JACKBOOTS, WHITE HOODS, AND THE WHITE BIBLE:
THE FUSION OF THE KKK, AMERICAN NAZIS, AND CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

by

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in
History

Charlotte

2021

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ABSTRACT

JOSEPH GABRIEL WOOD. Jackboots, White Hoods, and the White Bible: The Fusion of the KKK, the American Nazi Movement, and Christian Identity.

During the tumultuous twentieth century, three visually and dogmatically distinct white supremacist movements came together to bring forth a mostly unified front against their common enemies—integration, miscegenation, and various elaborate fictional conspiracies. At times antagonistic to one another, by November 1979, the stage was set for the beginnings of a movement rooted in solidarity. This thesis seeks to answer how and why the early distrust between the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Movement developed, as well as how this was overcome through the near-universal adoption of a fringe, conspiracy-minded branch of Protestant Christianity. By tracing the biographies of these organizations and movements during key moments in history, this thesis will answer the question of how and when the movements prior to 2001 came together and laid the groundwork for modern, nebulous partnerships during the twenty-first century.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Tabitha, Rory, Angie and Mike, Cereeta and Joe, Charity, and everyone else who said I should have done this ten years ago.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Abbreviations

American Nazi Movement	ANM
American Nazi Party	ANP
British Israelism	BI
Black Panther Party	BPP
Citizen's Law Enforcement Research Committee	CLERC
Christian Identity Movement	CIM
Fascist League of North America	FLNA
German American Bund	GAB
Ku Klux Klan	KKK
Northwest Territorial Imperative	NTI
Sovereign Citizen Movement	SCM
Sheriff's Posse Comitatus	SPC
United Klans of America	UKA
United Racist Front	URF
US Christian Posse Association	USCPA

Introduction

On November 3, 1979, an unarmed protest bloc in Greensboro, North Carolina, faced an armed mass of belligerents named the United Racist Front (URF). After ninety seconds of gunfire, five protestors lay dead, and an additional twelve sustained injuries resulting from this calculated assault. The attacking party, a semi-cohesive alliance of Ku Klux Klansmen (KKK) and American Nazi Party (ANP) members, heralded the dawn of a radical, diffuse syncretism that would culminate in the birth of an "Alt-Right" and a ubiquitous, idiosyncratic online presence.[1]

The attacks, later known as the "Greensboro Massacre," left Cesar Cauce, Dr. James "Jim" Waller, William Evan Sampson, Sandra Neely Smith, and Dr. Michael Nathan dead. All of those killed were highly educated union activists: Dr. James Waller was a professor at Duke University before establishing the Carolina Brown Lung Association, while Dr. Michael Nathan was chief of pediatrics at Lincoln Community Health Center. Their murderers had met several weeks before to form the URF in anticipation of an armed encounter with the protest bloc, led by the Communist Worker's Party, formerly the Worker's Viewpoint Organization, and the Youth Organization for Black Unity, led by Nelson Johnson. An all-white jury acquitted the Klansmen and Nazis responsible for the Greensboro Massacre with little deliberation.[2]

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[1] While the scope of this thesis falls short of the promulgation of far-right ideology through the internet and social media, and stops well short of Richard Spencer's declaration of an "Alt-Right," this thesis provides the contextual background necessary for the emergence of such post-factional tendencies.

[2] "Acquittal in Greensboro," *New York Times*, Apr 18, 1984;
The Worker's Viewpoint Organization changed its name to the Communist Worker's Party on October 19, 1979, though the first planned event, a conference following the planned protest in Greensboro, never happened. Additionally, many of the notable events prior to the Greensboro Massacre were from before the organization's name change and Party Congress. For the sake of clarification and continuity, Worker's Viewpoint Organization will be used. See:
Paul C. Bermanzohn, M.D. and Sally A. Bermanzohn, *The True Story of the Greensboro Massacre* (New York: César Cauce Publishers and Distributors, 1980), 11-14.

The Greensboro Massacre would be a harbinger of the closing decades of the 20th century in the realm of American white supremacy movements. Before the Greensboro Massacre, few attempts were made to unite the KKK, which held itself as a patriotic group, with the American Nazi Movement (ANM), which variously sought a violent national revolution or the establishment of all-white breakaway states. The repercussions of the attack in Greensboro highlighted several distinct aspects of the conception of a united white nationalist front, many of which would not be felt until well after the movement began. For example, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the rigid ideological divisions would become more nebulous, especially with the growing ubiquity of message boards and social media. Additionally, a united white nationalist front required the unification of several different reactionary and revolutionary movements.[3]

To unite the KKK and the ANM, the right conditions needed to exist: the dissemination of the Christian Identity Movement (CIM) from the edge of mainstream right-wing Christianity to more accessible positions, the embrace of anti-communism by the KKK as the most significant threat to the Western world, and the loss of the segregation and Civil Rights fight by Klansmen in the southern United States. Once these groups began open dialogues and joint rallies throughout the 1980s, a new era of terrorism and violence started to grip the United States in the 1990s. This thesis explores both the histories that led to the unification of the KKK and ANM during the Greensboro Massacre, as well as religious trends that carried on throughout the decades following.

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[3] "Christofascism" as a term comes from the provocative liberation theology of Dorothy Sölle. Historically, groups such as the Silver Legion of America are considered "clero-fascist," though semantically, this requires the leading figures of a fascist-totalitarian movement also be ecumenical or clerical in some capacity. With the less rigid structure of American evangelical Protestantism, "Christofascism" makes more sense. For an overview, see Sölle, Dorothee. *The Window of Vulnerability: A Political Spirituality* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).

This thesis utilizes a biographical approach to the groups that helped form the modern white supremacy movement. While this approach contains three separate chronologies, combining them into a cohesive, chronological story would yield an incomprehensible narrative. Understanding the three separate narratives enables understanding of the convergence of these movements into one based on solidarity with overall goals. In observing how the leadership and prominent members of certain organizations connect to one another, the overall ideological direction, as well as the internal issues and public perception of each of these movements, forms a road map.

The ideological origins of these movements, while separate, converge around the time of the Greensboro Massacre. The period from 1979 to the 1990s is often labeled the "White Power Movement," though the specifics and direction of this movement, driven by the racist-skinhead punk scene and informal organization, falls outside the scope of this thesis.

The Importance of Semantics

The explosion of a diverse and seemingly contradictory ideology within a unified far-right resulted from pseudo-solidarity tendencies that developed within the far-right following the civil rights movement and the "New Left" push of the 1960s and 1970s. However, these pseudo-solidarity tendencies of the various right-wing hate groups and ethno-terrorist cells make more sense with a dramatic change in semantics. A more pertinent phrase to convey the habit of uniting under temporary or permanent "umbrella movements" while retaining the original organizations' semiotic understandings and communications might be "arrested factionalization."[4]

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[4] The reason for not classifying the URF and modern synthesis groups as "solidarity" movements is twofold: first, solidarity discourse is explicitly derived from leftist ideology, specifically Durkheim and Kropotkin. As such, it seems inappropriate to classify "marriages of convenience" within the far-right as solidarity movements. Second,

To better understand the requisite mental gymnastics for members of groups like the "United Racist Front," a reader need only look to the foundational history of the groups involved: in this case, the KKK and the American Nazi Party. These two movements' leaders and theorists stood at odds with one another, with these conflicts and confrontations sometimes erupting into verbal and physical assault, especially in the years following the Second World War. Two things would ultimately serve to change this, though—the publication of William L. Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* and underground reprints of *The Protocols of the Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion*.[5] The nature of these works would allow for an easily spread conspiracy capable of reaching and radicalizing individuals who would otherwise have no contact with white nationalism or ethno-terrorism.

With the rapid dissemination of these two works throughout the already radical far-right ranks, several prominent Klansmen and Nazis latched onto the idea of a "white genocide" plot. This conspiracy theory, already ancient, would influence Grand Dragon Virgil Lee Griffin of Mount Holly's KKK chapter and Harold Covington, variously of the Rhodesian Bush War and the Chapel Hill chapter of the National Socialist White People's Party (NSWPP), to meet at a remote farm in Louisburg, North Carolina. This meeting would end up forming the first publicly visible unified white supremacist movement.[6]

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most of these unification tendencies seem to be temporary and event-based, sometimes lasting only a single march: solidarity is meant to be long-term cooperation by distinct ideological groups over the course of a struggle.

[5] Richard Abanes, *American Militias* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 137-139.

[6] Elizabeth Weaton, *Codename GREENKIL: The 1979 Greensboro Killings* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1987).

A Note on Sources

This thesis was originally intended to rely on primary sources scattered throughout the United States, held in university collections, personal collections, and small museums. With the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020, I was unable to access many of these sources that I had planned on using throughout. As such, this thesis necessarily took on a new direction, utilizing digitized newspaper clippings as the typical primary source.

The Ku Klux Klan

Historiography

The Lost Cause mythos, which was the trend in Southern apologist scholarship deemphasizing or ignoring the role of slavery and Southern belligerence, developed in the years immediately following the Civil War. The Lost Cause found, as its earliest proponents, journalists such as Edward A. Pollard and retired Confederate officers like Jubal Early, who spread the notion that slavery was relatively unimportant to the *casus belli* of the Civil War. While this initially only spread through the ranks of the Southern Aristocracy, it was the publication of works like "The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government" by Jefferson Davis and memorializations such as Confederate Decoration Day—a precursor to Memorial Day—that brought a softening of the reasoning for the Civil War within the minds of not only average Southerners, but people in the North as well. With time and the generational removal of factual antebellum memory, the "War of Northern Aggression" became a question of nationalistic loyalty and duty.[7]

Early historiographical trends highlight the duty aspect of not only Southern Secession, but of the Ku Klux Klan and the later White Man's League and Red Shirt militias. In eulogizing Robert E. Lee following the general's death, Jubal Early characterized the Southern ethos as "unselfish patriotism and Christian purity" best exemplified by Robert E. Lee's character, while President Lincoln was "calling for troops to make an unconstitutional war on the seceded States." Likewise, Edward A. Pollard promoted similar sentiments in "The Lost Cause: A New Southern

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[7] Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1881).

History of the War of the Confederates," a sensationalist pseudohistory published the year after the Civil War's conclusion.[8]

Throughout the last decade of the 19th century, the newly founded American Historical Association (AHA) would lead the push in normalizing the Lost Cause as the historical norm within American academic history. Thus, by the early 1900s, the Lost Cause was the mainstream narrative about the Civil War. Following the early AHA model, historians such as Frederick Jackson Turner, president of the AHA in 1910, reframed the Civil War to be about "states' rights" or economics rather than Slavery. de-emphasized or omitted slavery's effects on American History. This would serve two systematic functions in history: it ensured that any competing narrative would be "revisionist" and it served to reinforce Jim Crow codes throughout the United States.[9]

Turner, writing primarily on the American frontier, framed it in relation to the legacy of slavery and the Civil War: "When American history comes to be rightly viewed, it will be seen that the slavery question is an incident. In the period from the first half of the present century to the close of the Civil War, slavery rose to primary, but far from exclusive importance... The legislation which most developed the powers of the national government and played the largest part in its activity, was conditioned on the frontier." The KKK did not often make an appearance in these historical works, but when they did it was in the guise of a fraternal order resisting Federal military occupation and quenching potential race riots. The indubitable irony of this

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[8] Jubal A. Early, *The Campaigns of Gen. Robert E. Lee, An Address* (Baltimore: John Murphy & Co., 1872); Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E.B. Treat & Co, 1866).
[9] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner* (New York: Henry Holy, 1994): 48.

sentiment is the massacres and racist insurrections by the Red Shirts and the White Man's League that characterized part of Reconstruction.

The Dunning School, named after William Archibald Dunning, sought to further solidify the narrative of Reconstruction from a Southern "Redeemer" Democrat viewpoint. To Dunning School scholars, Reconstruction was not only a military occupation of the South, it was fully punitive against the entire southern populace. Groups like the KKK and the Red Shirts found a home in Dunning School works as underdog resistance movements—partisans against the oppression of a foreign government. To these scholars, foremost among them Dunning, who was president of the AHA in 1913. Reconstruction became a push for the utter destruction of the South by southern Republican scalawags and carpetbaggers from the North. Slavery, an institution that just so happened to be ended by the Civil War, was a benign institution that was an integral part of Southern society and a civilizing mission that dared to stand against the Utopian Socialists of the 19th century. The Civil War, and by extension, the KKK and white supremacist paramilitary groups, were defending the Southern homeland as part of their nationalistic duty.[10]

One of the foremost Lost Cause historians that helped reform the KKK's image was Woodrow Wilson, President of Princeton from 1902-1910, President of the United States from 1913-1921, and AHA president in 1924, the year of his death. Due to Wilson's close personal connection with Thomas Dixon, author of *The Clansman*, much of Dixon's work embodies Wilsonian history. Many of the sentiments written about by Dixon in regards to the necessity of the KKK and white supremacist paramilitarism during Reconstruction came from Wilson and the

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[10] William Archibald Dunning, *Reconstruction, Political and Economic, 1865–1877* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1907); many of the works of his PhD students out of Columbia University also belong to the Dunning School. A comprehensive analysis of the Dunning School and its effect on American History can be found in *The Dunning School: Historians, Race, and the Meaning of Reconstruction*, edited by John David Smith and J. Vincent Lowery.

Dunning School. Wilson's histories were the most prominent example of historians utilizing the existence of the KKK, Red Shirts, and White Man's League as proof that the South needed to defend itself against servile insurrection and Northern interloping during reconstruction. Thus, the popular conception in the 1910s and 1920s of the KKK as heroic defenders of Southern sovereignty was born. Writing on the issue in *A History of the American People,* a seminal work of the time, Wilson paints a bleak picture of Republican policies and society:

> "In the villages and country-sides, the negroes themselves were the office-holders, men who could not so much as write their names and who knew none of the uses of authority except its insolence…It was there [in the villages] that the policy of the congressional leaders wrought its perfect work of fear, demoralization, disgust, and social revolution. No one who thought justly or tolerantly could think that this veritable overthrow of civilization in the South had been foreseen or desired by the men who had followed Mr. Stevens and Mr. Wade and Mr. Morton in their policy of rule or ruin. That handful of leaders were proof against both fact and reason in their determination to 'put the white South under the heel of the black South.'"[11]

In the decades following the emergence of the Dunning School and Wilson's history, the Lost Cause history and its necessitation of the KKK met with little resistance from dissenting academics. Some of the most vocal critics were black historians, most notably W. E. B. Du Bois. In his critical 1935 work, Black Reconstruction in America, Du Bois painstakingly charts the cohesion of Southern society following the end of the Civil War. The breakdown of society, Du Bois notes throughout, is down to paramilitary groups such as the Red Shirts and the White Man's League, also noting the relative inefficacy of the KKK during Reconstruction. Du Bois's rebuttal to Dunning School historians engages in a material analysis of society during reconstruction, much in line with Marxist historians, and provides a more objective and balanced analysis of Reconstruction society. The suppression of Reconstruction aims, Du Bois posited,

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[11] Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People, Vol. 5: Reunion and Nationalization* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1918): 49-50.

was down to the seizure of power by wealthy white Democrats from the hands of Republicans

and Fusionists. In this light, the white paramilitaries of the mid-to-late 19th century appear as

thugs working for the reestablishment of their own hegemony in the face of the fear of a

freedman takeover.[12]

By the 1960s, more critical approaches in line with Du Bois's painstaking work began to

appear by scholars such as William Peirce Randel, an English professor and director of

American Studies at Florida State University. His 1965 monograph, *The Ku Klux Klan: A

Century of Infamy* illustrated the savage nature of KKK behavior. Much of his monograph is

devoted to Reconstruction, and he interacts with much of the same source material as W. E. B.

Du Bois. However, as several contemporaries of the time note, Randel's work falls flat in several

major areas, among them, the relationship between the KKK, class, and region. Instead, "The

Dark and Bloody Ground of Reconstruction Historiography" by Bernard Weisberger seems to be

the quintessential historical work from the time dealing with Reconstruction. A historiography, it

nonetheless serves as a focal point for the history of Reconstruction in the 1950s and 1960s,

providing scholars from 1959 onwards a comprehensive examination of useful scholarship—

three monographs by C. Vann Woodward (two in 1951 and one in 1955), and "The Scalawag in

Mississippi Reconstruction" by T. Harry Williams, among many others. Weisberger's article,

while serving its role as a historiography, nevertheless provides succinct analyses of the works

preceding him, and serves as a valuable starting point for modern scholarship on the KKK.[13]

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[12] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1935).

[13] William Peirce Randel, *The Ku Klux Klan: A Century of Infamy* (Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1965); Bernard Weisberger, "The Dark and Bloody Ground of Reconstruction Historiography," *The Journal of Southern History* 25, 4 (Nov. 1959): 427-447.

The first iteration of the KKK is the one with the largest historiography, having existed during a flashpoint in American History. While much of the work prior to the 1960s, some important scholarly works tackled the most prominent obstacle to scholarship of the Second KKK: religion. In his 1956 article "A Note on the Relationship between the Protestant Churches and the Revived Ku Klux Klan," Robert Moats Miller approached the subject of widespread Protestant support for the KKK during the 1920s and 1930s, noting a distinct lack of public support from various denominational institutions. Miller's work, though slight and seemingly meant as little more than an addendum to the greater body of work, nevertheless allows for the historian to approach the Second Ku Klux Klan as less than a foregone conclusion. The examples he provides, such as the vitriol the various large, influential Protestant publications levelled against the contemporary KKK of the 1920s, serve to illustrate the rather broad distaste for KKK actions, even if they did meet with national support.[14]

By far the largest area of scholarship during the 1950s and 1960s was that of the rise and fall of the Second Klan. While historians since the founding in 1915 have marked on the causation being linked to the release of D. W. Griffith's Birth of a Nation, one of the earliest works that analyzed the KKK founder, William Joseph Simmons, was George Brown Tindall's *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945.* By juxtaposing Simmons' unscrupulous personality and nature with the economic progress of the New South's interwar years, Tindall leaves implicit questions about the place the KKK occupied during this time—namely the Second Klan acting as an agent for social cohesion among reactionary elements in white

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[14] Robert Moats Miller, "A Note on the Relationship between the Protestant Churches and the Revived Ku Klux Klan," *The Journal of Southern History* 22, 3 (1956): 355–68.

American society. Tindall's work thus is a cornerstone for later historians to engage with in regards to the society and change surrounding the second Klan.[15]

One of the most pivotal works of the 1960s was David M. Chalmers's *Hooded Americanism,* an analysis of interwar KKK activity and motivation. While the work is notably choppy, when taken with Tindall's more comprehensive social analysis of the time, Chalmers's work helps provide a window into the scholarship that would come just a few years later in the 1970s, with an explosion of local social histories and semiotic deconstructions that characterized the decade.[16]

While a wealth of dissertations during the mid-70s cover individual Klan chapters from 1866 until the 1970s, (William V. Moore's 1975 dissertation "A Symbolic Analysis of the Ku Klux Klan" and C. Blue Clark's 1976 "A History of the Ku Klux Klan in Oklahoma" among them), this trend is perhaps best characterized by Richard Melching's 1974 article "The Activities of the Ku Klux Klan in Anaheim, California, 1923-1925." Through contextualizing Klan activity with ultra-specific regional analyses, these social histories written throughout the 1970s and 1980s allowed for the reframing of further developments in the 1990s.[17]

By the 1990s, comprehensive attempts to analyze KKK activity came to the forefront. Hooded Americanism, then on its third edition, proved to be a mainstay of Klan scholarship. By the time of its third edition print in 1987, Chalmers had included a comprehensive analysis of Klan activity during the Civil Rights movement up to the Greensboro Massacre. This work, now indispensable, ushered in the modern age of scholarship along with Elizabeth Weaton's

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[15] George Brown Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967).

[16] David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1967).

[17] Richard Melching, "The Activities of the Ku Klux Klan in Anaheim, California, 1923-1925," *Southern California Quarterly* 56, 2 (1974), 175-196.

comprehensive analysis of the 1979 Greensboro Massacre and the deep social issues surrounding it, Michael and Judy Ann Newton's 1990 encyclopedia on the Ku Klux Klan, and H. Leon's Prather's 1998 body of work on white paramilitarism in 1898 Wilmington, North Carolina. Raphael S. Ezekiel's 1995 book on his time interviewing Klansmen and Neo-Nazis also bears mention. It is during this period to the present that exciting new possibilities emerge for comprehensive analyses on the behaviors of the KKK compared to other movements such as the American Nazi and Fascist Movements and the CIM emerge.[18]

<div align="center">Genesis</div>

The KKK was founded in 1866 by a group of former Confederate soldiers at Stone Mountain, Georgia. Initially little more than a social club, the founders of the KKK began committing acts of terrorism against groups such as the Freedman's Bureau and Republican politicians. Some members of this early incarnation of the KKK were prominent, wealthy Southerners like Nathan Bedford Forrest, his grandson Nathan Bedford Forrest II, and George Washington Gordon, who would serve in the United States House of Representatives for the state of Tennessee.[19]

This earliest incarnation of the KKK was infamous for its "night rides"—riding on horseback, dressed as the ghosts of dead Confederate soldiers to terrify black populations and reconstruction-era carpetbaggers. The terrorist campaign would involve the lynching of freedmen and the burning of homes and businesses. However, this early incarnation of the KKK

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[18] Elizabeth Weaton, *Codename GREENKIL* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1987); Michael Newton and Judy Ann Newton, *The Ku Klux Klan: An Encyclopedia,* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990); H. Leon Prather, *Democracy Betrayed: The Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 and Its Legacy* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 1998); Raphael S. Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind* (New York: Penguin Books USA).
[19] Stephen E. Atkins, *Encyclopedia of Right-Wing Extremism in Modern American History* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011).

appeared, in many cases, to be a fringe element of Reconstruction-era society—a gentleman's

club for wealthy ex-confederates. Few in positions of authority took the Klan seriously, even

with a list of murder victims in the thousands across the South. However, the KKK would soon

be an undeniable entity with a series of high-profile crimes in 1868. One such crime was the

murder of Reconstructionist judge George W. Ashburn in 1868. These crimes would mark the

KKK as an active terrorist group and would set the stage for other such groups to develop.[20]

<center>The Decline of the Early Klan</center>

Despite the public notoriety brought to the KKK by the Ashburn assassination and the

KKK sympathies of many prominent, wealthy Southern whites, these early bands faced armed

resistance from both Southern black communities and the occupying US Army. Armed anti-Klan

posses were so successful in deterring Klan violence that Klan activity was forced to turn

towards more clandestine terrorism than the outright strongman violence that would mark the

closing decades of the 19th century.[21]

Additionally, a national declaration of the KKK as a "terrorist group," combined with

anti-Klan legislation in southern states, led to a sharp decline in Klan activity. Nathan Bedford

Forrest would order this first shadowy league disbanded in the early 1870s and all Klan regalia to

be destroyed. For a moment, Republican Reconstructionists saw a victory against organized

racist gangs; however, the disbanding of the Klan only saw the rise of new, localized

independent groups spring up—groups like the Red Shirts and the White Man's League would

continue the legacy of racist violence for decades following the end of the "first empire." The

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[20] Daniell, Elizabeth Otto. "The Ashburn Murder Case In Georgia Reconstruction, 1868." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 59, No. 3, 290-315.
[21] Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Perennial Classics, 2014) 342-343, 454-459.

KKK may have demonstrated the possibility of armed resistance to Reconstruction, but the groups that would follow would demonstrate the capability.[22]

Splinter Paramilitary Groups

If the KKK was primarily a fraternal order that engaged in terror campaigns and violence on a personal level, groups such as The White Man's League of Louisiana were full-fledged paramilitary groups, culpable for massacres and attempted coups. They and the Red Shirts of Mississippi and the Carolinas would eschew the shadowy nature of the KKK, opting instead to operate brazenly, unmasked against their opposition. They had considerable financial support, and as a result, were able to stage more large-scale activities than the first KKK. The scalability of the Red Shirts demonstrates an implicit, though key, aim of armed reactionary extremist groups in the United States that would carry on through the future: to maintain the status quo of conservative white hegemony through a combination of political corruption and organized violence.[23]

These groups were primarily middle- and upper-class reconstruction-era whites who feared the empowerment of the black freedmen who made up a large, growing middle class across the Southeastern United States. These fears frequently bordered on intense paranoia, and in states like Louisiana and North Carolina, the paranoia would give way to mass hysteria. Contrasting the common modern perception of intercommunal tension, the black communities of these areas saw considerable support from poor white communities, who faced exploitation from many of the same sources. This mutual understanding would be a rare example of intersectional politics in American history. As a result of their financial support and desire for the

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[22] Ibid. 387-388, 523, 568-569.
[23] Helen G. Edmonds, *The Negro and Fusion Politics in North Carolina, 1894-1901* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1951).

disempowerment of reconstruction-era black communities, the White Man's League and the Red Shirts would stage two large-scale actions that would echo throughout American history for generations: a failed attempt at a coup in 1874 in New Orleans, and a successful insurrection and coup in Wilmington in 1898. Each of these events would have lasting implications on the regions and would have a lasting impact on the groups' legacy. Through the legacy of these events, the stage is set for what would turn out to be a trend in American history following the Civil War: organized reactionary violence against marginalized populations' empowerment.[24]

Even though the KKK itself had disappeared by the mid-1870s, those above white paramilitary groups ensured that the racial hegemony returned to *status quo antebellum*. This white supremacist "rage against the dying of the light" would lay dormant for several years following the suppression of Reconstruction's expansion of rights, which allowed scholars and journalists of the time to essentially ignore any further reinforcing of hegemonic power in the South. While slavery itself was illegal, the black populations of most regions in the South were relegated to low-income jobs such as sharecropping.[25]

The Second Klan

On August 9th, 1925, a hooded precession paraded down the street in Washington D.C. With uniform robes and conical hats, this would become a galvanizing moment in the history of the resurgence of the KKK—one that would leave its mark on the rest of the dawning American Century. British Pathé newsreel footage of the March on Washington shows a parade of people clad in robes alongside one another. Perhaps shockingly for older people who remembered the

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[24] H. Leon Prather, "The Red Shirt Movement in North Carolina 1898-1900," *The Journal of Negro History* 62, no. 2 (1977): 174–184; H. Leon Prather, *Democracy Betrayed: The Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 and Its Legacy* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 1998).
[25] Wesley Allen Riddle, "The Origins of Black Sharecropping," *The Mississippi Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (1996): 53–71.

first Klan as a Reconstruction-era terrorist group, the women in attendance bore banners and crosses, tasked with the same duties as the men in the audience. This considerable importance of women to the movement would be a hallmark of several major Klan groups of the 20th century, and it would be women who would be responsible for the meteoric rise and fall of this second "Invisible Empire."[26]

A product of the popular culture and zeitgeist of the time, this new Klan was born from unique circumstances. The first KKK, which shared little more than its name with the second, was ultimately a masculine racial hegemony. This one, meanwhile, was keener on holding public rallies and inserting itself into the issues of the time. The importance of women to the movement brought with it the cares and importance of women. This period would be the Klan's golden age—their "finest hour" as a unified body—but it would end in the ignominy deserving of its hateful rhetoric and hypocrisy.

By 1905, the Klan was long gone, but nevertheless lived on in popular memory—and it threatened to rear its head again in short order. With the publication of Thomas Dixon Jr.'s *The Clansman*, this memory of the Klan would undergo a public transformation—one which would be more palatable for middle-class, Northern, and Midwestern sensibilities. In 1915, director D.W. Griffith released a film adaptation of *The Clansman*, entitled *The Birth of a Nation*. This film received widespread acclaim, and Griffith's technical achievements in making the film would directly influence narrative filmmaking. *The Birth of a Nation* would have another direct influence, though—the rebirth of the KKK. Beneath their veneer of Anglo-Saxon family values, this iteration of the KKK would be even more frightening than the first. Their reach would

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[26] *Ku Klux Klan Members Hold Demonstration in Washington ca. 1925* (London: Pathé WPA Film Library, 2007).

extend to every corner of the country, and their massive rallies would help inspire the political

pageantry of fascism only a brief time later.[27]

William Joseph Simmons

Shortly before World War I ravaged Europe, a directionless, somewhat itinerant minister

for the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church would be removed from his post for "inefficiency"

in 1912 at age 32—his minor importance demanded no detailed description of the conditions for

his firing. This disgraced former minister occasionally reported having prophetic visions of

equestrians in white robes blazing through the night with burning crosses. William Joseph

Simmons, who had a proclivity for fraternal organizations, was in most respects an unremarkable

man; however, following years of directionless wandering, this man would go on to help shape

reactionary American society for the next hundred years.[28]

While convalescing after a car struck him, Simmons attended a screening of D.W.

Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*. Inspired by the patriotic imagery Griffith imbued the Klan

within the film, Simmons would convene a meeting at Stone Mountain, Georgia, along with

fifteen other men. The resulting organization would have a new agenda—not just anti-black, but

vehemently anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic, and anti-Semitic, with its membership heavily

invested in the Protestant-led Prohibition movement. Much of what would come to be standard

KKK regalia—the burning crosses and white hoods—would come from this re-birth of the KKK.

The development of Klan symbolism and ritual during this period would lead to the KKK being

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[27] Melvyn Stokes, *D.W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation : a History of "the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[28] "The Various Shady Lives of the Ku Klux Klan," *Time* April 9, 1965.

the most visually distinct group and leading to the group becoming shorthand for white

supremacist ideals.[29]

Whereas the first iteration of the Klan was based in the Southeast, the second would be

primarily Midwestern and would bring Midwestern anxieties along with it. Moreover, with

Midwestern Protestantism came the Midwestern middle-class. While the perceived threats to this

predominantly masculine hegemony would eventually coalesce into extreme paranoia and the

group's eventual downfall, many of the second Klan's characteristics would come to define other

reactionary groups throughout the twentieth century.

While the first Klan and the following paramilitary groups were a violent response to

Reconstruction and the attempted social revolution that accompanied it, the second Klan was a

response to issues from within industrial centers across the United States: a substantial portion of

Klansmen were rural Protestants who relocated to Midwestern cities between 1910 and 1930.

The anxieties presented to these newly urbanized white populations included exposure to

Catholic and Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, Communists, and gangs. These new

anxieties manifested themselves in the new face of the KKK—patriotic, Protestant, and

prohibitionist—a far cry from the mad, drunken, anti-Federal violence of the first KKK.

William Joseph Simmons, a consummate narcissist, was nonetheless a brilliant

propagandist and marketing organizer. While Confederate symbolism was not absent, it was not

center stage in public displays. Instead, the American flag flew in the parades alongside white-

robed Klansmen and women, emblazoned with the red-and-white "blood drop cross." Though

birthed in the second wave, this symbolism would define the Klan order of dress for the rest of

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[29] Michael Newton and Judy Ann Newton, *The Ku Klux Klan: An Encyclopedia,* "Simmons, William Joseph" (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 520-521.

the 20th century. Additionally, religion became absolute within the KKK, with Protestant

ministers comprising an estimated two-thirds of speakers at Klan rallies.[30]

An interesting analysis comes from Steven Levitt, author of <u>Freakonomics</u>, and former

Harvard economics professor Roland Fryer, wherein the pair argue that the second KKK was

modeled on what amounted to a pyramid scheme. Levitt and Fryer argue that this iteration of the

Klan existed to grift money from the insecurity and paranoia of the displaced Southern populace

and the Midwestern Protestants who saw an encroaching threat from Catholic and Jewish

immigrants. This organization and fundraising system is notable for being similar to the

"televangelist" model that would come about decades later.[31]

By embracing Christian imagery and practice, this iteration of the Klan created the ritual

and methodology that would continue in later waves of Klan activity. The white robes and

conical hood, seemingly modeled on the Catholic *capirote*, were perhaps intended as a mockery

of Catholic penitents in Europe; however, the most likely explanation is the cost of production—

the cinematic Klansmen in *Birth of a Nation* wore helmets resembling the German *pickelhaube.*

The *pickelhaube*, an ornate helmet with a spike on top, would be more expensive than the conical

hood. Whether William Simmons was exposed to the *capirote* through his service in the

Spanish-American War or through a mass-produced attempt to copy the cinematic equivalent, no

definitive explanation has been found. Regardless, the robe and hood, which Simmons initially

sold for $10 a set--$260 in 2021—would come to define the image of the KKK alongside another

symbolic innovation of Simmons's: the burning cross.[32]

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[30] Brian R. Farmer, *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2005), 207-209.

[31] Roland G. Fryer and Steven D. Levitt, "Hatred and Profits: Under the Hood of the Ku Klux Klan," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* no. 127, vol. 4 :1883-1925.

[32] Newton and Newton, *Ku Klux Klan*, "Simmons, William Joseph," 520-521.

The fiery cross of the KKK, in a historical context, was a threat against Catholics. During the 19th and 20th centuries, many, if not most American Protestants viewed veneration of crucifixion symbolism as idolatrous, if not outright satanic. By erecting a Latin cross, heavily associated at the time with Catholicism, Simmons and subsequent Klan leaders envisioned the burning of a holy symbol as intimidation. Apart from the strict historicity of the burning cross, however, is the popular contemporary perception of it: Thomas W. Dixon in The Clansman, invented the use of the burning cross by the first Klan as a parallel to the *Crann Tara* used in Scotland and by Scottish Loyalists during the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. The *Crann Tara* was either an erected cross used to call men to the defense of a region, or a smaller cross carried from town to town for the same reason. This historical interpretation demonstrates something still very much part of KKK and other white supremacist Christian-nationalist movements—an invented claim to a feature of the group's generally common heritage.[33]

Heavily centered around Protestantism, the KKK became a public bastion of Christian virtue. Prohibition, backed by Protestant ministers and Christian women's groups nationwide, became a unifying force for Klan chapters. In addition to terrorizing black Americans, Catholics, and Jews, the Klan would focus on attacking and sometimes murdering bootleggers and moonshiners. Membership swelled throughout Protestant regions, with some ministers and even entire congregations declaring membership.[34]

This iteration of the Klan was undoubtedly Simmons's project from the outset. His leadership would be short-lived, however. Following an increase of Klan-involved violence and

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[33] While in present day, the fiery Scottish cross is referred to as a *Crann Tara* to distinguish it in the United States from the flaming cross of the Ku Klux Klan, prior to the second wave of the KKK, *Crann Tara* does not appear in print as often as "fiery cross." Some of this can be attributed to the modern Gaelic movements alongside North American attempts to distinguish legitimate Scottish culture from the Scottish-inspired KKK symbol; "The Fiery Cross," *Episcopal Recorder* 24, no. 46 (1847): 184; "The Fiery Cross," *The Riverside Magazine for Young People: an Illustrated Monthly*, 12 (1869): 561.
[34] Miller, "Protestant Churches and the Revived Ku Klux Klan," 355–56.

terrorism throughout the country, in 1921, Congress summoned him to testify about his organization, which had grown to a membership of several million Protestants. While he virulently denied any wrongdoing and extolled his strictly fraternal organization's virtues, the testimony marked his fall from grace within the organization.[35]

In 1922, Stephenson would lose his actual power to a quadrumvirate of Klan leaders—Hiram Wesley Evans, D.C. Stephenson, Elizabeth Tyler, Edward Young Clarke. Simmons would be granted the title "Emperor for Life," though this would be a more ceremonial role than anything. All the actual power in the Klan had by then gone to Evans and Stephenson, with Tyler and Clarke standing to profit off the endeavor, though Tyler would die in 1924 and Clarke would be imprisoned under the Mann act because of a violent sexual assault.[36]

Hiram Wesley Evans - A Successor to Simmons

The son of a judge, Hiram Wesley Evans would become a dentist in 1900 at 19. A member of the Disciples of Christ as well as the York Rite and Scottish Rite Freemasons, he would come to be the Imperial Wizard of the KKK following Simmons's disgrace. A proponent of eugenics and the scientific racism movement like many ordinary Americans of the time, his views would ordinarily be viewed as proto-fascist, though many of the younger men who were Klansmen throughout the 1930s would later go on to enthusiastically fight in World War II. Later in life, he faced accusations of antisemitism, though he would virulently deny that he held any antisemitic views throughout his life, even with his shift in focus towards anti-immigration and anti-communism, which often overlapped with antisemitic rhetoric. The tumultuous era of

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[35] "Statement of Mr. William Joseph Simmons," *The Ku-Klux Klan: Hearings Before The Committee on Rules: House of Representatives,* (Sixty-Seventh Congress: First Session, 1921) 66-73.

[36] "Klan Makes Simmons Emperor For Life; Dr. H.W. Evans of Dallas Is the New Imperial Wizard—Clarke Imperial Giant" *New York Times*, November 29, 1922.

Evans's leadership would signal a marked decline in membership, owing to a mass loss of funding and public goodwill.[37]

Hiram Evans was the leader of the coup against Simmons, and under his reign, the Klan would at first prosper; however, after a media-heavy scandal centered around D.C. Stephenson in 1925, membership would rapidly decline in a matter of months. Evans' Klan would enter the 1930s a shell of its former self, some of which can be attributed to his inconsistent leadership and the disillusionment within mainstream Protestantism with the Klan following a series of high-profile scandals.[38]

Evans would maintain his dental profession until his rise to prominence in the KKK in 1921. He was the primary recruiter—the "exalted cyclops" of the Dallas KKK chapter before rising through the ranks due to a campaign of violence, torture, and murder against black Texans. While as a leader, Evans would condemn vigilantism, he was rather candid about this being a result of the federal scrutiny public violence would bring upon his organization. Gradually, his constituency turned against him, and he retired in 1939. Despite his contemporary prominence, his legacy in the KKK would be overshadowed by the corruption and crimes of another prominent Klansman—the one who helped him gain power.[39]

<div align="center">D.C. Stephenson - The Klan's Ruin</div>

In 1922, D.C. Stephenson, a coat salesman who had relocated from Texas to Indiana, launched an ultimately unsuccessful Congressional campaign for the Democratic Party. Eventually, Stephenson would be appointed Grand Dragon of the state of Indiana, making him the highest-ranking Klansman in Indiana. In this position of power, Stephenson would let his lust

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[37] Randel, *The Ku Klux Klan*, 119-137.
[38] Newton and Newton, *Ku Klux Klan*, "Evans, Dr. Hiram Wesley," 189.
[39] Randel, *The Ku Klux Klan*, 137.

for power and misogyny loose—and would set the stage for the near-collapse of the KKK.

Though Stephenson was able to encourage Klan membership to swell to over 250,000 in Indiana,

he harbored a deep-seated disdain for the women around him, seeing them as little more than

objects to fulfill his sexual fantasies. Stephenson's sexual appetite would eventually culminate in

one of the most lurid and damaging trials of the 1920s.[40]

In 1924, Stephenson, a publicly avowed prohibitionist dedicated to protecting the virtue

of white womanhood, met with Madge Oberholtzer, a state worker, literacy advocate, and

Stephenson's former aide. He and four associates kidnapped her, forced her to drink copious

amounts of liquor, and locked her in Stephenson's private train car. Stephenson would then

violently rape her repeatedly, biting chunks out of her flesh in the process. She would purchase

an entire box of mercuric chloride—a standard syphilis treatment at the time and a relatively

common method of suicide. Unbeknownst to her, she was in the initial stages of a staph infection

from the bite wounds.[41]

Her condition would deteriorate for the next month, despite the best efforts of doctors. On

March 28, she relayed the whole story in a notarized statement, which would prove damning for

both Stephenson and the institution of the KKK. On April 14, 30 days after the start of her ordeal

with Stephenson, she would die from a combination of an acute staph infection and terminal

kidney failure from the mercuric chloride tablets.[42]

Stephenson was arrested for kidnapping, rape, and second-degree murder. At the ensuing

trial, Stephenson's defense was that Oberholtzer committed suicide. With no ground to stand on,

the jury found him guilty on all counts. He was paroled in 1956 and permanently banned from

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[40] William Peirce Randel, *The Ku Klux Klan: A Century of Infamy* (Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1965).
[41] Ibid.
[42] Newton and Newton, *Ku Klux Klan*, "Stephenson, D.C."

Indiana; however, he was arrested again in 1961 in Tennessee for sexual assault. He died in 1966, disgraced and responsible for the decline of the most prominent Klan chapters of the second wave.[43]

WWII

From Hiram Evans's retirement in 1939, the final few years of the second KKK would see leadership by an Indiana native named James A. Colescott. A veterinarian by trade, he succeeded Evans as Imperial Wizard in 1939 at age 42. It was here that the Klan would face its crisis of identity relating to Nazism. In New York and New Jersey, KKK chapters had begun to affiliate with the German American Bund, a prominent American pro-Nazi group. The Grand Dragon of the KKK in New Jersey was Arthur Hornbui Bell, the GAB vice-president.[44]

In the face of the growing threat of Nazism, many Klansmen quit in disgust at what they saw as a betrayal of the patriotic values that the KKK stood for. Colescott subsequently removed him as Grand Dragon in 1940, following an investigation by the House Committee on Un-American Activities into his plans to merge the KKK and the ANM, and the Bell affair marks the first real rift and conflict of ideology between these groups. This rift would stand until the end of the 1970s with the unification of the North Carolina KKK and ANP into the United Racist Front, which perpetrated the Greensboro Massacre.[45]

Colescott faced a dilemma following his own 1942 investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee over his deep-seated anti-Catholic rhetoric. He publicly rebuked terrorism and violence at this hearing and was made to make public the KKK's earnings: a mere $10,000 in 1941. The IRS would seek over $600,000 from the Klan over their accumulated

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[43] Ibid.

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unpaid taxes from the 1920s to the 1940s. It was at this point, on April 23, 1944, that the final second-wave Klan meeting was held. Colescott stepped down the same day in Atlanta, a mere 20 miles from where the second Klan was born at Stone Mountain, almost 30 years prior.[46]

Changing Times

With the benefit of hindsight, the KKK and the American Nazi Party's (ANP) fateful meeting might seem less revolutionary than it did in the 1970s. Several prominent North Carolina Klansmen, among them the locally infamous Carlos Joe Grady, Jr., would vehemently oppose any Klan-Nazi union. The backlash from groups willing to discard their initial hesitancy and distaste for Nazi symbolism and Hitlerian fascism culminated in a public "roasting" of Grady during a national news conference. The winds of hate were changing with the new generation.

The hesitancy of Ku Klux Klansmen primarily came from the age of the older members of the organization: many of them vociferously supported the war against Adolf Hitler and fought in World War II. However, by the 1970s, the younger members of this "third wave" of the KKK did not share the same experiences, being much more familiar with the existential threat of communism through the Korean and Vietnam Wars than the first-hand knowledge of Nazi atrocities. This difference in generational experience, coupled with the Cold War's escalation, enabled the shift in Klan attitudes from anti-Nazi "patriotic Americanist" racism to a willingness to work with fascist groups.[47]

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[46] Chester L. Quarles, *The Ku Klux Klan and Related American Racialist and Antisemitic Organizations: A History and Analysis* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1999).

[47] David Cunningham, *Klansville, U. S. A: The Rise and Fall of the Civil Rights-Era Ku Klux Klan* (Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, 2012) 138.

Gorrell Pierce, then-leader of the Federated Knights of the KKK, summed up his hesitancy and willingness to ultimately capitulate with a callback to his personal history. The Associated Press quotes him as saying, "you take a man who fought in the Second World War, it's hard for him to sit down in a room with swastikas. But people realize time is running out. We're going to have to get together. We're more effective when we're organized." Nonetheless, in testimony before Greensboro's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2005, Pierce claimed, "I told everybody that, `Next time somebody might get killed, that this is serious business. This is not Boy Scouts.'" Pierce perfectly embodied the two extremes of Klan responses to the unification of the KKK and the American Nazi Party (ANP).[48]

The Klan-Nazi union's reactionary revisionism would soon be very visible, with Klan rallies becoming an erratic display of Klan white hoods, confederate flags, and crosses alongside neo-Nazi jackboots, swastikas, and runes. Membership in one of these groups did not necessitate membership in another, though over time, the characteristics of Klandom and Nazism blended; however, even with the blending of the two most visible white nationalist groups in America, it would take the adoption of characteristics from a third group before the reactionary extreme-right would solidify as a marketable identity. This third group shares much of the ideological background as the KKK and ANP, though its founders and leaders cloaked its semantics and semiotics in the shroud of constitutionalism, federal skepticism, and religious conspiracy: the CIM (CIM).

During the 1950s, the KKK saw a resurgence for the first time since the decline of the 1930s. While the developments in the 1950s-1960s were seen as a "third wave," their differences

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[48] Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 61; Rusty Jacobs, "Klan Leader Testifies Before N.C. Commission," *NPR* (July 17, 2005).

are slight enough from the second wave of the early 20th century to consider this more of a "post-second wave" than a unique third wave. The broad KKK focus on communism had not come into play yet, and many of the people involved in this "post-second wave" were virulently anti-fascist due to their experiences in World War II.

<div align="center">A New Paradigm: WWII to the 1970s</div>

The split between the KKK and the ANM would live on, particularly in the minds of its Southern members, who were most of what remained of the second wave. Instead of being unified by central state leadership, however, KKK chapters were independent, autonomous groups responsible for their individual fundraising and regalia. Importantly, this opened an avenue for the federal government to exploit the growing disconnect between different KKK chapters, which would be exploited throughout the 1970s.

From the end of WWII, some returning Southern GIs would join KKK chapters, especially in Alabama and Mississippi. The late 1940s would see a steady consolidation of membership, with an explosion of terrorist violence reacting to the growing Civil Rights Movement. A 1946 mass lynching in Georgia has been long suspected as an orchestration by the growing Georgia KKK, who restructured following the end of WWII. Following attempts to have the grand jury investigation released between 2016 and 2020, the federal government and an Athens, Georgia appeals court ruled to seal the records permanently.[49]

Klan members would be responsible for some of the worst atrocities of this time, including the 1951 NAACP activist bombing in Mims, Florida, and the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in 1963. Such attacks would kickstart a trend of bombings and assassinations

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[49] Neil Vigdor, "Records in 1946 Lynching Case Must Remain Sealed, Court Rules," New York Times, March 30, 2020.

that would continue through the 1970s, whereby conveniently "former" Klansmen would wage a campaign of domestic terrorism against known black activists.[50]

While this increased violence did not endear them to the broader public, nonetheless, the KKK saw a steady increase in membership in rural portions of the South as a pushback against the increasingly popular Civil Rights Movement. One of the most egregious examples of terrorism waged in the American South is the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing of 1963, in which four African-American girls were killed and 22 others were injured by a large explosive package planted under the steps by four Klan members. The first conviction for this crime would not come until 1977. One suspect died before his case went to trial, and two others would be convicted in the early 2000s. The horrendous nature of the terrorist attack would presage those that would come in later decades, though the Klan's decentralized campaign of violence in the 1950s and 1960s was not without resistance.[51]

Growing Resistance – North Carolina in the 1950s and 1960s

Apart from the intentionally peaceful mainstream Civil Rights Movement, a growing percentage of the population saw the need to meet the Klan's violence with forcible resistance. In 1958, in response to a cross burning on the front lawn of the home of two Lumbee Native Americans, 500 Lumbee and anti-Klan North Carolinians surrounded a 100-member Klan rally at Hayes Pond in Maxton, where they exchanged gunfire, wounding four Klansmen. The only arrest that would come of this act was of the Klan leader, James "Catfish" Cole.[52]

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[50] Lottie L. Joiner, "50 Years Later: The 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing," *The Daily Beast* (New York: The Newsweek/Daily Beast Company LLC, 2013).

[51] J. Michael Martinez, *Terrorist Attacks on American Soil: From the Civil War Era to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012).

[52] "'Catfish' Cast In Clink; 300 Klansmen Burn Cross," *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, NC, Jul 17, 1967).

Cole's arrest was not the first time in his career that he met with severe resistance to his plans. In 1957, he began a terror campaign against Albert Perry, a black doctor in Monroe, North Carolina, intending to drive out the NAACP. The doctor was long suspected of being the primary financier of the Monroe NAACP. However, the NAACP chapter formed a militia called the Black Armed Guard, which the National Rifle Association chartered. As a Klan procession moved towards Perry's home, firing weapons, the Black Armed Guard fired on the Klansmen, who were forced into a retreat. In response, Monroe criminalized KKK processions and motorcades.[53]

After attempting to incite Klan violence, Cole would be arrested several other times throughout his life. He attempted a hostile takeover of a Klan chapter, and was expelled from the Greensboro Klan in June of 1967. A fatal car wreck in the same month as his expulsion relegated his efforts to mere footnotes instead of ensuring his involvement in later Klan confrontations in the 1970s. North Carolina had always been a contentious state for the Klan, with peaks and ebbs in membership that reflected its populace's polarized nature. However, it was not until the 1960s when North Carolina would see its peak membership.[54]

George Dorsett – A North Carolinian Catastrophe

The Greensboro sit-in of 1960 was one of the earliest Civil Rights demonstrations that saw support from a white populace. Woolworth's, a national company, was one of several businesses that maintained a "local custom" policy on segregated seating in their lunch areas. Four students from NC A&T were the first to challenge this policy. On February 1, 1960, the

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[53] Timothy B. Tyson, "Robert F. Williams, 'Black Power,' and the Roots of the African American Freedom Struggle," *The Journal of American History* 85, no. 2 (1998): 540–570.

[54] Lawrence Falk, "Ku Klux Klan Membership Falling Off" *The Terre Haute Tribune* (Terre Haute, IN, Jun 18 1967); "Onetime Leader of Carolina Klan Dies in Car Crash" *The North Adams Transcript* (North Adams, MA: Jul 28 1967); Cunningham, *Klansville, USA*, 100-102.

four students, Jibreel Khazan, David Richmond, Franklin McCain, and Joseph McNeil, would

daily go into Woolworth's, sit at the lunch counter, and ask to be served. Upon refusal of service,

they would remain and keep the portion of the lunch counter occupied. [55] The demonstration

continued until June 1960 and would attract thousands of participants in other cities and states

throughout the South. One of the primary antagonists of this demonstration was North Carolina

Klansman, George Dorsett.[56]

Dorsett, a Klan chaplain, was a charismatic and sleazy figure, even to other Klansmen,

throughout most of his history with the Klan. He was a leading figure of the United Klans of

America (UKA), which was based in Birmingham, Alabama, and he would be instrumental in

growing various UKA chapters throughout North Carolina. It was in Dorsett's prime that he

recommended the membership of James "Catfish" Cole. However, his prominence and ambition

came at a cost to the internal security of the KKK. Dorsett had been on the FBI's payroll since

January 1959 and would continue to be so until 1970 as part of COINTELPRO.[57]

This revelation, combined with Dorsett's patronage for James Cole, set the stage for the

perception of North Carolina's KKK chapters throughout the 1970s—corrupt, unscrupulous, and

utilizing a cover of white supremacy to further monetary ambitions. The KKK was unable to

regulate itself, and it came at a cost to the Klan's public image. The revelation that one of North

Carolina's most prominent Klansmen and virulent racists were, in fact, on the take came as a

blow to the broader KKK structure.

Throughout the 1970s, Klan chapters grew distrustful of one another and distrustful of

members within its own ranks. This distrust led to further separation between the Klan chapters,

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[55] At the time, Jibreel Khazan's legal name was Ezell Blair, Jr.
[56] Weaton, *Codename GREENKIL.*
[57] Peter Monaghan, "The Klansman and the G-Man," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 54, no. 30 (Apr 04, 2008).

which a tenuous alliance in 1979 would seek to rectify. This attempt at unity, combined with the growing belief that communism was a more significant threat to the Christian faith and western white hegemony than integration, would lead to strange bedfellows and even stranger syncretic movements.

The 1970s Through the 1990s – Coalition Building

Virgil Lee Griffin

On September 22, 1979, a cadre of KKK members and American Nazis met at a farm in Louisburg, North Carolina. The aim was to strengthen the position of stringently racist, anti-communist groups throughout the Carolinas in the face of a direct challenge by the Worker's Viewpoint Organization. Among the members present were Grand Dragon Virgil Lee Griffin of Mount Holly's Invisible Empire of the KKK and Harold Armstead Covington, one of the only members of the NSWPP in the area.[58]

Born in 1944 in rural Western North Carolina, Griffin experienced hard labor and economic hardship as a child, often helping his family by picking cotton. Through his upbringing in rural poverty, he was the embodiment of the ANM perception of Klansmen. While much about his early life is not public record, he is recorded as having joined the KKK in 1962. His experiences would have been informed from the age of 18 by the Klan's "middling years" of the 1960s and 1970s, where the KKK experienced a rebirth of identity and began to focus more on anti-communist rhetoric and renewal of opposition to miscegenation over a focus on integration. This rebirth signaled a drastic shift away from the older members of the KKK, who were more

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[58] Newton and Newton, *Ku Klux Klan*, "Griffin, Virgil," 241; Douglas Martin, "Virgil Lee Griffin, Klan Leader, Dies at 64," *The New York Times*, February 17, 2009.

concerned with older conceptions of racial integration than communism. The change is not to say

that the KKK had abandoned any of its racist ideologies by the time of the Greensboro

Massacre—merely that the reorientation of Klan priorities began to focus more on

communism.[59]

Virgil Griffin was of a different age than many other Klan leaders. Born in 1944, he did

not experience World War II in the same way as many of his Klan peers. He understood the Cold

War and the threat of an inevitable Communist "march to the sea"—the fear that the Soviet

Union would decimate the South much in the same way as William Tecumseh Sherman. Much

of the rhetoric in southern Klan circles echoed legends of the American Civil War, though this

frightening enemy was external, a terrifying alien ideology. When the Worker's Viewpoint

Organization staged a large, community-involved protest outside of a China Grove KKK chapter,

Griffin saw his chance to organize a response to the perceived growing communist threat.[60]

Griffin's idea culminated in an alliance with the nascent North Carolina NSWPP and

their leader, Harold Armstead Covington. His move would turn out to be too bold for many of

his fellow Klansmen, and the pushback to his proposed URF would engender severe tension with

rivals such as Carlos Joe Grady Jr. vehemently opposing the Nazi-Klan alliance. Apart from the

threat of communism and the generation gap, this cooperation of the KKK and ANP signaled a

growing rift between radical, revolutionary-minded groups and the reactionary, conservative

groups that marked earlier iterations of the KKK.[61]

From the Greensboro Massacre on, men like Griffin and Louisiana's David Duke would

serve as the face for this new, restructured Klan—strong and charismatic, but unapologetically

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[59] Obituary of Virgil Lee Griffin, *Gaston Gazette*, February 12, 2009; Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 420.
[60] Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 419-420.
[61] Ibid. 100-137.

hateful. In the decades following the Greensboro Massacre, Griffin would downplay the KKK's connection to Covington's ANP, though the trajectory was set through this series of events. The isolated KKK would see membership dwindle in favor of more unifying movements, and Griffin shares some responsibility for this shift.

<div align="center">Carlos Joe Grady, Jr.</div>

On October 24, 1974, Jet Magazine reported a strange exchange between the Winston-Salem Black Panther Party (BPP) and "Klansman Carlos Joe Grady." The Winston-Salem BPP provided a free ambulance service for members of the black community—when Grady showed up, BPP leader Larry D. Little said, "I thought we were in for a fight." Grady was then quoted as thanking Little for freeing up county resources and declaring, "I hope to say the Klan is made up of big enough men to appreciate people that are trying to do the right things."[62]

This exchange is characteristic of Carlos Joe Grady, Jr.'s personality and shows us a hallmark of some of the older Klansmen of the time. On February 17, 1979, *The Harvard Crimson* published an article by Joanne L. Kenen where she describes Grady and his Klan chapter in Winston-Salem. Writing the article as a "Yankee Jewish girl," she covers the frustrations and anger of the approximately 100 people at the rally. Foremost among the "chivalrous… repellant but trivial farmers and workers in a juvenile boys' club" was the Joe Grady, the "red-faced masonry contractor… Walking clumsily, his big belly swaying over his belt with every step, he'd nod his head at the lady journalists, slap the backs of the men, lean on the edge of the file cabinet, and begin to expound." By 1979, he had stopped using his legal first name and gave little indication that his father was also named Carlos.[63]

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[62] "Ku Klux Klan Praises Black Panther Ambulance Service," *Jet*, October 24, 1974, 5.
[63] Joanne L. Kenen, "Stalking the Klan," *The Harvard Crimson*, February 17, 1979.

Interestingly, this name disparity was not the first time that Joe Grady had thrown off the trail on his name— in 1945, his application for a social security number listed his and his father's name as "Carlous Joe Grady." In 1948, his son, Carlos Joe Grady III, "Jody," was born. Jody would die in 1975 at 27. Little else is publicly available about this period in Grady's life, though we have some indications thanks to his status in society and proclivity for idle talk with journalists.[64]

Grady was an institution in Winston-Salem, appearing in the *Winston-Salem Chronicle* no less than twenty separate times over ten years. Born in 1929, he was a decade and a half older than Virgil Griffin and able to recall the horrors of war from the newsreels and stories from the European front of World War II. Griffin was old enough for Vietnam—Grady was old enough for Korea.[65]

When the (WVO) issued their challenge to North Carolina hate groups, Joe Grady scoffed. When he was told of Griffin's meeting with Covington, Grady replied with, "you can't be a Nazi and a Klansmen [sic] — it would go against your oath to uphold the government." Shortly after the Louisburg meeting, Grady founded the White Knights of Liberty—an antifascist Klan chapter. In response, Griffin's newly minted URF staged a public "roast" of him in front of news cameras at one of his public events.[66]

<center>Conflicting Interpretations of the Klan</center>

Throughout the various 20th century iterations of the KKK, the organization understood key details that would be incorporated into later white nationalist movements, though they were unable to overcome some issues that would be addressed by various successful subsequent

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[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Monte Plott, "Today's Topic: The Knights of North Carolina," *The Associated Press*, November 8, 1979.

organizations. As highlighted by David Cunningham in *Klansville, USA,* the KKK had more success in heavily integrated counties and regions—in North Carolina, this would be in the eastern part of the state. By leveraging racial tensions in integrated, impoverished areas, the KKK was able to manipulate this tension into outright animosity and violence. In less integrated areas, even impoverished ones, the racial tension was not in place for the KKK to exploit.[67]

By leveraging these tensions during the Civil Rights era up until the Reagan administration, the KKK saw some of its greatest success. These tactics would be further developed and refined in the following decades by various other organizations who would utilize many of the KKK's recruitment tactics. In an increasingly connected, online world, these tensions would become even more exploitable.[68]

One of the organizational shortcomings of the Klan—one that would hasten its downfall almost as much as the bad publicity and internal distrust—was that the more moderate Klansmen found their aims furthered by national organizations like the John Birch Society and the Republican Party following Nixon's "southern strategy." These moderate Klansmen would hang up their hoods for a more political approach in the years following the Greensboro Massacre. The most hardline members were leaving in droves for even more militant unity organizations (such as neo-Nazi groups) or forming their own breakaway Klan chapters. This exodus left a small contingent of mostly legacy Klansmen by the dawn of the new millennium. Much of the new membership in previously hotbed areas would be the sons of Klansmen seeking to continue a legacy of hate sandwiched between the doublespeak of mainstream politics and the rabid pageantry of an increasingly hostile racial warfare movement.[69]

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[67] Cunningham, *Klansville, USA,* 184-188.
[68] Ibid., 180-195
[69] Ibid.

Joe Grady's standing within the white supremacist community is indicative of the ideological shift within the more militant Klansmen away from the preservation of the status quo towards allying with revolutionary groups. Rather than attempting to restore their society to a desirable point, these radical new Klan groups would adopt conspiratorial, fringe Christian beliefs and work together with American neo-Nazi movements to break the foundations of the society around them. Thus, these Klansmen would make the leap from reactionary to revolutionary, and they would bring their robes and hoods with them.

Understanding how the Klan groups moved away from their reactionary positions and adopted the more rigidly militaristic ideals of the American Nazi movements would be incomplete at best without a thorough exploration of the fractured history of American fascism. The splintering and near-dissolution of the KKK as a result of COINTELPRO infiltration allowed for the rise of other racist movements during the 1970s and enabled the development of ideological foundations outside of the KKK banner; however, the foundational members for these latter groups were rooted in an understanding of Nazi principles of propaganda and subterfuge that the Klan was first exposed to during the controversial leadership of New Jersey Grand Dragon Arthur H. Bell in 1939 and 1940. His early link with the German American Bund allowed for some semblance of precedence of merging the groups, though this would not be realized until the CIM's spread in the 1970s.

Nazism and American Interpretive Fascism

Historiography

For the purposes of this historiography, The Silver Legion of America, founded in 1933, is the earliest completely homegrown fascist movement. However, the long-term narrative of Pelley's "Silver Shirts" is more complex, and this movement thus finds itself in the subsequent chapter on Christian Identity, owing to its relationship to later fringe Christian militia movements.

The historiography of the American Nazi Movement is much simpler than that of the Ku Klux Klan, with a distinct lack of a strong academic apologist wave, unlike Lost Cause scholarship's relation to the KKK. The bulk of the earliest analytical material on Nazism in America comes in 1939 with Abraham Chapman's *Nazi Penetration in America* and John L. Spivak's *Secret Armies: The New Techniques of Nazi Warfare.* Chapman's publication covers Nazi social techniques and how they attempted to infiltrate American society via propaganda and provides guidance for resisting the spread of fascist doctrine. Spivak's monograph, meanwhile, deals with the infiltration of American government by agents of Nazi agents and exposes the subterfuge of American fascists on university campuses. Spivak's work, equally an early history of Nazism, along with Chapman's social analysis of Nazism in America, provide valuable starting points for later scholars.[70]

In the war years and the rest of the 1940s, academia focused on the theory and development of Nazism in Germany. Franz L. Neumann's *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism* stands tall as one of the most important of these contemporary

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[70] Abraham Chapman, *Nazi Penetration in America* (New York: American League for Peace and Democracy, 1939); John L. Spivak, *Secret Armies: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare* (New York: Modern Age Books, 1939).

works along with Leo Alexander's series on the relationship between Nazism, medicine, and psychiatry. Neumann's monograph, one of the earlier seminal works on the development of Nazism, is one that later scholars would engage with regularly—everyone from S. P. Huntington in his 1957 "Conservatism as an Ideology" to T. W. Adorno in the *Critical Models* duology published in 1963 and 1967. The importance of Adorno's *Critical Models* (later republished in one volume) is difficult to overstate, as well as the relationship of these works to those of the *nouvelle histoire* of the 1970s. While Adorno signaled the peak of Frankfurt school Marxist analysis with his dialectical empiricism, much of academia would become embroiled in the functionalism-intentionalism debate about the Holocaust. There would not be an influential, significant work relating to Nazism in America until after the Greensboro Massacre (barring the plethora of works throughout the 1970s and 1980s dealing with the exposure of Nazi war criminals hiding in the United States).[71]

One of the first publications immediately following the Greensboro Massacre in 1979 was *The True Story of the Greensboro Massacre,* allegedly by Paul and Sally Bermanzohn, who were at the event. The book would come under fire for some of its more lurid, unsupported assertions about the involvement of federal agents with Nazi activities, though the Bermanzohns would claim decades later that they had little to do with the authorship of the small monograph— the bulk of it instead being written by other members of the Communist Workers Party who were in New York during the incident.[72]

While the Anti-Defamation League published at least one pamphlet about George Lincoln Rockwell during his life, the majority of the information about him comes from

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[71] Franz L. Neumann, *Behemoth; the Structure and Practice of National Socialism* (London: V. Gollancz Ltd., 1942); Theodor W. Adorno, *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).
[72] Bermanzohn and Bermanzohn, *The True Story of the Greensboro Massacre*.

newspaper clippings, with the bulk of scholarship about the American Nazi Movement emerging in the 1990s. Susan Canedy's 1990 work on the German American Bund (*America's Nazis*) and Philippa Strum's *When the Nazis Came to Skokie: Freedom for Speech We Hate* are pivotal and at times controversial explorations of the relationship of American Nazi and Neo-Nazi movements in the 1930s and 1970s, respectively.[73]

Foremost among 1990s scholarship on Nazism comes Umberto Eco's "Ur-Fascism" in 1995 and Robert O. Paxton's "The Five Stages of Fascism" in 1998. These two works are pivotal in analyzing the development and social acceptance of fascism, as well as techniques and categorizations that allow scholars to argue over what is and is not actual fascism. This would usher in the 2000s, which would include more in-depth analyses and comparisons of American Nazism with the original German flavor. Additionally, William Schmaltz's biography on George Lincoln Rockwell is the de facto standard for scholarship on the early American Nazi Party.[74]

Foremost among 2000s scholarship are Elinor Langer's *A Hundred Little Hitlers* and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke's wholesale expose on the relationship between identity politics, new age esotericism, and the Nazi genesis of those two things are both prime examples of 2000s scholarship. Warren Grover's *Nazis in Newark* also bears mention for highlighting antifascist resistance in New Jersey during the 1930s.[75]

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[73] Susan Canedy, *America's Nazis: a Democratic Dilemma: a History of the German American Bund* (Menlo Park: Markgraf Publications Group, 1990); Philippa Strum, *When the Nazis Came to Skokie: Freedom for Speech We Hate* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999); William H. Schmaltz, *Hate: George Lincoln Rockwell and the American Nazi Party* (Washington, D.C: Brassey's, 1999).

[74] Umberto Eco, "Ur-Fascism," *The New York Review of Books*, June 22, 1995, 1-9; Robert O. Paxton, "The Five Stages of Fascism," *The Journal of Modern History* 70, no. 1 (1998): 1–23.

[75] Elinor Langer, *A Hundred Little Hitlers: The Death of a Black Man, the Trial of a White Racist, and the Rise of the Neo-Nazi Movement in America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003); Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Warren Grover, *Nazis in Newark* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2003).

More recently, the relationship between modern American Nazism and other fringe white supremacist groups have become an area of interest for scholars. Exploratory works such as James Q. Whitman's 2017 monograph *Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* continue to open exciting new avenues for scholarship and analysis. Going forward, perhaps the tumultuous late 2010s and early 2020s will see further groundbreaking research into the relationship between Nazism and other hate groups.[76]

<div align="center">Background</div>

Nazism is a loose set of ideas rooted in fascism and is the variant of fascism most familiar to many in the United States from its connection to World War II and Adolf Hitler; however, the origins of Nazism lead to a surprising, murkily defined ideology. This is compounded by the fact that in exploring the ideological origins of American Nazism, many scholarly works have ignored the contribution that general ideological fascism and other sympathetic but unique European ideologies contributed to the development of the American neo-Nazi movement. An additional complication for analyzing Nazism in America is the long history of institutional racism and general ambivalence towards racial justice: according to a 2017 ABC News/Washington Post poll, 10% of Americans find neo-Nazi ideology to be acceptable, a further 10% support the alt-right, and 16% find blackface to be an acceptable practice. While blackface as a practice is much older and is technically rooted outside of ideological fascism, the results combined with the margin of error in the polls demonstrates that implicit support of racist views or practices does not necessarily imply support of fascism,

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[76] James Q. Whitman, *Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

Nazism, or any movement that co-opts the symbolism of either movement—sometimes a racist is just a racist.[77]

The things that make Nazism specifically worth mentioning are the ties to pageantry and occultism. While the convergence of fascist ideology and American-brand racism would go through a merge with the CIM (CIM), the specifics of Nazism that would survive would be the occult-centric, pseudohistorical conspiracy theories.

The ideological innovation of fascism in the 20th century was one of the most important political European developments of the modern era. Rather than the hoods, robes, and crosses—rooted in vague, half-remembered medieval Scottish and English Christianity—the European fascist movements sought a form of neopaganism, complete with symbols derived from pre-Christian cultures endemic to their respective regions. Instead of evoking the Inquisition and religious wars of Europe as a pretense for racial oppression as the KKK did, fascists would variously invoke symbols of past, often prehistoric greatness. In the case of Italian fascism, this would be in a reimagining of the glory of the Roman Empire at its height, with the fascist state and the Catholic church variously at odds or in cooperation with one another. In the case of Nazi Germany, this would be a New Age interpretation of pre-Christian Germanic paganism—a chimera of Indian subcontinent misrepresentation and invented prehistorical Germanic empires, with Futhark runes serving as Wehrmacht unit insignias and occult groups communing with spirits and extraterrestrials to uncover lost secrets.[78]

Fascism as a political ideology developed during the economic downturn in Europe following the First World War. Several early fascist leaders contended delineation from

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[77] Gary Langer, "Trump Approval is Low but Steady; On Charlottesville, Lower Still," *Langer Research Associates* (August 21, 2017).

[78] Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity* (New York: NYU Press, 2002), 107-150.

dissimilar sources, but the core tenets of fascism mostly remained consistent from party to party: all were variously anti-communist while also opposing liberal economics and traditional conservatism. Umberto Eco and Robert Paxton are responsible for the most comprehensive definitions of fascism. To Eco, fascism is a cult of tradition, a rejection of modernist thinking and culture, an embrace of action for action's sake, a rejection of dissent, a rejection of diversity, an appeal to a frustrated middle class, obsession with an imagined conspiracy or plot, rhetoric focused on the simultaneous weakness and overbearing strength of their enemies, an understanding that "life is permanent warfare," contempt for the weak, a cult of heroism, an embrace of the superiority of machismo, "selective populism," and an ideological embrace of "newspeak" or "dog-whistling." While several of these categorizations are not necessarily applicable to all variations of fascism, most of the directives apply to all major variations. Important among all these categorizations is the conception that fascism is envisioned as a "third way" versus the capitalist-socialist duality. Eco thus helpfully prefaces the categorizations with a helpful explanation of the transient nature of fascist movements and parties.[79]

Contrasting with Umberto Eco's observational categorizations of fascism, Robert O. Paxton takes an approach grounded in historicity—noting that a lineage to fascist thinking exists through right-wing conservatism and enlightenment-inspired left-wing thought. Noting the unexpected rise of fascism, Paxton muses on the role of democracy—something socialists took for granted as securing their rise to power. In highlighting the difficulty facing scholars of fascism, Paxton reminds his reader that "it took two generations before the Left understood that fascism is, after all, an authentic mass popular enthusiasm and not merely a clever manipulation of populist emotions by the reactionary Right or by capitalism in crisis." [80]

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[79] Umberto Eco, "Ur-Fascism," *The New York Review of Books*, June 22, 1995, 1-9.
[80] Robert O. Paxton, "Five Stages of Fascism," *The Journal of Modern History,* Vol. 70, No. 1 (March 1998), 1-3.

In what is perhaps Paxton's most important analysis for the purposes of this thesis, he

notes that fascists "subordinate thought and reason not to faith, as did the traditional Right, but to

the promptings of the blood and the historic destiny of the group." It is this understanding—that

fascism is not beholden to religion in the same way as groups such as the KKK—that enables an

understanding of the distinctions between fascism and reactionary conservative groups.[81]

Following Paxton's summary explanation of what distinguishes fascism as a uniquely

twentieth century ideology, he outlines a crystal-clear set of core tenets that define fascist

movements:

> 1. The primacy of the group, toward which one has duties superior to
> every right, whether universal or individual.
> 2. The belief that one's group is a victim, a sentiment which justifies any
> action against the group's enemies, internal as well as external.
> 3. Dread of the group's decadence (decline) under the corrosive effect of
> individualistic and cosmopolitan liberalism.
> 4. Closer integration of the community within a brotherhood (fascio)
> whose unity and purity are forged by common conviction, if possible, or
> by exclusionary violence if necessary.
> 5. An enhanced sense of identity and belonging, in which the grandeur of
> the group reinforces individual self-esteem.
> 6. Authority of natural leaders (always male) throughout society,
> culminating in a national chieftain who alone is capable of incarnating the
> group's destiny.
> 7. The beauty of violence and of will, when they are devoted to the group's
> success in a Darwinian struggle.[82]

Thus, through Paxton, fascism becomes a hypermasculine neo-tribalism, propelled by

feelings rather than thought. Throughout Five Stages of Fascism and Anatomy of Fascism,

Paxton elucidates the fascist's impulse for rejecting academic logic and faith for instinct and

groupthink. This is not to say that fascists are atheists, comparatively many are devout, but the

religious trappings always serve the group narrative. This is why the ANM's adoption of

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[81] Ibid., 4-5.
[82] Ibid., 6.

Christian Identity makes so much sense in hindsight—rather than moving from the New Age trappings of classical Nazism to a corrupt Christian fringe, the ANM found a religion that would serve its needs. The destiny of the group is thus preserved while the faith is incorporated for the sake of unity.

The traditionalism espoused by fascism in general, and Nazism specifically, rejects the conservative ideals of traditionalism while substituting their own, rooted in a cultic mythologization of a distant national genesis or even "ancient" neo-paganism. As a result, many of the variations or tendencies within fascism and Nazism trend towards a rejection of Abrahamic religion as inferior or even conspiratorial—especially given the implicit antisemitism of "New World Order" conspiracy theories and associations of this conspiracy theory and Catholicism. Fascist conceptions of traditionalism, then, are unrelated to previous, reactionary conceptions of traditionalism—and many of the categorizations that seem related to those present in other ideologies are similarly distinct and revolutionary. A rejection of Abrahamic religion is thus, not only an embrace of an invented ancient traditionalism, but a rejection of everything derived from Western Asian and North African history or culture—the Bible, the Qur'an, the Torah, and the Talmud.

A final clarification on the nature and complex categorization of fascism is the realization that fascism truly is a "third way" in the sense that it borrows concepts and tendencies from various prior movements—Strasserism borrows from a socialist and communist focus on the value of labor and exploitation, while Falangists such as Francisco Franco embraced Carlist ideas and monarchism. As such, classifying fascism as exclusively far-right makes little sense and detracts from any honest analysis of fascism and the rise of Nazism and neo-Nazism within the

United States. These complex tendencies and issues with classification lead to a muddling of analysis within academia and political discourse in the public sphere.

Whereas the KKK is, in many ways, the pinnacle of reactionary conservatism, fascism is a revolutionary movement marked by dynamism, an emphasis on mythical masculinity, and a syncretic form of paranoid spiritism. Rather than the often-nebulous traditional patriotism and racism, the fascist pride and belief in superiority is more structured, based almost entirely on the nationalist mythos and scientific racism. Herbert Spencer, Thomas Malthus, and Francis Galton are inspirational figures, seen as forward-thinking in recognizing the scarcity of resources and the "scientific" reason for the difference in the standard of living for the global north and the global south—it is race and ethnicity that allows for the ease of the success of European descendants, rather than capitalism and opportunity. And those unsuccessful races are not only excluded from the nationalist mythos and intentionally "kept in their place"—the fascist sees the need to eradicate their polluting influence from the world altogether.[83]

This genocidal eugenic belief encompasses much of fascist ideology, though the subject of the fascist's ire varies depending on country and region. For the United States, the American Nazi Movement (ANM) took the virulent antisemitism of German Nazism and married it to anti-black and anti-indigenous beliefs and practices. This development would come with the adoption and integration of Nazi conceptions and tactics into the burgeoning American Nazi Movement.

<div align="center">Dynamism</div>

The dynamism that characterizes fascist and Nazi movements center around two philosophical concepts: that of the *Übermensch*, the "super man," and that of *Gleichschaltung*, or coordination. Each of these philosophies, while not necessarily unique to Nazism, are

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[83] Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun.*

nonetheless inherent in the neofascist movements that arose in the United States in the decades following World War II. At the same time, the American movement would eschew many of the linguistic Germanisms of Nazi ideology and strategy. The dynamistic duality nonetheless is foundational to the movement going back to George Rockwell.[84]

The *Übermensch* aspect of Nazism springs from a misrepresentation of the Nietzschean ideal of "post-moral" humanism. Through interpreting this existential humanist ideal through a biological, deterministic lens, Adolf Hitler and various other Nazi theorists turned this into biologically and spiritually superior *Übermenschen*. To preserve the biological supremacy of Aryanism, Nazi theorists pushed a cult of physical culture that lives on in modern neo-Nazi movements. Through this physical culture, adherents of neo-Nazi ideology and Nazi-adjacent groups will train their bodies to a degree not typical of other white supremacist groups.

The other aspect of dynamism comes from the Nazi conception of *Gleichschaltung*, which is definitively the more important aspect for cooperation with other groups and is what the broader white supremacist movement owes to Nazism. In Nazi Germany, *Gleichschaltung* referred to a coordination takeover of all systems of government. Through a combination of simultaneous legislation, propaganda, and physical violence, the Nazi party was able to sweep into total power in Germany. In copying *Gleichschaltung* as an organizational tactic, the white supremacist movement has long advocated for similar infiltration and coordination. After the influence of the CIM, this goal came closer to fruition.

Mythical Masculinity

The *Übermensch* of Nazism gives way to a form of masculine behavior and idealization that, while also present in other totalitarian and white supremacist movements, are honed and

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[84] Neumann, *Behemoth*.

mythologized to a greater degree. While organizations such as the KKK have elements of reclaiming masculinity from an emasculatory, modern state, Nazism tends to focus on a mythological interpretation of masculinity—perhaps best described as the holiness of masculinity. Additionally, this mythology serves as a point of entry for Nazism: the modern man has not just been emasculated; he has been rendered subhuman by not embracing his masculinity.

<div align="center">Paranoid Spiritism</div>

Nazism became famous in the latter half of the 20th century for the esoteric and occult movements that went alongside mainstream Nazi interpretations. While this occultism was well outside of established interpretations of archaeological and anthropological findings of the time, in the decades since, the beliefs of Esoteric Nazis such as Savitri Devi sought to connect Nazism and Aryanism to Hinduism and the Indian caste system, while other prominent Esoteric Nazis such as Robert Charroux would influence later Nazi occultists and the broader New Age movement through ancient astronaut interpretations of Bronze Age human migration.[85]

One such esotericist was Miguel Serrano, who created a complex, global framework that the "Hyperborean" civilizations of Charroux were not only extraterrestrial but were linked to Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Vril, the Power of the Coming Race*. Serrano links his ideas to the Cathars of the medieval period, whereby Jehovah is cast into the role of the evil demiurge that opposes the "true God," thus painting Jews and Christians as children and servants, respectively, of a Satanic figure. This paranoia, exemplified by authors like Serrano, would come to define not only the spiritual views of neo-Nazis but would influence the greater New Age and occult

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[85] Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*.

practices. The myth of a Hyperborean Atlantis, while not unique to Nazism, nevertheless obtained a new life through the Thule society.[86]

Fascism is, at its most base, an ethno-nationalist physical and spiritual response to a perceived decline in the national conception of masculinity by conservative and reactionary figures. This makes fascism a further development of centrist and reactionary right-wing ideology marked by repressive underground groups like the KKK. The fascist sees an international conspiracy from a shadowy, frequently Jewish cabal that seeks the emasculation of not just the nation but the individual man. Emphasizing this, in essence, serves to differentiate fascist groups from the more typical American reactionary militias and racist cults.

Fascism is also different from groups like the Klan because fascist groups require a large surge of populist support to justify their own existence. Groups like the White Man's League and the Red Shirts could exist as an underground elite—perhaps united by vanguardist ideals, but cells ultimately independent of one another. Without visible, public support, fascists exist as only a street gang—able to be challenged by everything from law enforcement to counter-protesters and roving groups of antifascist punk rockers. The fascist relies on spectacle to incite fear and submission, whereas American white nationalist gangs depend on the fear of secret, sudden violence.

Fascism, in this way, is a mad cry against the social evolution of masculinity. Whereas more traditional reactionary movements seek the *preservation* of current or recent hierarchies and systems of organization, fascism is, in its own way, a utopian revolutionary movement. At its most base form, Nazism represents a right-wing utopianism—a homogenous, spiritual-scientific world, made so through a great struggle with the oppositional forces of a quantifiable

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[86] Dan Edelstein, "Hyperborean Atlantis: Jean-Sylvain Bailly, Madame Blavatsky, and the Nazi Myth," *Studies in Eighteenth-century Culture* 35, no. 1 (2006): 267–291.

evil. While often this idealism is overlooked in favor of the abhorrent specifics of Nazi ideology, the framework utopianism is a significant feature of not only classical Nazism but the neo-Nazi developments of the later 20th century. Together with this Utopianism is another concept that is often overlooked—Nazism is revolutionary.

Once the conservative conception of masculinity comes under fire by social reform and liberation-focused, anti-capitalist revolutionary movements, fascism seeks to (re)construct a type of immutable, mythical masculinity that can overcome the degeneracy of modernist conceptions and interpretations of masculinity.

<div align="center">Italian Fascism and Mussolini</div>

Any discussion on the distinction between "all-American" reactionary racism and European revolutionary fascism should begin with the development of a codified fascist system in Italy, Benito Mussolini, and Mussolini's militant-populist rise to power. This is because of a trend that marks successful fascist movements and one that—with one notable exception—American fascist movements lacked. While Mussolini is generally perceived as the "creator" of fascism, the conception arose as a syncretism of various national *fascio* during the 1910s and 1920s. The incorporation of Mussolini's *Fasci Italiani di Combattimento* into the National Fascist Party (PNF) brought the interventionist socialism, syndicalist tendencies, and proto-fascist ideals of Mussolini to the center stage and created *Il Duce*, the progenitor of all other fascist despots.[87]

Fascist Italy initially drew considerable support from Italian Americans, especially with Paolo Theon di Revel's foundation of the Fascist League of North America (FLNA) in 1924. While Mussolini hoped that the popularity of fascism within the United States would lead to

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[87] Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Strongmen: Mussolini to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company).

more harmonious relations between his Italy and the United States, within the first year of the

founding of the FLNA, American Fasci had engaged in fatal confrontations with antifascist

Italian American groups in New York and Boston. Relations continued to sour, and suspicion in

Congress eventually led to Mussolini ordering the dissolution of the FLNA in 1929 to save

diplomatic relations with the United States.[88]

Benito Mussolini's fascism contains several elements that are different from other, more

well-known forms of fascism, particularly Nazism. A famous narcissist, Mussolini was critical of

Adolf Hitler, even after solidifying his alliance with Nazi Germany. In hindsight, it would make

sense for Mussolini and Hitler to not be fast friends: they disagreed on Aryan supremacy, with

Mussolini believing in the cultural and ethnic superiority of Italians; additionally, fascist Italy

passed no racial laws prior to 1938, and those laws were deeply unpopular with many Italian

citizens. However, the continued subordination of fascist Italy to Nazi Germany pressured the

fascist rulers to bow to the pressure of Hitler's agenda.[89]

<div align="center">German Fascism: Strasserism, and Nazism</div>

The development of fascism in Germany has the most complex narrative among the

major European factions. An example of this comes from the development of the term "National

Socialist" itself. Following World War I, several German monarchist groups and far-right

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[88] "Six Men Stabbed in a Fascist Riot," *New York Times*, August 17, 1925; "A Fascist Answers Mr. Wells," *New York Times*, March 6, 1927;
"Fascist Dinner Guarded," *New York Times*, May 2, 1927;
"Fascist Oath Made Public," *New York Times*, September 27, 1927;
"Heflin Asks Data on Fascist League," *New York Times*, October 27, 1929;
Luca de Caprariis, "'Fascism for Export'? The Rise and Eclipse of the Fasci Italiani all'Estero," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 35, no 2, 151-183; Marcus Duffield, "Mussolini's American Empire: The Fascist Invasion of the United States," *Harpers Magazine*, Vol 159, November 1929.
[89] Richard Collier, *Duce! A Biography of Benito Mussolini* (New York: Viking Press, 1971);
Meir Michaelis, *Mussolini and the Jews: German-Italian Relations and the Jewish Question in Italy, 1922-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).

nationalist groups formed the *Freikorps*—a spiritual precursor to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP)-affiliated paramilitaries, though not necessarily an ideological one. Early in his political career, Adolf Hitler's rhetoric was entrenched in anti-communist, anti-capitalist, and antisemitic discourse. His continued attacks on the socialist tendencies within the NSDAP consistently alienated some of the more Marxist-inspired fascists within the NSDAP, such as Gregor and Otto Strasser, who would go on to form the Black Front, an opposition fascist group.[90]

Adolf Hitler learned earlier on that the less radical of the Marxist-inclined and liberal capitalist-minded would make excellent converts to the NSDAP but would never support the NSDAP if his rhetoric failed to include the plight of the worker. In an interview with *Frankfurter Volksblatt*, he is quoted as saying, "National Socialism takes for itself the pure idea from each of these two camps [Marxism and the bourgeois right-wing]. From the camp of bourgeois tradition, it takes national resolve, and from the materialism of the Marxist dogma, living, creative socialism." Hitler thus presented Nazism as a synthesis in of itself—drawing from the "best" aspects of all prior political ideologies. It was this tendency towards syncretism that informed Nazi movements in Europe and the Americas during the latter half of the twentieth century.[91]

<div align="center">Spanish Falangists and the Salazar Question</div>

French radicals adopted fascist language and symbolism early in the development of fascism as an ideology. Fascism in France can trace its roots to an ideological shift in nationalist tendencies following the emergence of a Catholic antisemitic league who supported Boulanger and opposed the acquittal of Alfred Dreyfus during the Dreyfus Affair. Though these 19th and

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[90] "1935: Steps Towards Destruction," *The Holocaust Chronicle*, 2009.

[91] Paul Silas Peterson, *The Early Karl Barth: Historical Contexts and Intellectual Formation 1905-1935* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 38.

20th century groups were not fascist in name, several prominent French fascists came from this collection of *Boulangists* and would form three important French fascist groups: the Mussolini-inspired *Le Faisceaum*, *le Croix de Feu* (which would become the modern *Parti Social Français*), and the *Parti Populaire Français*, which was the largest and most significant collaborationist group outside of the government of Vichy France and the *Révolution Nationale*.[92]

Maréchal Henri Phillippe Pétain, France's hero of Verdun in World War I, was chosen to lead the collaborationist Vichy state, and the *Révolution Nationale*, the ideological machine that only stopped short of mobilizing and constructing concentration camps. Even though Pétain initially drew an immense amount of support from the French public, by December 1940, Pétain's only remaining large support base came from the collaborationists: those French fascist groups that encouraged France to completely adopt the policies of Nazi Germany. These fascist groups would also support Franco's nationalists during the Spanish Civil War. [93]

Spain's Francisco Franco could well be the world's third most-famous fascist dictator for several reasons: his junta against a democratically elected government that quickly devolved into an international conflict, the atrocities committed by his nationalist faction against republicans, socialists, communists, anarchists, and Basques, and his contentious rule following his 1939 victory until his death in 1975. He is often associated with Nazism and Italian Fascism, though questions remain whether Franco was himself a fascist or merely an authoritarian dictator—several of his policies go directly against core elements of fascism, such as his embrace of

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[92] For information and primary sources on the Dreyfus Affair, see:
Émile Zola, Alain Pagès, and Eleanor Levieux, *The Dreyfus Affair : "J'accuse" and Other Writings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).
[93] Thomas R. Christofferson and Michael S. Christofferson, *France during World War II: From Defeat to Liberation* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 32–41.

capitalism and the Falangist's blatant rejection of racial theory in favor of the spread of Spanish-style Catholic culture. Regardless, Falangist policy was not distinct enough to warrant its exclusion from this analysis.[94]

Whether Franco and the Falangists were fascist or not, their close association with Nazism and Italian fascism led to several Falangist ideas being incorporated into fascism or national socialism in other countries; however, another country strongly associated with Francoist Spain is Salazarian Portugal. Despite the Falangist and monarchist Carlist desire to annex Spain's neighbor to the West, Salazar supported Franco during the Civil War and allowed the use of Portugal's ports for nationalist troops; however, if Franco was a lukewarm-fascist authoritarian, Salazar was arguably even less of a fascist. Instead of encouraging the dissemination of power to the diehard supporters of the regime while stripping power from undesirables, Salazar was corporatist and desired power to be consolidated in the hands of the Catholic church, the military, and the nobility.[95]

From studying fascism in Spain, and Portugal, an interesting problem arises: what caused the distinction and solidarity between ordinary authoritarian movements and fascist movements? Fascism and conservative authoritarianism both vehemently opposed communism and socialism to varying degrees, especially taking certain tendencies within Nazism into consideration. Fascism and conservative authoritarianism both emphasize religion or spiritualism, though again, to different extents and with potentially quite different ends. Fascism and authoritarianism both emphasize populist concessions along a spectrum of extremes and depending on the tendencies

[94] Derrin Pinto, "Indoctrinating the Youth of Post-War Spain: a Discourse Analysis of a Fascist Civics Textbook," *Discourse & Society* 15, no. 5 (2004): 649–667; Jonathan Dunnage, "Policing Right-Wing Dictatorships: Some Preliminary Comparisons of Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and Franco's Spain," *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés* 10, no. 1 (2006): 93–122.

[95] António Rafael Amaro, "The Late Construction of Portugal Welfare State: The Failure of the Social Corporatist State (1933-1974)," *Memoria y Civilización* 21 (2018): 437–454.

of conservatism within the country and culture, emphasize racial theory to differing degrees and conclusions.

The main, major distinguishing characteristic is the revolutionary versus reactionary dichotomy: conservative authoritarians such as Salazar and, to varying degrees, Franco lacked the revolutionary drive of fascist strongmen like Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. Even with the Spanish Civil War, Franco's crackdowns and consolidations of power led to a militant, authoritarian Spanish state, though without the mystical and revolutionary trappings of his fascist peers. Salazar, likewise, was a Catholic restorationist. He more-or-less sought a corporatist theocracy in the vein of older European traditions, not a revolutionary embrace of pseudohistory. These distinctions echo the struggle in the United States for a unified white supremacist movement—the more revolutionary-minded ANM understood that the KKK would need to lose its old face to recruit more followers.[96]

A Distinctly American Flavor – George Rockwell's American Nazi Party

The American Nazi Party was formed in 1959 as the "World Union of Free Enterprise National Socialists" by George Lincoln Rockwell, a World War II veteran. He would, perhaps wisely, change the name a year later. Following a failed push for recruitment, he would again change the name of the group in 1967 to the NSWPP to distance the group from the swastika-laden image of the Nazi movement. Some of the more hardline Nazi members disapproved of this shift away from Nazi iconography, and Rockwell's successor, Matthias Koehl, began a "purge" of membership, whether by coercive resignation or base removal of members.[97]

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[96] Ibid.
[97] Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*, 15-20.

After Rockwell

In 1967, a disgruntled and alienated American Nazi named John Patler assassinated Rockwell as he was getting into his car. His death shocked many in the American white supremacist community, with future high-profile KKK leader David Duke, then a high school student, proclaiming that "the greatest American who ever lived has been shot down and killed."[98] Following Rockwell's assassination, the NSWPP would wrest control of Rockwell's body and assets from his parents. Several members attempted to break into Culpeper National Cemetery following a confrontation with Army military police, who "then went into action, barred the way and arrested three of the Nazis."[99] He was later cremated, and his final resting place is unknown to the public at large: the local legend is that Rockwell's "ashes were last seen with his 33-year-old successor, Matthias Koehl."[100]

Matthias Koehl, the child of Hungarian-German immigrants, would later take control of the NSWPP and move its headquarters from Arlington, Virginia, to New Berlin, Wisconsin. Koehl, by then a prominent Nazi mystic, changed the name of the NSWPP to "New Order" a year later. At the same time, New Order began to distance itself from negative proselytizing and would, ultimately, intentionally lower its public profile—preferring to operate in secret rather than conducting marches and rallies. According to local sources in New Berlin, Rockwell's ashes are on prominent display within the walls of the headquarters on the 88-acre plot of farmland.[101]

Upon Matthias Koehl's death in 2014, the organization passed into the hands of Martin Kerr, who sought to revitalize New Order into a more militant group once again. Kerr's efforts

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[98] Elinor Langer, *A Hundred Little Hitlers: The Death of a Black Man, the Trial of a White Racist, and the Rise of the Neo-Nazi Movement in America* (New York: Picador, 2003), 131.

[99] "Army Cancels Approval for Burial of Rockwell at National Cemetery; 3 Nazis Arrested," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, August 30, 1967.

[100] "Death of an Arlington Nazi," *Northern Virginia Magazine*, December 30, 2010.

[101] "Old Berlin," Milwaukee Magazine, December 1, 2008.

culminated in his group's participation in the 2017 Charlottesville rally. While another racist group, Vanguard America, had closer ties to the car attacker James Fields, Jr., New Order was included in the court case brought against the rally participants. Following Charlottesville, Kerr continued to focus on growing the group beyond the disrepair that Koehl left behind.[102]

Harold Armstead Covington

During the 1980s, a movement within neo-Nazi and white nationalist circles led to a mass influx of ethnonationalists and fascists leaving the East Coast of the United States and moving to the Pacific Northwest. This mass migration was part of the Northwest Territorial Imperative (NTI), a sort of "Manifest Destiny" of ethnostate advocates. One of the early adopters and advocates of the NTI was Harold Armstead Covington—a failed North Carolina neo-Nazi who had previously attempted to turn the Carolinas into a white ethnostate. The importance and controversy, even among his fellow neo-Nazis, as well as his resurgence in the digital age, makes Harold Covington a prime example of mid-to-late 20th century American Nazism and ethnostate fascism.[103]

Born in Burlington, North Carolina in 1953, Harold Covington joined the United States Army in 1971. During his first year of service, he joined the NSWPP. After floundering in active service until his discharge in 1973, he relocated to Rhodesia, then amid the Rhodesian Bush War, where he claimed he served in the Rhodesian Army against the Zimbabwe Liberationists. Later records would show his claimed service to extend to "sitting behind a desk," though his time in Rhodesia gave him credibility within the neo-Nazi and white ethno-statists for a time. While in

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[102] Bruce Murphy, "City a Leader in White Nationalism," *Urban Milwaukee*, November 1, 2018.
[103] Sonia Scherr and Laurie Wood, "Ben Covington Offers Insight Into His Brother Harold's Neo-Nazi Activity," *Intelligence Report*, November 30, 2008.

Rhodesia, Covington founded the Rhodesian White People's Party, though he was expelled from the country for sending threatening letters to Jewish congregations.[104]

Following his return to the United States, Harold Covington moved back to North Carolina and settled near his parents at Chapel Hill. Upon re-founding the NSWPP and serving as president for a term, Covington sought an audience with Virgil Lee Griffin: the two would meet on a farm outside of Louisburg, NC and form the United Racist Front (URF). After the events of Greensboro, Covington would move to the United Kingdom for a time before relocating to the Pacific Northwest and founding the Northwest Front—a pro-militant ethnostate website that would serve as inspiration for Dylann Roof, who would become known as the Charleston church shooter.[105]

Harold Covington's reputation would be in shambles after his military service in Rhodesia came into question. At the time of his death, he had become a laughingstock and a prime example of a "futon fascist" who would theorize but not act. Even so, Covington's legacy would live on through acts of terrorism committed by individuals who were inspired by his writings, his website, and his theory.

Further on from Nazism

Harold Covington, though widely mocked and reviled even by his American Nazi contemporaries towards the end of his life, would provide a prototype of the kind of leadership that would unite the ANM and the KKK. Though he was at the forefront of the time, his inefficacy and lack of charisma would lead to few results of his own past 1979.

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[104] Ryan Lenz, "Harold Covington, founder of white separatist group, dies at 64," *Hatewatch*, July 25, 2018; Northwest Front, "The Butler Plan Introduction," http://northwestfront.org/about/the-butler-plan/ (accessed May 2, 2020).
[105] Sam Thielman, "White Supremacist Calls Charleston 'A Preview of Coming Attractions'," *The Guardian*, June 28, 2015.

The ANM inherited key strengths and weaknesses from the European fascist movements that preceded it. Based in urban and suburban areas, groups like the ANP were able to reach disaffected white youths in ways that the third KKK was never able to. The militant imagery proved attractive for angry young men, seeking hate as a refuge from whatever troubled them. The blame shifting in the ANM was broader than in the KKK, and thus able to reach a more consistently educated demographic. Instead of other impoverished populations, the ANM placed the blame at the feet of "international Jewry," often couched in the language of anti-corporate or anti-globalist sentiment. By easing new recruits into the movement and using coded language, the ANM became the most successful of the early internet-age hate groups. An example of this coded language is the recent phenomenon of referring to Jews and black Americans as "Skype" and "Google." This linguistic mastery would become instrumental in the growth of the online white supremacist movement.[106]

The ANM brought with it an ability to reach alternative urban groups—punk, metal, and occultists. The adoption of Nazi conspiracy theories by several prominent New Age thinkers allowed for a mostly seamless pipeline between conspiracy-minded esotericists and the ANM. This counterculture appeal aided the development of a socially diverse recruitment base to the point where Nazi symbolism itself was utilized for its shock value within elements of the alternative music community that were otherwise unaffiliated with Nazism.

The same universal appeal that allowed for the adoption of Nazi symbolism as tools of offense within the broader culture of the United States inevitably allowed for easy identification of American Nazis. The same communities that utilized Nazi symbolism as a way of offending the sensibilities of the Reagan and Clinton years eventually took a hardline stance, shunning

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[106] Gabriel Weimann and Ari Ben Am, "Digital Dog Whistles: The New Online Language of Extremism," *International Journal of Security Studies* 2, no. 1 (2020): 9.

Nazi sympathizers within their ranks, and forcing them into their own enclaves. The swastika became shorthand for racist skinheads. White supremacist movements would need further refinement to reach a broader audience than even the urban appeal of the aggressive, antisocial ANM. Nazis like Harold Covington missed the key ingredient that drew Klansmen to the fray in the first place, which would also draw countless new followers in the following decades— religion. The religious aspect would be a growing religious trend that, while rooted in 18th and 19th century England, would see a renaissance in the United States: the CIM.

From Fascist Americans to Sovereign Citizens

Armed and Sovereign: New Citizen Movements

The armed citizen militia movements, while ostensibly an ideological successor to the state-sponsored and payrolled militias of the late 18th century, share much more with the foundational militia movements CIM (CIM) of the early 20th century. Such anti-government, "libertarian constitutionalist" organizations share foundational ideas and leaders with antisemitic revisionist Christianity, such as the Christian Identity—itself a strong influence on the second wave of the KKK. W.D. Pelley, a prominent Christian Identity theorist, was also the founder of the Silver Legion of America, an American, experiential Christian interpretation of Adolf Hitler's Nazi ideology. Another member of the Silver Legion, Henry L. "Mike" Beach, would go on to form the Posse Comitatus militia in 1969. "Reverend" William P. Gale also played a prominent role in the spread of Christian Identity as an antisemitic, "racial science"-inspired entity. The anti-federalist armed militias and "sovereign citizens" movements would go on to inspire a rash of ethno-terrorism and armed standoffs with federal authorities throughout the 1990s. Names like Timothy McVeigh and Eric R. Rudolph would become household names because of the spread of the CIM and sovereign citizen militias.

The mid-20th century was a formative time for fringe racist groups. Early in the 1900s, various sympathetic interpretations of Christianity developed that, following the rise and fall of European fascism, allowed for the incorporation of conspiratorial antisemitism to gradually creep into American understandings of Christianity. Following the rise and development of these so-called Christian Identity churches during the 1960s and 1970s, widespread distribution of Christian Identarian literature to KKK and American fascist circles aided in the armament and spread of the conspiratorially-minded sovereign citizen movements. It was from these

movements that the late 20th century would see its most drastic displays of domestic terrorism throughout the 1990s.

The Christian Identity Movement (or CIM)

Any discussion of the Sovereign Citizen Movement cannot begin without an exploration of the CIM. The CIM traces its lineage to the development of British Israelism throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, whereby the Anglo-Saxon "race" was interpreted as the Israelite nation of the Torah and Bible. During the development of British Israelism, it was able to attract many prominent British and Scottish political figures, though the founders of the British Israeli movement often opposed the machinations of the British monarchy. This anti-authoritarian trend would continue in the later CIM, which would stand in stark opposition to mainstream fundamentalist Christianity due to fundamentalist pro-Israeli sentiment as part of end-time accelerationism.

Important works of British Israelism that would influence various waves of the American CIM include John Wilson's 1850 publication *Our Israelitish Origin,* William Henry Poole's 1889 *Anglo-Israel, or the British Nation the Lost Tribes of Israel*, and the writings of Alexander James Ferris from the 1930s to the mid-1950s. British Israelism held such sway for a time that membership included notables such as John Fisher, 1st Baron Fisher, and Herbert W. Armstrong, who would bring British Israelism into the realm of the Seventh Day Adventist church. William Massey, the Prime Minister of New Zealand from 1912-1925, and Howard Rand, a three-time candidate for the Massachusetts state office during prohibition and the national commissioner of the Anglo-Saxon Federation of America, were also British Israelites. Rand would go on to have a strong influence on the spread of antisemitism within the CIM. William J. Cameron, Henry Ford's publicist, was a close associate of Howard Rand, and it was through Cameron that Ford

would publish *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* for the first time in the United States. Charles Fox Parham, a founder of Pentecostalism, was an avowed British Israelite, and his teachings would help the fringe movement spread to other more mainstream Christian denominations.

Core tenets of British Israelism

The core tenets of British Israelism can be distilled to four distinct teachings, which would evolve upon arriving in the United States. First, British Israelism posits that the Israelites of the Bible were not Jews but rather were a tribe of fair-skinned people who would be "lost" through migrating to the European continent. Thus, the second belief is that the British (and in some interpretations, the Scottish and Germanic peoples) are descended from the Lost Tribes of Israel. Third, if the British are the true Israelites from the Bible, the British throne is a continuation of the Davidic throne. Finally, Britain (and, by extension, United States) are the inheritors of Jacob's birthright, as the true inheritors of the kingdom of David. Such beliefs trace back to one strange, singular figure: Richard Brothers.

Richard Brothers

Though an early form of British Israelism was expressed via John Sadler in 1649 in *Rights of the Kingdom,* where he compared Hebrew and English laws, a more recognizable British Israeli movement came from the late 18th century writings of Richard Brothers.[107] Formerly of the Royal Navy, Brothers believed that he could "gather the 'Jews' back to Palestine." After proclaiming himself "Prince of Hebrews" and claiming ancestry from the House of David, he took the alias "Nephew of the Almighty" and preached that he would rule over

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[107] Sadler claimed the name "Britain" was derived from "Berat Anak" (field of tin and lead) and claimed Phoenician origin of etymology.

Israel until the return of Jesus. Additionally, he claimed to perform miracles using a switch made from a wild rosebush.[108]

His first publication, which would turn out to be the first canonical British Israelist publication, was *Revealed Knowledge* in 1794. From there, he would write and print a further seven full documents with numerous other tracts to push his beliefs. He would escape mainstream notice for a while, but for a public prediction of the death of King George III, he would be arrested for treason and confined to an asylum for the criminally insane for ten years before spending his final three decades in cloistered ignominy. While he was imprisoned, the date for his "revelation" that he was "Prince of Hebrews" passed without any such recognition. Brothers was not released from prison until 1806, having lost most of his following. He died in 1824, having published a total of sixteen volumes that would influence British Israelites in the 19th century.[109]

<center>John Wilson and British Israeli spread</center>

In 1840, John Wilson, a self-educated Scottish historian inspired by Richard Brothers, began proselytizing to anyone he would meet about the Biblical identity of Anglo-Saxon Britons. One of his followers: Charles Piazzi Smyth, the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland who attempted to determine the future of the English economy via numerology based on the dimensions of the Great Giza pyramid, was one of the more influential people in the development of fringe

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[108] Donna Kossy, "The Anglo-Israelites" in *Kooks: A Guide to the Outer Limits of Human Belief*, (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2001).

[109] Richard Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times.* (Springfield, 1797);
Hugh Chisholm, ed. "Brothers, Richard," *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.) (Cambridge University Press);
C. T. Dimont, *The Legend of British-Israel, Principal of Salisbury Theological College Chancellor and Canon of Salisbury Cathedral* (London: SPCK, 1933).

"pyramid prophecy." It was during this time that the phrase "British-Israelite" replaced "Anglo-Israelite," which was R. Brothers' preference.[110]

Wilson published *Our Israelitish Origin* in 1840, which claimed that all Northern European people were descended from the Lost Tribes of Israel and that they came from the Near East during Biblical times. Much of *Israelitish Origin* relies on comparative philology of English, Scottish, and Irish words; however, most of the claims are speculative at best and do not stand up to scrutiny. Wilson was not a philologist himself; additionally, he had no seminary training. That said, Wilson would go on to aid the spread of British Israelism to the United States, where it would morph into the CIM.[111]

<div align="center">From British Israelism to Christian Identity</div>

The Southern Poverty Law Center lists the CIM as related to NTI fascist groups and modern neo-confederate groups, though it only traces CIM to the explosion of the 1980s and lists it as more of modern development. In fact, from the peak of British Israelism in the 19th century, American interpretations and followings have existed. The CIM is an American racial, religious and political movement that advocates the racial supremacist doctrines of the Christian doctrines of primarily the Protestant Church. Christian Identity, a wholly syncretic religious movement, can range from the advocacy of racial segregation and the re-enslavement of black Americans to outright genocide. Due in part to this unorthodoxy and spread throughout the country, Christian Identity is conceivably the one Christian nationalistic movement that has spawned churches,

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[110] David S. Katz, "Israel in America: The Wanderings of the Lost Ten Tribes from Mikveigh Yisrael to Timothy McVeigh" in *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450 to 1800* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001).
[111] Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

institutions, and individuals at all levels of religious, intellectual, and political life in the United States.[112]

An observer could remark that most Christian Identarians are not Christian in any mainstream way, instead believing in a sort of "white Christian nationalism." Indeed, the followers of Christian Identity would mark themselves separate from mainstream Christianity due to the drastic differences between mainstream views on Zionism and Israeli sovereignty and Christian Identarian views on these issues. Taking the issue further, this author believes the term "Christian" is indeed sufficient to describe many Christian Identity groups: while in modernity, it is far more relevant to differentiate between the organizations that are supposed to be Christian and those that are not, those with the theological and cultural strengths of the Christian faith and those who use the Christian label to their own political advantage are, at various times, "mainstreamed" during periods of social upheaval and uncertainty.[113]

Christian Identity first achieved a level of prominence in 1946, when the Reverend Wesley A. Swift, previously of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the South, established the White Identity Church of Jesus Christ-Christian. In taking a stark antisemitic, anti-Zionist approach, Christian Identarians manage to stand fundamentally at odds with other millennialist Protestant Christians, who predominantly believe in some form of dispensationalism or what amounts to end-times accelerationism.[114]

Dispensationalism, the main form of millennialism in America, ties the fate and history of Judaism and Israel into that of Christianity through a reliance on the belief that God's promised eternal kingdom will not be realized until the re-establishment of an earthly kingdom in

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[112] Danny W. Davis, *The Phinehas Priesthood: Violent Vanguard of the CIM* (Santa Barbara, Calif: Praeger, 2010).
[113] Ann Burlein, *Lift High the Cross: Where White Supremacy and the Christian Right Converge* (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2002).
[114] Michael Barkun, "Racist Apocalypse: Millennialism on the Far Right" *American Studies* 31, no. 2 (1990) 121-40.

Israel. This movement grew following the foundation of the Israeli state in 1948. Following the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967, dispensationalism attracted even more mainstream success, and these two ideals—a Jewish state in Israel and premillennial dispensationalism—are central to mainstream American Protestantism.[115]

Tangentially Protestant, CIM justifies antisemitism through the erasure of Jewish populations in scriptural texts, rather than the past Christian antisemitic view of Jews as being disgraced, though chosen—having fallen irreparably from God's grace. During the 1960s and 1970s, CIMs gained traction, gradually incorporating themselves with fringe libertarianism and well-known white supremacist militias and paramilitary groups. This incorporation was the essential moment in white supremacist unification. By eschewing the perceived Philo-Semitism of the mainstream church, the CIM, like the British Israeli movement before it, allowed for the growth and dissemination of radical racial ideas. This growth signaled a shift in white supremacy away from the reactionary/revolutionary divide towards a unified religious idealism that characterizes large swaths of this nationwide movement.[116]

<center>Silver Legion and Christian Identity ties to Fascism</center>

In January 1934, George Clarke, writing for the Trotskyist communist magazine *The Militant*, highlights a growing concern among left-wing and minority groups:

> There is a Fascist movement in America. It is small. It is inconspicuous. It lacks popular protagonists. It has no spokesmen in the accredited capitalist press. It is unknown to most American workers. It does not possess state power and is not represented in any governmental office. But it is growing and disposes of finances, freely given from some undivulged source.[117]

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[115] Julius H. Bailey, "Fearing Hate: Reexamining the Media Coverage of the Christian Identity Movement," *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 4, no. 1 (2010) 55–73.

[116] Tanya Telfair Sharpe, "The Identity Christian Movement: Ideology of Domestic Terrorism," *Journal of Black Studies* 30, no. 4 (2000): 604–623.

[117] George Clarke, "Fascism in America: Pelley's Silver Shirts," *The Militant*, vol VII, no 2 (January 20, 1934), 1-4.

What Clarke missed, however, is that although the movement—The Silver Legion of America—would swell to over 15,000 by the end of the year, this uniquely American pro-Nazi fascist movement was rooted in a type of religious fervor that would be unfamiliar to most of the rest of the global north during the twentieth century. The founder of this movement, dubbed the "Silver Shirts" in the press, was a man named William Dudley Pelley. Pelley, the son of a Methodist minister, would go on to incorporate new-age spiritualism and theosophy into his particularly charismatic Christian upbringing to promote antisemitism and anti-communism.[118]

William Pelley served in the Red Cross in Siberia during the Russian Civil War, aiding the White Army remnants against the combined forces of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. During this time, he was exposed to the "Semitic Communism" conspiracy theory and, allegedly, the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" by White Army soldiers. He would later go through an "out of body experience" and develop a religion based on his experiences, combined with a strange form of Christianity informed by British Israelism.[119]

Pelley moved to North Carolina and announced the Silver Legion the day after Paul von Hindenburg declared Adolf Hitler to be chancellor. Initially, the Silver Legion was purely a pro-Nazi American fascist movement; however, Pelley's rhetoric slowly shifted towards that of a manic prophet, touting his hybridized antisemitic Christianity and, ultimately, losing membership as a result. By the time of Pelley's arrest in January 1942, membership had dwindled to an estimated 5,000. By then, the Silver Legion headquarters had relocated from Asheville, North Carolina to Los Angeles, with a further contingent in Oregon.[120]

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[118] American Jewish Committee, "The Silver Shirts: Their Theory, Founder, and Activities," *Bulletin No. 3* (August 24, 1933).

[119] Scott Beekman, "Pelley, William Dudley," *American National Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, October 31, 2006).

[120] "1935: Steps Towards Destruction," *The Holocaust Chronicle*, 2009; Associated Press, "Pelley of Silver Shirts Must Serve Prison Term," *The San Bernardino Daily Sun*, 21 January 1942.

Henry Lamont Beach, William Porter Gale, and Posse Comitatus

One of Pelley's lieutenants, an enigmatic man named Henry Lamont "Mike" Beach, was one of those Oregonian Silver Shirts. After the federal directive dissolving the Silver Legion of America, he spent time developing an anti-government, racist set of ideas rooted in the early CIM. His initial ideas seem informed by Pelley's spiritualism, but by the time of Beach's notoriety, the literature bears a striking resemblance to one of the founders of the modern American CIM.[121]

Henry Lamont Beach was responsible for establishing the Citizen's Law Enforcement Research Committee (CLERC) in 1969. He would later rename the group the Sheriff's Posse Comitatus (SPC), which was when the group began to take off outside of Oregon. The literature for the SPC, ostensibly written by Henry Lamont Beach, would turn out to be plagiarized sermons and pamphlets by a preacher in Mariposa, California named William Porter Gale. From 1973 on, Christian Identity and the SCM would be inexorably linked through these two men.[122]

In one recruiting flier for CLERC, Henry Lamont Beach expressed, "Farmers are victims of a Jewish-controlled government and banking system, federal taxes are illegal, and loans need not be repaid." This would be a recurring theme throughout the early development of the SCM: a recontextualization of the "blood libel" myths from the medieval period on, such slogans linked a belief in a secret, conspiratorial concentration of Jewish power to the illegitimacy of Federal power and central banking.[123]

Beach's CLERC was founded in Portland during the 1960s, but by all accounts, once he pivoted towards the SPC branding, his movement was also largely a copy of William Potter

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[121] Daniel Levitas, *The Terrorist Next Door: The Militia Movement and the Radical Right* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 8, 108, 435.
[122] Ibid., 9, 113-119 145-148.
[123] Henry Lamont Beach, *CLERC Pamphlet* (Michigan, 1969).

Gale's US Christian Posse Association (USCPA), with Beach's following grown through the aforementioned plagiarism. Following the subsumption of the SPC by the USCPA, Gale's circle and influence would grow. He would partner with three other prominent Christian Identitarians to form two rather California-based groups: the California Committee to Combat Communism and the Christian Defense League. His two partners, Richard Girnt Butler, a former Silver Shirt, and Wesley A. Swift, having by then dropped the "White Identity" part of the Church of Jesus Christ-Christian's name. Another member of this in-group was James K. Warner, prominent anti-civil rights activist, founder of the Louisiana New Christian Crusade Church, and the Louisiana chapter of the Christian Defense League.[124]

By 1970, Wesley Swift was an aging Christian Identitarian minister and Klansman. His church had gained a relatively sizable following, and his body of work was moderately circulated throughout interested groups. He would die in October of that year, though not before naming Richard Butler as his successor. Richard Girnt Butler, by comparison, was a proud former Silver Legionnaire—a follower of William Dudley Pelley. It is likely from Pelley that Butler got many of his early ideas on fringe Christianity.[125]

Butler organized yearly gatherings of white supremacists at his compound in Idaho, which he termed the "Aryan Nations World Congress." At their height in 1984-86, several hundred people would attend, including most of the well-known leaders of the American far-right, such as Klansman Louis Beam, White Aryan Resistance leader Tom Metzger, Gordon

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[124] The CCCC and CDL are equally difficult to find information about, however, these two groups prove that three of the most prominent Christian Identitarians were not in opposition, but rather, were willing to work together. Additionally, this is another link between the Silver Legion and the CIM.

[125] Chester L. Quarles, *Christian Identity: The Aryan American Bloodline Religion* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2014).

"Jack" Mohr, Robert E. Miles, Posse Comitatus leader James Wickstrom, Thomas Robb, Grand Wizard Don Black, and John Trochmann leader of the Militia of Montana.[126]

Throughout the 1980s, the CIM would solidify its place within what became known as the "White Power Movement." From this position of relative prestige, Christian Identity acted as a unifying force for groups of disaffected, paranoid racist groups. This paranoia would seem to be validated through a series of events in the early-to-mid 1990s, which would cast a shadow over the entirety of the United States.

Ruby Ridge: August 21–31, 1992

In 1992, the United States Marshals Service (USMS) laid siege to a wooded home in response to a member of the family failing to appear in court on an illegal weapons charge. The siege, which killed one United States Marshal and two members of the Weaver family and the family dog while wounding two other members of the Weaver family, became a rallying cry for sovereign citizens, libertarians, constitutionalists, and anti-government activists. The mismanagement of the USMS warrant ultimately helped spread sovereign citizen propaganda throughout rural America and ushered in a new age of "us versus them" mentality among the rural poor who were already suspicious of federal government activity from decades of FBI and Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives surveillance.[127]

The subject of the USMS warrant, Randy Weaver, was a former Green Beret who spent the decades following the Vietnam War with his wife, developing an apocalyptic Christian faith.

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[126] "Extremism in America: Aryan Nations/Church of Jesus Christ Christian," Anti-Defamation League, 2007; Meagan Day, "Welcome to Hayden Lake, where white supremacists tried to build their homeland," *Timeline* (November 4, 2016); Bill Morlin, "Some Say Potato, Most Say Aryan Nations," *Blue Review* (February 11, 2014); Elisha Fieldstadt, "Hate Groups in America," *CBS News,* September 22, 2017.

[127] Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Ruby Ridge Shooting Incident* (Washington, D.C: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2003).

This faith took a darker turn in the late 1980s with the couple's involvement in various Christian Identity and Aryan Nation churches. Approximately ten years before the siege, Randy Weaver and his wife, Vicki, were living on a 20-acre plot in Ruby Ridge, Idaho with their children Sara and Samuel. By the time of the siege, they would have two more children, Rachel and Elisheba.[128]

Because of Randy Weaver's outstanding warrant, the USMS siege left his son, Samuel, and his wife, Vicki, dead. Rachel and Randy would be wounded in the ensuing gunfire and would surrender along with family friend Kevin Harris, daughter Sara, and the infant, Elisheba. In the days, months, and years after Ruby Ridge, the abject federal mismanagement of serving the warrant would be subject to analysis, congressional hearings, court cases, and documentaries. The conclusion seems to almost universally be that the Weaver family was unjustly assaulted before a warrant could be served peaceably. The initial reaction of horror led to protests as almost a form of pilgrimage with sympathetic Americans coming from the surrounding states. A further incident less than a year later would reinforce this revulsion and skepticism of federal authority, this time in Texas.[129]

<center>Waco: February 28 – April 19, 1993</center>

In 1993, David Koresh, formerly Vernon Howell, was a Branch Davidian leader in the 1980s and early 1990s. His period of rule was marked by stockpiling weapons and allegations of child abuse, which led to an investigation and siege by the BATFE. At the end of this siege, 4 BATFE agents were killed along with 82 Branch Davidians. This event would be a culmination

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[128] Richard Abanes, *American Militias* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996) 43-44; "18 Months in Jail for Supremacist," *The Associated Press*, October 19, 1993.

[129] Jason Wilson, "Ruby Ridge, 1992: The Day the American Militia Movement was Born," *The Guardian*, August 26, 2017.

of years of perceived microaggressions against the right-wing Christian Identity and sovereign citizen movements, even though Koresh and the Branch Davidians were not blatantly associated with either group.[130]

Vernon Howell was a charismatic and troubled person from his early childhood. When he was 21, he moved from Houston to Waco, Texas, and became involved in an offshoot of a variant of Davidian Seventh-Day Adventism called the Branch Davidians, founded by Benjamin Roden in 1955. After Roden's death, Howell rose through the ranks of the church and eventually came into conflict with Benjamin Roden's son, George Roden, who was later imprisoned for an axe murder. Following George Roden's arrest and imprisonment, Howell changed his name to David Koresh—an amalgamation of the Biblical kings David and Cyrus, who is mentioned as freeing the Jews from bondage in Babylon.[131]

Regardless of affiliation, the Waco siege became the penultimate rallying cry for sovereign citizen and Christian Identity violence throughout the 1990s. Again, the federal government was "incompetent" and thus incapable of ruling a state—especially since the federal government seemed to be targeting individuals who only wanted to be "left alone." The Waco siege would end up being the most famous federal mishandling of the 1990s because of the sheer scope of death and mayhem that resulted from the siege. Additionally, even though Koresh and the Branch Davidians did not outwardly express political opinions, the federal mismanagement of what amounted to a fringe Christian group resonated with many in the CIM. Waco would be a flashpoint for the worst terrorist attack in the United States prior to September 11, 2001.[132]

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[130] Dick J. Reavis, *The Ashes of Waco: An Investigation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995).

[131] David Thibodeau and Leon Whiteson, *A Place Called Waco: A Survivor's Story* (New York: PublicAffairs Books, 1999).

[132] It is unfortunate that Waco's public legacy would begin and end with white supremacist groups—as James Tabor wonderfully illustrates in *Why Waco?*, the Waco siege deserves a more nuanced discussion than has been allowed in the past; Ibid.

Oklahoma City: April 19, 1995

The morning of April 19, 1995, a former soldier with the United States Army parked a yellow Ryder truck outside of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal building on NW 5th Street in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He dashed away from the rental truck, running for a car hidden three streets up and two streets over, near the intersection of North Broadway Avenue and NW 8th Street. When he was approximately halfway, the Ryder truck unleashed an unholy hail of heat and shrapnel—the two-and-a-half-ton bomb in the truck exploded right on cue.[133]

Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, both former service members that met in the late 1980s, had been plotting to bomb a federal building since McVeigh drove from his home in Kingman, Arizona to Axtell, Texas while the Waco siege was underway. When he was arrested, he was in possession of photocopied sections of *The Turner Diaries* and a wide array of Christian Identarian propaganda. He would be identified in the weeks following the Oklahoma City Bombing as a white nationalist who supported the KKK during his time in the Armed Forces.[134]

The events of the Oklahoma City bombing signaled a shift in white nationalist praxis: instead of "keeping their heads down," the embattled white nationalist or fascist would become an independent actor in a secret war. The war waged by these nascent terror cells would differ from the violent actions of past groups and organizations in that the goal of the attacks would be mass casualties—and collateral damage would be unimportant, if not encouraged. The culmination of the development of white nationalism and fascism in the 20th century would be McVeigh's senseless attack, but the heyday of this turn-of-the-century Christofascist militancy

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[133] Carol Smith, ed., *Final Report: Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing April 19, 1995* (Stillwater, OK: Department of Central Services Central Printing Division, 1996).

[134] Lou Michael and Dan Herbeck, *American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh & the Oklahoma City Bombing* (Buffalo: Harper, 2001).

would see a major setback in 2001. The terror attacks of September 11, 2001 would end this renaissance and require a change in tactics for those who would desire a white ethnostate.

The 1990s and the Legacy of 1979

Unlike the controversial and temporary unification of the KKK and ANP during the Greensboro Massacre, the 1990s demonstrated the efficacy of an armed, cooperative campaign of terror. This was accomplished, in the case of the Oklahoma City Bombing, by utilizing federal mistakes as evidence of a perpetual secret war against the very notion of whiteness. The 1990s were more refined in terms of communication, and the development of the message board Stormfront, as well as online BBS groups, allowed for the continual evolution of white supremacist ideas.[135]

Following the Oklahoma City Bombing and Eric Robert Rudolph's 1996-1998 anti-abortion terrorist bombing campaign, much of the vitriol moved into online spaces. This was compounded by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, which seemingly caused white supremacist groups to reorient and shift focus towards anti-Islamic activity and anti-immigrant attacks. This reorientation would set the stage for more modern *modus operandi*, with online manifestos and lone wolf terrorist attacks becoming commonplace.[136]

Before long, the symbolic trappings of Nazism or the Ku Klux Klan regalia became a recognized joint aesthetic. The public was not surprised by the joint rallies, and concepts like the NTI and nostalgia for the Rhodesian Bush War found equal shared spaces online to the writings of David Duke and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Here, in the chaotic, unkempt 1990s, the culmination of the evolution of over a century's worth of conspiracy theory, racial science, and

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[135] Nathan Eckstrand, "The Ugliness of Trolls: Comparing the Strategies/Methods of the Alt-Right and the Ku Klux Klan," *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 10, no. 3 (2018): 41-62.
[136] Abanes, Richard. *American Militias*. Downers Grove, Il.: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

white supremacist hegemony would find its public face—one that continued to evolve online and through media. The public face of white supremacy would become isolated, violent, and revolutionary, fueled by a fringe religious fervor and a twisted, grotesque interpretation of American constitutionalism. That, tempered by the historical trend in American right-wing extremism to gravitate towards fringe Protestantism, enabled a period of restructuring and development during the 2000s. This restructuring, driven by forum posts and early social media, set the stage for a more unified front going into the 2010s.

Conclusion: A Wholesale Relationship of White Supremacy of the Twentieth Century

In the Epilogue to Raphael W. Ezekiel's *The Racist Mind*, he describes white supremacy as a state of mind characterized by "lonely resentment—and several ideas—white specialness, the biological significance of "race," and the primacy of power in human relations." Throughout this monograph, Ezekiel interviews and analyzes Klansmen and neo-Nazis, concluding that the many of the lives he discusses are characterized by a form of self-realized experientialism—isolated or dejected people seeking to place blame for the general unfairness of life. The big takeaway from Ezekiel's seminal work is the fundamentally flawed social dialogue on racism's essence, a "misconception that racism is a thing out there in the environment that one could pick up or reject." These worldviews that developed in the fractured societies of North America and Europe reflect an intrinsic desire to shift blame away from actual, structural failings and injustices onto other populations.[137]

The KKK was, throughout its time as an independent entity, a reactionary, conspiratorial, historical revisionist movement marked by white supremacy and paramilitary terrorism. The KKK of the mid to late 20th century is characterized by rephrased, revised, or misremembered history. As an extreme reactionary movement, it is inherently conservative, seeking preservation or reestablishment of the "natural order." Primarily in the United States, this manifests as predominantly anti-black activity, though anti-Catholic, antisemitic, anti-Latin, and anti-Asian actions are similarly common. The KKK can be easily divided into three eras, though the characteristics of those eras are a little more nebulous.

From its emergence in the 1910s, the second wave of the KKK was heavily reliant on its Protestant self-identity. The nativist ideals manifested in anti-Catholic, antisemitic, and anti-

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[137] Raphael S. Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind* (New York: Penguin Books USA) 321-323.

immigrant sentiments in addition to its suppression of black populations was recognizably akin to modern White Power organizations—the key was to frame these groups as "unamerican," which allowed for the rapid growth and development of this wave of the KKK.

The decline of the KKK during World War II would give way to the growth of a third wave of KKK activity in the 1950s through the 1970s. After the emergence of an organized civil rights movement, the third KKK developed to counter the peaceful civil rights movement and intimidate people away from supporting the movements. In opposing affirmative action and focusing on anticommunism, the third wave of the KKK later opened itself to alliances with neo-Nazi groups—something aided by near-universal adoption of Christian Identity religious and political beliefs throughout the broader White Power movement that developed in the 1980s.

While the development of neo-Nazi ideology owed much of its growth to the adoption of classical Nazi imagery and symbolism, it would later feed into the CIM through institutions like the Aryan Nations church. Further combination of fascist ideology with white supremacist, anti-federal movements such as the Sovereign Citizens and Posse Comitatus would continue to blur the lines separating these groups into the 1980s and 1990s. While the Klan would maintain its imagery, many of these groups would become nigh-indistinguishable in the public eye.[138]

The conservative interpretation of United States civil religion, writ large and taken to its logical conclusion, would come to be encapsulated within the SCM. A "de-interpretation" of the foundation of the United States, the SCM would morph into a civil religion, with followers worshipping the cult of anti-federalism as a civic body. The collective-individualist pulpit would become true democracy in these groups—born of the xenophobic paranoia of the Cold War and subsequent disillusionment of, at first, the violent 1990s and, later, the War on Terror.

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[138] Abanes, *American Militias*.

While previously overlooked due to the media's proclivity for oversimplification along the lines of a "monolithization of evil," each movement was founded as a reaction to a large event or societal shift. As such, each one has unique characteristics that appeal to different people, and by considering the explicit and implicit goals of each movement, distinct target demographics and specific tactics emerge. Additionally, by analyzing when each ideology emerged and caught on, three distinct philosophies emerge. These philosophies are sometimes convergent but are frequently in opposition with one another.

However, the main unifying feature for each of these movements would end up being a fringe, antisemitic, extremist interpretation of Christianity. While each of these groups and movements would embody these beliefs in subtly different ways, it was the unifying underpinnings of Christian Identity that eventually allowed for the previously antagonistic KKK and ANP to join under one cause—fighting against what they perceived as a combination of federal overreach, the creeping terror of integration and affirmative action, and the Jewish overlords who supposedly controlled all of it, the KKK, ANP, CIM, and SCM would morph into a mostly unified solidarity movement by the dawning of the connected internet age.

The future of scholarship will possibly be affected by the events of the late 2010s and early 2020s. If the 2017 debacle at Charlottesville proved as ultimately detrimental to hate groups as the Greensboro Massacre, then the Capitol Insurrection in January of 2021 echoes the KKK's massive march on Washington. While hate groups were present, the most striking feature of the storming of the capitol building was the overwhelming presence of otherwise normal Americans. Many present, who took part in the storming of the capitol building were not brandishing traditional symbols of fascist groups (though some were).

Robert Paxton, a preeminent scholar of fascism, made waves in January of 2021 following the Capitol Insurrection. Throughout the previous four years of Donald Trump's presidency, he intentionally shunned the use of the term 'fascist' to describe President Trump and his supporters. Following the insurrection, he changed his mind—likening the riot to the fascist revolts in Paris prior to World War II, noting the drastic turn in public opinion towards the protestors that did not occur in France.[139]

With the tumultuous political climate in the United States, as well as an increasingly polarized populace, the "arrested factionalization" of past groups seems to be morphing into outright solidarity or fusionism. The difficulties in estimating the outcome of political crises and the political instability, both domestically and internationally, will more than likely shape the coming decades of scholarship and understanding. That said, these hate groups show little sign of backing off or melting away into the background and their continued presence will be a detriment to social cohesion and stability, not to mention a threat to life and limb.

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[139] Robert O. Paxton, "I've Hesitated to Call Donald Trump a Fascist. Until Now," *Newsweek*, January 11, 2021.

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