

Social Production of an Internal Colony: Urban Space in Black Chicago, 1945-1970

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Introduction

The Great Migration is one of the most defining points of American urban history. Driven away from the South by horrendous Jim Crow laws, millions of Black Americans migrated northwards, congregating in urban areas in the Northeast and Midwest. The migration radically altered the demographic and spatial makeup of these regions' urban centers, from Minneapolis to New York City. Unsurprisingly, Chicago, the pre-eminent Midwestern metropolis during this period, was immeasurably altered by this racial re-configuration. In 1940, Chicago's Black population numbered 278,000. By 1960, it had increased to 813,000, and it continued to climb into the 1970s.¹

Histories of Chicago's development during this Second Great Migration have focused on white flight, urban divestment, and the creation of racial ghettos in the inner city.² In this paper, I seek to expand on this research by analyzing the Second City's post-war development through models of internal colonialism and social production of space. In doing so, I will demonstrate how urban space in Chicago from 1945-1970 was meticulously constructed in a colonial fashion, intentionally cultivated to maximize control of Black economy in order to maintain an exploitative relationship. I will begin by explaining precisely what these theoretical concepts are and how they can be applied to Black Chicagoans. After this is established, I will explore how housing was used to shape Black space within the Windy City. Finally, I will examine how police were used as an instrument of colonial enforcement to maintain rigid control and separation of Black space.

¹ Roger Biles, "Race and Housing in Post WWII Chicago," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1998-) 94, no. 1 (2001): 32.

² Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983); Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Establishing Context: Internal Colonialism and the Social Production of Urban Space

Analyzing the Black American experience through an internal colonial model has a long and rich history. Developed in the 1960s by Chicano/a and Black academics such as Harold Cruse, Kwame Ture, Robert Blauner, Mario Barrera, Robert L. Allen, and Joan Moore, the model of internal colonialism seeks to understand, explain, and analyze the experience of a “subordinated... racial or ethnic group in its own homeland within the boundaries of a larger state dominated by a different people.”³ This principle can be readily applied to Black Americans. Although Black Americans are native to the United States, white American hegemony has alienated them from their country of origin through sophisticated orientalism. By creating a conception of idealized America as white, American hegemony has implicitly otherized non-white people in the United States, whether they were born there or not. Alongside this image of white America is an equally malicious idea of what Black Americans are. Hegemonic thinking in the US regards Black Americans as “lazy,” “stupid,” “aggressive,” and dangerous.⁴ By dehumanizing Black people and associating them with these negative characteristics and stereotypes, white, American Hegemony has succeeded in alienating them from both their humanity and their status as Americans. This characterization allows Black Americans to remain a colonized people, even in their nation of birth. Once this orientalized status is understood, the remaining pieces of colonial analysis fall into place.⁵ In the United States, Black people are a minority racial group that have endured grossly unequal social conditions compared to white Americans. These socio-economic and cultural inequalities create a colonial relationship based on the “greed, cruelty, insensitivity, guilt and fear” of their white colonizers.⁶

The nature of this colonial relationship is driven primarily by material interests, the driving force behind any colonial enterprise. Although colonial relationships are strongly linked with race, colonialism is ultimately driven by the material interests of the hegemonic classes. The intersectional nature of class and race in the United States thus renders any analysis of race-based, colonial hierarchies incomplete without a concurrent class analysis.⁷ But the oppression of colonial environments is not limited to these areas. A multitude of intersecting structures work to exploit and exclude the colonized based on factors of race, class, gender, and sexuality as efficiently as possible. Although all these areas are important to fully understanding

³ John R. Chávez, “Aliens in Their Native Lands: The Persistence of Internal Colonial Theory,” *Journal of World History* 22, no. 4 (December 2011): 786. <http://doi.org/10.1353/jwh.2011.0123>.

⁴ Samuel L. Gaertner and John P. McLaughlin, “Racial Stereotypes: Associations and Ascriptions of Positive and Negative Characteristics,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 46, no. 1 (March 1983): 23-30, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3033657>.

⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, NY: Penguin Classics, 2003), 31-72.

⁶ Robert Staples, “Race and Colonialism: The Domestic Case in Theory and Practice,” *The Black Scholar* 7, no. 9 (June 1976): 38, <http://doi.org/10.1080/00064246.1976.11413836>.

⁷ Mario Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 193-194, 212; Kimberlé Crenshaw, *On Intersectionality: Essential Writings* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2017).

colonialism and urban space, the scope of this paper is limited to examining issues of race and class.

This analysis further utilizes the foundational urban studies work of Henri Lefebvre, specifically his work on the social production of urban space.⁸ Lefebvre argued that space must be fully understood as a social construct, not an objective creation. There are aspects of space, such as volume or natural resources, that can be measured objectively, akin to a scientific experiment. However, proper understanding of space in an urban environment must incorporate how space has been constructed, who has done the construction, and who is affected by it. Critical analysis of space must include not only the objective aspect of space, but the contents – the users of the space – as well.⁹ This paper combines this social understanding of space with a colonial understanding of African American history to analyze how urban space was constructed to optimize colonial control over the lives and economic power of Black Chicagoans. The internal colonial model allows us to conceptualize Black history in the United States, while Lefebvre’s work on understanding how space is socially constructed allows us to comprehend the full intentionality and exploitation behind the colonial nature of Black Chicago. Specifically, this paper examines how housing in Chicago was used to shape Black urban space. After this is established, the way police controlled and maintained this colonial relationship with urban space will be explored.

Housing During and After the Great Migration: Construction of Separate Spaces

Race is inextricably tied to colonialism. Although material interests are the primary driver of colonial ventures, race is critical to establishing successful colonial hegemony because it creates clear and rigid distinctions between the colonizer and the colonized. The immediate visual difference of skin color is used by colonizing forces to otherize and dehumanize the oppressed, making it easier to justify their continued exploitation. Because of this otherization, race becomes an essential part of maintaining the colonizer’s hegemony.¹⁰ This racial demarcation has been essential to maintaining the wealthy, white, male, cisgender American hegemony for decades; in Chicago this race-based differentiation was of particular importance. Before World War II, the Windy City’s population had remained predominately white. However, the Second Great Migration radically altered the city’s demographic makeup. In 1940, 8% of Chicago’s population was Black. By 1970, that number had skyrocketed to 32%.¹¹ This racial

⁸ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Blackwell, 2016.

⁹ Henri Lefebvre, “Reflections on the Politics of Space,” *State, Space, World: Selected Essays*, edited by Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 170-172.

¹⁰ Linda Bryder, “Sex, Race, and Colonialism: An Historiographical Review.” *The International History Review* 20, no.4 (December 1998): 807-808. <http://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.1998.9640841>; E. Franklin Frazier, *Race and Culture Contacts in the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965), 177-188; Robert Staples, “Race and Colonialism: The Domestic Case in Theory and Practice.”

¹¹ Christopher Manning, “African Americans,” *The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*, 2005. <http://encycolpedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/27.html>; Patrick Reardon, “City About Equal in Terms of Race.” *Chicago Tribune*, 23 September 1986.

recomposition altered many of the barriers that had been created to separate Black and white neighborhoods in Chicago. To maintain the unequal separation of spaces that helped enable the exploitation of Black Chicagoans, hegemonic institutions in the city reinforced and reformed existing structures of economic, social, and spatial control.¹²

While reconstructing these rigid colonial structures, the intersectional relationship between race and class became essential. Adjusted for inflation, the median income of Black people in Chicago by the conclusion of the Great Migration was \$34,000, well below the estimated \$43,715 it cost to live in Chicago at the time.¹³ According to census data, approximately 33% of Black people in Chicago were below the poverty line in 1970, and 76% of Black Chicagoans lived in predominately low-income areas.¹⁴ These figures remained similar through the second period of Great Migration. Thus, the economically disadvantaged position of Black Chicagoans amplified the exclusionary power of race-based hierarchy. The disparity of wealth and income between Black Chicagoans and white Chicagoans allowed hegemonic, white institutions to control Black people under the guise of empirical, economic policies, policies which in actuality conspired to further exploit and control Black space.

Capitalizing on this intersectional position, hegemonic institutions utilized housing to shape Black space. When analyzing constructed space, understanding the role of housing is essential. Housing is a unique and critically important part of maintaining independence. Not only does it provide working and middle-class people a crucial avenue to wealth accumulation, it is also a fundamental human need. Without shelter, people cannot survive. This inelastic demand makes the housing sector an immensely powerful tool for enacting socio-economic change, one that hegemonic institutions weaponized to ensure their continued dominance. There were two primary methods in which hegemonic institutions worked to control the housing of Black Chicagoans: redlining, which occurred through private institutions via regulations set forth by the federal government, and urban planning by the local government. Earning its name from color-coded maps produced by both the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), redlining is a process of systemic exclusion from institutional support, particularly in the realm of real estate and home ownership. Using “high-risk” geographic designation as a justification, redlining drastically reduces the amount of structural support a neighborhood receives. Banks are less likely to approve home improvement loans or mortgages in these areas, leading to a sharp decline in the quantity and quality of housing development. This high-risk designation, however, was highly racialized.¹⁵ The FHA not only increased the risk designation of an area if it contained non-white residents, but in many cases outright refused to offer mortgage insurance to non-white buyers, even if they were willing

¹² Biles, “Race and Housing in Post WWII Chicago,” 31-38.

¹³ Alex Q. Arbuckle, ed. “John H. White’s Chicago, 1973-1974,” Mashable, accessed May 2, 2021; Jean C. Brackett, *Three Standards of Living for an Urban Family of Four Persons, Spring 1967*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1969). Inflation adjusted using the Federal CPI Tool through the Bureau of Labor Statistics to fit 2021.

¹⁴ US Census Bureau, 1970. Summary of Social and Housing Characteristics for the 50 Largest Cities by Residence in Census Tracts with a Poverty Rate of 20 Percent or More.

¹⁵ Bruce Mitchell and Juan Franco, “HOLC ‘Redlining’ Maps: The Persistent Structure of Segregation and Income Inequality,” Report, National Community Reinvestment Coalition, 2018.

and able to purchase a home that fit the criteria of a low-risk investment.¹⁶ From 1934-1962, white borrowers received 98% of all FHA loans.¹⁷

The difficult financial situation that most African Americans found themselves in was inextricably tied to a systemic effort to disenfranchise them from property ownership. White banks across the United States refused to work with Black people, which left credit sources dry. This decline in housing caused wealthier white residents to flee redlined areas, concentrating people with low-income and people of color in these dilapidated neighborhoods.¹⁸ Public services, most of which were funded directly by the tax dollars of those living these neighborhoods, declined precipitously as demographic changes correlated directly to drops in education quality, employment opportunities, and institutional support. Combined with the lack of access to traditional mortgages from banks, many Black families were forced to buy houses with installment land contracts (ILC). ILCs were notoriously risky engagements that forced the buyer to pay several times a property's actual worth, without the security or financial backing of a traditional mortgage. Unlike a traditional mortgage, homes purchased with ILCs were not put in the resident's name until the last payment had been fulfilled, allowing real estate companies to evict people for as little as one late payment. These practices worked to stifle any attempt at Black homeownership. In 1970, 65% of white Americans owned their home, while only 42% of Black Americans could say the same.¹⁹ Traditionally, home ownership remains one of the few ways in which working-class individuals can obtain financial assets. However, the conditions in Chicago were so brutal for Black residents that home ownership changed from a positive asset acquisition into one that "undermined the ability to accumulate wealth."²⁰

Redlining at the institutional level also led to further private exclusion at the individual and community levels. White homeowners, terrified that even a single non-white resident in their neighborhood would send their home values plummeting downwards, set up race-based housing covenants that prevented Black people from living in traditionally white neighborhoods. Although these covenants were declared illegal in 1948, the white residents of Chicago found that reactionary violence was a suitable alternative to enforcing segregated neighborhoods. During a period between 1949 to 1951, there were "three bombings, ten incidents of arson, eleven incidents of attempted arson, and at least eighty-one other incidents of terrorism or intimidation" related to housing in Chicago.²¹ This climate of racial violence led to even larger outbreaks of violence by white people against Black people. In 1951, over 4,000 white

¹⁶ James L. Greer, "Historic Home Mortgage Redlining in Chicago," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1998-) 107, no. 2 (2014): 227. <http://doi.org/10.5406/jillistathistsoc.107.2.0204>.

¹⁷ Nikole Hannah-Jones, "Living Apart: How the Government Betrayed a Landmark Civil Rights Law," ProPublica, Pro Publica Inc., June 25, 2015. <http://www.propublica.org/article/living-apart-how-the-government-betrayed-a-landmark-civil-rights-law>.

¹⁸ Richard Rothstein, "White Flight," *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of Our Government Segregated America* (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018).

¹⁹ F. John Devaney, *Tracking the American Dream, Current Housing Reports, Series H121/94-1*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 1994.

²⁰ Greer, "Historic Home Mortgage Redlining in Chicago," 204-233.

²¹ Grant Meyer, *As Long as They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), 118.

Chicagoans rioted against the Clarks, a Black family that had moved into the all-white Cicero district. These rioters ransacked the Clark residence, breaking into the apartment and destroying furniture, personal items, and clothing. Even the Clark's marriage certificate was dug up and burned.²² A similar episode of racial violence occurred in the Trumbull Park homes, near the southeast side of the city. Traditionally a white housing project, in July 1953 the Howard family became the first Black residents. They were immediately besieged by white demonstrators. Marching on the street day and night outside the Howard home, incensed white Chicagoans fired guns, threw blunt objects, and even launched homemade fireworks at the windows in an attempt to drive the Howards away. Though pressure from the NAACP forced city institutions to control the demonstrators in May of 1954, the harassment proved too much for the Howards to handle. They relocated in Spring of that year.²³ This type of mob-led, white-on-Black racial violence occurred throughout the Second Great Migration, and it contributed to the maintenance and strengthening of racial boundaries.

The combined effects of these practices on the Black community were devastating. Housing covenants and redlining forced Black people to buy or rent their homes on the South and West Sides of the city, the two most institutionally unsupported areas of Chicago. The spatial limitations imposed on Black Chicagoans further worked to undermine their financial independence. Capitalizing on race-based housing covenants and redlined districts, so-called "block-busters" made massive profits off the backs of Black Chicagoans by exploiting their limited options. These block-busters would target white areas on the periphery of Black space and use the threat of the Black community's expansion to terrify white Chicagoans. Once this fear of Black expansion was stoked, block-busters would purchase their properties at dirt-cheap rates, having artificially lowered the value of the neighborhood by preying on racial prejudice. After this property was acquired at a significant markdown, they would turn around and sell or rent them out to Black people at a massive mark-up.²⁴ Black Chicagoans were forced to accept these prices. Their limited financial flexibility and the lack of space they were afforded left them little choice. Following the Great Migration, these block-busting companies annually returned profit margins of over 70%, directly at the expense of people of color in Chicago.²⁵

Not satisfied with the substantial profits they made from real estate speculation, these block-busters utilized predatory landlord practices to further dominate Black economy. Surprise evictions were common, and often came in waves. During August of 1953, over two thousand Chicago tenants were evicted in a two-week span.²⁶ Black Chicagoans would often return home to changed locks and piles of their belongings on the street. Elizabeth Nelson, a single mother of nine, was the victim of one such eviction. On December 11, 1969, she returned home only to find

²² Meyer, *As Long as They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods*, 118-119.

²³ Arnold R. Hirsch, "Massive Resistance in the Urban North: Trumbull Park, Chicago, 1953-1966," *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 2 (1995): 526-30. <http://doi.org/10.2307/2082185>.

²⁴ Race and Housing in Post WWII Chicago 33-34; Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, "White Flight."

²⁵ Alphine Jefferson, "Housing Discrimination and Community Response in North Lawndale (Chicago), Illinois 1948-1968" (Ph.D. Diss., Duke University, 1979), 72, 80-84.

²⁶ "Eviction Suits Are Keeping Four Chicago Courts Busy," *Chicago Defender*, 29 August 1953, Page 4.

her possessions on the sidewalk and her house boarded up. Had members of Ms. Nelson's tenant union not put her back into the vacated residence by force, she and her children would have spent a cold winter's night on the street.²⁷ Elizabeth Nelson's case was not the exception. Whether through the threat of physical violence or financial ruin, control of both Black spaces and Black economy was embedded in the housing market. By preventing Black people from controlling their own housing or establishing stable residency, white institutions successfully safeguarded their ability to carry out future economic exploitation while enriching themselves in the process. Through control of Black housing, the ability of the colonizer classes to control Black Chicagoans was ensured.

Local Reinforcement of Separation

This extreme residential segregation was not only reinforced by private economic institutions, it was also meticulously cultivated by public institutions. The Great Migration had drastically changed the demographics and size of the city, and local officials were troubled. Prior to the Migration, they had worked rigorously to establish racial segregation throughout Chicago, and this radical shift in housing and population distributions threatened that. In response, the city launched a renewed public housing initiative.²⁸ While this project was presented as an opportunity to improve the city, in actuality it was a deliberate attempt by Chicago institutions to create a segregated, exploitative, colonial landscape. Intent on restoring the rigid barriers between white spaces and spaces of color, the city government meticulously crafted a public housing agenda to do just that.

Beginning under Mayor Martin Kennelly and continuing through the twenty years of Richard J. Daley's mayorship, the Chicago government utilized sweeping new powers granted to them by the state of Illinois to segregate and control urban space under the guise of "public interest."²⁹ New public housing developed under these powers was one of the city's most important methods of separation. Initially, the plan was to build public housing in "scattered-sites", distributing the projects throughout various neighborhoods of the city, where land was cheaper and race-based ghettos could be avoided. However, this scattered-site method would have required the placement of public housing projects, disproportionately filled with Black people, in primarily white neighborhoods. As they demonstrated with the Cicero and Trumbull Park Riots, white people would not tolerate this. With the scattered-site proposal dead in the water, city planners resorted to tightly packed, underdeveloped housing projects concentrated in Black areas of the city. While the city government had catered to white concerns about public housing, they openly disregarded Black ones. Chicago housing projects were placed in the heart of already established Black communities, demolishing what little Black homeownership and community had been allowed to exist in the city. Of the fifty-one housing projects approved or

²⁷ Ted Lacey, "Evict Mother, Nine Children," *Chicago Defender*, 16 December 1969, Page 8.

²⁸ Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, "IRS Support and Complaint Legislators."

²⁹ Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960*, 213, 223.

constructed between 1955-1966, forty-nine were in overwhelmingly Black areas of the city.³⁰ Together the Chicago Housing Administration, city council, mayors Kennelly and Daley, and the Illinois Commerce Commission colluded to keep Black spaces separate from white ones, weaponizing federal aid from the Urban Renewal Act and the construction of public housing to control where and how Black people could live.³¹ This intentional control of Black housing was officially recognized for the racist, segregationist practice it was 1972 with the *Hills v. Gautreaux* Supreme Court decision, but by then it was too late. The residential policies had finished their work.

By 1970, Chicago was one of the most segregated cities in the United States, and the most segregated it had ever been.³² This separation of space allowed white hegemony to loot the Black community, utilizing malicious means to economically exploit a community that had no way to escape. The intentional restriction of Black space ensured they would remain subjugated. By dominating housing, colonial institutions gained immense power over Black Chicagoans – power that would be maintained through any means necessary.

The Chicago Police Department: Enforcers of Spatial Barriers and Colonial Hegemony

Housing had allowed white, hegemonic forces in Chicago to craft an internal colony in the city, but they still needed to be able to control it. Without careful oversight, there was always a risk that Black Chicagoans would find a way out of the shackles that had been placed on them. The hegemonic order needed something that would defend the rigid barriers it had erected at all costs. It needed the police. Fundamentally, a police force exists to maintain order. They enforce boundaries and ensure that people remain where they are supposed to be. This role implies a sort of impartiality and fairness, but in practical terms it turns police into enforcers of hegemony. They enforce the status quo at all costs, reinforcing old confines and preventing spatial changes. In colonial environments, this turns police into an occupying force, one that ensures the colonized are aware of, and remain in, their subjugated position.

The overwhelming violence associated with this position cannot be overstated. In colonial environments, the “language of force” is the primary method of enforcing hegemony, no matter the human cost it brings with it.³³ Chicago was no different. The Chicago Police Department (CPD) specialized in the use of aggressive physical violence. Black Chicagoans lived in constant fear of police violence, afraid that any activity could be criminalized by a hostile, invasive force. Although Black spaces had been rendered separate from white ones, this separation was a one-way relationship. Black people may have been excluded from white space, but the overwhelmingly white police violated Black space at every opportunity. This can be seen clearly in police reaction to Black social unrest. In 1966, riots on the West Side broke out after

³⁰ Biles, “Race and Housing in Post WWII Chicago,” 36-37.

³¹ Biles, “Race and Housing in Post WWII Chicago,” 35.

³² Tyrone Forman and Maria Krysan, “Racial Segregation in Metropolitan Chicago Housing.” *Institute of Government and Public Affairs* 20, no. 3 (February 2008): 2.

³³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 42-43.

two white police officers tried to arrest a Black man at a liquor store. While he evaded capture, rumor spread that officers were trying to kill the man. This sparked outbreak of violence that lasted for three days. In retaliation for the unrest, officers from the CPD drove through Black neighborhoods like Humboldt Park and South Lawndale to shoot at homes long after the violence had ended.³⁴ Similar patterns followed any sort of disagreement between Black Chicagoans and oppressive public institutions. In 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. This sparked an outbreak of violence as many Black Chicagoans, overcome with grief and anger, began rioting and demonstrating throughout the West and South sides of the city.³⁵ The reaction to the King assassination threatened the carefully maintained and constructed separation of Black and white spaces the city had worked so long to create. Mayor Daley worked swiftly to end it. The National Guard was called in to assist the CPD, employing the use of armored combat vehicles and tear gas in an effort to regain control.³⁶ In addition to these traditional tactics of police brutality, Mayor Richard Daley authorized police to “shoot to kill” anyone participating in “looting or vandalism,” resulting in nine deaths at the hands of officers.³⁷

This same violence was not extended to militant demonstrations of white anger. In the Cicero and Trumbull Park riots police were remarkably restrained, handling violent mobs with care and often refusing to defend Black victims altogether. The discrepancy between police reaction to episodes of white and Black violence is telling, and important to recognize. While these examples of violence by police against the very people they were supposed to protect and serve are unnecessarily cruel, it is important to understand that police officers did not see it that way. The violent marauders who murdered and assaulted Black people were not exceptional in their department. They were doing their job as they understood it, and their job was “to keep Black people in their place by any means necessary.”³⁸

This discrepancy in systemic violence was not limited to times of civil unrest. A CPD team known as the Gang Intelligence Unit was supposedly created to combat gang activity, but instead used its far-reaching powers to racially profile and harass Black Chicagoans. While the GIU did succeed in stopping gang violence from the Blackstone P. Rangers, they did so at the cost of constant civil liberties violations, not only of gang members but of countless innocent

³⁴ Tera Agyepong, “In the Belly of the Beast: Black Policemen Combat Police Brutality in Chicago, 1968-1983,” *The Journal of African American History* 98, no. 2 (2013): 253-76.

³⁵ Donald Mosby, “Despite Guard, Cops, Federal Troops, More Looting Hits Ghetto” *Chicago Defender*, 8 April 1968, Page 1.

³⁶ Donald Janson, “More Soldiers Sent to Control Washington and Chicago Riots; 5,000 Troops Are Flown to Chicago for Riot Duty 5,000 U.S. Troops Sent as Chicago Riots Spread; Death Toll Is 9, and 300 Are Hurt A YOUTH CURFEW ORDERED BY DALEY 7,500 Guard Troops Help to Patrol the City ~800 Persons Seized.” *New York Times*, 7 April 1968, Page 1.

³⁷ Jeanne Theoharis, Komozi Woodard, Matthew Countryman, and Jon Rice. “The World of the Illinois Black Panthers,” *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South*, (New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 41-59.

³⁸ Tom Picou, “Cops Hope to Restore Faith in the Uniform,” *Chicago Defender*, 4 November 1968, Page 4.

people of color.³⁹ In late 1969, white police officers belonging to the GIU raided a youth group meeting at Olivet Presbyterian Church. Claiming that the church was harboring “vicious gangs,” the officers harassed the Black teenagers meeting inside, forcing them up against the walls and pointing shotguns at them. None of the teenagers were convicted of a crime.⁴⁰ This violation of Black space speaks to the colonial nature of the CPD and the GIU. Private spaces that existed for white people did not exist for Black people. Fundamental rights to assemble and practice religion were not afforded to them, either. Their own existence was strictly monitored and limited by the whims of an invasive, dehumanizing, and hostile police force.

Rank-and-file police officers committed similar acts of violence. One patrolman bothered Isaiah Pittman, a Black resident of Morgan Park, for starting his car early in winter. When Pittman returned to his running car in order to go to work, a police officer harassed and arrested him for no reason. Caught in the dispute was Pittman’s neighbor, Marion Rogers. She was arrested for “helping a criminal avoid arrest,” and her children were forced to accompany her to a holding cell. While Rogers and her children were on their way to the police station, one of the officers could not resist reminding her of her relationship with the police. “We pigs are wrong aren’t we?” he snarled, “You n*ggers are always right. But one thing you people might as well know: *we are going to win* [emphasis my own].”⁴¹ The ferocity and clarity of this rank-and-file officer speaks volumes. In Chicago, the police existed in complete opposition to Black residents. The openly hostile, adversarial exchanges between Black people and the police clearly illustrate the colonial relationship they shared. In colonized space, law enforcement does not exist to protect the oppressed. They exist to subjugate and control them. By criminalizing Black existence and controlling their limited space, the CPD enabled the continued economic exploitation and marginalization of Black Chicagoans.

Conclusion

During the Great Migration, Chicago’s urban cityscape was intentionally constructed in order to ensure the continued colonial exploitation of Black Chicagoans. Through control of Black spaces, hegemonic classes were able to advance their material interests at the expense of a colonized people, while simultaneously maintaining a rigid, race-based hierarchy. The weaponization of housing and police institutions to achieve this goal is clear. Housing restrictions forced Black Chicagoans into easily controllable ghettos, ghettos which were watched over by an armed, occupying force of police officers. These intentionally worsened material conditions made it easier for, and directly contributed to, the continued economic exploitation of Black people. The parallels with traditional overseas colonies are clear and undeniable, although a more thorough analysis of the social space within black Chicago must be

³⁹ Pierre Guilant, “Buckney May Face Lawsuit,” *Chicago Defender*, 5 July 1969, Page 1; Bonne Nesbit, “Charges GIU in ‘Torture,’” *Chicago Defender*, 21 November 1970, Page 1.

⁴⁰ John D. Vasilopoulos, “Presbyterians Blast GIU,” *Chicago Defender*, 31 December 1969, Page 3.

⁴¹ Ted Lacy, “Hit Cops on ‘Bum Raps’: Morgan Park 2 File Complaint,” *Chicago Defender*, 27 December 1969, Page 1.

conducted to fully understand how this colonial construction affected issues such as healthcare and food insecurity. Without this research, we are still able to utilize Henri Lefevre's work and the internal colonial model to understand the intentionality of how Chicago's urban space was crafted. This intentionality is essential to understanding the full weight of exploitation it brings, and any research on Chicago and its institutions must acknowledge it.

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