Conclusion

In late February 1964 – shortly after the World Peace Brigade was forced to reroute its Delhi-to-Beijing Friendship March and, instead, to halt in Assam, India; and during the Nagaland Baptist Church Council's convention that called for a Nagaland Peace Mission – Devi Prasad of War Resisters' International and Reverend Michael Scott of the Brigade met in London to discuss the difficulties faced by the Brigade arising from the question of Naga nationalism within India. Prasad suggested that a party of three to five people "acceptable" to the Indian government and "the [Naga nationalist, pro-independence] Phizo group ... should be sent to the Naga Hills not only to find out facts but also for the purpose of reconciliation."[1] This proposal ran in tandem with that of the Naga Baptist Church, which would invite Scott and fellow Brigade leader Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) to Nagaland later that year to be part of its proposed Peace Mission. While Scott agreed with Prasad's proposal, he worried about what was happening – or rather not happening – to the Brigade. According to Scott, "The World Peace Brigade started without knowing what it was expected to do" and "took up 'protest' as its main function."[2] He felt that the Brigade had never moved past protest to the work of solving seemingly intractable political problems – to the work of reconciliation. In this formulation, protest and reconciliation opposed each other: the former, potentially wasteful of effort and opportunity; the latter, the Holy Grail of international peace efforts.

[1] Devi Prasad, Notes on conversation with Michael Scott, February 25, 1964, Box 59, GMS Papers.

[2] As quoted in Prasad, Notes on conversation with Scott.

As illustrated by many episodes chronicled in *States-in-Waiting*, this February 1964 exchange between Prasad and Scott displayed the Brigade community's negative capability: its members' drive to operate beyond the feasibility of their enterprises, even as they encountered repeated, sometimes even career-ending roadblocks.[3] Through their arrested outcomes, their work made visible the constraints of a postcolonial political order that officially claimed to celebrate and facilitate national liberation, while in practice restricting access to that recognition. As individuals, nationalists and their advocates fought, rejected, and attempted to transcend the limits of decolonization – limits placed on which nationalist claim could become an independent state, as well as the constraints inherent to many postcolonial states' functional sovereignty – while remaining fully aware of those limits. Their visa, passport difficulties and deportations challenged the national boundaries they were attempting to remake, while also demonstrating the continuing supremacy of those boundaries. Nationalists and their advocates kept pressing against the limits of a system of international order that refused to empower or recognize them as political actors, relegating their work to a sphere of unofficial, irregular, and quasi-recognized politics. This sphere was not actually separate from formal state-to-state relations; it was a political no-man's-land that reflected the institutionalized international order's confusion about, and resistance to, questions of national self-determination for states-in-waiting that did not align with former colonial territorial boundaries.

After the Second World War, both the formal international order of the United Nations and Cold War political alignments recognized national self-determination as an international norm but only acknowledged claims of national self-determination that resisted European empires. However, claims within postcolonial states persisted, as did those within many other countries, including indigenous movements in North America and the Basque and Catalan movements in Spain.[4] These claims often operated through informal networks and forums because they were deliberately politically and legally invisible to international institutions. Over time, these networks created interwoven layers of

[3] The concept of "negative capability" is an allusion to John Keats's letter to George and Thomas Keats, December 21, 1817. Available at http://mason.gmu.edu/~rnanian/Keats-NegativeCapability.html.

[4] David Myer Temin, *Remapping Sovereignty: Decolonization and Self-Determination in North American Indigenous Political Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2023); Dorothy Noyes, *Fire in the Plaça: Catalan Festival Politics after Franco* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

international relations and spheres of action that took on the question of states-in-waiting.

The process of decolonization created states-in-waiting in postcolonial states. States-in-waiting were territorially linked communities within (or across) newly decolonized states; they were left unliberated when the latter gained independence – and therefore recognition – within the state-centric international order. By foregrounding the nationalist movements that arose from these regions, *States-in-Waiting* illuminates the unendings of decolonization – the unfinished, messy, and improvised way that the state-centric system of international order replaced empire. Nationalist claimants from communities left out of the global order (as it was radically expanded by decolonization) were forced to work through unofficial channels to advance their claims in the arena of international politics. Therefore, the ambiguous and at times unreliable role of their international advocates – the intermediaries they used to navigate these channels – highlighted the uncertainties of the transitions from empires to states. These uncertainties, and the concomitant political weakness of the various positions of different nationalists, left certain nationalist claims seemingly perpetually awaiting international recognition.

As particular regions seeking independence continued to be states-in-waiting, unofficial advocacy on their behalf became an integral component of their international politics. Indeed, persistent reliance on such advocacy became a defining characteristic of those movements that remained states-in-waiting. For independence struggles across the decolonization divide, that is, both before and after formal independence, advocates could be pivotal but not central to the process of nationalist claims-making. In turn, nationalists were central but not always empowered to be pivotal – that is, to be able to represent their region's struggle for independence in international politics. However, while advocacy was an integral characteristic of states-in-waiting, it was not the cause or the defining feature of whether or not a nationalist claim succeeded in achieving its goal of statehood.

States-in-Waiting has followed the activities of a network of advocates that had formed before the Second World War and during the struggle for Indian independence. Subsequently, these advocates tried to help 1960s decolonization escape its "entrapment in violence":[5] They assisted

[5] Albert Bigelow, "Some Reflections on the Conference to Establish the World Peace Brigade," 1961. World Peace Brigade, North American Regional Council Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI.

Kenneth Kaunda's ascension to leadership of Zambia, a former state-in-waiting. While Namibia was a state-in-waiting, they helped maintain its status as a League of Nations mandate, in this way preventing its international-legal absorption into apartheid South Africa. They also worked to undermine the legitimacy of Katanga, another state-in-waiting, which attempted to secede from Congo-Léopoldville (present-day Democratic Republic of the Congo). However, the state-in-waiting of Nagaland, a nationalist claim within India, a postcolonial state with impeccable anticolonial nationalist credentials, alienated the network's Indian membership and disrupted the underlying basis for this network's original support of national liberation struggles, which was anticolonialism.

* * *

The Naga nationalist Angami Zapu Phizo never returned to Nagaland until after his death in 1990. Living in exile for thirty years in London, his home became a metaphorical embassy as advocates and the few Nagas who were able to travel abroad sought to pay their respects to the grand old man of the Naga independence movement. Always well dressed and sharply focused, Phizo would hold court in his parlor while his household stinted on food and fuel when visitors were not present. In the years after the Nagaland Peace Mission's attempt to find an equitable, acceptable solution to the Naga claim, the Naga nationalist movement fractured into competing insurgent groups, and the region remains under martial law with an extensive Indian military presence. Regular violence persisted until the cold peace of a ceasefire agreement in the late 1990s, which, with modifications, has since been extended indefinitely to the present day, without a publicly available agreement addressing the Naga nationalist claim.

Amid this bleak political situation, Phizo's body returned home by chartered plane in May 1990, ten days after his death. His coffin, draped in the Naga rainbow flag and driven in a brand-new pick-up truck, climbed the sixty-five-kilometer road from the airport in Dimapur to the Naga capital of Kohima. Crowds of Nagas in traditional ceremonial warrior dress lined the route, silently bearing witness, all quiet except for the rhythmic shooting of Second World War–era rifles into the air.[6]

[6] Account of Phizo's funeral described in an interview by the author with Visier Sanyü, December 15, 2019; and "25th Anniversary of the Funeral of AZ Phizo, *Eastern Mirror*

In this way, Phizo received a "state funeral" from a state-in-waiting. Mourners chose their attire because their leader had passed away, and they had "served him as his soldiers."[7] They waited for his body to pass, because he was the "father of [their] Nagaland."[8] Phizo's death marked an end for Naga nationalist claims-making in the context of decolonization's potential for national liberation as the Cold War waned and as rights discourses on nationalism were supplanted by those focused on human rights, indigeneity, and ethnicity for many disenfranchised peoples across the globe.

Phizo's 1960 arrival in London had coincided in time with the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence and the recognition of independence for seventeen African countries. The declaration stated that "the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation" violates their human rights and that "peoples have the right to self-determination."[9] It set UN trust territories (i.e., former League of Nations mandates) firmly on the road to independence and positioned colonial rule and self-determination as oppositional practices, in which the end of empire led to the exercise of self-determination for all peoples – a political fiction that over time has grown more nuanced but has not been fundamentally overturned.

The political shifts of the 1960s, when nearly fifty countries became independent (depending on how you count them), increased people's optimism about the possibility of national liberation. However, communities whose nationalist claims remained unrecognized during this decade, and subsequent decades, did not disappear. Many, including Nagas, continued their nationalist demands, but other modes and methods of claims-making gained international traction, such as concepts of indigeneity and ethnicity. The end of apartheid and the Cold War also

(Nagaland, India), May 1, 2015. Available at https://easternmirrornagaland.com/25th-anniversary-of-the-funeral-of-a-z-phizo/. Umatic films by Visier Sanyü of episodic interviews that surround the events of Phizo's funeral were restored and digitized with support from the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam) and then translated and transcribed with support from the Provost's Early Career Scholar funding scheme, The Ohio State University.

[7] Umatic Film 9, Visier Sanyü Collections. [8] Umatic Film 9, Visier Sanyü Collections.

[9] UN General Assembly Resolution 1514, "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples," December 14, 1960. Available at www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-granting-independence-colonial-countries-and-peoples.

marked a shift toward the frequent use of the term "ethnicity," which connects the construction of political identity to the global-economic shifts of the 1990s and after.

Ethnicity and indigeneity have provided nonnational modes of claims-making for peoples who seek to remain distinct from their ruling governments. The incomplete political struggles of those left behind by decolonization require categories of understanding that lie outside the lens of the postcolonial state.[10] "Indigeneity" highlights the specific historical experiences of particular communities that consider themselves outside of nationally made histories and state-building projects, providing a common identifier for making shared political claims across broad geographies.[11] The concept creates seemingly politically safer, potentially more feasible grounds than that of nationalism for claims of autonomy and difference. Yet, claims of indigeneity remain dependent upon definitions by, and the time horizon of, the state from which communities seek to carve out an autonomous sphere, since indigeneity as an international-legal concept depends upon a people's territorial origins' predating those of their governing state. Critics of the term and its usage point out that it relies upon notions of "primordial" "primitiveness" that awkwardly echo colonial categorizations.[12] Indeed, the imperial discourses and

[10] Christopher J. Lee, "The Cruel Optimism of Decolonization," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 42, no. 2 (2022): 541–45.

[11] There are regional dynamics to the global spread of indigenous claims-making in international politics, which was dominated by groups in the Americas in the 1970s; came to have a strong Sami/European presence that complicated notions of belonging to the welfare state; later, included more Asian peoples, especially from the Pacific Islands and upland Southeast Asia that have had long-term, explicitly nationalist movements, and then incorporated groups on the African continent that have had adversarial relationships with postcolonial state governments ruled by former anticolonial nationalist movements. For the San peoples in Southern Africa, see Maria Sapignoli, *Hunting Justice: Development, Law, and Activism in the Kalahari* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018). For the generation of an international discourse of indigenous claims-making, see Andrew Canessa, "Indigenous Conflict in Bolivia Explored through an African Lens: Towards a Comparative Analysis of Indigeneity," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 2 (2018): 308–37. For comparative connections between North America and Australia, see Audra Simpson, "Under the Sign of Sovereignty: Certainty, Ambivalence, and Law in Native North America and Indigenous Australia," *Wicazo Sa Review* 25, no. 2 (2010): 107–24.

[12] Adam Kuper, "The Return of the Native," *Current Anthropology* 44, no. 3 (2003): 389–402; Manvir Singh, "It's Time to Rethink the Idea of the 'Indigenous,'" *New Yorker*, February 20, 2023. Available at www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/02/27/its-time-to-rethink-the-idea-of-the-indigenous.

connections that underpinned much of the resistance to ruling states during twentieth-century decolonization are foundational features of these movements, which have utilized similar advocates as did states-in-waiting to access international institutions.[13]

While not all Nagas see indigeneity as the appropriate structure in which to frame their claim, by the 1990s some had come to "believe that relations with other indigenous peoples, and a connection to the United Nations' efforts for the rights of indigenous peoples, could only strengthen" their cause.[14] Other nationalist claimants – such as Jariretundu Kozonguizi, originally of SWANU, or Mburumba Kerina, briefly of SWAPO, who both came to feel marginalized from the majoritarian nationalist movement of SWAPO during the Namibian liberation struggle – shifted to ethnically defined organizations, such as the Herero Chiefs Council (for whom Kozonguizi was a legal advisor) or political parties that came to be perceived as more accommodationist with South Africa.[15] Evolving journeys of claims-making thwart narratives of

[13] To access the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, organizations had to be accredited, leading to a politics of accreditation in which established nongovernmental organizations with such status would bring particular indigenous claimants to the Working Group through their organizational structure, acting as gatekeepers in a similar manner to the politics of advocacy described in *States-in-Waiting*. These observations are drawn from the draft reports of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples, 1987–1990, held in the records of the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam.

[14] Visier Sanyü with Richard Broome, *A Naga Odyssey: Visier's Long Way Home* (Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2017), 186; Visier Sanyü–Hans Ragnar Mathisen/Keviselie Correspondence, 1974, private collection in the possession of Arkotong Longkumar. Thank you to Visier and to Hans Ragnar for giving me permission to access this private collection.

[15] Dag Henrichsen, "Multicultural Lives, Defiance and Liberation Politics in Namibia: The Getzen-Kerina Family History," African History, *Oxford Research Encyclopedias* (published online January 28, 2022), 1–24. Available at https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-775. Henrichsen, an experienced archivist and researcher of Namibian history, has this to say about the complexity of Kerina's career and how it defies easy categorization (p. 19):

> Mburumba Kerina's long political career has not yet been researched and accessed in a scholarly way. Apart from numerous unpublished interviews with him by various scholars since the late 1970s and limited access to his dispersed private archives, a few autobiographies of contemporary activists and politicians provide fleeting glimpses into more personal encounters. In the case of his biography, too, conflicting details prevail. His controversial entanglements with Namibian, South African, and US (state) organizations, in particular, which took place in very volatile Cold War and highly manipulative propaganda-war contexts, warrant further archival research.

decolonization as a unidirectional (from dependent colonies ruled by empires to independent self-governed states), progressive process of self-determination leading to national liberation in the singular shape of the state.

In its 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the United Nations recognized a nonbinding right to self-determination for indigenous peoples.[16] Yet that process decoupled self-determination from international-legal sovereignty, even as, from the perspective of indigenous claimants, "the broken promises of decolonization were the basis of Indigenous populations' movement toward human rights."[17] James (Sa'ke'j) Henderson, the North American indigenous legal theorist who wrote those words, explicitly invoked the experiences of Nagas, Karens, and Kachins (of Myanmar), as well as of the South Sudanese, as those who were promised a state and then betrayed by postcolonial institutions of international order.[18] South Sudan, which became independent in 2011 and remains a zone of conflict, demonstrates the continued global scope of states-in-waiting and how the elusive prize of independence does not necessarily equate with lasting peace.

The question that states-in-waiting pose to the current system of international order defies resolution or a set of "lessons learned": unless the lesson is one of recognition that every liberation and its celebration includes a subjugation. This reality creates a counternarrative of decolonization that contains a history that former colonizers, postcolonial governments, and international institutions seek to obscure in order to shift attention away from their own responsibility, or impotence, or both. Today, (a portion of) Nagaland is a state in the Indian Union, but one continuously ruled under martial law through the Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1958, a legal instrument originally forged under British empire.

[16] United Nations, General Assembly, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, A/RES/61/295, September 13, 2007. Miranda Johnson, "Indigenizing Self-Determination at the United Nations: Reparative Progress in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," *Journal of the History of International Law* 23, no. 1 (2020): 206–28; Megan Davis, "The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," *Australian Indigenous Law Review* 11, no. 3 (2007): 55–63.

[17] James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson, *Indigenous Diplomacy and the Rights of Peoples: Achieving UN Recognition* (Vancouver, BC: Purich Publishing, 2008), 27.

[18] Henderson, *Indigenous Diplomacy*, 111.

Other states-in-waiting face similar incomplete decolonizations. After Katanga's secession failed in 1962, its leader Moise Tshombe went into exile in Spain, though he remained involved in Congolese politics. In 1967, his private plane was hijacked, and he was imprisoned in Algiers. His international advocates petitioned the United Nations on his behalf, comparing Tshombe with Namibian nationalists, including Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, who was then on trial for "terrorism" in South Africa.[19] Ya Toivo had been arrested in 1966 and tortured by South African authorities after SWAPO launched a military action following the 1966 International Court of Justice's (non)decision on South West Africa. Ya Toivo was tried under South Africa's Terrorism Act; his statement on February 1, 1968, became a famous declaration of resistance:

> We do not now, and will not in the future, recognize your right to govern us; to make laws for us, in which we had no say; to treat our country as if it was your property and us as if you are our masters.[20]

To secure Tshombe's release, Katanga's advocates attempted to draw upon the international anger that Ya Toivo's incarceration generated.[21] But their efforts were futile. Tshombe died in 1969 after two years of imprisonment. Since Katanga's halted secession in 1962, insurgency has continued intermittently; violence in the region was particularly intense during the Second Congo War of 1997–2003.[22] Since 1960, the country (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) has been the site of three United Nations peacekeeping interventions, the latest of which remains ongoing, as of this writing.

Other movements chronicled in *States-in-Waiting* – those for an independent Zambia and Namibia – achieved statehood. Kenneth Kaunda, friend and colleague of the World Peace Brigade and first president of Zambia (1964), made Zambia a one-party state in 1972 and nationalized its copper mines in 1974. These authoritarian and socialist moves drew criticism from many in the Brigade community, criticism that subsequently eroded their relationships with Kaunda.[23] Kaunda stepped aside

[19] Marvin Liebman to Morris E. Abrams, senior adviser to the US delegation to the UN, November 14, 1967, Box 29, Liebman Papers, the Hoover Institution.

[20] Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo, "Statement from the Dock," *Journal of Namibian Studies* 22, no. 1 (2017): 99–104.

[21] Lila Acheson and DeWitt Wallace telegram, undated (probably 1968), Box 35, Liebman Papers.

[22] Gérard Prunier, *Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 139–42, 234–35.

[23] Michael Scott to Kenneth Kaunda, July 7, 1980, Box 63, GMS Papers.

from power in 1991, as the end of the Cold War revised global power dynamics. As part of this geopolitical realignment, Namibia became independent in 1990 under the rule of Swapo, the political party (the former nationalist movement of SWAPO).

In Namibia as of this writing, the tensions between nationalism and ethnicity, as well as present politics and historic identity, swirl around the issue of German reparations for the colonial genocide of the Herero and Nama peoples. In 2021, the German government apologized to the Namibian government for the genocide and agreed to pay over a billion euros over a thirty-year period toward development projects without using the formal term "reparations" or making an international-legal statement of responsibility.[24] This sum is close to the amount of German aid Namibia received in the thirty years since independence and so does not represent a change in the status quo. In response, representatives of the Herero and Nama peoples have demanded that any apology and monetary reparations be made directly to them, as the ethnic descendants of the peoples massacred by Germany between 1904 and 1908, rather than to the Swapo-led, Ovambo-dominated Namibian government, and that it resolve the issue of land stolen from their ancestors, land which is mostly owned by the descendants of white German settlers, who are present-day Namibian citizens.[25] This debate shows the contentious knot of nation, government, ethnicity, and territoriality, and how intertwined it is with colonial pasts and postcolonial presents. At issue is who gets to legitimately speak for historic peoples in politics; whether an anticolonial nationalist movement turned postcolonial state government can represent peoples from a century before its existence in international negotiations; and whether historical reparations can occur without change of land ownership, the most personal form of sovereignty.

While temporality structures the context and language of the claims that remain states-in-waiting, the questions themselves persist across decades (or even centuries), geographies, and political regimes. *States-in-Waiting* has related a counternarrative of decolonization, of nationalist impossibility embedded in that of possibility, a narrative that did not end

[24] Joseph Cotterill, "Battle for Namibia Reparations: German Deal Was Never About Us," *Financial Times*, April 29, 2022. Available at www.ft.com/content/ab289014-0414-4514-a77e-a3f030505e0f.

[25] Kaamil Ahmed, "Descendants of Namibia's Genocide Victims Call on Germany to Stop Hiding," *Guardian*, February 3, 2023. Available at www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/feb/03/namibia-genocide-victims-herero-nama-germany-reparations.

as the horizon of optimistic national expectation closed in the late 1960s. Many of the same nationalist claims took new forms, used different modes of political discourse, but still posed the same questions: What peoples are able to make a legitimate claim of self-determination? What processes, forums, and power relationships determine that legitimacy through international recognition? The answers to these questions evolve with subsequent geopolitical shifts on the scale of twentieth-centry global decolonization. The questions themselves remain remarkably consistent accross time, space, and regime.