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Nationalism and Border Violence: The Global Rise in Soft Fascism

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Abstract

Since the election of Donald Trump in the United States in 2016, there has been a particularly nationalistic, illiberal shift in the way we interact with the rest of the world. As we have favored some while violently excluding others at our borders, the media and press which criticizes these policies is under attack. This shift is not exclusive to the United States and the following research will also focus on the illiberal democratic movements in Hungary, Brazil, the Philippines, and the unfolding right-wing politics of a post-Brexit state. In an explanatory style, this research will focus on Benedict Anderson's imagined community theory and Reece Jones articulation of militarized borders to answer what the connection is between nationalism and border violence. My research will also be guided by Naomi Wolf's discussion of the closing down of an open society to argue how this could be considered a soft form of fascism. Lastly, this research will turn to a collection of Howard Zinn's essays to understand the loss of liberties and how to face this issue as a citizen.

Introduction

Most people tend to have some kind of understanding of where they come from and where they belong in the world. It has become almost instinctual to identify oneself as pertaining to a certain geographic location, culture or race. When asked the question, "Where are you from," most of us would answer with whatever place we most closely identify ourselves to such as, "Marina, California". Then the question of, "But where are you originally from," might even be followed after you have already answered the first question. More often than not,

someone is actually asking you, "What is your race, what is your culture and why are you here?" These are the questions which bind certain people to nation-states and make clear distinctions between the "us" and the "them". Only recently in human history have we invented borders and claimed territories which separates the "insiders" from the "outsiders". Borders and territories have created a sense of what some may call nationalism, or a collective form of identity that is socially constructed and contested[1]. Nationalism may also operate internally within the state to categorize and manage citizens who are considered legitimate and those who are considered illegitimate or aliens[2]. From a historical human perspective, we have been nomadic peoples crossing borderless lands for thousands of years, and from a human rights perspective, it is also protected under several articles in the Universal Declaration of Human rights to do so. This recent phenomenon of territorial boundaries in human history has also been accompanied by violence and restricted movement of people considered to be "illegitimate aliens" in order to protect such claimed territories. In a rapidly increasing global trend, this has led to the seizure and control of social life in order to dispel political dissent without using 'hard' tactics such as a police state or banning elections. This rising, global, political trend is called 'soft fascism'. Without overly romanticizing the past as a nomadic paradise, this paper speculates that the implications of borders and nationalism may incite a global pattern of fear, restricted movement and violence on certain migratory populations and refugees. This case study will illustrate the shift from democratic led politics to soft fascism using Benedict Andersons 'imagined communities' theory as a focal point to analyze nationalisms, violent borders and soft fascism.

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[1] Anderson, Benedict. "Imagined Communities': Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism." *Verso.*1983.
[2] Darian-Smith and McCarty. "The Global Turn: Theories, Research Designs, and Methods for Global Studies." *University of California Press.* 2017.

Literature Review

The global issues we face today is rising soft fascism, illiberal democracy, and the oppression of marginalized populations through fear and violent borders. This literature review aims to explain how rising soft fascist politics have reached this point globally and what the implications on cosmopolitan societies may be. I will begin by examining what a demagogue and a fascist leader is. Next I will discuss the differences in nationalisms abroad and examine how they individually account for the global shift toward soft fascism. Finally, I will discuss how this process is responsible for border violence and the threat to cosmopolitanism. In my analysis, I will answer the question; to what extent has nationalism accounted for border violence and the global rise in soft fascism?

Accordingly, demagogues or someone who deliberately makes evidently false statements and breaks publicly endorsed prescriptive norms while catering to widely-held private prejudices, have propagated nationalistic agendas around the globe[3]. Such private prejudices are often upheld by those who call themselves patriots. Patriots can be describes as those individuals who believe that that government is always right and are loyal to it without question[4]. Such nationalistic agendas have threatened a society in which we have an obligation to one another which goes beyond shared citizenship and kin ties. This type of obligation to one another is called, Cosmopolitanism. Additionally, true cosmopolitans sincerely value human lives and the practices and beliefs which lend them value[5]There are many types of nationalisms that cater to the spread of soft fascism, but first it is important to know under what pretenses a fascist leader

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[3] Hahl et al. "The Authentic Appeal of the Lying Demagogue: Proclaiming the Deeper Truth about Political Illegitimacy." *American Sociological Review.* 2018.

[4] Howard Zinn. "A Power Govenments Cannot Suppress" p.112. San Fransisco. *City Lights Books.* (2007)

[5] Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers." *W.W. Norton &Company.* New York.2006.

can be described. For example, they tend to be charismatic individuals with strong inclinations toward authoritarian rule who derives their strength from a multi-class mass base. They also engage in or support the systematic and massive violation of basic human, civil, and political rights. Lastly, they contradict the fundamental values and aims of liberal democracy or social democracy[6]. Ideologically, soft-fascism can also be engaged through populism. Claiming to identify with the people, populism is characterized by exclusionary narratives which separate groups such as immigrants and religious minorities; a feature considered by many analysts as specific to right-wing populism. Although Left-wing populism also exists, it is frequently defined as sharing right-wing populism's identification with the people and its anti-elitism, but not its attachment to exclusionary narratives[7]. Another ideology that is heavy-handed in soft-fascism is right-wing authoritarianism. Authoritarianism involves the practice of hierarchic social structures. Dominated by the leadership principle as a principle of totality, it has no respect for individuality in the organization of the political system, the capitalist economy, the army, the family and the cultural organization[8]. One might even wonder how right-wing authoritarianism has gained support with such seemingly undesirable characteristics. To answer this question, the socio-economic hypothesis ascertains that it has to do with socio-economic inequalities, class structures, declassification and fears of social degradation[9]. In other terms, it is a fear-based system which plays on the victimization of one group at the expense of another, often marginalized, group. These marginalized groups are blamed for the potential social degradation of the proclaimed victimized group. For example, the Nazis blamed Jews for social

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[6] Walden Bello. The Nation.com, "Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte Is a Wildly Popular Fascist: Now What?" (2017) https://www.thenation.com/article/philippine-president-rodrigo-duterte-is-a-wildly-popular-fascist/

[7] Karen Sanders, et al. "Populism and exclusionary narratives: The 'other' in Podemos' 2014 European Union election campaign" *European Journal of Communication*. Vol. 32(6) (2017). 554.

[8] Fuchs, Christian. "Authoritarian capitalism, authoritarian movements and authoritarian communication." *Media, Culture & Society*. Vol. 40(5) 779–791. 2018.

[9] Ibd.

and economic degradation in Germany at the expense of a once glorious German past. Further, the fascist mythic past and the rhetoric of extreme-nationalists means that a glorious past has been lost by the humiliation brought on by globalism, liberal cosmopolitanism and respect for "universal values" such as equality[10]. The fascist mythic past plays a major part in how demagogues push their agendas which become the basis of the nation's identity under fascist politics. It is also important to note that because I am discussing soft fascism, demagogues may not prescribe to every pretense listed above, such as a classic or "hard fascist" like Mussolini would, but will engage in several of them as a result. According to Naomi Wolf, a liberal author and former political advisor to Al Gore and Bill Clinton, we need to look at the lessons of European and other kinds of fascism to understand the seriousness of the closing down of an open society. Wolf argues that it happens in a series of steps. The steps include invoking terror through an external threat, creating prison systems outside the rule of law, deploy a paramilitary group, set up internal surveillance, harass citizens' groups, engage in arbitrary detention and release, target key individuals, control the press, cast dissent as treason and criticism as espionage, and lastly to suspend the rule of law[11].

Now that the qualities of fascism are clear, it is necessary to examine the various types of nationalisms around the globe which have assisted in both the rise in global soft fascism and border violence. Brazil, the Philippines, Hungary, India, the United States and the UK referendum to leave the European Union (Brexit) have all prescribed to demagoguery, populism or private prejudices as a form of nationalism. While it may seem like fascism would be widely opposed due to its authoritarian-like qualities, Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte is very

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[10] Stanley, Jason.
[11] Naomi Wolf. "The End of America: Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot" *Chelsea Green Publishing Co.* (2007)

popular with the people. Fascism comes in many different forms, and as an example, Duterte is one that actually deviates from the classic definition in which people expect fascism to form. For example, he does not use a mythical national past to get the people on his side, but rather a gangster-like charm who people see as the leader to end "national chaos". Because of this, people have failed to recognize that a form of soft fascism is upon them and they have accepted Duterte as a strong leader. Oriented towards and authoritarian figure, Duterte is misogynistic, a violator of human rights, and an open critic of liberal democracy[12]. Meanwhile, Jair Bolsonaro, the front-runner in Brazil's presidential race has been labeled as an extreme right candidate who has explicitly defended the violation of human rights, questioned the rights of minorities and denied that the military government had used torture[13]. In Hungary, Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, has been outspoken about his vision towards an illiberal state, making a statement that he wants to "build an illiberal state based on national foundations," citing Russia and China as examples. Orban has repeatedly criticized the media and NGO's who he sees as disloyal to the nation. This kind of nationalism is what can be considered ethnic nationalism, as Orban has called refugees "poison" while erecting a razor wire fence on Hungary's southern border to keep them out.[14] However, religious nationalism is also present in Hungary. In 2011 Orban also oversaw the introduction of Hungary's new constitution, "Law of Hungary", which begins by praising Saint Stephen who, "made our country a part of the Christian Europe a thousand years ago" and recognizes the "role of Christianity in preserving nationhood." [15] Orban is not the only demagogue to stake this claim to religious nationalism. India's demagogue leader, Modi, has

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[12] Bello, Walden. "Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte Is a Wildly Popular Fascist." *The nation.com*. 2017.
[13] "Fascist? Populist? Debate over Describing Brazil's Bolsonaro". *Indiatvnews.com*. 2018.
[14] Harris, Erika. "Democracy is on the brink in Hungary, so why is no one talking about it?" *University of Liverpool*. 2017.
[15] Stanley, Jason. "How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them." *Random House*. 2018.

supported Hindutva, or "Hinduness". Hindutva rejects the constitutional secularism of the Indian state and proposes that India is fundamentally a Hindu nation. Hindutva also insists that minorities such as Muslim and Christian Indians, are unwelcome in a Hindu country[16].

Lastly, we must also address the phenomena of Brexit and the United States after the election of Donald Trump. While Donald Trump is an elected representative of the United States and Brexit is a political establishment aimed at the exit of Britain from the EU, both are part of a broader trend across Europe and in the West to limit immigration and restore national sovereignty for the 'people'. Similarly, both establishments can be described as 'right-wing populists' which are the symptom of the same problem that can also be seen in Hungary, the Philippines, India and Brazil: an inability to address a growing popular discontent with mainstream politics. However, what is especially characteristic of Brexit and Trumps America is a cultural backlash that has been triggered by immigration at the perceived cost of economic insecurity and the loss of status[17].

Furthermore, the definition of nationalism varies from one nation-state to another. For example, American nationalism is often perceived as love for ones' country, or "patriotism." However, this simple definition does not include classifications and hierarchies that indeed exist in our imagined communities that we call a nation-state. The U.S. is undeniably a heterogeneous society built upon the immigrant experience, however it has created hierarchal systems which exclude certain members and halt new immigrants from joining through fabricated nationhood. In comparison, English nationalism is based upon an Anglo-British identity committed to

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[16] Chopra, Rohit. "Fascist Fest as Trump's America Meets Modi's Hindus" *SCMP-This week in Asia.* Sept. 12, 2018.

[17] Brian Girvin. *H-network.org* "Brexit and the rise of right-wing populism in Europe: why and how nationalism matters."(2018) https://networks.h-net.org/node3911/discussions/1971598/brexit-and-rise-right-wing-populism-europe-why-and-how

Parliamentary sovereignty and British exceptionalism. Between 1970 and 1975, during debates

over entry to the European Economic Community, the paradox of Anglo-British nationalism was

affirmed: that its populist expression can be used to reinforce parliamentary sovereignty[18].With

the recent British vote for Brexit, it was found that most of the population who voted for it was

concurrent with patterns of Eurosceptic parties of the past such as the UK independence party.

However, it was also found that it was much more polarized along education lines and is more

socially distinctive than before. Just as the U.S. has worsened perceived class polarization since

Donald Trump has become the president, this data would infer that Brexit and British

nationalism has worsened or clarified class distinctions and hierarchies as well.[19] Both the vote

for Brexit and Donald Trump have fostered what political thinker Anthony Barnett would

consider to be one of the worst democratic disasters of our time. Barnett compares the

exclusionary policies and nationalistic attitudes of the two, but his most compelling argument is

that Brexit is primarily a response to England's loss of faith in the once-glorious British project.

Seventy percent of England claimed their national identity as "English." Barnett claims this is a

result of being deprived of a national identity and that "Britishness is now Brexitness[20]." This so-

called Brexitness is an imagined community just as the "Make America Great Again" supporters

are an imagined community of their own[21].

In relation to the imagined community theory, Anderson addresses the fact that the

majority of the people involved in a certain community may never actually meet each other. So if

the individuals from these imagined communities such as Brexit and MAGA truly will never

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[18] Emma Vines. "A Common Appeal: Anglo-British Nationalism and Opposition to Europe, 1970-1975" *Australian Journal of Politics and History*: Volume 61, Number 4, pp.530-545.(2015)

[19] Mathew J. Goodwin and Heath Oliver. "The 2016 Referendum, Brexit and the Left Behind: An Aggregate-level Analysis of the Result." *The Political Quarterly*. Vol.87. Issue 3. pp323-332.(2016)

[20] Barnett, Anthony. "The Lure of Greatness: England's Brexit and America's Trump." *Random House*. (2017).

[21] MAGA is U.S. President Donald Trump's slogan which encompasses an imagined community of followers.

meet each other, then the issue of exclusivity and intolerance creates a blurred line between who the "us' vs. the "them" truly is. The blurred lines beckons attention and explanation. If exclusivity to these communities does not actually rely on individual relations as a community would entail, then one explanation could be that it is racially exclusive. Nationalism has close ties to racial violence in both the U.S. and the Brexit state. Research by the Institute of Race Relations into over one hundred incidents of racial violence was reported in the mass media in the month after the EU referendum. This indicates that the rise in such attacks has to be understood in terms of the racist climate created not just during the clearly nativist referendum debate, but also in the divisive policies and programs of successive governments preceding it[22]. Similarly, hate crimes had been steadily decreasing annually in the U.S., but increased to 300 more than the year prior to Donald Trump's presidency[23]. Furthermore, Trump's plans to build a border wall has worsened an already existing issue of violence and militarization at the U.S.-Mexico border. U.S. immigration policy has changed over the years and generated unintended, undesirable outcomes such as separating families, fueling violence, and failing to keep deported unauthorized immigrants from attempting to immigrate again. Criminalization of migration demonstrates the futility of deportation as a tool for deterrence[24]. Driven by the fear of change and being on the losing end of globalization, the UK's Euroscepticism parallels the anti-immigration and anti-trade sentiment that has raged through the United States since Donald Trump's presidency. In his recent self-proclamation as a nationalist, President Donald Trump has furthered the rhetoric of his private prejudices against "others". His slogan, "Make American Great Again" falls right into the mythical past trap of a fascist leader. Trump's lying

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[22] Burnett, John. "Racial Violence and the Brexit State." *Sage Journals*. Vol 58, Issue 4, (2017).
[23] Mindock, Clark. "Number of hate crimes surges in year of Trump's election". *Independent.* (2017)
[24] Jeremy Slack, Daniel E. Martinez, and Scott Whiteford. "The Shadow of the Wall: Violence and Migration on the U.S.-Mexico Border policies." *University of Arizona Press*. (2018)

demagoguery has allowed for a massive rise in hate crimes against minorities both domestically and in violation of human rights at the southern border. By placing blame on marginalized groups and the media for crime and a poor economy in the United States, Trump has irrationally victimized far-right conservatives. While demonizing liberal democracy, Trump's nationalism has many fascist qualities. To demonstrate, calling the media the enemy of the state, criminalizing immigration, and lying to the public in order to push his private prejudices are just a few of Donald Trump's soft-fascist qualities. His incessant demands to build a border wall has only increased the violence at the current border, since the current border is already strategized to create deadly conditions to deter others from crossing. Currently, the US-Mexico border has already recovered more than 6,000 bodies which have been attributed to the massive border patrol presence. Likewise, more than half the deaths at borders in the last decade have occurred at the edges of the EU, making it more dangerous than the US-Mexico border or than any other border globally[25].

Historically, 10,000 years ago most humans migrated as hunter-gatherers without borders. Borders were first created in the sixteenth and seventeenth century England to make common lands more profitable by limiting free movement into pastures and forests with hedges and calling them private properties. After the Thirty-Years War (1618-48), the treaties of Westphalia began to use territorial sovereignty and drawn maps to establish who did and did not have rights to certain places. In this sense, what Edward Said calls imaginative geographies, have been placed in the minds of those living within these boundaries. According to Said, these boundaries arbitrarily distinguish a space which is familiar as "ours" and a territory beyond

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[25] Reece Jones

which is "theirs" or "the land of the barbarians."[26] This is the same system which still exists

today, but is more appropriately called, neo-colonialism. Former colonies borrowed to finance

development after decolonization, and borrowed again later to finance debt-service payments

from those previous loans. These debts increased significantly in the 1970s due to energy cost

increases, and by 1982 it was evident that these decolonized countries would never be able to

repay their debts. A "structural adjustment" was implemented to regulate the global financial

system, but ultimately just opened the door for these underdeveloped countries to access more

foreign loans to repay the initial debts once again. Thus, foreign indebtedness continued to grow

along with foreign control over these "decolonized" territories and neocolonialism was created as

a result.[27]

To understand this better, what Benedict Anderson calls imagined communities can be

used to further analyze borders and nations, which Anderson describes as both inherently limited

and sovereign. According to Anderson, a political scientist and historian, an imagined

community is a nation in which the members will never know the vast majority of each other, yet

in each of their minds they have an image of communion[28]. Benedict Anderson's theory

rationalizes this as the result of print-capitalism and the Reformation in Europe, which allowed

for the creation of non-religious identities through common vernacular languages. New

languages enabled mutual forms of communication that had been adopted by non-religious

regimes that had created the newest form of an imagined community after religion-

nationalism[29]. Although Anderson aligns the rise of nationalism with the erosion of religion, he

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[26] Edward Said. *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 54.
[27]David C. Korten. "The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community." San Francisco. *Kumarian Press*.(2006)
[28] Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 6.
[29] Ibd. (46-47)

argues that nationalism does not supersede religion. This is important to note as there are religious nationalisms today such as in India and Brazil to an extent.

By the twentieth century, the movement of the poor from one state to another led to passports and visas as a system to establish identity and citizenship. In this way, restricted movement of peoples was created along with limited or restricted access to resources. As a result of power expression, physical borders, laws and documents now restrict the movement of migrants. When these tactics fail to keep them out of a territory, physical violence is used as a resort[30]. Thus, the very existence of borders produces the violence that surrounds it and new security practices is the source of violence, not a response to it. The idea that borders are a natural part of the human world and that migration is driven by traffickers and smugglers is also a misguided assumption[31].

To explain further, we must discuss that even though everyone moves around, border violence is the preservation of privilege and opportunity for some by restricting access to resources and movement for others. This is evident in a post-colonial critique of nationalism from Homi Bhabha which reminds us that there are still nationless people in the world, thus any contemporary research on nations must account for ways to represent the voices of such marginalized peoples on identity and belonging. Through the cases of these nationless peoples, we must make efforts to understand our positioning and our relationships with others. Bhabha highlights that the nation is a relatively new concept which "antiquity was unfamiliar with." Bhabha explains that there have been claims that a nation is based upon the exclusivity of race or of language, yet these are proven to be misguided assertions or even "imagined". There is no

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[30] Reece Jones
[31] Jones, Reece. "Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move" *Verso*. 2017.

purity of a nation due to race or language, instead the opposite is the case and nations are racially and linguistically heterogeneous. Appiah expands on this concept as he discusses cosmopolitanism as an obligation to each other beyond kin and shared citizenship[32]. Appiah argues rather that we have to lay value in "humanity" on an individual level even if these are people that we will never know because we enrich one another with our different cultures and identities.

Theoretical Perspective

Anderson's 'imagined communities' is the base theory for which we can conceptualize the relationship between nationalism and violence, however there are several supporting theorists and scholars in addition. In order to understand the modern nation-state, John Agnew's notion of the 'territorial trap' is extremely useful in understanding the different components of what a nation-state is. The 'territorial trap' explains assumptions that the nation-state is a clearly bounded territorial space with differences between domestic and foreign affairs, and lastly that state boundaries are also the boundaries of society[33]. The 'territorial trap' conceptualizes 'imagined communities' in that the boundaries enforced by nation-states may result in violence in order to protect and preserve normalized assumptions of exclusive societies and communities that do not actually exist outside of our imaginations. Presuming that there is an excluded population on the receiving end of these boundaries, power must be wielded in order to enforce exclusive boundaries and nation-states. Rather than viewing the power of nationalism through the lens of oppression, Michel Foucault's 'Subject and Power' model is based in the assumption

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[32] Homi Bhabha. "Nation and Narration". London: *Routledge*.1990.
[33] John Agnew. "The Territorial trap: the geographical assumptions of international relations theory". *Review of International Political Economy* 1, 1: 53-80. 1994.

that power is wielded through the manufacturing of "individuals"[34]. Foucault highlights that although a nation-state may have a common history, language, belief, custom, or common territory, these factors do not define the nation-state. Similar to Anderson, Foucault rather argues that the sovereign power to construct the illusion of a commonality among people and a common national identity actually defines the nation-state. Instead of asking what nation we belong to, Foucault asks rather "how" we became subjects of a particular nation. His 'subjectification' model defines how we become subjects with certain identities through exertion of control and dependence through identity and conscience. Another way to examine power relations and imagined communities is through "ethno-symbolism". Ethno-symbolism is a school of thought in the study of nationalism that stresses the importance of symbols, myths, values and traditions in the formation and persistence of the modern nation-state. From this perspective, the power of the nation-state is wielded in ethno-symbolism such as flags and oral histories, which reinforces national identities and a sense of loyalty to such identities. Smith argues that the modernist paradigm pays insufficient attention to the long-term formation of national identities and, moreover, to the political power of the 'myth-symbol complex'. This theory suggests that the myths and symbols that are imagined creates political power.[35] Andersons imagined communities encompasses all of these concepts in that he argues that nationalism is not the enlightenment of a nation, but rather that it is the *invention* of nations when they do not exist.

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[34] Michel Foucault. "Subject and Power" in James D. Faubion (ed.) "Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984", London: *Penguin*.2002.
[35] Anthony Smith. "Theories of Nationalism." *Geralad Duckwork and Co.Ltd*.(1971).

Methodology

In order to answer my research question, I explore Benedict Andersons "Imagined Communities" theory in an explanatory research style and use case studies to identify certain causes of nationalism, border violence and soft fascism. The theoretical framework is also analyzed using historical modes of research which supports the emergence of borders and nationalism. In conducting my research outside of theory, I found it difficult to find peer reviewed articles or books about this subject since it seems to unfold on a daily basis. With that being said, much of my research comes from daily news sources and journals written from an anthropological perspective. These sources could be considered primary sources as well since they are reports of current events unfolding. Secondary sources were also used, which include theoretical perspective pieces, peer reviewed journals, and data on borders and violent incidents due to the current global political climate.

Findings

From my research, I have found that border violence is a result of nationalism, and the global rise in soft fascism is also a result of the two. Contrary to popular assumptions, demagogues are not in fact the disease, but rather they are symptoms of soft fascism, which is the disease. Borders are a key site where privileges are maintained through restricted movement, and the militarization of borders symbolizes the global trend toward soft fascism. There is not an existential threat to the sovereignty of the state as populist and nationalist believe, but rather there is an irrational fear of an invasion which could potentially hinder hierarchal structures in which they personally benefit from. However, the very migrants who pose the threat of a supposed invasion are the remnants of European colonialism who created the artificial borders in

the first place to keep out the poor and those who potentially could hinder the preferred system of hierarchy. Ironically, these nationalists and populists who believe their nation is being invaded fail to realize that they are often the ones doing the invading. For example, the United States has not been invaded since the war of 1812 by British forces, yet the United States has invaded other countries non-stop, even in present day[36]. In my research, I have found that nationalism creates patriots who do not question the government's actions, which is very dangerous for a democratic society. The United States Declaration of Independence also declares equal rights for all to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." And "whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it…" Thus, if it is our duty to alter or abolish such destruction, then we must also be able to criticize and have freedom of press and media without censorship. I have found that one of the major points of the global rise in soft fascism has been the restriction of the press and media when it criticizes the very demagogues who are demolishing liberal democracy. My research overall suggests that there is a failure of the people to recognize the difference between the country and the government. Patriotism assumes that the globe is sectioned off where some being born in a particular place are superior and must fight, kill and die in an attempt to protect their status. These imagined communities are arbitrary and threaten both cosmopolitanism and liberal democracy. Obedience to the government is the idea that the government does what it does in the interest of the people. Further, and even more disturbing, is that patriotism is therefore the reason for border violence and death. A true cosmopolitan society would ensure that we have allegiance to humanity rather than to just one nation and that our nation is not immune from standards of human decency. In

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[36] Howard Zinn. "A Power Governments Cannot Suppress." p.189 *San Francisco*. City Light Books. (2007)

this way, it is crucial that we understand the differences between the two if we are to spare democracy and avoid fascism for further generations.

Analysis

In general, nationalism and border violence is universally a violation of human rights. According to article 13 of the Declaration of Human Rights:

1.) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state

2.) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country[37]

Article 14 continues this thought as it declares:

1.) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

2.) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts of contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.[38]

These articles mean a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations was set at the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December 10, 1948. This is but a small victory in the course of human history, since we are yet to acknowledge these universal human rights, which were set forth by representatives of all regions of the world and cultural backgrounds. Conversely, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also acknowledges in article 15 that:

1.) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

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[37] Universal Declaration of Human Rights. *United Nations.org*
[38] Ibid.

2.) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.[39]

Section one of this article reiterates that is not necessarily a problem to have a nationality, but that arrogant nationalism when backed by weapons of mass destruction and militarization is the true issue. We should have the rights to identify ourselves with where we are familiar and where we find comfort, but at the same time this must be approached with caution and not confused for obedience to the government and a violent military which 'protects' the people. Section two also reiterates cosmopolitanism through the human right to be able to change ones nationality without penalty.

Conclusion

In order to avoid the potential threat to democracy and cosmopolitanism, it is the duty of civil society at the global level to prevent this from happening. In Hungary, 250 NGO's which include *Human Rights Watch, Human Rights First,* and *Civil Society Europe* have banded together to defend human rights and a free and just society. With Hungary steadily increasing soft fascist policies, civil society is shrinking at an alarming rate. These NGO's have called upon the Hungarian Parliament to reject proposed laws that would restrict organizations that support migration.[40] In Brazil, the recent victory of Jair Bolsonaro has been eerily reminiscent of the two-decades long dictatorship by the Brazilian military who lead attacks against the UNE (National Student Union) from the 1960s-1980s. At the forefront of the opposition today stands university students once again. Bolsonaro's political vision threatens the autonomy of the universities as he has already began raiding universities for pro-democracy or anti-fascist

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[39] Ibid.
[40] Human Rights Watch.org "We stand in solidarity with civil society in Hungary" (February 19, 2018).

materials that have been deemed illegal. Whatever is left of Brazil's civil society lays in the

university students and their resistance who understand the urgent fight for human rights during

the current rise in fascism.[41] Similarly, there is a student uprising in Eastern Europe against a

post-Brexit state. Prime Minister Theresa May held her position in a 200-117 vote on December

11, 2018 in her favor. A vote against her could have halted Brexit, but since she is still Prime

Minister, the Brexit ordeal will continue on[42]. Contrary to populist views, the future of a post-

Brexit state in Europe actually suggest less sovereignty rather than more.[43] The continued far-

right Brexit has provoked the grassroots movements in Eastern Europe as a result. Having vivid

memories of an authoritarian system, young people are motivated to protect democratic

movements. Many of the young people being students from Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Poland

and the Czech Republic have all met to discuss their struggles and their ideals against the future

of a post-Brexit state at the "Lets demand the impossible" conference. Although the country has

ratified most of the international human rights treaties, including the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights, the Philippine government has treated them only as suggestions. Under Duterte's

administration, 33 women have been killed while defending women's rights this year and at least

900 were killed in the Marawi siege where civil society was protesting Martial Law in Mindanao

last year on May 23rd. Additonally, 447,963 individuals have been displaced due to bombings

and military operations under Martial Law. As a result, 152 civil society organizations and

activists have signed and sent a letter to President Rodrigo Duterte regarding the deterioration of

democracy and human rights in hopes to restore the sovereignty of the people[44]. In India, civil

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[41] Marianne Quijano. "In Brazil, The Revolution Will Be on Campus.*" Study Breaks.com* (November 13, 2018.)
[42] Yahoo News. "Theresa May clings on as prime minister after winning vote of no confidence" (December 12, 2018)
[43]Naomi Rovnick. "Brexit Deal Crisis: May Fights Back-as it happened" *Financial Times*(November 15, 2018)
[44] Marya Salamat. "152 Civil Society Orgs demand Duterte's accountability for human rights violations"*Bulatlat.com* (December 11, 2018)

society is beginning the journey toward their right to freedom of speech and expression, assembly, and association guaranteed by the Indian constitution. Activists, journalists and lawyers all joined together on the December 10th, 2018, the 70th anniversary of the proclamation and adoption of the UDHR, to uphold these rights and stand in solidarity with NGO's like Amnesty India and Greenpeace India. Speaking publicly at the gathering in New Delhi and referring to civil society's solidarity with human rights organizations, activist Henri Tiphange said that, "The government should know that the more it attacks human rights, the stronger it gets." Similar protests took place in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderbad, Pune and Chennai on the December 10th.[45]

Here in the United States, I must bring back Naomi Wolf's ten steps toward the "End of America". Most of her ten steps are still absolutely relevant today as the press is in the U.S. is under immense attack by the Trump administration while they falsify external threats of Muslims and immigrants and refugees at the southern border. Both have been imprisoned outside the rule of law by a paramilitary group is ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and individuals have been targeted as threats and arbitrarily detained and released at the border and domestically. Civil society has already taken a stand on this issue. One example is the American Friends Service Committee who organized border rallies to advocate for the current Honduran migrant caravan seeking asylum in the United States. As they have been met with violent tear gassing and beatings, civil society has stood for their human right to migrate and to end the militarization of the border[46]. Further, black people still face immense systematic oppression here in the US and currently resist with civil society groups such as BLM (Black Lives Matter) which advocates

[45] "Human Rights Will Win, Assert Amnesty India and Civil Society Activists." *Sikh Siyasat Bureau*. (December 10, 2018)
[46] Migrantjustice.afsc.org

for the recognition and reformation of excessive police brutality against the black population. The irony of BLM critics is that they argue that activists such as former NFL player Colin Kaepernick are "unpatriotic" for protesting during the national anthem by taking a knee instead of standing. Arguing that Kaepernick is ungrateful for the country he lives in while protesting the government, these patriots are actually blindly observing their loyalty to the government, not the country. Moreover, the exclusionary right-wing populist policies ignorantly deteriorates the sovereignty of the people in furthering this rhetoric. Ultimately, my research of the global rise in soft fascism in connection with border violence and nationalism has led me to conclude that revolutionary change is not going to come as one cataclysmic moment, but rather an endless succession of small acts by millions of people zigzagging toward a more decent society[47].

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