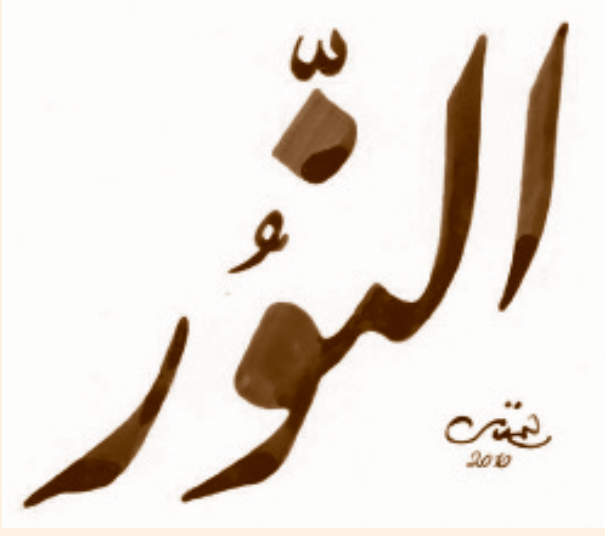

MISSION STATEMENT

Al Noor, **the Boston College Undergraduate Middle Eastern Studies Journal,** aims to: ◆ Facilitate a nonpartisan, unbiased conversation within the Boston College community and beyond about the Middle East. ◆ Provide a medium for students to publish research on the Middle East and Islam. ◆ Promote diverse opinions and present a comprehensive view of the myriad of cultures, histories, and perspectives that comprise the Middle East. ◆

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

We are delighted to release the Fall 2025 edition of *Al Noor*, which explores the theme of "Strategy and Reaction: Inflections of Power in Negotiation in the Middle East." While negotiations are often seen as formal processes of mediation and agreement, in another sense, they form the very fabric of society, allowing governments, communities, and relationships to function. Power is rarely static; instead, it is constantly resisted and reshaped by the other forces and stakeholders at play. These are the dynamics explored in the pages that follow.

In "An Alliance of Dual Necessity: The Iraqi Communist Party's Negotiation for Power under Qasim," Ameer Sadi examines the fraught and often misunderstood relationship between Iraqi Prime Minister Abd al-Karim Qasim and the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP). Sadi situates their alliance not as a product of shared ideology, but as one of mutual dependence. Ultimately, he argues that Qasim's pursuit of international legitimacy and pan-Arab approval, rather than a stable partnership with the ICP, eventually undermined his own regime. Conversely, the ICP's failure to act decisively once Qasim's intentions became clear proved a critical and costly misstep that failed to capitalize on the zenith of the party's power. Through close analysis of episodes such as the Mosul revolt, the Kirkuk massacre, and Qasim's shifting domestic and foreign policies, Sadi's analysis traces how pragmatism coupled with cognitive dissonance within both parties curdled into paranoia. By the time Qasim moved to suppress the ICP, the alliance that had sustained the republic had collapsed, clearing the path for the 1963 Ba'athist and Nasserist coup that ended Iraq's first experiment with republicanism.

Lauren Blakemore's "Persia, Piety, and Patriarchal Tradition: Analyzing the Secular and Religious Contexts of the Veil in the History of Iran" investigates the evolving cultural meaning proscribed to veiling in Iran, tracing it from a marker of class and status to a focal point of political and cultural contention. Throughout the piece, Blakemore explores how veils, which were banned under the guise of progress by the secular Pahlavi regime and mandated in the name of religion by the Islamic Republic, serve as a sociocultural lever for state control. In addition, Blakemore illustrates how, somewhat ironically, both secular and religious regimes used the veil as a political tool, negotiating legitimacy through patriarchal control of women's bodies and appearances. Yet this very tool of state oppression has also become a symbol at Iranian women's protests, making it a vivid example of negotiation and pushback between autonomy and control, identity and ideology.

"The Linguistic Landscape of Freedom: Language as Resistance in Moroccan History," a photo essay by Caroline Serenyi and Leo King, contextualizes how Morocco's linguistic diversity, including Arabic, Tamazight, and English, has served as a vehicle of resistance to oppression. Drawing on original photographs documenting language use in Moroccan cities, they argue that linguistic visibility reflects enduring political and ideological battles. Arabic was adopted early on by nationalist movements to resist French cultural assimilation and reinforce the monarchy's legitimacy. More recently, Tamazight, spoken by nearly half the population, gained official status in 2011 after sustained activism, increasing its presence in public life. English, meanwhile, has emerged as a tool of global solidarity, exemplified by graffiti supporting Palestine and broader decolonization movements. Though French remains influential, its gradual decline signals Morocco's continuing struggle to assert its indigenous and pan-Arab identities. This balance between language and influence reflects an ongoing negotiation, as Moroccans continually choose which words, and whose voices, define their public and cultural life.

We extend our deepest thanks to the readers, writers, and artists who make *Al Noor* vibrant with their curiosity and support. We hope this issue offers new perspectives on the Middle East, challenging assumptions, provoking thought, and inspiring further questions.
To explore past editions or learn more about our mission, please visit www.alnoorbc.org.

With warm regards,
Aalok Bhattacharya
Editor-in-Chief

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An Alliance of Dual Necessity

The Iraqi Communist Party's Negotiations for Power under Qasim

Ameer Sadi

Ameer Sadi is an International History major at Georgetown University in Qatar, focused primarily on the history of the modern Middle East. He has most recently appeared on Al Jazeera/Doha Debates as a panelist on a show debating several global topics ranging from architecture to neo-feudalism. He is currently the Qatar section editor of the Georgetown Journal of International Affairs.

On July 14th every year, supporters of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) gather in the thousands to commemorate the 1958 revolution against Iraq's Hashemite monarchy, leading to the formation of the first Iraqi republic.[1] Supporters wave flags of the party, as well as the republic's original flag—a black, white, and green Arab tricolor with a Kurdish sun in the center and an Assyrian star surrounding it—adopted after the revolution. They hold up portraits of the revolution's controversial leader, Brigadier Abd al-Karim Qasim, viewed as an advocate of the poor and of women's rights by some, criticized by others as the figure who sent Iraq tumbling into a series of coups. But for the ICP, the July 14th revolution is not just a cause for celebration, but the true national day in opposition to October 3rd, the day the Hashemite monarchy secured Iraqi independence from the British in 1932. For supporters of Qasim,

the overthrow of the monarchy marks a true day of Iraqi independence, as the ICP worked with Qasim as he oversaw Iraq's exit from the British sphere of influence. To this day, the communists have adopted Qasim's symbols as their own, sing songs of his revolution, and advocate for the virtues of Qasim's republic. Today in Iraq, the ICP and Qasim are almost synonymous, and many Iraqis have even come to believe that Qasim, himself never a member of any political party, was a communist. This view, however, is ignorant of the complex relationship between the ICP, one of the most powerful political parties in Iraqi history, and Qasim, the leader of Iraq's short-lived first republic until its overthrow in 1963 at the hands of Arab nationalist army officers. For Qasim, his ideological proximity in many regards to the ICP created a temporary alliance that he ultimately abandoned in a failed attempt to appease anti-communist forces in the region that proved to be a far more existential threat to his regime than he had calculated. For the ICP, its insistence on appeasing Qasim—a strategy partially rooted in their Marxist analysis of Iraqi politics—rather than exerting their influence on him allowed for the Arab nationalists to ultimately bring about the downfall of both the ICP and Qasim's regime.

Qasim's alliance with the ICP was initially formed out of their ideological proximity, particularly in their agreementto reject domination by the United Arab Republic (UAR) led by Gamal Abdel Nasser. The July 14th revolution took place within the context of the ascension of Arab nationalism, particularly the kind led by Nasser and his newly formed UAR, a union between Egypt and Syria. Following the overthrow of Iraq's monarchy, many within the ranks of the military, as well as the wider Arab nationalist movement (*Qawmiyya*), expected Iraq to join the effort to unite the Arab world. While they advocated for Iraq to join the UAR alongside Syria as an integrated part of the republic, Qasim strongly disagreed. He instead advocated for a form of pluralistic Iraqi civic nationalism (*Wataniyya*) that not only encompassed Iraq's Arabs, but also its Kurds, Assyrians, Turkmen, and other ethnic groups. Similarly, the ICP, which derived significant support from ethnic minorities as well as Iraq's Shia population, also opposed Iraq's accession to the UAR. Qasim, the ICP, the social democratic National Democratic Party (NDP), and the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) eventually formed something of an unofficial alliance centered on Iraqi nationalism. For the KDP, this alignment reflected not Iraqi nationalism per se, but a preference for Iraqi over Arab rule, a system within which they would constitute a larger portion of the population and be afforded far more power. Together, these groups opposed the Ba'athist and Nasserist forces that favored union with the UAR.[2] Following the revolution, the countless communists locked inside Hashemite prisons were released, ushering in the first era in which the communist party was able to, for a brief period, exercise freedom of speech and operate in public.[3] Despite his opposition to union with the UAR, Qasim emphasized his belief in strong relations with the Arab republic, and even the ICP had supported a loose confederation with the UAR, issuing vague statements in support of Arab unity.[4] However, these token concessions to the Arab nationalist movement would ultimately fail to prevent the ideological fracturing that defined much of the early republican period in Iraq.

This ideological schism manifested in the form of Qasim's rivalry with Abdul Salam Arif, a man who, despite having been a comrade and co-conspirator on July 14th, quickly turned against the first republic's leader, as Arif viewed the revolution as one "betrayed" by Qasim's refusal to join the UAR.[5] This personal rivalry influenced Qasim's calculus, prompting him to quickly realize that the communists would serve as the perfect counterbalance to the forces of Arab nationalism.[6] Eventually, Qasim attempted to dismiss Arif from his position as deputy minister and send him as part of a mission to West Germany, only for Arif to resign of his own accord before Qasim could politically sideline him. By October, a meeting between the two, during which Qasim attempted to convince Arif he needed to leave the country to preserve national unity, ended in Arif attempting to pull a revolver on Qasim before a nearby officer quickly diffused the fight.[7] Arif reluctantly went to Europe, only to attempt to return to Baghdad soon after, where he was promptly put on trial and sentenced to death by the infamous People's Court run by Colonel Fadhil

Abbas al-Mahdawi for attempting to conspire against the Iraqi state.[8] While Qasim had intended to send a message that Arab nationalists should stand down, this trial only bolstered tensions between the two factions. The next year, the city of Mosul erupted in a several-day rebellion led by Colonel Abdel Wahab Shawwaf against the "dictator who betrayed the revolution's aims." What started as an army rebellion against the communist-supported "Peace Partisans" quickly turned into an all-out conflict that pitted Arab tribal and nationalist forces against the joint forces of the Iraqi army, communist militias, and Kurdish tribesmen.[9] The fight for Mosul began to encapsulate the battle for Iraq itself, and the communists were determined to put down a rebellion led by forces they viewed as reactionary and seeking to undo the revolution.[10]

By the end of the Mosul revolt, Qasim and the communists had achieved a resounding victory. The revolt had been crushed, and pro-Qasim and communist radio channels quickly went on a media blitz, decrying the UAR, the country they blamed for the bloodshed. In the words of the Baghdadi newspaper *Al-Thawra* (The Revolution):

Abdel Nasser is revealed as the great plotter, enemy, dictator, and shedder of blood. Those who proclaim pan-Arabism and raise Abdel Nasser to the rank of prophet have been exposed. Gamal Abdel Nasser has sent arms to Mosul for fighting because he wanted to annex Iraq and add it to his kingdom.[11]

Nasser denied getting involved, but repeatedly praised the revolt in Mosul. Speaking on the ICP after the revolt, the communists, he asserted, would:

Never in the Arab world find anyone who will answer them save agents, because the communists are [themselves] agents and they do not believe in freedom in their country nor in the freedom of the homeland, but work for the foreigner.[12]

Iraqi communists were painted not only as anti-Arabists, but were derogatorily referred to as "Shu'ubis", a reference to the medieval Islamic movement that advocated for greater rights and privileges for non-Arab and non-Sunni parts of the Islamic world.[13] At the center of these attacks stood Abdul Karim Qasim, condemned as having allowed these communists to overrun the country. Not only had he betrayed the revolution in the eyes of the Arab nationalists, but he was allowing Iraq to fall prey to foreign agents attempting to break apart Arab unity from the inside. The UAR, on the other hand, represented a liberatory force, one that would bring Iraq back into the fold of the Arab world. Qasim was no doubt aware of the serious threat this posed to Iraqi sovereignty. British intelligence documents noted that Nasser's increasingly belligerent attitude towards Iraq was pushing Qasim closer and closer towards the ICP, a move which only exacerbated existing tensions.[14] The Qasim-Nasser rivalry only strengthened the influence of the communists, as a TIME magazine article detailed in the aftermath of the Mosul Revolt:

Next day Communist-led mobs burned Nasser in effigy in Baghdad's main street. When the body of Kamil Kazanchi, the Communist lawyer executed in Mosul, was brought to the capital for burial, a funeral procession six miles long wound like a slow river through the city center. Behind the coffin marched Iraqis who short months ago acclaimed the dictator of the Nile their idol, and now shouted: 'Death to Nasser! Death to Nasser!'[15]

For the ICP, this was perfect for the development of Iraq along Marxist lines, as their role in supporting Qasim's regime was one based on a strong belief in a particular path of political development. In the words of the British Foreign Office:

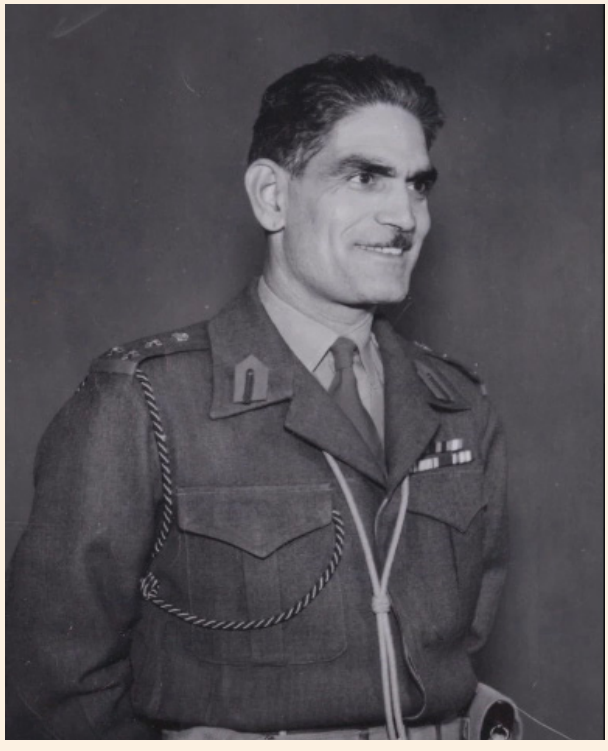
The revolution of July 14 came straight out of the Marxist test books; it was bourgeois and nationalist and anti-imperialist. And the Iraqi Communist Party, again in accordance with Marxist doctrine, swung on to the band-wagon, with the object, which was not of course confessed, of strengthening their position in the country under the shelter of the new regime and eventually of supplanting it.[16]

For the ICP, the bourgeois, nationalist, and

anti-imperialist revolution was necessary for a third-world country such as Iraq. Therefore, the ascension of Qasim and the republic was a progressive political development that the communist party was required to defend. While debates would soon rage over how applicable Qasim was to this line of thinking, in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, the Politburo was initially completely behind Qasim and the first republic. There had even been a planned coup against Qasim by some renegade communist military officers, but it was quickly rejected by the party leadership, as they so strongly supported the necessary bourgeois, nationalist, and anti-imperialist regime.[17] Prior to the revolution, the ICP had been part of the National Front that comprised all the nationalist and progressive parties in Hashemite Iraq, including Ba'athists and Nasserists. When the ICP received word of the incoming coup, they directed party members to emphasize unity, avoid extremist slogans, and adhere to the basic principles of the United National Front.[19] In other words, the party leadership was pragmatic, believing that the ICP might best position itself by allying itself with progressive, anti-imperialist forces instead of attempting to seize power for itself. Iraq, they reasoned, was simply not ready for the next stage yet, as it had to undergo a social and political transformation before it could truly implement socialism. The chairman of the ICP, Hussein al-Radi, also known by his nom de guerre, Salam Adil, described his analysis of Qasim's role within a Marxist theoretical framework:

[Abd al-Karim Qasim is] progressive, and leftist, and having some understanding and an elementary grasp of democracy, and who can be influenced to sharpen these tendencies. ... As for Abdul-Salam Arif, he is anti-communist, has no connection with any progressive circles, and is impetuous, rash, and self-centred to an extreme degree. Our information about when he joined the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers is that he was the worst of them.[20]

The ICP recognized the threat that the Arab nationalists posed to the regime, even in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. The moment of unity between the nationalist and progressive forces was incredibly



Abd al-Karim Qasim, one of the leaders of the coup that overthrew the Iraqi monarchy in 1958, and the first prime minister of the new Iraqi Republic.[18]

short-lived, as described by Aziz al-Hajj, a prisoner released following the revolution:

I found Baghdad, upon my release, in the most jumbled condition. Political parties were suddenly allowed to function ... [and] began to propagate their views [in a chaotic manner]. Each one considered itself to be the vanguard [of the national movement]. The communists with their slogan: Without Fahd there would not have been Abd-ul-Karim Qasim … boasted about the amount of their suffering and torture ... The nationalists, Istiqlal and the Ba'ath parties responded by [uniting] to stop the communists.[21]

For the communists, July 14th was the culmination of all of their efforts over the past several decades, one they sought to mold in their image. Yusuf Salman Yusuf, referred to as Fahd above, was an

Iraqi-Assyrian communist and chairman of the ICP who was executed by the monarchy for his political activities, which positioned him as a martyr for liberation in Iraq. He and countless other ICP members had endured the brunt of the persecution under the monarchy, making them the ones who stood to benefit the most from the ascension of Qasim. Beyond the Marxist theory that caused them to support Qasim, there was no doubt that many leftists felt a strong sense of gratitude to him for ending the regime that had caused them such misery. With Qasim in charge, the ICP had reached the zenith of its power and influence in Iraq. For the Arab nationalists, however, their true leader lay not in Qasim, but in the far more charismatic Nasser. Arab nationalist parties, while not favored under the royalist prime minister Nuri al-Said, were certainly far better off than the ICP. It is with this in mind that the communists embarked on a project to influence Qasim, whom they viewed as an almost Castro-like figure who could be converted to communism.[22] Over the course of Qasim's administration, the ICP backed, and some communist cabinet members even devised, several reform programs across Iraq. With communist support, Qasim built the famous "Revolution City" to house the poor, massively expanded women's rights with the 1959 Personal Status Law, oversaw Iraq's exit from the Sterling area, coordinated its exit from the pro-West and anti-communist Baghdad Pact, nationalized a majority of the Iraqi oil industry, implemented agrarian land reform to the benefit of the Iraqi peasantry, and expanded education and health services, even building the Medical City district that continues to be a center of healthcare service and education in Baghdad to this day.[23]

The relationship between Qasim and the ICP, however, was constantly evolving throughout the course of the republic, as the increased association between Qasim and the ICP drove Qasim to attempt to distance himself from the communists in an attempt to appease the anti-communist West and the Arab nationalists. The geopolitical context in which Qasim governed Iraq cannot be ignored, as Iraq found itself not just in the midst of a Cold War, but in the midst of a clash between communists and the Arab socialists under figures like Nasser. Qasim had to constantly worry about the possibility of UAR invasion, particularly after the Mosul Revolt signaled that the UAR was more than willing to use any means possible to remove his government, even though the rebellion had temporarily significantly weakened the Arab nationalist movement.[24] Just before the Mosul Revolt, a 50,000-man demonstration was staged in Cairo, with protestors carrying coffins bearing portraits of Qasim and hanged rats, no doubt a reference to the gallows on which the communists had been executed during Iraq's Hashemite period. On top of the threat posed by the UAR, Qasim was being watched carefully by the Western powers after his role in overthrowing a pro-West monarchy. British intelligence documents reveal extensive analysis on Qasim's relationship with the West, with many Western powers indicating that they would be open to working with Qasim. However, salvaging such relationships would require reconciliation between Qasim and Nasser, as well as declined support from the ICP in Qasim's regime. A British communication to the Foreign Office stated:

…Qassem had told Turkish Ambassador that there were about 5,000 Communist altogether. To this the Ambassador had replied that he calculated that there were probably at least 250,000, that is to say 5% of the population, and had asked Qassem why, if he was right in his figures, had he to seek the support of such a small minority. Qassem had made no reply to this particular question, nor to the general offer of help which the Ambassador gave him on behalf of the Turkish Government.[25]

His attempt at hiding the true number of communists in Iraq was no doubt an attempt to avoid the suspicions of the West, no matter how unconvincing. In a post-Mossadegh and post-Suez Middle East, Qasim wanted to be extremely careful about how he positioned himself. This would ultimately prove to be a mistake, as Qasim would never be able to convincingly assert that his government was free of communist influence, particularly as his agenda aligned with so many communist objectives. A British-American joint-intelligence working group on the matter

concluded with regard to its policy with Qasim that, should communist influence continue, it would "… secure general acceptance of the fact that the Iraq Government was Communist-inspired and the product of a Communist conspiracy aimed at subverting the whole Middle East, and we should seek to secure the political isolation of Iraq by encouraging the formation of a United front of anti-communist Arab states and a rapprochement between these states and the West."[26] The working group recognized the possibility of Qasim reconciling with his Arab neighbors, but the British and Americans were certainly more than happy to ally with anybody against Qasim, even if that meant backing a figure like Nasser. Further documents indicate the British would not have opposed to a nationalist coup,[27] or even a full-scale UAR invasion of Iraq in the case of a civil war. Working groups recommended telling Israel to stand down and avoid conflict with the UAR, should it ever conduct military operations in Iraq.[28] Additionally, Baghdad Pact plans for a joint Turkish-Iranian-Pakistani invasion force to overthrow the new republican regime were suggested, but ultimately scrapped,[29] likely due to both the inefficiency of the armies involved as well as the threat of creating massive backlash in Iraq and the Arab World at large. British documents also emphasized the importance of reconciling Jordan and the UAR so that they may have coordinated against Iraq,[30] with Jordan even suggesting its own invasion plan to restore the Hashemite monarchy.[31] Though Qasim could not have been aware of all of these specific plans, he was no doubt aware of the serious threat that the hostile neighboring countries constituted to Iraq's stability.

It is exactly these developments and the context in which the Iraqi Republic was formed that led Qasim to turn against the communist party in an attempt to win over both the Arab nationalists and pro-Western powers in the region. This realignment resulted in the ICP's first real conflict with Qasim: the matter of the formation of the first cabinet. The cabinet was filled with members from across the Iraqi political spectrum, including Arab nationalists, but did not contain a single member of the ICP. The National Front had been dissolved, and the ICP was the only former member not participating in the government. Indeed, the Ba'ath Party declared that not only had the Front outlived its usefulness since the monarchy was overthrown, but that the ICP was now the principal enemy, even more so than imperialism.[32]

On May Day in 1959, in response to the formation of the first cabinet, countless communists staged a protest outside of Qasim's headquarters, demanding participation in the new government. To the communists, it seemed only logical that the largest party by membership in Iraq deserved proportional representation in the government. To Qasim, it was an obvious attempt to destabilize his regime, and he became deeply angry with the ICP Politburo.[33] Soon thereafter, the NDP, a left-wing party heavily modeled after the Labour Party in the UK and backed largely by urban liberal elites, announced it would be suspending its operations following an internal power struggle. The long-standing leader of the NDP, Kamil Chaderji, was not fully supportive of the Qasim regime and insisted on continuing to agitate for greater democratic reforms in the new republic. Mohammad Hadid, a high-ranking party member, believed this approach to be unnecessarily antagonistic, insisting that the NDP support Qasim's regime and orchestrating the freezing of all of the NDP's political activities while Chaderji was still in Moscow.[34] The communists decided to represent themselves as standing up for the NDP against its self-imposed decline. The ICP rallied against the freezing of NDP's activities, drawing in the left-wing faction of the NDP as well as Kurdish sympathizers with the NDP's progressive project.[35] Continued communist criticism of Qasim contributed to an almost siege-like mentality as would be seen in later years, as Qasim seemed to have felt attacked from all sides.

The communist party eventually began to split apart over the matter of how to approach Qasim, with the Politburo continuing to maintain the line that Qasim was a Castro-like figure, while others, particularly Salam Adil, had a cynical yet critically supportive view of the regime. In the newspaper *Ittihad al-Shaab* (Union of the People), articles simultaneously defended the party's demands while blaming the masses for the excesses of the May Day protests:

Our party was denied the right of representation in

government ... which had negative results. ... and the best way to identify those who support [the republic] is through [the actions of] national parties and organizations which have [already] proved their commitment. ... if we did ask to shoulder the responsibility of [being] in government ... it is because of our feeling of responsibility.[36]

The very next day, the party issued yet another article:

The masses were not used to Party activities... and thus it was expected that their enthusiasm would not be without error... and because political parties are not licensed ...their activities will be hindered [and] their organizational abilities will be limited, and thus, they will not be able to control the masses.[37]

Even in one of the ICP's earliest controversies, the party failed to maintain a united front and consistent position, devolving into factionalism and ultimately contradicting itself. The ICP eventually backed down on its demand to participate in government after seeing these efforts only created a hostile relationship with Qasim.[38] However, the communists did succeed in continuing political operations outside the party, despite their diminished influence, through proxy organizations like the Partisans of Peace, Committee for the Preservation of the Republic, League for the Defense of Iraqi Women's Rights, and the Iraqi Union of Democratic Youth, as well as the powerful militia deployed in Mosul, the People's Resistance Forces.[39]
Things escalated significantly following the events of Kirkuk in July 1959, where a group of largely communist Kurds engaged in a brutal slaughter of Iraqi Turkmen, a massacre for which the ICP was blamed. The bloodshed, although narrativized as either a fit of ethnic violence or the brutality of the ICP, was likely rooted in class differences as well. The Kurdish population of Kirkuk was predominantly immigrants from the North working in the oil fields, as opposed to the long-standing Turkmen community that comprised a large part of the petite bourgeoisie in the city. Simultaneously, their position as laborers also made many of them members or sympathizers with the ICP, creating a public relations nightmare for an ICP already troubled in the aftermath of the May Day rally.[40] At a moment in which Iraq's international reputation was already tarnished by growing communist influence, the massacre at Kirkuk seemed to be the final straw for Qasim. Qasim began to actively suppress communist activity, released Arab nationalist prisoners, and even started a process of cleansing the army leadership of communists.[41] Qasim's rivalry with Salam Adil grew as Qasim began to back Adil's old party foe, Duad Sayegh. The Politburo had also reached a limit with Adil, whom they blamed for the breakdown in relations between the ICP and the Iraqi government. As a result, the so-called "Clique of Four," consisting of Amir Abdullah, Baha al-Din al-Nuri, Zaki Khairi, and Muhammad Hussein Abu al-Iss, began to take over ICP activities, even as Salam Adil remained the Secretary-General.[42] The party issued a statement denouncing the massacre, distancing itself from the atrocities that took place in Kirkuk.[43]
Throughout this time period, Western and pro-Western sources seemed to be unsure of the extent of the relationship between Qasim and the communist party, with many recognizing the threat he posed while still differentiating the republic's leader from the communist party itself. Western sources talked of the possibility of reconciling with Qasim.[44] Turkey, in particular, was the most interested in reaching a diplomatic solution with Qasim,[45] possibly due to their shared interest in coordinating over the matter of the Kurdish minority. American newspapers continued to describe Qasim in an incredibly negative light and to paint him as a possible communist sympathizer, even as American intelligence documents differed on this matter. This reporting may have been an American tactic in order to force Qasim to recognize the harm his relationship with the communist party was doing to his outside relationships. Indeed, it follows the playbook as described by the Americans and British in 1959:

In covert propaganda we should advise the Arabs, who are already working effectively on themes, such as-
(a) Iraq for the Iraqis and not for Communists
(b) (For Qasim) The Soviets intend to reduce Iraq to another satellite state

(c) (For the Iraqi Army) The threat to its status which the People's Resistance Forces constitute.[46]

These propaganda lines were repeated not only by American media, but also by Arab figures like Gamal Abdel Nasser, just as the plan intended. Point C could have easily been spread to the Iraqi army through Arab nationalist radio, particularly the infamous *Sawt al-Arab* (Voice of the Arabs) radio station in Cairo. In American media, he was presented as a man not only dependent on communist support, but as a man fed with communist-supplied conspiracy theories and delusions, as described in TIME in an April 1959 article:

The turning point came one day last October, when Kassem [Qasim], possessed by Communist-fed suspicions, ordered "my son, my pupil, my brother" into exile as Ambassador to West Germany. Almost hysterical, Aref [Arif] refused. He pulled his pistol out of the holster. Kassem grabbed his wrist, shouted: 'What are you trying to do, Abdul Salam?' Aref sobbed: 'I wanted to take my own life.' Said Kassem: 'I forgive you for this too. But you have to leave. You are splitting the country. I want to keep you away from evil people.' Then he brought Aref a glass of milk, and in a late-night session argued his friend into going.[47]

This same article would describe Mustafa Barzani, the leader of the KDP, as a "red mullah" and even paint Rashid Ali al-Gaylani, a former Nazi collaborator in 1941, in a favorable light for his attempts to resist Qasim. Despite this, it still did not assert that Iraq had become fully communist and established four main criteria for Iraq's descent into communism:

1) abrogation of the Baghdad Pact; 2) purging of anti-Communist and pro-Nasser elements of the army; 3) execution of Aref and officials of the old regime; 4) distribution of arms to the People's Resistance militia. The first point has been passed, and Kassem is giving way on the second. But he is still holding out against Communist demands for Aref's execution. 'Haste always ends in repentance, and we will not make haste,' he said recently. And though Communist Party Secretary Salem Adil last week again called on the government to 'arm the People's Resistance Force' as a protection against Nasser, Kassem has so far ignored such demands.[48]

Qasim's ultimate refusal to enact both points three and four are frequently criticized in hindsight by supporters of the communist party, but Qasim's perspective becomes clearer upon closer inspection. Firstly, given his background in the military, Qasim likely believed he could exert his influence over the army, an influence that was acknowledged by Western intelligence documents as one of the few non-communist power bases that Qasim possessed.[49] Secondly, Arif's position as a former comrade in the revolution could have made him someone that Qasim would have preferred to reason with. Thirdly, Qasim's opposition to Nasser and Arab nationalism was rather mild at first, simply opposing Iraq's full integration into the UAR. Qasim, alongside the NDP and ICP, had called for some sort of confederation and reminisced a vague sense of Arab unity. Indeed, as the earlier TIME Magazine article on the Mosul Revolt had pointed out, the Baghdadi crowds that had been chanting 'Death to Nasser' viewed him wholly differently just months prior to the breakdown in relations between Qasim and the Nasserist/Ba'athist elements in the Iraqi military and beyond. Fourthly, the continued threat of both Western and Arab intervention in Iraq prevented Qasim from executing such an extreme agenda, even if we were to assume that he may have personally agreed with many of the communist demands. Finally, given the large power base of the Arab nationalists, it is also possible that Qasim sought to safeguard Iraqi national unity by avoiding some kind of total purge of Arab nationalism, one that could likely spark yet another Mosul revolt, but with even bigger consequences. Essentially, it seems that many of Qasim's decisions were built not as part of a grand ideological project, but were instead born from the circumstances he found himself in, and this explains his complex and seemingly contradictory relationship with the communist party. While the communist party provided support to Qasim, it did not exert power in the same way as other actors in Iraq did. Knowing that

the ICP was not going to start a civil war against the leader they so deeply supported, Qasim instead opted to appease the Arab nationalists, who posed a more serious threat to the stability of Iraq. His increased suppression of the communists following the Kirkuk massacre further proves that he seemed to have been attempting to save face by distancing himself from the party. Despite this, he avoided concrete actions such as fully dismantling the People's Resistance Force that would have permanently wrecked communist influence and destabilized the counter-balancing force against the Arab nationalists.

The recognition that there was still something to be salvaged of Iraq's international legitimacy, as Iraq had not fully been condemned as a communist country yet, is likely what led Qasim to his continued antagonistic moves against the ICP, even as the communists sang his praises and extolled the virtues of the revolution. Essentially, the fact that Qasim was neither permanently condemned as a communist that required some sort of removal nor a safe ally of either the UAR or the West, put him in a constant position of paranoia. On top of Qasim's failure to align with either side in the Cold War, Iraq's Qasimist regime was reviled by both sides of the Arab Cold War, as conservative monarchist regimes of the Arab world no doubt found the overthrow of the monarchy abhorrent, while Arab nationalists deemed Qasim a traitor who had hijacked the July Revolution and prevented Iraq's unification with Egypt and Syria. Trapped in the middle of the region's international powers, harsh to his allies, and lenient to his enemies, Qasim demolished his relationship with the ICP for little gain.

By 1960, attempts at suppressing the communist party became even more prominent, forcing the Politburo to take more and more actions as a desperate attempt to maintain its influence within Iraqi society. With the passing of a law legalizing the formation of political parties—an attempt at beginning the process of democratization that figures in the NDP had called for—Daud Sayegh, Salam Adil's old rival, registered his Qasim-backed party under the name "Iraqi Communist Party." When the actual ICP registered itself, it was rejected on the grounds that there was already a party with such a name. With yet another disaster for the communist party, the Clique of Four placed the blame yet again on Adil, whose rivalry with Sayegh allowed Qasim to intentionally fracture the party.[50] They continued to insist that Qasim could be won over, so long as the party played by his rules. It is particularly in moments like these that the ICP's almost dogmatic application of Marxist theory began to hinder them. Despite being one of the largest parties in the entire country, with a swath of proxy organizations and even a fully functioning paramilitary force, they refused to actually apply the power that they wielded, believing instead that the necessary bourgeois nationalist regime, in this case, Qasim, would back them out of necessity. The behavior of the ICP was more akin to a small underground movement than one of the largest communist parties in Arab history, refusing to implement any show of force in the hopes of not repeating yet another May Day incident. This would prove to be a grave mistake, however, as their timidness likely is exactly what led Qasim to believe he could get away with such behavior, seeing as he successfully dismissed the demands of both the NDP and the ICP with little serious pushback. Having made many of these observations himself already, Salam Adil was sent away to Moscow by the Politburo, and the party was now firmly in the hands of the Clique.

"...many of Qasim's decisions were built not as part of a grand ideological project...but from the circumstances he found himself in, and this explains his complex and seemingly contradictory relationship with the communist party."

Pressure continued to mount on Qasim as his Iraqi nationalist rhetoric continued to isolate any non-communist allies he could find. Early on in the republic, Qasim avoided a full nationalization of the Iraqi oil company, choosing instead to renegotiate Iraq's control over it, likely remembering the fate that Mossadegh had met in neighboring Iran.[51] This pragmatic approach seemed to diminish over time, as Qasim lashed out over the matter of Kuwait. Historically considered a part of the Ottoman Vilayet of Basra, Qasim insisted that Kuwait was an integral part of Iraq. This may have been one of the few matters in which communist pressure may have played a role, as the communists had criticized him before for being insufficiently anti-imperialist.[52] Regardless, Qasim's demands for Kuwait significantly isolated Iraq on the international stage. British documents seem almost tired of Qasim's antics, declaring his assertion that Iraq was the richest country in the world—not realizing it was a reference to oil fields in both Iraq and Kuwait— must have been his "usual idiocy."[53] Iraqi troops began to congregate at the Kuwaiti border as Qasim's propaganda campaign denounced not only alleged Kuwaiti discrimination against Iraqis, but also the other Arab regimes that supported Kuwait during the crisis.[54] Qasim's behavior during the Kuwait crisis reveals much about the state of his regime, namely, that it was highly prone to lashing out, picking fights that were not only unnecessary but also unsustainable. Already a despised government by conservative monarchies and Arab nationalist revolutionary republics alike, Qasim added yet another stressor to a country in deep turmoil.

The cause of much of this turmoil were the Nasserists and the Ba'athists, who had not been deterred by their defeat in the Mosul Revolt. Despite this fact, Qasim had refused to execute any of the Arab nationalist figures who attempted to assassinate him, including Nazi sympathizer Rashid Ali al-Gaylani and former comrade Abdul Salam Arif. The communists had called for their execution repeatedly, although to no avail.[55] It seemed as if the communists had been losing power, although a shift in their strategy towards the Sayegh-led proxy communist party allowed them to regain some influence. Instead of appealing to the Qasim regime for legalization, the ICP began to back internal disputes within the Sayegh-led party until it dissolved on its own, leaving the "real" ICP as the sole communist party in the country.[56] These indirect forms of action against Qasim, while rare, seemed to be far more effective than the quietist approach usually taken by the Politburo, which were typically unsuccessful in convincing Qasim to change his position on the communist party. While this shift in strategy did restore some of the ICP's legitimacy and political power, Qasim continued to suppress the communist party, even as labor unions went out in mass strikes. Qasim's fading popularity became increasingly clear, and yet the communist party failed to capitalize on the opportunity, as most of these protests were spontaneous and not directed by the ICP. However, the party would face its most difficult dilemma with the conflict between Barzani and Qasim, which led to an all-out Kurdish revolt.

Qasim's original position towards the Kurds had been positive, as he promoted a multi-ethnic form of Iraqi nationalism. Qasim himself was half Shi'a Kurdish from his mother's side, half Sunni Arab on his father's side,[57] and his own mixed heritage was no doubt seen as emblematic of Iraq's diverse demographics. It was for this reason and out of a desire to combat the rising influence of Arab nationalism that he brought Mustafa Barzani, leader of the KDP, back from exile in the Soviet Union. This move was intended to signal increased cooperation with Iraq's Kurds and the beginning of a diplomatic process to reach a final agreement that would ensure both Iraq's sovereignty and the protection of Kurdish political, social, and cultural rights. However, many of the same tensions that occurred with the ICP began to appear in negotiations with the Kurds, as Qasim faced constant pressure from Arab nationalists. Kurdish demands were viewed as a threat to the stability of the country,[58] and Qasim continued to face criticism from Arab nationalist elements who viewed him as too lenient to the Kurds. Mas'ud Barzani, Mustafa Barzani's son, describes his regrets in the KDP's approach to Qasim:

I must admit that our dealings with Qasim and his regime very often were short-sighted and not astute.

Our actions were hasty, immature, and narrow-minded, and did not take into account their potential to endanger Qasim's regime. Sometimes we acted as if we were a state within a state, [in effect] giving him cause to worry about the threat to national unity, and provoking the [Arab] chauvinists surrounding him ... into creating mistrust between Qasim and Mullah Mustafa Barzani, the Kurdish Democratic Party, and the Kurdish people.[59]

At the beginning of Qasim's regime in the immediate aftermath of the July Revolution and particularly the Mosul Revolt, Qasim's regime was backed by the big tent alliance of the KDP, the ICP, and the NDP.[60] Representing Iraq's working class, ethnic minorities, and liberal intelligentsia, Qasim's coalition had wide appeal and a clear ability to stand up to the Arab nationalist elements that threatened the regime. Little by little, however, Qasim weakened this alliance. The NDP froze its activities under his pressure, the ICP was suppressed and intentionally fractured, and the KDP was now locked into a military struggle against the Iraqi government, all as Arab nationalists plotted the regime's demise. The ICP failed to exert the full scope of its power, justifying its inaction through critical support for a necessary revolution, but failing to hold that revolution to account. Rather than criticizing Qasim for his rash behavior that led to the collapse of the ICP-NDP-KDP alliance, Zaki Kheiri, the acting Secretary-General during Salam Adil's absence, chose to blame the KDP in a direct letter to their leadership for failing to show critical support for the regime:

Using force against a nationalist anti-imperialist government in the current situation, by a democratic party, will result, in the best of situations, in two possibilities, [one] either the existing regime will throw itself in the lap of imperialism and ally itself with all the reactionary forces in order to fight this [anti-government] movement, or [two], the imperialists and their agents will exploit this chance to overthrow the existing government and establish a reactionary government which will wipe out all the people's gains.[61]

This behavior could have very nearly led to the ICP fading into irrelevance, if not for a major shift in inner-party politics, one that would form the final attempt by the ICP at turning their political situation around and saving the Qasim regime from itself. By September 1962, the practically-exiled Salam Adil returned from his stay in the Soviet Union, having closely observed the events of the past couple of years. Unsurprisingly, he was horrified by the behavior of the Politburo and the Clique of Four, specifically the actions during his absence. If anything, in the time since he had relinquished power and been in the Soviet Union, Adil became even more convinced that it was necessary to take more direct action to pressure Qasim, regardless of its consequences.

In Adil's absence, the conflict in Iraqi Kurdistan had reached new heights in both scale and brutality. His immediate priority shifted to criticizing the regime's military campaign against the KDP, and shifting the ICP's official position from one of tactical silence to open criticism. Despite Qasim's attempt to promote Sayegh and the Clique's attempts to remove him from power, Adil's unmistakable influence within the party was now on full display as he directed a new wave of protests and strikes across the country. In particular, Salam Adil also criticized what he viewed to be Qasim moderating his economic radicalism, reversing initial sweeping land reforms as an attempt to appease Kurdish landowners and sheikhs. By early 1963, Adil was at the forefront of calling for peaceful opposition to Abd al-Karim Qasim's campaign in Kurdistan, demanding an end to the military conflict and a restoration of the civil liberties of Iraqis, particularly for the countless communists who had by now ended up in prison as a result of the ICP's growing tensions with Qasim.[62] In fact, in 1962, the ICP officially added a demand for Kurdish autonomy to its party platform, marking a turning point in favor of the Kurdish struggle.[63] The Iraqi communist newspaper *Tariq al-Shaab* (Path of the People) describes the situation particularly harshly for Qasim's regime:

Conditions in Kurdistan are similar to a country occupied by a foreign invader's forces, in which a policy of vengeance is practised without the restraints of decency, conscience, or honour. Cities and villages were wiped out, citizens in a great number of cases were killed to

terrorize the population or with no reason, and thousands of peaceful homes were attacked, their contents looted and their valuables divided among high-ranking officers. In addition, scores of women were violated, and children and the elderly lived in constant fear. In this environment, and because of the Kurdish war, taxes were increased by the government, and inflation climbed. Qasim's progressive measures, especially as they related to agrarian reform, were reduced to appease the landlords and sheikhs... as their reforms were considered to be a communist measure.[64]

Indeed, Salam Adil's return began a brief renaissance of leftist activism in Iraq, as he recognized the importance of taking drastic action before Qasim's political blunders manifested at the expense of the ICP. A grassroots movement dedicated to reviving the alliance between the ICP and KDP began to mobilize in the hopes that a Kurdish militant revolt and communist organization in Arab-majority governorates would finally pressure Qasim to end his repressive policy towards two of the parties that had initially formed the backbone of support for Qasim's regime. The party called on all members to:

...reactivate the mass struggle, especially among workers, poor peasants, and revolutionary democratic forces, ... against military dictatorship, ... [to] educate the comrades and organizations on the weakness of the governing military dictatorship ... and educate the masses to struggle against isolationism and actively work to solve the Kurdish crisis on a democratic basis.[65]

Noticeably, despite all of Adil's disagreements with Qasim, and even his characterization of Qasim's regime as a dictatorial one, he still did not call for Qasim's removal. This indicates that Adil still found the Iraqi regime to be a necessary one, one that could pave the way for the eventual road to communism. The promotion of democratic institutions—an old NDP demand—became another way with which the communist party would attempt to negotiate for even more power. Recognizing their widespread support, the ICP leadership was well aware that a more democratic Iraq would ultimately result in more influence for the communist party and might even permanently cement a ruling Qasimist coalition to combat Arab nationalist influence. Even under a more hardline figure like Adil, the ICP's analysis remained that the communist party's role was ultimately to play second fiddle to the military regime. While this may seem to be a fatal mistake, it is likely rooted in many of the same fears that Qasim had. Numerous documents from the British extensively describe the necessity of invasion or supporting an invasion of Iraq should a communist takeover ever take place, and the communist party was likely well aware of how a direct takeover would ultimately result in a foreign occupation of the country, or perhaps a bloody civil war with the nationalists. Instead, the communists now took the position of influencing Qasim not by appealing to a sense of unity, nor by staying silent in the face of suppression, but by making it clear to Qasim that his regime's survival depends on the support of the ICP, the last major active party that could truly defend his regime. The KDP was in open revolt, the Nasserists and Ba'athists were plotting his demise, and the NDP was effectively out of the picture. It was up to Qasim whether he wanted to trust the communists, and it is here that we see Qasim's failure to distinguish between disagreements and existential threats. Despite the existential threat that the Arab nationalists posed to his regime, Qasim refused to ally with the communists, believing that avoiding communist influence would save him from the wrath of the Iraqi right. History reveals that he was wrong, and Qasim would pay the price for his miscalculation.

By late 1962, the young republic seemed to be on the brink of collapse. On December 31, 1962, the British were warned of a plot hatched not even by Arab nationalists, but by a group of Iraqi conservatives from the Hashemite period. This included Khalil Khanna, a member of former royalist Prime Minister Nuri al-Said's Constitutional Union Party, who was named to be a possible future prime minister should the coup against Qasim succeed.[66] The ICP similarly began to receive warnings of an impending Arab nationalist coup, and directed its members in January 1963 to prepare themselves accordingly.[67] Bringing this information to Qasim, they demanded

"Qasim's failure to recognize that the threat to his regime was existential...was ultimately on of the primary reasons for his downfall"

that he provide them with the same leniency he had granted the communists to put down the Mosul Revolt, but this demand was ultimately rejected. While the party had called on the people to be "vigilant," it ultimately did not significantly prepare for the very coup they had been warning about, perhaps showing that the party was not truly ready to move on from the Qasim regime.[68] On February 8th, 1963, the Arab nationalists finally had their revenge. They swept through Baghdad, murdering the Air Force chief and card-carrying ICP member, Brigadier Jalal al-Awqati. Abd al-Karim Qasim was executed in a sham trial, sparking a call from Salam Adil for popular resistance against the nationalist coup. By the 12th of February, all the communist holdouts in Baghdad and Basra had been brutally crushed, and Adil himself was also executed.[69] In the aftermath of the coup, the new government would quickly reverse many of Qasim's reforms he had made with the endorsement or collaboration of the communist party, including his land reforms and renegotiations of Iraqi oil agreements. Relationships with the Warsaw Pact were downgraded as Iraq shifted back towards the West and Nasser's Egypt, although constant infighting between the Nasserists and Ba'athists would ultimately prevent this from resulting in any political union, a solution already unlikely as the UAR had practically ended with the 1961 Syrian coup d'etat. US National Security Council member Robert Kromer informed President Kennedy that the coup was "a gain for our side,"[70] signaling that Qasim had certainly won no sympathy in the West despite his attempts to distance himself from the ICP. While a final attempt at resistance would take place that summer at the Rashid Camp, the so-called "Ramadan Revolution" had truly ended the golden age of the ICP. No longer would the party hold such sway in Iraqi affairs, and indeed, being associated with it now came at serious personal cost to one's safety. The brutality with which the Ba'athists and Nasserists had conducted their anti-communist purge was described by an eyewitness:

People's legs were chopped off, piece by piece, ... children's eyes were bound with ropes until their eyelashes were pushed into their eyeballs, women were beaten and sexually violated, and children were tortured in front of their parents. The torturers used tin snips to cut the hands, legs, and face muscles slowly. ... Scores of victims were crowded into small rooms; [they were] forced to stand on one leg for a number of hours, and water from sewers was thrown on the wounds of the tortured. Others were left without water or food for days and [their] wounds [predictably] became infected. ... other victims, both men and women, [were] hung upside down on ceiling fans for days, ... and others were burned with hot metal objects, their bones broken by iron bars or their eyes blinded by cigarette butts or fingers. Nails were pulled off and electrified cattle prods [were] used to inflict pain.[71]

The brutality with which the Arab nationalists swept through Baghdad illustrated not just their willingness to commit such actions, but their pure contempt for Qasim and his supporters, including the communists, despite several attempts by Qasim to separate himself from the ICP. Up until the final moments of his life, Qasim refused to put his trust in the communist party. Perhaps one may imagine the regret he could have had on that final day, the day in which all the warnings of the party had been true, the day both he and scores of communists would face the same brutal fate, no matter how hard he tried to separate himself from them. Qasim's failure to recognize that the threat to his regime was existential, despite his efforts to signal his anti-communism to his enemies, was ultimately one of the primary reasons for his downfall. While part of it was no doubt out of fear of Western intervention, or becoming yet another Mossadegh, it

was also rooted in his philosophy towards approaching his opposition. Qasim seemed to deeply fear the power of the Arab nationalists, seeing as he avoided taking the most drastic and violent measures against them when possible, much to the dismay of the ICP. His failure to find any true allies, with the irrelevance of the NDP, the revolt of the KDP, and the suppression of the ICP, left Qasim with no real ability to go about a state-building project that could have withstood the forces of Arab nationalism. This is despite the fact that the ICP stated its support for Qasim's ideological goals repeatedly, and even found his approach to politics the ideal transitional period in the necessary bourgeois revolution prior to the establishment of socialism. As different former allies challenged Qasim, he only became further entrenched in his own paranoia, and his failure to address the demands of his allies made them ultimately turn against him in a self-fulfilling prophecy. For the ICP, their relationship with Qasim was part praxis, part naivety. Their timidness in approaching him ultimately empowered Qasim to weaken the party with little pushback, even though the communists were probably the most popular and well-organized political party in the country. While this observation had been made by Salam Adil, constant infighting within the communist party, both instigated by the Clique of Four as well as by Qasim himself with the Sayegh affair, ultimately resulted in a party that failed to take advantage of a revolution that had given them more political freedom than ever. The return of Adil saw the resurrection of the ICP's political activities, creating a popular movement for reform in the country, but it was perhaps not enough at a time when Qasim had already alienated so many. Even in these final dying moments of the republic, the ICP refused to envision a world beyond Qasim, and so, rather fittingly, effectively stayed in that world forever as a relic of history. While the party would continue to operate, it would endure brutal suppression under the Nasserists, Ba'athists, and especially Saddam Hussein, by which point the party had lost much of its ethnic minority support to ethnic nationalist parties like the KDP and the Assyrian Democratic Movement, as well as losing much of its Shi'a support to the rise of Shi'a Islamist movements such as the Islamic Da'wa Party and the Islamic Supreme Council in Iraq. The relationship between Qasim and the ICP was a strange alliance of dual necessity, creating a conflict with which the republic's fall can largely be ascribed. What truly encapsulates the relationship lies in the fact that at the end of the Ramadan Revolution, both Abd al-Karim Qasim and Salam Adil, the men whose personal rivalry had come to represent the greater struggle between the ICP and Iraqi Republic, ultimately both bled and died for the same side, murdered by the same enemies.

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Persia, Piety, and Patriarchal Tradition

Analyzing the Secular and Religious Contexts of the History of the Veil in Iran

Lauren Blakemore

Lauren K. Blakemore is a current senior at Kenyon College, where she studies History, Arabic, and Religious Studies. Her research is generally focused on women's history and the history of religion in the MENA and Central Asian regions, which she hopes to continue through graduate study.

Veiling, a worldwide phenomenon with a variety of functions and fashions, maintains a particularly vibrant and multivalent tradition in Central and West Asia. Dating back to the city-states of Mesopotamia, these regions have experienced many shifts in the styles of veiling; however, the 20th century brought a new emphasis on the veil as state-building projects relied on the image of the people as a way to project modernity. Maintaining and growing its presence in the contemporary world, the veil in an Islamic context has gained more than a few negative connotations, especially in the West. To many, the veil is emblematic of gendered oppression, a "sexist symbol" that reflects patriarchal attitudes.[1]

However, arguments that portray the veil purely as a form of religious oppression fail to consider the veil in cultural contexts where it has developed secularly. Central Asia, and more specifically, Iran, thus emerges as a case study in which veiling and attitudes towards the practice can be examined via several, nuanced angles. This paper asserts that, while veiling once acted as a widespread symbol of status and cultural identity by the women of Iran, it was purposefully oversimplified, moralized, and politicized by the Islamic Revolution, rendering the veil a salient symbol of the hypervigilant policing of women's autonomy in Iran.

Before beginning, the difference in usage between "veil" and "*hijab*" should be noted, as both will be referenced throughout this paper. The word *hijab*, originally stemming from Arabic, is used as a loanword in modern Persian, the official language of Iran; therefore, many of the sources will reference all forms of veiling in Iran as *hijab*. However, this presents a problem regarding the meaning of *hijab* in Arabic, which, in an Islamic context, actually refers to the code of modesty that applies to all Muslims and not the headscarf itself. Because this paper focuses on head coverings from several cultures, I have chosen to use the term "veil" instead of *hijab* to generally refer to head coverings. It is also worth noting that the Islamic *hijab* maintains several styles across the world; some women use only headscarves,[2] while others use full-body or face-covering styles like the *burqa*,[3] *niqab*,[4] or *khimar*.[5] When referring to different culturally-specific styles, I will use their transliterated name to avoid connoting them with the religious term of *hijab*.

Although the practice of veiling has accumulated specific cultural and religious connotations both in Iran and the world as a whole, the practice of covering one's head and hair for extra-functional reasons varies widely. Still, a general statement can be made about the nature of the veil in a social context: across the globe, women have worn veils as a way to navigate the politics of sight. Described by David Morgan as the "primary medium of social life," sight is an action that is deeply embedded in social politics.[6] Explaining seeing as a kind of transaction, Morgan argues that the most common interaction is to see while being seen. In the case of a veil, particularly one that obscures the face or even the eyes as seen in a *burqa*, the power imbalance favors the veiled woman. Effectively, veiling has been used as a way for women to maintain autonomy, allowing them a separate, elevated status that privileges them over other women who do not, or can not, wear the veil.

Examples from far outside Iran, such as the *mìlí* of the Sui and Tang dynasties of China, the *ghoonghat* from the Indian subcontinent, or the *flammeum* worn by ancient Roman brides, all provide evidence of veils used as status symbols. The Assyrians who inhabited ancient Iran, also named Persia, had a similar understanding of the semiotics of veiling; in fact, the earliest known written record of veiling is often attributed to them. The document, a legal code inscribed on tablets, was translated by Semitist G.R. Driver and legal historian John C. Miles in 1935. The section concerning veiling states that "...one, whom a husband has not married, must have her head uncovered in a (public) street; she shall not be veiled."[7] Great care was taken by the Assyrian lawmakers to explain the importance of married and upper class women wearing a veil, while also placing just as much emphasis on unmarried women and sex-workers not being allowed to wear it. In the case of the Assyrians, these laws apply not just to class, but to social status as a whole, providing nuance about the wearer with a single gaze.

Similar contemporary implementations of the veil can be found in several cultures living in and around Iran. Azeris, an ethnic group shared between Azerbaijan and Iran, have maintained a veil fashion known as *kelaghayi*, a square scarf made of woven silk and embroidered or stamped with various traditional designs and patterns.[8] In addition to being worn according to one's age or marital status, the *kelaghayi* can convey information about the type or mood of a social event. Colors like red and black represent marriage and funerals, respectively, while the patterns emblazoned upon the fabric can indicate the heritage or regional identity of the wearer.[9]

Yet another prominent example of cultural veiling comes from the Turkmen, a Central Asian ethnic group whose Iranian population is largely concentrated along Iran's northeastern border, who had also

established veiling traditions before the Islamic conquest. A two-piece style veil named the *yashmak* is referenced by historian Adrienne Lynn Edgar in her book *Tribal Nation*. Reaffirming the notion that the veil could be emblematic of cultural and social traditions more than religious ones, Edgar explains that the veil had much stricter rules than those dictated by Islamic scholars; while Muslim women would be allowed to unveil in the presence of their male relatives or *mahram*,[10] Turkmen women were to remain veiled in the presence of all "in-laws, both male and female, who were older than her husband."[11] Related fashions like the *paranja* and the *kimeshek* can be found in the countries surrounding Iran.

The meaning behind veiling systematically changed at the beginning of the 20th century, as the Pahlavi dynasty introduced a series of reforms aimed at modernizing the nation. Ascending the throne after a British-backed coup in 1925, Reza Shah Pahlavi founded the last of the Iranian royal dynasties and, soon after, enacted a law demanding the uncovering of women. Known in Persian as *kashf-e hijab*, it was a systematic process of unveiling that lasted only five years from its implementation in 1936. The process was largely inspired by the efforts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the nearby and newly founded Republic of Turkey; however, a crucial factor separated the Iranian process and its eventual reversal from its Turkish counterpart.

Noted by Fadwa El-Guindi, an anthropologist focusing on Islamicate veiling, Turkey "avoided an outright ban on the veil" and instead pressured women, with no legal ramifications, into unveiling in public.[12] On the other hand, Iranian women who chose to veil in public after the *kashf-e hijab* law had been passed were persecuted and publicly punished, explains Canadian-Iranian Anthropologist Homa Hoodfar.[13] Police were allowed, and even encouraged, to "pull off and tear up any scarf or chador worn in public," which generated a considerable amount of fear and disdain for the state.[14] Subsequently, many Iranian women, even those who had not personally experienced force or violence, disapproved of and fought against the mandate.

While many agreed with the notion that "unveiling was a progressive measure," sociologist Ashraf Zahedi explains that the ban lacked religious and cultural nuance.[15] Iranian women felt that the ban undermined women's autonomy and viewed it as a contradiction of the other, supposedly liberating reforms Shah had been implementing.[16] Furthermore, the ban created a unified sense of frustration among the conservatives of Iran; religious and secular conservative communities alike "vehemently opposed unveiling" and viewed it as an attack on Iranian, particularly Muslim Iranian, women.[17] Reza Shah and his supporters believed that Iran would be modernized through the elimination of the veil. Instead, by instating an all-encompassing ban on head coverings, the only thing they eliminated was women's choice in the matter.

While the reforms had been implemented as a way to modernize the country and afford its women more opportunities, *kashf-e hijab* backfired and reinforced conservative opposition to the Shah, securing his downfall. The decline of the Pahlavis led them to exile one of the most powerful members of the clergy, Imam Khomeini, in a last-ditch effort to regain power. Unfortunately for the Pahlavis, Khomeini's exile only added to his popularity, and he instigated a successful revolution in 1979, creating the Islamic Republic of Iran that survives into the present.

One of the most notable actions of the Islamic Republic was the instatement of a new policy on the veil, rendering it mandatory for all women of Iran. With Islam as a state religion, the mandate of the veil applied even to those who identified as secular or as a part of a religious minority. This disconnect posed serious problems for the stability of the country, which had long been a point of convergence and overlap for many religions, including the Abrahamic faiths, in addition to Zoroastrians, Baha'is, Yazidis, Mandaeists, and even Buddhists. Shaken by a top-down implementation of an Islamic Theocracy, Iranians began a wave of immigration out of the country as families were pressured to leave for their own safety, especially when violence began to escalate against those who refused to veil. One of the most famous personal accounts of the intensification of the revolution belongs to Marjane Satrapi, an Iranian author whose memoir *Persepolis* was made into a widely circulated graphic novel and film.

Coming from a largely secular family, Satrapi struggled with the enforcement of the veil, especially since the revolution occurred when she was just ten years old. Having previously attended a secular, co-educational school, Satrapi was separated from her peers and forced to cover her head and hair. Remembering the confusion shared between herself and her classmates, the opening page of Satrapi's memoir depicts the young girls playing with the veils—tying them together, playing jump rope, and chasing each other around the schoolyard.[18] What Satrapi depicts in her illustrations speaks to a common critique of the laws of the Islamic Republic: that the enforcement began too young, especially if it was supposed to have any religious impact on the girls made to wear it.

While opinions and traditions vary across the Islamicate world, it is generally held by scholars and laymen alike that Muslim girls should begin to veil when they reach puberty. Much of this reasoning stems from a pair of *hadith* attributed to 'Aisha, a wife of the prophet; the main *hadith* on the subject argues that "Allah does not accept the prayer of a woman who menstruates" if she is not veiled.[19] From Satrapi's descriptions, it is clear that neither she nor her classmates had matured past childhood and therefore would not be made to wear the veil in most other contexts. So while there are examples of girls veiling before puberty, there is little to no *purely* Islamic reasoning for doing so, which is especially concerning for those living in a state claiming to operate under *purely* Islamic principles.

Even more concerning was the behavior of the enforcers of the veiling laws. Satrapi gives an account of her mother being accosted by fundamentalists in the street, remembering how her mother was berated and told that women like her deserve sexual assault for not wearing the veil.[20] A similar scene was described by Jacqueline Saper, a member of a Tehrani Jewish community during the Islamic Revolution. In Saper's confrontation, a woman, likely a member of the *komiteh*,[21] told her that she deserved "to be treated as a sex object" because she had not been wearing a veil in public.[22] It was a frightening and dehumanizing experience for Saper, who began to wear the common pairing of a *manteau* and *maghnaeh* before ultimately fleeing Iran with her husband and child.

A contributing factor, explains Iranian writer Azadeh Moaveni in her memoir *Lipstick Jihad*, was the encouragement of common men to participate in the enforcement of the new laws. While the police and *komiteh* had long been allowed to arrest and physically punish women who refused to veil, Moaveni argues that the Islamic Republic "gave powers akin to a citizen's arrest to pious, local bullies," further endangering the safety of any woman, even in her own backyard.[23] Satrapi corroborates her claims, discussing her family's paranoia regarding their neighbors, many of whom had recently dressed in popular Western fashions only to flip completely after the revolution.[24] To many, religion was grotesquely altered into a public display that more often entailed virtue signaling than a true embodiment of values the regime claimed to uphold.

Regrettably, the enforcement of the veil would only grow more violent. Moaveni identifies a paradoxical spiral where the restrictions on women's hair and clothing instilled a fervent preoccupation regarding sexual and gender-based morality in Iranian society.[25] She argues that "the constant exposure to covered flesh—whether it was covered hideously, artfully, or plainly—brought to mind, well, flesh."[26] Even if thought of as something to control, women and their sexuality were at the forefront of the minds of Iranian society and government; they became an obsession that fueled increasingly strict levels of reform that would lead to corruption in the administration.

This trend of intensifying focus on and reform of the veil and its legality would tragically lead to the deaths of women like Neda Agha-Soltan, who was shot in the chest—allegedly by a member of the paramilitary group known as the *basij*[27]—during a protest of the presidential election in 2009.[28] While violent, Neda's death would be followed by even more controversial deaths that inflicted torture and sexual assault on detained women, such as the interrogation and murder of Canadian-Iranian journalist Zahra Kazemi in 2003.[29] These troubling incidents have continued into the present, with one of the most recent deaths—that of Mahsa Amini in 2022—inciting a global movement against mandatory veiling.

"Instead of using Islamic law to protect the citizens of the Republic, the state appears to be using it as an excuse to dominate the population."

One of the most troubling aspects of these deaths regards the laws consulted in the explanations of their deaths. While it is true that the veil was made mandatory in Iran since the 1980s, the written law of Iran merely says that women should not "appear in public places and roads without wearing an Islamic *hijab*," but does not specify what this practice consists of.[30] Clearly there are the options of *chador*, *maghnaeh*, and *manteau*, but which combinations of these are acceptable or unacceptable is not elucidated. This lack of explanation might be less concerning if the harshest potential *official* punishments did not include imprisonment for a period of ten days at the minimum and two months at the maximum, as well as unofficial punishments like those endured by Kazemi, Soltan, and Amini.[31]

The violence perpetrated against these women, although ranging in severity and ubiquity, serves as unnerving evidence of a crack in the moral foundation that the Islamic Republic claims to have both created and upheld since its establishment in 1979. While examples of state violence as a form of control are hardly limited to Iran, the cases of women being abducted and murdered for their reluctance to obey a highly subjective law code surrounding the Islamic *hijab* are indicative of an ulterior motive within the Islamic Republic. Instead of using Islamic law to protect the citizens of the Republic, the state appears to be using it as an excuse to dominate the population. Even worse, as Moaveni explained, the paradoxical obsession with the veil and the women who do or do not wear it only intensifies with every incident. Even as millions across the globe gathered in protest of Amini's death, the entity responsible for her abduction was unapologetic. Iranian women would face a new, harsher law on veiling in the year after Amini's passing.[32]

There remains much to be discussed regarding the role of the veil in contemporary Iran as well as about the women who have worn it and those who have suffered in the wake of its enforcement. As a living tradition, the veil and its various meanings and representations will continue to evolve; the same can be said about the persistence and bravery of the women who have embodied their right to personal and religious freedom through resistance to laws that mandate the veil or its removal. But in the current moment, the veil unfortunately symbolizes the subjugation and hypervigilant policing of Iranian women through the systematic oversimplification, moralization, and politicization of an ancient and multivalent tradition. Until the vicious cycle of obsession with women's sexuality and freedom therein, the veil will likely continue to be a point of political contention rather than as a mark of religious piety or cultural expression.

ENDNOTES

1. Michèle Sirois quoted in Jonathan Montpetit, "*Hijab* a symbol of empowerment, not oppression, plaintiffs argue at trial of Quebec secularism law," CBC News, 3 Nov. 2020, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/bill-21-trial-constitution-superior-court-1.5788087.
2. I use the term headscarf here to refer to all veiling styles that are used to cover the head and hair but not the face or rest of the body. This style is the most common style for many Muslim women in the West but is also a globally popular style and is thus known by several different names including but not limited to *shayla* in the Persian Gulf region, *tarha* in Egypt, and *esarp* in Türkiye.
3. The *burqa* is a full-body veil that drapes over one's entire figure and obscures the eyes, leaving a thin, often lacy or otherwise translucent strip on the face veil where the wearer can see but not be seen.
4. The *niqab* is a style of *hijab* that covers the face but not the eyes; there is a cut-out section of the face veil that allows for the wearer to see and leaves their eyes visible. *Niqab* is often in a full-body style but can

also be an attachable face veil that can be added to a headscarf.
5. The *khimar* is a style that covers most of the body but is often worn over top of a dress, skirt, or other kind of loose, draping clothing. It covers the head, shoulders, and sometimes part of the lower body depending on the preferred length.
6. David Morgan, "Vision and Embodiment," Chapter in *The Embodied Eye: Religious Visual Culture and the Social Life of Feeling*, University of California Press, 2012, 3

7. G.R. Driver and John C. Miles, "Text and Transliterated Text: Middle Assyrian Laws," Chapter in *The Assyrian Laws*, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1935, 407.
8. *Traditional art and symbolism of Kelaghayi, making and wearing women's silk headscarves*. Directed by Asif Abramov. Entry in "Inscriptions on the Intangible Heritage Lists." 2013. https://www.unesco.org/archives/multimedia/document-3703
9. Leyla Aliyeva, "*Kelaghayi*: Silky way." BakuCorner. 2015. https://bakucorner.az/en/milli/about-*kelaghayi*.html.
10. A man who is related to a woman who she may not marry. Reasons include being related directly by blood (i.e. father, brother, son, uncle), being closely related by marriage (i.e. father-in-law or son-in-law), or by breastfeeding (a child fed by a wet-nurse is a *mahram* to her).
11. Adrienne Lynn Edgar, "Emancipation of the Unveiled: Turkmen Women under Soviet Rule," Chapter in *Tribal Nation: The Making of Soviet Turkmenistan*, Princeton University Press, 2004, 236.
12. Fadwa El Guindi, *Veil: Modesty, Privacy and Resistance*, 1999, 130.
13. Hooda Hoodfar, "The Veil in Their Minds and on Our Heads: Veiling Practices and Muslim Women," Chapter in *Women, Gender, Religion*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 429, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-04830-1_22.
14. Ibid.
15. Ashraf Zahedi, "Contested Meaning of the Veil and Political Ideologies of Iranian Regimes," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 3, no. 3 (Fall 2007): 82.
16. Ibid, 83.
17. Ibid, 82.
18. Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis: A Story of a Childhood*, New York City, New York: Pantheon, 2004, 3.
19. Imam Muhammad Bin Yazeed Ibn Majah Al-Qazwini, *English translation of Sunan Ibn Mâjah*. Edited by Hafiz Abu Tahir Zubair 'Ali Za'i , Huda Khattab, and Abu Khaliyl. Translated by Nasiruddin Khattab. Vol. 1. Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007, 433.
20. Satrapi, *Persepolis*, 74.
21. Government organization(s) that functioned as law enforcement groups, One of their main motives was to enforce Islamic regulations like the mandatory veil. Since 2005, the *komiteh* are known as the *Gasht-e Ershad*, which is often translated as "Guidance Police" or "Morality Police."
22. Jacqueline Saper, *From Miniskirt to Hijab: A Girl in Revolutionary Iran*. Sterling, Virginia: Potomac Books, 2019, 130.
23. Azadeh Moaveni, *Lipstick Jihad : a memoir of growing up Iranian in America and American in Iran*. New York, New York: PublicAffairs, 2005, 125.
24. Satrapi, *Persepolis*, 75.
25. Moaveni, *Lipstick Jihad*, 70.
26. Ibid, 71.
27. Volunteer paramilitary group within the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC); they work closely with the *Gasht-e Ershad* and have been linked to many suspicious arrests and murders.
28. "Ahmadinejad: Neda's death is 'suspicious'," CNN, June 29, 2009, https://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/06/29/iran.neda.ahmadinejad/.
29. "Zahra Kazemi: Iran's changing story," CBC, November 27, 2007, https://web.archive.org/web/20080424064555/http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/kazemi/.
30. Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, "Chapter Eighteen - Crimes against public prudency and morality." *Islamic Penal Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran – Book Five: Ta'zir and Deterring Punishments*, Article 638, (January 2012): 26.
31. Ibid.
32. Tara Subramaniam, Adam Pourahmadi, and Mostafa Salem, "Iranian Women Face 10 Years in Jail for Inappropriate Dress after '*Hijab* Bill'

Approved," CNN, September 21, 2023, https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/21/middleeast/iran-*hijab*-law-parliament-jail-intl-hnk/index.html#:~:text=The%20new%20law%20ramps%20up,today%20between%20%241.18%20to%20%2411.82.

The Linguistic Landscape of Freedom: Language as Resistance in Moroccan History

A Photo Essay

Leo King and Caroline Serenyi

Leo King currently studies as part of the Class of 2028 at Boston College. Majoring in History and Islamic Civilizations and Societies, his scholarly interests focus on the history of transnational justice in post-WWII East Asia and the politics of the MENA region. Over the next two years, Leo looks forward to completing a senior thesis on the intersection of justice methods in these two regions.

Caroline Serenyi is a second-year undergraduate at Boston College, studying Linguistics and Islamic Civilizations & Societies. She spent last summer studying colloquial and standard Arabic in Rabat, Morocco, and hopes to continue researching the connections between language and society throughout the Arab world.

Each language used in Morocco reflects its long, complex history of colonialism and resistance. French, Arabic, English, and the native Tamazight language all have their own unique roles in society. Despite the end of the French protectorate era in 1956, the French language continues to hold a considerable cultural legacy in Morocco. In response to France's impact, Morocco has seen movements—beginning with the nationalist movements of the protectorate era and continuing through the Amazigh Cultural Movement today—in support of Arabic and the indigenous language of Morocco, Tamazight, as official languages. Activists have also used English in protest movements, despite its status as an external language, as Moroccans frequently use the language's power as a global *lingua franca* to advocate international support for Palestine. Arabic, Tamazight, and English have been used as unique

means of resistance against foreign imposition throughout its history.

Morocco's history of French and Spanish rule provides context for the linguistic landscape of the 20th and 21st centuries. Even before the French arrived, Morocco's strategic location between the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts made it a crucial part of the Spanish and Portuguese empires of the early modern era. The Treaty of Fez in 1912 established French control in the region legally, although the expansion of infrastructure and cultural influence took considerably more time. France ceded much of northern Morocco to Spain, and Spain's linguistic legacy can still be seen in northern Moroccan dialects and environments, as seen in Figure I.A.

During the early period of France's rule in Morocco, French became the language of bureaucracy. This period of modernization connected Morocco to the rest of the world, while simultaneously symbolizing a loss of cultural heritage for Moroccans. Under French administration, Morocco was designated as a protectorate, rather than a colony, and thus many French officials hoped to "bring Western progress to the subject peoples under its sway, but without changing their fundamental 'soul.'"[1] As a result, much of the French presence in Morocco was aimed at modernization. From 1914 to 1923, the French reenvisioned nearly every historic city in the country, with new quarters built according to French plans. City planners brought running water, sewage, and better transportation systems to the ancient cities. However, even in their modernization processes, many city planners made efforts to preserve the aesthetics of their new territory. Buildings such as the Maroc Telecom building in Figure I.B combine Moroccan decorative motifs, like arches and tile work, with French structures. This combination is also evident in the presence of both French and Arabic writing. However, despite the mask of "indirect rule" that French leaders in Morocco assumed, their control over nearly every aspect of modern life quickly proved oppressive.[2] Popular movements emerged soon after the dawn of the protectorate to revolt against this foreign imposition.

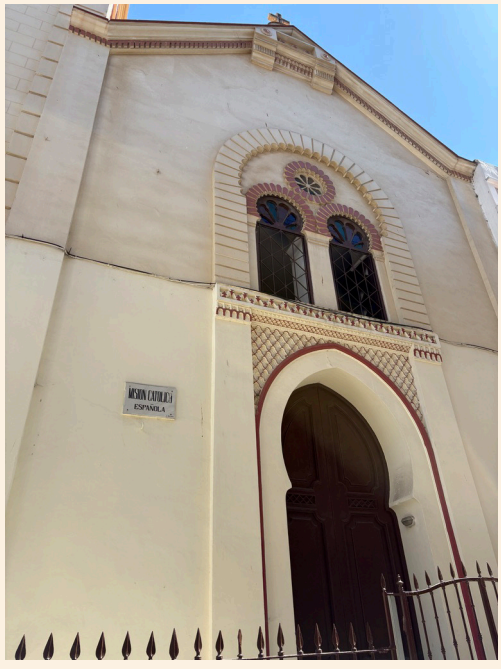


Figure I.A

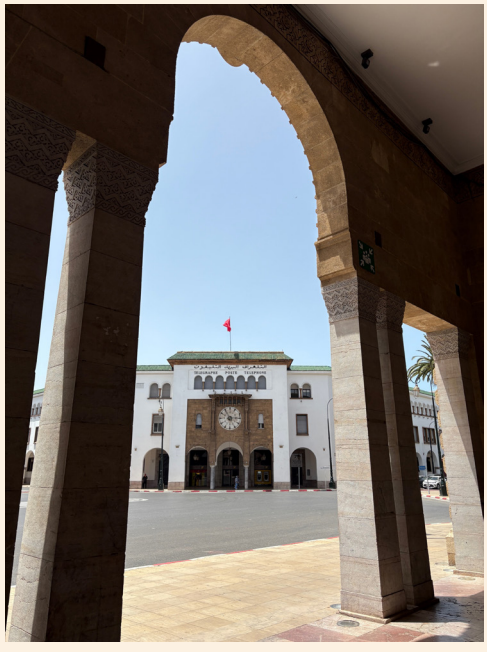


Figure I.B.

Methods and Historiography

In order to write this essay, we travelled to Morocco for seven weeks. We stayed in Rabat, but also travelled to a variety of cities in the north, center, and south of the country, including Fez, Marrakesh, Tangier, and Chefchaouen. Throughout our stay, we photographed the linguistic landscape of the country: where we saw language manifest in the physical world, which language was being used, and for which purpose. We also spoke to individuals about language ideologies in the countries, and then upon our return, we researched language use specifically as a means of resistance.

This essay takes inspiration from Samira Hassa's 2012 paper, titled "Regulating and Negotiating Linguistic Diversity: Top-Down and Bottom-Up Language Planning in the Moroccan City." Her paper centers on the idea of "linguistic landscapes," or "the analysis of written language displayed in the public space."[3] She presents a basic historical and sociolinguistic background of the country, and then analyzes the way that she saw language displayed in several Moroccan cities. She makes the claim that "the distribution and visibility of languages in urban spaces can reveal ideological and political beliefs."[4] In other words, the languages displayed in public spaces can convey how people think about their identities. In this essay, we use the basic idea of linguistic landscapes to analyze how language has been used throughout Moroccan history, specifically in the context of colonialism and resistance.

Arabic as Resistance against French Protectorate Rule

During the protectorate, language education became an important flashpoint. As part of their modernization efforts, the French remade the traditional Moroccan education system, which consisted largely of Qur'anic study in primary and secondary schools.[5] The French segregated Europeans and Moroccans, and they heavily restricted what even elite-class Moroccans could study; the *collèges musulmans*, created to train well-born Moroccan youth for the bureaucracy, offered a much stricter scope as compared to the *lycées* for Europeans. Education at the *collèges musulmans* focused on "civilizing" the students and acclimating them to French culture, rather than emphasizing their own heritage. Opposition to this system formed early. Starting in the mid-1920s, fewer than ten years after the protectorate began, intellectuals created Arabic-language schools in opposition to the French system.[6] The institution of these schools provides an early example of the French colonial/Arabic nationalist dichotomy that developed later in the 20th century.

As more developed independence movements sprang into existence during the later years of the protectorate, language use became even more important. A 1934 document written by Moroccan reformers called for the reinstatement of Arabic "everywhere in public space, including the railway, where 'all tickets and receipts, as well as signs on the cars and in the stations, be printed in Arabic as well as French.'"[7] This early example of language policy proves far more symbolic than practical; during this era, most of the working class had very little access to education, and most literate individuals would have been able to read in both French and Arabic.[8] Therefore, the reformers acted out of a desire to maintain a national identity, not out of necessity.

The language used in publications such as newspapers and magazines also held important implications. The protectorate banned Arabic-language newspapers from discussing politics, so in response, independent newspapers such as *Al-Atlas* began covering the nationalist cause.[9] A French-language nationalist newspaper called "l'action du Peuple" was also created in order to circumnavigate restrictions on the Arabic press.[10] Today, newspapers in many languages are circulated around Morocco, as seen in Figure III.A.

When it came to solidifying the legitimacy of the crown, many sources used the Arabic language to tie the king to divine power. The currently ruling Alawi dynasty has been in power since the 17th century and has continued unbroken through the protectorate era. Religion and power have been intertwined throughout Moroccan history, as the dynasty

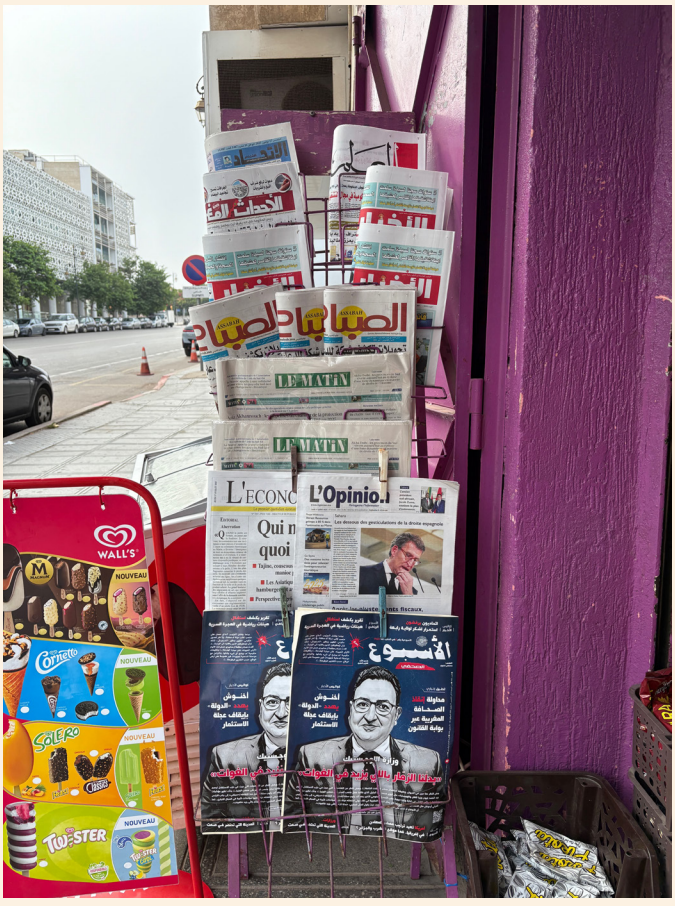
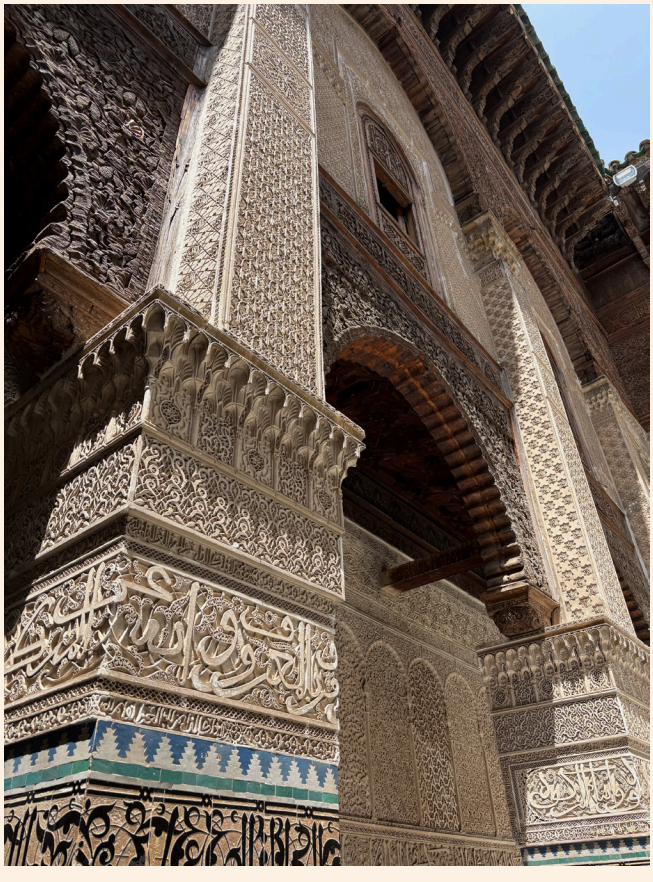


Figure III.A

Figure III.B



traces its lineage back to the Prophet Muhammad. Language has played a major role in reaffirming this connection; Arabic has historically been seen as divine due to its role as the language in which God chose to reveal the Qur'an. As a result, many holy places built throughout Moroccan history use Arabic calligraphy in their decoration.

Figures III.B and C show a historic madrasa in Fez used for Qur'anic instruction. The use of Arabic was essential in building a new nationalist identity centered around both Islam and the crown.

In addition to the display of Arabic in holy places, the language has been used specifically in relation to the monarchy. Figure III.D shows the outer gate to the royal palace in Fez. This gate, which was completed in the early 1970s after the fall of the protectorate, prominently features Arabic poetry referring to the king as Commander of the Faithful. The inscription demonstrates the continued importance of language and religion in legitimizing royal power.

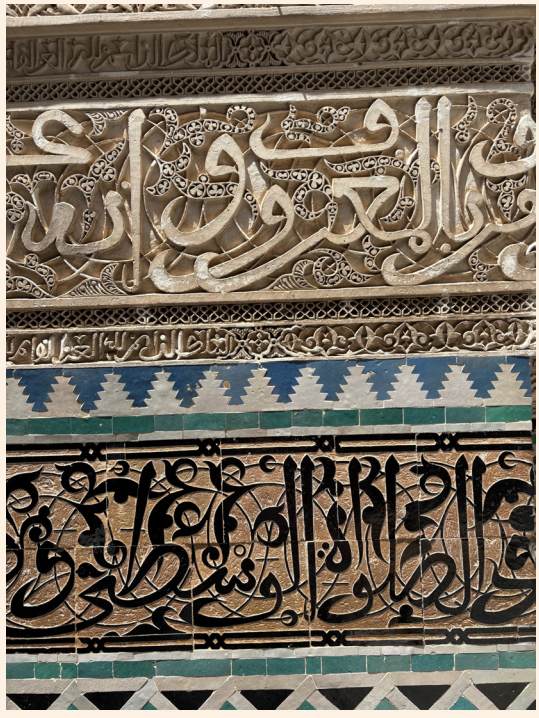


Figure III.C

Tamazight Language Policy

Tamazight, the language of the Amazigh people who lived in North Africa before the Arabs, has been used to promote a different vision of nationalism. The Amazigh, also known as Berbers, make up about half of the country's population. However, most of them live in mountainous and rural regions of the country, with little access to the outside world or representation in politics.[11] Additionally, Tamazight lacks a strong written history and thus has remained the marginalized language of a marginalized people for much of Moroccan history.

However, the visibility of Tamazight language today reflects an increased cultural and national importance in recent years. Beginning in the 1980s, in response to discrimination and high rates of poverty in predominantly Amazigh areas, activists from several North African countries founded the Berber Cultural Movement.[12] In 1991, members of the movement drafted the Charter of Agadir, which called for Tamazight language education in schools as well as greater visibility of the language in public spaces.[13] This activism produced results, albeit slowly: King Mohammed

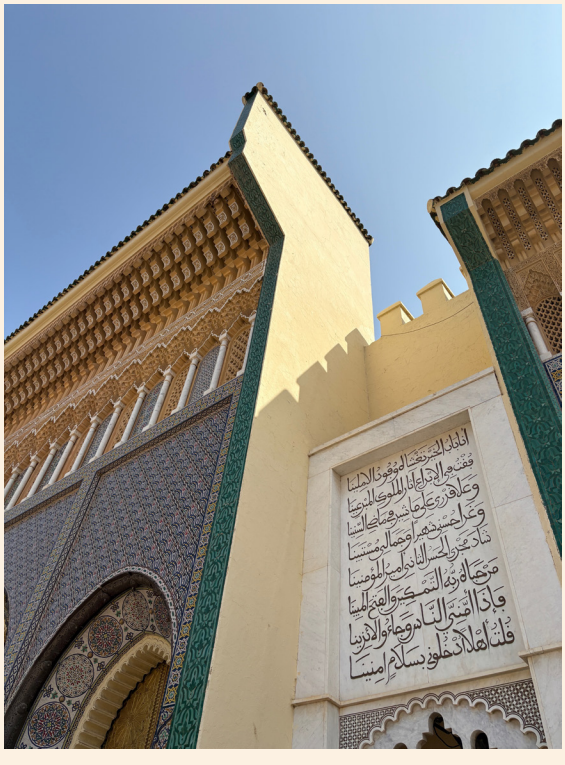


Figure III.D

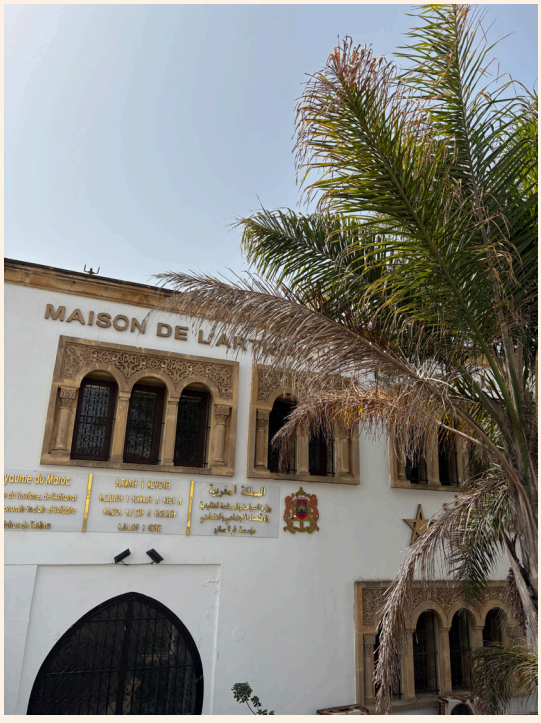


Figure IV.A

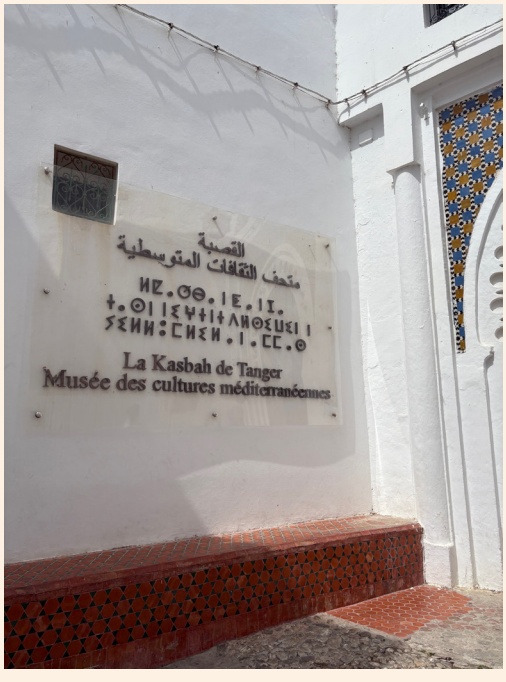


Figure IV.B

VI established the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture (IRCAM) in 2001 in order to better highlight Amazigh contributions to Morocco, and Tamazight became an official language alongside Arabic in 2011. As shown in Figures IV.A and IV.B, most official buildings today have Tamazight alongside Arabic, although many also display the colonial French.

While the modern Arabist movement continues to seek the removal of French from the public sphere and the Amazigh Cultural Movement pushes for greater Tamazight visibility, English has also appeared as another language of resistance.

Palestine in Morocco

Deviation from the standard languages of Arabic or Tamazight to the use of English, as the current global *lingua franca*, serves as a key way for Moroccans to resist the effects of colonialism by standing in solidarity with other parts of the world. This is most notably the case over the past decade, perhaps even the last century, in relation to Palestine.[14]

As evident in Figures V.A and V.B, there is a wide diversity in the seriousness and presumed age of amateur graffiti artists who choose to comment on Palestine. From bubbly and colorful drawings to the colorless and frantically scrawled "free Palestine," there seems to be no shortage of the English, globally-targeted phrase. However, in certain cases, comments on Palestine reach higher levels of complexity than the common phrase "free Palestine."

In Figure V.C, an artist uses the phrase "perestroika" in English letters (as opposed to the original Russian). Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines perestroika as "the policy of economic and governmental reform instituted by Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union during the mid-1980s," but notes that the etymology comes from a Russian word literally meaning "restructuring."[15] In combination with traditional Palestinian colors, this message of restructuring sends a clear demand for change in Palestine.

Conclusion

Throughout Morocco's history, Arabic, Tamazight, and English have each served as unique means of resist-

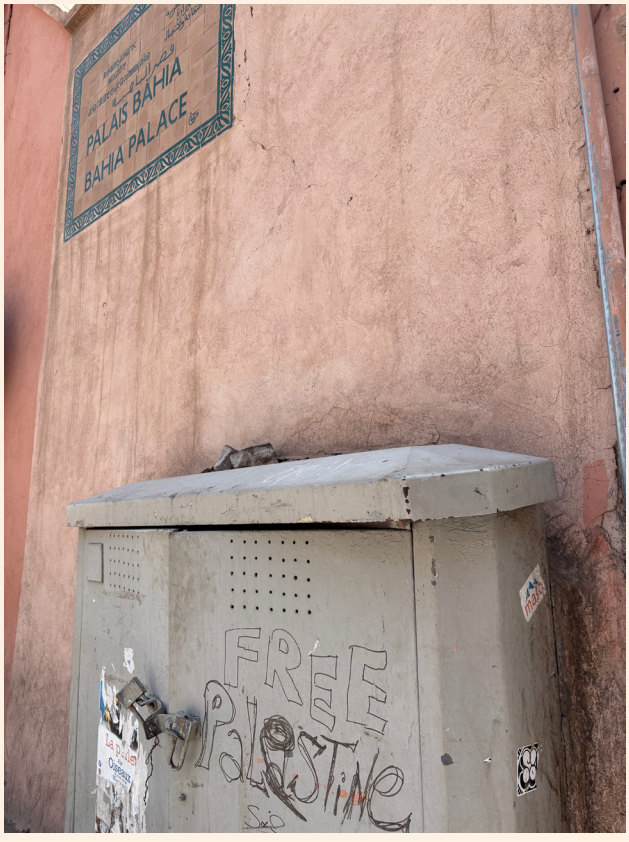


Figure V.A

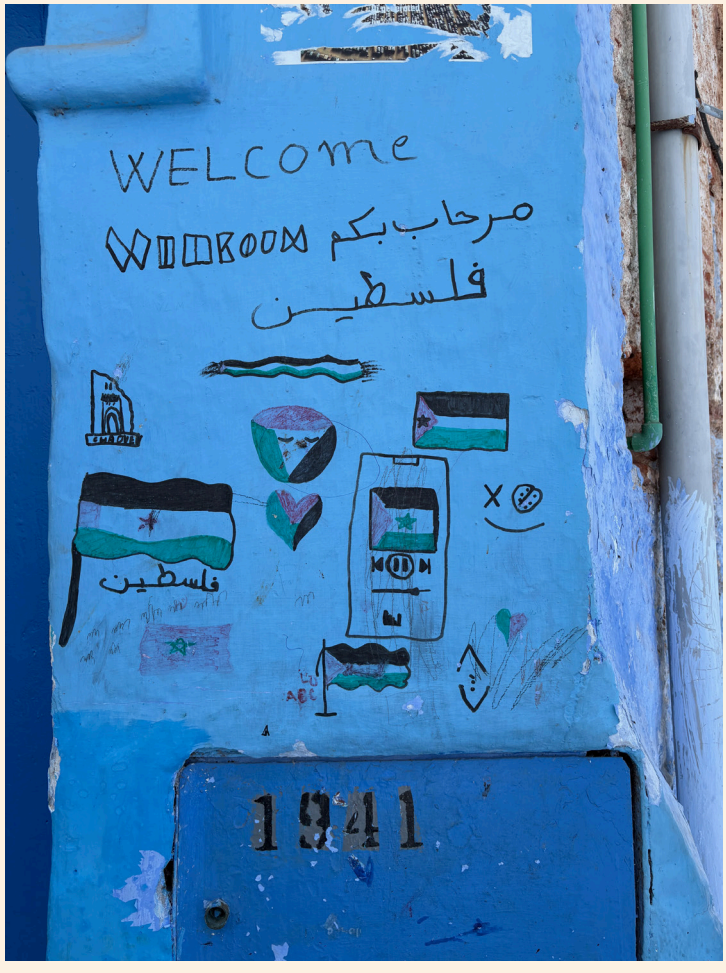


Figure V.B

ing foreign imposition. Today, linguistic attitudes in Morocco reflect the country's history and reveal its current fight to support its neighbors in similar decolonization efforts. While French continues to be used as the language of higher education and remains on many government buildings, it has shown signs of decline. Certain official buildings, such as the Capacity Development Center of the High Council of Accounts, have even done away entirely with French signage, as shown in Figure VI.A.

As debates continue about the proper status of French in Morocco, the visibility of all the languages in the country reflects its long history of resistance.

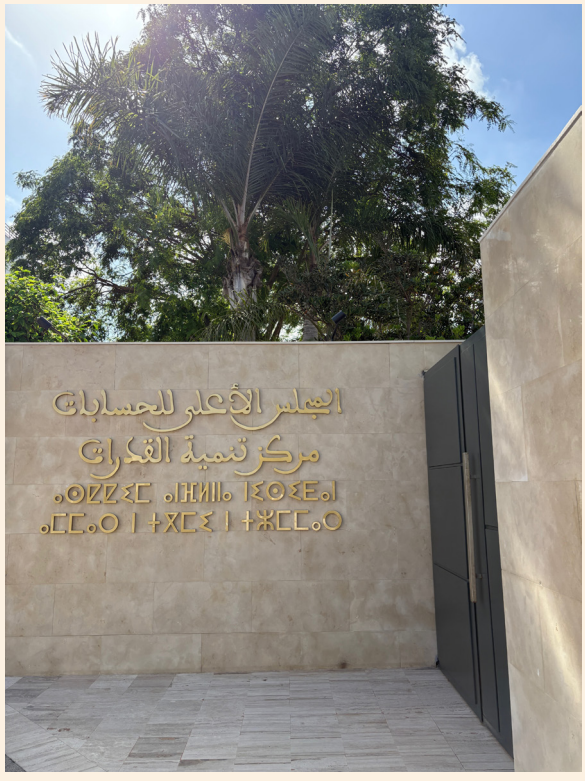


Figure VI.A

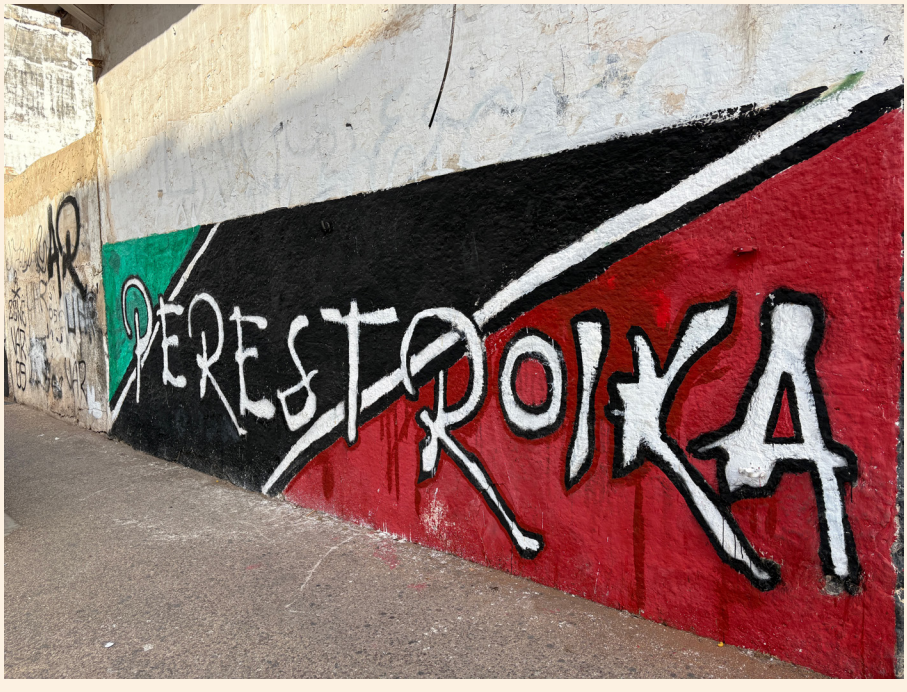


Figure V.C.

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