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Emperors in America: Haile Selassie and Hirohito on Tour

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Emperors in America:
Haile Selassie and Hirohito on Tour

by
Robert Alexander Findlay

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

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The imperial visits to the United States by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia in 1954 and Emperor Hirohito of Japan in 1975, while billed as unofficial by all parties involved, demonstrated the problematic nature of America's unstable Cold War political agendas, connected African and Asian Americans with alternative sources of race, nationality, and ethnic pride, and created spaces for the emperors to reinforce domestic policies while advancing their nations on the world stage.

Just as America's civil and governmental forces came together during the imperial tours, in 1954 and 1975 respectively, to strongly promote Cold War ideological narratives to a global audience, African American and Japanese American racial and ethnic groups within the United States created their own interpretations of the tours. Likewise, the governments and imperial institutions of Ethiopia and Japan both appropriated American efforts in an attempt to renegotiate political relationships and produce imperial narratives for domestic consumption. However, fundamental contradictions arose during these tours as both Ethiopia and Japan simultaneously sought to embrace America and to expand their presence on the world stage.

The full nature of the political, economic, and social ramifications of these two imperial visits, and the contradictions in American's Cold War policies revealed by the tours, has yet to be explored. Reactions to the emperors' tours demonstrated the connections and conflicts between race, nation, and identity. Further the narratives of Ethiopia's and Japan's role on the world stage, particularly during these "unofficial" imperial tours, have yet to be fully examined by historians. Only by examining the emperors' tours within a broader transnational context, taking multiple political, racial,

and economic perspectives into account, can the consequences of these visits be fully observed and understood.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The imperial visits to the United States by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia in 1954 and Emperor Hirohito of Japan in 1975 share many commonalities. Both emperors stayed in Blair house in Washington D.C., laid wreathes at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and visited the United Nations headquarters in New York. They stayed at the same hotels, received keys to the same cities, and met with famous actors and politicians. They both even got to spend a day exploring Disneyland. But beyond their exciting itineraries, both imperial tours demonstrated America's Cold War policy agendas, connected African and Asian Americans with alternative sources of ethnic pride, and created spaces for the emperors to reinforce domestic policies while advancing their nations on the world stage.

In the immediate post-World War II years, Ethiopia spearheaded decolonization in Africa. Haile Selassie's government took the lead in the movement for collective security by joining the United Nations as a founding member, dedicating thousands of troops to the U.N. efforts in the Korean War, and working to organize a broad array of African nationalists. As the longtime “torch bearer of independence for Africans on the continent and in the diaspora” and the first nation liberated from Axis aggression during World War II, Ethiopia held a special place in the imagination of African nationalists and civil rights leaders.¹ Likewise, during the first half of the 20th century, America was seen in the

¹Getachew Metaferia, *Ethiopia and the United States: History, Diplomacy, and Analysis* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2009), 3.

Ethiopian imagination as the “counter balance to Europeans” and their colonial ambitions in Africa.² The declining power of imperialist nations in the post-war world, coupled with America's promises to make good on the policies and ideals of the newly formed United Nations based in New York, contributed to a belief in Ethiopia, and in all of Africa, that the United States would help lead the continent towards a brighter future.

Haile Selassie's tour of America signaled a new era in U.S.-African relations. Although plans for Haile Selassie's American tour did not materialize until 1953, the U.S. began crafting its relationship with the independent African nation before the end of World War II. The postwar relationship between the U.S. and Ethiopia began in 1943 during a series of secret exchanges conducted by American and Ethiopian diplomats. America planned to encourage Ethiopian sovereignty with a series of Lend-Lease agreements designed to defend the nation from European influence. This plan was only revealed after President Roosevelt, returning from the 1943 Yalta conference, met with Haile Selassie and other Arab leaders in the Suez Canal.³ Roosevelt knew that America had the opportunity to increase its presence in the Red Sea if Ethiopia remained independent of European colonial rule.⁴

The British had already made many efforts to claim de facto colonization of Ethiopia as World War II was concluding, and attempted to fold the area into a larger territorial administration run out of Nairobi, a known “center of colonial [power] and

2 Metaferia, 18-19.

3 Statements of John Spencer, former foreign policy adviser to Emperor Haile Selassie, at the Hearings Before the Subcommittee on African Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Ninety-fourth Congress, Second Session, 4-6 August 1976, records page 21.

4 Spencer, 21-23.

white-settler rule.”⁵ Neither America nor Ethiopia intended to see British authority increased in the Horn of Africa and Haile Selassie's tour was in part designed to emphasize America's intentions to keep Ethiopia under its wing and independent from any form of outside imperialism.

As U.S. policy makers planned to prevent (re)colonization in East Africa, they simultaneously planned for the occupation of Japan that would begin immediately after the war. The U.S. occupation was originally designed to demilitarize and democratize Japan, abolishing Japan's military state in the process, with utmost speed and efficacy. However, the perceived Communist threat from Russia and China quickly overshadowed the initial liberal policies of the Occupation. The U.S. endeavored to make Japan a “bulwark against Communism” and a strong American ally in the Pacific. The Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), led by General Douglas MacArthur, temporarily banned many freedoms of political expression, maintained monopolistic business conglomerations, and tabled questions of reparations for Japan's wartime actions in Asia. Still, SCAP went ahead with several radical reforms and abolished the former Empire of Japan, promulgated a democratic constitution, and addressed lingering economic issues such as the redistribution of land amongst the previous tenant class.⁶

Not all institutions of the former Japanese empire were removed, however. General MacArthur, supported by many American diplomats and scholars, decided that

5 Theodore M. Vestal, “Consequences of the British Occupation of Ethiopia During World War II” in *Rediscovering the British Empire* (Melbourne: Krieger, 2001), 11-14.

6 For a good summary of the occupation period in Japan see Andrew Gordon *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 229-243.

preserving the imperial system of Japan would be in the best interests of maintaining a functioning social order and propagating American occupation policies. There was also the added benefit that Hirohito was strongly anti-Communist. This policy infuriated many Americans who felt Hirohito was responsible for the war.⁷ Debate among Japanese politicians and intellectuals was much more nuanced and far-reaching. SCAP envisioned the emperor as a sort of symbolic “flag” for the new, democratic Japan.⁸ The refashioning of the imperial system, and of the emperor himself, was critical to keeping Hirohito in place and avoiding charges that he was a war criminal. Prior to the end of World War II, propaganda in the United States had at times depicted Hirohito as a war criminal comparable to Hitler or Mussolini. Once the decision was made to keep the emperor on the throne, an active campaign began to depict Hirohito not as a monster, but as a gentle, childlike, and effeminate man of peace.⁹ This sort of “Cold War orientalism,” under the pretext of containing communism and integrating decolonized nations into the “free world,” created a sensationalized impression in the United States that both Ethiopia and Japan were willing to learn if only America would lead them.¹⁰

Despite being billed by all parties as “unofficial” tours to simply promote good will, American civil and governmental forces came together during Haile Selassie’s and Hirohito’s tours, in 1954 and 1975 respectively, to promote American economic and

7 Naoko Shibusawa, *America’s Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 100.

8 See Kenneth J. Ruoff, *The People’s Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), especially chapter two.

9 Shibusawa, 110-111.

10 See Christina Kline, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). Although Kline’s work does not include Ethiopia, the framework of her argument applies equally well to the empire from the 1950s through the 1970s.

political interests in Ethiopia and Japan. In the case of Haile Selassie's tour, the United States hoped to use Ethiopia's success to demonstrate to decolonizing nationalists (especially in Africa and the Middle East) the benefits of embracing the United States rather than Communist ideology. In the case of Hirohito's tour, the U.S. government sought to reinforce U.S.-Japan economic, political, and military relations and reassure Japanese politicians that America would not abandon Japan to a hostile East Asia still fractured by the memories of wartime atrocities.

America's cultivation of public goodwill in Ethiopia and Japan by hosting their respective heads of state strongly engaged Cold War ideological narratives projecting American benevolence and militarization to a global audience.¹¹ But, as the United States attempted to reorient these emperors into alignment with American foreign policies, racial and ethnic groups within the United States created their own interpretations of the imperial tours.

In 1954, Emperor Haile Selassie visited the United States primarily to conduct military negotiations, request American aid dollars, and make connections with the United Nations. African Americans, however, created their own interpretations of the emperor's tour. Linking Jim Crow laws and segregation policies with the American government's embrace of a black African leader, many African American intellectuals, critics, and social commentators used the occasion to reflect on their nationality, race, and

¹¹ My framework of the Cold War, particularly as it relates to interactions between domestic civil rights and America's foreign policy, has been largely influenced by Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); and Penny Marie Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1997).

role in American society in relation to desegregation and America's Cold War foreign policies.

Some historians have assumed that the pan-African movements of the 1930s and 1940s were crushed by the political climate of the early Cold War years which limited the range of acceptable debate on race, imperialism, and American foreign policy. Furthermore they argue that these movements were largely repressed until Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and other African American leaders linked their causes in the 1960s with all oppressed people of "color."¹² However, Haile Selassie's visit, while serving several functions of the American government, also served as a bridge between the early pan-African movements and those that resurfaced in the 1960s. Haile Selassie's tour, specifically because he was brought by the American government, created a space for all Americans of African descent to renegotiate their own sense of identity and role in American society.

Likewise, for Japanese Americans, Emperor Hirohito's 1975 visit was uniquely important. The emperor's visit drew attention to "the place [that] Americans of Japanese ancestry" occupied within American society and helped Japanese Americans reflect on their sense of being Japanese.¹³ The tour brought to the surface the multiplicity of choices in reference to race, ethnicity, and identity within the Japanese American community and provided a space to debate the future of Japanese America.

Hirohito's tour coincided with a period in American history in which Japanese

¹² This is the main argument in Von Eschen, 1997.

¹³ "Toasts of the President and Emperor Hirohito of Japan at the Dinner Honoring the President" 3 October 1975. Available through *The American Presidency Project*.

Americans were in the process of redefining themselves, their ethnicity, and their communities. Reimagining notions of race and ethnicity within a setting both accepting and hostile toward Japan, Japanese Americans both embraced and protested Hirohito's tour. Conflicts of representation and identity brought to light by Hirohito's tour helped mobilize the community and provided a sense of pride which was critical for the reparations movement.

It was not, however, only the peoples of the United States who sought to remake the emperors' images. The governments and imperial institutions of Ethiopia and Japan both used the tours to refashion the global and domestic appearance of the emperors to meet their own political agendas. While the United States attempted to depict the emperors in ways that fit Washington's political agendas, the emperors, in coordination with their respective governments, appropriated American efforts in an attempt to renegotiate political relationships and produce imperial narratives for domestic consumption.

Both governments gained legitimacy from their respective tours and promoted their countries' sense of nationhood as symbolized by their emperors. However, fundamental contradictions arose during these tours as both Ethiopia and Japan simultaneously sought to embrace America and to expand their presence on the world stage.

While other historians have touched on these topics, the full nature of the political, economic, and social ramifications of these two imperial visits has yet to be

explored.¹⁴ Some scholarship has been written on the United States' use of Haile Selassie in the Cold War and many authors have written on the American recreation of Hirohito by the Allied powers and the Imperial Household agency.¹⁵ Less studied are the responses from ethnic communities who connected, or in some cases disassociated, their political agendas with the imperial visits. These groups' reactions to the emperors' tours demonstrated the connections and conflicts between race, nation, and identity. Further, little research has analyzed the use of these tours by the emperors and their respective governments. The narratives of Ethiopia's and Japan's role on the world stage, particularly during these "unofficial" imperial tours, have yet to be fully examined by historians. Ethiopia's victimization at the hands of Italian empire and the overnight collapse of the Japanese empire following its crushing surrender in August 1945 has to some extent clogged narratives and prevented study and debate of these nations' postwar histories. Only by examining Haile Selassie's and Hirohito's tours within a broader transnational context, taking multiple political, racial, and economic perspectives into account, can the consequences of these visits be fully observed and understood.

14 For Haile Selassie's tour see Ras Nathaniel, *50th Anniversary of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I First Visit to the United States, 1954-2004* (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 2004). For brief descriptions of Hirohito's American tour see Herbert Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000) and Ruoff, 2001.

¹⁵ For examples of Haile Selassie's interactions with America's Cold War foreign policy see Barhru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, Second Edition* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001); Fikru Gebrekidan, "Pan-African Dialectics: Ethiopia, Africa, and the African Diaspora, 1941-1974" *Personality and Political Culture in Modern Africa* (Boston: African Studies Center, 1998) and Ras Nathaniel, 2004. For examples of Hirohito as recreated by the American government and the Imperial House Agency see Naoko Shibusawa, 2006; Ruoff, 2001 and Bix, 2001.

Chapter 2: Official or Not Here They Come

Beyond their exciting itineraries as unofficial guests of the United States, Emperor Haile Selassie's and Emperor Hirohito's American tours, in 1954 and 1975 respectively, demonstrated the length to which American policy makers went to influence these heads of state and the nations they represented. In the case of Ethiopia, the United States desperately wanted to support a pro-American, pro-United Nations government in the Horn of Africa in the hopes of swaying other decolonizing nationalists (especially in Africa and the Middle East) to embrace the United States rather than Communism or "Non-Alignment." In the case of Hirohito's tour, the U.S. government wanted to reinforce the bilateral nature of U.S.-Japan economic, political, and military relations and reassure Japanese politicians that America would not abandon Japan to a hostile East Asia still fractured by the memories of wartime atrocities.

Both civil and governmental American policy makers cultivated public goodwill in Ethiopia and Japan by hosting their respective heads of state and attempted to reorient these emperors' into alignment with American foreign policies. Likewise, these tours strongly engaged Cold War ideological narratives projecting American benevolence and militarization to a global audience.¹

¹ My framework of the Cold War, particularly as it relates to interactions between domestic civil rights and America's foreign policy have been largely influenced by Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); Penny Marie Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1997).

Courting Ethiopia, Courting the World

During the imperial visits of Emperor Haile Selassie and Emperor Hirohito, representatives of American civil society and governmental forces came together to present their national interests to the visiting dignitaries. At the time of the visits, 1954 and 1975 respectively, both the United States and their imperial guests claimed in government documents and newspaper reports that the visits were merely unofficial and nonpolitical. However, all parties involved were angling to gain or maintain control of key political issues on behalf of their nations. The tours of both Haile Selassie and Hirohito were filled with political gestures, behind the scene politicking, and high profile governmental interactions revolving around military and economic issues.

In the case of Ethiopia and Haile Selassie's visit, American politicians hoped to create a presence in the Middle-East and East Africa while at the same time limiting the role of the British and French.² They were also very interested in promoting nations, such as Ethiopia, which demonstrated seemingly unlimited support for the newly formed United Nations. American leaders felt that encouraging “nation building” in these areas would prevent communism, strengthen the United Nations, and put America in the best position possible within the new post-War/Cold War world order.³ Although Haile Selassie's visit had many social elements and was, officially, “solely to express to the

² See Harold G. Marcus, *Ethiopia, Great Britain, and the United States, 1941-1974* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), particularly chapters three and four.

³ This seems to be a legacy of the Roosevelt era and can be seen in several of his personal files and letters such as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *F.D.R., His Personal Letters: 1928-1945, vol. 4* (New York: Duell, Sloan, Pearce, 1950), 1565.

American people our [Ethiopia's] sincere and profound gratitude and our admiration,”⁴ it was mostly designed to set into motion key policies in both the civil and governmental institutions of U.S.-Ethiopian relations, particularly in regards to collective security.

This sort of civil-government hybrid was present in many of Haile Selassie's interactions with the public and politicians. For example, near the beginning of his visit in May 1954, Haile Selassie participated in the National Broadcasting Company radio show “Youth Wants to Know.”⁵ The highly popular show featured a panel of American high school students from around the nation engaging in question and answer sessions with politically important individuals of the day. The program was billed as a broadcast designed to help young Americans pursue their educational interests and “to help resolve the questions in their minds.” This radio show appeared to many as non-partisan educational programming. However, the program was sponsored by and “under the auspices of the National Public Relations Division of the American Legion,”⁶ a right-leaning anticommunist organization deeply involved in “red baiting” and aiding the search for “un-American” sympathies in the 1950s.⁷ The American Legion screened students, questions, and guests to the program. During each show, they also awarded a thirty volume set of *Encyclopedia Americana* to the student who provided the “question of the week” deemed most pertinent to the topic.

4 Haile Selassie's remarks upon arrival, New York, 25 May 1954. Recorded in Ras Nathaniel, *50th Anniversary of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I First Visit to the United States: 1954-2004* (Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing, 2004), 12.

5 The show aired on 30 May 1954 but had been previously recorded the day before on 29 May.

6 “Youth Wants to Know” National Broadcasting Company radio broadcast, 30 May 1954. Available in audio format at <http://newstalgia.crooksandliars.com/gordonskene/weekend-talk-shows-past-youth-wants-kn>

7 See Athan Theoharis, “The FBI and the American Legion Contact Program, 1940-1966,” *Political Science Quarterly* 100, No. 2 (1985), 271-286.

During Haile Selassie's time on the show, most of the questions directly and indirectly revolved around collective security, the United Nations, and fighting communism. These inquiries also included a few nods to daily life and amusements in Ethiopia such as what sort of sports were popular there, or had the Emperor ever had an American milkshake, but most of the questions were formal and political. One of the students, Helen Cusack, asked the emperor, "What is the purpose of your visit here to the United States?" Haile Selassie replied that, "We know the United States does a lot of good for the world at large and we have come to see for ourselves." Another student, Jim Holmes asked, "If the United Nations sends troops to Indochina, will Ethiopia send a delegation also?" Haile Selassie responded that because Ethiopia's foreign policy is primarily concerned with collective security that he would "stand against aggression wherever it may appear." The winning "question of the week" offered by Sandra Ericson of Hibbing, Minnesota symbolized the session. She asked "What is the most important things small nations can do for the promotion of world peace?" Haile Selassie responded immediately that "the best thing small nations can do for the peace of the world is to follow the principles of the United Nations effectively and also if all nations give up selfishness."⁸

The questions asked of Haile Selassie and the answers he provided served the interests of both the American Legion and the United States government. Unlike the far-right of today, in the 1950s the right-wing of the American political spectrum often wholeheartedly supported the United Nations particularly as a means of abolishing

⁸ In the question and answer session Haile Selassie spoke in Amharic. His words were translated by Lidj Endalatchew Makonnen, Director General in the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chief of Protocol.

communist influence.⁹ Despite an embarrassing “red baiting” incident in which the American Legion briefly branded the United Nations' Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) “subversive,” the Legion had nothing but “strong support for the U.N.”¹⁰ Haile Selassie shared the Legion’s devotion to the U.N. and both the Legion and the American government knew his words would be very powerful and were excited to have him address these concerns to as wide an audience as possible.

Haile Selassie could speak on needs of collective security with great knowledge and firsthand experience. The 1934-35 Italian invasion of Ethiopia was one of the starting points for World War II.¹¹ Both Italy and Ethiopia were members of the League of Nations, which was formed after World War I “in order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance [by member nations] of obligations not to resort to war.”¹² When the League of Nations tacitly consented to the illegal invasion, occupation, and destruction of one member state by another, it was shown to be an ineffectual international body which did not abide by its own laws and could not protect the sovereignty of member nations. Haile Selassie sent an urgent telegram to the League of Nations condemning the invasion of his country. On 30 June 1936, he stood before the assembly and warned smaller European nations that if the League failed “they may one day suffer the fate of Ethiopia.”¹³ When Hitler's armies invaded Czechoslovakia in 1939, Haile Selassie's predictions seemed much more relevant

9 See Berlet, Chip and Matthew N. Lyons, *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000), particularly 193, 242, and 293.

10 “Veterans' Views on UNESCO,” *Life Magazine* 24 October 1955.

11 See such works as Hugh R. Wilson, Jr., *For the Want of a Nail: The Fail of the League of Nations in Ethiopia* (New York: Vantage Press, 1959).

12 The Covenant of the League of Nations, preambles to Article One, 28 June 1919.

13 Haile Selassie, “Appeal to the League of Nations,” 30 June 1936.

to smaller nations across Europe.

Haile Selassie's extreme dedication toward collective security and the United Nations, even after the failure of the League of Nations, coupled with his pro-American attitude stood out as a perfect model for decolonization and an ideal blueprint for fighting communism. In this one brief radio show, Haile Selassie depicted the success and benefits that could result when “small nations” worked with the United States to prevent communist “aggressions.”¹⁴ Haile Selassie's words were very influential in this regard as many African and Asian nationalists looked up to Haile Selassie as a leader who had avoided colonization. Also, American listeners could get the sense that the United States was pursuing the correct course in Africa and Asia. The message was that, through the United Nations, America was winning real victories in the Cold War.

As an independent non-white African nation with a unique history of collective security, Ethiopia was particularly important in America's quest to influence budding nationalists' opinions on mutual cooperation, the United States, and the United Nations. Having been the victim of Italian aggression, despite membership in the League of Nations, Ethiopia's recent history stood as an example of the dangers faced by newly independent nations and the result of failures in collective security.¹⁵ After World War II, as Italy gained a United Nations seat and reclaimed colonial territory in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia was determined to weave itself into the fabric of the international system as a form of protection from foreign aggression. Motivated by anti-colonial and anti-racist sentiment, Emperor Haile Selassie engaged the United Nations and collective

14 “Youth Wants to Know,” 30 May 1954.

15 Wilson, 33-34.

security in order to demonstrate the sovereignty of Ethiopia and prevent recolonization by European powers. Haile Selassie proved his belief in collective security most definitively by sending Ethiopian troops to the battle fields of Korea. While he could not be sure that embracing and supporting the United Nations would prove more effective at protecting Ethiopia's sovereignty than the League of Nations had been, the emperor saw few other options.

When the United Nations put out the call to defend a weaker nation under attack, Ethiopia acted quickly and decisively by dispatching the Kagnew Battalion to the front lines of Korea. From 1951-1954, Ethiopia sent thousands of troops to aid the United Nation's efforts in East Asia, making it the only African U.N. representative in the war.¹⁶ The men of Kagnew Battalion, trained by both the Swiss Guard and Ethiopia's World War II veterans, impressed U.S. military commanders with their courage and efficiency. Through Ethiopia's war efforts in Korea, the Kagnew Battalion not only demonstrated the potential of black fighting men in combat to American generals, but also directly facilitated Haile Selassie's visit to the United States. It is no coincidence that President Eisenhower named Major General Arthur G. Trudeau, the American general directly responsible for Kagnew Battalion in Korea, as the official "Presidential Aide" to help prepare Haile Selassie for his tour in 1954.¹⁷

The appointment of General Trudeau as presidential aide to Haile Selassie hints at the political capital generated by Ethiopia's participation in the Korean War. As commander of the 7th Infantry Division, the Kagnew soldiers were directly under General

16 This is a complex issue because South Africa also sent troops, but they were white soldiers. Also, at the time, Haile Selassie would talk about Ethiopia as both the Middle East and Africa.

17 Lieutenant General Arthur G. Trudeau, *Engineers Memoirs* (US Army Corps of Engineers, 1986), 243.

Trudeau's direction. He became particularly impressed with the unit after a series of hard fought victories in October and November of 1952. These months saw the men of Kagnew Battalion, working with Republic of Korea and desegregated American units, involved in heavy fighting across several fronts. During this period they sustained many casualties and were repeatedly forced to prove their strength and determination in the face of communist advances.¹⁸

On the night of 30 October, for example, Chinese and North Korean soldiers attacked both the 2nd and 4th company of Kagnew Battalion in a well coordinated night raid. A heavy barrage of enemy artillery fire destroyed bunkers and emptied the trenches the Ethiopian soldiers held. Though they possessed inferior numbers, the men of Kagnew battalion engaged in heavy hand-to-hand combat against the strong assault of the communists. They inflicted such a large number of casualties that the communist troops were forced to abandon the attack and retreat to safer positions.¹⁹ The next night, the enemy attacked again. The communist troops shelled the Ethiopian soldiers from 2:00 pm until 10:00 pm. A brief time after the shelling stopped, the enemy attacked in wave after wave. Kagnew Battalion, through sheer determination and courage, managed to hold its positions. That night, four Ethiopian soldiers were killed and nineteen wounded, but the enemy suffered far greater losses and the defensive line was held again.

During these bloody months at the front, the Kagnew Battalion never failed to achieve the goals set for it by the 7th infantry command. General Trudeau awarded medals to many Ethiopian soldiers. In March of the following year he sent a letter to

¹⁸ See Kimon Skordiles, *Kagnew: The Story of Ethiopian Fighters in Korea* (Tokyo: Radiopress, 1954).
¹⁹ Skordiles, 105.

Colonel Asfaw Andargue thanking the Ethiopian soldiers for their bravery in the face of battle. General Trudeau was especially impressed by the “most harmonious” relationship between Ethiopian soldiers and the newly desegregated American units of the 7th Infantry division.²⁰ In his personal memoirs, he recalled Kagnew’s “tremendous fighting” ability and discipline within the larger infantry division, but also the quality of the soldiers as people.²¹ General Trudeau was very comfortable with the Ethiopian soldiers and would frequently visit with their officers at the front and when resting in reserve.²² His comfort in dealing with the Ethiopians was no doubt the reason he was called upon to help represent Ethiopia’s dedication to the United Nations before American audiences during Haile Selassie’s 1954 visit.

Ethiopia's adoption of the United Nations' principles of mutual cooperation and collective security demonstrated that these ideas were not simply rhetoric designed to support the agenda of the United States. Smaller member nations had a profound interest in these ideas as a way to modernize their countries and prevent re-colonization. In Ethiopia’s case, the legacy of Italy’s imperialist aggression, and the League of Nations failure to act, created particularly strong anti-colonial feelings and a sense of responsibility to the larger world community. Likewise, the inclusion of newly formed smaller non-Western member states transformed the U.N. into a truly international organization and provided a worldwide arena for debate on the virtues of collective security.²³ During the 1950s, as the Cold War turned hot, the United Nations’ quick

20 Skordiles, 112.

21 Trudeau, 208.

22 Skordiles, photo plate opposite 165.

23 Bradley Lynn Coleman, “The Columbian Army in Korea, 1950-1954,” *The Journal of Military History*,

action in Korea assuaged the fears of leaders from “third world” nations who worried that the U.N. would be as ineffective as the League of Nations.²⁴ The participation of nineteen member countries not only demonstrated the power behind U.N. resolutions, but also allowed smaller nation-states outside the Western world a voice on the international stage.²⁵

For the United States, Haile Selassie was the perfect means through which to demonstrate the importance of the United Nations and collective security to nationalist leaders in Asia and Africa. The invasion of his country by Italy in the 1930s and the humiliation of the re-colonization of the Horn of Africa after World War II weighed heavily on Haile Selassie’s mind. The United States provided Haile Selassie with a grand stage to express these concerns at a joint session of the United States Congress. During his speech before congress, Haile Selassie made his case for economic assistance through trade not aid, cooperation on industrial development, and the prevention of imperialism in Africa. He also pointed out the benefits of mutual security and “the glorious comradeship in arms in Korea.”²⁶

It is unclear if Haile Selassie's address had a great impact on African nationalists or simply rang true in describing the current situations on the continent, but several U.S. government reports found that what most Africans wanted was independence, peace,

69, no 4 (2005), 1138.

24 Skordiles, 32.

25 U.N. member states that sent troops or medical support teams include America, Belgium, the British Commonwealth, Columbia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, India, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, and Turkey. Of course, South Korean troops were present as well.

26 Haile Selassie’s address to the Joint House of Congress of the United States, 28 May 1954. Printed in Skordiles, 229.

strong ties with the United Nations, African nationalism, and trade, not aid.²⁷ Of course, Haile Selassie was not simply delivering a speech to Congress to please American interests. He was a very charismatic speaker and sought to generate increased momentum for expanding U.S.-Ethiopia military and economic cooperation. Haile Selassie was able to gain many supporters in the Senate, and address a much larger radio-listening audience, on the premise of mutual cooperation.²⁸

Aside from the United States' desire to disseminate Haile Selassie's message of collective security back to the wider world, political leaders in the U.S. also wanted to ensure that Ethiopia remained in the pro-American, pro-United Nations camp.²⁹ Eisenhower went out of his way to demonstrate the potential for investment in Ethiopian infrastructure, private business, and continued aid for development. Although Eisenhower told Haile Selassie that he could not make any “specific promises,” his words clearly suggested that sticking with America would bring large economic advantages.³⁰ Even Eisenhower's non-specific promises seemed to inspire confidence amongst the Ethiopian government into the mid-1950s. Haile Selassie supported this confidence often citing America as a strong ally “favoring Ethiopia over any other countries of the Middle-

27 Special Staff Notes and Observations of James H. Smith, Jr., Director of the International Cooperation Administration for his administrative visit to Africa 2 November to 22 November 1958.

28 Senator Theo. F. Green was particularly moved by Selassie's words. A member of the foreign relations committee and long time supporter of the U.N. and domestic civil rights, Senator Green took it upon himself to visit Selassie in Ethiopia in 1956 to smooth over a diplomatic flap. He was 89 years old at the time of his visit to Ethiopia.

29 These ideas and fears can be most clearly seen in the collected writings of John Cowles, a writer for *The Star Tribune*, who captured these themes in his work. His work was influential in the White House and was presented to President Eisenhower who responded with agreement on the importance of the issue. See *President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files 1953-1961*, Part 1 reel 9:0228 17 May 1956.

30 Comments by the President on the departure of Haile Selassie from Washington. See *President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files 1953-1961*, Part 2 reel 5:0839.

East.”³¹

Haile Selassie's unquestioning faith in the promises of the United States waned, however, as he came to view American policy as siding with Arab nations over Ethiopia during the 1956 Suez Crisis.³² By the 1960s, Haile Selassie realized that the United States could not be the sole benefactor to Ethiopia. He continued to support the United Nations, specifically in the intervention in Congo, and leaned on the United States for support after an abortive coup attempt by rebel military officers, but also began to look towards non-alignment and the Soviet Union.³³ As American political and economic policy shifted away from Africa and focused on engaging Japan, the fate of Vietnam, and the Asia Pacific region in general, Haile Selassie found less and less incentive to ally his nation with the United States.

Working Together with Hirohito

The fact that Haile Selassie was engaging in subtle politics on his “non-political” visit may not come as too large of a surprise as he was the political head of the Ethiopian government. But what about Emperor Hirohito's tour of America? In 1946, The Supreme Commander for Allied Powers (SCAP) foisted a new constitution onto the government of Japan which transferred sovereignty from the emperor to the people and redefined the emperor as a mere symbol with no real governmental power.³⁴ While the

31 Memorandum to the President from His Imperial Majesty, 28 May 1954. Cataloged in President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files 1953-1961, Part 2 reel5:0839.

32 Getachew Metaferia, *Ethiopia and the United States: History, Diplomacy, and Analysis* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2009), 46.

33 See Hovet, Thomas Jr., “The Role of Africa in the United Nations,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political Science and Social Science* 354, *Africa in Motion* (1964), 122-134.

34 Kenneth J. Ruoff, *The People's Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995*

postwar constitution has been widely accepted in Japan as the legitimate basis of government, the symbolic status of the emperor was, and continues periodically to be, a fractious political issue. Although the emperor is expressly defined by the postwar constitution of Japan as a symbolic figure with no political power, this foreign trip provided a platform for the Japanese government to engage in political and economic negotiations with other nations. Hirohito's tour also provided civic groups and business interest an opportunity to capitalize on the image of the emperor and Japan's success on the economic stage.³⁵ While America's economic interest in Africa waned, its interest in Asia increased.

A number of economic and political changes in the 1970s had roiled U.S.-Japan relations and America hoped to smooth over some of these during Hirohito's 1975 imperial visit. The Japanese government was particularly disturbed by the so-called "Nixon Shocks." The first shock came in 1971 when President Richard Nixon announced that he would make a trip to Communist China the following year. Nixon's trip, which signaled a major change in U.S. foreign policy, was planned without consulting, or even warning, the government of Japan. The second Nixon shock came when he made the decision to "close the gold window" ending convertibility between American dollars and gold.³⁶ This decision had large scale long-term implications for monetary policies worldwide, but particularly in Japan.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party was nervous and angry following these two

(Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), 5-6.

³⁵ This was particularly important for Japanese Americans. See below.

³⁶ Stephen S. Large, *Emperor Hirohito and Showa Japan: A Political Biography* (London: Routledge, 1992), 180.

policy announcements which came with little or no warning from their closest ally. The Satō cabinet worked with the imperial house to plan an imperial tour to Europe that would “help reduce the isolating effects on Japan of the recent ‘Nixon shocks’ and create an atmosphere conducive to the expansion of Japanese trade with Europe.”³⁷

Unfortunately for Emperor Hirohito and the Satō cabinet, the Japanese government severely underestimated the anger Europeans still harbored, not against Japan, but against Hirohito. Protests, by both Europeans and Japanese, indicting Hirohito as a war criminal greeted his visits to Belgium, Britain, and most of all, to the Netherlands.

From a public relations standpoint, the trip turned into a failure. The tour stirred up bitter memories over the war and forced people in Japan, America, and Europe to reconsider the role Hirohito played in Japan’s militant past. In Japan, some people even broached the topic of Hirohito’s future. At a special news conference called by the imperial palace, one foreign reporter was bold enough to ask if Hirohito might abdicate to ease relations, to which Hirohito awkwardly replied that there was no clause for abdication in the constitution.³⁸ At the same interview, prompted by a Dutch journalist’s question, Hirohito made what appeared to be his first public apology for the war. When asked if he was sorry about anything that happened during the war, Hirohito replied that, “Depending upon the event that you are talking about, yes. There are certain things which happened for which I feel personally sorry.”³⁹ Hirohito also accidentally noted that he was in negotiations for a trip to America sometime in the future. The translator attempted to cover for Hirohito, but some Japanese-speaking reporters caught on to his

37 Large, 183.

38 *The Guardian* (Manchester), November 17, 1971.

39 *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles), November 18th, 1971.

meaning.⁴⁰

Despite some false steps and disappointment with the European tour, Emperor Hirohito and President Ford decided to push ahead with the imperial visit as planned. Politicians knew they would have to plan Hirohito's tour very carefully in order to avoid the same controversies which vexed his European tour. Many in the American government considered the tour of the utmost importance to the political relationship between America and Japan, indicating their interpretation that Hirohito was deeply involved in the affairs of the Japanese government. An internal White House memo from Henry Kissinger advised President Ford that:

while billed as a non-political [event], the visit in and of itself has highly political implications-- a successful visit would contribute substantially to the US-Japan relationship, while an unfortunate incident would have unpredictable domestic repercussions. More-over, the opposition and the media are ready to scream if they detect introduction of a political element.⁴¹

A cable from the American embassy in Tokyo went further saying that “the occurrence of an unfortunate incident” during the tour could have a wide variety of results including “the fall of the Japanese government.”⁴² This interpretation seems quite extreme, but it demonstrates the immense importance placed on the visit from both sides of the Pacific.

It is clear, however, that while the Japanese wanted the trip to look unofficial, they also demanded that some official interactions take place largely as a result of Emperor Hirohito's personal requests. In a memo sent 28th July 1975, John A. Froebe Jr., an

40 *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles), November 18th, 1971.

41 Notes and Background on Meeting with the Japanese Emperor Hirohito, written by Henry Kissinger for President Ford, 1 October, 1975. Cataloged in *The Ron Nessen Papers* (Box 27-28), Hirohito 4.

42 Cable from Embassy Tokyo, September 26, 1975. Cataloged in the *Ron Nessen Papers* (box 27-28) Hirohito 4.

advisor for the National Security Council, advised the White House that “for political reasons the Japanese would like no private meetings between President Ford and the Emperor.” Instead, Japanese negotiators suggested that the Fords and their majesties have a brief meeting in “the family quarters” rather than go to the President’s “official office.”⁴³ This point was approved and regularly repeated in memoranda and notes to the White House. It was part of the official itinerary until just before the arrival of the emperor.

On 23 September, 1975, Jay Taylor of the National Security Council sent a memo to the White House which confirmed that, as the Emperor “particularly hoped to see the Oval Office,” the President’s itinerary had been changed. The Fords would meet with their majesties in the Oval office for twenty minutes or so before proceeding to other aspects of the day’s visit. Handmade alterations to the memo noted the importance of keeping the press, presumably the Japanese press in particular, away from the Oval Office.⁴⁴ From an American standpoint this was not a big change. However, as noted in previous memos, this sort of arrangement might have greatly bothered many Japanese who did not want the emperor in any way involved in politics, particularly in America.

This desire on the part of many Japanese that the trip be completely non-political and unofficial was in some ways constrictive to the tour. On the other hand, Hirohito strategically used these apolitical constraints to avoid issues and topics as he saw fit. The

⁴³ “Points Raised by Japanese Advanced Team Regarding Emperor’s Visit,” National Security Council Memorandum from John A. Froebe, Jr. to General Scowcroft 28 July 1975. Cataloged in NSA Presidential Briefing Material for VIP Visits (Boxes 13-14), Subtitle: Hirohito 1.

⁴⁴ “Japanese Emperor’s Visit: Scenario Following Arrival Ceremony” National Security Council Memorandum, 23 September 1975. Cataloged in NSA Presidential Briefing Material for VIP Visits (Boxes 13-14), Subtitle: Hirohito 3.

best example of this can be seen in the highly charged political debate, which took place behind closed doors, over whether or not Hirohito would visit General Douglas MacArthur's grave upon arrival in the United States.

The trouble began on 2 September 1975 when Jean MacArthur, the widow of General MacArthur, realized that the emperor would be "barely thirty miles" from MacArthur's tomb and yet the State Department had failed to include this as a stop on Hirohito's itinerary. After becoming frustrated because she was not getting answers over the phone, Mrs. MacArthur wrote letters to President Ford, Vice President Rockefeller, and the Japanese Ambassador Takeshi Yasukawa. She also contacted members of the MacArthur Memorial Foundation. Mrs. MacArthur expressed her feelings that it was "unbelievable that his majesty could be aware" that he was so close to General MacArthur's tomb and would not "take the necessary one or two hours" out of his schedule "to pay his respects to the General's memory in the traditional Japanese fashion." Furthermore, she asked President Ford, "is it too much to ask" that the president "see that such a visit is added."⁴⁵

The letters immediately stirred controversy. Jack Marsh Jr., the Counselor to the President on National Security Issues, spearheaded the response.⁴⁶ While he presented the request to the Japanese Ambassadors, he was not optimistic as he understood that Hirohito himself had decided he would not go to MacArthur's tomb. Not wanting to reveal that Hirohito simply refused to go, the State Department developed the idea, in

⁴⁵ Letter from Jean MacArthur to President Ford, 2 September 1975. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-2-75 to 10-9-75.

⁴⁶ This topic is covered over dozens of memos between the National Security Council, The White House, and people agitating for the emperor to visit the tomb. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-2-75 to 10-9-75.

conjunction with the Japanese ambassador, that Hirohito needed a day's rest after arrival to protect his health and thus there would be no time for the emperor to visit MacArthur's memorial. However, those at the MacArthur Memorial Foundation, particularly the Executive Director Major General (Ret.) Norman J. Anderson, found this response unacceptable and continued to push the White House to arrange for a visit anyway.⁴⁷

After the first effort to deal with the problem failed, and Hirohito's American tour dates neared, the State Department settled on a different approach. On 30 September, Jack Marsh responded to General Anderson by stating that the "Japanese Cabinet" had already "approved and announced the Emperor's schedule some time ago." As it would be quite impossible to expect the Japanese Cabinet to renegotiate the schedule only a couple of days before Hirohito's tour, the idea should be dropped and some alternative arranged.⁴⁸ This response also fell on deaf ears and only provoked Mrs. MacArthur, General Anderson, and Virginia Congressman G. William Whitehurst to threaten the State Department with an "increased intensity."⁴⁹

In the end, it was Hirohito himself that solved the problem for the State Department. The emperor used the idea that his tour was meant to be "unofficial" as a rationale for not visiting MacArthur's tour. He would create the appearance that he wanted to go, but was constrained by "the most formal protocol" and "Japanese officials

⁴⁷ Memorandum from Major General (Ret.) Norman J. Anderson, Executive Director of the MacArthur Memorial Foundation to John Marsh, 11 September 1975. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-2-75 to 10-9-75.

⁴⁸ Letter from Jack Marsh, Jr., Counsellor to the President to Major General Norman J. Anderson, USMC (Ret.), 30 September. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-2-75 to 10-9-75.

⁴⁹ Memorandum from Major General (Ret.) Norman J. Anderson, Executive Director of the MacArthur Memorial Foundation to Jack Marsh, 11 September 1975. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-2-75 to 10-9-75.

in charge of the trip.”⁵⁰ Jack Marsh was very impressed with the emperor’s solution saying “Hirohito is quite the politician himself. What a brilliant way out.”⁵¹ Hirohito’s method proved successful as an empathetic *Washington Star* would later report that although the emperor wanted to visit the tomb, he could not go “personally because of possible political repercussions at home.”⁵² This example clearly demonstrates that the “unofficial” label placed on these tours was not simply a tool of the United States, but was a flexible idea incorporated by all parties to support their agendas during the imperial tours.

The agendas, although varied on both sides, mainly focused on ensuring that the U.S.-Japan relationship remained primarily a “cooperative bilateral” arrangement.⁵³ During the 1970s, Japan's relationship with the rest of East Asia, and the world, greatly expanded. In part due to having served as a supply line for America's wars in Asia, Japan had grown to be the second largest economy in the world.⁵⁴ It joined the newly formed economic block the Group of Six (soon to become G7 then G8), actively increased its participation in the United Nations, and began, once again, to reach out to diasporic communities in the Americas and elsewhere.⁵⁵ Some U.S. politicians felt that

⁵⁰ Letter from Max L. Friedersdorf, Assistant to the President, to The Honorable G. William Whitehurst, 9 October 1954. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-2-75 to 10-9-75.

⁵¹ Small typed note on official White House stationary From “Jack” to “Russ” dated 1 October 1975. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-2-75 to 10-9-75.

⁵² “Hirohito Honors MacArthur” in *The Washington Star*, 1 October, 1975.

⁵³ “Meeting with Japanese Emperor Hirohito: Purpose,” White House memo from Henry Kissinger to President Ford, 1 October 1975. Cataloged in the *Ron Nessen Papers* (box 27-28) Hirohito 4.

⁵⁴ Some sources claim that the Japanese government was the only winner in the Vietnam War, perhaps adding more than a billion dollars of revenue annually to their GDP from 1966 to 1971. See Guy Faure and Laurent Schwab, *Japan-Vietnam: A Relation Under Influences* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008), 45-47.

⁵⁵ The topic of Japan beginning to embrace diasporic communities from the late 1960s onward has yet to be thoroughly explored and remains fertile ground for academic study. Most surprising are the similarities

Japan's status demanded a greater share in their equal and bilateral partnership, particularly in the area of defense spending.⁵⁶

The official letters, notes, and memoranda circulated in the White House leading up to and during the Emperor's visit almost all contain the phrase “cooperative bilateral relationship.” In proposed talking points for both President Ford and Vice President Rockefeller, special care was taken to note that “reinforcing [the] Japanese public support for close and cooperative bilateral relationships” was of the greatest importance during this “rigorously non-political” tour.⁵⁷ It was hoped that the bilateral relationship would be one based on shared economic interests, and Hirohito’s tour was designed to support these goals. Perhaps most telling of this fact is that the Japanese Diet sent Deputy Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda along on the tour as one of Hirohito’s protocol officers.

Deputy Prime Minister Fukuda was not only an assistant to Hirohito, but had also just been named Director General of Japan’s Economic Planning Agency. He was widely regarded in economic circles as the “leading architect of Japan’s anti-inflation program.” At the time of the emperor’s tour, he had “turned his attention toward [the] recession” and was “designing a program to counter the problem.”⁵⁸ As part of the Emperor’s “unofficial” visit, it was claimed by both America and Japan that Fukuda would be acting

between Japan's per-War/wartime stance on Japanese living abroad and their post-War efforts to make claims on these communities. For example see Taku Suzuki, *Embodying Belonging: Racializing Okinawan Diaspora in Bolivia and Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).

⁵⁶ See Richard J. Samuels, Richard J., *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), particularly part 1.

⁵⁷ Department of State Memorandum for the Vice President 27 September 1975 and The Deputy Secretary of State Memorandum for the President (undated). Cataloged in the *President Ford White House Central Name Files Subject File CO75 – Japan* (boxes 30-31) 9-26-75 to 9-30-75.

⁵⁸ Biographical scope and sketches of the Emperor’s entourage compiled by the White House, State Department, and National Security council. Contained in multiple locations in the Ron Nessen Papers and *President Ford White House Central Files*. Cataloged in Ron Nessen Papers (Boxes 27-28): Nessen Papers – Hirohito 2-3, *President Ford White House Central Name Files Subject File CO75 – Japan* (boxes 30-31).

in an “essentially non-political role during the visit.”⁵⁹ However, “a gathering arranged at Fukuda’s intuitive and with the specific approval” of some members of Japan’s government took place between Fukuda and America’s economic leaders during the tour. Fukuda met with Alan Greenspan, Arthur Burns, and other American economic policy leaders also working on battling the recession. They had a private breakfast together and conducted economic negotiations between the United States and Japan.⁶⁰ Due to the sensitive nature of this meeting, and “Fukuda’s economic policy role within the government,” both American and Japanese diplomats covered up the meeting with the express intent of preventing its appearance in the Japanese media. In case the media got wind of the meeting, it would be sold as an “informal gathering of economic peers.”⁶¹

This was not the only time Fukuda discussed U.S.-Japan economic policies while on the tour. President Ford and Fukuda had brief occasions to meet privately for which an elaborate set of economic talking points was prepared for the president. Although these were billed as “informal” the president’s talking points were sharply focused on the hard hitting economic issues troubling the relationship between Japan and the United States. Consider the following statement:

I understand that you will be seeing Alan Greenspan and others during your stay here. I think it is very important that our two governments consult regularly and closely on economic issues. This is particularly true in view of the growing

⁵⁹ “Visit of the Emperor of Japan” Memorandum from the Deputy Secretary of State, Washington, written by Robert S. Ingersoll for President Ford, 25 September 1975. Cataloged in NSA Presidential Briefing Material for VIP Visits (Box 13-14): Hirohito 5.

⁶⁰ Alan Greenspan described this group as President Ford’s “inner circle of economic advisors” who battled the recession in the mid-1970s. See Alan Greenspan, *The Age of Turbulence: Adventures in a New World* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008).

⁶¹ “Visit of the Emperor of Japan” Memorandum from the Deputy Secretary of State, Washington, written by Robert S. Ingersoll for President Ford, 25 September 1975. Cataloged in NSA Presidential Briefing Material for VIP Visits (Box 13-14): Hirohito 5.

interdependence of our two economies and the profound impact economic conditions in our two countries exert on the rest of the world.

This demonstrates the seriousness with which these brief ‘unofficial comments’ were conveyed. Also included in the President’s private talking points were comments on the recession, warnings against inflation in Japan, questions about the speed of economic recovery in Japan, and not-so-subtle hints that information must be shared between the two nations in order to push forward on a bilateral level.⁶²

This push towards a bilateral relationship was particularly successful in terms of increasing cooperative economic activity between Japan, American corporations, and Japanese Americans. For example, when in Los Angeles, Hirohito visited Disneyland. This was a longtime goal of the emperor. While it is true that Hirohito enjoyed his time in Disneyland, and bought a Mickey Mouse watch that he wore the rest of his life and even in death (he was buried with the watch), he was also there to help conduct business and further bilateral relationships. At the time, Mitsui Ltd. was in negotiations with Disney to open a version of the park in Japan under the title of “Oriental World.”⁶³ By 1976, just months after the emperor’s visit, the major negotiations were worked out between Japanese companies and Disney except for such minor details as the royalties Disney would collect for packets of cigarettes, bearing Disney trademarks, sold within the park.⁶⁴ This park is now known as Tokyo Disneyland, a hugely successful venture.

Hirohito’s tour was also a boon for businesses at the local level, particularly in the

⁶² “Visit of the Emperor of Japan” Memorandum from the Deputy Secretary of State, Washington, written by Robert S. Ingersoll for President Ford, 25 September 1975. Cataloged in NSA Presidential Briefing Material for VIP Visits (Box 13-14): Hirohito 5.

⁶³ *The Reading Eagle* (Berks County), October 9, 1975.

⁶⁴ *The New York Times News Service* (New York), December 14, 1978.

Japanese American communities of California and Hawaii. Commemorative bowls, coins, plates, plaques, and other memorabilia created to honor the emperor's tour were sold to Japanese Americans by both American and Japanese companies. They were advertised in both Japanese and Japanese American newspapers.⁶⁵ A thriving book industry produced numerous titles celebrating the life of the emperor, outlining events of the tour, and later commemorated the tour in photographs and short essays.⁶⁶

It was not only the commemorative commodification of the emperor's tour, but also his direct presence which promoted economic exchange. At each stop of the imperial tour Hirohito met with prominent business leaders in the Japanese American community. His brief tour to the Japanese Center complex in San Francisco was of particular importance to the Japanese American business community. Not only did his presence draw media attention to this "\$15 million dollar" complex and the economic success of the Japanese Americans, but it also highlighted the hardship many Japanese Americans faced in previous years in order to achieve that success. At a reception in Strybring Arboretum, just outside Golden Gate Park, Hirohito told the crowd of four hundred Japanese American business leaders that he was "mindful that a great number of Japanese-Americans here have built what they are today, withstanding many a trial since their arrival in the United States more than half a century ago."⁶⁷ Of course Hirohito was

⁶⁵ See *The Asahi*, *The Japan Times*, *The Hawaii Hochi*, and even *The Pacific Citizen* in August, September, and October for examples of such objects being marketed in connection with the imperial tour.

⁶⁶ See such examples as *Tennō kōgō Ryōheika Hawai hōgei kinen shashin shū: A Photographic Collection of Welcoming T.M. Emperor and Empress of Japan in Hawaii, 1975* ([S.I.] Hawaishū Ryōheika Hōgei Inkaikai, 1976); Edwin O. Reischauer, *The Emperor of Japan: On the Occasion of the Visit by the Emperor and Empress to the United States September 30th to October 13th, 1975* (New York: The Japan Society, 1975), and the anonymously authored *Emperor Hirohito: A Pictorial History* (Tokyo: Kodansha International LTD in collaboration with *Shukan Gendai*, 1975).

⁶⁷ Quoted in *The Palm Beach Post* (Palm Beach), October 11, 1975.

alluding to racism, but primarily he was referring to the hardships for Japanese Americans that began with internment. He later said that, “it is most gratifying to me to see cultural and economic relations between Japan and Los Angeles growing closer and closer.” Hirohito seemed to be talking mostly about the Japanese American community and business leaders with whom he met in private later that evening.⁶⁸

While many of these relationships forged through Hirohito’s visit quickly promoted individuals economic success, others were set up to cement long term economic exchange through cultural and intellectual networks between The United States and Japan. Two weeks after Hirohito's visit to Washington, on 21 October 1975, President Ford signed the Japanese-United States Friendship Act which established a commission to “help prepare Americans to better meet the challenges and opportunities in the U.S.-Japan relationship.”⁶⁹ The legislators most responsible for the passage of this bill, New York Senator Jacob Javits (Republican) and Ohio Congressman Wayne Hays (Democrat), wanted the bill to be ready for signing during Hirohito's visit, but it simply was not ready in time.⁷⁰ Moreover, in a State Department memo sent 9 October, it was recommended to the White House that no public announcement of the act should be allowed before the President personally told Hirohito the details of the bill.⁷¹

⁶⁸ *The Palm Beach Post* (Palm Beach), October 8, 1975.

⁶⁹ Statement of Purpose of the Japanese-United States Friendship Commission. Also, it is of interest that the money for this program and the grants it offers come from “certain funds accruing to the United States from post-war occupation payments and Okinawa reversion.” Noted in The Deputy Secretary of State Memorandum for the President on the Visit of the Emperor of Japan, (Undated, but probably created September 1975). Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Name Files Subject File *CO75 – Japan* (boxes 30-31) 9-26-75 to 9-30-75.

⁷⁰ The Deputy Secretary of State Memorandum for the President on the Visit of the Emperor of Japan, (Undated, but probably created September 1975). Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Name Files Subject File *CO75 – Japan* (boxes 30-31) 9-26-75 to 9-30-75.

⁷¹ “New Japan-U.S. Friendship Fund and Farewell to the Emperor” Department of State Memo sent from

Aside from demonstrating another political aspect of this tour, the Japanese-American Friendship Bill demonstrated ongoing efforts to cement American and Japanese support for economic cooperation understandings and a bilateral relationship. However, on 12 August 1978, despite a history of U.S. disapproval, Japan and China signed a Peace and Friendship Treaty which sent strong signal that Japan would not rely solely on its American relationship in Asia-Pacific.⁷² Although Japan sought to stay closely allied to America in the post-Vietnam world, it was also a sizable world economic power in its own right and attempted to diversify its position globally. This included “re-entering” Asia even as it embraced a mature bilateral relationship with the United States.

Conclusions

In general, American policy makers were very successful in their use of the imperial tours to pull Emperor Haile Selassie and Emperor Hirohito into closer orbit to the United States. They also found fertile ground for convincing the nations these emperors represented to embrace America for the long term. Even as the American government later disappointed leaders in Ethiopia, Haile Selassie remained pro-United Nations and advocated for stronger ties with the United State until his removal from government in 1974. Likewise, Hirohito, although required by law to be apolitical, was clearly quite moved by the tour and remembered it as one of his fondest memories.

While these tours were only part of the overall political realities of the day, they were

George S. Springfield to Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft, 9 October 1975. Cataloged in the President Ford White House Central Files Subject File CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31): 10-10-75 to 10-20-75.

⁷² Chae-Jin Lee, “The Making of the Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty,” *Pacific Affairs* 52, No. 3 (1979), 420-445.

also very powerful tools in U.S. foreign policy and deeply influenced Ethiopian-U.S. and Japan-U.S. relations. Although American diplomats used the emperors to influence Ethiopian and Japanese policies, they also influenced the way the emperors themselves were understood in their nations and in domestic U.S. populations of African and Japanese descent.

Chapter 3: Desegregation, the African American Press, and Haile Selassie's Tour

In 1954 Emperor Haile Selassie visited the United States to conduct military negotiations, request American aid dollars, and make connections with the United Nations. Haile Selassie's visit also ignited the imaginations of black Americans from Canada to the Caribbean. A number of black intellectuals, critics, and social commentators used the occasion to reflect on, and to challenge, concepts of nationality, race, and the role of African Americans in society. The tour's showcasing of an African leader determined to aid decolonization combined with America's Cold War foreign policies, creating a new space for black Americans to debate Jim Crow laws, desegregation, and the oppression of peoples of "color" worldwide.

It is often assumed that the pan-African movements of the 1930s and 1940s, which connected the oppression of colonial subjects under European imperialism with the plight of Americans of African descent, were crushed by the onset of the new political climate of the Cold War, and that it was not to be heard from again until Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and other African American leaders linked their plights with all oppressed people of "color" around the world. State Department policies and public opinion during the early Cold War years required a pro-American and anti-Communist mentality. African Americans community leaders seeking racial justice largely worked within this framework as anxiety between the Soviet and American political camps severely limited the range of acceptable debate on race, imperialism, and American

foreign policy.¹

However, Haile Selassie's visit, while serving several functions of the American government, also bridged the early pan-African movements of the 1930s and 40s and those reinitiated by black nationalists and civil rights leaders in the 1960s. Because the American government deemed Haile Selassie as an acceptable black leader to visit the United States, the African American press, black community leaders, and budding nationalists used the occasion to further their goals. Haile Selassie's tour symbolically linked desegregation with African independence and decolonization, created a racially charged buzz in the African American Press that contradicted the portrayals of Ethiopia in the general mass media, and served as a platform for civil rights leaders and early black nationalists to connect to African leaders despite objections by the State Department.

Haile Selassie and the American Media

Ethiopia has long held a special place in the imagination of Americans of African descent. From biblical texts to European discourse, the name Ethiopia was commonly associated with the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. Although most "New World black awareness of Africa in the nineteenth century had been confined to the western portion of the continent because of Liberia's peculiar history as a black American colony," things began to change quickly as the nineteenth century came to a close.² In 1895, the Italian imperial armies invaded Ethiopia with the explicit purpose of colonizing the African

¹ This is the main argument in Penny M. Von Eschen's *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

² Fikru Gebrekidan, "Pan-African Dialectics: Ethiopia, Africa, and the African Diaspora, 1941-1974" *Personalities and Political Culture in Modern Africa: Studies Presented to Professor Harold Marcus* (Boston: African Studies Center, 1998), 65.

nation. Although not as famous as Japan's victory over Russia in 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War, Ethiopia's 1896 defeat of the European, white, and "civilized" Italian forces on the battlefield of Adwa caused reverberations worldwide. The "racial dimension" of this "victory of blacks over whites" fired the imaginations of Africans, and those of African descent, around the globe.³ Ethiopia's victory, heralded in every African American newspaper of the era, resonated throughout African American communities and intellectual circles.

The wherewithal of Ethiopia in the face of white aggression greatly "enhanced the fascination [that] the African nation historically held for people of African descent," and contributed to growing Ethiopianist movements within the United States.⁴ As the only African nation to avoid colonialism and to establish self-governance despite the European "scramble for Africa," Ethiopia became the "torch bearer of independence for Africans."⁵ When Italy invaded Ethiopia again in 1935, this time more successfully, many African Americans felt that, as the only free "Black nation" left, its "destruction would symbolize the final victory of whites over blacks."⁶

Throughout the second half of the 1930s, the African American press regularly expressed their opinions on this matter with headlines sympathetic towards Ethiopia and critical of Italy. They often reported on Italy's "war crimes" such as the use of dum dum

³ Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991, Second Edition* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001), 81.

⁴ Joseph E. Harris, *African American Reactions to the War in Ethiopia, 1936-1941* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994), 2.

⁵ Getachew Metaferia, *Ethiopia and the United States: History, Diplomacy, and Analysis* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2009), 3.

⁶ John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1994), 433-434.

bullets and chemical weapons.⁷ America's mass media in general was more ambivalent. Although it reported on many of the abuses of the war and recognized that some "Negroes were stirred" by the fate of Ethiopia, it also clung to racialized notions about Africa and the "tired, disillusioned little brown man" who embodied it.⁸

Following the Ethiopian defeat of Italy in the 1896 battle of Adwa, European and American commentators reinvigorated seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century notions that Ethiopians were Semitic, Hamitic, and white.⁹ This reinforced concept of Ethiopian race, ethnicity, and heritage as essentially non-African allowed westerners to address the reality that a black nation had bested a white imperial power. It also served as an excellent propaganda tool for the colonialists with a vested interest in preventing a successful black nation from giving the hope of independence to oppressed black colonial subjects and diasporas.¹⁰ Throughout the end of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, western journalists and intellectuals, "hoping to dissuade Africans and persons of African descent from supporting Ethiopia," regularly promoted the myth that "Ethiopians were white people and considered themselves superior to blacks."¹¹

By the time of Haile Selassie's 1954 visit to the United States, the mass media had spread these myths across America. While a few newspapers, such as *The Christian Science Monitor*, completely ignored the issue of race and focused instead on Haile

⁷ See *The Pittsburgh Press* 19 October 1935. Dum Dum bullets are loaded backwards into cartridges so that the flat side of the bullet will hit the target and cause larger wounds.

⁸ See *The New York Times* 14 July 1935 and *The Grape Belt and Chautauqua Farmer* 30 June 1936.

⁹ See Harold Marcus, "The Black Men who Turned White: European Attitudes Towards Ethiopians, 1850-1900," *Archiv Orientali* vol. 39 (1979), 155-166.

¹⁰ Many examples of this can be found in the writings of Karl Dove, Georg Schweinfurth, C.G. Seligman and many other writers of the period. See Edith Sanders, "The Hamatic Hypothesis: Its Origins and Foundations in time Perspective," *Journal of African History*, 10, no.4 (1969), 1-17.

¹¹ S.K.B. Asante, *Pan-African Protest: West Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis, 1934-1941* (London: Longman Group, 1977), 54.

Selassie as a promoter of collective security, the majority of the mainstream press exoticized Haile Selassie using highly racialized language.¹² These depictions of the emperor range from gross underestimates of his height and weight, to exaggerations about the opulent manner in which Haile Selassie lived.¹³ Much more inflammatory, however, were the white journalists and authors who attempted to demonstrate that neither Haile Selassie nor Ethiopians in general identified with America's black communities or even with their own "black" African neighbors. By projecting Haile Selassie as white while simultaneously denying Ethiopians the agency and respect associated with that term, Anglo-Americans hoped to keep control of racial categories and hierarchical structures effectively masking the highly contested nature of racial definitions in the United States.

The best, and most influential, example of this attempt to separate African independence and nationalism from American's black communities can be found in the writings of the white American journalist John Gunther. Gunther, one of the most well-known news personalities of the era, became famous in the 1940s and 1950s for his "inside reports" on foreign lands. He sold "more than 4.5 million copies at a time when a scale of 100,000 copies was still considered extraordinary."¹⁴ His works, especially *Inside Europe* and *Inside the U.S.A.*, became instant classics that were quoted in many textbooks and travel guides. His book *Inside Africa*, published in 1954, helped shape an

¹² Throughout 1953 and 1954, *The Christian Science Monitor* published more than twenty articles on Haile Selassie and his American tour. By comparison to other "white" press of the time, *The Christian Science Monitor* treats the Emperor with dignity and respect.

¹³ See *The Pittsburg Press* 26 May 1954 and *The Virgin Island Daily News* 28 June 1954 for a few examples of this wide spread trend in reportage of the time.

¹⁴ Ken Cuthbertson, *Inside: The Biography of John Gunther* (Los Angeles: Bonus Books Inc., 1992), xix.

entire generation's thinking about the continent.¹⁵ It also demonstrated the way that Africa and Ethiopia in particular was racialized, exoticized, and marginalized in America's mass media.

In *Inside Africa*, John Gunther emphasized that Haile Selassie's "big fortresslike [sic] mountain-high domain," of a territory was "*not* a black nation, as most people think."¹⁶ Instead, Ethiopians "consider themselves to be 'white' no matter what their color is." The other "people [as] black as Vulcan," so prevalent around Ethiopia, Gunther elaborated, were merely "former slaves from the Sudan or other Negroes."¹⁷ Moreover, Gunther told his readers that "there is practically no contact, cultural or economic, with Black Africa. Kenya though it borders on Ethiopia seems farther away than Saskatchewan."¹⁸ In Gunther's opinion, even the trees in Ethiopia were not African; they were "not palms, not tropical shrubbery – but stout, honest trees."¹⁹

John Gunther's claims that Ethiopia was not associated with the black races or "Black Africa" did not prevent him from elaborating on the "semi-savage" nature of the "backwards" nation.²⁰ He went to great lengths to demonstrate the barbarity of the Ethiopians, telling readers of their "traditional addiction to mutilation," and providing several stories to prove his point.²¹ In the best of imperialist tradition, he attributed Ethiopia's military and cultural successes not to the hard work of the people themselves,

¹⁵ John Gunther, *A Fragment of Autobiography: The Fun of Writing the Inside Books* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), 2.

¹⁶ John Gunther, *Inside Africa* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), 247, 252. Italics in original.

¹⁷ Gunther, 1954, 255.

¹⁸ Gunther, 1954, 255.

¹⁹ Gunther, 1954, 247.

²⁰ Gunther, 1954, 247, 253.

²¹ This version does not appear in his book, but does appear in the serial format of this section titled *Inside Ethiopia*, which ran in daily newspapers and magazines across the country in 1954.

but rather to geography, climate, and outside influences. Although he mentioned Ethiopia's defeat of Italy at the 1895 Battle of Adwa, and their "three thousand years of independence," he attributed this phenomenon to "the simplest of reasons – it [Ethiopia] was too inaccessible, too mountainous and impregnable to attack."²² His arguments were also persuasive because Gunther's staunch anti-Communism kept him in the mainstream of American society. His red baiting tactics served as a rhetorical device to prove that America in particular should be interested in preventing "the great mass of black illiterates, among the intolerably poor and crushed in the submerged regions of the continent" from "being lost [to Communism] as China has been lost."²³ Gunther made no effort to explain why colonial Africans were illiterate, poor, or crushed, only that they needed saving.

Despite the fact that Ethiopians were not "black" in John Gunther's opinion, he had difficulty expressing his genuine admiration for Haile Selassie without a racially biased framework. He emphasized to the point of exhaustion that Haile Selassie was a "complex person" full of "grace and dignity" who "has already done more for his country than any other emperor in history." On the other hand, he described the emperor as a "frail tenacious little man" and told his readers that "Haile Selassie strides the immense wastes of the Ethiopian plateau – like a gnome."²⁴ He went on to tell readers that Haile Selassie is "exceptionally short," "looks something like a mushroom," and has to "rest his tiny feet on a cushion otherwise they would not have touched the floor."²⁵ Further, he

²² Gunther, 1954, 252.

²³ Gunther, 1954, 19.

²⁴ Gunther 1954, 247.

²⁵ Gunther, 1954, 250-251.

described the emperor as running his kingdom “almost as if it were a kindergarten.”²⁶

This infantilization of Haile Selassie allowed Gunther to cede a portion of whiteness to the emperor without challenging his or his reader’s racial stereotypes and sense of superiority over Africans.

These examples from John Gunther’s writings demonstrate the general atmosphere in America’s mass media during the time of Haile Selassie’s 1954 visit to the United States. Far from extreme, Gunther’s views were even considered to be politically left-leaning during this period. Due to the fact that he proclaimed throughout *Inside Africa* that colonialism was no longer tenable in Africa and that the continent was slowly beginning to wake up, his work resonated with “progressives” in America and Europe.²⁷ His outright ridicule of the South African Union also made him popular with those denouncing the worldwide “color bar.”²⁸

In *African Affairs*, an Oxford-based academic journal, Negley Farson described Gunther’s “friendly, thoughtful, and even intuitive” work as “the most comprehensive volume that any writer, or administrator, could have on his desk,” particularly due to its “*New Yorker*-type” profiles on Africa.²⁹ Even civil rights activists and black intellectuals had positive opinions about Gunther’s work. George M. Houser, a Methodist minister, lifelong advocate for decolonization and civil rights, and the executive director for the American Committee on Africa, found *Inside Africa* to be a “refreshing read” with

²⁶ Gunther, 1954, 248.

²⁷ Of course, in the same paragraph in which Gunther claims colonialism’s “days are numbered,” he also elaborates on all the benefits colonialism has brought to the continent including “making nationalism possible,” “paving the way for democracy,” “improving the standard of living,” and “most importantly, bringing Christianity and western education.” See Gunther, 1954, 13.

²⁸ Gunther, 1954, 14-15.

²⁹ Farson, Negley, “Book Reviews: *Inside Africa* by John Gunther,” *African Affairs* 55, No. 218 (1956), 60-61.

“sound perspectives.”³⁰ Similarly, Rayford W. Logon, a history professor at Howard University, wrote in the *Journal of Negro Education* that Gunther’s work contained some of “the most apperceptive observations” of Africa available at the time.³¹

These myths were problematic for African American communities excited by the upcoming tour. The African American press largely dismissed allegations that Ethiopians, particularly Haile Selassie, “do not consider themselves colored” and instead saw the emperor’s visit as the coming of a black leader.³² In the months preceding the emperor’s tour, African American newspapers regularly celebrated “the great and welcome news for Afro-Americans” that an “African emperor [would] put foot on American soil.”³³

This is not to say that the African American press was completely happy with the organization, or events, of the tour. A number of writers and community leaders quickly voiced their displeasure that the State Department held such tight control of Haile Selassie’s schedule while the black community was allowed no input. They were particularly skeptical about the emperor’s itinerary in relation to regional politics in the United States. Many writers were upset that the emperor would not be spending much time in the South. *JET Magazine* even ran an article that blatantly accused the State Department of skipping the South for political reasons. According to their reporter’s source inside the government, “the emperor’s boycott of the south” was “ostensibly an

³⁰ Houser, George M., “Untitled Review: Inside Africa by John Gunther,” *Africa Today* 2, No. 5 (1955), 15.

³¹ Logon, Rayford W., “Current Literature on Negro Education Book Reviews: Racial Ferment in Africa,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 26, No. 1 (1957), 30-33.

³² *The Afro American* 5 June 1954.

³³ *The Washington Afro-American* 2 February 1954.

attempt to minimize embarrassment from racial discrimination.”³⁴ Despite this “oversight” there was still plenty of excitement in the African American press about the tour, particularly about Haile Selassie’s scheduled visit to Harlem.

Thrilled that Haile Selassie would be visiting Harlem, many community leaders cleaned the street fronts, put up decorations, and generally prepared for the imperial visit.³⁵ However, this initial burst of excitement did not last. Many became frustrated and angry by the quick “snub” arranged between the State Department and the mayor of New York.³⁶ Although over 300,000 Harlemites crowded the streets on 30 May 1954 expecting to see the emperor, only a small portion caught a glimpse of fancy government cars, all with closed roofs. Furthermore Harlem’s African American community leaders were outraged when Haile Selassie’s motorcade passed right by the Theresa Hotel, which had been specially decorated to receive the emperor. Willie Bryant, a jazz orchestra leader considered by many to be “the unofficial mayor of Harlem,” and a little girl holding a bouquet of orchids for the emperor’s granddaughter stood at a podium shocked as Haile Selassie “whizzed” past the crowd.³⁷ While Haile Selassie did make a scheduled stop at the Abyssinian Baptist Church several blocks away, many felt hurt and embarrassed that the emperor’s caravan of close topped cars hardly slowed down for the huge crowds of African American onlookers.

Seeking answers, and perhaps an apology, The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), also known as the Black Press of America, contacted the New York

³⁴ *JET Magazine* 13 May 1954, 8.

³⁵ *The Afro American* 1 May 1954.

³⁶ *The Afro American* 5 June 1954.

³⁷ “Haile’s Speedy Visit Irks Harlem” in *The Afro American* 5 June 1954.

City Mayor's Office and demanded to know why Haile Selassie had not been allowed to stop at the Theresa Hotel or ride in an open top vehicle. Mary Gorman, the public relations director for the mayor's reception committee, responded to the NNAP by saying that "the State Department simply refused to allow the Emperor to ride in an open car because of 'security' reasons."³⁸ Many commentators found this explanation ridiculous and insulting especially considering that the very next day Haile Selassie was paraded along Broadway (through an Italian neighborhood) in an open top vehicle. James L. Hicks, an African American reporter allowed to travel in the motorcade with the emperor noted that "it was an insult... to imply that the Emperor might be harmed while riding down 125th St. [through Harlem] where 99 percent of his viewers would be colored, and that he would not be harmed by the thousands of Italians" who saw the emperor in his open car on Broadway.³⁹ The State Department never clarified the issue.

However upset the NNAP writers and citizens of Harlem were at Haile Selassie's brief semi-appearance, writers in the southern states were even more infuriated by the State Department's complete avoidance of their communities. John H. McCray, writing for *The Afro American* on behalf of southern states, responded to NNPA reporters by saying that "even its [Harlem's] glimpse of the 'Lion of Judah' gives Harlem a whopping advantage over the 11 million" African Americans "who live south of the Mason-Dixon." McCray argued that the State Department's "rank discrimination" demonstrated by "ducking around having visitors from other countries peak into the South" was a much greater insult and affected many African Americans. Instead of inspiring "three-fourths

³⁸ *The Afro American* 5 June 1954.

³⁹ "Haile's Speedy Visit Irks Harlem" in *The Afro American* 5 June 1954.

of the country's colored people... the largest portion of America's 16 million colored citizens," the vast majority only experienced Haile Selassie's visit by reading newspapers. Furthermore, McCray noted the transformative effect that such a visit could have for the South's white population who "still don't think government affairs should be shared by everybody under the government" and would be shocked to learn that some nations are "run by people who aren't white."⁴⁰

John H. McCray was not the only African American writer who noticed the race-based intentions of the American government which carefully ushered Haile Selassie away from southern cities. In fact, many journalists wrote about the State Department's desire to keep Selassie out of the South. More importantly however, and much more interesting, was the way African American writers used the occasion to point out Southern racism. Despite the government's attempt to "minimize embracement from racial discrimination" in the South, in actuality, this gave black writers in America's southern states a means to bridge the relationship between America's foreign diplomacy and Jim Crow segregation.⁴¹

For example, Charles Loeb, a reporter for the *Washington Afro-American*, saw the emperor's visit as "the tightest concentration of Jim Crow" he had ever seen. Although Loeb's article dealt mostly with the state of segregation in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Loeb began by describing how Haile Selassie "ducked out of Stillwater [Oklahoma] in the wee hours, leaving behind him a disappointed citizenry." Loeb very successfully used the image and *idea* of Haile Selassie to segue from the visit of a black African head of state to the state

⁴⁰ "Need for Changing: The South's Always Forgotten" by John H. McCray in *The Afro American*, 5 June 1954.

⁴¹ *JET Magazine*, 13 May 1954, 8.

of black people in America's South.⁴² Another news report released by the NNPA used Haile Selassie's visit to discuss the New Orleans city government's plans to evade the recent Supreme Court ruling on *Brown v. Board of Education*. The article noted the irony of the city's attempt to "gerrymander the [school] districts to circumvent the ruling of the Supreme Court on desegregation" on this, "the eve of the visit of Emperor Haile Selassie."⁴³

Aside from African American writers directly relating the emperor's visit to Jim Crow laws, many newspaper editors must have recognized that making this connection would have a profound effect on their readers. In dozens, perhaps hundreds, of newspaper articles published during the months surrounding Haile Selassie's visit, newspaper editors placed articles reporting on the imperial visit directly adjacent to news stories debating Jim Crow, desegregation, and racial tensions. Although it is possible that such story placement is coincidental, it seems unlikely considering the staggering number of papers that follow this format.⁴⁴ In storyboarding their papers, editors may have consciously connected Haile Selassie with desegregation, demonstrating the ironies of American foreign policy, or simply assumed that a reader of one article would be interested in the other. In any event, readers of African American newspapers during the imperial visit, consciously or not, would have seen these articles paired together.

Attempts to link Haile Selassie with African American racial and political issues

⁴² "Tulsa Seen as a City of Many Contradictions" by Charles Loeb in *The Washington Afro-American*, 1 June 1954.

⁴³ "Plan to Circumvent Court Ruling Futile" in *The Washington Afro-American* 1 June 1954.

⁴⁴ This is particularly evident in the African American press. See *The Afro American*, *The Washington Afro-American*, *The Chicago Defender*, *JET Magazine*, and *The Pittsburg Press*, May-June 1954 for multiple examples of this layout.

created a racially charged buzz in the African American Press that contradicted America's general mass media and promised that the emperor's visit would have a profound effect on race relations in the United States. White journalists and authors justified Ethiopia's success, still subordinate to the U.S., by temporarily relying on older racialized notions of African inferiority to partially expand their definition of whiteness to include Haile Selassie. Simultaneously, African America commentators sought to appropriate Ethiopia's successes to further justify efforts to gain racial justice for black Americans. This contested flexibility of race in the 1950s demonstrates a divorcing of color from racial categorization to meet communities' political agendas by pairing their own racial categories, or brandings, with people in positions of power.

Selassie and Desegregation

Haile Selassie himself paired African Americans, desegregation, and decolonization in his speeches and writing. However, unlike the NNPA and the African American Press, Haile Selassie's main audience was not necessarily people of African descent. He came to America first and foremost to conduct business and negotiate with the United States government in an attempt to better his and his country's international standing.⁴⁵ This being said, the emperor had long held a special place in his heart for "black Americans" and their newspapers. In his early autobiographical records, written before the visit but collected and translated posthumously, Haile Selassie referred to African Americans as "genuine friend[s]" who offered Ethiopia "substantial support and political agitation." He also noted that during the Italo-Ethiopian war, African

⁴⁵ See Chapter 1.

Americans “established a newspaper called *The Voice of Ethiopia*” specifically to mobilize support for Ethiopia’s wartime cause.⁴⁶

African American support profoundly influenced Haile Selassie in 1936 when he made his initial bid to visit the United States. The prospect of an imperial visit by an African leader made the American government quite nervous.⁴⁷ It goes without saying that the State Department “was unsure how to deal with an independent black African” head of state “while its own black citizens were denied their share of the American dream.”⁴⁸ This was particularly true in the late 1930s when the African American community was mobilized as “never before” and positioned itself to “exert influence on American foreign policies.”⁴⁹ Even after early African internationalism had been largely constrained by national solidarity and anti-communism, some members of the U.S. government were still against Haile Selassie’s visit. In fact Secretary of State John Foster Dulles attempted to prevent the visit altogether.⁵⁰

The mixed feelings of the State Department coupled with high expectations in African American communities forced Haile Selassie to consider carefully his audience at each event, and to respond with nuanced speeches and gestures. Likewise the American government, in its ongoing battle to supplant Communist racial propaganda, sought to

⁴⁶ Haile Selassie I, *My Life and Ethiopia’s Progress, Volume Two*, Eds. Harold Marcus with Ezekiel Gebissa and Tibebe Eshet, Trans. Ezekiel Gebissa, (East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, 1994), 27. The issue of *The Voice of Ethiopian* is very complicated as it was actually started by an Ethiopian delegate that Haile Selassie himself assigned to travel to New York to interact with African Americans. This would be an excellent topic for further study, but is beyond the scope of this thesis.

⁴⁷ Harris, 104-112.

⁴⁸ Metaferia, 23.

⁴⁹ Harris, 120.

⁵⁰ According to John H. Spencer, an American who worked as a political liaison for Ethiopia, Secretary of State Dulles thought it would be more convenient to work with the British run “Northern Tier” of the Middle East and Africa as oppose to an independent state. See John H. Spencer, *Ethiopia at Bay: A Personal Account of the Haile Selassie Years* (Algonac, Reference Publications, Inc., 1984), 267-268.

show the emperor desegregation in action without actually calling any overt attention to the subject. This can be seen in both the actions of Haile Selassie and his treatment by government officials during his tour. In Washington, D.C., the first stop on the emperor's tour, the government and Haile Selassie easily balanced out their political agendas. As the tour progressed, however, racial tensions in America became more apparent to Haile Selassie and, as he moved further from the seat of the U.S. government, the emperor took greater liberty in linking himself and Ethiopia with African Americans.

One of Haile Selassie's first major public events on his American tour included a speech before the Joint House of Congress in Washington, D.C. During this speech, the emperor focused on collective security, Ethiopia's solidarity with the United States, and the desire for more of America's "pioneering spirit, ingenuity, and technical abilities." He presented Ethiopia as a critical component of America's security policy in the Middle East. He did not, however, mention African Americans, decolonization, or the recent Supreme Court rulings on desegregation. Although Haile Selassie noted that Ethiopia was an African nation on the "forefront" of "Africa's racial, economic, and social interests," he did not tie these interests to America's domestic policies.⁵¹ It seems that while the emperor was conducting negotiations with the United States government, these topics would have been inappropriate.

The State Department took special steps to "put integration on display" during the early phase of Haile Selassie's visit.⁵² From the time Haile Selassie's plane landed, selections of "colored" Washingtonians were carefully placed along the emperor's tour of

⁵¹ Haile Selassie, speech before a joint session of the American Congress, 28 May 1954. Reprinted in *The New York Times*, 29 May 1954.

⁵² "Integration on Display for Selassie at Capital" in *The Chicago Defender*, 5 June 1954.

the nation's capital. Three "colored policemen" rode in the procession from the airport to the White House. Many "colored servicemen" were put "right up front" during the military procession. "Colored citizens" were also placed near the front of the ceremony when Haile Selassie was given the key to the city.⁵³ According to James L. Hicks, a journalist of the time, the State Department did these things to "counter communist propaganda" and "present colored Americans in a favorable light during the emperor's stay."

Unfortunately for the State Department, as Haile Selassie traveled the nation, the American government found it increasingly difficult to mask the realities of Jim Crow laws and prevent the emperor's tour from clashing with racial tensions. When the emperor visited Howard University, only a short distance from downtown Washington, D.C., the tension became much more apparent. Howard University, one of America's oldest African American educational institutions and a center for African America's intellectual development, took the opportunity both to award an honorary Doctorate of Law to Haile Selassie and to question the emperor on racial issues. During a speech, and the following semi-private question and answer sessions, the emperor proclaimed that "Africa has contributed profoundly to the development, both materially and culturally, of the Americas" through the "enormous labors of Africans whose great descendants are here represented" at Howard University.⁵⁴ The "mostly colored" crowd of thousands wildly responded to Haile Selassie's historical reference to Africa and the linking of

⁵³ *The Chicago Defender*, 5 June 1954.

⁵⁴ Haile Selassie's reception speech at Howard University, 28 May 1954. Reprinted by James Hicks and the NNPA June 5, 1954.

“colored Americans” to Africa.⁵⁵ Likewise, this must have been a unique experience for Haile Selassie, as it was surely the first time he had addressed such a large crowd of people of African descent outside of Africa proper. It would not be the emperor’s last, nor most controversial, meeting of African Americans during his tour.

In Chicago, Haile Selassie made his strongest pro-African American statements of the tour. The racially-charged dimensions of this destination were apparent before Haile Selassie even left Ethiopia. In the tour’s initial planning phase, leaders in Washington scheduled three days for the emperor to explore Chicago. However, the itinerary was cut down to one full day after the Drake Hotel, which was set to house Haile Selassie’s entourage, refused such a long visit on the grounds that a “large reception in his [the emperor’s] honor” would be undesirable for the city, “lest too many African society leaders show up.”⁵⁶ When the emperor’s airplane touched down in the windy city, ten police cars transported the emperor from the airport to downtown Chicago. An “estimated 25,000 persons lined the route” from Midway Airport to Haile Selassie’s accommodations at The Drake Hotel. Most of them were “colored.”⁵⁷

Apparently the next day, after a long afternoon of touring Chicago’s industrial factories and construction sites, Haile Selassie became upset when he learned that his itinerary did not schedule a meeting with any members of Chicago’s African American community. Haile Selassie asked his tour guides to take him to a “Negro church,” as they

⁵⁵ *The Chicago Defender*, 5 June 1954. The size of the crowd at the Howard University reception is somewhat in doubt as sources range in their estimates from 4,000 to 10,000 individuals attending. All sources agree, however, that the crowds primarily consisted of African Americans.

⁵⁶ *JET Magazine*, quoting “an informed source” in the government, 13 May 1954, 8.

⁵⁷ “Big Program for Selassie: Chicago Welcomes Ethiopian Emperor” an AP bulletin reprinted in many newspapers 8 June 1954. Also, see *The Chicago Tribune*, 8 June 1954.

must have forgotten to schedule such a visit for him.⁵⁸ In less than two hours, Haile Selassie was welcomed by more than 3000 people spilling out of the South Park Chicago Baptist Church in Chicago's South Side.⁵⁹

In an impromptu eight minute speech, Haile Selassie clearly linked Africa, African Americans, decolonization, and Jim Crow. Haile Selassie connected to the African American crowd from the start:

It is only natural that we Africans should follow with deepest interest the inspiring achievements and contributions of the colored groups of the United States. By your actions, your devotions and your sacrifices, you are justifying everywhere throughout the world the advancement of the cause of racial and social equality and the right of all people to freedom and independence.

The connection between Africans and African American struggles could not have been clearer. His speech also recalled the years of "Fascist aggression against Ethiopia" and the massive support that Haile Selassie's government in exile received from the African American community. The emperor told the crowd that "in those difficult hours" in "our fight for independence," he never stood alone. Rather, "through their moral and material support," Ethiopia and Haile Selassie knew that "the peoples of African origin throughout the world were with us."⁶⁰

Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, and Haile Selassie

Despite ongoing efforts by the State Department to prevent the overt mobilization of the African American community, Haile Selassie met with many African American

⁵⁸ "Selassie Lauds U.S. Negroes in Surprise Chicago Church Visit," in *Jet Magazine* 24 June 1954.

⁵⁹ Nathaniel, 54.

⁶⁰ Text of Haile Selassie speech printed in *Jet Magazine* 24 June 1954.

leaders who embraced the emperor as a symbol of pan-African unity and opportunity. These leaders were excited to meet Haile Selassie on a personal level, but were also very interested in the prospect of using the emperor's visit to influence American foreign policy, to revive pan-Africanist movements stunted by the onset of the Cold War, and to gain personal prestige. For the emperor, these leaders posed an interesting problem. On one hand, he was grateful for the black American pan-African movements, particularly in Harlem, that had supported him during the 1930s Italo-Ethiopia crisis. He was also interested in the possibility of recruiting African American technocrats and investors to serve as advisors in Ethiopia's modernization programs. On the other hand, he visited America not only to meet with black leaders, but to shore up military and economic negotiations with an American government that did not look kindly upon leaders sowing the seeds of Black Nationalism.

One such leader that met with the emperor was the Reverend Adam Clayton Powell Jr. As both the leader of Harlem's oldest African American church and the first black congressman from New York, only the second in the post-reconstruction era, Powell played a unique role in the early civil rights movement.⁶¹ He also acted as an anti-colonial activist who linked segregation and imperialism to the lack of "colored" representation in the United States and elsewhere. He personally insisted to President Eisenhower that Haile Selassie be allowed to speak at the Abyssinian Baptist Church

⁶¹ For a general biography, see Adam Clayton Powell Jr., *Adam by Adam: The Autobiography of Adam Clayton Powell Jr.* (New York: Kensington Publishing Corp., 1971) and Charles V Hamilton, *Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.: The Political Biography of an American Dilemma* (Lanham: Cooper Square Press, 2002).

during the emperor's tour of Harlem on 30 May 1954.⁶² Powell felt that "no important Negro" should "come to Harlem from any of the four corners of the earth without being honored at the Abyssinian Baptist Church."⁶³ In the years after Selassie's visit, Powell continued to host and honor leaders from Haiti, Liberia, Indonesia, Ghana, and Nigeria, but he was most inspired by the only emperor to ever visit his church.⁶⁴

During the visit by Haile Selassie to the Abyssinian Baptist Church, Rev. Adam Clayton Powell roused the crowd with a tremendous speech welcoming the emperor in which he tied the "prayers of Harlem" to the past, present, and future of Ethiopia. Powell glorified Ethiopia's victory in the face of Fascist aggression. He voiced the idea that World War II could have been avoided had Western powers intervened in Africa. He directly told the emperor that "Harlem's prayers were being offered for the day when the entire continent of Africa is free."⁶⁵ Haile Selassie responded to Powell's praise by telling the crowd how much he appreciated the "thousands of dollars" and moral support sent by Harlemites to Ethiopia during their time of need. He then bestowed upon the church a giant solid gold Ethiopian cross and decorated Powell with a medal of honor.⁶⁶ At least one source claims that Powell "proudly" wore the medal awarded by Haile Selassie "around his neck for the rest of his life" as a symbol of his unity with Ethiopia.⁶⁷

Aside from influencing politics in the United States, Powell also became highly active in U.S. foreign policy and as a supporter of international human rights as a vehicle

⁶² Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, eds. *Harlem Renaissance Lives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 404.

⁶³ Powell, 54.

⁶⁴ Powell, 54.

⁶⁵ "Harlem Gives Emperor Warm Welcome" by James L. Hicks in *The Washington Afro-American*, 1 June 1954.

⁶⁶ Powell, 54.

⁶⁷ Gates, eds., 404.

of equality for the “colored” peoples of the world. In 1953, less than a year before Haile Selassie’s visit, Powell began to press President Eisenhower and the State Department about including more African Americans in America’s Foreign Service.⁶⁸ In one communication to Eisenhower on 10 June 1953, Powell demanded that the “discrimination in the Department of State which now allows only fifty Negroes in [the] Foreign Service out of six thousand employed” should immediately end its segregationist policies.⁶⁹ Powell raised even more ire from the government when, during the year after Selassie’s visit, he attended the 1955 Bandung Afro-Asian Conference as an observer against the ardent objections of the State Department.⁷⁰ When he came back from the conference, he widely proclaimed America’s failure to address the “colored” issue on the international stage.⁷¹ Powell was determined to help and felt that this “people’s revolution” should be “vitally a part of the Black Revolution.”⁷²

Another controversial community leader Haile Selassie met with during his visit was James R. Lawson of the United African Nationalist Movement (UANM). Lawson, a Harlem based activist, founded the UANM in 1948 after an ideological break with the Harlem Labor Union. Although it is likely that his “movement [was] mostly on paper,” Lawson developed into a leader in the international black movements of the early 1960s. He was described by a contemporary as “one of the most active of the Harlem

⁶⁸ Of course Powell was not the only one to do this. This was an ongoing complaint in the African American community that had yet to be resolved. The Committee of Negro Leaders was also particularly invested in this topic in the 1950s.

⁶⁹ Memorandum sent from Congressman Powell to President Eisenhower, 10 June 1953.

⁷⁰ The State Department attempted to bribe and intimidate Congressman Powell from attending the conference, but this actually served to harden his determination to go on his own. See Powell, 102-104.

⁷¹ Many of these comments were reprinted by the NNPA. See for example *The Washington Afro-American* 3 May 1955 and *The Baltimore Afro-American* 21 May 1955.

⁷² Quoted in the biographical information of Rev. Adam Clayton Powell Jr. available through the Abyssinian Baptist Church history pages.

nationalists.”⁷³

James R. Lawson met Haile Selassie a few years earlier than the emperor’s visit while on a tour of Africa. It was during this early period that Lawson’s ardent Black Nationalism took shape. When Lawson heard that the Emperor would be coming to New York he immediately set up what he called the “official committee” to receive Haile Selassie in Harlem. Members of Lawson’s official committee visited storefronts along the emperor’s parade route and passed out informational pamphlets about the tour. They also asked locals to dress up their shops for the occasion. Several local shop owners doubted Lawson’s credibility and inquired with the mayor’s office. The mayor’s office and the State Department quickly took action to prevent further interaction between Lawson and the emperor.⁷⁴

When Lawson attempted to attend a State Department-sponsored luncheon held for Haile Selassie on 1 June at the Waldorf-Astoria, which he had previously been warned by the State Department not to attend, he was quickly ejected by Secret Service personal. As he was being removed, he insisted that he was a guest of the emperor’s and they were scheduled to meet the following morning. This only angered the security personnel.⁷⁵

The next morning, at the Waldorf Hotel, Haile Selassie called the most prominent local African American leaders to his room to be awarded medals and honors. This included the Reverend Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Walter White of the NAACP, and the

⁷³ John Henrik Clarke, “The New Afro-American Nationalism,” *Freedomways* 1, No.3 (1961), 286-8.

⁷⁴ “State Department Given Kingly Rap on Official Wrist” by James L Hicks in *The Cleveland Call and Post*, 5 June 1954.

⁷⁵ *The Afro American*, 5 June 1954.

Borough President of Manhattan Hulan Jack.⁷⁶ The emperor also called for Lawson to be brought to his hotel. Initially refused entrance by police and State Department officials, Lawson was eventually admitted to the emperor's room where Haile Selassie decorated him with the Order of the Star of Ethiopia.⁷⁷ Although neither the emperor nor his staff commented directly upon the nature of this award, Haile Selassie himself ensured that the whole incident took place in front of African American reporter James Hicks. Within days, Hick's original reporting of the incident was picked up by many African American newspapers with clever titles poking fun at the State Department.⁷⁸

After his first attempt to organize Haile Selassie's visit, Lawson became something of a specialist at organizing receptions for African leaders visiting Harlem, irritating and embarrassing the State Department in the process. In 1960, he arranged for the reception of President Sékou Touré of the Republic of Guinea to attend a formal reception in Harlem, which caused a large problem for the State Department. Members of the NAACP, the UANM, and the Nation of Islam (represented at the reception by Malcolm X) fought over who could attend the event. After journalists reported that the NAACP, and perhaps Touré himself, were booed off the stage by members of the Nation of Islam, the State Department was livid.⁷⁹

The State Department quickly circulated an instructional memo to all of its African, Middle Eastern, and "Muslim" field stations denouncing Lawson and encouraging their agents to dissuade black or Islamic leaders from visiting Harlem.

⁷⁶ *The Afro American* 5 June 1954.

⁷⁷ *The Afro American* 5 June 1954.

⁷⁸ For example, "State Department Given Kingly Rap on Wrist" in *The Cleveland Call and Post* and "Selassie Honors Lawson after U.S. Rebuffs Him" in *The Afro American*.

⁷⁹ C. Erin Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 150.

Citing the fact that Lawson had “almost caused a race riot during a rally in Harlem,” during a visit by Ralph Bunche (the first African American Nobel Peace Prize recipient), State Department officials made clear their intention to prevent more “embarrassing” situations:

Since Harlem is so well known abroad, many African visitors ask specifically to go there and in denying their request, the Department would risk creating the impression that it wanted to hide a ‘black ghetto.’ On the other hand, the risk of a serious incident is so great that if the future visits are planned to Harlem, all activities planned exclusively by extremist organizations will have to be refused.⁸⁰

Unfortunately for Lawson, the Department of State classified him as an “extremist” in the Islamic movement, thus limiting his access to foreign leaders visiting the United States. This is ironic because other “Islamic” groups did not consider Lawson to be radically Islamic. Rather, as an Imam in Chicago put it in 1961, many Nation of Islam leaders were envious of Lawson’s ability to reach African leaders and the African American community through “materialism” rather than spirituality.⁸¹

Lawson’s time with Haile Selassie, although cut short by the State Department, can be seen as the start of his career as a liaison between African leaders and Harlem. Lawson did not gain too much recognition because of the emperor’s award, but the widespread news coverage of Lawson’s ability to meet with African leaders and circumvent the State Department did gain him notoriety. Perhaps this is why other African, and African American, leaders thought of Lawson as maintaining “liaisons with

⁸⁰ “Islamic Negro Groups in the United States” Department of State Instruction 1311 CA-6590, 15 February 1960.

⁸¹ Essien Udosen Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 193-194.

most of the African missions at the United Nations.”⁸² Whether Lawson actually had these contacts or not, the *appearance* that he had these contacts helped him get meetings with well-known leaders such as President Nasser of Egypt, President Tubman of Liberia, and President Nkrumah of Ghana.⁸³ Likewise, these international connections, first established with Haile Selassie, helped legitimize his organization and allowed Lawson to influence a broader audience in Harlem.

Haile Selassie’s encounters with Lawson and Rev. Adam Clayton Powell demonstrates both the continuity of pan-Africanism in black America, and the precarious situation the State Department faced in bringing Haile Selassie to visit the United States. It is clear that U.S. Policy makers wanted geopolitical connections with (or perhaps control of) a leader *in* Africa, but they had absolutely no interest in *African* leaders, particularly if they undermined foreign policy agendas or exposed American racial hypocrisy.

In the hopes of producing pro-Americanism, the U.S. government was willing to strike a strategic compromise on the changing debates of racial justice, even going as far as allowing an African leader to address such issues, as long as they were framed as civil rights issues *within* the United States. They were, however, adamantly opposed to any kind of debate or activism that might undermine U.S. foreign policy goals abroad. The State Department was not overly concerned by the African American press as it linked Haile Selassie’s visit to the internal American problems of Jim Crow. However, they had no intention of letting anyone challenge the U.S. in an international forum or in ways that

⁸² Clarke, 287.

⁸³ Essien-Udom, 162.

might link Black Nationalists to Africa and call attention to America's (neo)imperialism. This problematized Haile Selassie's visit, rendering it controversial yet promising, for the U.S. government, Africans, and African Americans.

Chapter 4: Hirohito and Japanese America's "Secret Pride."

When the Emperor Hirohito first arrived in California he was greeted by crowds of enthusiastic Japanese American citizens. After his plane landed at the Los Angeles International Airport, Japanese Americans turned out by the thousands waving both Japanese and American flags. Later, crowds gathered outside the downtown Music Center to catch a glimpse of Hirohito at his star-studded lunch.¹ Hirohito took the opportunity to praise the Japanese American community. During his remarks, he stated, "I am pleased to note that the 130,000 Japanese-Americans in this region are playing active roles as good American citizens."²

In 1975, Emperor Hirohito was for most Americans a "frail old man" who "appeared on television screens and newspapers" to symbolize "reconciliation between two countries."³ For Japanese Americans, however, the emperor's visit was uniquely important. As President Ford stated in a toast upon Hirohito's arrival, the emperor's visit drew attention to "the place Americans of Japanese ancestry" occupied within American society. "While their numbers are not large," Ford admitted, "their contributions to American life have been most significant." Ford made the case that Japanese Americans were "actually a living bond between two great countries."⁴

Whether or not they identified with the "bridge motif" expressed by President Ford,

1 *The Palm Beach Post*, October 8, 1975.

2 Quoted in *The Reading Eagle*, October 9, 1975.

3 Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Body of Memories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 39.

4 "Toasts of the President and Emperor Hirohito of Japan at the Dinner Honoring the President" 3 October 1975. Available through *The American Presidency Project*.

these communities reflected on their “Japanese-ness” as a result of the emperor’s visit.”⁵ During the emperor’s visit, journalists and commentators frequently claimed that Issei (first generation Japanese immigrants) “appeared enthusiastic” while Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans) seemed “ambivalent,” and Sansei (third generation Japanese Americans primarily born in United States) appeared “indifferent.”⁶ Of course the reality was much more complicated than these simple generational divisions.⁷ Issei, Nisei, and Sansei tended to feel differently about the emperor, if they felt anything at all, but it was not simply a reflection of generation. Rather, it demonstrated deep divisions over questions of leadership, identity, and ethnicity within the Japanese American community.

At the individual level, a person’s sense of being “Japanese American” was heavily influenced by both personal and family history connected to internment, military service, and economic success (or lack thereof). On larger institutional levels, Japanese Americans were influenced by political affiliation, religiosity, educational institutions, and the mass media. Location also played a critical role in the process of memory and identification. As Hirohito toured the United States, particularly in California and Hawaii, he met with thousands of Japanese Americans in the process of redefining themselves, their ethnicity, and their communities through larger institutional platforms.

⁵ For an examination of the origins and pervasive nature of the bridge motif in Japanese American historiography see Eiichiro Azuma, Eiichiro, “‘The Pacific Era Has Arrived’: Transnational Education Among Japanese Americans, 1932-1941” *History of Education Quarterly*, 43, no.1 (2003): 39-73.

⁶ “Anything Goes” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 14 October 1975.

⁷ Generational terms themselves are often problematic, politicized, and ahistorical. See Brian Masaru Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy: The Japanese American Internment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 43-44. Also, see Jere Takahashi, *Nisei/Sansei: Shifting Japanese American Identities and Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007) for an understanding of the complexity and problematic nature of using generational labeling as a form of identification. His arguments on generation vs. “generational units” are especially convincing.

Hirohito's tour created an ambiguous atmosphere which simultaneously promoted the Japanese Americans in positive (though essentialized) racial and nationalist terms and reminded Americans of Japan's militarism and aggression during World War II. This duality forced Japanese Americans to confront and reconsider notions of race and ethnicity within a setting both accepting and hostile toward Japan. Perhaps this is why reporters at the time claimed that "twenty-five percent of Los Angeles Nikkei" opposed Hirohito's tour altogether.⁸

Japanese Americans embraced, or protested, Hirohito's tour largely through group-based institutional platforms. Although the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) was often the most vocal group representing Japanese American interests in the government and mass media, it never represented the majority of Japanese Americans or their interests. Buddhist churches, gardeners' associations, ancestral prefectural associations, athletic organizations, Japanese language schools, and groups that adopted alternative models of ethnicity based on shared Asian American heritage utilized the tour to further their agendas and to challenge the JACL.⁹ This conflict of representation and identity, brought to the surface by Hirohito's tour, helped shift Japanese Americans away from "an absent presence" in American society and towards the reparations movement.

Complexity and Division: Hirohito Raises questions of Representation and Identity

⁸ "Claimed 25 Percent of Los Angeles Nikkei Oppose Visit of the Emperor" AP Bulletin reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 6 October 1975. The Asian American movement and rejection of American militarism in Vietnam were also an aspect of this process as discussed below.

⁹ The size and clout of these organizations ballooned in the postwar period yet are often left out of resettlement, postwar, and reparations narratives. See Satoru Ichikawa, Interview segment 21 "Changes in the Seattle Buddhist Temple after World War II" *Denshō Visual History Collection*, 20 April 2009 and Naomi Hirahara, ed., *Green makers: Japanese American Gardeners in Southern California* (Los Angeles: Southern California Gardeners' Federation, 2000).

Japanese American communities have never been monolithic. Questions of political representation, the codification of history, and who “owns” Japanese America have been issues within the community from the beginning.¹⁰ Hirohito’s tour, because of its grandeur, brought these issues to the forefront of Japanese American communities. Foreshadowing the divisions caused by the emperor’s visit, Japan’s Prime Minister Takeo Miki caused a minor controversy a month earlier in Los Angeles when only “Issei” leaders and “newcomer” businessman George Doizaki represented the Japanese American Community in interactions with the prime minister. The JACL was largely excluded as unimportant.¹¹

James Oda, a Californian Nisei, wrote to the editor of *The Rafu Shimpō*, a popular Japanese American newspaper in Los Angeles, claiming that Issei “shouldn’t be calling all the shots for the whole (Japanese) community.” Oda then went on to name several Nikkei community leaders with “outstanding backgrounds and of diversified views.” These included John Aiso, Robert Takasugi, Frank Chuman, Masamori Kojima, Mas Fukai, Paul Bannai, and Ellen Endo.¹² Of the seven “diverse” Japanese Americans Oda named to represent the community, six were advocates for the JACL and five were veterans associated with the 442nd Japanese American volunteer combat unit whose bravery against Axis forces had come to represent the JACL’s main platform for demonstrating Japanese American loyalty to the United States.¹³ In response to Oda’s editorial, Dick Gima, a columnist for *The Hawaii Hochi*, questioned how many of these

¹⁰ See Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race History and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹¹ “Anything Goes” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 30 September 1975.

¹² Originally in *The Rafu Shimpō*, reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 30 September, 1975.

¹³ This group was, however, diverse by age if not by ideology.

leaders would, or should, play a significant role in “the impending visit of Emperor Hirohito.”¹⁴ Whether or not most Japanese Americans would have agreed with Oda’s assessment of who was qualified to lead the community, his complaint demonstrated the absence of the JACL, and their accompanying 442nd platform, in Japanese American representation leading up to Hirohito’s visit.

It should come as no surprise that the Issei were heavily involved with politics directly interacting with Japan and also Japanese American communities. They spoke Japanese and commanded more resources. However, the Issei did not primarily play a political role in Hirohito’s tour. The excitement Issei felt leading up to and during Hirohito’s tour was primarily based on race and nationalism which for the Issei, at least in this circumstance, superseded political representation and community goals. For elderly Issei, the idea of being racially Japanese and the idea of extreme respect for the emperor were intimately intertwined as the emperor represented the soul of Japan in racial and nationalistic terms. Most Issei left the empire before the height of Japan’s attempts to solidify the *Kokutai*, the national polity, around the imperial house and the person of the emperor. However, continuing contact between Japan and the Japanese American communities during the 1930s created a flow of ideas which reinforced the paramount role of the emperor in Japanese society.¹⁵ To be in the presence of the emperor was simply unthinkable when the Issei lived in Japan. This changed in 1945 when Emperor

¹⁴ “Anything Goes” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 30 September 1975.

¹⁵ For the imperial mythology see Carol Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1985); Kenneth J. Ruoff, *The People’s Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), and Irokawa Daikichi, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, trans. Marius B. Jansen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). For aspects of continuing Japanese and Japanese American contact, particularly in the 1930s, see Azuma, 2005 and Hayashi, 2004.

Hirohito was forced to publicly renounce his divinity. This “rehabilitated” the emperor as a man of the people capable of coming face to face with the Japanese and people of Japanese ancestry.

Many Issei were as excited by the prospect of being able to see Hirohito while on his tour as they would have been before emigrating from Japan. Wakako Adachi, an 82-year old Issei living in San Francisco, told a journalist, “I feel the same toward the Emperor as I did 63 years ago when I emigrated from Japan.”¹⁶ For Issei outside of Japan in the postwar period, Hirohito’s “majestic” qualities remained much more intact than for the Japanese themselves. It was exactly because they lived outside of the political climate of Japan proper that the Issei’s opinions of the Emperor were less affected by postwar changes and debates on the proper role of a “democratic” monarchy. Japanese American commentators in the United States predicted that for “thousands of elderly immigrants” like Adachi, the emperor’s visit would be “the experience of a lifetime.”¹⁷ Masamori Kojima, a Nisei assistant to Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, told Japanese reporters that the Issei’s “feelings for the Japanese Emperor probably exceed that of many people living in Japan. His visit will be one of the most memorable moments of their lives.”¹⁸

The Issei themselves shared this opinion and spoke about their expectations openly. Sanae Ikeda, an Issei and chairman of an unofficial committee to welcome the

¹⁶ “Hirohito, Empress Brave Rain at Last Mainland Stop in U.S.” UPI Bulletin reprinted in *The Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, 8 October 1975.

¹⁷ “Emperor’s Visit to S. California: His Majesty Expected to Find Warm Welcome” Kyodo-Reuter News Services, printed in *The Japan Times*, 27 September 1975.

¹⁸ “Emperor’s Visit to S. California: His Majesty Expected to Find Warm Welcome” Kyodo-Reuter News Services, printed in *The Japan Times*, 27 September 1975.

emperor to California, summed up his feelings by saying that, “we [the Issei] still feel like Japanese.” He told the reporter that back in Japan, he “had to bow” from afar and could not “even look at the emperor’s face when he passed, because he was regarded as a God.”¹⁹ In 1975 however, he raised several thousand dollars and organized a welcoming ceremony for Issei from up and down the West Coast who gathered to see the emperor shake hands and pose for pictures with local Japanese Americans.²⁰

Sanae Ikeda’s expectations and sentiments during the emperor’s visit were in no way unique. Older Japanese Americans, particularly those with memories of pre-war life in Japan, shared the same feelings of anticipation and excitement about Hirohito’s upcoming tour. Journalists from the American mass media, the Japanese American press, and Japanese news services all reported on the overwhelming joy and enthusiasm from the elderly at every stop along the emperor’s tour. They were regularly described as instantly overwhelmed by emotion at the sight of the imperial couple. One younger Japanese American commentator told reporters that “for the oldtimers [sic] who left Japan 50 or 60 years ago – this is the first time (for them) to see majesty[sic]. They want to cry.”²¹ Issei sources, in Japanese, go even further, claiming that “the old people of Japanese descent (*rōnikkeijin*)” absolutely could not prevent “shedding tears (*namida o nagasu*)” upon first sight of the emperor.²²

This wellspring of emotion for the emperor’s tour reflected a complex sense of

¹⁹ “Emperor and Japanese Americans” UPI News bulletin printed in *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1975.

²⁰ “Emperor and Japanese Americans” UPI News bulletin printed in *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1975.

²¹ “Los Angeles Residents Greet Japanese Royalty” AP bulletin printed in the *Observer-Reporter*, 9 October 1975.

²² “*Hawai de no akarui kangei*,” *Tennō kōgō Ryōheika Hawaii hōgei kinen shashin shū: A Photographic Collection of Welcoming T.M. Emperor and Empress of Japan in Hawaii, 1975* ([S.I.] Hawaiishū Ryōheika Hōgei Iinkai, 1976), 48.

pride for both their “parent” nations. Regardless of their desire to gain American citizenship, these Japanese Americans overcame extreme circumstances to participate in the imperial tour, see the emperor in person, and demonstrate their love of both America and Japan. They used the occasion of the imperial visit to participate in being Japanese through America. In Honolulu, Haru Oda, an eighty-eight year old Issei, waited for hours outside of the Japanese Consulate to see the emperor speak. She told a reporter that she “never dreamed she could” meet the emperor and that she “would wave her Japanese and American flags enthusiastically (*isshokemmei hata o furimasu*).”²³ In San Diego, Osaki Kiyotaro, a 101-year old Issei, planned to have his son fly in from Japan, rent a wheel chair, and take him to greet the emperor’s plane. He told a reporter, “I think it’s wonderful the emperor can come out and we can see him.” Osaki explained that such an event “in the old days” was simply impossible and could only occur in America. Osaki had every intention of directly looking upon the emperor. He said, “I have only seen pictures for 101 years. I’m going to the airport to *see* him.”²⁴

Aside from just seeing the emperor, many Issei felt motivated to ensure that Hirohito would be given the proper respect during his American tour. The State Department, in coordination with the government of Japan and state and local governments in America, created the itinerary of the emperor’s tour, but it was local Japanese American community leaders, mostly Issei, who dealt with the nuanced details of providing the correct “Japanese” respect for Hirohito during the visit. For example, in San Francisco, a local Issei welcoming organization raised more than 9000 dollars from

²³ *The Hawaii Hochi*, 13 October 1975.

²⁴ “San Diego Issei – 101 to Meet Emperor” AP Bulletin reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 8 October, 1975. Emphasis added.

donors across the West Coast specifically for this purpose. Fully two-thirds of these generous donations, again mostly from Issei, went into renting enough “red carpet to be used for the Emperor” as he walked around Golden Gate Park during and after a welcoming ceremony.²⁵

Another very successful effort at ensuring respect for the emperor occurred in a debate in a Japanese American newspaper, *The Hawaii Hochi*, over the correct nomenclature for reportage on Hirohito. In its *Toku Toku Kyōshitsu*, a write-in question and opinion column, an upset Issei challenged the occasional use of the word “Hirohito” to refer to the emperor. He argued that only *Tennō* (emperor), *Ryōheika* (Their Majesties), or their English equivalents should be used, never simply Hirohito. He compared it to only using Jerry and Liz to refer to President Ford and Queen Elizabeth and held it up as a marker of disrespect in the American, in this case the Japanese American, media. In *The Hawaii Hochi*’s initial reply, columnist Tomomichi Kuraishi “pointed out that *Tennō* itself is a word of Chinese origins” and that the convention in U.S. papers was to use Hirohito when referring to the emperor. Apparently, this caused a controversy among older Japanese Americans in the community. *The Hawaii Hochi*’s English language editor felt compelled to write a lengthy reply supporting his columnist and the use of the word Hirohito. However, through the end of the tour and the subsequent weeks, *The Hawaii Hochi* did not again use the term Hirohito except in direct quotes from other sources.²⁶

Efforts to present the Emperor in a respectful manner demonstrated recognition of

²⁵ “Emperor and Japanese Americans” UPI News bulletin printed in *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1975.

²⁶ See “If Hirohito, why not Elizabeth” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 6 October 1975. The lack of the usage of the term “Hirohito” runs at least through the end of the month following Hirohito tour.

the community's stakes in the imperial visit and were largely intended to insure that both Hirohito and Japanese American communities enjoyed the tour as much as possible. However, not all Japanese Americans were as openly excited for the emperor's arrival. For Nisei and Sansei who were more integrated into American society, Emperor Hirohito's visit evoked complex problems of identity and representation. Social status, wartime memories, "Americanization," and a fear of how other Americans would perceive the Japanese American response caused friction within the community, especially over the issue of leadership. For some, this meant turning out to cheer Hirohito regardless of what others might think. For others, the need to represent themselves as "whole Americans," a continuation of the imagined wartime binary of either total loyalty to the American government or fanatical pro-Japanese loyalties, precluded them from any public excitement over the emperor's visit. Still others closely associated with the Asian American movement actively sought to disrupt the emperor's tour. Despite this complex predicament, individuals and groups working to demonstrate their pure "American-ness," and those trying to avoid any such labeling, still voluntarily turned out by the thousands to see Emperor Hirohito in the 1970s.

One approach to overcome this dilemma was to embrace fully the societal benefits of the emperor's tour while delicately renouncing any personal sentiment of respect, admiration, or affection for Hirohito. For example, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) tread a fine line to craft an appropriate response to Hirohito's tour. The JACL was concerned about the implications of demonstrating support for the emperor's visit especially within any sort of racial, ethnic, or religious context. They wanted to

welcome the emperor in the same manner as the “millions of [other] Americans throughout the country.”²⁷ While not maintaining the appearance of enthusiasm about the emperor’s visit, they endorsed the tour as a method of protecting Japanese Americans from the excesses of local political controversies between America and Japan. David Ushio, a Nisei and the executive director of the Nisei-dominated Japanese-American Citizens League, issued a lengthy, if half-hearted, endorsement of Hirohito’s impending tour claiming that “the fate of Japanese Americans is inextricably tied to the relations between the two countries.”²⁸ Ushio explained that:

The importance of maintaining harmonious relations between the U.S. and Japan is of prime concern to the Japanese American Citizens League. Historically, in times of political and economic tension between the U.S. and Japan, Japanese Americans have been the victims in this country of misdirected animosities toward policies of Japan. The most notable example occurred during World War II when 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry were imprisoned without due process as a consequence of the Pacific war with Japan.²⁹

According to Ushio and the JAACL, this pragmatic strategy based on expectations of white American racism would prevent conflict between whites and Japanese Americans. Hirohito’s tour was beneficial and should be supported because it demonstrated and further bolstered U.S.-Japan relations. Ushio warned that if these “relations go sour,” the “general American public won’t distinguish us [Japanese Americans] from Japanese in Japan.” He also reminded Japanese Americans that “even now, they [Japanese Americans] often become the target of demonstrations in this country because of Japan’s

²⁷ “Japanese American Citizens League Hails Long-delayed Visit of the Emperor” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 4 October 1975.

²⁸ “Emperor and Japanese Americans” UPI News bulletin printed in *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1975.

²⁹ “Japanese American Citizens League Hails Long-delayed Visit of the Emperor” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 4 October 1975.

economic pressures or whale killings.”³⁰

The JACL’s approach of accepting the social benefits while claiming no personal attachment to the visit worked well on a large institutional level, but was more difficult for smaller groups and individuals with more at stake in the emperor’s visit. One such group was the Japanese American veterans of the 442nd military unit. Mainstream media reporters, and their principally non-Japanese American readership, were very interested in what these particular Japanese Americans, so central to the acceptance of the community as a whole, thought of the emperor’s visit. The veterans had to be careful not to come off as either anti-Japanese, or worse un-American, as either response could endanger the narrative of heroism and loyalty to the nation that they were charged with upholding.

Veterans of the 442nd, at least the more vocal ones, used the common American narrative of Hirohito as a “man of peace” to rationalize their support for the emperor’s visit. During the 1950s and 1960s, the American media depicted Hirohito in an overwhelmingly positive, if pedantic, light.³¹ From his declared lack of war responsibility to his renunciation of divinity, Hirohito was brought in line with American interests and ideology. He was depicted as a simple, passive figure who had been led astray by Japan’s militarists. Veterans of the 442nd, either because they truly believed it or found it useful, used this interpretation of Hirohito in their arguments supporting the tour. One 442nd Veteran in Honolulu told reporters that, in regards to the emperor, “there was no personal resentment against him.” He explained that “even during the war, we

³⁰ “Emperor and Japanese Americans” UPI News bulletin printed in *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1975.

³¹ See Naoko Shibusawa, *America’s Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[the 442nd] saw the military in Japan as the villain,” not Hirohito himself.³² Another veteran, Rev. Hiro Higuchi, who served as a chaplain for the 442nd, explained that he was sure that among Japanese Americans, “there is no lingering feeling about the war” and hoped the emperor had “a nice and safe visit.”³³

Although the JACL, which heavily relied on the 442nd narrative, never politically represented the majority of the community, many Japanese Americans followed similar patterns of thinking with regards to Hirohito’s tour. Nisei interested in demonstrating their “whole American-ness” since the end of World War II, were surrounded by American media and propaganda and came to view the emperor as innocent of war responsibility and also as a symbol of the new Japanese democracy.³⁴ This process allowed Nisei, previously relegated to proving their “American-ness,” to support the emperor’s tour and reclaim aspects of their ethnicity without giving up their “Americanization.” By the 1970s many Japanese Americans connected with the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and gardeners’ associations, which represented a far greater portion of the Japanese American community than the JACL, were proud of Japan’s progress and felt a certain self-created pride and acceptance of their Japanese heritage.³⁵ Many Japanese Americans saw participation in these organizations as a

³² “Hirohito Visits Pearl Harbor, but Won’t see War Monument” AP Bulletin reprinted in *The Daytona Beach Morning Journal*, 12 October 1975.

³³ “Hirohito Visits Pearl Harbor, but Won’t see War Monument” AP Bulletin reprinted in *The Daytona Beach Morning Journal*, 12 October 1975.

³⁴ See Klein, Christina, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003) and Naoko, 2006 for more nuanced and distinct discussion of this point.

³⁵ For example, in 1972, 43,476 Japanese Americans were members in the Buddhist Churches of America. Likewise, gardeners’ associations at the local level regularly drew thousands of participants while the JACL had difficulty over the next decade getting a few hundred people to come to their most important meetings. See respectively Tetsuden Kashima, *Buddhism in America: The Social Organization of an Ethnic Religious*

method for “determining their own future” within “their own ethnic groups” free from “invisibility and anonymity.”³⁶ Their “absent presence” broke down within these communities, and in American popular culture, if not yet to the extent that they all embraced their “Japanese-ness” openly.³⁷

Buddhist Churches of America and local/regional gardeners’ associations promoted “Japanese” ethnicity and pride through a number of events and institutions. However, the most important mechanism was the creation of local community-based Japanese language schools. JACL-backed schools did “not emphasize Japanese history and culture, largely due to the sentiments of [Nisei] parents” who saw no importance in “emphasizing the bridges between history, culture, and identity.”³⁸ The language schools run by the BCA and gardeners’ associations, while certainly supporting Americanism, actively engaged the ethnicity of their Japanese American pupils and challenged them to connect with their Japanese heritage.

Sansei and the younger generations composed the main body of these language schools.³⁹ These students, for the most part born in America to American citizens, were not too concerned with demonstrating their American credentials. Without direct

Institution (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1977), 142; Hirahara, ed., 5 and 142, and “Only 250 Attend ‘Day of Remembrance’ Ceremony: Nikkei Apathetic After 37 Years” *The Rafu Shimpo*, 20 February 1979.

³⁶ Paul Nagano, Interview Segment 14 “Role of the Berkley Buddhist Temple in Providing Housing and Serving the Community During the Postwar Resettlement Period” *Denshō Visual History Collection*, 25 May 1999.

³⁷ See Caroline Chung Simpson, *An Absent Presence: Japanese Americans in Postwar American Culture, 1945-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

³⁸ As stated by J.D. Hokoyama the principle of Maryknoll, a Catholic Japanese American school in Little Tokyo with strong JACL support and affiliations. Quoted in “Opposition to Hirohito’s Visit Arises in L.A.” *The Los Angeles Times*, 6 October 1975.

³⁹ There were of course many others such as *Shin Issei* and their children, Nisei born from “war brides,” and *nanmin* (refugees) or *tanno* (agricultural workers) from Japan. For an interesting look at how some of these groups were absorbed into and supported by the gardeners’ associations see “The *Tanno* Program, 1956-1965” by Eiichiro Azuma in Hirahara, Naomi, eds.:107-111.

memories of internment, and the total racial exclusion of the pre-war period, they had more liberty to explore options of self-definition and connect with their perceived Japanese roots, if they desired. Because of the ongoing civil rights movement and people-power politics of the 1960s and 1970s, these groups “were poised to participate more fully in the mainstream of U.S. Society than had any previous generation” of Japanese Americans.⁴⁰ In a way, they were not very different from their parents and “despite the criticism of the materialism of American society which was prevalent among the general youth of the time,” most of these students sought lifestyles and career paths that “tended to conform closely” to the careers of their parents.⁴¹

Most younger Japanese Americans, even those deeply involved with the BCA, gardeners’ associations, and Japanese language schools “were becoming very much like their White American counterparts” in their dress and social conduct within society.⁴² Their reactions to Hirohito’s visit, likewise, were not much different than other American youth of the time. Many young Japanese Americans made semi-rebellious jokes or showed no interest. For example, Kayoko Ueda, a Sansei from New York told a reporter, as they were browsing in a Zen-oriented bookstore, that “for the Emperor I am applauding but only with one hand.”⁴³ When asked if she was excited about the emperor’s upcoming visit to New York, Kazuhide Kamura, a Sansei clerk at the same bookstore, said “not very much.” She elaborated, “after all, Yoko Ono and John Lennon came into the store last week.” Kamura continued:

⁴⁰ Takahashi, 1.

⁴¹ Takahashi, 155.

⁴² Takahashi, 1.

⁴³ “Pride and Pleasure Evident Beneath Usual Restraint; Japanese Here Prepare for Imperial Visit” *The New York Times*, 23 September 1975.

He [the emperor] still means much to our parents and grandparents, but if you are under 30, as we are, you were born after World War II, when he was no longer a god, you don't think about him very much one way or the other.⁴⁴

Jeff Mori, a Sansei from San Francisco explained that he had no intention of waving flags for the Emperor, because “to us [younger generations] it's just like a visit from the Queen of England.”⁴⁵ At all of Hirohito's stops, reporters commented on the “indifferent” Sansei attitudes toward the tour.⁴⁶

These reports were not entirely accurate, however. Two divergent groups of young Japanese Americans were very interested in Hirohito's tour and the chance to participate in the events surrounding the imperial visit. Those who strongly identified as Japanese, racially or ethnically, actively supported the emperor's tour as it reinforced their “Japanese” roots. On the other hand, those who primarily identified themselves as Japanese members of the Asian American community or movement were typically opposed to Hirohito's tour as they related it to militarization in general. This group viewed American militarism against Asians, particularly in Vietnam, as an example of America's continuing racist undertones in an era when racial rights had “officially” been settled and equalized.⁴⁷ For them, Hirohito was yet another symbol of militarization projected in negative racialized terms.

Japanese American youths who participate in Hirohito's tour were often associated with Japanese language schools, Buddhist youth organizations, or deeply

⁴⁴ “Pride and Pleasure Evident Beneath Usual Restraint; Japanese Here Prepare for Imperial Visit” *The New York Times*, 23 September 1975.

⁴⁵ “Emperor and Japanese Americans” UPI News bulletin printed in *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1975.

⁴⁶ “Anything Goes” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 14 October 1975.

⁴⁷ “Japanese-US League Pressured by Youths” *The Los Angeles Times*, 17 July 1970.

influenced by “traditional” Japanese ideological movements. Through the origination and support of their parents, these younger Japanese Americans engaged in school and club events in support of the emperor’s tour. When the emperor arrived in New York, for example, it was widely reported that “young students” from the Japanese American Association of New York’s Japanese-language classes greeted the emperor and empress on arrival in LaGuardia Airport. When their majesties left New York, it was the Sansei students from the Japanese School of New York that officially bid them farewell at the airport.⁴⁸ On the other end of the country in Honolulu, it was Akemi Yamanishi and Keiichi Sato, both young Sansei students in local Japanese language schools, who officially “represented Japanese residents in Honolulu” when they shook hands and welcomed the emperor.⁴⁹

Some older self-identifying Sansei raised with strong “Japanese” identities played more official and centralized roles. For example, Jimmy Sakoda, a forty year old Sansei, organized police security for the Los Angeles portion of Hirohito’s tour. Sakoda, nicknamed the “Samurai detective” by colleagues, was the Los Angeles Police Department’s first Japanese American police lieutenant. He attributed his success to the “Japanese” education he received from Issei as a young man in the Tule Lake internment camp. While in the camp, Sakoda was taught the Japanese language, *bushido* (warrior ethics), *gaman* (patience) and *giri* (obligation).⁵⁰ In 1975, Sakoda established an “Asian taskforce” police bureau, America’s first.

⁴⁸ “Japanese Residents of New York Anticipate with Pride Upcoming Emperor Hirohito Visit” *The Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, 2 October, 1975.

⁴⁹ Hawaishū Ryōheika Hōgei Iinkai, 29.

⁵⁰ “Sansei Cop Urges Revival of Traditional Values” *The Japan Times*, 9 June 1997.

Protecting Hirohito in Los Angeles was the taskforce's first official assignment.⁵¹ Decades later, Sakoda reflected on the joys of meeting the emperor, participating in Japan's yearly nikkeijin conventions, and advocated a revival of "traditional" values.⁵² He felt that traditional Japanese values were dying in Japan but were "still very much alive" in populations of "Nikkei-jin throughout the world." Sakoda advocated that nikkeijin, as the real Japanese, be used to reinvigorate both Japanese and American societies.⁵³

However, not all young Japanese Americans embraced Hirohito's tour as a symbol of their identity or their communities' goals. By the 1970s, a sizable portion of Sansei had "developed a political and ideological orientation remarkably different from their Nisei predecessors."⁵⁴ They "felt estranged from the mainstream" of American society "despite a desire and an effort to become a part of it."⁵⁵ Utilizing political methods "patterned after black activists," these Sansei sought full political rights and pressed for racial justice in an era ostensibly free from racial prejudice.⁵⁶ In part, the Sansei strategically "defined themselves as a

⁵¹ "LAPD Detective Gets His Man" *Police: The Law Enforcement Magazine Community for Cops* interview by *The Los Angeles Times* interviewers Stefano Paltera and Teresa Watanabe, 29 March 2008. Available at <http://www.policemag.com/Forums/Police-Magazine-Forum/From-the-Editor/New-Forum-Features/LAPD-DETECTIVE-GETS-HIS-MAN.aspx>

⁵² These yearly *nikkeijin* conventions began in 1940 and have been more or less ongoing since that time. The sixteenth annual postwar nikkeijin conference opened in Tokyo while the emperor was in the United States on tour. See *The Japan Times*, 9 October 1975,

⁵³ "Sansei Cop Urges Revival of Traditional Values" *The Japan Times*, 9 June 1997.

⁵⁴ Takahashi, 2.

⁵⁵ Takahashi, 156.

⁵⁶ Takahashi, 2.

racially oppressed group and linked themselves to broader movements for racial change” in the context of the Asian American movement.⁵⁷

Challenging Japanese American community leadership, and American society in general, Sansei who identified with the Asian American movement became particularly invested in anti-war activities, protested over American militarization, and saw the Vietnam War in the context of American imperialism in Asian.⁵⁸ They viewed Hirohito as a militant leader who had already helped conduct a war against Asians. Several Sansei protested the emperor’s visit on the grounds that it promoted Japanese remilitarization, particularly in their dealings with Korea.⁵⁹ More radical youths saw U.S.-Japanese military connections, in this case symbolized by Hirohito’s tour, as a potential threat to the sovereignty of both North and South Korea should another war arise on the peninsula.⁶⁰

These alternative responses to Hirohito from a wide range of Japanese Americans demonstrated the “dual mentality” of many Japanese Americans at the time of the imperial tour. Despite both active support and protests from the younger generation, Japanese Americans overall claimed publicly that the emperor’s tour was positive for U.S.-Japanese relations and business. They often refrained from statements of their personal feelings despite being excited for the tour. Edison Uno, a Nisei teacher of Japanese American history from San Francisco State University and later a powerful figure in the JACL, summed up the situation saying:

⁵⁷ William Wei, *The Asian American Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 246-247.

⁵⁸ Wei, 21, 246 and Takahashi, 163.

⁵⁹ “Los Angeles Residents Greet Japanese Royalty” AP Bulletin reprinted in *The Observer-Reporter*, 9 October 1975.

⁶⁰ “Opposition to Hirohito Visit Arises in L.A.” *The Los Angeles Times*, 6 October 1975.

We are American citizens, but always have to apologize for what Japan does. We want to identify with Japan because it's a source of our cultural heritage, but we don't want to get too close because [of] our past experiences. The Emperor's visit increases this dual mentality of Japanese Americans.

Uno reported that this led not only to the community's, but to his personal, deeply felt emotions about the tour. Uno confessed, "It's a secret pride."⁶¹

Hirohito and Civil Rights?: The Emperor's Tour, Japanese American Empowerment, and the Redress Movement

It was in part this "secret pride," that led Edison Uno, and many other JACL members, into further embracing their past, politically mobilizing, and advocating for redress. The emperor's tour signaled to the community that ethnic pride was not a shame, but a virtue. Likewise, Japanese Americans opposed to Hirohito's tour also developed a sturdy platform for their political activities. Often, both groups supported similar goals. In Japanese American communities, internment was the issue that most affected ideas of nationalism, culture, and citizenship. By the time of Emperor Hirohito's visit, many Japanese Americans had already taken an interest in civil rights, particularly those who identified with the Asian American movement.⁶² Many others simply wanted recognition of past grievances. Whether with a new sense of pride from Japan's success, or opposition to it, politically motivated Japanese Americans reconnected to their culturally Japanese roots, reacted to the idea of being a "model

⁶¹ "Emperor and Japanese Americans" UPI News bulletin printed in *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1975.
⁶² Kim, 221.

minority,” and embraced Hirohito’s tour as a symbol for Japanese America’s future.⁶³

One aspect of Hirohito’s tour which created both controversy and a new space to debate the past was the linking of the emperor, Japanese Americans, and internment. President Ford, Hirohito, the JACL, and dozens of journalists linked the emperor’s tour with the suffering of internment and brought the trauma of Japanese American incarceration, as well as the movement for redress, into the mainstream. The idea of redress and reparations was first raised in the JACL by Edison Uno during the 1970 national convention, but it soon fell flat from lack of support.⁶⁴ However, four months after Hirohito’s visit, on 19 February 1976, President Ford signed Proclamation 4417 which officially rescinded Executive Order 9066, recognized “the indignities suffered” by Japanese Americans during internment, and is often cited as a cornerstone of the redress movement.⁶⁵

While it would be a stretch to claim that Hirohito’s tour caused Proclamation 4417 to come about, it is not difficult to pair the two events. At the request of President Ford

⁶³ See Lon Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival in Los Angeles, 1934-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). Although Kurashige does not discuss Hirohito’s tour in any way, his analysis of Japanese American interactions with Japan, and Japanese economic success, in the 1970s is very convincing.

⁶⁴ Brian Niiya, ed., *Japanese American History: An A-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present* (New York: Facts on File, 1993), 183-184 and Tsuchida Kumiko, “Retelling the Past: Collective Memory in the Japanese American Redress Movement” Paper presented at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Sheldon Boston and the Boston Marriot, Boston, MA, July 31, 2008.

⁶⁵ President Gerald Ford, “An American Promise,” Proclamation 4417, Confirming the Termination of the Executive Order Authorizing Japanese-American Internment During World War II, 19 February 1976. Cataloged in the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Speeches and Writings Collection, the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum. For example of Prop 4417 as the beginning of redress see Mitchell T. Maki, et. al., *Achieving the Impossible Dream: How Japanese Americans Achieved Redress* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 70-71; Leslie Hatamiya, *Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and the Passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 135; Stephanie Bangrath, Stephanie, *Voices Raised in Protest: Defending North American Citizens of Japanese Ancestry, 1942-1949* (Vancouver: UCB Press, 2008), 1; Roy L. Brooks, *When Sorry Isn’t Enough: The Controversies Over Apologies and Reparations for Human Injustice* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 160.

and the White House, Congressional members Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (Dem., Hawaii), Rep. Spark Matsunaga (Dem., Hawaii), and Rep. Norman Mineta (Dem. California) met with Hirohito during his tour and were later asked to attend the signing of Proclamation 4417.⁶⁶ Likewise, Mike Masaoka attended both functions in coordination with the JACL. Wayne Horiuchi (the JACL's Washington representative) initially created the momentum for the proposition in Washington, with the support of David E. Ushio (National Executive Director, JACL), during Hirohito's tour.⁶⁷ Horiuchi "stirred up interest among members of Congress" when congressional attention was already heavily focused on Hirohito and Japanese Americans.⁶⁸

The push for Proclamation 4417 had very little to do with the majority of Japanese Americans' political goals, personal agendas, or reactions to Hirohito's tour. However, due to its timing, it tapped into a growing consciousness of internment connected to Hirohito's visit. Andrew H. Malcolm, a reporter for the *New York Times*, explored this connection by interviewing Japanese Americans while on an investigative tour of Camp Amache, one of the wartime internment camps in Granada, Colorado. Malcolm asked local Nisei who remained in the Colorado community after internment about their feeling toward the emperor. Kazuko Matsunaga informed Malcolm that the emperor's visit had not changed her feelings or memories at all. She told him, "the emperor means nothing to me, it's the President I respect." Another Kibei Nisei, Elden Tanaka, was more

⁶⁶ See Memo "Dinner in Honor of Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress of Japan," guest list, checklist, 2 October 1975. Cataloged in The White House Central Files Subject Files CO75 – Japan (Boxes 30-31), 10-2-75 to 10-9-75 and "After 34 Years Order to Move Japanese Lifted" AP Bulletin reprinted in *The Observer-Reporter*, 20 February 1976.

⁶⁷ See "Japanese Dream Fulfilled," *The Deseret News*, 20 February 1975 and Bill Hosokawa, *JACL in Quest of Justice* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1982), 339-340.

⁶⁸ Hosokawa, 1982, 339. Also, Congress "officially" welcomed Hirohito in September and had just passed the Japanese-United States Friendship Act in direct response to Hirohito's visit. See Chapter 1.

verbose and relayed the role the Emperor played during his educational years. In school in Japan, Tanaka told the reporter, “They said it would be an honor to die for the Emperor,” but no one believed it. In regards to the Emperor’s visit, Tanka said, “I seen [sic] him on TV here. That’s all. And that’s fine.” A third Nisei interviewee, Fred Morimoto, felt the emperor’s visit did no good and simply brought up painful memories in the community. Morimoto told Malcolm, “it was a difficult time in those days. And the less said about them the better. In fact, the less thought about them the better.”⁶⁹

Although Malcolm blatantly questioned his interviewees’ claims of disinterest and “little bitterness” toward the emperor, the main thrust of his article was that Hirohito’s visit “finally ended” the saga of internment and frustrations between Japanese America, Japan, and the United States. This was not consistent, however, with the feelings of the Nisei he interviewed or the Japanese American community at large.⁷⁰ In a way, however, Malcolm was correct. Hirohito’s visit symbolized the end of an era in which internment was associated with depersonalized suffering and lost.⁷¹ Around the time of the tour, internment was reinterpreted as a national mistake which needed to be “brought to the public’s attention.”⁷² For example, *Farewell to Manzanar*, a made for TV movie that openly demonstrated the mass “psychological and emotional experiences of internment” was released 11 March 1976.⁷³ The film, which called attention to internment’s destructive role in national history, came only three weeks after Proclamation 4417 was signed and just a few months after the emperor’s visit to the

⁶⁹ “Japanese-Americans Recall Internment” *The New York Times*, 10 October 1975.

⁷⁰ “Japanese-Americans Recall Internment” *The New York Times*, 10 October 1975.

⁷¹ See Simpson for my “absent” framework.

⁷² “Interned in Camp: Japanese Uprooted” in *The Evening News*, 5 March 1976.

⁷³ Simpson, 29.

United States.⁷⁴ Although the movie was completed in September 1975 and certainly would have been an important film without Hirohito's visit, the tour raised awareness of internment among younger generations of Japanese Americans with little or no direct knowledge of the incarceration and motivated them toward political action.⁷⁵

Hirohito's visit promoted an atmosphere ripe for reexamination and redress by creating a public space in which wrongs committed by the United States government against Japanese Americans were discussed, questioned, and recognized on a mass scale.⁷⁶ But, the imperial tour also opened the door for Japanese Americans to debate sources of friction between their communities and Japan. The biggest issue was Japan's perceived economic "aggression" in California. Mark Masaki, a Nisei advocate in Little Tokyo who worked closely with members of the Japanese American community to preserve their own space, felt that emperor Hirohito's tour represented just another form of Japan's "intensive capitalist" expansionism. In an article relating Hirohito's Los Angeles visit to Japanese expansion of influence and corporatization, Masaki railed against the new Japanese hotels and businesses in Little Tokyo. He claimed that "any self-respecting Japanese American wouldn't be caught dead shopping in a Japanese-owned store down here [Little Tokyo]." Moreover, Masaki linked Japan's aggressive

⁷⁴ The movie was based on Jeanne Wakatsuki, Jeanne and James D. Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1973). For journalists connection of Proclamation 4417 and the film see "Interned in Camp: Japanese Uprooted" in *The Evening News*, 5 March 1976.

⁷⁵ "Drama of Tule Lake Televised in U.S." *The Japan Times*, 6 September 1975 and "Japanese Americans: Times are Changing and so is Unknown Minority" *Newsweek Feature Service* reprinted in multiple newspapers, 15 July 1971.

⁷⁶ Similar narratives and re-imaginings of victimization politics occurred throughout the 1970s. The My Lai Massacre created new spaces for Vietnam protests and shifts in Holocaust memories after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War are two prominent examples of this phenomenon. A more in-depth study of this process is beyond the scope of this work, but would add to general historiography on a number of levels.

“modernization” and business projects to the rise of Japanese militarism saying that “this kind of takeover of a community reminds Japanese-Americans of the economic aggression of Japan that led to World War II.”⁷⁷

Similarly, the Los Angeles based Post-Thirty Year Committee, a small group largely composed of antiwar Sansei activists founded exclusively to oppose the emperor’s visit, protested based on economic concerns and the emperor’s wartime legacy in Asia.⁷⁸ On the eve of Hirohito’s visit, a spokesman for the group claimed that supporting the emperor would mean ‘identifying with the interests and policies of the Japanese government and corporations that are not working in our interests.’⁷⁹ The group teamed up with Buddhists and Korean groups protesting the imperial tour, distributed leaflets outlining their concerns, and raised some commotion in the Japanese American community, but with only twenty or thirty members their impact was fairly limited.

Japanese Americans with this view often separated Japanese culture, which they embraced, from the Japanese economic pressure they feared. They were not “radicalizing” or becoming anti-Japanese, but rather sought to preserve and control their own space and identity within their community for themselves, their Issei parents, and the future generations. During Hirohito’s tour, Bert Nakano, a self-described “armchair liberal” Nisei from Los Angeles, began to think of alternative paths to reparations that would exclude the JAACL. Challenged by his son to “help prevent the Issei “from being kicked out [of Little Tokyo] again,” this time by

⁷⁷ “Japan’s Cultural Impact on U.S. Grows Broader” *The New York Times*, 12 October 1975.

⁷⁸ “Anything Goes” *The Hawaii Hochi*, 14 October 1975.

⁷⁹ “Opposition to Hirohito Visit Arises in L.A.” *The Los Angeles Times*, 6 October 1975.

“Japanese from Japan,” Nakano worked closely with the elderly community in an attempt to raise funds. He joined the Little Tokyo Peoples Rights Organization. After a 1978 JACL conference which addressed reparations, many Japanese Americans felt that the JACL would not embrace a multiplicity of voices in the community and could not represent their interests. In response, Nakano and others started the Los Angeles Community Coalition for Redress (the LACCRR), a group designed to promote reparations among Japanese Americans opposed to the JACL and their seemingly exclusionary policies.⁸⁰ Hirohito’s tour, coupled with the sense of Japanese imperialism perceived by some Japanese Americans, actually led groups otherwise opposed to the activities of the JACL into much closer alignment with the organization’s policies.

Although the Japanese American community remained divided on how to approach redress, what aspects of internment to debate, and how to respond to Japan’s economic success, it is clear that both supporters and protesters of Hirohito’s tour were motivated and mobilized by the emperor’s visit. From nationwide organizations such as the JACL to localized neighborhood rights groups, Hirohito’s words, actions, and appearances raised issues which could no longer be ignored. While Hirohito did not explicitly endorse Japanese American activism, he played a critical role in bringing to the surface Japanese Americans’ “secret pride” for Japan, the United States, and themselves.

⁸⁰ Nakano, Bert, Interview segment 3, “Getting Involved in the Redress Movement, Early Los Angeles Social Activism,” *Denshō Visual History Collection*, 13 September, 1997.

Conclusions

Emperor Hirohito's tour was very unique. Although the British royal family drew large crowds when they visited the East Coast in 1957, few if any people took the opportunity to celebrate their sense of British race or nationality or question who should represent America before the imperial family. On the other hand, in a manner very similar to the African American reception of Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia in 1954, many Japanese Americans took the opportunity of Hirohito's visit to reflect on their sense of what it meant to be Japanese. Japanese Americans turned out by the thousands — waving both Japanese and American flags and demonstrating the ambiguities of race, nationality, and American citizenship. The tour also raised issues of leadership and representation, further proving that the Japanese American community has never been monolithic and was certainly not represented by a single group such as the JACL.

Japanese Americans empowered by, or rallying against, Hirohito's physical presence in the United States were forced to debate their own historical presence within the narrative of the American experience. Many were inspired to press for redress and reparations for internment through governmental channels. Others simply wanted to protect their past at the local level through the preservation of Japanese American spaces such as Little Tokyo in Los Angeles.

Most of the younger Japanese American community today, now beyond the Sansei and Yonsei groups where people often stop counting, rarely think of the emperor if they think of him at all. This could of course change in the future if social, national, or international conditions change in ways that makes the association more powerful and

meaningful in Japanese American communities as it was in 1975 during Hirohito's tour.

Chapter 5: Remaking *Their* Emperors

During Haile Selassie's 1954 tour and Hirohito's 1975 tour, the American government successfully cast the emperors as friendly, pro-American symbols of their respective nations. However, the United States was not the only one attempting to remake the emperors' images. The governments and imperial institutions of Ethiopia and Japan both capitalized on the tours in order to reinforce, reimagine, and refashion the global and domestic appearance of their emperors to meet their own political agendas. Both emperors were depicted by their governments as life-long monarchs from sovereign and ancient nations that, at their core, had changed little for thousands of years. Ironically, this strategic engagement with Western orientalist thinking during the imperial visits both reinforced and challenged these "ancient traditions" of the imperial institutions in Ethiopia and Japan.

Empires and nation states are often conceived of as produced from the inside and expanding outward. However, after World War II neocolonialism and decolonization allowed polities to refashion themselves in unexpected ways using the physical and ideological spaces of areas outside of their control. Haile Selassie's and Hirohito's tours of the United States demonstrated aspects of the ideological (re)construction of both the Ethiopian empire and Japanese polity not from within, but from without. These imperial tours, which can be seen as neo-imperial actions by the United States, can also be interpreted as successful attempts to invert the colonialist gaze. While the United States attempted to depict the emperors they imagined, the emperors, in coordination with their

respective governments, appropriated American efforts in an attempt to renegotiate political relationships and project their own desires back for domestic consumption.

The emperors' strategies of reorienting American attention in positive terms were very successful. Both the Ethiopian and Japanese governments gained legitimacy from the tours and solidified their countries' sense of nationhood as symbolized by the emperors. Despite fundamental contradictions that arose as these nations sought to simultaneously embrace America patronage and expand their own nations' presence on the world stage, both Ethiopia and Japan demonstrated the limits of American hegemony in the post-War world by positively engaged growing ideological conflicts in the Cold War, civil rights era, and the age of "free trade."

Ethiopia: From Coronation to the Height of Imperialism

Haile Selassie's American tour greatly expanded the importance of the emperor in both Ethiopian and international politics. The grand nature of the tour in the world's most powerful nation reinforced the legitimacy of Ethiopia's modern imperial ideology. It simultaneously created the emperor as Ethiopia's only legitimate leader, a pan-African spokesman for decolonization, and a cosmopolitan figure completely divorced from all domestic political strife in Ethiopia. Not only was the tour used by Haile Selassie to shore up the legitimacy of the imperial tradition, it also demonstrated the expansiveness of the Ethiopian empire and revealed the aggressive imperialist behavior of the new Ethiopian state.

Less than two years before the emperor's visit, Ethiopia, with the cooperation of

the United Nations, absorbed into the empire the nominally independent polity of Eritrea. In part, this process was finalized when American and Ethiopian military agreements were made during the 1954 visit. These military arrangements were part of a broader Ethiopian agenda of “collective security” which rapidly took on many of the characteristics of imperialism. Likewise, contradictions arose as Haile Selassie championed desegregation in the United States while his government actively pursued internal colonization of the Oromo, a marginalized ethnic group, during its postwar state formation process.

The modern state of Ethiopia first arose in 1855 when Emperor Tewodros (r. 1855-1868) sought to recreate the empire’s imperial institutions and project them onto the world stage.¹ Appearing as early as the fourteenth century, these institutions and “traditions,” such as linking the royal house to the lineage of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, were reimagined to coincide with the necessities of the nation state and promoted the notion that empire in Ethiopia was justified and legitimate.² However, it was not until Haile Selassie’s American tour, which brought this imperial “tradition” to its absolute peak, that the non-African world fully recognized the legitimacy of the emperor’s government.³

After Haile Selassie was crowned as the Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930, he immediately began to modernize his government and received tremendous support from

¹ Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991, Second Edition* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001), 26-27.

² See Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence* (Addis Ababa: Tsehai Press, 2003) and Donald Crummey, “Imperial Legitimacy and the Creation of Neo-Solomonic Ideology in 19th-Century Ethiopia” *Cashiers d’Etudes Africains*, 28, Cashier 109, Memoires, Histoires, Identites 2 (1998), 17.

³ For placing these events within the framework of Ethiopia in the 1950s, see Zewde, 178.

the Ethiopian people, pan-Africanists, and African Americans. However, the emperor received little support or legitimacy from the American government or mass media. Although his coronation was attended by a representative of President Hoover, and newspapers covered the event with great interest, most reports were simply focused on the “opulence” of the “savage” and “barbaric” ceremonies.⁴ Other reports openly questioned the legitimacy of the “self styled [sic]” emperor and reported on political disputes caused by Ethiopians who supported Lidj Jeassu, the previously “deposed” emperor, in the years following the coronation.⁵

Likewise, American and British officials were openly skeptical of the new emperor’s abilities to lead the nation. In the European and American mindset, it was considered “an open secret” that “many Ethiopian subjects questioned the right of Haile Selassie to [rule] the throne.”⁶ When an American official who “lightly struck a native” with his car was “attacked” by policemen, the American government demanded an apology from the “pompously titled” emperor who could not keep his subjects in line.⁷ The British government, in a claim over Kenyan border communities, went further claiming that the emperor was “still incapable of enforcing obedience on the tribesmen” of his nation.⁸

⁴ “Thousands of Abyssinians en Route Home after Feast of Raw Meat with Emperor” AP Bulletin reprinted in *The Evening Independent*, 4 November 1930, “Today” *The Milwaukee Sentinel*, 9 November 1930, “Ras Tafari Becomes Selassie I Sunday: 336th Emperor of Black Empire Spends \$2,000,000 for Coronation” *The Afro American*, 1 November 1930.

⁵ *The Sheffield Observer*, 5 November 1930, “Deposed Ruler of Abyssinia Escapes” *The Vancouver Sun*, 10 June 1932.

⁶ “Abyssinia” *The Afro American*, 31 December 1932.

⁷ “U.S. Asks Amends in Attack on Envoy” *The New York Times*, 23 January 1932; “Redress is Demanded” *The Border Cities Star*, 23 January 1932.

⁸ “British Threaten Abyssinia with ‘Action’ After Massacre by Slave Raiders in Kenya” *The New York Times*, 16 November 1932.

By the 1950s however, external challenges to Haile Selassie's legitimacy largely reversed course. Haile Selassie's condemnation of fascism and imperialism before the League of Nations, support of the Allied war efforts particularly against Italy, and increased prestige in the imagination of Africans and the African diaspora greatly increased his presence and legitimacy on the world stage. However, there still existed a threat from British colonialism which haunted Ethiopian sovereignty in the immediate post-war years. The emperor's American tour was a method for Haile Selassie to finally eliminate the specter of British imperial ambitions by embracing the material support of the United States, demonstrating Ethiopian independence, and denying any claims that Ethiopia's independence needed the assistance of the British.

American politicians, Ethiopian officials, and the mass media in both the United States and Ethiopia reproduced and disseminated Ethiopia's imperial ideology throughout the tour, particularly linking the Emperor's ancient Solomonic and Christian origins to Ethiopia's independence and sovereignty. For example, at the official White House reception dinner, President Eisenhower reinforced the image of Haile Selassie as a beneficent ruler who "established new standards in the world" for protecting and administering over his people.⁹ A moment later, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles reminded the audience that "Ethiopia is the oldest independent country in Africa and it has been a Christian nation since the fourth century."¹⁰ These comments, and many others like them from governmental and civic sources, were immediately reprinted in

⁹ "Toasts of the President and Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia" Dwight D. Eisenhower, 26 May 1954. Recorded in *The American Presidency Project*, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 124. Available online at URL <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=9902#axzz1I3YqOT38>.

¹⁰ Ras Nathaniel, *50th Anniversary of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I First Visit to the United States: 1954-2004* (Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing, 2004), 19.

state controlled Ethiopian newspapers along with articles describing the coming bounty provided by America's support.¹¹ Despite drawing legitimacy from a shared Christian heritage and American military support, legacies of British imperialism coupled with America's efforts to promote its interests in the Horn of Africa stifled democratic efforts in Ethiopia and promoted Haile Selassie as an absolute ruler of the state.¹²

The absolutist nature with which Haile Selassie ruled Ethiopia in the 1950s brought a number of contradictions and complexities to the impact of the emperor's tour. His very presence as the first (and only) African emperor to visit the United States, only a week after the *Brown vs. The Board of Education* verdict was handed down, symbolized the promise of desegregation and African independence. As the emperor cautiously supported the recent progress of American desegregation, he gave hope to black Americans seeking racial justice.¹³ However, this depiction of Haile Selassie completely ignores his government's colonization of new territory in Africa and its repression of the Oromo, its own group of racially, culturally, and religiously disenfranchised citizens.¹⁴

The Oromo, groups of nominally independent communities that shared linguistic and cultural traits, were first "subjugated and incorporated" as second-class subjects of the Ethiopian empire by Emperor Menelik from 1875 to 1886.¹⁵ This imperial process of

¹¹ For Example, "President Eisenhower in Tribute to Emperor; Calls Him 'Great Man'" and "Emperor of Ethiopia is praised by State Department Officials" *The Ethiopian Herald*, 5 June 1954. *The Ethiopian Herald* ran several such articles in every edition of the paper during the emperor's tour.

¹² See Zewde, 178. Although he does not discuss the tour in any length, Zewde points out the United States "provided the infrastructure and superstructural support for the consolidation of absolutism" in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

¹³ With the ruling on *Brown vs. The Board of Education* handed down only one week before the arrival of the first (and only) African emperor to visit the United States, the subject was frequently addressed in the American and Ethiopian media, particularly the African American Press. See chapter 2.

¹⁴ For Haile Selassie's interactions with the African American community in the 1950s, see chapter 2.

¹⁵ Zewde, 62-63.

othering created for the first time a shared notion of “being Oromo” within these communities. During Italy’s attacks and occupation of the Ethiopian empire in the late 1930s and early 1940s, many Oromo mobilized against the Ethiopian state and sought political alternatives to empire.¹⁶ Although not developed fully into a sense of nationalism, a strong Oromo resistance developed against the imperialist system that denied these groups self-rule. When Haile Selassie returned to the empire on the wings of British military intervention in early 1941, he quickly crushed the emerging Oromo resistance to the Ethiopian government. The empire recruited British forces to put down rebellions in the Oromo homeland.¹⁷ Haile Selassie’s government, relying on the British presence in the empire, then reinvigorated systems of exploitation, destroyed Oromo artifacts and literature, and even banned the use of the Oromo language within the empire.¹⁸

The Ethiopian government’s domination of the Oromo people remained a minor issue in Ethiopia. While Oromo groups continued to create anti-imperialist support within their communities and challenge the legitimacy of the centralized state on a small scale, it was the reclaiming and defending of Eritrea and the Ogden which concerned the Ethiopian state.¹⁹ When Haile Selassie visited the White House as part of his 1954 American tour, the first thing he sought to discuss with President Eisenhower was increased military support to expand and control his empire. Haile Selassie told

¹⁶ Lemmu Baissa, “The Oromo and the Quest for Peace in Ethiopia” *TransAfrica Forum*, 9, no. 1 (1992), 63 and Zewde, 168-169.

¹⁷ Margery Perham, *The Government of Ethiopia* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), 356-360 and Zewde, 215.

¹⁸ Richard Greenfield, Richard and Mohammed Hassan, "Interpretation of Oromo Nationality," *Horn of Africa*, 3, no. 3 (1981), 10 and Baissa, 64.

¹⁹ Baissa, 62.

Eisenhower that it was “absolutely essential” that “fruitful collaborations on the military” go forward as quickly as possible in order to secure Ethiopia’s Northern and Southern frontiers.²⁰ These “collaborations” included training troops, organizing base positions, military funding, and the direct sale and supplementation of military hardware under the 1953 Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement.²¹

John H. Spencer, an American acting as Ethiopia’s Adviser of Foreign Affairs, claimed that cooperation with America made Ethiopia the most powerful military state on the continent of Africa with the exception of Egypt and South Africa.²² By 1970, “Ethiopia had come to absorb some 60% of U.S. military aid to the whole of Africa.”²³ Rather than bolstering democratic rule, military advantages and training, promoted by America interests as a method of resisting the “Muslim” threat from Eritrea and the Ogden, allowed the Ethiopian government a monopoly on violence. This became a method for Haile Selassie’s government to enforce unequal policies within the empire.²⁴

Ethiopia’s new military technology, political backing, and huge cash flows from the United States solidified its absolutist government. Haile Selassie not only went to great lengths to maintain the shape and ideology of the Ethiopian state but, he also made many efforts to expand his reach in previously impossible ways. One such expansive endeavor of the Ethiopian state was the federation of Eritrea into the Ethiopian Empire in

²⁰ “Memorandum to the President” Haile Selassie, Washington, 28 May 1954. Held in the *President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files, 1953-1961 Part 2*. Microfilm available (Bethesda: University Publications of America, 1990), reel 5. Ultimately, this request for more military aid left some American officials soured on the military aid relationship with Ethiopia. See John H. Spencer, *Ethiopia at Bay: A Personal Account of the Haile Selassie Years* (Algonac: Reference Publications, Inc., 1984), 270.

²¹ The actual implementation was carried out by the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) created by the agreement.

²² Spencer, 263-267.

²³ Zmede, 186.

²⁴ Baissa, 63.

1952.²⁵ Haile Selassie's government laid claim to Eritrea, previously colonized by Italy from 1890 until 1941, when it fell under British military administration, on the basis of shared ethnic, linguistic, and religious histories and tradition.²⁶

Although the new Italian state, and some Eritreans, rejected the idea of (re)unification with Ethiopia, the United States helped pass a resolution in the United Nations justifying the federation.²⁷ In exchange, the United States received continued access to a large military base and radio outpost (Radio Marine, renamed Kagnev Station in 1953) in Eritrea and was allowed to expand its military posts in Ethiopia.²⁸ Haile Selassie and his government were very appreciative of the deal and certainly would not have achieved the same success in the U.N. without the direct help of the United States. Ambassador Ato Yilma Deressa, in his letter of appointment presented to President Eisenhower, took special note of the political cooperation that had "steadily developed between the two countries," particularly the role of America in "bringing about the return of Eritrea."²⁹

²⁵ This was officially an act of the United Nations and not a unilateral Ethiopian endeavor. See "Eritrea, Once Italy's Oldest Colony, Joins in Federation with Ethiopia; Act Backed by U.N.," *The New York Times*, 12 September 1952.

²⁶ Hagai Erlikh, *Ethiopia and the Challenge of Independence* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1986), 214.

²⁷ For Eritrean resistance due to local politicization by colonial powers see Ellingson, Lloyd, "The Emergence of Political Parties in Eritrea, 1941-1950" *Journal of African History*, 19, No. 2 (1977): 261-281 and Ruth Iyob, *The Eritrean Struggle for Independence: Domination, Resistance, Nationalism 1941-1993* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 64-66. For America's strong support of Eritrea's federation in 1952/1953 see "Appointment of the Ethiopian Ambassador, Ras Imuru" Memorandum for the President, Department of State Under Secretary, 20 March 1953 and other similar memoranda held in in the *President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files, 1953-1961Part 2*. Microfilm available (Bethesda: University Publications of America, 1990), reel 5.

²⁸ "Memorandum to the President" Haile Selassie, Washington, 28 May 1954. Held in the *President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files, 1953-1961Part 2*. Microfilm available (Bethesda: University Publications of America, 1990), reel 5.

²⁹ "The Remarks of the Newly Appointed Ambassador of Ethiopia Ato Yilma Deressa Upon the Occasion of the Presentation of His Letter of Credence," 26 September 1953. Held in the *President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files, 1953-1961Part 2*. Microfilm available (Bethesda: University Publications of

The American government not only aided and legitimized the federation of Eritrea, it also helped the Ethiopian state celebrate afterwards. In October 1952, after the emperor cut a ribbon officially federating Eritrea into the empire, he met with the American Rear Admiral F.M. Hughes on the *USS Greenwich Bay* and had a celebratory lunch while taking a “short cruise” of the Red Sea. During the emperor’s imperial tour of the United States less than two years later in 1954, he was presented by the State Department with a replica model of the *USS Greenwich Bay* which “held great significance.” It was meant to remind Ethiopia of this “gesture of American friendship” in securing Eritrea for the empire.³⁰

Despite the Ethiopian government’s behind the scene cooperation with the United States in the federation of Eritrea symbolized by the model victory ship and its internal colonization of the Oromo, Haile Selassie’s American tour further reinforced his image as a pan-African leader for independence and decolonization. During the tour, he increased his interactions with the African American community, advocated for decolonization, and directly linked himself to “the defense of Africa’s racial, economic, and social interests” in a speech before Congress.³¹ In large part, the idea of Haile Selassie as the preeminent pan-African leader came from his overstated commitment to collective security and racial justice which resonated with Africans and the African diaspora during the tour. The emperor’s dedication to collective security seemed to dictate “greater participation in

America, 1990), reel 5.

³⁰ “Memorandum for General Carroll” written by R.D. Muir, Acting Chief of Protocol, Department of State, 27 January 1954. Held in the *President Dwight D. Eisenhower Office Files, 1953-1961 Part 2*. Microfilm available (Bethesda: University Publications of America, 1990), reel 5.

³¹ Haile Selassie, speech before a joint session of the American Congress, 28 May 1954. Reprinted in *The New York Times*, 29 May 1954. For interactions with the African American community and decolonization see Chapter 2.

continental [African] politics” and “to that end, he extended moral, political, and to some extent economic and military support to African freedom fighters.”³² However, Haile Selassie’s notions of collective security, strongly supported by the United States, merged with Ethiopia’s imperialist agenda in the 1950s and 1960s.

The connection between collective security and Ethiopia’s imperialism was very complex. In the years before World War II and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie was perhaps the greatest supporter of collective security as a means of protecting national sovereignty.³³ After World War II, and the blatant failure of collective security, Haile Selassie recontextualized the notion of collective security in order to further his own agendas. Collective security became a method of imperialist justification for Ethiopia’s colonization of Eritrea and other areas around the Sudan. By sending troops to participate with U.N. forces in the Korean War, and later in the infamous U.N. peace keeping missions in the Congo, Ethiopia gained American political support, money, and military might. Likewise, Ethiopia’s pursuit of collective security began to emulate America’s foreign policy of containment which supported British, French, and Dutch attempts to recolonize Africa and Asia.

Despite Haile Selassie’s successful attempts to align himself with American policies, gain legitimacy for his regime, and procure millions of dollars in military funding, the emperor could not create the modern empire he desired. He ended up creating an absolutist state and, although beloved amongst large sections of the

³² Gebrekidan, 66-67.

³³ See for example Haile Selassie, “Appeal to the League of Nations,” Geneva, Switzerland, 30 June 1936. The emperor cited “collective security,” a term provided by the League of Nations 1919 charter, four times in his reasoning for reprimanding Italian breaches of Ethiopia’s sovereignty.

population and in popular in the global imagination, there was always political dissent from the Oromo, disenfranchised Eritreans, and the military. Likewise, the increased American presence in Ethiopia encouraged Soviet monetary and political support of rival groups in the Horn of Africa.³⁴ The growing discontent of students, the military, and pockets of oppressed citizenry led to a revolution which ended the Ethiopian empire in 1974.³⁵

Japan: From the Height of Imperialism to an Attempt to End the Postwar Era

When Hirohito visited the United States in 1975, the government of Japan hoped to use the emperor's tour to recentralize the nation's government around a single political entity and to justify Japan's increased role as a global power. Beginning in the late 1960s, the Japanese political scene underwent massive changes which saw an unprecedented rise in local, populist, and class-based movements that fractured national political debates and threatened the monopoly of power held by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).³⁶

The emperor, as a symbol of *the* Japanese, was in a position to show the world, and more importantly Japan's constituents, a singular and unified nation revolving around a singular national center. At the same moment, Japan began to expand globally in a way not seen since the end of the Pacific War. By reclaiming Okinawa, reaching out to

³⁴ See Spencer, 300 for the Soviet Union's support of the Greater Somalia Movements. Also, Charles K. Armstrong is currently investigating the role North Korea played in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa.

³⁵ This event was a combination of student movements, communist resistance to governmental restraints, and manufactured ethnic tensions. See Zewde, 220-240 and Salem Mekurie, *Deluge: Yawaneze Micebale* (Jamaica Plain: Mekurie Productions, 1995), Film.

³⁶ Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan from Tokugawa Times to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 285-286.

diasporic Japanese, and investing in overseas economies, Japan took on the trappings of an expansive nation. Hirohito's tour enforced these ideas and justified Japan's recent gains abroad. However, notwithstanding the tour's successes, the U.S.-Japan relationship remained largely unchanged. Despite the wishes of Japanese commentators and the government of Japan, the tour did not bring political divisions to a halt or wrap up the postwar by addressing thorny legacies of the war. The tour's main achievement was in successfully reorienting Japanese citizens around the centrality of the Japanese state through Hirohito, the symbol of Japan abroad.

During the mid-1970s, the legitimacy of the Japanese government fell under increasing fire from all sides of the political spectrum. There was massive discontent over the LDP's foreign and domestic policies and many questioned the equity of Japan's democratic process. Both the far left and far right regularly resorted to mass demonstrations, protests, and occasionally violence.³⁷ Despite the government efforts to boost feelings of "peaceful" democracy, the Japanese government had difficulty finding a singular rallying point to unite the nation.³⁸ Hirohito's 1975 American tour provided a platform for the Japanese government to unite the majority of the Japanese nation around a single symbolic element, Emperor Hirohito. The emperor came to represent a singular Japanese nation, because the outside world's impression of Hirohito as the representative of a peaceful, democratic, and monolithic Japanese nation was relayed back to the Japanese people themselves. In this way, the Japanese government and imperial house

³⁷ See *The Asahi Shimbun*, *The Japan Times*, *The Hawaii Hochi*, and *The Mainichi* particularly during late August, September, and October 1975 for a sense of these events around the time of the Hirohito's tour.

³⁸ For effort by the government to create a singular narrative of democracy supporting the state, see "Japan's Dawn of Democracy" *The Japan Times*, reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 10 September 1975.

used the tour as a final push to create Hirohito as the unifying symbol of Japan.

While Hirohito had been fully rehabilitated as a man of peace by both the United States government and the imperial house, in 1975 he was not yet a clear and undisputed symbol of the Japanese nation and democracy. With the imperial tours, the Japanese government quickly learned that because the emperor was the “symbol” of Japan, his symbolic actions in other nations could carry powerful messages. As America’s impression of Hirohito was relayed back to the Japanese through live T.V., radio broadcasts, and endless newspaper coverage, many Japanese reevaluated the role of emperor in Japanese society.

In postwar Japan, the role of the emperor was divided between public and private functions. In public, he would act a symbol for the nation. In private, he would be the head of the Shinto religion and could pursue his own personal interests. In neither role would he be considered a deity.³⁹ The idea of the emperor as divine was abandoned by most Japanese except by those on the far right. However, the belief that he should remain sovereign and somewhat involved in politics was fairly common among Japanese. In his private role, Hirohito was regularly briefed by many government ministers and even the Prime ministers of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), thus perpetuating to some extent his role in government. As long as the briefings, and more importantly the emperor’s responses, were kept private, people were generally comfortable with Hirohito’s role.⁴⁰

This system of private and public symbolism was widely accepted until Emperor Hirohito strained the distinction between both public and private roles and the division

39 See Herbert P. Bix, “Inventing the ‘Symbol Monarchy’ in Japan” *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 21, No. 2 (1995): 319-363.

40 See Ruoff, 2001, Chapter 3 “Ministerial Briefings and Emperor Hirohito in Politics.”

between symbolic and political action during his American tour. While the prospects of Hirohito's tour rekindled fears of neo-militarism in Japan's far-left and troubled many conservatives who wished to maintain the dignity and presence of Hirohito in the national polity, most Japanese were excited for the tour. According to the American Embassy in Tokyo, just before Hirohito's tour Japanese looked on the imperial visit with excitement, “feelings of pride, and deep emotion,” but also with “some trepidation.”⁴¹ When Emperor Hirohito's American tour turned out to be a wild success the majority of Japanese were very pleased.⁴²

The success of Hirohito's tour was produced through both American and Japanese effort. While American diplomats and scholars diligently worked to ensure that government officials viewed Hirohito as a democratic peaceful symbol of the Japanese nation, it was really propaganda from the Imperial House, in coordination with the government of Japan, which reached most Americans.⁴³ This process began months before the emperor's visit and included the publication of numerous English-language articles and books, films depicting the emperor's daily life, American scholars reporting on the emperor's role in Japanese society, and a series of staged press interviews all designed to depict the emperor as a symbol of a singular, peaceful, and democratic

41 Notes and Background on Meeting with the Japanese Emperor Hirohito, written by Henry Kissinger for President Ford, 1 October, 1975. Cataloged in The Ron Nessen Papers (Box 27-28), Hirohito 4.

42 “Japanese Politics in Review: Emperor's U.S. Visit” *The Japan Times*, reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 21 October 1975.

43 On the American side, Edwin O. Reischauer, a Harvard historian and former ambassador to Japan was the main source of propaganda influencing members of the American government. He worked closely with the Japan Society to publish a short hagiographical text on Hirohito that became the standard source of government information on the emperor for the duration of the tour. See The Ron Nessen Papers (Box 27-28), Nessen Papers - Hirohito 1 held in the President Ford Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

Japan.⁴⁴

In large part these efforts by the Imperial House and the government of Japan were aimed at ensuring a strong positive response to Hirohito's tour to be broadcast back to the people at home. The event was covered by what the *Shukan Shincho* described as a "human wave" of Japanese journalists and photographers. On top of that, the paper added, "a swarm" of more than 120 television reporters followed the imperial couple around the United States.⁴⁵ Perhaps the most interesting approach to ensuring that this media relayed to the Japanese would depict the tour as positively as possible was the sale of hundreds of "Banzai tours" to Japanese citizens. These tour packages coordinated the arrival of Japanese tourists with every stop along the emperor's tour. Japanese people could see the emperor, yell out "banzai," and get on a plane in time to repeat themselves at the emperor's next public appearance. More than six hundred applications for the tour had already been filled out with a month remaining until the emperor's departure. While billed as the brainchild of entrepreneurial travel agent Okamoto Hiroharu, it was the "highly-placed" government officials Hakomizu Hisatoshi and Tachibana Naoharu (both members of the House of Councilors in the Japanese Diet) who oversaw the tours and "cut through bureaucratic red tape."⁴⁶

Perhaps one reason that some Japanese tourists were willing to put up with such a grueling schedule to see Hirohito, not to mention the tremendous cost, was because it

⁴⁴ See in particular "U.S. to See Films on Emperor" *Japan Times Service, The Hawaii Hochi*, 5 September 1975.

⁴⁵ "Topics from the Japanese Weeklies" *The Shukan Shincho*, reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 2 October 1975. The author also acknowledges that these are only the official numbers registered with the government and that large "unofficial" groups were also sent to report for a wide variety of news media.

⁴⁶ "'Banzai Tours' to Greet Emperor in U.S." *The Shukan Shincho*, reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 6 September 1975.

would be much more difficult to see the emperor in Japan. A writer for the *Yomiuri Henshu Techo* called on Hirohito to tour Japan as he had toured the United States. He argued that the tour gave Japanese people a “rare glimpse” of the emperor’s “real” self and that such a tour in Japan would be very powerful.⁴⁷ The fact that Japanese citizens were experiencing part of “being Japanese” from an international experience such as the emperor’s tour, in addition to being exactly what the government planned, demonstrated Japan’s renewed global identity.

Hirohito’s tour coincided with Japan’s reemergence on the world stage. With an average economic growth of 10% per year in the 1960s, Japan emerged as an economic powerhouse by the time of Hirohito’s visit. Likewise, the 1970’s saw Japan regain its previous territorial possession of Okinawa and reach out economically to diasporic communities throughout the Americas. Although Japan already had, and desired to maintain, strong ties with America, many of the actions taken by the Japanese governments in this period exemplified Japan’s desire to expand and increase its role in the Pacific and the world at large.

By 1972, when Japan reacquired Okinawa, many American politicians and military personnel already viewed America’s presence on the islands as a form of colonization or occupation, not of Japan, but of the Okinawans.⁴⁸ Colonization and the re-othering of Okinawa and its “Japanese” citizens occurred in coordination with the emperor’s American tour. Less than three months before the Emperor’s American tour,

⁴⁷ “The Emperor’s Visit: Fleeting Glimpses” *The Pacific Citizen*, 24 October 1975.

⁴⁸ See the work of Mitzi Uehara Carter a Ph.D. candidate in the University of California, Berkeley’s Department of Anthropology. In particular, she maintains a website at the URL <http://gritsandsushi.com/> for the purpose of understanding transnational issues of race, ethnicity, and representation of “Okinawans.”

his son Crown Prince Akihito travelled to Okinawa to pay homage at a war memorial site, the Himeyuri Tower, and to officially open the Okinawa Ocean Exposition. This was the first visit to Okinawa by a member of the imperial family since World War II.⁴⁹ Both activities were designed by the Japanese government to increase the presence and authority of mainland Japan over her new citizens.

Akihito's first stop upon arrival in Okinawa was a short and highly publicized visit to the Himeyuri Tower, "a memorial to 188 women who committed suicide" when it became apparent "during some of the bloodiest fighting" that the Japanese army would lose.⁵⁰ The Himeyuri narrative of Okinawan high school girls recruited to die in the field as nurses became "the single most popularized story from The Battle of Okinawa – arguably *the* mainland Japanese image of the battle if not of Okinawa itself in the postwar period."⁵¹ Escorted by attractive and deeply emotional tour bus guides, mainland Japanese visiting this mnemonic site of loss and sacrifice experienced Okinawa through an imperialist lens. By "evoking wartime tragedy" and "provincializing" the Okinawan land and people, the Himeyuri memorial became one of the "icons of recovered postwar Okinawa."⁵² This heritage tourism, which reinforced nationalism while also assisting in the mainland's agenda of reclaiming Okinawa, demonstrated many similarities to the imperialist heritage tourism of the prewar and wartime era.⁵³

⁴⁹ "Prince and Princess of Japan Attacked by Okinawa Radicals" *The New York Times*, 17 July 1975.

⁵⁰ *The Hawaii Hochi*, 17 July 1975. There is also some debate about the number of women who died. Some other sources, including the official memorial site pamphlets, say 220 women died.

⁵¹ Gerald Figal, "Between War and Tropics: Heritage Tourism in Postwar Okinawa" *The Public Historian*, 30, No. 2 (2008), 91. Emphasis in the original text.

⁵² Figal, 92.

⁵³ For examples of this wartime and imperialist heritage tourism see Kenneth J. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at Its Zenith: The Wartime Celebration of the Empire's 2,600th Anniversary* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

Akihito and the imperial house hoped to tap into this sense of heritage and memory during the crown prince's visit to the memorial site, but found more than they bargained for. The surviving "Himeyuri girls" were invited to attend the ceremony.⁵⁴ The prince laid a wreath at the tower memorial and intended to give public remarks. However, Okinawan protesters quickly destroyed the moment. Two youths threw "gasoline bombs" at Akihito and the crown princess Michiko as they were "praying for the spirits of the war dead."⁵⁵ One of the prince's aids suffered burns, but the imperial couple managed to escape harm. These violent youths, along with many other protesters in Okinawa, demanded "a formal apology from Akihito's father, Emperor Hirohito, as an expression of responsibility for Okinawa's suffering."⁵⁶ Naturally, the protesters disapproved of an imperial visit to a wartime battle memorial for which they held the imperial household accountable.

Akihito's second stop to officially open the Okinawa Ocean Exposition, a giant World's Fair type of event focused on the oceans of the world, was also problematic. Although the prince felt that "many people in Honshu would come to show greater interest in Okinawa if the Ocean Exposition proved a success," protesters in Okinawa found the attention undesirable.⁵⁷ Perhaps as many as 40,000 Okinawans turned out to

⁵⁴ Of the forty "girls" invited, 37 refused on the basis that the Japanese imperial family had never assumed responsibility for the wartime atrocities on Okinawa. See "An Isle's Peacetime Battle: Return to Japan Brings no Reward to Okinawa" Southam News Services Tokyo division, *The Ottawa Citizen*, 29 August 1975.

⁵⁵ "Radicals Hurl Firebombs at Japan's Crown Prince During Okinawa Visit," *The Los Angeles Times*, 18 July 1975.

⁵⁶ *The Hawaii Hochi*, 17 July 1975.

⁵⁷ "Crown Prince Enlightened by Visit to Okinawa Pref." *The Japan Times*, reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 28 August 1975.

protest as the Prince rode toward the opening event.⁵⁸ Although the fair was billed as the first exposition to focus on oceanic environmentalism and maritime cooperation between governments, many Okinawans resented what they felt to be the government of Japan's true intentions. Days before the opening of the ceremony, Suzuki Fumihiko, a government spokesman for the exposition, told Japanese reporters that "our ambition is to make Okinawa the Hawaii, Miami, Cote D'Azur of the Orient." He predicted that soon "two or three million foreign and domestic tourists" would be visiting the island annually, but there were questions about whether or not the economic gains derived from such tourism would help local Okinawans.⁵⁹

Aside from helping to reclaim territory lost during the war, the emperor's tour also opened a new chapter in the efforts of the Japanese government's attempts to reach out to Japanese in the diaspora, particularly in the Americas. Japanese emigration and colonization of the Americas began in earnest after the 1868 Meiji restoration.⁶⁰ Driven to new highs under imperial ideology, more than 600,000 Japanese left for the Americas before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.⁶¹ After 1942, emigration ground to a halt under Japanese wartime necessity, immigration bans from belligerent nations, and eventual military defeat and occupation.⁶² However, unlike the empire proper, Japan's overseas colonies "did not disintegrate after Japan's surrender."⁶³ Immediately after the end of the

⁵⁸ *The Hawaii Houchi*, 17 July 1975. To be fair, police at the event cited about the same number of "Japanese" waving "Rising Sun" flags and welcoming the imperial couple.

⁵⁹ "Ocean Exposition Stirs Controversy," UPI Bulletin reprinted in *The Times-Union*, 17 July 1975.

⁶⁰ Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 17-20.

⁶¹ After the 1924 U.S. Exclusion Acts, most of these Japanese migrated to Central and South America.

⁶² Toake Endoh, *Exporting Japan: Politics of Emigration Toward Latin America* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 18. Originally sourced from the Kokusai Kyōryoku Jigyōdan, Kaigai ijū tokei.

⁶³ Ruoff, 2010, 181.

American occupation, the government of Japan began to pursue programs to both reach out to the diaspora and create new colonies in the Americas.

By December of 1952, the first postwar Japanese emigrants left Japan aboard the *Santosu-maru* sailing for Brazil. These “pioneers” symbolized the “new Japan, a nation just reclaiming national sovereignty.”⁶⁴ A couple of years later, Japan entered negotiations with the Dominican Republic to establish new colonies in the “Paradise of the Caribbean.” Over the next two years, 1300 Japanese made their way into small colonies on the island. Although both nations intended to transfer 25,000 Japanese to the Caribbean nation, “political turmoil” in the Dominican Republic “brought to a close the sponsored immigration of Japanese.”⁶⁵ All in all, more than 166,000 Japanese emigrated to the Americas between 1952 and 1971.⁶⁶

The Japanese government kept close watch and associations with these overseas Japanese as well as with the older groups of “original pioneers” of Japanese ancestry. Just as they had done in the prewar and wartime years, the imperial house in coordination with the government of Japan continued to sponsor conferences for overseas Japanese.⁶⁷ During these conferences people of Japanese ancestry from outside of the empire (or nation-state after 1945) would return to Japan, often with much fanfare, and receive awards and accolades from the Japanese government. These overseas conferences

⁶⁴ Endoh, 35.

⁶⁵ Oscar H. Horst and Katsuhiko Asagiri, “The Odyssey of Japanese Colonists in the Dominican Republic” *Geographical Review*, 90, No.3 (2000), 339.

⁶⁶ Endoh, 36. Approximately 86,000 of these Japanese emigrated to the United States compared to approximately 80,000 combined emigrating to the Latin and South America. Originally sourced from the Kokusai Kyōryoku Jigyōdan, *Kaigai ijū tokei*, 98-101. This also does not show Okinawan immigration as the island chain was a possession of the United States.

⁶⁷ For the prewar and wartime versions of these conferences see Eiichiro Azuma, “The Politics of Transnational History Making: Japanese Immigrants on the Western ‘Frontier,’ 1927-1941” *The Journal of American History*, 89, No. 4 (2003): 1401-1430 and Ruoff, 2010.

allowed the Japanese government and imperial house to continue to claim Japanese in the diaspora, and their efforts “abroad,” as *Japan’s* successes.

This is not to deny agency to the diaspora living outside of Japan. If anything, many felt that Japan’s successes, symbolized by Hirohito’s American tour, meant that the Japanese government should be doing more for the diaspora. Even the JACL, which sought to project distance between Japanese Americans and Japan in order to legitimize their status as genuine Americans, thought that the overseas Japanese should be given greater recognition. In the *Pacific Citizen*, the official JACL newspaper, Edison Uno wrote that he hoped “the visit of the imperial couple may bring about a change” in the overseas conferences. Rather than simply awarding “a medal and a certificate,” Uno suggested a “monetary award should be included so the recipient could afford to make a round-trip [visit] to Japan.”⁶⁸

Although some members of the Japanese diaspora felt they were in a position to negotiate, or even demand, greater appreciation from the Japanese government, many felt locked into a system of oppression. Most emigrants leaving Japan in the postwar period came from impoverished backgrounds, were sent to impoverished areas, and constantly felt pressure to “support Japan’s development efforts worldwide.”⁶⁹ Even those that returned to Japan and attempted to reintegrate often remained marginalized and “othered” in the imagination of mainland Japanese citizens.⁷⁰ The claiming of Japanese abroad, while simultaneously othering the diaspora, created a powerful legitimization for the state

⁶⁸ “Emperor’s Clothes” *The Pacific Citizen*, 31 October 1975.

⁶⁹ Endoh, 170.

⁷⁰ See Taku Suzuki, *Embodying Belonging: Racializing Okinawan Diaspora in Bolivia and Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010) and Junichi Goto, *Latin Americans of Japanese Origin (Nikkeijin) Working in Japan: A Survey* (Washington: World Bank Publications, 2007).

to “involve itself with the daily social life of the emigrants.”⁷¹

One of the primary methods by which the Japanese state carried out its involvement in the lives of its emigrant populations was through direct economic investment. Because of Japan’s economic success in the 1970s, both the government and private entrepreneurs had plenty of money to invest abroad.⁷² Some groups in the United States saw this economic activity as a challenge to the local economy and as a form of economic imperialism. One of the main reactions against Hirohito’s tour came from communities that felt threatened by Japanese corporations and government ventures. For example in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles’s Japantown, Japanese Americans protested Hirohito’s visit because “the monarch” symbolized “Japanese corporations whose construction and business enterprise” forced “Japanese-American businessmen from their businesses” and Japanese American families from their homes.⁷³ The American mass media, on some occasions, depicted Japanese investments as “invasions.” In an AP bulletin reprinted in dozens of American newspapers, a reporter claimed that “many Hawaiians are fearful that America’s 50th state may soon become, in economic terms at least, the 48th prefecture of Japan.” Non-Japanese American Hawaiians were particularly upset by the “multinational Japanese economy” and its interferences with the island.⁷⁴ It was the purchase of golf courses, hotel openings, and the procurement of land that was seen as the most dangerous perhaps because these actions resembled previous white colonial efforts on the island.

⁷¹ Endoh, 170-171.

⁷² Bill Emmott, *The Sun Also Sets: The Limits to Japan’s Economic Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster Inc., 1989), 5-8.

⁷³ “Opposition to Hirohito’s Visit Arises in L.A.” *The Los Angeles Times*, 6 October 1975.

⁷⁴ “Hawaii Looks Like a Nippon Island” AP Bulletin, reprinted in *The Hawaii Hochi*, 2 September 1975.

The combination of Japanese economic influence abroad, interactions with the diaspora, and the reclaiming of Okinawa, in coordination with the emperor's American tour, signaled to many commentators in Japan that the limiting post-defeat era was a thing of the past. As Hirohito officially thanked the United States for its "generosity and goodwill" in the postwar period, he also spoke of "a new generation with no personal memory of those years."⁷⁵ Shortly after these remarks the *Tokyo Shimbun*, one of Japan's most popular newspapers with a circulation of millions, published an article claiming that, for the Japanese, the emperor's "visit is regarded as a symbolic event to put an end to the postwar era." It went on to explain:

Apart from their impression of the Japanese people as tough soldiers or hard-working 'economic animals,' there may arise a view of friendly Japanese. We felt warmth in our heart when we watched the television scenes... showing their majesties warmly and the American people welcoming their visit. It may be said that this warmth truly puts an end to the postwar era.⁷⁶

As far as putting an end to the postwar era, the newspaper's claims are quite dubious and echoed the Japanese government's desires rather than the political realities in the Pacific. America retained its bases in Okinawa, played Japan and China off of each other economically, and continued to dominate what some historians have negatively referred to as Japan's "client state" embrace of the U.S.⁷⁷

Despite not necessarily changing the postwar U.S.-Japan relationship, the tour did create a "warmth" in the heart of Japanese strongly centered on national pride and unity surrounding the symbolic figure of the emperor. The most successful aspect of the tour

⁷⁵ "Toast of President and Emperor Hirohito of Japan," 2 October 1975. Available online through the *American Presidency Project* at URL www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=5301.

⁷⁶ "Their Majesties' Visit," *The Tokyo Shimbun*, reprinted in *The Japan Times*, 5 October 1975.

⁷⁷ See Gavan McCormack, *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace* (London: Verso, 2007).

from the stand point of the Japanese government was this reorientation of the Japanese nation around a central axis manifested in the emperor. Hirohito's role as the symbol of the Japanese nation took on a wider definition as a result of his American tour. The Japanese constitution remained the same, but the Japanese citizens, and the international community, demanded more complex involvement from the monarchy in the recreation of Japanese identity. Hirohito's clumsy (or very well planned) remarks and admission of regret on his international tour led to the idea of "emperor as apologist" thus far perpetuated by Emperor Akihito.⁷⁸ What the postwar emperor symbolizes was never solely the domain of the Japanese, and it is hard to say what the monarchy will represent in the twenty-first century.⁷⁹ However, the role of the emperor is sure to evolve to meet both internal and external circumstances as it has done for a very long time.

Conclusion

The emperors' tours were hugely successful as demonstrations of America's growing relationships with both Ethiopia and Japan. Likewise, the governments of these nations were able to parlay American recognition and respect (genuine or not) of the emperors into real political capital to fire their own domestic agendas. However, in the long run, these tours neither changed America's overall political orientations toward Ethiopia and Japan, nor allowed these two countries to fully control their expanding global role. These tours provided the nations of Ethiopia and Japan with internal political

⁷⁸ Ruoff, 2001, 126-127.

⁷⁹ This idea is a very prickly topic in Japan. The full connotations of remaking Hirohito during the occupation, Hirohito's recasting during his tour in America, and Akihito's primary education by an American for Americans has yet to be assembled in a unified examination of U.S. influences on the Japanese monarchy.

support, but at the cost of some sovereignty on the world stage.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The imperial tours of Emperor Haile Selassie and of Emperor Hirohito promoted pro-American attitudes abroad, gave further legitimacy to the imperial houses of Ethiopia and Japan, and created new spaces for Americans of African and Japanese descent to explore issues of race, nationality, and identity. The imperial tours were fertile ground for American policy makers who sought to direct the emperors, and the nations they represented, into closer orbit to the United States. Likewise both Ethiopia and Japan used the visits to renegotiate aspects of their nations' relationship with the U.S. Although both governments sought to gain more political and economic ground during the visits, the emperors' pro-Americanism remained intact and even grew. The tour also provided a unique opportunity for African Americans and Japanese Americans to reimagine their cultural identity, debate transnational racial oppression, and renegotiate their space within American society.

The imperial tours' most successful aspects, from the American government's standpoint, were the pro-American attitudes cultivated during the events. Even though the tours did not produce strong U.S. support for decolonization in Africa or end the postwar era in Japan as some commentators had hoped, the emperors strongly reinforced the cooperative U.S.-Ethiopia and U.S.-Japan relations respectively. Haile Selassie remained pro-United Nations and pro-America despite military and economic pressure as

his neighbors turned toward Arab and Soviet sources for support.¹ Likewise, Hirohito, although required by law to be apolitical, was clearly quite moved by the tour and recounted it as one of his fondest memories. While these tours were only one piece of the overall political picture of the day, they were also very powerful tools of U.S. foreign policy and deeply influenced America's political and economic relationship with Ethiopia and Japan.

America's domestic racial dynamic was also heavily affected by the emperors' visits. The tours challenged stereotypes, mobilized communities, and promoted pride amongst groups often marginalized by Anglo-American society. In the 1950s, during Haile Selassie's tour, John Gunther and other white journalists attempted to disrupt this challenge to white American prominence by claiming epistemological control of racial definitions, particularly the idea of whiteness. They recreated Haile Selassie as white in part to explain Ethiopia's success, but also to prevent wider debates linking desegregation and decolonization. African Americans, on the other hand, associated themselves with the Ethiopia's success and progress through claims of racial similarities to the emperor. This reveals the contested flexibility of racialized language in America in the early Cold War years. Neither the mass media, nor the U.S. government was particularly excited by the questions of racial justice raised during Haile Selassie's tour. However, faced with Cold War Soviet propaganda and potential embracement in a globalized context, the U.S. made strategic compromises particularly in regards to its African American citizens.

Likewise, Emperor Hirohito's tour was unique for Americans of Japanese descent.

¹ Memorandum for the Record, Senator Theo. F. Green's appointment with the President to discuss his [Green's] visit to Ethiopia, prepared by Bernard M. Shanley, 12 November 1956. Cataloged in the *Dwight D. Eisenhower Diaries*, box 10.

Although the 1957 American visit of the British royal family drew large crowds, few if any Americans celebrated their British roots, heritage, and ethnicity through the royal family. On the other hand, just as African Americans responded to Haile Selassie, many Japanese Americans used Hirohito's tour to reflect on their identity and ethnicity. Japanese Americans empowered by, or rallying against, Hirohito's physical presence in the United States, debated their own historical presence within the narrative of the American experience. Ethnic pride, memories of internment, and a conflict of leadership surfaced in many Japanese American communities in conjunction with the emperor's tour. Issues such as reparations and redress for internment became relatively mainstream in Japanese American society and could no longer be ignored. Many felt there was simply no longer a need to hide the past.

The emperors' tours demonstrated America's growing relationships with both Ethiopia and Japan. Likewise, the governments of these nations were able to parlay American recognition and respect (genuine or not) of the emperors into real political capital to fuel their own domestic agendas. However, neither the U.S.-Ethiopia nor the U.S. Japan relationship was radically strengthened or altered by the tours. The U.S. largely abandoned efforts to aid decolonization in Africa in order to appease European powers, fight communism on the front lines in Korea, assist France in Vietnam, and increase political and economic control in the newly imagined Pacific Rim. Japan played a very important role in this process as a sort of economic and cultural "bridge" over the Pacific during the postwar. America relied on Japan's economy to some extent to create supply routes throughout the Pacific. Military bases in Japan enabled American warfare throughout the Pacific, first in Korea and then in Vietnam. In addition, America

occasionally used Japan as a proxy in its dealings with other East Asian nations. The Japanese government's hope that Hirohito's tour would end this postwar system simply did not come to pass.

In the long run, these tours neither changed America's overall political orientations toward Ethiopia or Japan, nor allowed those two countries to fully control their expanding global role. The tours provided the nations of Ethiopia and Japan with internal political support, but at the cost of some sovereignty on the world stage. Ironically perhaps, it was the historically marginalized and oppressed African Americans and Asian Americans that occupied middle spaces between America, Ethiopia, and Japan who reaped the greatest rewards and gained the most ground from the imperial tours. This hints at the limitations of both the U.S. hegemony in Cold War politics and the limits of the nation-state in defining, manipulating, and controlling identity. Just as the U.S. could not control many aspects of the imperial tours, such as the individual actions of the emperors once they arrived, no nation-state can impose nationality solely from the inside out. The emperors' tours influenced notions of nationhood and identity across preconceived boundaries of racial hierarchies, ethnicity affiliation, and state control. By mobilizing and supporting people identified, or self-identified, with symbolic elements of nationality as represented by the emperors, the tours' legacies far exceed the political boundaries of the American, Ethiopian, or Japanese state.

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