 10, 12; Hélène de Champlain, *The Secret War of Helene de Champlain* (London: W.H. Allen, 1980), 36-37.

<sup>91</sup> Dorothy Dore Dowlen (ed. Theresa Kaminski), *Enduring What Cannot Be Endured: Memoir of a Woman Medical Aide in the Philippines in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001), 46.

<sup>92</sup> Peter Duus, et al. (ed.), *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 288; John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 281.

of Filipinos influenced the guarantees of support and eventual independence from the United States that the Japanese occupation threatened.<sup>93</sup>

Resistance motivations resting on identities of communist-nationalism also existed in all the case study countries.<sup>94</sup> These resisters maintained strong anti-fascist (and anti-imperialist) sentiment as an element of their political identity as the ideology of Germany, Italy, and Japan was the antithesis of communism. The neutrality pact signed between the European Axis and Russia in 1939, prevented some communists with internationalist identities from joining the resistance on orders from Moscow until the 22 June 1941 German invasion of the Soviet Union and negation of the treaty.<sup>95</sup> Others, motivated by both anti-fascist identity elements and strong nationalist identities, looked to join their national militaries during the Axis invasion or resistance groups after the occupation began, regardless of Moscow's position.<sup>96</sup> In the case of Burma, individual communist-nationalist resisters operated in almost all the resistance groups comprised of ethnic Burmese, with many working under the direction of British and Indian SOE officers.<sup>97</sup> As another example, the *Hukbalahap* (Huk) resistance group in the Philippines existed independently from other resistance groups in contact with the Allies. Neither communist-nationalist groups in the Philippines, nor Burma for that matter, had strong ties to Moscow.

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<sup>93</sup> Quezon, 293.

<sup>94</sup> See Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*; Robert H. Taylor, *Marxism and Resistance in Burma, 1942-1945. Thein Pe Myint's Wartime Traveler* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1984); Charles Andrew Willoughby, *The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines: 1941-1945* (First Edition, New York: Vantage Press, 1972).

<sup>95</sup> David Wingeate Pike, "Between the Junes: The French Communists from the Collapse of France to the Invasion of Russia," *Journal of Contemporary History* (Vol. 28, No. 3, July 1993), 465-485; Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 117-118.

<sup>96</sup> Some of the resisters in the top echelons of the *Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije* (KPJ) (Yugoslavian Communist Party) began operations against the Germans and Italians on 6 April 1941, the day of invasion even though the non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia still existed. Vladimir Dedijer, *The War Diaries of Vladimir Dedijer*, Volume One (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 3; Members of the communist party in France "who had supported begrudgingly the earlier party line undoubtedly breathed a great sigh of relief to see the party return to its identification with French patriotism" after the invasion of the Soviet Union well over a year after their own experience of occupation began. Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements unis de la Résistance*, 120.

<sup>97</sup> Taylor, 9, 13-30; Guyot, 369-371.

Rather, influence for these groups historically came from communist movements in India and China.<sup>98</sup>

One of the largest resistance groups of predominantly communist-nationalists in Europe, led by Josip Broz Tito and frequently referred to as the Partisans, operated in Yugoslavia.<sup>99</sup> Before the war came to Yugoslavia, the monarchy oppressed communists and made their party gatherings illegal so a number of communists already had some familiarity with working in clandestine settings. Additionally, prior to the occupation of Yugoslavia, many who came to join the Partisans were veterans of the Spanish Civil War, experienced resisters previously identified with international anti-fascism.<sup>100</sup>

Since communist groups were direct ideological opponents of the Axis occupation, lethal threats against their communist identities increased and added to the destructive policies targeting their nationalist identities.<sup>101</sup> Though communists frequently cited social revolution as an end goal, occupation components such as governmental, economic, ideological, and to some extent social control policies threatened the identities of communist-nationalists to the point that

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<sup>98</sup> Unlike the USAFFE resistance, the Huk resistance in the Philippines did not receive any official aid from the United States however, they did receive aid from another Allied partner, China. This aid consisted of a military training school and two squadrons of Chinese soldiers brought in to assist the predominantly Filipino membership. Apart from this, the Huk and other resistance groups in the Philippines cooperated only on an individual basis. Lapham and Norling, 138; Shang Wan Liang, 89.

<sup>99</sup> The Partisans in Yugoslavia and other communist-nationalist resistance groups in Europe frequently received aid from Britain and the United States in the form of airdropped weapons, supplies, and personnel. Despite some misgivings about equipping communists in a time of growing concern over the international character of the ideology, many top decision makers viewed their nationalist identities as powerful allies against the Axis. Many historians and participants in the resistance explored this topic; see Ford; Hæstrup; Michel, *The Shadow War: European Resistance, 1939-1945*; Williams; Davidson; Deakin; Lindsay.

<sup>100</sup> Disaffected peasants, victims of occupation brutality, students, urban workers, professionals, and at least one priest made up much of the rest of the Partisan membership. See Maclean, 319. No limits on membership existed although leadership positions remained exclusively filled by communists. See M. R. D. Foot, *Resistance: An Analysis of European Resistance to Nazism 1940-1945* (London: Methuen, 1976), 192.

<sup>101</sup> Ford, 8.

hundreds of thousands of people joined the Partisans and other communist-nationalist groups operating in the case study countries.<sup>102</sup>

### *Historical identity*

Identities that included a historical tradition of resistance among a population, whether accurate or mythical, also functioned as resistance motivations. Personal recollections as well as historical research make extensive references to this type of motivation. For instance, a large number of resisters in Yugoslavia came from the mountainous region of Montenegro and, “like many other mountain peoples in the Balkans, the Montenegrins were divided into tribes, marked by a strong code of honor enforced by feuds, and fine warriors.”<sup>103</sup> Works on other case study countries similarly link traditional groups of tough, rugged people living in the hinterlands with an almost ‘natural’ predilection for resistance, regardless of whether those involved in anti-Axis resistance continued to live in the same harsh environments by the 1940s.<sup>104</sup> Instead, this historical identity follows their particular ethnicity as a group, not as individuals.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> For an overview of social revolution programs including political education and instruction, the emancipation of women, redistribution of land, better wages, direct governmental control of business and public affairs, and an end to rampant illiteracy, see Michel, *The Shadow War: European Resistance, 1939-1945*, 343; an in-depth analysis also appears in Jelic, et al., 61-87. Estimates of Yugoslav Partisan membership totals approaching 800,000 are in Jelic, et al., 7; Partisan numbers of 370,000 to 500,000 appear in Hæstrup, 472.

<sup>103</sup> Dedijer, xviii.

<sup>104</sup> Maclean; Nel Adams, *My Vanished World: The True Story of a Shan Princess* (Frodsham: Horseshoe, 2000); Ian Fellowes-Gordon, *Battle for Haw Seng's kingdom: The magic war; the battle for North Burma* (New York: Scribner, 1972); Donovan Webster, *The Burma Road: The Epic Story of the China-Burma-India Theater in World War II* (First Edition, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003); Espaldon; Lapham and Norling.

<sup>105</sup> The historical identity of resistance is also part of the French resistance motivations with frequent references to the French Revolution of 1789, the French Constitution of 1793, and among the more radical resistance elements, the Cathar heretics' resistance activities in the thirteenth century. According to the historical resistance identity, all were a response to expanding state power or unreasonable demands. See Moore, 257.

An interesting example of historical resister identities based on ethnicity, was the Basque population in the Philippines.<sup>106</sup> Higinio de Uriarte, an affluent plantation owner prior to the war and a resister on the island of Negros, counted his Basque heritage among his resistance motivations declaring, “I have come to realize that one does not have to be a native Filipino to be a good Filipino.”<sup>107</sup> Considering the Philippines his second homeland (his parents immigrated to the Philippines before his birth), de Uriarte wrote that he resisted because of the Basque love of freedom and hatred of totalitarianism.<sup>108</sup> He traced this identity back through the centuries but most significant among his examples of the Basque resister identity was the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s. According to his account, the majority of Basques in Spain fought for the established government against fascism, and formed an exile government with Jose Antonio de Aguirre as president.<sup>109</sup> Although he was born in the Philippines, sharing many of the cultural traditions of plantation life there, and though he did not participate in any of the resistance activities in Europe, this ethnically based historical identity as a resister seemed to be one of the most important motivations for his own resistance against the Japanese occupation of the Philippines.<sup>110</sup>

The historical resister identity existed among native Filipinos as well. Jesus Villamor, a well-known Filipino fighter pilot and veteran of Corregidor, returned to the Philippines in late 1942 to investigate reports that resisters scattered throughout the islands continued to harass the occupation. After finding large numbers of Filipinos and some Americans who refused to

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<sup>106</sup> A recently published book traces the historical identity of the Basque in the Philippines, including resister identities, over several hundred years. See Marciano R. de Borja, *Basques in the Philippines* (First Edition, Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 2005).

<sup>107</sup> Higinio de Uriarte, *A Basque Among the Guerrillas of Negros* (First Edition, Bacolod City, Philippines: Editor of Civismo Weekly, 1962), xix.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, 18-19.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, 84-87.

<sup>110</sup> His other motivation follows that noted by many Filipinos, atrocities against civilians carried out by the occupation forces.

surrender or escaped capture, Villamor remarked, “I had no doubt that there was resistance, for I was familiar with the Filipino’s fierce love for freedom, and I was steeped in the history of the country and of how its inhabitants had resisted foreign invaders.”<sup>111</sup> In response to white American officers replacing some USAFFE Filipino resistance leaders, the author went on to write:

The Filipino people were being given such little credit. Yet they knew so much about resistance. The unwelcome invaders of centuries could affirm it. On the shore of Mactan Island, Filipinos with only bows and arrows, bolos and spears, had cut apart the gun-wielding troops of Ferdinand Magellan, and killed Magellan himself. For three hundred years the Spaniards held the Philippines, and they and the British, who for a year ruled central Luzon, both had lost blood from the sharp blades of the bolomen. The Japanese invaders were not spared from this fury.<sup>112</sup>

Villamor’s identity that motivated his resistance, like so many other Filipinos, was a combination of this concept of historical identity and nationalism discussed above.<sup>113</sup>

Other historical identities focused on individualized past war experiences as motivations.<sup>114</sup> Regional memories, such as occupation during earlier wars, encouraged a climate of resistance in later occupations regardless of intensity. Indeed, memories of World War I veterans and their families frequently counted among resistance motivations in Europe, even by

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<sup>111</sup> As a member of a well-to-do and politically elite family in the Philippines, the author received a private education that incorporated the best of history and tradition. Villamor, 76-77.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 111-112. Interestingly missing from his account of the historical resistance identity is the Philippine-American War at the turn of the twentieth century. Villamor had many critical things to say against the style of Allied military operations during World War II, particularly those of Douglas MacArthur. Although he worked within the Allied command and later acted as a consultant for the United States, he maintained a strong Filipino nationalist identity. Ibid, 282, 285-286.

<sup>113</sup> The exiled president, Quezon, also shared a historical resister identity. During the Philippine-American War, he led the Filipino Army in the Bataan peninsula and surrendered to American forces in 1901. In 1935, he ran for president of the commonwealth on a platform that highlighted his strong nationalism through his resister identity. Other national leaders during and after World War II capitalized on their resister identities as well including de Gaulle, Tito, and Aung San’s cabinet in Burma.

<sup>114</sup> One resistance leader noted the translation of individual experience, such as the veteran experience in World War I to the collective national memory in Yugoslavia and its influence on resistance motivations during World War II noting, “history will judge that the major influences were two: first, the tradition of independence of the Serb people, and secondly, the memory of the Salonika Front. Of course, at a later stage, opposition to the Germans developed which was not based on traditional feelings or on faithful memories, but was a combination of outraged humanity, national aspiration, and ideological opposition to Fascism.” Rootham, 6.



daughters of veterans. Some felt they were carrying on the previous battle for their fathers who were now gone or too old to be part of the resistance; women spoke of similar sentiments when their husbands and sons were prisoners of war.<sup>115</sup> Those children who suffered while their fathers fought at Verdun or the Somme were less likely to tolerate German occupation and anti-German occupation: indeed, anti-German sentiment already existed in many areas because of atrocities against civilians during the previous war.

While the historical resister identity existed in Burma as well, particularly among the ethnic Burmese in reference to the three Anglo-Burman Wars of the nineteenth century and the Saya San Rebellion of 1930-1932, another historical identity also motivated resistance. The British SOE, in planning to retake Burma from the Japanese with American and Chinese support, continued to count on particular minority populations in Burma known in the language of the empire as ‘martial races’. This idea, that “some groups of men are biologically or culturally predisposed to the arts of war” such as Scottish Highlanders, Sikhs, and Gurkhas from the imperial Indian provinces, spread throughout the empire by the close of the nineteenth century, leading to a prevalence of these groups in the imperial military.<sup>116</sup>

Recent historical works on ‘martial races’ focus on India, particularly as they related to the uprising of 1857, but a limited amount of historical scholarship also places some Burman ethnic minorities such as the Karen, Kachin, and Chin within this classification as well.<sup>117</sup> Considering that the British Empire did not separate Burma from India until the late 1930s, it is logical that the British concept of ‘martial race’ applied to certain groups in both imperial

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<sup>115</sup> Diamond, 116.

<sup>116</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 1.

<sup>117</sup> Andrew Selth, “Race and Resistance in Burma, 1942-1945,” *Modern Asian Studies* (Vol. 20, No. 3, 1986), 483-507. The ‘martial races’ of Burma were often in different geographical locations than the ethnic Burmese and had religious differences. Many of the Karens identified themselves as Christians while other minority populations practiced Buddhism in addition to ancient animist religions.

territories.<sup>118</sup> References to these Burman groups as ‘martial races,’ with different languages or religions but all “sharing only an aptitude for making war,” point to a continuation of this concept well into World War II, long after the zenith of British imperialism.<sup>119</sup>

As an example of the Allied reliance on ‘martial races,’ William Slim noted in his post-war memoir of the Burma campaign that “These men, mainly Kachins, Chins, Karens, and other hillmen...in due course formed the backbone of the resistance movements that grew in strength as the Japanese occupation continued.”<sup>120</sup> In fact, recruitment among those deemed ‘martial races’ prior to the war meant that almost three quarters of those in the Burma Army came exclusively from the minority populations; when resistance groups reorganized along the line of the previous military structures, minorities again constituted the bulk of those ready to take up arms.<sup>121</sup> Attempts to recruit ethnic Burmese after the start of the war proved ineffective as the BIA held more appeal for a population increasingly identifying themselves as anti-British nationalists.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Another significant component to the designation of certain populations being ‘martial races’ has less to do with battlefield prowess and more to do with loyalty. Those populations in India that came to be known as ‘martial races’ were the same groups who did not take part in the uprising of 1857 against the British Empire. Streets, 8. In Burma, those designated as ‘martial races’ assisted the British in overthrowing the ethnic Burmese king, Thibaw in 1885 and in putting down the Saya San Rebellion of 1930-1932. Selth, 485; Military recruitment of ‘martial races’, particularly among the Karen, increased in response to growing ethnic Burmese nationalism. By the early twentieth century, the British viewed the Karens as exceptionally loyal servants of the crown despite their own rebellion against the British in 1857. It seemed that their assistance in 1885 made up for past transgressions against the empire. Moscotti, 132.

<sup>119</sup> Fellowes-Gordon, 22. Similar to the heavily gendered conceptions of “‘martial’ worthiness (and unworthiness) of different groups of Indians” explored by Heather Streets (3), Burman populations were also gendered in terms of ‘martial race’ ideas. Henry Noel Cochrane Stevenson, a resistance recruiter for the British, lived in the remote hills of northern Burma since 1926 and was a fanatical supporter of the ‘martial race’ populations, frequently contrasting them to the “‘effeminate’ plains Burmese.” Bayly and Harper, 205.

<sup>120</sup> Slim, 90.

<sup>121</sup> In 1939, only 472 ethnic Burmese, Mon, and Shan were in the regular armed forces, although they constituted 75.11% of the Burman population. Among the ethnic minorities, there were 1448 Karens (9.3% of the Burman population), 868 Chins (2.3% of the Burman population), 881 Kachins (1.05% of the Burman population) and 168 military members from other ethnic groups. Among officers, four were ethnic Burmese and seventy-five were from the minority groups. Selth, 489.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, 489.

Many accounts of the war in Burma written by British or Indian military men posit that Kachins, Chins, and Karens resisted the Japanese occupation because of a notable pro-British (and pro-Empire) stance.<sup>123</sup> Historians, however, argue that these groups resisted against the Japanese “not so much out of love for the British but because the Japanese were invading their sacred territory alongside ethnic Burmese to whom they were deeply antagonistic.”<sup>124</sup> During the British administration, soldiers seldom ventured into the remote mountains but with the Japanese occupation, whole armies marched and fought, requisitioned labor, seized animals and burned villages. According to Christopher Bayly, many among the minority groups were “relatively satisfied with the old order,” noting,

However much they had resented or even resisted the initial imposition of the Raj, they came to find that the British presence was not too intrusive and even gave them some advantages. In many cases, they had come to dislike the assumption of the plains politicians that they would easily merge into the new Burmese or Indian nations, forfeiting their political privileges and long-cultivated special identities.<sup>125</sup>

Although Bayly does not argue specifically that ‘martial races’ counted among the ‘long-cultivated special identities,’ a significant number of resisters did link their motivation for resistance to their special pre-war military or otherwise influential positions within Burman society.<sup>126</sup>

Other resisters, notably Smith Dun, a Karen officer who later participated in the resistance after his official demobilization, rejected the concept that Karens were a ‘martial race.’

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<sup>123</sup> Slim, 90; Fellowes-Gordon, 21. The American OSS leadership in Assam, India did not seem to identify any of the ethnic minorities as better suited for combat than others in any official sense. Detachment 101, an irregular group of volunteer resisters organized by the Americans operated in Burma from 1942 to the end of the war. Among their numbers were ethnic Burmese, Anglo-Burmese, Americans, Chinese, British, Irish, Scottish, Armenian, Korean, Kachin, Karen, Naga, San, and others; truly an Allied army. Unlike the indigenous resisters that joined the British, Americans did not exclusively lead the groups of the 101; rank promotions into positions of leadership were merit-based. See Peers and Brellis, 14.

<sup>124</sup> Bayly and Harper, 232.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, 198.

<sup>126</sup> U Vum Ko Hau, *passim*; Selth, 488.

In his memoir, Smith Dun recounted training with Indian ‘martial races’ in the 1<sup>st</sup> Punjab Regiment, noting their bravery, loyalty, and fighting skills. However, after serving with a “conglomeration of all Burma races” the author stressed his conviction that “there is no martial or non-martial race in the world. It all depends on...training, equipment, leadership, efficient administration, etc.”<sup>127</sup> Instead, Smith Dun’s resistance motivations stemmed from his own historical identity as a career military officer inspired by Karens returning from military service after World War I; resistance was simply a continuation of his initial choice of joining the military.<sup>128</sup> Other Burman minorities shared this motivation for resistance based on their own historic military identity rather than any belief in their own ‘martial race’ identity.

### *Anti-Axis Foreign Fighters*

The final identity to explore as a resistance motivation is that of the anti-Axis resisters who operated in foreign countries.<sup>129</sup> All of these resisters shared an identity that placed them in direct opposition to the Axis powers; sometimes this identity operated in tandem with other identities such as nationalism or communism. In other situations, the anti-fascist identity acted as the primary resistance motivation. Veterans of the Spanish Civil War who later joined the resistance represent both aspects of this resister identity. Those in the International Brigades

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<sup>127</sup> Smith Dun, *Memoirs of the Four-Foot Colonel* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Dept. of Asian Studies, Cornell University, 1980), 114-115.

<sup>128</sup> Writing his memoir entirely in third person, the author noted “In his dream for the future, one thing which was outstandingly embedded in his mind was to rise to the top rank, and to go through a hellish war, at the end of which, to come out unscathed and take part in the victory parade in London as was done after the First World War.” Ibid, xii.

<sup>129</sup> Some of these groups have already received brief attention in previous sections of this study. Members of the SOE and the OSS, for example, certainly counted among the anti-Axis foreign fighters. Their contribution to the overall resistance against the Axis powers was tremendous but they are not a subject here because the Allied operations conceived of them as an ‘official’ element of the total war effort. A variety of books already exists on these groups; among the best secondary sources are Auty and Clogg; C. Cruickshank, *SOE in the Far East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Foot, *SOE in France: An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France, 1940-1944*; Ford; Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance, 1940-1945: A Survey of the Special Operations Executive, With Documents*; Williams.

operating in Spain, such as Tito who came to lead the Partisans in Yugoslavia, frequently held identities as communists that led to their ideological opposition to fascism at an international level. As referenced in the examination of Basque identities, others identified themselves primarily as anti-fascist.

Polish resisters also operated in both of the European case study countries. After the intense occupation of their own country by the German military, many Poles joined resistance groups scattered among their cities and forests. Others individually made their way to the governments in exile in London to volunteer their services or traveled by clandestine means directly to countries where they later joined the resistance. ‘Nash,’ a young former officer in the Polish military, was one such person who airdropped into Yugoslavia to join the resistance after linking up with the SOE in London.<sup>130</sup> The large Polish resistance network also advised and participated in the resistance led by the *Parti Communiste Français* (French Communist Party) (PCF).<sup>131</sup>

The Philippines were historically an area of convergence for many cultures and ethnicities. This dynamic manifested itself in the resistance groups found there, as they too were an assortment of identities, rationales, and motivations. Filipinos, Malays, Chinese, Japanese, Anglo-Americans, Black-Americans, and other Pacific Islanders lived on the islands during the Japanese occupation. Many groups within the Philippine population, such as a large Chinese immigrant community, held decades of anti-Japanese sentiment and were not persuaded to join in friendly relations with the occupiers. Anti-Japanese sentiment based on the decade-long war in Manchuria, continued aggression and atrocities carried out against China, and the Japanese

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<sup>130</sup> Rootham, 64. The author also mentions several occasions when his group encountered roving bands of Polish and Soviet resisters scattered throughout the area. Apparently, some did not know they were in Yugoslav territory as they were in a pattern of engaging and then evading patrolling German troops.

<sup>131</sup> Bieganski, et al., 226.

occupation of many coastal areas of the Chinese mainland motivated a particularly large number of resisters in Burma and the Philippines. Often identified as overseas Chinese or ‘huaqiao,’ these populations did not consider themselves permanent members of these communities abroad and maintained their Chinese nationality and identity.<sup>132</sup> Particularly in the Philippines, overseas Chinese did not have a historical identity of resisters against occupation forces, as they had frequently been complicit in previous occupations.<sup>133</sup> In this respect, the resistance against the Japanese occupation was unprecedented.

Despite the few Chinese who did intermarry and adopt Filipino or Burman identities, the majority of overseas Chinese were frequent targets of discrimination and marginalization. This was particularly true in the Philippines where they controlled a significant amount of trade prior to the war, primarily lived middle-class lifestyles, yet made up less than 1% of the population.<sup>134</sup> The economic position of these middle-class Chinese also provided a motivation for Anti-Axis resistance since the Japanese GEACS plan sought to eliminate the middle-class Chinese as noted earlier in this study. The social and secret organizations present in all ‘huaqiao’ communities that provided assistance to those trying to establish themselves in new communities, became a perfect meeting point for people looking to form resistance groups.

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<sup>132</sup> Yuk-wai Yung Li, xii. There were exceptions to this, of course. Puan Seng ‘James’ Go had connections to many armed resisters in the Philippines though he was an intellectual resister as publisher of the *Fookien Times*; he did not consider himself a temporary resident of the Philippines. He married a Chinese woman previously acculturated into Filipino society (her family emigrated during the Spanish period), converted to Christianity, had several children, and established himself within Chinese and American Christian organizations. He lived in Manila from at least 1932 (date of marriage) until his death. Apparently, the Chinese evangelical Christian community was growing within the overwhelmingly Catholic Philippines as is evidenced by a number of Chinese Christians mentioned in his occupation memoir. Puan Seng Go, *Refuge and Strength* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970).

<sup>133</sup> During the Seven Years War, Britain occupied the Philippines (1762-1764) in their war with Spain for supporting the French; the Chinese assisted the British with supplies and guides. Some overseas Chinese participated in the Philippine-American War on the side of the Filipino revolutionaries but there was no widespread commitment by the Chinese population. Yuk-wai Yung Li, 17, 19.

<sup>134</sup> Despite the small percentage of overseas Chinese relative to the total Philippine population, they represented the largest foreign population in the islands. Ibid, 3, 5. Lower class Chinese laborers were probably present in the Philippines illegally but were officially barred entry into the United States and its colonies with the U.S. Exclusion Bill modifications in 1902.

Since the overseas Chinese resisters were predominantly motivated by anti-Japanese sentiment, other resister identities ran the gamut between conservative nationalists, communists, Christian, pro-Allies, and anti-Allies.<sup>135</sup> Some resistance groups received aid from pro-capitalist nationalists aligned with Chiang Kai-Shek's army in southern China, most notably those engaged in Allied resistance in Burma, while others were associated with Mao Zedong communist resisters in northern China.<sup>136</sup> Based on the variety of resistance groups among the overseas Chinese, the anti-Axis, particularly anti-Japanese, identity among these resisters proved to be their defining motivation.<sup>137</sup>

As evidenced in this small sampling of the many identities that could provide resistance motivations, it is not surprising that resistance occurred in every Axis occupied country. Nationalist (including communist-nationalist) identities, often noted by historians as the definitive resistance motivation, was but only one aspect of the myriad identities that informed the choice of resistance. The same holds true for historical identities including 'martial races' and anti-Axis foreign fighters. Rather than compartmentalizing each identity as a singular resistance motivation, this section attempted to treat all of them as elements of the overall motivation – the threatened destruction of identity itself brought about by intense Axis occupations.

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<sup>135</sup> A sizable resistance group of overseas Chinese and Filipinos with a parallel Christian identity, commonly known as the Zambales guerrillas led by Ramon Magsaysay (later president of the Philippines) received funding and equipment through the Cosmopolitan Student Church in Manila. Puan Seng Go, 131. For an extensive study of Chinese communities in the Philippines that provides detailed information on the administrative and armed resistance of overseas Chinese groups operating in the islands, see Irene Khin Khin Myint Jensen, *The Chinese in the Philippines During the American Regime, 1898-1946* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1975).

<sup>136</sup> The other identities among overseas Chinese also determined the membership of resistance groups and their geographic distribution. For instance, nationalist groups in the Philippines tended to operate in the urban areas of Luzon due to pre-existing economic and social class status while the groups with communist identities, such as the Philippine Chinese Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Force (*Hua Zhi* or *Wha Chi*), operated in remote locations with assistance from indigenous farmers and peasants. Yuk-wai Yung Li, 13. For memoirs of the overseas Chinese communist group within the Hukbalahap resistance in the Philippines, Squadron 48, see Shang Wan Liang.

<sup>137</sup> For thoughtful accounts of resistance groups that included overseas Chinese, rather than regular Chinese soldiers operating in official capacity as in some areas of northern Burma, see Espaldon; Hilsman; Peers and Brellis; Slim.

## *Conclusion*

The commonality of dignity and identity as resistance motivations in response to intense Axis occupation was certainly not lost on the resisters themselves. Jasper Rootham noted the common struggle against indignation, the “right to be somebody.”<sup>138</sup> Similarly, in his biography written in the final year of the war, Iliff David Richardson, a resister in the Philippines noted:

[the resistance in] Leyte has its precedents and has plenty of brothers all over the world these days – China, Russia, Tito’s boys, the forest lands of Poland, Greece, the FFI in France, the FI in Belgium. Wherever a fascist conqueror has tried to stand, the people have risen under his feet as guerrillas. That’s the human race for you, and the Filipino people take their place big in it, just as big as the biggest.<sup>139</sup>

Sentiments like these may seem to emanate a heady mix of idealism and romanticism. Nevertheless, resisters in all the case study countries – France, Yugoslavia, Burma, and the Philippines - identified with them, making them worth a significant amount of historical attention. In reality, many resisters identified themselves as ‘nationalists,’ ‘patriots,’ ‘communists,’ or ‘anti-fascists’ with corresponding motivations. In addition to all of these elements of individual and collective identity is the human identity that includes the equally motivating concept of dignity.

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<sup>138</sup> Rootham, 224.

<sup>139</sup> Wolfert, 219.



## CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

### *The Effectiveness of Resistance*

As noted in chapter one, many historians of World War II limit their studies to the battles, fronts, and personnel of national armies; only a relative handful examine resistance as a primary subject. In each retelling of the pitched battles at Leyte in the Philippines or the Allied invasion of Normandy, the armies - with their artillery, ships, and mechanized infantry - are present, but any mention of civilian resisters is absent or cursory at best; they become, in effect, a footnote in the largest and most destructive global conflict in recorded human history.<sup>1</sup>

In some respects, this is understandable. Working within the official story of the war, identifying the winners and losers is straightforward; it is also rather simple to determine which official armies fought in a particular battle. Moreover, casualty rates are often easily available (though with some discrepancies), and a paper trail of orders and other communications exist in thousands of acid-free cardboard boxes housed in the national archives of the Allied and Axis countries.

With resistance groups, the historical record is not so clear-cut. They were frequently unassociated with the national armies so that rosters, operation summaries, and official debriefings rarely exist, except among those few who made contact with organizations like the SOE and OSS. Most of their stories only come to light if someone, frequently the resister him or herself, takes a personal interest in retelling the clandestine tale in the form of a diary. Commonly, the historical trail abruptly ends after raids and arrests at a resister's home or hideout by the occupation.

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<sup>1</sup> Civilian resistance during World War II in Europe and Asia occurs in exactly two footnotes, none in the text, within a classic of military history. See Theodore Ropp, *War in the Modern World* (New, Revised Edition, New York: Collier Books, 1962), 339, 356.

Perhaps the most prominent matter facing historians who may be interested in studying the anti-Axis resistance is the question of effectiveness. Did resistance contribute in any tangible way to the larger war effort? Did the activities of resisters lead to the liberation of their respective countries from Axis occupation? Did resistance cause significant casualties among the enemy forces or hamper supply or transportation in any significant way? If the answer to any of these questions is 'no,' then is resistance worthy of any considerable examination? Historians of the war, and those few historians focused on resistance, debate all of these questions.

John Keegan's summation of resistance in Europe echoed many other war historians. Focusing on Yugoslavian resistance as the most sustained and widespread in all of Europe (apart from the Soviet Union), Keegan maintained that despite its achievements,

It is now accepted that the liberation of Yugoslavia was the direct result of the arrival of Russian troops in the country in September 1944...The 'indirect' offensive encouraged and sustained by the Allies against Hitler – military assistance to partisans, sabotage and subversion – must therefore be judged to have contributed materially little to his defeat.<sup>2</sup>

If Yugoslavian resistance was the best-case scenario according to Keegan's standard history of warfare and it was ineffective there, then it seems to follow that resistance activities mattered very little on a truly global scale.<sup>3</sup>

Resisters themselves made similar arguments. In the case of the Philippines, one personal narrative comparatively reflected on resistance activities in France and the Philippines. Resistance in both locations benefited from large areas of countryside in which to hide, such as the Massif Central or mountainous jungle; a sympathetic population provided care for the

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<sup>2</sup> John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 494-495.

<sup>3</sup> Many resistance historians disagree with this position and make excellent arguments that harassment, sabotage, and other resistance activities are significant to the larger war effort even if the only result was more occupation attention focused on the resisters rather than on the larger civilian population. See Jørgen Hæstrup, *Europe Ablaze: An Analysis of the History of the European Resistance Movements 1939-1945* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1978), 460.

wounded, some food and supplies and both areas received airdrops of weapons, ammunition, and radios. Still, the author surmised that resistance in both countries was largely ineffective until the arrival of the massive Allied armies at Normandy and Leyte; “Guerrillas...can never be more than a supplement. Guerrilla warfare is the principal weapon only of the weak. And with this as their principal weapon, the weak can never prevail in a war between states.”<sup>4</sup>

Resistance historians, however, often put forward a more nuanced interpretation of the effectiveness of resistance. It is true that resisters never eliminated as many enemy soldiers as did the regular armies; the occupation constantly worked to hunt them down which prevented sustained operations in many areas. In France alone, the occupation forces executed 20,000 and deported almost 100,000 resisters to camps.<sup>5</sup> It is also true that resistance efforts did not often inspire widespread panic and surrender among occupation forces. Disruption of supply lines or transportation occurred in many areas, but not on a sustained basis; soldiers and forced labor quickly went out to repair the cut telephone lines and railways bombed by resistance groups.<sup>6</sup> Rather, the effectiveness of resistance had more to do with its affect on *occupied* populations rather than on the occupation. Knowledge of the existence of active resistance often boosted the morale of occupied populations and gave them hope. As noted in previous chapters, resisters felt joy and satisfaction just in knowing that they were part of resistance against the occupation even before ever receiving an assignment.

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<sup>4</sup> Roger Hilsman, *American Guerrilla: My War Behind Japanese Lines* (First Memories of War Edition, Washington, DC: Potomac, 2005), 292.

<sup>5</sup> Henri Michel, “The Psychology of the French Resister,” *Journal of Contemporary History* (Volume 5, Number 3, 1970), 159-175; 175.

<sup>6</sup> As an example, resisters cut 950 railway lines the night of the Normandy landings but within seven days, the occupation repaired almost every one. Within two weeks however, the resistance had re-cut all those same railways again as part of this cyclical nature of sabotage and repair. Stephen Hawes and Ralph White (ed.), *Resistance in Europe, 1939-1945: Based on the Proceedings of a Symposium Held at the University of Salford, March, 1973* (London: A. Lane, 1975), 211.

Some of the most notable resistance historians acknowledge the psychological effectiveness of resistance in the occupied countries. Alan S. Milward noted that even in situations where resistance was not the “correct strategy” when assessed on economic considerations, “the social and psychological value of resistance was so strong as to make its choice sometimes the correct one.”<sup>7</sup> His conclusion however, does not rest on collective resistance, which in his opinion was “seldom effective, sometimes stultifying, frequently dangerous, and almost always too costly,” but more on individual resistance, which was “liberating, satisfying and necessary.”<sup>8</sup> Milward’s argument is valuable in terms of the *individual* dignity motivations of resistance but another historian offered a better summation of the importance of resistance to both dignity and identity among the *collective*. Indeed, all of the examples in this study strongly support his conclusion about the effectiveness of resistance.

The late M.R.D. Foot, among the most astute and well-regarded World War II resistance historians addressed the crowd of scholars gathered at a symposium in 1973. There on the grounds of the University of Salford, Foot recognized that not all resisters took up arms for “good conscientious reasons” since hunger, greed, and survival frequently proved just as powerful an impetus for resistance. However, as we have seen in this study, a considerable number *did* resist from a deep sense of moral responsibility. According to Foot:

The greatest good that resistance did lay in the hearts of the people that took part in it. This is not something that can be brushed aside as of no historical importance, if history is to retain any contact with life. Millions – yes, millions – of people in the end plucked up courage to take some part, however slight, in resistance; and (if they are still alive) can say...*moi, j’ai le coeur tranquille* [me, my heart is at peace]. It is not a wholly easy thing to be able to say...They do deserve our gratitude. For they gave back self-respect to the defeated; and they kept alive the ideas of dignity and originality, without which all Europe, all the world would be the poorer.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 190.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 203.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 219-220.

Indeed, this was the true effectiveness of resistance. Though it defies measurement in any tangible sense, resistance provided immeasurable hope and allowed for a refuge where dignity, self-respect, and identity could survive until the end of the war. Then, after the guns fell silent, those countries previously occupied by the Axis used their resistance experience to rebuild their own dignity and identity, fully informed by the horrors visited upon the world.

### *Resistance and World History*

Resistance, defined broadly as violent opposition to an oppressive or aggressively coercive power, occurs in all human societies regardless of time, location, or culture; the mid-twentieth century World War II era is no exception. This includes resistance known under its politicized titles of independence movements, revolutions, insurrections, rebellions, decolonization, terrorism, insurgency, and the more obscure social or political change. In this regard, resistance is a universal element in the human experience. Considering that very few topics are historically universal, this should be enough reason to place resistance in a prominent position in world history. Yet, there are additional reasons why resistance is so important within the larger field.

Two ideas emerge in a climate of globalization. One is the spread of a dominant culture around the world, which some see as a process of homogenizing culture and society into one texturally bland construct with increasing constrictions placed on unique cultural expression. In turn, calls for diversity and cultural awareness spread among groups dedicated to preserving the distinctiveness of human societies. Another idea formulated within this process of globalization, which certainly existed as a process for centuries prior to its recent dramatic expansion, is that societies increasingly identify themselves against the backdrop of an 'other' that becomes the

counter to their self-identity. In essence, globalization enhances differences among peoples as they attempt to set themselves apart from one another, sometimes fostering a climate of violence.

Studying resistance as a global theme allows for exploration of *both* globalization ideas – as ‘the resistance’ and ‘a resistance’. Fundamental motivations for resistance are often similar, as are fundamental tactics and strategies, providing an effective tool to explore the *commonality* of humankind. Indeed, this was the primary focus of this study of motivations. As an instrument to explore universality, studying resistance as ‘the resistance’ can lead to a diffusion of differences between populations that may have a history of violent conflict based on identity. For instance, those countries once known as Yugoslavia, with such intense focus on ethnic and religious differences that translated several times into brutal civil war and a growing number of mass graves, could do with some diffusion of differences.

Apart from the universal aspects of resistance, its study in world history can also contribute to understanding cultural *diversity* through an examination of the particulars of ‘a resistance’ in specific circumstances. In the case of Burma, for example, considering the interaction of Buddhism, violent and non-violent resistance, and Western democratic values in Burma from the 1930s, through World War II, and continuing to the present is critical to understanding the diversity (and conflict) in the region over the last few centuries.

Additionally, former resisters frequently became active in shaping their countries; Gaullism was a powerful force in France, even outlasting the political career of the general himself; the ‘Titoist’ regime controlled Yugoslavia, with the identity of the country and the man inextricably tied together for more than forty years; long after the assassination of Aung San in 1947, the military coup that seized control of the Burman government in 1962 also had a former anti-Axis resister at its head, General Ne Win; finally, a series of Filipino leaders including

Roxas, Magsaysay, and a host of others in the cabinet and legislature of the Philippines held tremendous popular and international support related to their wartime resister status.<sup>10</sup> The power and influence wielded internationally by these and other former World War II resisters such as Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam is undeniable, allowing the legacy of this resistance to continue long after the war and occupation ended.

Another reason to place resistance into a prominent position within world history is its effect in shaping the contemporary world. Insurgencies, independence movements, and revolutionaries learned a good deal about resistance techniques after World War II, including subversion, training, attack, and the most necessary principles to ‘irregular,’ or guerilla warfare.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, much of the warfare conducted in decades following World War II was in some respects more ‘irregular’ than ‘regular’ in nature. It is not difficult to see evidence of the growing importance of studying resistance, from the example of the Vietnam War, so often billed as the penultimate example of resistance and its effectiveness, to less frequently discussed examples of Central and South America like the *Farabundo Marti National Liberation (FMLN)* in El Salvador, or the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the National Liberation Army (ELN) – all competing groups operating in Colombia for decades. Studying resistance also provides a historical lens to view other resistance occurring now in Central and West Africa, the Middle East, Russia, Indonesia, and Asia that all too often receive only political attention.

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<sup>10</sup> The symbolic representation of resisters was so powerful that some of the more unscrupulous national leaders fabricated or enhanced their own resistance histories to move easily into positions of power. Prior to his first election in 1966, Ferdinand Marcos, former president of the Philippines, constructed himself as a resistance leader, rather than the regular member he really was. Based on records found in the U.S. National Archives, an American historian declared Marcos’ claims fraudulent in 1986. See Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America’s Empire in the Philippines* (First Edition, New York: Random House, 1989), 311.

<sup>11</sup> Hawes and White, 211. See also Otto D. Van Den Muijzenberg, “Political Mobilization and Violence in Central Luzon (Philippines),” *Modern Asian Studies* (Vol. 7, No. 4, 1973), 691-705.

## *The Legacy of Dignity and Identity*

The ideas present throughout this study – dignity, reclaiming collective self-respect, safeguarding identity in all its forms, and moral responsibility – mean a great deal to the study of resistance and world history. Other disciplines, such as anthropology, philosophy, and political science are currently engaged in exploring these concepts but historians have largely ignored them. A notable exception is Holocaust history that has from its inception focused on dignity and identity among Jewish communities and resisters, both as motivations to remain passive and as motivations for resistance.<sup>12</sup>

As the world's people continue to think, act, and react on a global scale, these concepts, explored as resistance motivations in this study, create foundations for other ideas. For instance, human rights became a topic of substantial controversy after World War II when the United Nations adopted a Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The topic did not remain in the chambers of the UN for very long as scholars, theorists, and the lay public debated the issue in light of the horrors of World War II. Since then, the concepts of dignity and human rights have elicited considerable interest in the humanities and social sciences.

Two books in particular suggest the promising future that dignity and identity hold for historians willing to engage them. The Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka diverged from his award-winning fictional prose and poetry to compile his Reith lectures into a thought piece on dignity, freedom, fear, and justice. In his lecture titled, “The Quest for Dignity,” the author explored dignity as “simply another face of freedom, and thus the obverse of power and domination.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> As an example of one anthology that explored this topic, see Brana Gurewitsch (ed.), *Mothers, Sisters, Resisters: Oral Histories of Women Who Survived the Holocaust* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1998). See also Lucien Lazare (trans. Jeffrey M. Green), *Rescue as Resistance: How Jewish Organizations Fought the Holocaust in France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

<sup>13</sup> Wole Soyinka, *Climate of Fear: The Quest for Dignity in a Dehumanized World* (First U.S. Edition, New York: Random House, 2005), 104.



He identified references to dignity in the discourse of nations and states that declare ‘We shall not sacrifice our dignity’ as the last intact element of their self-identity by surmising,

During conflict negotiations or their aftermath...that phrase, an insistent, minimal appeal, surfaces with remarkable constancy, even when all else has been surrendered: let us leave these negotiating chambers with, at the very least, our self-respect. It is very much the historic cry of a defeated people...when they discover that they have no more bargaining chips left.<sup>14</sup>

World historians who recognize this ‘historic cry’ in their research benefit from developing this overlooked but “not accessible meaning to human self-regarding.”<sup>15</sup> Additionally, there are those groups throughout history that make up the “republic of the disillusioned” that “lose...all faith in a universal concept of human dignity and become indifferent to the moralities and restraints” within human societies.<sup>16</sup> Both groups - those striving to maintain their dignity and identity as well as those who have nothing else to lose - often count amongst those who undeniably shaped history as for example, resisters or collaborators, even if they could not claim to be prominent or powerful leaders otherwise.

Another book, the first of its kind, recently explored the development of human rights throughout recorded history. Since human rights rest on a foundation of inherent dignity and human identity, this universal concept is a progression of themes explored in this study of resistance motivations. Using a structure that lends itself well to world history, Micheline Ishay detailed the history of human rights across the globe from the perspective of the oppressed. In her examination of human rights as the “result of a cumulative historical process...beyond the speeches and writings of progressive thinkers, beyond the documents and main events that compose a particular epoch,” the author speculated that ideas such as these transfer from “one

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 93.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 98.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 111.

era to another, through the media of historical texts, cultural traditions, architecture, and artistic displays.”<sup>17</sup>

While this is an exciting book because of its perspective and subject matter - from ancient India, to the code of Hammurabi, and on to twenty-first century Afghanistan - Ishay regrettably does not include a discussion about World War II. Limiting her scope of the world wars period to the principle of self-determination promulgated after World War I and its connection with decolonization movements beginning in the late 1940s and 1950s, leaves an opening for world historians. Indeed, World War II and resistance historians can make significant contributions to this field of historical study.

In studying dignity and identity as motivations for resistance, there are varieties of fruitful research paths still to explore. As only one example, the moral problem inherent in these types of resistance motivations deserves attention. One historian briefly mentioned the convergence of resistance and illegality that easily applies to all the case study countries. Speaking somewhat informally at a symposium, he said of resistance, “If you go in for it, you undertake action which you know is legally wrong, is against what the authorities tell you to do; because you know it is morally right.”<sup>18</sup> This creates not only a situation where once law-abiding citizens are choosing to become criminals because it is right but additionally, “the most important of the many uncomfortable things resistance did was to get people used to the idea that you can do what is said to be wrong, by people you do not respect, because your conscience tells you it is right: an idea with many awkward consequences for establishments of every kind.”<sup>19</sup> Indeed, resistance motivations not accepted as completely noble and valid has been a sticking

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<sup>17</sup> Micheline R. Ishay, *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 2.

<sup>18</sup> Hawes and White, 219.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 219.

point within the international community since the end of World War II and the beginning of decolonization.

### *Conclusion*

The intention of this study has been to explain how resistance similarly occurred in incredibly diverse populations, all linked by elements of human commonality. Furthermore, this research provides a springboard for future exploration of how dignity and identity as resistance motivations adapted to the post-war world of the Cold War and the final gasps of ‘official’ imperialism. Though this paper only scratched the surface, this contribution to the field of world history will hopefully lend itself to more focus on armed civilian resistance. This important, but frequently overlooked, part of the human historical experience deserves an equal amount of attention as ‘official’ wars, failed diplomacy, and ‘great men’ of nations and states.

## **APPENDIX**

## **List of Abbreviations**

AFPFL – Anti-Fascist Peoples’ Freedom League (Burma)

ANL – Army of National Liberation (Philippines)

BDA – Burma Defense Army

BIA – Burma Independence Army

BNA – Burma National Army

CAS(B) – Civil Affairs Service (Burma)

CBI – China-Burma-India War Theater as designated by Allied Command

FFI – *Forces Françaises de l’Intérieur* (Free France)

GEACS – Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

Huk or Hukbalahap – Hukbo ng Bayang Laban Sa Hapon (People’s Army to Fight Japan) (Philippines)

PCF – *Parti Communiste Français* (French Communist Party)

OSS – American Office of Strategic Services

STO – *Service de Travail Obligatoire* (Obligatory Labor Service) (France)

SOE – British Special Operations Executive

USAFFE – United States Armed Forces in the Far East

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