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THE UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF HISTORY
AND ITS RELATED FIELDS
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

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New York University
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Thank you,

The Editorial Board

Sara Puls, Editor-in-Chief
Rebecca Geraghty
Alissa Leio
Jennifer Lubelko
Deirdre Lyons
Christopher Morell
Dustin Robinson
Marie Stango

Faculty Advisor's Forward

I am extremely pleased to report that this year our venerable undergraduate journal celebrates its 50th anniversary. Much has changed at New York University since 1959, especially in our department. In those days we had twenty faculty members at the Washington Square College of Arts & Science and ten at our University College of Arts & Science on the 40-odd acre Heights campus in the Bronx. Just two years earlier the two departments were merged to form the All-University Department of History and placed under the Headship of Professor Bayrd Still. Though women students were admitted to the Heights campus for the first time that year we had only one female faculty member in the combined departments and she was at the Square. Some faculty taught at both campuses and rode the subway between them.

Things were quite formal, especially at the Square. Teachers came to class in suits or sports jackets and were addressed not as "professor" but "mister" or "miss." Students also tended to be formally attired in neckties or dresses. Blue jeans and T-shirts were not part of the unofficial dress code. NYU was still primarily a commuters' school and only a minority of undergraduates lived in dorms away from home or beyond the metropolitan core.

At the Square, the department was housed in East Building in a large cramped single room with abutting desks. Private offices and individual phone lines were not even the privilege of the department's Head. The library, with closed stacks, was next door in the overheated, poorly-ventilated and dimly-lit basement of Main Building (now Silver Center). There were comparatively few spaces on campus where students could study or socially mingle.

Classes tended to be large with little interaction between students and professor. The two 6-credit sequential, two-semester, required courses "Men and Ideas in Western Civilization" and "Development of the American People" were team-taught and met three times a week with an additional recitation. It was not unusual for students to have a five-day schedule with some courses meeting from eight to nine twenty in the evening. The Western Civ course was part of the so-called "core curriculum" which all students in Washington Square College as well as in the Schools of Commerce (now Stern) and Education (Steinhardt) had to complete for the baccalaureate degree. Typically, there were hundreds enrolled each semester in these mega courses. In addition, all international students at NYU had to take the American History survey.

Our academic year seemed long and a bit fractured. Classes began on September 25th and ended May 29th with a June 7th commencement on the sweeping Green in front of a huge Greek Revival domed library at the Heights campus. The Fall semester didn't end until mid-January and final exams were held after the Winter holidays.

Requirements for the History major in those days were rather simple and straightforward. At the Heights campus, all freshmen had to enroll in Western Civilization and majors were required to take an additional 18 credits of history. No seminars or workshops were available at either campus but seniors with at least a "B" average could obtain permission to take graduate-level courses which were offered only at the Square. Also, seniors with a 90 average in their major could take a 4-credit one-semester "Advanced Individual Study" course under a faculty member designated by the

department chair. An Honors program in history had just begun that year. A large number of majors were interested in pursuing a career in Law and were urged to register for a 6-credit "Constitutional and Legal History of England." As late as 1959, there was only one course in non-Western history, entitled "History of the Far East," and nothing on Africa. There were survey courses on Mexico and South America at the Square but unavailable that year.

History has been a popular major at NYU since the founding of the department at the Square in 1893 but it was not until May 1959 that undergraduates at the Heights campus organized themselves into an extracurricular club, The Huntington Hill Historical Society, and decided to publish their own journal, the *Historian*. With only a few budget-related interruptions it was published annually at the Heights until 1973 when a financial crisis within the city and the university forced the trustees to sell the campus to the municipality which transformed it into Bronx Community College a public institution. In this painful process many Heights faculty members lost their jobs or retired and some were invited to relocate to Washington Square, where the two departments were consolidated into a single facility at 19 University Place. Shortly thereafter the journal was revived. In ensuing years the department and its faculty grew in stature and diversity and the range of undergraduate courses was greatly extended.

On this the 50th anniversary of our journal I'd like to congratulate and thank the hundreds of New York University students who have faithfully served as its editors and contributors and the numerous alumni, deans and chairpersons who over the years have lent their support to this distinguished publication.

Richard W. Hull
Professor of History

Essay Introductions

Zoë Eckman gives an overview of how concepts of rape and sexual violence evolved throughout history, placing special emphasis on the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, and primarily within the traditions of France and England. Her work explores the concept of “rape” as it relates to the relationship between men and women in several contexts: religion, literature, law, and society.

In “Medieval Obstetrics, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Womb,” **Adam Blumenberg** discusses a medieval medical manuscript, Sloane MS 2463, in order to understand the role and function of midwives in medieval gynecology and how female-specific medical treatment was typically treated and viewed during the Middle Ages.

In “The Yalta Conference and the Origins of the Cold War,” **Matthew Bricker** explores whether an ill and dying President Franklin Roosevelt relinquished valuable concessions to Joseph Stalin, or if perhaps there is another explanation for the Cold War. Challenging the idea that Roosevelt’s actions led to a powerful Communist sphere of influence, he argues it was actually President Truman’s reinterpretation of Yalta which led to the closing of the Iron Curtain and the beginning of the Cold War.

The gods of Greek and Roman mythology provide some of the most beloved narratives of the ancient world. Fortunately for students of history, debates over actual figures provide equally compelling mythologies of their own, such is the case with Archimedes and his so-called burning mirrors. **Michael Catania** unpacks the facts of the weaponry used at the Battle of Syracuse in order to weed out the fictions. Relying on firsthand accounts, mathematical analyses, and the Discovery Channel, he elucidates the debate in question and does a thorough job of resolving it.

The *Kibra Negast*, which translates to “The Glory of Kings,” is an Ethiopian account of biblical events that does more than simply retell them for an Ethiopian audience. In his essay, **Josh Chung** discusses how this seven-hundred-year-old work refashioned Jewish and Christian religious beliefs and ideals to create a nationalist charter for Ethiopians. Through an investigation of the text’s contents, he demonstrates that the *Kibra Negast* facilitated the “Ethiopicization” of certain foreign attempts to reshape these foreign ideas as quintessentially Ethiopian and establish the Ethiopian civilization’s political and spiritual primacy in the minds of its readers.

Jonathan Conigliari examines the Almohad Movement in North Africa. His essay incorporates a historical trajectory of Maghrebian peoples and an interpretation of Ibn Tumart’s project in developing a distinct identity for them. The concept of community was thoroughly reorganized and developed by the Almohad movement, leaving the ultimate legacy of Ibn Tumart as a social leader, and not just a religious one.

In “The Intoxicating Joy of Speed,” **Thomas Dyne** takes a step back in time and relives the confusion surrounding the invention of the automobile and its introduction to an urban New York setting. He considers and offers explanations for the emotional responses, ideological changes, and new challenges presented by the transition from a natural, horse-driven means of transportation to a technological, automotive society.

Emily Harrold contrasts the antislavery movements of Great Britain and the United States in the nineteenth century. Concentrating on the shared humanitarian orientation of abolitionists in the two countries, she questions why the United States required an additional three decades and a bloody civil war to eradicate slavery. Juxtaposing the distinct domestic contexts in which the abolition movements operated, Emily reveals that British antislavery movement succeeded in enlisting parliamentary support. In contrast, the slaveholding community in the United States posed an impenetrable political bloc to the abolitionists, thereby generating a political impasse and propelling the country into civil war.

In the sixteenth century, missionaries from the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, introduced Catholicism to China. The Jesuits, in order to overcome cultural barriers, strove to find ways to relate the tenets of their faith to the underlying philosophical principles of Chinese society. In his essay, **Sam Kessler Gilbride** shows how the Jesuit missionaries and Confucian-influenced members of Chinese society embraced different facets of each other’s ways of life. Through an examination of the life and influence of Confucius, the work of the Society of Jesus founder Ignatius Loyola, and the legacy of influential missionary Matteo Ricci, he demonstrates that these historical moments were ones of cultural exchange rather than of Western imperialism or conquest.

In “The Kosher Meat Boycott of 1902: The Working-Class Mentality of Jewish Housewives in the Lower East Side,” **Julianna Monjeau** offers evidence that Jewish Women in the Lower-East Side of New York demonstrated a remarkable sense of labor and political consciousness. From here, she goes on to explain how this unique consciousness impacted the Kosher Meat Boycott of 1902, contributing to its development as a large-scale “strike.” As she convincingly argues, this was a strike which dealt with issues of social, spiritual, and working-class justice, in addition to economic concerns.

In examining America’s “War on Drugs,” **Pamela Schwartz** largely focuses on Ronald Reagan’s two-front war strategy: a “demand-side” front aimed at eradicating international drug suppliers, and a “supply-side” strategy, designed to abolish drug use from within the United States. According to Schwartz, the President was able to garner support for his domestic anti-drug campaign by tapping into the middle-class system of beliefs, or by “suburbanizing” the rhetoric on the “War on Drugs.” Ironically, however, Reagan’s emphasis on total abstinence and harsh penalties for abusers seems to have had unexpected effects: after being indoctrinated to “Just Say No” as kids—and to see drug users as morally corrupt—many of those suburbanites became alienated, sometimes even turning to recreational drug-use themselves.

The specter of Communism created a paradigm shift in the post World War II period, as the United States government sought to expose sympathizers, especially in the field of academia. Gabryel Smith explores the implications of Loyalty Oaths in the United States following World War II. In specific, he analyzes the relationship between the Oaths and the changing definition of loyalty in the postwar period.

Franco-American Folklore in Early Twentieth-Century New England
Ordinary Voices:
JACOB ALBERT

By the time that the Great Depression was in full swing, French-speaking people from southeastern Canada were wrapping up a chapter of immigration to the northern United States that had begun decades before the American Civil War. Mostly departing from Québec to settle in a Protestant New England, nearly one million Catholic French traded in their economic insecurities for a more realistic sort of the American Dream: a little prosperity atop cultural alienation, a foreign language, and the eternal reprimand of their shamed motherland. Ostracized or ignored on one end, poor or abandoned on other, working French immigrants endured in a middle space that was little seen or heard from without. Their biography was collected en masse and nonspecifically by French priests, businessmen, and their few literati—those with enough social capital to recognizable flash minority faces to an American crowd.¹

Thankfully, the U.S. government-funded Federal Writers' Project (FWP) of the late 1930s, through its ethnographic "American Memory" research campaign, was able to capture some of the early voices of the largely unheard working immigrant French, and to salvage some of the stories of a people collectively seeping into the folds of Americana. According to C. Stewart Doty, historian of the New England French, the FWP products "are probably the earliest first-person accounts we have of ordinary Franco-Americans."² What would come to be called Franco-American "folklore" narratives entered the world in an enlightening, uplifting way: the few stories of an "ordinary" people not all new, but entirely their own, squeezing into a history already vaguely drafted for them. The voices in these stories are conferred with the burdensome honor of speaking both for themselves and the near-million others previously known—simply and brusquely—as impoverished migrants.

This essay will attempt to show how the New England folklore transcripts relate in a particular way to our understanding of the immigrant French worker in that early twentieth-century context. "I am going to tell you as well as I can the story of the French Canadian textile worker," said an interviewed New Hampshire man, "...and it's the story of all the French Canadians who settled in New England mill towns."³ Like imagined here, FWP life histories, ethnographic legacies, have competing objectives to fulfill for the universal reader: to be at once explicitly singular and accommodatingly plural. One man's autobiography is first digested as his own, exclusively, unable to illuminate or be absorbed into the lives of "all the French Canadians"—women or men, adults or children. But in identifying a common people out of a single person as limited histories often do, the function of folklore is also plural. It appropriates private voices to stand in for a disparate public whole, face recorded history upright, and endow a people's history with the multi-dimensional scope of possibility. It is this—reconciling the personal with the common, the marginal with the central, the story with the fact—that is the necessary flight of the historian of French America, confronted with an evidentiary lack.

Here I will explore the nature of northern New England's Franco-American folklore and the formative conditions of its production in the FWP, all the while stepping back to watch its content interact with the general tale of French immigration. I will discuss how conversational intimacy and the peculiarity of individual, working-class minority experiences both embellish the history of the people for which they stand and partly resist that same history, complicating its claims, undermining its assumptions—subverting transparency in the name of inconsistency and dim emotion. I will attempt to show how the heroic role of the FWP and the imagined tribulations

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of French immigrants come to be, upon reflection, tempered by the ordinariness of folklore and the unflattering normality of its almost-fictions. I propose that this folklore attempts to bridge an historical gap and fill the space between French Canadian and Franco-American with something sustainable, edible, applicable, real. Folklore helps us to mark the transition from the foreign immigrant to the hyphenated, assimilated, and naturalized citizen. Franco-American worker identities here evolve out of common speech.

The Federal Writers' Project: A Context for History-Makers

The production of French folklore through the FWP is historically situated in the desolation of the Great Depression. In 1933, amidst pervasive unemployment and poverty, Franklin Roosevelt's Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) indicated through survey and research the particular lack of jobs available to "white-collar workers," namely artists, musicians, painters, writers.⁴ FERA's successor, the job-creating Works Progress Administration (WPA), consequently animated the FWP, one of four "Arts Projects" seeking to fill creative Americans' empty pockets, hoping to revive a national artistic culture that had gone the way of the 1929 stock market.⁵ Much to the credit of the relentlessly outspoken Writers' Union and Authors' League, roughly 6500 workers—mostly writers, although some not—were added to the federal government's payroll. Their mission: composing guidebooks outlining the history, culture, and geography particular to each American state and Washington, D.C. The project that grew into being called the "American Guide Series" eventually became a publishing success, lucrative in its completion, useful as a tourist resource or a coffee-table history book for locals. A successful and appealing form of labor, too, the FWP guide venture satisfied its employees as a sort of First Amendment rebirth, the scholastic phoenix of expressive freedom rising out of oppressive economic hardship. For creative Americans earlier deprived of a work outlet, compiling state research became a means of "making history" rather than "just the writing of it."⁶ A very tired and bruised worker agency waxed fruitful in artistic release, "helping to present the country with its first candid self-portrait."⁷

A groundbreaking, artistic reflection of this nature could not have been honestly produced, however, without the influence of a cyclical cramping natural to its political origins. Such a milestone collection of American snapshots, crafted out of Depression frugality's meager offerings, was in fact smudged in the era's political climate. Top-down governmental influence shaped the FWP where, from an administrative standpoint, gaining editorial authority over a state project often involved serious congressional lobbying. Resulting guidebooks thus at times deferred to their political stipulators and took shape "on the basis of political expediency rather than with the good of the program" at the fore.⁸ On the job floor, the FWP also failed to escape the conspiratorial pestering of American Republicans' "Red Scare" ideological objections to the New Deal, and was painstakingly criticized by public conservatives even despite employees' legal protection from dismissal on political grounds.⁹ The external pressures of authorized editing and conservative critique continuously attached themselves to the Depression's widespread malaise and contributed to the unsettling of the workday environment. Free expression in the American Guide Series, then, was more accurately never quite free of the specific historical limits of Depression-era economic and political contexts.

¹¹ Certain traditions of scholarship also imposed their own influential disciplinary boundaries on the FWP.

¹² Propelled in the directions of storytelling and history-preserving by American folklorist Benjamin Botkin, sociologist Morton Royce, and New England historian Frank Manuel, the FWP staff from 1938 onward more actively pursued its own research interests.

¹³ Especially in 1939, when the federal government delegated control of FWP assignments to the states individually, project administrators became more open to sympathizing with working groups' "local pride," and local stories grew into subtle resists to the initial federal plan.

¹⁴ Scholarly research became accessible to publication apart from the federal government's primary hope to stimulate GDP through a mass production of more accessible, simplified state manuals.

By 1938, writers of complementary academic disciplines had amassed enough stories and interviews, essays and expositions particular to American ethnic groups to begin something of an American "living lore."¹¹ What developed into a diverse and localized folklore movement eventually fostered the collection of ethnographies more culturally than politically bounded. This auxiliary art project attempted to milk the benefits of WPA job creation for all of their diverse worth, effectively uniting more local concerns for economic security with small-scale, particularized attempts at academic thoroughness and historical integrity. By way of a sort of self-reflective and conversational anthropology, the folklore project came to produce oral histories in the form of personal interviews divided by state and minority ethnicity.¹² Some interactions drew out casual storytelling while others were conducted in the vein of "social-ethnic studies," provoking local, working-class peoples to recall their minority communities' "acculturation"¹³ through the development of intra-state, inter-ethnic political and social relationships.¹⁴

Thousands of transcripts of federal employee conversations with 1938 and 1939 ethnic-minority Americans have since been amassed into a single collection—the bulk of which has not been given its full or deserved attention, left unpublished in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress.¹⁵ Largely considered a failure, most of its intended goals for publication unrealized, the folklore project collapsed under the weight of its own ambition; its research incomplete,¹⁶ what remains, however, amplifies well the voices and memories of some American minorities from the 1930s. The purpose of these folklores, "seek[ing] entry...to a wider world of literary and cultural reference," was effectively achieved, despite the project's premature collapse.¹⁷ Especially for groups like the early twentieth-century immigrant French whose movement and experiences are little known in detail, the value of scarce FWP-manufactured New England lore is naturally great. Modern historians of working French America, at least tempted to acknowledge this small variety of intimate oral sources, now have at their disposal the comparative, empirical tools to appraise the impersonally drafted pages of general history and tell us, in not so many words, that its flavor is just a bit off. *en petit peu.*

The Immigration Story and Immigration Stories

Seeing how specific French memories generated by the FWP weave in and out of a quasi-national immigration story helps to solidify folklore while bringing singular French experiences into relief. The same stories also do well, oppositely, to call into question understood strengths of that broader French immigration narrative. How were the immigrant French in America understood from without? And, how might they tell their own stories? Histories in comparison propel us, fruitfully, into a sort of fertilizing historical blend.

The first question is, and has always been: "Why did people leave Canada...?"¹⁸ An elderly New Hampshire man, Philippe Lemay, asked himself this in an interview transcribed by fellow Franco-American, Louis Paré. "Because they had to make sure of a living for their family...and because they greatly needed money."¹⁹ With the gradual failure of rural farm life in early nineteenth-century Québec, a crisis in wheat production in the 1830s, and the ensuing growth of indebted farmers unable to pay their lenders and support their families, the image of post-bellum industrial New England shined consistently brighter. "Land scarcity, depleted farms, and poverty" ultimately forced rural French Canadians to seek economic security elsewhere.²⁰ Part-time industrial work in Canada was common for gaining some additional income, but it was not always very lucrative or stable, especially in comparison to those jobs from the translated stories that made their way northward from beyond the American border. "The wages paid by textile mills was the attraction," Lemay said to Paré.²¹ The expansion of textile and lumber operations in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont and the eventual birth of a Montreal-Boston railroad all but beckoned weary French workers into emigration, out of the self-subsistent lifestyle to which farms had confined them.

But, Lemay added, "most of them hadn't come here to stay. What they wanted most was to go back to their Canadian farms with the money they earned.... At heart, Monsieur, they were

still farmers like their ancestors had been.²² For Lemay, America's appeal was not substantive, and American citizenship was often deemed something of an unnecessarily burdensome objective, an unrealistic expectation. The primary goals of French workers were to pay off outstanding Canadian debts and support their children by reviving farms that had fallen by the wayside. The decision to settle in New England or return to Canada wealthier thus determined the course of the immigration experience. And in spite of Lemay's remarks and the innumerable troubles of immigration, a great many established permanent residence. Between 1840 and 1900, over 570,000 French Canadians crossed the American border for good, with at least an additional 150,000 moving there before 1930.²³

For French Canadians generally, the notion of *mobility* has long been integral to their identity, seen in their constant movement as fur-trading, foresting frontiersmen in the early seventeenth century, before the demarcation of political borders on the North American continent.²⁴ According to some, French Canadian "people preserve[di] their identity through their very [domestic] instability."²⁵ An "enduring biosocial structure" in family, the disciplinary moral unification of the Catholic Church, and the persistence of a common French language served to "negate geography" as a common bond in favor of a greater emphasis upon "sharing common meanings and symbols" through prayer and speech.²⁶

In New England, they congregated most densely in mill towns like Manchester, New Hampshire, and Lewiston, Maine, where so-called *Little Canadas* had begun to form as early as the 1880s. Trailblazing immigrants acted out transitional networks to help newcomers phase into the minority identity that would permeate their social interactions and potentially color their experiences in the American workplace.²⁷ Mill foremen, property owners, and boardinghouse keepers were some of the few matured immigrants that eased the potential socioeconomic hardships of French jobseekers early on. Mari Tomasi, a Vermont FWP writer and eventual novelist, transcribed the story of one of these, a French "Boardinghouse Keeper," integral to the efficiency of young French communal networks. "I have had as many as eighteen boarding here," said Mrs. Lachance, the house keeper, as she was interviewed while preparing dinner for her residents.²⁸ She moved to clarify, however, and effectively downplay her perceivable valiance: "No, I have not always taken in boarders...I did not have to. [My deceased husband] made enough for us to get along well." Unlike what might appear at a glance to be a sort of compatriotic sympathy guiding citizens into helping others, certain cases like Lachance's were mostly contingent upon personal need. The superficially altruistic appearance of a matriarchal Lachance in the grand scheme of immigration perhaps transcends, or even obscures, her real intentions. Moreover, her work as a widow brings a woman's working-class French representation above the fold where it is usually either generalized or displaced, if not by the stories of higher-class French men, then by husband farmers or millworkers providing for their families. Concerning gender more pointedly, the manner in which Tomasi records Lachance's story is meaningfully unexceptional: a silent threat to the priest's hegemony over early French history-making and the male worker's claim to breadwinning. Tomasi casts the "Boardinghouse Keeper," the title character of her account, as simply and explicitly that: a genderless laborer. In this way, subtly complicating the body of the typical working French by assuming no sexed exclusion, naturally including the toils of Mrs. Lachance, Tomasi unveils a female dimension to "French immigrant worker" that perhaps went unconsidered before her time.

The structure and meaning-making functions of the French church in New England were also generally important for shaping immigrant communities and preserving a French identity abroad. The organizing capability of the church, parish, and later French schools pervaded most of the French reality, with rigid Catholic discipline and colloquial truisms alike regulating common behavior and speech in everyday life.²⁹ Rituals included in holidays like St-Jean-Baptiste Day, though sometimes conflicting with misunderstood traditions like the American Independence Day celebration, behaviorally renewed ethnic pride. "The population of the Little Canadas was inherently religious," says one historian.³⁰ The French-speaking pastors of what

were called the "national parishes"—numbering 100 in New England by 1900—effectively married Catholicism to a minority French culture, and gave French language itself the sacred title "guardian of the faith," the single speech of God in secular space.³¹ "A census is taken each year at all the parishes [in Manchester, New Hampshire]," said Lemay, "that tells us the number of Franco-Americans at any time."³² Priests, like clerics, governors, and fathers, saw assimilation into English as a simple threat to culture broadly, but also a specific threat to Catholicism itself, to the census count, and a force of disintegration to the French parish family.

Work, too, what the French immigration history presents as the most obvious motivation for movement, comes preserved as such out of folklore, often appearing as a disciplinary, interactive, life-forming endeavor. It was more than an addendum to a life lived in its acquired wealth, and may in fact have forced many French into reducing their lives to employment—saving themselves economically, but losing a heritage to a dominant American working culture. The workplace was animated by French adults and children alike who forsook education to help provide for their families and, ironically, often abandoned those same families in total to earn wages in their support. Mrs. Lachance's husband, for example, was one of thousands of Vermont stonecutters to succumb to the lung disease almost guaranteed by exposure to certain mechanical processes in the granite industry.³³ She said, "I was not happy having him in the sheds. It's bad, especially for a man with a family, and most of the French stonecutters around here have large families."³⁴ The paradox of perilous work and the hope for family security is astounding in retrospect, especially when certain workers like Lachance's husband were ostensibly prepared to accept daily threats to their well-being. It thus becomes that work's call for French emigration awakened emotions more complicated than a rich/poor or home/away binary could satisfy. And placing more than their heritage at risk, for Vermont stonecutters, the choice to work in an American industry was as equally aligned with the desire to live in financial security as it was with the unsettling resignation to inevitably take on an incurable illness, and face death.

The diverse workplace also often became a site of inter-ethnically motivated tension, most apparently between French- and Irish-Catholic New Englanders. The influx of French workers to New England mills stimulated an animosity easily lashed onto by peoples of different languages hunting after similar wages. Though perhaps less pervasive than a general New England apathy toward educating or medicating its French immigrants, active inter-ethnic violence both in and out of the mills modified French assimilation, and the French worker intimately confronted the divisive implications of his own minority language.³⁵ "Our troubles came mostly, not to say entirely, from Irish people," recalled Lemay. "They wanted us to speak English among ourselves when we only knew French and it made them mad when we didn't."³⁶ He remembers oppression. Importantly, though, he remembers it in English. His successful assimilation, as he recalls, has since ended the violence. "The day did come....We surely have found our place in the sun of American liberty...We have distinguished doctors, lawyers, educators, judges, artists, architects, bankers, and clergymen."³⁷

No doubt, conflict of various sorts shaped the journey from French Canadian to Franco-American, from mobile worker to naturalized U.S. citizen. For Lemay, too, the French working person has since become a typified American success: rising up and out of the mill, outside the walls of worker violence, transcending ethnic divide and poverty together. The resolution of inter-ethnic violence came not in a mutual desire for coexistence, but was a product of upward mobility and the departure from the hard labor arena, a symptom of becoming "distinguished" in the American sense. Strangely written as romance, the story of violence has also necessarily left behind the language and the cultural tensions of its original happening. Economic achievement, the initial emigrant's mover, has become the measure of success. To tell their story, the immigrant French-Canadian workers perhaps became those priests, businessmen, and literati who once took a peoples' whole storytelling upon themselves—but in doing so, they have also begun to lose their former identity. For better or for worse, the journey to peace seemingly incorporated cultural dissolution.

Naturally, this kind of perceivable Americanization generally consistent with U.S. immigration histories has drawn both political and moral responses from French Canada. Early on, Canadian nationals shamefully addressed their ex-compatriots with a sense of “national defeat,” a popular loss.³⁸ Canadian Catholic clergy united political with religious critique and made a morale effort to discredit those Catholics who left their Canadian parishes for America, away from the Canadian church’s dictates against “sloth, intemperance, and... luxury.”³⁹ Those French who more optimistically imagined emigration to be a test of moral fortitude were still forced to reckon tersely with the cultural confrontation into which their former working neighbors were jumping. The tensions that leaving Canada imposed upon French language, faith, and nation affirmed the distinct interweaving of these in early twentieth-century American French communities.

Discourse like this painted the reality of the Franco-American. Canadian dissenters to immigration placed the responsibility of French culture in the conscience of a veritable working-class mutiny. Even when immigrants were not confronted on account of Canadian national shame, or recalled by their families now at long distance, they encountered the piercing loneliness of not being confronted at all, rendered invisible by their former neighbors, left to tell their own different tales from disconnected Little Canadas. This new disintegrated community was also the site of a new challenge for the early New England Franco-American: to begin to reckon one compound, quasi-national ethnic identity with singular, disjointed, local contexts, apart from other Franco-Americans, among difference. At the turn of the century, French immigrants were thus charged with competing duties: to at once remain French and become American, to think French and speak English, to remember a heritage and assimilate; in sum, to adopt a new *Franco-American* identity. Becoming “Franco-American” was more (or less) than singly succeeding at a conservative program of cultural preservation. It rather was, and is, to inhabit the extraordinary space between conservation and change.

Franco-American Local

Mobile French Canada’s amalgamation in northern New England not only deserves but requires isolated historical attention on account of the divergent cultural and linguistic developments of its people. The collection of historical literature simply on the ostensible “heroes” of the French Canadians in America, the “elite who struggled to uphold...the integrity of the Catholic and French way of life,” bars the designation of *Franco-American* from their opposites—the villains: the apostates, the assimilators, and the geographically dispersed.⁴⁰ “Except for Québec,” remarks another historian, “the many communities that constitute French America careess no single political objective.”⁴¹ Disunity and political disorientation are sheer realities of the historical present, finding origin in a not so distant emigrant past. The persistent fear that multifarious working-class French localities will be overwritten, and that communities uniquely influential to New England at the turn of the twentieth century will have their histories arrested at that century-old point, has provoked, even now, suggestions for history-making:

...if local studies are not undertaken systematically and soon, it will be too late to recapture the richness of the ethnoculture, the complexity of the socio-economy and the variety of *mentalités* that characterized the French Canadian neighborhoods of New England.⁴²

To limit the memory of early Franco-Americans singularly to the so-called “heroic” elite “who fought for the integral or partial survivance” of their national language and ethnicity is shortsighted. Folklore narratives, in a fashion itself quite heroic, sought to remember the “variety” of toils of the working-class French: the majority of immigrants that may or may not have knowingly confronted threats to their language and identity, but necessarily worked through these threats, and molded their own dispersed identities toward undetermined cultural ends.

The diversity of the immigrant experience calls out for multiple diverse and local representations. Here is the value of the WPA, whose method “had an inchoate and often self-undermining structure that allowed for the expression of diverse and often competing or resistant local interests.”⁴³ FWP interviews were able to capture “ethnic and racial interrelationships which, until [WPA projects], had gone unnoticed.”⁴⁴ Ignoring these available sources and the personalized information they offer is tantamount to rejecting crucial historical moments, and to replacing the many turns in Franco-American “ethnicultural” development with generalizable myth.⁴⁵ FWP folklores have become valuable for us now not only in their variety, but in their novelty. In tangents like fiction, through individualized emotion and less-than-assimilated speech, they are able to depart newly from the same history that, as we see in the accounts above, they also confirm or complicate.

But if New England FWP interviews are to be considered on the large scale for their individualized merit, apart from affirming the history already available to us, what variables must we account for? What lack must we acknowledge, or what embellishments must we evaluate? Firstly, the information acquired through the form of interview, the “oral history,” must be confronted on account of its nature, its production, and its producer. Secondly, its content must be squared, as done above, with that of the general historical sense acquired from the period, area, and people it covers—the Franco-Americans—not so much to qualify, but rather to compare. Thirdly, now, we must evaluate its achievements as a plain and lonely collection of memories, as works of history in themselves. The remnants of a tattered lost past are our invaluable connections to this people’s ancestry, the make-up of their cultural present, and the fragile pieces of the structure of their Franco-American identity.

Oral history, the folklore of the FWP, is a composite form of study. It is a product of questions and answers, a dialogue that is framed by both interrogator and interviewee. In this respect, it is an “intrusive” method of collecting information, a potential invasion of privacy.⁴⁶ Still, it is “co-authored.”⁴⁷ The story that might seem supplementary to the interviewer’s cause is, regardless of her intention, the true oral product. Oral history is also “indsight.”⁴⁸ It is memory, always confronted by the gap in time that mirrors the space between romance and realism. Its form connects “two levels of meaning,” the more obvious one being the speech itself, the more intuitive being the cultural or historical narrative into which it is placed.⁴⁹ Oral history helps locate where culture is situated in the individual, and where the individual asserts herself into a cultural fabric.⁵⁰ It is the product of personal historical development: an adult looking inward down the blurred trail of her growth, and the location of history in a certain interrogated moment.

New England FWPers helped to reframe oral history by their individual means to documentation during the Depression. Many of the project employees in rural northern New England had never worked in history before, “not...as writers, certainly not as professional folklorists or ethnographers.”⁵¹ Methods of information collection thus “varied wildly” with the variety of writers.⁵² With money on the line, their work was less characterized by a mastery of the ideal “specialized [research] techniques” proposed by scholars above than by the enthusiasm to create manuscripts juicy enough for publication.⁵³ At the end of the Maine collection of manuscripts, for example, a barely legible editorial note speaks to the internal motivations guiding the project:

There should be enough material for a New England book if it is necessary to have one at this time...a lot of it is better than many of the [pieces] used in [other folklore compilations]... Broken up with illustrations or page decorations, the volume would probably be well received by critics and the public (we hope).
P.S. I say, keep the sentimental stuff in—if it is good—the public wants it.⁵⁴

It would be easy to cite this message in an argument against the integrity of the folklore project, its primary concern appearing to sit with publication, presentation, and quantity over well-written,

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thought-provoking stuff. The note's more subtle significance, however, comes briefly in the end. The postscript speaks louder than the message's optimism for a regional compilation. In an afterthought, on the fringe of the message, the editor or commentator visibly concerned with the logistics of publication speaks not only to form ("enough material," "page decorations," etc.) but to *content*. "Keep the sentimental stuff in." Pursue memories that have flavor, emotion, passion. Retain history's intimacy, because dry facts and timelines are available elsewhere. Do all of these things because "the public wants it," not because the public will buy it. The public's desire to read folklore that implicates their ordinary lifestyles relates perhaps to a silent and simmering public hope for representation, to a desire to read what is not simply a characterless history of themselves.

As the ordinary Franco-American voices captured by the FWP are probably the earliest on record, it is tempting to squeeze them into the ever-widening historical cavity worn by lost memories and pretend that they fit—where, as above, they partially do. But an undersized selection of voices in their storytelling does not, and cannot, account for what would be a cacophonous whole of history now missing. Folklore is necessarily local. Its pull originates in anthropological intimacy; the value of story, in its being offered to the interviewer. As the FWP realized, the telling of such tales needed mere provocation. Ironically, too, the harvesting of these tales was provoked in its own, more carnal fashion: survival through Depression inadequacy. The worth of personal endurance by interviewing, writing, and compiling through economic strain thus compares in a strange, almost commensurate way with the persistent prayer of a local immigrant people to be understood by their detractors in a distinct form historical preservation.

Harvest Reaped

De facto FWP historian Robert Grady, a laid-off factory worker and "aspiring writer," transcribed interviews with eastern-Maine Franco-Americans "among whom he, an Irish Catholic, had grown up."⁵⁵ His works can be read alongside those of Mari Tomasi and Louis Paré as intimate, individualized representations of French America. Grady's personal history also adds a distinct flavor to his historical approach: his employment story is as typical as his perspective is unique. An inimical racial divide, for example, seemingly integral to popular French history in Grady's region, is not apparent in the interactions he transcribes with his neighbors, allowing him to undercut the fruits of ethnic violence's better known tales. In certain other of his interviews with Maine Penobscot Native American locals, Grady also personally resisted "exoticizing" his subjects, acknowledging in them, as with the French, a subtle "[objection] to being considered as a 'race apart'."⁵⁶ To read Grady's work is thus to begin in a conversational space that does not embellish the stereotypes casually assumed or extracted from a superficial glance at the historical movement of French Canadians. His stories are mediated sweetly by the hand of the writing worker, less so by a filter of predetermined, assimilative immigration myth.

An interview he conducts with Mike Pelkey (the anglicized version of *Magloire Pelleter*), whose father ventured to Maine in 1865, amounts to over forty pages of personal anecdotes on the daily toils of a woodsman: floating logs downriver, milling lumber. Pelkey situates his stories in the towns of Bangor and Old Town, whose mills were at once connected by the flow of the Penobscot river and Pellerier family lore. At face value, his accounts are reaffirmations of a working-class narrative that cannot at all separate the work day from one's personal development. They aptly characterize the popular reasoning behind Franco-American southward migration. But Pelkey's flair for storytelling and Grady's transcriptions in other ways soar beyond mere depiction of class. One description of seasonal workers, for example, brings out qualities otherwise missing in the tale of male immigrants from the late nineteenth century.

The way those fellows did was to buy a lot of provisions to last them through the winter. If they didn't want to go to the woods, they could sit back and smoke their pipes with the chance they could pick up a few odd jobs here and there until

the mills opened in the spring. They would be broke when the winter was over, but they wouldn't owe anything—at least not very much—and they knew a job was in the offing.⁵⁷

Working men here were not ambitious. They had no families to support. They were lost to the awful prospect of logging in the harsh winter. Personal comfort without debt was their settlement. Clearly, then, the common immigration narrative carved out of the pursuit of wealth does not alone stand for them. They are neither cultural heroes nor assimilated villains. And where is the holy mother Church here—that indispensable guide of the Franco-American community against sloth? She does not interfere much in these old memories. Only twice later does Pelkey mention being a Catholic, too old to have attended the new convent school, and just recently in his adulthood becoming a local congregant.

Because of the rarity of its type, Pelky's own FWP interview is tempting to romanticize. The grand tale of French immigration to the U.S. laid out above is unimaginably sad, or courageous, or humbling, and the personal accounts we have from its period might also be assumed so. What the above shows, though, quite ordinarily, yet also quite revolutionarily, is clear: plain storytellers and their plain stories, neither singly confirming nor subverting the history into which they fit. Pelky helps Franco-Americans speak for themselves, normally. He refuses, along with his transcriber, to "miss the irreducible nature" of his story, "what has been made...out on the borderlands," not in the typical French church or mill, and certainly not in the writer's office—at least, not only there.⁵⁸ This is the beginning of Franco-Americans.

Little tales with touches of invention flood the latter half of Pelky's conversation. "Now you can believe [these] or not, just as you please," he says before telling the story of a trapper and his cat with the wooden leg, or the one about the pig in northern Maine's Aroostook County who lived through the winter in a giant pumpkin where she feasted and laid a litter of twelve.⁵⁹ These oral recollections supplement the tale of a newly immigrated community with the intimacy it lacks. The "homemade sled," the perils of the icy, un-planked sidewalks that kept people to the double-planked walks of Main Street in a winter mess, and the "free-for-all-fights going on on Water Street" between fellow woodsmen: here is an ordinary voice, shivering in the cold, speaking for itself.⁶⁰

Another of Grady's interviews is transcribed as it is heard, in a broken-English dialect heavily spoken with French intonations—the site of assimilation's transition from Canadian French to American English (*franglais*, for many). Alphonse Martin, a French-Canadian woodsman born in 1901, tells how he "work on de boom [log-floating site] mebbe tree or five summer."⁶¹ Other than giving a brief explanation of his job, Alphonse fills his interview with the jovial sarcasm that alleviated the physical pains of the work week.

Dere was a fellow dere dat didn't have much hair on his head, an' one night when we was play poker, some one say, "Onzime, de barba'n shave you pretty close in de wrong place, ain't it?" Onzime, he say, "My frien'; did you know dat was a sign of intelligence?" If dat's de case," de fellow say, "dey ought to put you on de supreme court."⁶²

In Martin's mind, Franco-American workers gambled. Not only did they enjoy leisure time, but they filled it with sin. Martin remembers well this story, even showing a sort of popularized political talk that existed among some of the uneducated workers. Here not only do we find a friendly humor, but it comes to the English-speaking reader in a speech altogether unfamiliar. The value that this piece could have given to a regional FWP book is thus greater and simpler than that of research. Not only might its paraphrasing obscure the comedic value of its story, but its translation would eliminate the plainly real form of a language that is by most technical or standard measures very much unreal.

The one historian who makes use of some of the FWP folklore narratives, C. Stewart Dory, labels the content of this particular interview “patronizing” and “condescending,” as if its rendering as heard in broken English had done some injustice to the speaker.⁶³ This is his anecdote in his book only after translating it into “standard English.”⁶⁴ This is his prerogative. His translation is more readable to the native English speaker, no doubt. Critically speaking, though, the translation—reinterpretation, reframing, reclamation—has unfortunately helped to disappear that which it was trying so desperately to save. The recording of speech in a single historical moment was cast off as *condescending*, a sort of talking-down to working-class, immigrant historical subjects. To Franco-Americans who have not yet assimilated, though, whose words take on a character more purely French than English, but neither entirely, where might their voices be situated in the historical record? Somewhere in a footnote? Behind an asterisk? Dory’s self-consciousness is arguably the more patronizing aspect of his intended reproduction. His movement mirrors both the depth of the troubles and the height of the glories of the FWP as a tool for historical preservation. Despite all of this, it must be sustained that FWP workers admirably endowed local interviewees with a sort of creative potential, allowing them the opportunity to tell their own stories, however silly or bland, fact or fiction, standard or unrecognizably obscure.

An End and a Beginning

These folklores, these local histories, are not what most readers want them to be. Charged with carrying the burden of a people, time, and geography, Franco-American memories break down and fall short. Their speakers are either turned by the reader’s imagination into caricatures of their general history or published in the festooning margins of popular historical narrative. Produced in an era of economic insecurity with an intended publishable goal, FWP folklores naturally favored publicity, readability, and completeness. They were deemed valid insofar as they attached themselves to a broader linguistic or historical validity. Perhaps this was their ultimate failure: not suiting publication; not becoming saturated enough with “sentimental stuff”; not always attesting to the supposed drama of a century’s long immigration and its implications for family, nation, and culture; separating from and tempering rather than embellishing the common tale. In this same fashion, though, the FWP was a grand achievement. After all, the excitement and strength that it afforded ordinary storytellers are not merely once-in-a-lifetime treats. They are, in fact, eternal. Stories carry on in text. Though most of the French-Canadian immigrants of the early twentieth century remain lost to history, a few of their neighbors, their wives, and their children have remembered them fondly, choosing to throw them into a conversation, onto paper, and into the future.

We must resign ourselves to the notion that these memories—perhaps forced, perhaps offered—are all we have of an otherwise blurted people in a vague historical moment, its legacy preserved in the great-grandchildren of its deceased mobile million. The temptation either to preside over their stories in all the particularities of a popular history, or oppositely to make their commonalities stand for the French whole, is large. The importance of their story, however, is perhaps surpassed by the manner of its telling, the means of its transmission, and the light it allows to shine from below. FWP folklore stories are fragile memories produced in a fractured context. Depression ambition fostered writer creativity, and desperate interviewers provoked storytellers. Minority stories are at once overwhelmingly ordinary and historically exceptional. Thankfully now, though, a Franco-American present is better able to ponder its past on paper, to consider more accurately what it potentially was. From here, a diverse American French people has the precedent to keep its diverse pasts in mind while courageously voicing its own new tales.

It is my understanding that the purpose of constructing a general historical narrative of French-Canadian immigration in the twentieth century has been to preserve our knowledge of one period in the history of the world, and to trace a certain people’s progression into the present. The true function of the French immigrant narrative and its effect, though, perhaps contradictorily, has

been to impose a common framework on a multiplicity of French working people in now disparate locales. The ultimate success of the folklore project has been the undercutting of this framework, the refusal to confirm generality without complicating it. The Franco-Americans, as audible in their own (mostly) English voices now, did not develop in this framework teleologically, or consistently in retrospection, aspiring to a secure, identifiable French identity akin to that of their ancestors. Rather, through the poverty that drove them from their homes, and through the work that sustained them in America, their concerns were less with those of an encompassing legend than with the culture, language, and faith of fused French individuals in the workday. As their stories show, the Franco-Americans of New England can only be fully understood by what they tell us individually, plainly, beautifully—in their jokes and their deaths, on the broken sidewalks, through the smoke and the cold.

Notes

¹ C. Stewart Dory, *The First Franco-Americans: New England Life Histories for the Federal Writers’ Project, 1938-1939*, (Orono, Maine: UMO Press, 1985), 1.

²Ibid., 3.

³ Louis Paré, “French Canadian Textile Worker,” *American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers’ Project, 1936-1940*, 1.

⁴ Monty Noam Penkower, *The Federal Writers’ Project: A Study in Government Patronage of the Arts*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 9.

⁵ Ray Allen Billington, “Government and the Arts: The W.P.A. Experience,” *American Quarterly* Vol. 13, No. 4 (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, Winter, 1961), 468.

⁶ Penkower, 22.

⁷ Penkower, 22.

⁸ Billington, 474.

⁹ Billington, 475 and 478; Jerre Mangione, *The Dream and the Deal: The Federal Writers Project 1935-1943*, (Boston: Little and Brown, 1972), 289.

¹⁰ Penkower, 136, 39.

¹¹ Penkower, 148; Doty, 3.

¹² Doty, 3.

¹³ Ibid., 379.

¹⁴ Penkower, 151.

¹⁵ William T. Couch’s *These Are Our Lives*, Ann Banks’ *First Person America*, and other published works from Botkin or from historians Studs Terkel and Bernice Harris are some of the few minor successes that have put the content of FWP minority oral histories on the map, and their certain form of history-making visible use. Perhaps more influential than these was the contribution of WPA slave narratives and African-American oral histories to the emerging field of “black studies” in the early 1940s (See Penkower, 140-147).

¹⁶ Siobhan Senier, “Employing the Local: A Penobscot Modern in the Federal Writers’ Project” *New England Quarterly* Vol. 75, No. 3 (The New England Quarterly, Inc., September 2002), 360.

¹⁷ Carolyn Kay Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman: A Story of Two Lives*, (Rutgers University P, 1986), 144.

¹⁸ Paré, 2.

¹⁹ Ibid., 2.

²⁰ Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community*, (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982), 16; Yves Roby, *The Franco-Americans of New England: Dreams and Realities*, (Sillery: Septentrion, 2004), 7-8.

²¹ Paré, 2.

²² Ibid., 2, 14.

²³ Roby, 74; Dean R. Louder and Eric Waddell, *French America: Mobility, Identity, and Minority Experience Across the Continent*, (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1993), 5.

²⁴ Louder, xi.

²⁵ Christian Morissonneau, "The 'Ungovernable' People: French-Canadian Mobility and Identity," in *French America: Mobility, Identity, and Minority Experience Across the Continent*, eds. Dean R. Louder and Eric Waddell, (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1993), 28.

²⁶ Ibid., 28.

²⁷ Frances H. Early, "The Rise and Fall of Felix Albert: Some Reflections of the Aspirations of Habitant Immigrants to Lowell, Massachusetts in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *The Quebec and Acadian Diaspora in North America*, eds. Raymond Breton and Pierre Savard, (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1982), 29.

²⁸ Mari Tomasi, "Boarding House Keeper," *American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940*, 1. (It should be noted that the internet transcription of this folklore narrative uses the name "Lachance," while another of Tomasi's stories, an interview with someone else, "Alcide Savoie," appears to take place at the same house, and refers to a "Mrs. LaCrosse." Her real name is not clear, but I use it as it is used in the cited story.)

²⁹ Roby, 75.

³⁰ Ibid., 81.

³¹ Ibid., 82, 99.

³² Parté, 9.

³³ Dory, 105.

³⁴ Tomasi, 2.

³⁵ Robert F. Hartney, "Franco-Americans and Ethnic Studies: Notes on a Mill Town," in *The Quebec and Acadian Diaspora in North America*, eds. Raymond Breton and Pierre Savard (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1982), 84.

³⁶ Parté, 32.

³⁷ Ibid., 40.

³⁸ Pierre Arcil, "The Franco-Americans of New England," in *French America: Mobility, Identity, and Minority Experience Across the Continent*, eds. Dean R. Louder and Eric Waddell (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1993), 42.

³⁹ Roby, 40.

⁴⁰ Roby, 4.

⁴¹ Eric Waddell and Dean Louder, "The Search for Home in America: An Afterword," in *French America: Mobility, Identity, and Minority Experience Across the Continent*, eds. Dean R. Louder and Eric Waddell, (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1993), 351.

⁴² Hartney, 86.

⁴³ Senier, 355-6.

⁴⁴ Petkover, 153.

⁴⁵ Hartney, 86.

⁴⁶ Hareven, 371.

⁴⁷ Senier, 374.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 371.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 381.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 382.

⁵¹ Senier, 381.

⁵² Ibid., 374-5.

⁵³ Pankover, 152.

⁵⁴ "Note," *American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940*. [emphasis mine]

⁵⁵ Senier, 360.

⁵⁶ Senier, 361.

⁵⁷ Robert Grady, "Mike Pelletier," *American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940*, 3.

⁵⁸ Steedman, 144.

⁵⁹ Grady, 29.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 6.

⁶¹ Dory, p. 88; Robert Grady, "The Life of Alphonse Martin," *American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940*, 1.

⁶² Grady, "The Life of Alphonse Martin," 3.

⁶³ Dory, 6.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 6.

Medieval Obstetrics, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Womb

ADAM BLUMENBERG

The medieval conception of anatomy was founded in a highly logical and systematic structure. Ignoring the facticity of the humoral medicine's predicates, the process by which conclusions were drawn from observed particulars and "known" universals was sound.¹ That is to say regardless of whether the precepts of humoral theory were themselves correct, the diagnoses and treatments actually performed by medical practitioners conformed to a strict syllogistic system.² Humoral theory was established by Greek physicians such as Diocorides, Hippocrates and Galen.³ This body of knowledge was preserved and transmitted to medieval Europe via Muslim Spain and the Middle East. While the Greek masters delineated the foundational elements of humoral anatomy, it was further developed and complicated by Arabic physicians such as Avicenna and Rhazes.⁴ By the time the medical corpus reached England, it had accumulated a millennium of redaction and complexity.

The practice of gynecology⁵ was a unique branch of medicine, which drew stark boundaries based on the gender of both practitioner and patient. Midwives were responsible for the treatment of feminine maladies and the care of expectant mothers. Although the basis for such medicine was founded on humoral theory, it was considered unnecessary and inefficient to train midwives in theoretical medicine. Therefore the greater body of medicine was often abbreviated and compartmentalized into specialized compendia for midwives.

Although several medieval physicians wrote dissertations on gynecology, such documents were intended to further the general knowledge of the subject. Therefore texts on the matter were generally crafted so as to impart only practical knowledge to the reader. The manuscript Sloane MS 2463 is one such text. The text was written in the early fifteenth century for the purpose of teaching midwives how to identify and remedy various gynaecological diseases. The book consolidates and combines a great deal of medical knowledge and presents it in a manner that makes theoretical understanding unnecessary. Rather than explaining the mechanism of treatment or cause of disorder, the prescription is simply asserted. In this fashion the text is intended to provide simple and immediate reference to questions of a patient's health.

While the humoral qualities of a remedy are occasionally presented, they are in passing and not intended to provide a theoretical structure for analysis of disease. Instead of detailing medical theory, which would hypothetically give the reader the ability to construct novel treatment, the tried and true methods are simply listed. While such discourse is overly-simplistic for a fully trained doctor, the allusions to known medical authorities such as Rhazes and Avicenna implies the reader was expected to have at least a partial knowledge of the medical canon. What makes this medical handbook unique however, is its stated intent to exclude men from obstetrics and gynecology.

The anticipated reader of the manual is a female midwife or obstetrician. The author takes a strong stance on the idea that patients with female-specific health issues must be cared for by women. This is rationalized by the allegation that men would misconstrue a woman's maladies as shameful or as the result of sin. Therefore, for decent healthcare to be available, the practitioner must be free of undue moral prejudice against the patient. This is strongly reflected in the opening lines of the text which state:

Because there are many women who have numerous and diverse illnesses - some of them almost fatal - and because they are also ashamed to reveal and tell their distress to any man, I therefore shall write somewhat to cure their illnesses... And although women have various maladies and more terrible sicknesses than any man knows, as I said, they are ashamed for fear of reproof in times to come and of exposure by discourteous men who love women only for physical pleasure and for evil gratification. And if women are sick, such men despise them and fail to realize how much sickness women have.... And so, to assist women, I intend to write of how to help their secret maladies so that one woman may aid another in her illness and not divulge her secrets to such discourteous men.⁷

The introduction presupposes the fact that a male physician would be more harmful to a female patient than a female practitioner. This is because men are allegedly more likely to sexualize a female patient or to conclude that a woman bears moral fault for her sickness. Therefore, the author sees the female practitioner as less influenced by such presumed bias and more likely to give effective care to sick women. Such an attitude appears to be the main reason why the author advocates gynecology should be a field operated by women.

This line of reasoning elucidates many qualities about the MS 2463. Women in the fifteenth century rarely received a liberal education. It is unlikely that even an expert and knowledgeable midwife would read and understand Latin. Therefore it is not surprising that the handbook is written in Middle English, the vernacular, which suggests that medieval midwives would have had minimal access to more advanced medical texts existing only in Latin, Arabic or Greek. This corroborates the notion that sophisticated theoretical expertise was not expected from a gynecologist due the subordination of obstetrics to medicine. As a result, there is a paucity of allusions to medical theory in the gynecological handbook.

What is somewhat unexpected however is that the text reveals certain indications of the wealth and class of the obstetricians using it. That is to say the manuscript is a particularly luxurious document; it contains pictures, is written on vellum, is decorated with many expensive dyes and small portions are even illuminated with gold.⁸ Furthermore, some ingredients for a certain medication are pomegranates, plantains and white sugar.⁹ These goods were imported from the East and were extremely expensive and rare. Consequently a midwife utilizing this cure would have to be employed by a very wealthy client.¹⁰ However medications this expansive in the handbook are rare. Most prescriptions call for simple herbs and commonly available items such as parsley, fennel, celery, linseed, juice of snails, and marshmallow.¹¹

Since the actual text of the handbook includes both expensive remedies and cheaper alternatives, it is a very robust guide to health. That is to say it is meant to be read by midwives serving both rich and poor. Since Sloane MS 2463 itself is an elaborately decorated tome, but also intended as a resource for those of more modest means, it was likely used both as a reader and as an exemplar. Cheaper copies could be made on parchment with few colors so as to help educate those that could not afford access to the original. There is evidence that this occurred. For example, some extant manuscripts written on parchment with minimal decorations contain similar or identical passages to Sloane 2463. Examples include Sloane 249 and MS 129a.i.5 at the Royal College of Surgeons and BL Royal 18.¹² All three of these documents contain largely the same text. Since they postdate Sloane 2463, either all of these documents were copied from an earlier non-extant source, or more likely Sloane 2463 served as their exemplar.

Since many inexpensive copies of the manuscript were produced, it seems likely that it was intended to allow relatively easy access to useful knowledge, which is especially seen in the fact that the book consolidates theory into a reader's digest thereby

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substitute for the entire medical canon. For example, the general format of the gynecological handbook is chapters devoted to specific illnesses. The chapters are arranged by particular family of sickness, i.e., disorders of the uterus, disorders of birth, etc.¹³ Each section describes symptoms which are used in order to diagnose a particular illness. Following this is a cure for the disease, usually a medicinal concoction or light surgery. Although each of these diseases and cures has a hypothetical rationale under humoral theory, they are explained descriptively and not causally. Rather than explicating the agent of the disease, the author addresses only the practical issue of how to recognize it. The author performs the intellectual work of deducing a cure for a particular disease. In this fashion a great deal of material is condensed into a highly utilitarian format.

Breaking down the chapters by disease allows the handbook to be consulted for rapid reference. This is important because the document incorporates a great deal of past medical literature, most of which would have been inaccessible. Portions of the manuscript paraprase treatises of such canonical writers as Trotula, Soranus, Hippocrates, Rhazes and Avicenna.¹⁴ The ideas of these authors are synthesized into a practical, easy to follow guide. Such a digest is a palatable summary of these writers' most important points. Thus the question of whether the handbook guides a gynecologist to heal her patient effectively is more important than whether she understands why what she is doing works.

As a result the manual rarely describes the underlying operation of diseases or cures. For example if the text is discussing a disease of excessive yellow bile, it will describe methods of diagnosing the disease and prescribe certain herbs which supposedly counteract the production of yellow bile. However the entire concept of yellow bile is omitted from the discussion. Instead of explaining the logic of diagnosis and treatment, the reader is instructed on identification of malady and regurgitation of cure.

There is a notable exception to this generalization however. When describing hemorrhagic disorders such as excessive or endless menstruation, both cause and cure for the problem is explained in humoral terms:

Excessive discharge of blood at the vagina comes in many ways: through the great amount of blood that is in the woman; or through the fierceness of the blood that through its strength destroys veins; [or a list of other perturbations in the blood]. . . .
Cure: And if there is a great quantity of blood, *dehydrate her with food and drink that produce only a little blood*, such as fruit and herbs, and have her bleed at the vein of her arm and be cupped under her nipples and about the kidneys and loins, and scarified on her legs to *draw the blood away from the uterus*.¹⁵

This clause explicates the causality of both disease and cure. Disease is caused by an overabundance of blood in the uterus. As a result the blood damages its container and forces its way out of the body via the vagina. There are two treatments to treat this problem at its source. The first is to reduce the total amount of blood in the body by reducing the intake of blood-producing foods. The second is to draw blood away from the uterus by allowing it to escape from a distant body part. Explaining this humoral concept while excluding rationalization for other treatments demonstrates the importance of blood letting to medicine. Even if a medical practitioner does not understand the function of any other cure, she must comprehend the theory behind redistributing blood.

While the author of the gynecological handbook is very knowledgeable of medicine, there is still an expectation of a certain level of learning on the part of the reader. This is shown not only in the explanation of phlebotomy,¹⁶ but also in occasional allusions to important medical authorities. The text gives several examples of medications prescribed by the esteemed canonical physicians Avicenna and Rhazes,¹⁷ implying that readers would be familiar with these names. Regardless of whether the

midwives had actually read the treatises of Rhazes or Avicenna, they would have recognized the doctors' importance. It follows that to be a midwife, one must possess at least a rudimentary education in the greater field of medicine.

Yet perhaps even more important than technical knowledge is a set of ethics. The introduction to the book affirms a strong stance that in gynecology a woman makes for a more impartial healer. Although this position is asserted immediately and as a justification for the rest of the book, the text is infused with moral advice. The plainest examples are in discussions of potentially immoral treatments. For example, a common instance of ethical discussion is the matter of abortion. Is Hippocrates himself wrote "I will not give an abortifacient."¹⁸ Nonetheless the issue has been historically controversial. Some physicians agree with Hippocrates and denounce medically induced abortions, while others appreciate that circumstances may necessitate the procedure. The handbook tells that there are times when an abortion is not only acceptable but even required. It encourages that, "when the woman is feeble and the child cannot come out, then it is better that the child be killed than the mother of the child *also die*."¹⁹ This demonstrates a weighing of morality. That is to say although the passage is reluctant to entirely condone abortion, it admits that it is better to lose one life than two. As a result the text itself assumes an ethically judicial role; the handbook concludes that abortion is morally sound when the alternative is death of both mother and child.

Another assertion of morality revolves around a certain uterine condition which is best cured by sexual intercourse with a man. Yet the implications of this in a Christian society are stark. An unmarried woman such as a nun or a widow must choose between her physical and spiritual well-being. If she has sex with a man she is committing adultery and sinning against God. Yet if she does not, she jeopardizes her health. Advice on such a treatment is ultimately to be decided by the individual midwife according to her discretion. Nevertheless the handbook takes a hard line: "it is better for a man or woman to have the greatest physical illness while they live than to be healed through a deed of lechery or any other deed against God's commands."²⁰ Here the superlative state of bodily harm is preferable to sin. Thus the entire practice of medicine is subordinate to spirituality.

This notion is further illustrated in a section of the text that describes treatments for the prevention of sex. Even though no physical disorder is described as requiring sexual abstinence, several medications "ad restringendum coytum" are listed.²¹ For example, one medicine "makes an erection impossible for seven days," while another "quiets lasciviousness and the desire for intercourse," as a third "extinguishes heat, erection, and lust."²² Yet there is no indication of why such a result would be desired; the medications are made available with no explanation of medical necessity. Clearly there is a demand for such drugs, as their formulation would not otherwise be recorded. However it is difficult to surmise exactly what occasions would call for medical repression of sexuality. It is conceivable that these preparations were asked for by clerics, pious laymen or possibly women who wished to abate their husband's libido. Such possibilities are speculative however. The only real conclusion that can be drawn is that midwives were expected to be knowledgeable about sexuality.

The first lines of Sloane MS 2463 affirm the necessity for women to have female advisers. The introduction regards a woman's health to be jeopardized by a man's bias towards her sex. The text demands a great deal of its expected readers, however its primary concern is not to synthesize the greater medical corpus. Rather it is meant to answer practical, real-world problems. The handbook explains how to identify disease and what to prescribe for that disease; more information is irrelevant. The manual also allows for application across wealth distinction indicating the ubiquitous demand for obstetrics. Perhaps most relevant to the actual role of midwives is the advice imparted about ethics and sexuality. The social implications of sexual morality cannot be as easily assessed as a logical system such as medicine. Nevertheless the handbook indicates the extent to which midwives had to engage with issues of morality and the practicality of

obstetrics and gynecology. And ultimately, in view of these characteristics, it is clear that Sloane MS 2463 stands as a symbol of medieval beliefs regarding anatomy, gender, and religion: women themselves were best suited to deal with women's health.

The Yalta Conference and the Origins of the Cold War

MATTHEW BRICKER

Notes

¹ A predicate is an accepted value within logic. Predicates can be “universal” arguments, which state a general proposition such as “all dogs drool.” Alternatively, predicates can be “particular,” arguments, which state situation specific information such as “Fletcher is not a dog.”

² It is confusing to many people that a system such as medieval medicine could be logical when modern science has irrefutably disproved its foundations. Logical deduction is not necessarily a means to ascertain absolute truth; it is simply a system by which known information implies unknown information. That is to say: if “A → B” is given, and “A” is given, then B is concluded. Although A → B may be understood as “true,” it may be an inaccurate statement. For example, “if a dog bites you (A), then you will get rabies (→B)” is not a true statement. However if A → B is given and condition A is observed, then under this system B must be true. Correct implementation of a logical syllogism is possible even with incorrect predicates.

³ Humoral theory states that a healthy body is the result of the proper balance of four bodily fluids, or humors. The humors are blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile.

⁴ Michael Dols, *Medieval Islamic Medicine*, (Los Angeles, 1984), 3.

⁵ The terms “gynecologist,” “obstetrician,” and “midwife” are essentially synonymous during the Middle Ages. The role of the midwife encompassed obstetrics and gynecology. Furthermore, the words “midwife,” “obstetrician,” and “gynecologist,” have the same original meanings however are etymologically derived from different languages: Middle English, Latin and Greek

⁶ “Translation of Sloane MS 2463 and Introductory Essay,” *Medieval Woman’s Guide to Health*, trans. Beryl Rowland, (Kent, 1981).

⁷ Ibid., 46-47.

⁸ Ibid., 77.

⁹ It is also possible that such ingredients could not be acquired at all. In this case their appearance in the recipe served to bolster the text’s prestige with exoticism and mystique.

¹⁰ Marshall McLuhan is made by beating egg whites and would not be difficult to prepare. *Ibid.*, 177.

¹¹ Ibid., 47.

¹² Ibid., 61.

¹³ Ibid., 39.

¹⁴ Ibid., 75-77, emphasis mine.

¹⁵ Ibid., 91.

¹⁶ Bloodletting

¹⁷ Ibid., 85, 105, 121, 123, 137, 155.

¹⁸ The concept of abortion during the Middle Ages was nowhere near as controversial a topic as today.

¹⁹ Fourth passage of Hippocratic Oath. It should be noted that there is debate whether Hippocrates took this stance for moral reasons or because an abortion was considered too dangerous to the mother’s health.

²⁰ Sloane, 97.

²¹ Ibid., 91.

²² “For the purpose of restraining coitus” *Ibid.*, 156-157.

²³ *Ibid.*, 157-159.

With Russian troops quickly approaching Berlin, the Allies convened at Yalta to discuss the reorganization of Europe that would take place after the end of World War II. The Yalta Conference took place at the Black Sea resort of Yalta - in the Crimea - and was attended by Joseph Stalin of Russia, Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States, and Winston Churchill of Britain, who were collectively known as the “Big Three,” due to their power and influence in the Second World War.¹ Going into the conference, each of the “Big Three” had a certain goal or objective that he sought to secure for his respective country. For Stalin, it was essential that a Russian sphere of influence in Eastern Europe be established in order to maintain Russia’s security and prevent future invasions. While Roosevelt was concerned mainly with securing Russia’s entry into the war in the Pacific, Churchill’s concerns hinged on the question of free elections and democratic governments in Europe, which essentially served to both protect Britain’s influence in Europe, and to limit Russian domination. Although Roosevelt was sympathetic to Churchill’s ideals, Roosevelt was torn between establishing permanent spheres of influence in Europe; which he perceived detrimental to long term prosperity, and preserving the alliance between the Allied Powers.

At the Yalta Conference, the “Big Three” reached a compromise on these intricate matters. This delicate agreement safeguarded British interests in Europe, while simultaneously granting Stalin enough concessions to maintain the unity behind the Allied cause. The question of what to do with Poland was settled, the United Nations was constructed, Stalin agreed to declare war on Japan within ninety days of Germany’s defeat, and he promised free elections in Eastern Europe. Yet, because the Yalta agreement was written using loosely worded terminology, it became open to differing interpretations, and this later posed problematic for the Allies. When President Roosevelt died, his successor, Harry S. Truman attempted to use this ambiguity to renege on and reinterpret certain aspects of the agreement. In doing so, Truman attempted to gain what he perceived as more favorable conditions for the United States.

Although many scholars often argue that Truman’s perception of the agreements was not duped, but was instead, skillfully pragmatic. Hence, this paper refutes the notion that it was correct, and thus at Yalta, Roosevelt was deceived by Stalin, this paper argues that Roosevelt was not duped, but was instead, skillfully pragmatic. Conflict over a Russian sphere of influence began early in the war. On August 14, 1941 - even before the United States entered the war - Roosevelt and Churchill signed a joint declaration intended to lay the blueprint for postwar Europe. Known as the Atlantic Charter, this document detailed the aims and goals of the Allied war effort. Among them, was the declaration that the United States and Britain would seek no territorial gains, and that there was to be “the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live.”² Unfortunately, this declaration of self-determination posed problematic from the beginning. Although Stalin was seemingly willing to allow for a “military alliance between the democratic countries which would be organized under a council...[and] will have an international military force at its disposal,”³ he was unwilling to concede Russian influence in Eastern Europe. As Britain’s Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, later noted, Stalin wanted immediate recognition of his territorial claims in

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Finland, the Baltic States, and Rumania. Yet, Stalin's proposal for "spheres of influence" would not be limited to solely a Russian sphere.

On December 16, 1941, shortly after the fateful events of Pearl Harbor caused the United States to enter the war, Stalin projected a map of Europe that would allow for both British bases in France and Holland, and Russian bases in Finland. Eventually this was expanded to include British naval bases in Norway and Denmark, and Russian military bases in Rumania. However evenhanded this proposal might have seemed, it posed difficult for Eden due to the fact that the formation of "spheres of influence" were contradictory to the provisions outlined in the Atlantic Charter. Forcing a country to allow a foreign power to place military bases within its boundaries not only violated the rhetoric of self-determination, but also the commitment the Allies made not to seek territorial gains in the postwar world. Furthermore, although Stalin's gains under the proposed agreement were to be no greater than the territories Russia had won by 1941, Churchill was unwilling to allow the Soviets to pick up any territorial gains they had made under the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. To do so, remarked Churchill in a cable to Eden, would be "dishonor to our cause."¹⁴

Yet for Stalin, these territorial gains were essential. Not only did Stalin remember that Russia had been invaded from the west twice before, but he also felt that he could not return to his people as a victor of the war with fewer territorial gains than he had prior to the German invasion of Russia. Thus, Stalin saw these Eastern States as vital to both his own security, as a leader in power, and Russian security as a nation. Friendly states in Eastern Europe would provide Russia with a buffer zone against future attacks from the west, and in the event of an attack, a possible safe-haven for Soviet supplies.

Nevertheless, the Anglo-American alliance was unwilling to budge. Indisposed to going back on the commitments in the Atlantic Charter, Eden was unable to settle the situation earlier - rather than later - as Stalin had hoped. Consequently, the level of disunity began to grow among the Allied powers. Despite the fact that Russian support was vital to the Allied war effort, Stalin began to believe that Russia was being treated as a second-class power. As Stalin famously remarked, "I thought the Atlantic Charter was directed against those people who were trying to establish world dominion. It now looks as if the Atlantic Charter was directed against the U.S.S.R."¹⁵

As a result of the Allies' failure to reach an agreement, these questions of territorial influence lingered throughout the war. With Stalin desperately asking for a second front in Europe, and having not received one until the June 6th, 1944 invasion of Normandy, the Allies had little bargaining power throughout much of the war. Additionally, Churchill's belief that the United States and the British Empire would emerge from World War II as "the most powerfully armed and economic bloc the world has ever seen" only helped to lend support to the theory that after the war, "the Soviet Union will need our aid for reconstruction far more than we shall need theirs."¹⁶ Thus, the Allies continually held off on making a final decision about the fate of Eastern Europe, in hopes of attaining better terms at a later date. This "later date" eventually became the Yalta Conference.

The issue of what would become of postwar Poland had arisen early in the war. This so-called "Polish Question," was complicated and difficult. After all, World War II in Europe had broken out when Britain declared war on Germany in an effort to prevent Nazi expansion into Poland. Yet for Russia, Poland too played an integral part in Russia's entrance into the war. The Nazis invaded Russia through Poland, and thus Stalin believed that in the postwar world, Poland would be essential to Russia's security. Both sides were unwilling to budge. Fearful of providing the Soviets with a sphere of influence, Churchill was reluctant to hand Poland to the Russians.⁷

Nonetheless, Eden wisely observed that, while Britain opposed a Soviet sphere of influence, through Britain's support for Tito in Yugoslavia and the National Liberation Front (EAM) in Greece, London had already set the precedent for spheres of influence. Thus, it was hardly unreasonable for Stalin to use this precedent to establish a Soviet sphere of influence in

Poland.⁸ Although a Soviet sphere of influence would have clearly violated the rhetoric of "self-determination" in the Atlantic Charter, London's support for the EAM party in the Greek Civil War had already done just the same.

While Roosevelt was a Wilsonian Idealist in certain respects, he also realized that maintaining the Alliance among the "Big Three" was of paramount importance to the Allied war effort. Although Roosevelt sought to establish the United Nations - which was clearly modeled after the brainchild of President Woodrow Wilson, the League of Nations - Roosevelt also realized that he needed to be a pragmatist when the situation required. At Yalta, his lofty idealistic rhetoric of "self-determination" was balanced by an attempt to secure a Russian promise to declare war on Japan. Since the Allies had not opened up a second front in France until almost three years after Stalin had first asked them to, Roosevelt had only a few chips to bargain with. Hence, Roosevelt was forced to make a compromise in order to obtain a Russian declaration of war on Japan.

Although the Manhattan Project had already been underway for many years, at the time of Yalta, the atomic bomb was still untested. Consequently, Roosevelt was unable to rely on the power and destruction of the atomic bomb to end the war in the Pacific. While the possession of a successful atomic bomb may have changed Roosevelt's thinking, at the time of Yalta, he was left only with the prospect of an invasion of the Japanese homeland. Due to the intense fighting in the Pacific Theater, such an invasion would have almost certainly been exceptionally dangerous, and bloody. Thus, Roosevelt understood that in order to limit the number of American casualties, he would need help in the Pacific campaign. At Yalta, he turned to Stalin for help and Roosevelt got the help he needed, securing a declaration that Russia would declare war on the Empire of Japan within 90 days after the defeat of Nazi-Germany.⁹

In exchange for this declaration, Roosevelt had to be pragmatic. As soon as the conference began, Stalin stated that the Polish Question "is not only a question of honor but of life and death for the Soviet state."¹⁰ Hence, it was clear to Roosevelt that Stalin would be unwilling to compromise on this issue. In order to gain a Soviet declaration of war on Japan, have Stalin agree to join the United Nations, and preserve Allied interests in Greece and China, among other places, Roosevelt had to grant Stalin certain concessions.¹¹ Accordingly, the borders of Poland were re-drawn, and Russia was allowed to keep some of the Polish territory it had acquired under the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany. Although Stalin promised to hold elections in Poland, the elections were to be held without Allied supervision, and as a result, the pro-Soviet interim government that was put in place when Russia liberated Poland, was largely allowed to remain in power.¹²

Despite the fact that many scholars believe that Roosevelt was duped at Yalta, this is largely incorrect. Instead of viewing Yalta as an act of Soviet deception, allowed to transpire because of the incompetence of the aging, and ill Roosevelt, Yalta should be seen as a compromise among the three great powers. Roosevelt agreed to grant Stalin certain concessions in order to secure various Allied interests, and hopefully allow for postwar cooperation in the United Nations. As Roosevelt later said, "It was the best I could do."¹³

While the atomic bomb eventually proved successful, and as a consequence, critics of the Yalta agreement assert that Russia's intervention into the war was not necessary, it is important to remember that even with the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan did not surrender. Instead, it was the "twin shock" of the second atomic bomb being dropped on Nagasaki and the Soviet declaration of war that finally caused the Japanese to capitulate-ending World War II. Even with the dropping of two atomic bombs, some scholars argue that the Soviet declaration of war still played an important role in the Japanese decision to surrender. Beating two great powers, as these scholars argue, would have been next to impossible for Japan. Even holding out and prolonging the war, would at this point, have been very difficult.¹⁴ Thus, Roosevelt did not surrender Eastern Europe to Stalin for little in return, but instead secured a

Russian declaration of war, that could have, and very well still may have been, an important factor contributing to the Japanese decision to capitulate.

Furthermore, Russia had been invaded twice before through Poland, and it was reasonable to conclude that a friendly Polish state was vital to Russian security. Establishing a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe was also not unlike some of the policies the United States had previously pursued in Latin America. For example, in 1903, the United States supported a Panamanian revolution in order to secure more favorable terms for the construction of the Panama Canal. Although Roosevelt did abandon his idealistic rhetoric of "self-determination" in order to compromise with Stalin, the United States had in earlier times pursued similar policies in Latin America, and thus, perhaps Stalin viewed Eastern Europe as his "Latin America." Therefore, when Stalin sought to establish friendly governments, and a so-called "sphere of influence" in Eastern Europe, his actions were not overtly hostile to the United States, but were instead quite common, albeit the fact that they were seemingly contrary to the new idealistic world of "self-determination" established at the Atlantic Charter.

At Yalta, Roosevelt was not motivated by a passionate love for Russian ideals, but instead, by his determination to project America's influence into world affairs. In doing so, Roosevelt hoped to create a stable and prosperous postwar world. After all, World War II had been a strong reminder of the failure of the League of Nations. Without American membership, the League was virtually useless in suppressing German and Japanese aggression. Thus, it would be imperative that the United States joined the United Nations. In order to avoid a repeat of President Wilson's failure to lead the United States into the League of Nations, Roosevelt realized that domestic support for these initiatives would be vital. However, Roosevelt also understood that cooperation between the United States and Russia would be essential for a peaceful and prosperous postwar world. In order to accomplish this, Roosevelt recognized that he would need to please his supporters at home, while simultaneously pleasing Stalin.

Accordingly, having reached a successful compromise with Stalin at Yalta, Roosevelt attempted to cloak this compromise in ambiguous language in an effort to protect his domestic support in the United States. Roosevelt knew that granting Stalin a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe would anger his supporters at home and prove contrary to the American ideals of "freedom" and "liberty." After all, a significant amount of support for the war came from the desire to free the European people from the Nazis. Yet, how could these people become "free" if they were simply turned over to Russia after the war? Therefore, Roosevelt believed it best to concede these concessions.¹⁵ As Admiral Leahy, who was chief of staff to the President, later remarked, the language in the Yalta conference was so vague that the Soviets "could stretch it all the way from Yalta to Washington without ever technically breaking it."¹⁶ Due to Roosevelt's untimely death, these ambiguities were ultimately exploited by his successor, Harry S. Truman, thereby leading to the breakout of the Cold War.

Although Truman was Roosevelt's Vice President, Truman had little direct knowledge of the Yalta agreement prior to taking office. Roosevelt tended to use his advisors in an ad-hoc manner, and unfortunately for Truman, this generally meant that Vice President Truman was given little involvement in foreign affairs. Once Roosevelt died, "the new President [Harry Truman] took his first look at the Yalta agreements and expressed shock and disappointment that they were not more clear-cut."¹⁷ Thus, Truman's poor firsthand knowledge of the agreements made him all the more reliant on his advisors. Yet, there is evidence that some of these advisors in the State Department had been opposed to the compromises enacted at Yalta even before the Yalta agreement was reached. In an effort to change policy, some of these advisors attempted to give President Truman their own interpretations of what the Yalta agreements were.

On November 10th, 1944, the Director of European Affairs, James C. Dunn, expressed his ideas for United States' policy in Eastern Europe in a memorandum to the Secretary of State and the President. The memorandum stated:

You now have the policy papers on U.S. policy and attitudes toward Eastern Europe, the Balkan area, and the Near East... These policy papers include the general position of the U.S....and have specific recommendations with regard to the policy and attitudes we *should pursue*...I think these memoranda *should be* brought to the President's attention.¹⁸

The fact that these memoranda "should be" brought to the President's attention clearly conveys that Dunn's priorities were probably not in line with those of the President. If these priorities were the same, there would have been little need for them to be brought to the President's attention. The fact that the President "should" be advised of the policies that ought to be pursued provides clues that these policies were probably divergent from Roosevelt's. This subtle disagreement within the Executive Branch became magnified when Truman took office. With little knowledge of the Yalta agreements, the State Department's briefing papers became an important source of information. Yet, the State Department's advisory role also allowed them the opportunity to influence Truman's policies. Devoid of firsthand knowledge of the Yalta agreements, Truman had to rely on the State Department for information, and the information he received was at times vastly contrasting to what Roosevelt had agreed upon.

On April 13th 1945, the State Department's briefing paper to Truman "emphasized that the stalemate over the reconstruction of the Polish provisional government stemmed from 'the Soviet authorities consistently sabotaging Ambassador Harriman's efforts in the Moscow Commission to hasten the implementation of the decisions at the Crimea Conference.'¹⁹ However, this was largely dissimilar to Roosevelt's position on Poland. The Yalta agreement stipulated that "the Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should therefore be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and Poland abroad."²⁰ The "provisional government" in Poland was in fact the Lublin Government, and was created by the Soviets. As Roosevelt wrote in a letter to Churchill on March 29, 1945, "if we attempt to evade the fact that we placed, as clearly shown in the agreement, somewhat more emphasis on the Lublin Poles than on the other two groups...I feel we are exposing ourselves to the charge that we are attempting to go back on the Crimea decision."²¹ Thus, shortly before his death, Roosevelt had acknowledged that he had conceded the Lublin Government predominance in Poland.

Nevertheless, Averell Harriman, who served as special envoy to Europe under Roosevelt, and later as Secretary of Commerce under Truman, tried to narrow the preeminence of the Lublin Poles in the new Polish government. Contrary to the stipulations of the Yalta agreement, Harriman sought to establish a new government "broadly representative of Democratic elements of the Polish State."²² As soon as Roosevelt died, Harriman rushed to Washington and sought to advise Truman on the Polish situation. Although the terms agreed upon at Yalta and the vagueness of the Yalta agreement hardly made Russia's establishment of the Lublin government unreasonable, Truman was more anti-communist than Roosevelt, and sought to limit the expanding influence of communist Russia wherever possible.

Truman stated that the United States Government "cannot be party to any method of consultation with Polish leaders which would not result in the establishment of a new Provisional Government of National Unity genuinely representative of the democratic elements of the Polish people."²³ Led by his aspiration to limit Soviet influence and his advisors' desire to lead policy in a new direction, Truman was clearly attempting to renege on the terms of the Yalta agreement. Although vague, nowhere in the Yalta agreement was there any mention of a government that was "representative" of the various "elements of the Polish people." Instead, Roosevelt had even conceded before his death that the Lublin government would be granted predominance in Poland. Truman's new interpretation of the Yalta agreement infuriated Soviet leaders. Stalin charged that the American position was "tantamount to a direct violation of the Crimean Conference decisions,"²⁴ and asserted that on April 24, 1945, he and Roosevelt had agreed that

the current provisional government of Poland (the Lublin Government) "should be the core, that is the main part of a new reconstructed Polish Government."²⁵ Clearly, being the "main part" of the government was different than being one part in a "genuinely representative" government. Moreover, although the Declaration of Liberated Europe contained the lofty rhetoric of "self-government" and "self-determination," it contained no mechanisms for enforcement. The only responsibility of the signatories was to "consult together...when in the opinion of the three governments, conditions....make such action necessary...on the measures necessary to discharge the joint responsibilities set forth in this declaration."²⁶ Thus, unless the conditions of Eastern Europe posed a direct threat to the United States, Roosevelt had conceded their maintenance to the Soviet Union. Nowhere did the Declaration of Liberated Europe contain an enforcement provision, and nowhere did the agreement state that the failure to establish "self-determination" in Eastern Europe by a certain date would violate that country's obligations under the agreement. The lofty rhetoric of "self-determination" and "self government" was largely that, just rhetoric. Until a more specific peace treaty was reached after World War II, the Soviets had significant legal authority to run things as they wished in Rumania, Finland, Bulgaria and Hungary. In an effort to contain Soviet expansion, Truman sought to limit this agreement, refusing to recognize the provisional governments set up by the Kremlin in Rumania and Bulgaria until they were "reorganized and made more representative."²⁷

Unlike Roosevelt, Truman was a virtual unknown in world affairs. Roosevelt's pragmatic attempt at reaching a compromise at Yalta was overridden by Truman's attempt to lead Russian international relations in a new direction. Although it is difficult to say whether it was mostly the result of Truman's advisors misleading him or Truman's desire to limit Russian influence, some combination of the two seems to be to blame. Truman's decision to renege on the provisions of the Yalta agreement only led to the growing distrust between the two nations. By 1947, Truman claimed that the Soviets had not abided by a "single" agreement, and decided to pursue other methods of limiting Soviet influence. Among these other methods was the call for unrestrained competition with the Soviet Union, and the desire to limit Soviet expansion wherever possible. This strategy of limitation quickly became known as "containment" and only served to further heighten the level of suspicion and distrust between the two nations. Although Churchill had originally spoke of an Iron Curtain dividing Europe in 1946, it was not until the United States enacted the Truman Doctrine and later the Marshall Plan that the Soviet Union further clamped down on Eastern Europe, and the formation of the Iron Curtain was complete.²⁸

While the unrestrained competition between Eastern and Western Europe was problematic in that it led to the Cold War level of hostilities, it did have some benefits. For one, it allowed Congress to authorize the spending of large amounts of money in order to revitalize Western Europe and protect it from a possible Communist takeover. Without the Cold War as a backdrop, it is difficult to imagine how Western Europe would have been reconstructed and revitalized as quickly as it was. The Cold War also served to quell certain rivalries in Europe, albeit while creating new ones. The tension between the Eastern and Western blocs after World War II replaced the chaotic quarreling over security matters that Britain and France that engaged in following the end of World War I. Although spheres of influence provided security at a heavy cost, the presence of two great superpowers and their respective spheres of influence were able to avert another World War, something that Europe was unable to do after World War I.²⁹

As Churchill later told an American reporter in 1956, "Stalin never broke his word to me. We agreed on the Balkans. I said he could have Rumania and Bulgaria; he said we could have Greece...he signed a slip of paper. And he never broke his word."³⁰ At the Yalta Conference, Roosevelt realized that the division of Europe was necessary in order to protect the prospect of a postwar world characterized by peace and stability. Having been invaded through Eastern Europe in World War II, and barely escaping defeat, the Soviet Union held onto Eastern Europe in an effort to protect itself from future attacks. Although the division of Europe created the possibility

of a cataclysmic confrontation between superpowers, it proved to be a necessary part of the healing process that occurred after World War II.

Notes

¹ Yalta Conference, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/yalta.asp>

² Atlantic Charter, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/wwii.asp

³ Gardner, 112.

⁴ Ibid., 115.

⁵ Gardner, 114.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Fenby, 240.

⁸ Gardner, 185.

⁹ Yalta Conference, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/yalta.asp>

¹⁰ Gardner, 207.

¹¹ Getting Russia to join the United Nations was difficult because Russia's membership in the League of Nations was revoked, leaving Stalin with a dislike for international organizations.

¹² Leffler, 91-92.

¹³ Fenby, 349.

¹⁴ Asada, 477-512.

¹⁵ See page 92 of Leffler. Although a more in-depth discussion of how the compromises reached at Yalta would have alienated Roosevelt's domestic supporters in the United States may be fruitful, such a discussion is largely outside the scope of this paper. However, some reasons, such as the conflict with American ideals, and the view that Roosevelt needed the support of these constituencies for the passage of the United Nations, are discussed, albeit briefly in this paper.

¹⁶ Leffler, 96.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Theoharis, 212-213, emphasis mine.

¹⁹ Ibid., 213.

²⁰ Leffler, 95.

²¹ Theoharis, 213.

²² Leffler, 96.

²³ Ibid., 97.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Leffler, 99.

²⁷ Leffler, 101.

²⁸ Leffler, 121.

²⁹ Gardner, 263-265.

³⁰ Ibid., 265.

city and he made ready the innovative devices he had created, such as an exceptional claw that could lift Roman ships clear out of the water.²

Meanwhile, as Marcellus descended upon the well-fortified city with his legions, the Roman fleet comprised of nearly 60 quinqueremes surrounded the harbor and attacked the coastal walls. Then a curious thing occurred: the sea-borne attack was repelled by the superior assault of the defenders, and a direct attack was abandoned in favor of a prolonged siege that would eventually lead to the fall of both the city and its most famous citizen. Supposedly, Archimedes's mysterious weapon was able to set fire to the Roman ships attacking the coastal walls, destroying many, and forcing the Romans to alter their strategy. The weapon was allegedly a mechanism of mirrors that reflected the Sun's rays onto the wooden ships. One of the sources most widely cited in support of the legend is the second-century C.E. Greek historian, Lucian of Samosata. Although many scholars have argued that Lucian explicitly mentioned Archimedes's use of a death ray, they are not correct. He did not say that Archimedes used burning mirrors, only that, "Archimedes burned the triremes of the enemy by means of his science."³ This quotation is ambiguous. Was Lucian referring to the burning mirrors or something else? And despite its brief length, the quote has in it a measure of inaccuracy. At the time of the siege, in the late third century BCE, quinqueremes (galleys with five banks of manned oars) formed the backbone of the Roman fleet, not triremes (three banks of oars). Having said that, it should be noted that by the lifetimes of Lucian and his contemporary, Galen (who also mislabeled the type of warships in his own account), triremes were back in use the Roman navy. Perhaps both men figured the triremes of the second century CE were probably in use during the Second Punic War. Those in support of the legend might argue that it was simply a mistake by the two scholars, however other historical sources that encapsulated the siege, mainly Polybius (203-120 B.C.E.) and Plutarch (45-125 C.E.), refer to the Roman fleet as constituted by 60 quinqueremes, and there is no doubt that quinqueremes formed the backbone of the Roman navy at the time.⁴ Therefore, one might conclude that while Lucian did mention some sort of fire attack upon the fleet, he was not clear in his description and did not specify the weapon as a mirror. Furthermore, the fact that both Lucian and Galen both falsely labeled marginalizes the value of their coverage of the events at Syracuse.

Additionally, despite recognizing his prominent role in the defense of Syracuse, neither Polybius nor Plutarch alluded to Archimedes's use of burning mirrors in their respective histories. In his essay, "Archimedes and the Burning Mirrors of Syracuse," the historian D.L. Simms argues that the silence of these two sources in particular is especially important to the debate. The quietness of Plutarch on the subject is especially telling, given Plutarch's exaggerated style of writing and his inclination to praise Greeks, especially Archimedes, whom Plutarch revered. Had Archimedes used the death ray, Plutarch would have been excited to account for it. Additionally, Plutarch wrote of burning mirrors elsewhere, and his essay, "On the Face of the Moon" displays that he was not unfamiliar with the science behind geometrical optics.⁵ Polybius, who also failed to write of the alleged mirrors, is widely acknowledged to have been a very good historian who showed interest in the technical side of warfare. Therefore, it makes little sense that he would leave out such a technically innovative weapon. Also, considering that Polybius wrote his histories during the lifetime of many of the combatants, and given his propensity for interviewing war veterans, Simms argued that his record of the siege was the most authoritative of the bunch; thus, his failure to account for Archimedes' burning mirrors is striking.⁶

As previously noted, Galen is the source most responsible for invigorating the legend. The anomalous use of the Greek term, *τρόπαιον*, appears in his work, *De Temporumis*, as such: "So strong the sun...in some such way, I think, Archimedes too is said to have set on fire the enemy's triremes by means of tropae."⁷ Again, there is the aforementioned misperception of the use of triremes by the Romans at Syracuse, which encourages the argument that the evidence of both Galen and Lucian was limited to him.

Archimedes and the Legend of the Burning Mirrors of Syracuse

MICHAEL J. CATANIA

Legend has it that during the siege of Syracuse the renowned Greek mathematician and military strategist, Archimedes, unleashed an unprecedented weapon upon the Roman fleet blockading the harbor. The weapon was so unconventional and unfamiliar that the terms used to describe it by ancient scholars are just as unconventional and unfamiliar. Galen called Archimedes's device *tropetos*—a term with no other recorded usage and no simple translation.¹ It can be roughly expressed in English as "fire sticks" or "fire-making device," but has another translation that has fanned the flames of the legend—"burning mirrors." Meanwhile, historical accounts of Archimedes's weapon are mysteriously disparate, and the science behind it is questionable. This varied evidence has sparked one of the most bizarre historical debates ever: whether or not Archimedes really did use burning mirrors to destroy the Roman fleet.

Some scholars have argued that it was not the *tropetos* that caused the Roman ships to combust—they believe Galen is guilty of sensational and exaggerated reporting. It is, therefore, the purpose of this essay to examine the evidence both in favor of and opposed to this fiery view of the events during the siege of Syracuse, as well as the debate ignited by several historical sources that make mention of the burning mirrors and their role in the fight against the Roman fleet. Archimedes could have succeeded in creating a functional death ray (its most theatrical name)—if he even attempted to set the Roman fleet afire with mirrors. However, the lack of consistent and reputable historical documentation surrounding the phenomenon, supported by scientific evaluation and unsuccessful recreations of the event, has proven that it was highly unlikely he did so given the means available to him at Syracuse. Moreover, there is a possibility that something else, also technologically novel, such as a primitive version of Greek fire, was used to destroy the ships. This paper will focus on the primary sources, as well as secondary examinations into the integrity of the classical evidence, and the scientific feasibility as demonstrated by one modern recreation.

In 215 B.C.E., the Roman Senate was insulted when Syracuse abandoned its alliance with Rome. Hiero II, the king of Syracuse, had honored the treaty with Rome for nearly 50 years up to his death in 215. But after Hiero II's death, civil war erupted and the pro-Carthage faction of Syracuse gained power and demanded the city's loyalties to support the Carthaginians in the Second Punic War. Syracuse was bold enough to take this action because the situation for Rome in the Italian Peninsula was grim. Rome's delicate set of alliances with the Latins, Campanians, Samnites, and Tarentines had crumbled in the face of the extremely successful Carthaginian general, Hannibal Barca, who was rampaging through Italy with his vast army of Carthaginians, Numidians, and Gauls. Hannibal's tactical genius allowed him to rout Rome's legions wherever he encountered them, and he was master of southern Italy. To Syracuse, Rome seemed on the verge of collapse; but, Rome was not yet defeated. Even with Hannibal in their homeland, the Senate voted to send an army and fleet to Sicily to deal with the unstable Syracusan situation. Marcus Claudius Marcellus led the expedition with orders to bring the city back into the Roman fold—or to its knees. Upon landing at nearby Leontini, Marcellus took the city by force and had some 2,000 local Carthaginian sympathizers beheaded. This savagery only strengthened the Syracusans's resolve as they prepared for the arrival of the Roman force. Archimedes was summoned to lead the defense of the

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hearsay. The sentences from *De Temperamentis* directly following Galen's first use of *μόποι* in the excerpt are also quite evocative but are more supportive of an argument only hinted at in this essay—that something technologically novel, like primitive Greek fire, was used to ignite the Roman fleet. Galen wrote, “Also stones rubbed together kindle flame, especially if sulfur is sprinkled over them. And Medea's compound was of this kind. Everything smeared with it catches fire when heat strikes it. It is prepared from sulfur and liquid bitumen and ignites by friction.”⁸ Simms argues that these sentences lend weight to the possibility that Archimedes loaded catapults with burning or flammable material such as Medea's compound, and launched them at the Roman ships. Consequently, a tactic like this would have had a higher probability of inducing combustion than would burning mirrors. Galen, it appears, sparked two fables from one passage.

All of the ancient historical sources mentioning Archimedes's use of solar mirrors during the siege of Syracuse are merely tentative allusions—no source of those times describes in detail the science and mathematics behind the death ray mechanism. Oddly enough, this changed as time progressed. The first source to give a definitive statement of the mirror's use at Syracuse came from the Byzantine geometer and architect, Anthemius of Tralles, in the sixth century C.E., well after the decline of antiquity following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire.⁹ Given the chronological distance between the siege of Syracuse and Anthemius—the latter coming nearly 800 years after the former—most scholars are skeptical of the credibility of Anthemius's statement that, “Archimedes used burning mirrors to burn the enemy fleet a bowshot off.”¹⁰ Anthemius was also the first source to describe the potential physical presentation of weaponized solar mirrors and also the first to attempt to produce a working model. This places him at the spearhead of a long tradition of scholars attempting to recreate the death ray, in which the crew of the Discovery Channel program, “Mythbusters”—which will be examined below—also belongs.

In his essay, “The Geometry of Burning Mirrors of Antiquity,” Wilbur Knorr, the late scholar of ancient mathematics, examined Anthemius' experimentation and reasoning. According to Knorr, Anthemius, the architect who built the Hagia Sophia, tried to recreate the phenomenon of the burning mirrors, but his experiments led him to conclude that a very large solo mirror would have been too impractical for use against a fleet. Therefore, a single mechanism of mirrors would have been all but impossible for Archimedes and the Greek defenders of Syracuse to control and aim effectively at the Roman ships.

Even modern science has failed to give a firm answer on the scientific feasibility of the weapon. A few years ago, the crew of the television show “Mythbusters” attempted to build a working death ray. The crew pieced together an immense plank of wood (approximately 25 feet by 25 feet) and fitted it with a set of bronze mirrors. Bronze, they surmised, was probably the material Archimedes would have used because of its availability, high solar reflectivity, and radiation output at the range enumerated by Anthemius (a bowshot was equal to approximately thirty meters).¹¹ The device they created was, as Anthemius had hypothesized, simply too large and unwieldy for the reflected rays of light to be focused on a small enough area of the Mythbusters's version of a Roman ship. Even with the help of a mobilized crane, which Archimedes certainly would not have had in 215 B.C.E., the crew was unable to focus the beams effectively on the wood in a manner that resulted in combustion. When they added several more mirrors held by volunteers to the experiment, it was still insufficient.

They concluded that the only way mirrors could have caused a Roman ship to catch fire was if there were a huge amount of them, all focused on a very small section of a single Roman ship. In his work, *On Paradoxical Mechanisms*, Anthemius proposed something similar, writing that, “Divine Archimedes effected burning not by a single mirror, but by several, and I believe that there is no other way than this to cause burning at that distance.”¹² If those conditions were met 2,200 years ago, then perhaps

Archimedes could have succeeded in setting the fleet on fire, but only one ship at a time after extensive and elongated exposure by an impractical amount of mirrors. This, of course, takes for granted the fact that the ship needed to be nearly motionless during the morning, as the Sun rises in the east and Syracuse is located on Sicily's east coast. Although the Mythbusters' attempt failed and they pronounced the legend “busted,” what they actually proved was that with an absurd amount of mirrors and enough diligence, it would be possible to set a ship on fire. However, that possibility was very small and entirely contingent upon on a wide variety of ideal circumstances. Moreover, considering the immense effort and manpower such an endeavor would have required, the use of death rays would have been impractical. The number of men required to operate the burning mirrors would probably have been more useful fighting somewhere else. From a tactical standpoint, the Syracusans would have had much better luck at combusting the Roman fleet by shooting flaming arrows or throwing incendiary materials, and Archimedes, who was no fool when it came to defending fortifications, would have had difficulty justifying the removal of the necessary manpower from the defense of the walls for such a fanciful effort.

After careful examination of the historical sources documenting the Roman siege of Syracuse in 212, it is unrealistic to believe that Archimedes did, in fact, set the Roman fleet ablaze using burning mirrors. The very fact that some of the historical sources—among them, the reputable historians Polybius and Plutarch—do not even touch upon the use of fire against the fleet leaves many questions as to the integrity of those sources that did, namely Galen and Lucian. Moreover, in their writings, the latter pair of scholars only briefly and equivocally shed light onto what became the legend of the pyreia. Only after several centuries had passed did the myth gain momentum when several historians and scientists—Anthemius among them—began to test the possibility of Archimedes's death ray. These recreations have yielded few substantial answers. With a large enough effort and some enterprising planning, Archimedes might have achieved what the legend stated he did, but it was highly improbable and strategically impractical. Had he survived the sack of the city after its surrender, perhaps Archimedes would have documented his defensive schemes and the world would know for sure if his burning mirrors were part of myth or of history.

Notes

¹ D. L. Simms, “Galen on Archimedes: Burning Mirror or Burning Pitch?” *Technology and Culture* 32 (1991): 91–96 (<http://jstor.org>).

² “Siege of Syracuse,” *Math.nyu.edu/~crorres/Archimedes/Siege/Summary.html*, 20 June 2008. The facts of this paragraph were all taken from this source.

³ Lucian of Samosata, *Hippias*, trans. A. M. Harraan. London: 1913.

⁴ L. Casson, *Ships and Seafarers in the Ancient World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971.

⁵ Simms, “Archimedes and the Burning Mirrors of Syracuse.” *Technology and Culture* 18 (1977): 1–24 (<http://jstor.org>).

⁶ Ibid. 6. It is well-known that Polybius typically interviewed witnesses and veterans of the events he covered, but there is no direct evidence to show he did so with regards to the siege of Syracuse.

⁷ Simms, “Galen,” 91. The particular passage from *De Temperamentis* appears in this essay by Simms.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ G. L. Huxley, *Anthemius of Tralles: A Study in Later Greek Geometry*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959.

¹⁰ Simms, "Archimedes," 7.

¹¹ MythBusters FanClub. March 12, 2006.
<http://www.mythbustersfanclub.com/mhb2/content/view/160/27/>.

¹² Translations from the text of Arthenius available in Huxley, *Anthemius*.

On the *Kibra Negast* and Ethiopic Cultural Incorporation

JOSH CHUNG

Ethiopia inhabits a fascinating locus in the fabric of world history. Scientists trace several of the earliest hominid fossils to Ethiopia's general vicinity, assigning its territory a primary role in the evolution of the human species.¹ Its location in the Horn of Africa, the East African peninsula, has garnered a perpetual strategic relevance for its kingdoms, polities and empires in trade, politics and the transfer of ideas that continues to the present day. Ethiopia also maintains one of the world's oldest extant Christian traditions, having officially converted circa 327 C.E., just as Christianity first realized a formalized political prominence in the Roman Empire.² The Ethiopic civilization managed a dynastic tradition spanning nearly 3,000 years, spanning from before the Axumite Empire of late antiquity into the modern period. Its triumph over Italy at the Battle of Adowa in the late nineteenth century constituted the first defeat of a European power at the hands of an African military since Hannibal. Far more than a military success, the victory at Adowa contradicted the racist ideology rationalizing Europe's imperialist conquest of Africa, issuing a statement of historically epic proportions that still reverberates today.

This inquiry investigates the literary work that functions as Ethiopia's national epic and against the resonance of which this history unfolded: the *Kibra Negast*.³ It occupies a definitive locale in the cultural, national and religious identity of Ethiopia and records the beginnings of Ethiopia's Solomonid dynastic tradition, which national lore dates to 1000 B.C.E., with Menelik I's ascension.⁴ More than just a national myth, the *Kibra Negast* illuminates the structures under-girding Ethiopia's understanding of itself, of how its people locate themselves against the region's rich history and its greater geopolitics. It records, as both an organic discourse and contextual backdrop, the process behind Ethiopia's identity construction, religious development, and cultural evolution. The *Kibra Negast* unabashedly employs Judaic and Christian traditions in establishing this imperial lineage's political legitimacy not for their respective religious values per se, but as vehicles distinctly emphasizing the primacy of the Ethiopic civilization. The Ethiopic civilization recognized within the Judaic and Christian traditions an advanced spiritual technology and an access point to the religious lingua franca of the pre-Islamic world. Yet for Ethiopia's constituents, the political efficacy of acquiring an advanced spiritual technology and a fluency in the Judeo-Christian religious language depended on the branding of these concepts as genuine Ethiopian products. Therefore, the *Kibra Negast* facilitated the Ethiopicization of certain foreign traditions, with particular regard to the Judaic and Christian traditions, for the political and ideological benefit of the Ethiopic civilization.

The title *Kibra Negast* itself translates to "The Glory of Kings"; accordingly, the primary subject of the work centers on establishing the determinants comprising the legitimacy and divine right of a ruling establishment. The *Kibra Negast* chronicles a rich narrative featuring Makeda, the Queen of Sheba, her son Menelik and the famed King Solomon of Israel, as its principal actors. Through the religious and historical circumstances surrounding these actors, the *Kibra Negast* surmises that legitimate political governance requires a membership in the Davidic royal lineage of ancient Israel, as well as the possession of the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of God's dwelling on Earth. In assessing these qualities as the fundamental determinants of a royal house's political legitimacy, as a national epic then, the *Kibra Negast* functions to qualify and

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define these determinants as historically Ethiopian. The narrative portion of the text depicts Makeda, the Queen of Sheba (or Sabea, which the text understands as a pre-Axumite state associated with Ethiopia), learning of the storied King Solomon, about the uniqueness of his religion, the magnetism of his intellect, and the unparalleled exorbitance of his wealth. Makeda then assembles her courtiers and travels to Israel. Solomon's wealth, mind and spirituality dazzle Makeda during the course of the state visit, during which she converts to his Mosaic monotheistic religion. The acme of this state visit revolves around a dinner, during which King Solomon pledges to refrain from pursuing sexual relations with Makeda on the condition she not take any of Solomon's possessions. Solomon deliberately serves Makeda spicy cuisine, prompting Makeda to drink water from jugs clearly labeled as Solomon's. This ruse affords Solomon the opportunity to pursue sexual relations with Makeda. Nine months after this encounter, on Makeda's return journey to Ethiopia, she gives birth to their son, Menelik. Thus, Solomon's paternity grants Ethiopia access to the elect Davidic lineage celebrated within Judaic religion.

This lineage maintains its relevancy after the Ethiopian conversion to Christianity, as Christian tradition also locates Jesus Christ within the Davidic ancestry. When Menelik reaches adulthood, he journeys to Israel to visit his father, King Solomon. Eventually, Menelik expresses the desire to return to his homeland, Ethiopia, which he describes as "better than the country of Judeah...the mountains of the land of my mother where I was born are far better in my sight."⁵ For this return journey, Solomon furnishes Menelik with a retinue of Israeliite noblemen and clergy. This assemblage included Azariah, the son of Israel's chief priest, who decides to confiscate the Ark of the Covenant for Ethiopia. When this larceny was discovered, Solomon's forces gave chase, but God purportedly levitated Menelik and his entourage across the Red Sea.⁶ This action—the transference of the Ark of the Covenant from Jerusalem to the Ethiopian city of Axum—symbolizes the transference of God's favor from the Israelites to the Ethiopians. It further signifies the transformation of Axum into the New Jerusalem, or the new Zion, the terrestrial dwelling place of the divine, achieving a new spiritual primacy and centrality for the Ethiopian civilization. With the two determinants of political legitimacy in hand—a membership within the Davidic royal lineage and the possession of the Ark of the Covenant—Makeda abdicates and Menelik assumes the throne, which thus begins the Solomoniid dynasty in Ethiopia.⁷

The *Kebra Negast*'s central narrative encapsulates one of the distinctive characteristics of the Ethiopian culture: its propensity to adopt foreign concepts and rework them into a quintessentially Ethiopian definition. This blatant commandeering of Judaic ideals into the Ethiopian dwelling place of the divine, achieving a new spiritual climate historically accustomed to such ideational adoption-transformation sequences. Its critical location in the Horn of Africa rendered Ethiopia the recipient of influence from a historically veritable, who's who of civilizations. Ethiopia's pre-Axumite civilizations borrowed heavily from the religious traditions of their Egyptian neighbors to the north. In later periods, Ethiopia's proximity with pre-Islamic Southern Arabia precipitated an overlapping cultural development that developed synonymously "so much so that for the next several centuries [after the seventh century B.C.E.] many aspects of the material culture of Ethiopia and Southern Arabia [became] virtually identical."⁸ One also sees further foreign influence in the greater Ethiopian literary history, where a cavalcade of Arabic, Syrian, Greek and European influences has historically influenced the development of the Ethiopian corpus. The *Kebra Negast* is no exception to this principle, drawing on a vast array of religious and apocryphal writings with origins in a variety of civilizations. Yet the *Kebra Negast*, above all else, exemplifies the uniquely Ethiopian mode of ideational adoption. In a paradigmatic process defined by fluid periods of extended modification, the final *Ethiopian* product emerges unrecognizable from its original external impulses. Surely, the adoption of foreign traditions by indigenous

cultures is not unique to history. Yet the logic driving the *Kebra Negast*'s adoptive tendencies in, which a nationalizing calculus transcends other considerations has disseminated into the greater Ethiopian culture an enthrallingly lush amalgamation of externally-originated ideas that together stand as unequivocally Ethiopian in character. The paradigmatic Ethiopian mode of adoption-transformation is especially evident with regards to Ethiopian religion. Notably, monotheistic concepts existed in Ethiopia well before its encounter with Judaic theological concepts. Its peoples traditionally believed in a monistic deity whose name varied by tribe and region. This supreme agent was universally associated with masculinity and the sky and noted for his impersonality.⁹ Though this supreme deity structured the basic framework of Ethiopian theology, for the daily spiritual life of Ethiopians the deity's impersonality necessitated a dependence on a diverse world of supernatural personalities. In other civilizations, the appearance of these types of supernatural figures historically allowed for the incorporation of foreign deities into other religious traditions. For instance, after its Greco-Roman conquest, Rome religiously acculturated Zeus as Jupiter, Hera as Juno, and Poseidon as Neptune, etc. This pattern of association-ralders also manifested itself in the Ethiopian civilizations. The pre-Judaic Axumite rulers, due to the aforementioned cultural overlap with Southern Arabia, equated the Ethiopian supreme deity with the Southern Arabian supreme deity, Astar. Later, as Greek influence moved further south, Astar, himself an acculturation, actually became associated with Zeus.¹⁰ Thus prominent religious influences that would later enter Ethiopia—namely, Judaism, Christianity, and later, Islam—discovered a pre-existing precedent favoring syncretism, as the correlation of foreign supernatural personalities with their indigenous counterparts was not conceptually unfamiliar. Thus foreign deities tended to absorb rather easily into an Ethiopian spiritual life that emphasized personal engagements with a variety of individualized spirit entities.

The most important characteristic of the Ethiopian model revolves not around the adoptive process, but its transformative process. Yet examining the adoptive process and its attendant factors does retain a critical significance, as they inform both the tenor and trajectory of the transformation process. It is important to note the extent to which the *Kebra Negast*'s central narrative incorporates fundamentally Judaic symbols—and therefore by association, Judaism—into the Ethiopian cultural discourse. Several pre-existing pan-Ethiopian cultural characteristics, in sharing traits associated with Judaism, eased this adoptive process. In addition to familiarity with monotheistic ideas, animal sacrifices and systemized dietary restrictions proliferated in pre-Judaic Ethiopia. More importantly, Ethiopian spiritual culture placed a great import on the idea of magic and sorcery. Such an emphasis would inform the interpretation of powerful individuals in a supernatural context. For example, though modern scholarship tends to depict King Solomon's prowess in economic terms, pre-Judaic Ethiopia understood the legendary Solomonic reputation in terms of wizardry and magical power. Pre-Judaic Ethiopia therefore saw Solomon as more than a sovereign; he was a powerful magician whose incantations were fueled by an exotic religion, a figure whose power undoubtedly exceeded that of indigenous shamans and mystics.

In this respect, a pre-technologic superiority emerged, what I term as an advanced "spiritual technology." More than a basic fascination motivated Makeda's visiting Solomon; as a head of state, she recognized a superior spiritual technology and sought to harness the power of Solomon's magic for state gain. Makeda's conversion to the Mosaic faith further advances this assertion, that Makeda's Ethiopian state had a vested interest in understanding and procuring the magical power at the core of wealthy Solomonic Israel. The origins of the Judaic incorporation likely originated in the politics of international relations. In an era when the scientific method did not yet exist, and in which supernatural actors were thought to influence terrestrial events, the acquisition of an advanced spiritual technology was no different than a Bronze Age polity seeking

alliance with an Iron Age state for access to its advanced weaponry. As this investigation demonstrates, it is clear that the *Kibra Negast* nationalizes the advanced spiritual technology of the Israelites for Ethiopia and the spiritual framework of its political legitimacy.

Whether or not the historicity surrounding Makeda's visit to Solomonic Israel is factual or fictitious, its basic theme of acquiring Israel's superior spiritual technology for a nationalized Ethiopian purpose remains relevant with regard to the dominant influence Judaic culture historically wielded in Ethiopian affairs. According to Ethiopian royal chronicles, the state maintained a Jewish identity in the first two centuries C.E. before its conversion to Christianity in which the precepts of Judaic culture "became the characteristic expression of the Aksumite kingdom."¹¹ The tremendous Judaic influence that remains in Ethiopian Christianity, such as the Saturday Sabbath, the Pentateuchal dietary laws, and circumcision, illuminates "mainstream" Ethiopic Judaism's incorporation into Ethiopic Christianity. Evidence for such a gradual assimilation exists within Ethiopic Christianity's religious festivities, which contain visibly Jewish characteristics. As John T. Pawlikowski states:

When the majority of Jews in Ethiopia converted to Christianity it became necessary to transfer the celebration of the New Year feast without substantial interference with the deeply rooted religious practices and customs then in vogue. The solution was to superimpose the Christian feasts . . . on to the ancient Jewish structure.¹²

In addition, the clergy within both branches of these Ethiopian religions shared a remarkably similar uniform, including a priestly belt and skullcap, and the architectural division of Ethiopian synagogues and Ethiopian churches were near identical; both featured a tripartite structure modeled on Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem.¹³

These examples of the blending of the two traditions to an inordinate degree exemplify an Ethiopicization of the two traditions, creating a distinctly branded Ethiopic tradition. Nowhere in Christendom were such Judaic customs so prominently featured; to the contrary, Christians elsewhere often formed the vanguard of anti-Semitic persecution. The *Kibra Negast* plays a formative role in both the Ethiopian Jewish and Ethiopian Christian histories, as both Ethiopian religions trace their spiritual heritages to a *national epic*. Both religions operate as subsidiaries with an ideological framework prioritizing national sentiment. Again the manifestation of the adoption-transformation sequence in which various traditions are nationalized and defined under a definitively Ethiopian banner is clear.

Against this backdrop, I will begin my analysis of the *Kibra Negast* itself, in which the characteristic adoption-transformation mode blossoms into its full function: as Ethiopia's national myth, it functions as a charter, a device greater than itself, as a mission statement for the nation's history and future destiny. It constitutes the textual symbol at the center of the Ethiopian identity on a national level by incorporating various historical, spiritual and political strands. It defines Ethiopiamness by locating the people against both the region's geopolitics and of a greater spiritual history, injecting a profound sense of destiny and purpose to Ethiopia's people. Religious language empowers the *Kibra Negast*'s wholesale application of grandiose notions like destiny and history. As Jack Carlyle discusses,

Myths are based primarily on revelations of gods, and secondarily on traditions repeating these religious myths on the basis of authorities (ancestors) who have had such experiences. They should be regarded as explanations from actual objects, for social events and for the experiences of the gods . . . [and for] noncognitive functions as well—

such as those of grounding authority, explaining ritual and expressing emotions.¹⁴

On a functional level, the notion and application of divine approval justifies and even motivates certain political actions, as in the case of the *Kibra Negast* with the continuing dominance of the Solomonic dynasty in the greater Ethiopian region's politics and economics. It rationalizes a people's existence in mythological terms, arousing the brand of patriotism conducive to establishing a national cohesiveness.

The text of the *Kibra Negast* itself dates to around the sixth century C.E. By this juncture, the ideology declaring the Ethiopic State of Axum as the spiritual and political successor to Israel had been established.¹⁵ Archaeology verifies King Caleb (circa 520-540) as the first Ethiopic monarch officially subscribing to the Davidic lineage.¹⁶ Unfortunately, the knowledge contemporary scholarship possesses about the *Kibra Negast* as it existed from the sixth century to the fourteenth century is sparse. The final redaction of the *Kibra Negast* occurred in 1320 under the guidance of priestly scribes, who translated it from the Arabic into Ge'ez, the Ethiopic liturgical language.¹⁷ Because today's *Kibra Negast* retains immense similarities with its fourteenth-century redaction, exploring the general political context surrounding the redaction's emergence is critical to understanding the work's interpretation.

The original Axumite Empire had faded into obscurity by the early tenth century. For several centuries, a period of shifting political ambiguity reigned. When Yikunno Amlak came to power in 1270, he restored the Solomonic ideology to the ruling ethos of Ethiopia.¹⁸ Several scholars, in pointedly noticing the proximity of the *Kibra Negast*'s final redaction to the reemergence of the Solomonic dynasty, consequently explain this away as a political apparatus employed by an emergent regime seeking to establish legitimacy.¹⁹ Though such viewpoints may expeditiously explain the adjacency of the regime's and redaction's dates, they betray a myopic reductionism rather ignorant of the *Kibra Negast*'s fundamental historical breadth. The date of the final redaction occurred fifty years after the Solomonic reemergence. The redaction should have emerged much earlier in the regime's nascence to have been used as an effective political tool. More importantly, the redacting scribes were ethnically Tigrean, a group whose patron had no vested interest in the ruling Solomonic regime, whose leaders were Amhara. Furthermore, a longstanding oral tradition existed, supporting the history of the *Kibra Negast* prior to the Solomonic dynasty's reemergence. The union of Solomon and Makeda is said to have been known in Cairo by the tenth century. Armenian Christian records report that the Ethiopians possessed the Ark of the Covenant circa 1208, a century before the final redaction of the *Kibra Negast*.²⁰ Moreover, the *Kibra Negast*'s allusion to Byzantine-era political alliances would only have been considered suitable around the seventh century. If, as Harold Marcus contends, the text was constructed in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, the specific inclusion of Byzantine politics would undermine its importance. Rochet d'Hericourt considers it "confused, tangled, and devoid of interest," while Walter Plowden perceives a "rubbish of invented tales, or imperfect and incoherent statements."²¹ Yet the *Kibra Negast* exists not as a literary work and paragon of stylistic consistency, but as the historical record of Ethiopic cultural development, of the conversations its civilization maintained both internally and externally. When considering the diversity of the sources it utilizes, its stylistic heterogeneity should not be surprising. The *Kibra Negast* draws upon the Hebrew Bible,

impact of the work.

In addition, as some scholars critique, when considered as a literary work, the *Kibra Negast* contains no real aesthetic or stylistic consistency, which may serve to undermine its importance. Rochet d'Hericourt considers it "confused, tangled, and devoid of interest," while Walter Plowden perceives a "rubbish of invented tales, or imperfect and incoherent statements."²² Yet the *Kibra Negast* exists not as a literary work and paragon of stylistic consistency, but as the historical record of Ethiopic cultural development, of the conversations its civilization maintained both internally and externally. When considering the diversity of the sources it utilizes, its stylistic heterogeneity should not be surprising. The *Kibra Negast* draws upon the Hebrew Bible,

the New Testament, various works of apocryphal literature, various works of rabbinical literature, Christological writings from the Coptic, Syriac and Greek traditions, as well as the Qur'an and Qur'anic commentaries.²³ Among its stylistic elements include Biblical and rabbinical allusions, and the midrashic form of narrative. As Pawlikowski states:

The literary reflection of the Jewish penetration, sometimes substantially changed, even distorted, is to be found in the *Kebra Negast* and in the Qur'an. The Semitic potpourri that characterizes the Qur'an, with its numerous Hebrew, Aramaic-Syriac and Ethiopic loan words, often in hybrid disguises, suggests that a complex process of religious syncretism was at work.²⁴

Clearly, the *Kebra Negast* draws upon a diverse array of sources not simply for the sake of variety, but to reflect the external and internal processes impacting Ethiopic history, with specific respect to the Ethiopic state's axial location in the Horn of Africa. Again, stylistic homogeneity was never a primary function. The *Kebra Negast* acts as a living repository of Ethiopia's cultural and religious development; it preserves the processes of incorporation of so many different traditions and their transformation into something grander and more profound: a consolidated Ethiopic purpose.

To further this purpose, the *Kebra Negast* attempts to rework preexisting psychologies of race into an ideology favoring the dominance of the Ethiopian state. The adoption of the Judaic religious culture for its advanced spiritual technology predicated the adoption of another Judaic precept that equated black skin color with the Hamite curse. The origins of this belief reach back into the Judaism's Noah narrative. Sometime after the Flood depicted in Genesis, Noah heavily imbibed himself with wine, and removed his clothing during the process of his intoxication. Ham, one of Noah's sons, upon discovering his father's drunkenness and nakedness, found the circumstances seemingly transfer the Hamite curse to the Ethiopic peoples by virtue of their physical characteristics. If the Judaic tradition located the general degeneracy of the Hamite peoples, early Christian theologians repeatedly stressed the idea, empowering the concept of a racial hierarchy in their nascent theology. The *Kebra Negast* directly broaches this issue in several instances. An Ethiopian tells an Israelite, "But there is one thing that ye have wherein ye are better than we are, namely wisdom" and later, an Israelite tells an Ethiopian, "...ye are black of face, I only mention this because I have seen it, and if God lightens up your hearts there is nothing that can do you harm."²⁵ The passage implies that only God's explicit favor saves the Ethiopians from relegation to a lower socialized category, without the Davidic lineage and the Ark of the Covenant, God's favor simply would not rest with the Ethiopic peoples. The Ethiopic claims to the aforementioned lineage and the Ark cannot be ideological excess then, but an unequivocal *ideological necessity* that unilaterally transforms the Ethiopic peoples from a cursed Hamite people to an elite "chosen people."

The *Kebra Negast*'s central narrative, in which Ethiopia usurps the Davidic lineage for its own, exchanges Ethiopia's Hamite origins with a Semitic one. The *Kebra Negast* systematically replaced a tradition that specifically recognized the original rulers of Axum as direct descendants of Ham. It resolved the ideational inconsistencies between Ethiopia's nationalist "ego" with its subscription to the Judeo-Christian tradition. The *Kebra Negast*, therefore, emphasizes the process of an ideological struggle that gradually untangled itself in the consciousness of a people over a period of centuries. It acts within a broader, collective psychological level "employing mechanisms of

defense like denial, repression projection, or rationalization; reconstituting the self through such devices as religious conversion, prophetic inspiration or psychotherapy.²⁶ A sort of psychological echolocation takes place in the text; though it is cognizant of certain superiorities in foreign states, the idea of Ethiopic superiority of its people, government and religion proved irreducible to Ethiopia's political and spiritual leadership.

The epilogue of the *Kebra Negast*, in its remarks about Ethiopia's transition from Judaism to Christianity, functions to cement Ethiopia's supremacy as a Christian state. The *Kebra Negast* concludes with a clear ideological transition from Judaism to Christianity. The Judaic quality undermining the narrative featuring Makeda, Solomon and Menelik is indisputable; the narrative itself can hardly denigrate a tradition it labored to weave into its very fabric. The epilogue then concretizes the superiority of Christian Ethiopia over not only Judaism, but other Christian nations. The epilogue contains prophecies beholding a divinely-sanctioned relinquishing and vanquishing of the Jews.²⁷ That the Ethiopian Christians conducting this scathing criticism practiced a religious tradition containing significant Judaic components attests to the impact, and ultimate effect of the Ethiopian adoption-transformation model. Jewish practices were so radically transformed they were seen simply as Ethiopic. Further, the conspicuousness by which the Judaic tenor under-girded the cultural and liturgical structure of the Ethiopian Church could only be denigrated when that tenor came to be recognized as undeniably and indisputably Ethiopian. Consequently, the Ethiopians emerge as the sole bearers of authentic Christianity, a claim that justifies the divine structure at the heart of their political legitimacy.

The *Kebra Negast*, acting in its capacity as a national charter, refashioned important Judaic and Christian *religious* ideas into a *political* rhetoric glorifying the Ethiopic civilization. It liberally utilized Judeo-Christian beliefs, motifs and histories as apparatuses in reconstructing Ethiopian heritage. This utilization reflects several historically fascinating principles unique to Ethiopia. It reflects how Ethiopia's strategic location in the Horn of Africa dictated the trajectory of its cultural evolution, furnishing the region's Ethiopic civilizations with a characteristic methodology of responding, absorbing and, above all, redefining these foreign ideas as quintessentially Ethiopian. The process of redefinition involved a complex interplay of cultural, political and religious pressures that irreversibly altered the quality of those foreign ideas. With particular regard to the Judaic and Christian influences, these ideas were seen as assets to be acquired and consequently merged into the Ethiopic agenda. In acting as the primary agents of their idational evolution, the Ethiopic peoples liberally redirected the gravity and grandiosity of religious terms to a political function: the establishment of the Ethiopic civilization's political and spiritual primacy.

Notes

¹ Richard Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians*, (Malden: Blackwell, 1998), 4.

² Gus W. Van Beek, "Monuments of Axum in the Light of South Arabian Archaeology," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 87 (1967): 116.

³ Scholars employ numerous transliterated spellings of "Kebra Negast." For the sake of consistency, I utilize "Kebra Negast" as the standard spelling in this paper, except in those instances that directly quote a scholar employing a different spelling.

⁴ Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1994), 17.

⁵ Donald N. Levine, *Greater Ethiopia* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 102.

⁶ Marcus, 18.

⁷ David Kessler, *The Falashas*, (Portland: Frank Cass, 1996), 39-40.

⁸ Van Beek, 114.

⁹ Levine, 47.

¹⁰ Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians*, 24.

¹¹ John T. Pawlikowski, "The Judaic Spirit of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 4 (1972): 186.

¹² Ibid., 192.

¹³ Richard Pankhurst, "The Falashas, or Judaic Ethiopians, in Their Christian Ethiopian Setting," *African Affairs* 91 (1992): 567.

¹⁴ Jack Cariote, "Myths as Religious Explanations," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 48 (1980): 188.

¹⁵ Donald Crummey, "Imperial Legitimacy and the Creation of Neo-Solomonic Ideology in 19th-century Ethiopia," *Cahiers D'Etudes Africaines* 28 (1988): 15.

¹⁶ John Abbink, "The Enigma of Beta Esra's Ethnogenesis. An Anthro-Historical Study," *Cahiers D'Etudes Africaines* 30 (1990): 404.

¹⁷ Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians*, 55.

¹⁸ Kessler, 82.

¹⁹ Marcus, 17.

²⁰ Levine, 100.

²¹ Marcus, 17.

²² Levine, 95.

²³ Pawlikowski, 188.

²⁴ Ibid., 185.

²⁵ Levine, 101-3.

²⁶ Ibid., 101.

²⁷ Abbink, 407.

**The Birth of the Almohad Movement in North Africa:
The Quest for Community as an Impetus for Reorganization**

JONATHAN CONIGLIARI

The Almohad movement in North Africa, which began in the twelfth century AD under the direction of Ibn Tumart, is a prime example of what happens when individuals are excluded from taking part in the daily activities of their society. In this paper, it will be shown that the birth of the Almohad movement in the Maghreb was a large-scale reorganization of the region's political, social, and religious structures caused primarily by the desire of Ibn Tumart's followers to seek a sense of community and a unified identity, not by a desire to become more orthodox in faith. To justify this, the geography of this region must be discussed, followed by a detailed look at Ibn Tumart himself and the tenants of his movement. Finally, the role of abstraction in institutional structure formation will be analyzed in order to understand Ibn Tumart's complex plan to guard ancient traditions while condemning them at the same time. First, though, a brief history of the Musnudia people and the Almoravid Empire is in order.

The Musnudia first arrived in North Africa near the end of the eighth century AD. They had fled the East, because they were being persecuted for following a spiritual, often mystical version of Islam that contrasted with popular Eastern legal and doctrinal versions. Over time, these Musnudia people split up into different tribes, some settling the plains and some venturing into the mountains. By 1040 AD, one of these groups, the Almoravids, a nomadic Sanhaja Berber tribe spreading from Southern Morocco to the Western Sudan, began their conquest of the Maghreb and Muslim Spain, founding the Almoravid Empire.¹ It is important to note here that the designation 'Berber' merely refers to an individual or people group originating in the Maghreb. In reality, the people of this region are historically very diverse, but beginning in the seventh century AD Arab writers began using the term 'Berber' to describe inhabitants of the region.² The mighty Almoravid Empire was centered on what was then called the Barbary, and eventually the leaders of the Almohad movement exploited its weaknesses to take over the territory. This paper, however, looks only at the birth of the Almohad movement, not at its military struggles with the Almoravid Empire. But, because physical circumstances often have an essential influence on economies, societies, and cultures, understanding the geography of this region is absolutely vital to gaining a complete picture of these twelfth-century AD peoples who controlled a larger portion of North Africa than any other previous western Islamic dynasty.³

Of central importance to understanding the geographic influences on North African history is correctly identifying the binary relationship between the plains and the mountains. The Atlas Mountains, a 1,500-mile mountain chain stretching eastward from Morocco, through Algeria, and finally terminating in Tunisia, effectively divides the terrain of this region into two distinct areas. On either side of the mountains lie vast plains: northward are the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts and southward is the vast Sahara desert. The mountains themselves are divided into several ranges: the Anti-Atlas, the High Atlas, the Middle Atlas, the Tell Atlas, and the Aures mountain range extension. The mountains, on their northern and northwestern slopes, have much fauna and in some places are highly forested with thick brush and trees, and the southern facing portions on the edge of the Sahara desert are largely barren. The entire mountain range is

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characterized by steep drop-offs and sudden changes in topography with little to no buffer ecosystems separating the mountainous interiors of the Atlas range from the relatively flat plains of the Atlantic and Mediterranean basins.

These geographic differences give rise to two main distinctions between the inhabitants of the region. The mountain Berbers were accustomed to life inside the steep confines of the Atlas mountains. The villages of these mountain inhabitants could be found nestled in valleys created at the bases of several different mountains. These villages had natural protection from outside warfare, because the steep walls of the mountains themselves proved very difficult for outsiders to penetrate. Interior mountain Berbers were not joined together by a political or military organization, most likely due to the rocky and abrupt nature of the range that made communication difficult. Rather, the inhabitants of the Atlas mountains belonged to small and independent Berber tribes, sharing only a common ancestry and, for some, a common faith: Islam. The physical reality of the environment in which these people lived clearly influenced their culture, government institutions, religion, and ability to form a cohesive whole.

The people of the plains were politically united under the Almoravid Empire. Although Almoravid rule quickly expanded from its western origins and eventually covered all of the Maghreb and Muslim Spain, they could never seize the Atlas mountains, as they were unable to navigate their rough interiors.⁴ In order to give the impression of dominance, the Almoravids excised tributes on the mountain tribes, promising to leave them in peace as long as certain sums of money and goods were paid each year to Marrakesh, the seat of Almoravid power. In the lands that they could control, the Almoravids relied primarily on taxes levied on trade routes.⁵

The Almoravid Berbers were legalistic: they implemented the holy law of the Qur'an in all their lands and ordered scribes and magistrates to strictly follow the Law as mandated by religious text. While they did rely heavily on taxes and tributaries, the Almoravids were prolific spoilers and often ransacked conquered citizens and swaths of land, demonstrating their notorious strict discipline in all aspects of economic, military, and governmental life.⁶ The governmental organization of the Almoravid Empire is quite complex. On one hand, a policy of near non-intervention through the use of tributes was practiced. But on the other hand, the strict implementation of the Sharia over the diverse plains population alienated many and gave the impression that the empire could not transform itself to meet the local needs of the populations it controlled.

The duality in geographic difference created the impetus for seeing mountain Berber tribes as very distinct from their plains counterparts. On the eve of the beginning of the Almohad movement, the political and religious tone of northern Africa can be seen as a product of natural geographic barriers.⁷ These differences, combined with the unhappiness created by the Almoravid Sharia and their tributaries, made the social, political, and cultural environment ripe for a change that could transcend the geographic differences of the region and unite all under a common culture and mission.⁸

Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah Ibn Tumart, a Moroccan Berber by birth and supposedly related to Muhammad, was born c. 1080 AD to a minor chieftain in the village of Igiliz.⁹ He left western Africa to pursue an education in the Middle East, spending most of his time away from home as a student in Egypt and Syria studying under many renowned and famous scholars, Abu Bakr ash-Shashi and al-Mubarak Ibn 'Abd al-Jabbar having the greatest influence on the young student.¹⁰ He became a jurist – a *safiq* – with an education rooted in ethics, philosophy, and judicial protocol.¹¹ By 1118 AD, he decided that he had a divine mission to return to the Muslim West and lead a religious reformation in the area,¹² because the Almoravids undermined the historical orthodoxy of the Maghreb.¹³ This decision to return west marked the beginning of a long period of training and wandering throughout North Africa, mostly Algeria, where he met one of his most ardent supporters, 'Abd al-Mu'min.¹⁴ Greatly gifted linguistically, Ibn Tumart's teachings in Arabic and Berber¹⁵ began spreading throughout the region, and he began

amassing an impressive number of listeners, though the results were often mixed.¹⁶ Suddenly, Ibn Tumart decided that it was time he return to his homeland, and he set out for Marrakesh, where he began deliberately clashing with Almoravid officials, declaring, according to the great chronicler Ibn Khalikan,¹⁷ that he hated “those who did not follow the rules of the Shar'i'a.”¹⁸

In Marrakesh, Ibn Tumart met king 'Ali bin Yusuf at a mosque. After this encounter, the king decided to host a debate, because he was greatly impressed by Ibn Tumart's intellect and knowledge of the world.¹⁹ The Almoravid king gathered his most impressive and renowned advisors and instructed them to justify the Almoravid legal positions and conversely asked Ibn Tumart to defend his attacks of these very positions. By all accounts, Ibn Tumart won due to his extensive religious knowledge, world-class education, and sheer eloquence. Greatly jealous about being outshone by a newcomer, the advisors asked the king to capture and kill Ibn Tumart. While it is largely unknown as to why the king did not kill him outright, he decided to banish Ibn Tumart from the empire, leaving a lasting impression of hostility on the traveling scholar.

Ibn Tumart noticed that while inside the Almoravid Empire's chief cities, he had continually attracted warm receptions by those outside the sphere of the Almoravid bureaucracy. This welcoming made him resolve not to leave the empire, but to force its rulers to live by his conception of the proper Islam. To do this, Ibn Tumart went to the Atlas mountains and began an extensive diplomatic campaign that involved talking to many tribal leaders to secure their support for a regional reformation. With followers increasing in number, Ibn Tumart made the decision that the rampantly corrupt Almoravid Empire needed to be wholly overthrown if a true and virtuous Islam was to exist. Returning to his hometown of Igiliz, Ibn Tumart began sending out emissaries throughout the Atlas mountain region.

But Ibn Tumart's time in Igiliz was limited, and he was soon forced to flee his birthplace. Fearful of a growing Berber movement in the Atlas region, 'Ali bin Yusuf sent troops to Igiliz to extinguish the movement by killing Ibn Tumart and his many followers. Ibn Tumart escaped death, because he received help from numerous chieftains dedicated to his cause. Needing a more secure location out of which he could base his operations, Ibn Tumart moved his entourage to Timmel, a safe haven close to Marrakesh and secured in a valley protected by mountains. Here, Ibn Tumart perfected his religious movement.

Ibn Tumart's unitarian movement, known as *al-muwahhidun* or Almohad, is described in a book Ibn Tumart wrote for the Berbers. The ideal central to Ibn Tumart's philosophy, known as *tawhid*, postulates that there is only One God, one divine individual responsible for leading faithful Muslims and capable of creating miracles on Earth. God's Oneness, as Ibn Tumart imagined it, means that He does not have disciples or divisions, but that He is wholly omnipotent and omnipresent as one sole entity.²⁰ Ibn Tumart summarizes his vision of *tawhid* quite eloquently in the *Marshida*:

He [God] is unique in entity; nothing coexists with Him, nothing exists outside of Him, neither land nor sky, nor water nor air, neither populated nor unpopulated world, neither light nor shadow, nor night nor day, nor reality nor noise, sound nor murmur; there is only the Unique, the Irresistible. He is in all eternity the only one to possess uniqueness, domination and divinity. Nothing guides created things with Him, nothing shares power with Him. He has the sentence and the decision; the land and the praise.²¹

The book is divided into seven different parts for each day of the week, each with a specific message to be accompanied by a reading of the Qu'aran. Followers of Ibn Tumart took on the movement's title, literally translated as “those who declare *tawhid*.²²

This massive educational mission, as documented by the anonymously-authored chronicle *al-Hulal al-Mayshiyah*, was aimed at propagating several principle tenants, aside from *tawhid*, to Ibn Tumart's people.²³

The first of these tenants is that Ibn Tumart rejected notions that the movement was political. To him, it was central that he and his movement be identified as a movement based on theology. In its early stages, the movement did not have a political agenda and did not seek to overthrow the power and the authority of the Almoravids. This eventually changed, but it is essential to insist that at the beginning, the Almohad leader sought not to amass political control, but only to bring theological reforms to his homeland due to his claimed love for fellow Berbers. This movement also was gradual, meaning Ibn Tumart believed that neither he nor others could arrive swiftly at true religion.²⁴ In his own life, he was careful to point out that his strong faith was not immediate, but a slow, sometimes arduous, and learned process whereby a formal religious education was needed. His own experience with religiosity meant that followers of *al-muwahhidun* would need to go through their own process of reformation, this being the only way of assuring that one's faith was virtuous and steadfast.²⁵

The legal nature of the Shari'a instituted by the Almoravids had, according to a main tenant of the *al-muwahhidun* movement, undermined the possibility of true faith. The legally-bound Almoravid faith had been founded by 'Abd Allah ibn Yasin,²⁶ who believed that the Almoravid Berbers ought to conquer in the name of faith and, expectedly, reform the religion of the region.²⁷ To counter the region's historic mysticism, which was perceived as a great weakness by ibn Yasin, the Almoravid administration decided to implement a highly uniform and legalistic version of Islam across the lands of the Empire. Even though ibn Yasin clearly could be regarded as a reformer, Ibn Tumart believed that legal demands undermined the personal spirituality of the individual, leaving a great personal void in the intimate, not public, faith of the Maghrebans. And, to make matters worse, the system of tributes as practiced by the Almoravids meant that the rulers of the empire had little interest in the peoples of their tributaries. Ibn Tumart and his followers considered this proof that the religion of the Maghreb - Almoravid Islam - needed to be reformed, because it neglected the souls of its inhabitants and put a premium on outward demonstrations of Islam, but wholly denied inner spirituality.²⁸ *Al-muwahhidun* was supposed to turn the Berbers back onto the right path of Islamic faith, a path that was individual and personal.

Tributary relationships inside the Almoravid Empire also created a system in which the Law was seemingly inferior to local customs. Ibn Tumart sought to inverse this relationship, believing that the Law should always trump local traditions and that "all required by the Law is right."²⁹ *Al-muwahhidun* was a full system of living, encompassing aspects of life. The Law was to instruct governing bodies and was also to instruct individuals on how to live their daily lives in a way that was in harmony with Islam. If a local tradition or custom came into contradiction with Ibn Tumart's interpretation of the Law, that local tradition or custom was to be erased. In all cases, the Law was indisputably superior.³⁰

This hierarchical conception of power was founded on the premise that government's power was temporal, but the spiritual power of Islam was atemporal. While earthly governments fade, rise, and evolve, Ibn Tumart believed religious authority never changed, making it a more stable institution than that of the government. This religious power, thought Ibn Tumart, relied on a steady stream of ministry that continually monitored the faith of its adherents. Ibn Tumart envisioned a world where the spiritual ministry of the state was wholly equal to other state functions, such as levying taxes, addressing legal issues, and maintaining territorial integrity and expansion. *Al-muwahhidun* believed that if the state did not provide for the spiritual needs of its citizens, it was refusing to carry out one of its chief--and most important--missions on earth, eventually leading to the state's earthly demise. The Almoravids, in their quest to

only instill the population with Islam legally, did not address the inhabitants' needs for spiritual leadership.

The notion of a hierarchy of power was also to be implemented inside the Islamic faith itself. In the Islamic faith there is the notion that near the end of the world, there will be a man who purifies the entire world and all of humanity under Islamic Law. This man, known as the *mahdi*, is to purify Islam and attract new converts to the faith. Soon, with Ibn Tumart as the self-established and unequivocal head of his movement, members of *al-muwahhidun* began calling him *mahdi*. With this development, Ibn Tumart was invested with seemingly infallible power, clearly denoting him the movement's sole centralized patriarch.

Now with a firm doctrinal basis to his religious movement, Ibn Tumart added missionaries to the ranks of his political emissaries. These missionaries spread the doctrine in the Berber language, while always asserting that the *mahdi* was infallible and that a proper understanding of theology was necessary to have true Islamic faith. But right in the middle of this religious revival, Ibn Tumart himself died several months after the fateful Battle of Al-Buhaira on 13 or 14 August 1130 AD.³¹ This battle was legendary, because it was fought between the followers of Ibn Tumart and the Almoravids. Even though the Almoravids were victorious, Ibn Tumart was considered the actual victor simply because he managed to create an army out of a great number of disenfranchised, diverse tribes. Due to the nascenty of Ibn Tumart's movement, his death after the battle was kept a secret from the general public for two to three years. During this time, his closest advisors claimed that the leader was sick and could not leave his home, but was still directing them regarding the daily tasks and overall goals of the movement. Once his death was finally announced, 'Abd al-Mu'min ibn 'Ali was named Ibn Tumart's successor by the five people who knew of the *mahdi*'s death when it happened.³²

'Abd al-Mu'min was the first to call Ibn Tumart *mahdi* and as such took on a special role in Ibn Tumart's religious--and increasingly political--movement. After the *mahdi*'s death, 'Abd al-Mu'min inherited the Caliphate and with it one central problem. The Battle of Ali-Buhaira proved that although the non-Almoravid Berber tribes could be united under a common mission, their military strength did not match their strong organizational union. It would be up to 'Abd al-Mu'min to capitalize on this bond and transform it into an undefeatable martial force. Over time, 'Abd al-Mu'min did slowly and methodologically create a strong army out of these diverse tribes, explaining why he is generally considered the true founder of the Almohad Empire. As time went on, the Almohads gained more and more territory and conquests, drastically increasing Almohad lands. 'Abd al-Mu'min overthrew the Almoravids, but this was largely due not to military defeat, but to the large numbers of people willingly converting to Ibn Tumart's cause, demonstrating that the success of 'Abd al-Mu'min was tied to a clear attraction to the teachings of the late Ibn Tumart.

Ibn Tumart intricately understood the region's cultural, social, and political circumstances, which allowed his movement to appeal to the North African inhabitants. Ibn Tumart's native sensitivities allowed him to incorporate regional traditions into his religious movement. While he stated through his doctrinal movement that the Law was to always remain superior to local tradition, reality provides a different story. Ibn Tumart actually permitted familiar structures--such as the tribe--to remain, so long as they evolved into a body that could effectively serve his purposes. Ibn Tumart's *al-muwahhidun* appears nothing more than a series of manipulations and tokens given to tribal chieftains and converts in order to grow the movement. Because the writings of Ibn Tumart indicate that he was indeed a faithful follower who supposedly had no political inclinations, but only looked out for the spiritual well-being of his people, Ibn Tumart's true intentions and motives will conceivably forever remain unknown.

Essentially, Ibn Tumart is an enigma and utterly contradictory. While many

branches of Islam drawn upon matriarchal inheritances and structures, there is evidence that Ibn Tumart permitted some matriarchal inheritances, this appealing to local tastes.³³ The conception of the *mahdi* itself too clearly seems to violate his notion of *tawhid*, because he places himself effectively over all earthly men.³⁴ Ibn Tumart was a highly educated scholar with a penchant for talking persuasively, a person who was diplomatically skilled enough to convince Islamic Berbers that his movement was more pure and orthodox than that of the Almoravids, even though *al-minwahidim* appears greatly tainted with political and cultural—i.e. worldly—components. History will never fully reveal Ibn Tumart, a man whose life has been said to parallel the Prophet's,³⁵ thus, it is more fruitful to look to the followers, rather than the leader, to understand the realities of the movement.

The widespread willingness of the Maghreban people to accept the spiritually strict (and supposedly theologically pure) religion promulgated by Ibn Tumart suggests that there was something more to Ibn Tumart's doctrine than the formulaic and legalistic constructs of the Almoravid religion. This something more is community. While the religion Ibn Tumart offered did indeed demand much from the individual, it offered the individual much in return. This return was a return of comfort, security, and camaraderie that arrived in the soul of a follower once he converted. The religious movement was not confined only to the political and religious institutions of the time, but it fundamentally altered the social and cultural fabric of the Almoravid Empire, culminating in a newly-unified Maghreb. Ibn Tumart's religious movement provided a sense of community to the adherent by offering traditional and familiar forms of political governance, by creating an iron-clad social hierarchy that gave a place to all, and, most importantly, by abstracting the individual, moving him from the traditional world of blood relations to a world of intellect and merit.

In order to understand this abstract movement envisioned by Ibn Tumart, it is necessary to fully understand the structure of Maghreban society contemporary to the *mahdi*. The most fundamental and universal organization of North African society in the first half of the twelfth century AD was the family. Families, depending on the region, were then grouped into specific tribes. Tribes were then organized into larger groups called a “people.” “People” could designate a historical blood tie among a group of tribes, a common social or political heritage, or a common place of inhabitance. It is important to note, though, that blood played an essential element of identity in designating someone of the same family, of the same tribe, and of the same people. The forms of “belonging” were very physical-based and one could not easily, if ever, move between these blood-defined organizations.

Politically speaking, there was much variety in the types of unions that existed in the region. The three main forms of unions—confederations, political tribes, and factions—often varied in strength, but for the most part were not extremely binding. The tribute system permitted a certain level of autonomous local governance due to the relatively laissez-faire policies of the Almoravid Empire. Politically, then, those of the Maghreb were not being abused by the Almoravids; the economic picture, contrarily, is quite different.

Growing discontent among those not of the Almoravid royal house became increasingly effected by a severe division between the wealthy and the hopelessly poor. The fast-growing nature of the Almoravid Empire lead to innumerable pillages and cases of looting. The Almoravids, although of Berber origin themselves, kept this new wealth only inside their tribe's coffers;³⁶ no longer did the Almoravids consider themselves “Berber.” There was a clear distinction made between the Almoravids and the Berbers, triggering an enormous gap between the wealthy inhabitants of the empire and their poor counterparts. Once the conflict started between the Almoravids and the Almohads, wealthy merchants tied closely with the Almoravid house began complaining that the conflict was ruining their businesses and depleting their wealth. A movement founded by

the less-than-wealthy, the Almohads made no effort to appease these merchants, but purposefully distanced themselves.³⁷ The Almohads thus focused on the largesse of the economically disadvantaged.

This economic gap fueled increasing personal aggravation on the part of the excluded Berber tribes. The idea that the royal house, an historically Berber house at that, was consistently becoming more wealthy seemed to be a sign that the Almoravids were denying their heritage and taking advantage of their brothers and fellow kinsmen. The growing gap also fueled a sense of isolation among the many Berber tribes. Economically excluded from the workings of the empire, non-Almoravids had nothing to which they could aspire. They were to simply stay in their villages or their towns and lead quiet lives, except, perhaps, when the Almoravids needed to raise an army. The wealth gap proved a chief weakness in the Almoravid's claim to power, because it alienated the chief supporters of Almoravid's rule, their like people. On the eve of Ibn Tumart's arrival, then, the disgruntled masses greatly wanted a fair, inclusive economic community.

To add to this economic alienation, Ibn Tumart's followers also became increasingly frustrated with the Almoravid judicial jurisdiction of the empire. To assure that the holy Law was applied throughout all accessible regions, the *fiquha*, or doctors of the Shari'a law, were given the mandate to dispense the Law throughout the empire. These *fiquha* were often considered to have no spiritual conviction, but instead appeared mere civil servants. With much control and vested power, these doctors were consistently accused of being narrow-minded and legalistic. Spirituality, as observed by many Berbers, was not exercised at all by the *fiquha*, who came to be resented by those of religious conviction, because the officials seemed mere propagators of religion solely because it helped the royal government assert authority, not because the government had an interest in the spiritual conviction of its inhabitants.

A sense of religious alienation also emanated from societal practices allowed by the Almoravids. Upon arriving in the empire, Ibn Tumart complained of the clothing, public mingling, and goods of the inhabitants. The *mahdi* noted that the luxurious clothing of those of the Almoravid Empire created vain and spoiled women, as well effeminate men. The luxurious clothing, thought Ibn Tumart, was an indication of the pervasive material culture that spread throughout the empire, further moving the inhabitants away from a pure and non-materialistic Islam. On the streets of various cities, Ibn Tumart noted that under the Almoravids, the two sexes were allowed to mingle freely, a clear violation of the Law. Such flagrant displays of sin were not indicative of a regime dedicated to spreading true faith. And, to add to the already long list of Law violations, certain goods that are to be kept in privacy, notably wine and pork, were sold publicly for all to see without any shame. Ibn Tumart, did not blame the individuals committing the offenses, but the leaders who failed to enforce fundamental Islamic Law. According to him, those attempting to live righteous lives were isolated from society, because they were, on a daily basis, forced to violate the tenants of their religion simply by the fact that they were inhabitants of a sinful empire. The system of only implementing the Law in legal settings meant that society deviated drastically from the Prophet's vision of a just Islamic land.

Ibn Tumart wanted to transform this society of sin, though his own vision of the Maghreb cannot be described as a reformation or revolution, but as a contradiction, because he permitted traditional social structures of the region to exist while claiming to be the bearer of an incredibly orthodox and righteous Islam. To reconcile these opposing visions, Ibn Tumart began a series of abstractions.

Social stratification according to ethnic group was long practised throughout the region, but it was not codified or religious in nature. Ibn Tumart created a codified, definite hierarchy that organized ethnic groups according to a system of superiority. Surprisingly, there was little opposition to this plan, even from the bottom. The

momentum behind Ibn Tumart's popularity and movement was so great that even those destined for the bottom of the hierarchy joined the *mahdi*'s ranks, perhaps presuming that some place, no matter how small, in the new order would be better than no place. This system, because it was strict and governed by the *mahdi*, put to rest quarrels among ethnic groups that had lasted for centuries, essentially making it possible for traditional enemies to fight side-by-side against a common enemy. The top of the hierarchy could be occupied by only one individual, the *mahdi* himself, making the *mahdi* the unquestionable political leader of the region. By transforming the old political hierarchy into a religious one, Ibn Tumart preserved the region's traditional desire for hierarchy, while at the same time claiming to have purified the region's traditional orders.

To complement this new hierarchical division of society, Ibn Tumart erased traditional tribal groups, replacing them with political councils that resembled the traditional councils of the tribes and other various tribal institutions. Ibn Tumart's Council of Fifty, the Household People, and the Ten were the three most influential governing bodies created by the *mahdi*. Each had a specific purpose in the administration of *al-muwahhidun*. The Council of Fifty, the largest of these councils, consisted of individuals deemed the greatest and most devoted followers of the *mahdi*. Interestingly, this council had a regional precedent. The largest traditional Berber council of leading tribal chieftains was known as *Ait Arba'in* (the sons of forty). The only difference is that, in addition to the ten extra positions, the Council of Fifty was religious and derived its power directly from the *mahdi*. Ibn Tumart also created his own advisory committee, the Household People. This privy council had no precedents in Berber society and was charged with advising the *mandi* and maintaining the royal house. The last council Ibn Tumart created was the most prestigious of the three, called the Ten, which consisted of the ten individuals said to have first called Ibn Tumart "*mahdi*." These ten were the closest confidants of Ibn Tumart and would come to play an increasingly important role in the Almohad movement after the *mahdi*'s death.

All of society was aimed towards reaching the grand ideals set by Ibn Tumart's *al-muwahhidun*. For education, this meant rewarding those who were said to have "exceptional gifts." Generally this meant defending Ibn Tumart's legitimacy and the validity of his movement, as well as spreading it through the newly-established *al-muwahhidun* Caliphate.³⁸ It is still important to note, as it is another clear sign that Ibn Tumart wanted to move away from a blood-based system of reward in favor of an abstract version based on merit. With this move, Ibn Tumart effectively fixed the alienation problem. The only reason for alienation would be wavering support for the *mahdi*. Ideally, all who supported *al-muwahhidun* would automatically receive the benefits of membership in this new society. To Ibn Tumart, blood relations as a social determiner needed to be eliminated, because they clearly violated the Law. Merit-based participation, then, was the only way Ibn Tumart could save local traditions. It is this abstraction--the move away from a sanguine tribal system to a religious tribal system--that actually permitted Ibn Tumart to offer something the Almoravids simply could not: a unifying vision for the Maghreb that looked strikingly similar to the ways of old, to the dear traditions of the ancestors.

Ibn Tumart's vision allowed all those previously disenfranchised to take part in society, creating a large Islamic empire that valued all converts. But what constitutes this community? When attempting to grasp "community" in this region, it is vital to understand Islam as a complex structure of both religious teachings and socio-political structures.³⁹ This stems from the desire of Mohammad to create "a more stable and more devoutly organized of his people"⁴⁰ that would truly create a religious community greatly interested in the social and private lives of its citizens.⁴¹ In the medieval ages, the Maghreb was consistently undergoing conflicts of identity and space, not certain where it belonged and what its destiny would be.⁴² Throughout history, the Maghreban identity has been two-fold: one part religious and the other of the royal house.⁴³ The region's

religion, for several centuries before Ibn Tumart's birth, had been firmly established as Islam.⁴⁴ Ibn Tumart believed the Almoravids to be a temporary interruption and proposed a Caliphate that was highly religious, but essentially the chief secular power as well.⁴⁵ Ibn Tumart was so successful in amassing followers, because he offered a clear vision of community for the Maghreb: united under a Caliphate that, through its personal and divine care for all, permeated all facets of life. Ibn Tumart's calls to rid the area of the Almoravids and wed the political and religious realms under one yoke were perhaps the most appealing aspects of his movement, most likely explaining its widespread acceptance in North Africa, as this promised a closing of the wealth gap and an inclusive feeling that had not been seen in the region for hundreds of years.⁴⁶ And Ibn Tumart's religion guaranteed one more thing: all members of the empire had an "internal solidarity" that was the foundation for a common identity.⁴⁷ Community, then, seems to be the notion that someone is part of a larger something, some outside entity, rather than being part of nothing.

The birth of the Almohad movement in the twelfth century AD was, therefore, a re-conceptualization of the region's economic, political, social, and religious institutions that was provoked primarily by the desire of neglected and alienated North Africans to form a sense of community. Ibn Tumart's genius is that he took advantage of a malaise provoked by a rigid, unbending centralized Almoravid government and capitalized on the unhappiness of many diverse groups to spark a revival. In the end, the region became more religious than ever, for Ibn Tumart had awakened a belief in God among the followers of Islam. But, this belief was not solely a religious belief. It was a belief in God that allowed for the preservation of ancient customs and traditions, for those of excess to be condemned, for loyal merit to replace arbitrary blood, for a true belief in the supremacy of compassionate divine law to replace a legalistic and unsympathetic Shari'a, and for all believers to join together under a common union. Eventually, this movement would decline, as almost all empires do.

After Ibn Tumart's and 'Abd al-Mu'min's deaths and the eventual cessation of military battles, the Almohads ceased to convert individuals and fell into a state of utter stagnation.⁴⁸ After years of war, the Almohads had gathered an impressive amount of wealth and their loyal soldiers were tired of fighting countless battles. Not wanting to jeopardize their personal fortunes and risk losing the support of their army, the Almohad leadership settled on a plan of lazy peace that drastically differed from the risky and energy-laden early years of the movement.⁴⁹ With no inspiring leaders, the Almohad doctrine became increasingly irrelevant to the lives of its followers, eventually leading the powerful Berber caliph al-Ma'mun to slowly repeal the Almohad doctrine between 1228 AD and 1232 AD, stating that the declaration of Ibn Tumart as *mahdi* was a great heresy that invalidated the entire doctrine.⁵⁰ The religious decline of the Almohad dynasty lead to a political decline as well, with the empire falling to Christians in Spain by 1223 AD⁵¹ and finally collapsing in 1269 AD.⁵² Ultimately, it can be said that Ibn Tumart's movement was a political failure,⁵³ but it did leave lasting contributions in many areas, including literature, arts, architecture, landscaping, spatial reasoning⁵⁴ and a great revival of classical Islamic simplicity in many facets of North African culture.⁵⁵

Failure, therefore, is completely subjective. Above all, the birth of this movement forces us to consider the extent to which individuals will go to seek a sense of community. What happens when individuals are truly isolated with nowhere to turn? If the birth of this movement is traced and analyzed carefully, it can be seen that truly alienated individuals will look past historic differences and contradictory leaders to join a unifying cause that offers some hope of establishing a cohesive and inclusive community of merit and loyalty through religion.

Notes

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The Intoxicating Joy of Speed:
The Early Automobile versus the New York Horse, Park, and Human, 1895-1905

THOMAS HU DYNE

On a Friday afternoon at the turn of the last century, an attorney from midtown Manhattan was arrested for driving his automobile through the entrance of Central Park. This act polarized the New York public, setting off a series of court cases, public hearings, and newspaper articles which centered on the new horseless contraptions from Paris. The history of the early days of the automobile reads as a narrative of nature versus technology, much as it does today; however, the differences in the two similar debates testify to the integral nature of the car's place in America today. While concerns over the sustainability, expensive operating costs, and harmful environmental effects of petroleum-based engines now dominate the concerns of many drivers, no such troubles plagued motorists a century ago. Indeed, the early development of the motor car, and its introduction into the United States, were marked by entirely different concerns. By 1905, the decade-old automotive industry had experienced two significant changes: while on one hand it had become a quickly growing, heavily invested industry, on the other it was eliciting more derision from the American public than ever before. Many made arguments attesting to the car's inherent "unnaturalness", yet, the "automobilists" made the same points in their support of their vehicles, seeing them not only as divergences from but also as improvements upon nature. Early reports thus presented the automobile as a threefold corruption of nature, pointing to the car's detrimental effects on the horse, the countryside, and the human. While these examples were given as either cause enough for its banishment, or as reason aplenty for its permanency, they marked the reversal of the automobile's image in American society, no longer the harbinger of a new age worthy of awe and praise, but rather, a deteriorious, although ultimately unavoidable, necessity.

Early reports of the introduction of self-propelled vehicles from Paris immediately pitted the new machines against the stalwart institution of transportation, the horse. While the London-based *Engineer*, one of Britain's "foremost technical journals," announced a whopping 1,000 guinea grand prize for the inventor of a practical engine for "horseless vehicles," the *New York Times* dubbed the event "Plotting against Horses," recalling a London Spectator report which predicted the impending "doom of the horse." Horseless carriages had first been tested and popularized in France the previous summer, when 50,000 francs was offered to the winner of an endurance race from Paris to Bordeaux and back; the victorious petroleum-powered four-seater completed the trip in just over two days, averaging a speed of six miles-per-hour.² While the car was making its first practical forays into British and French culture, in the United States it began to pique the interest of consumers and capitalists alike. Writing in the following year, Oliver McKee predicted the coming of an automotive revolution, whereby all modern delivery work, in the city or the suburb, from the farm or the factory, would be relegated to self-propelled vehicles. "The horse and the motor have entered the lists in a contest for supremacy," he writes, predicting that while the automobile delivers produce to the marketplace, "the living horse left idle in his stall [will] die a natural death," for the car can do his work more quickly, more efficiently, and less expensively.³ Experts across the country predicted just such a transportation revolution, framing their unhidden awe of the automotive marvel with a tasteful derision of the antiquated animal. Indeed, as the auto finally arrived on American shores, its popularity soared amongst the elite few who could

afford to buy one. Early ads extolled the beauty of its simplicity, the ease of its controls, and the power of its engine, boasting its top speed of thirty-five and its certified French origins, where the "perfection of horseless equipages" had been reached.⁴ The hefty six-hundred dollar asking price did not stop crowds of people attending public displays of the machine; presenters at the 1899 Chicago Bicycle Show stopped giving free rides in the evenings, because the thronging crowd of people drawn to see new motorcycles on display was "too great."⁵ While cars remained mechanical marvels in America, they were rapidly becoming an integral part of the social scene in France. J. M. Erwin wrote in 1897 of their "supposed utility," dashing about Parisian streets carrying ladies "of fashionable appearance" as they conspicuously and noisily went about their business of making calls and attending to bargain sales.⁶

Some did come to the defense of the horse. While still predicting that eventually, horses would cease to be an "important factor in the transportation of human beings," *Times* columnists wrote in 1897 that man can never love the car as he has the horse. When the horse leaves the city streets, "he will take with him a kind of picturesqueness which the self-moving wagon will never supply."⁷ Although he may idealize its mechanism, man "is not likely ever to love the automobile" as he does the "gracefulness of the horse," and likewise will certainly not get used to "speeding along the road behind nothing."⁸ Contemporary accounts rewarded points for practicality to the horse after harsh winters, for while the car would have to be significantly over-powered "to buck its way through a snowdrift," it is the "distinction of the horse that he has already been so overengined by nature for his usual tasks that he can be trusted for this extra service." The horse could be used to rescue a snowbound auto, while the same could not be said of the machine.⁹ Writers waxed poetic over the fate of the poor animal, whose role was rapidly being replaced by manmade machines, while simultaneously praising the efficiency and beauty of the car itself. That the car would prevail over the horse was all but accepted by 1899, when the *LA Times* reprinted an article from *Collier's Weekly* which stated that "[i]n the case of the automobile vs. the horse, the public already has rendered a verdict for the plaintiff, with these findings: The automobile is ready without having to be hitched up."¹⁰ The article further expands upon the ease of use of the new machine, remarking that no coachmen or stables are necessary, and that anybody, "man or woman, who can ride a bicycle, can run it." Indeed, the car is cheaper too, and the "expense of operation is slight;" the recently attempted 1,100-mile journey from Cleveland to New York was completed on six dollars of gas. Besides being a more economically sound investment, the auto is even extolled as a superior creation, as it "never gets hungry or thirsty, never suffers from heat or cold, never takes flight and runs away, and doesn't fall off in condition for lack of exercise."¹¹ The car, as a creation of man for a singular purpose, is exempt from the trappings of nature.

This conceptualization accepts the motorcar's detractors' assertions that it is a digression from nature, and expounds upon them further, insisting that it is even an enhancement. In his history of the rise of car culture, Kenneth Schneider quotes a 1907 *Harper's Weekly* article "The Horse of the Future and the Future of the Horse," in which author Winthrop Scarritt assures the reader of the enormity of this concept of the automobile as not just a replacement, but as an improvement.¹² Mankind has "finally segregated a little bit of the giant forces of nature and hitched it to his individual chariot. What human mind can measure the meaning of this mighty fact?" The automobile, man's subjugation of nature to his will, will become a "ready, tireless and faithful servant" in every free and civilized country, he asserts.¹³ Essayists and columnists widely lauded the automobile as the harbinger of this new era of advancement.¹⁴ Whether its fashionable use by the well-to-do, or its undeniable efficiency was given as the reason, the machine was set to dominate nature, and the horseless to conquer the horse. The auto age was upon America in 1899, and just as the car certainly had an assured place in the future of the country, the horse "must sooner or later become an

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extinct creature.¹⁵ Premonitions that the auto might replace the horse evolved into predictions that the horse itself would be extinct; even before production of the internal combustion engine was improved, there was "no longer any reasonable doubt that we are at the threshold of a new era as regards the ways and means of locomotion," exclaimed the *LA Times* in 1899. As the automobile is perfected, roads smoothed for its use, and its popularity spreads, "the horse will disappear."¹⁶

As the petrol-powered internal combustion engine took charge in the automotive world, proving the car cheaper, quicker, and cleaner than the horse, the question was no longer, "What should people drive?" but rather shifted to, "Where can I drive?" The atmosphere of man-made auto domination over the animal kingdom, which had pitted the car against nature from its inception, gave rise more fully to such a dichotomy as the car found itself battling nature proper. It was in this polarized atmosphere, then, that on Friday October 27, 1899, Winslow E. Buzby drove his Victoria phaeton into Central Park. Buzby entered the park at Fifty-Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, accompanied by his friends (and fellow attorneys) Whittney Lyon and William Beatty. Buzby, a member of the newly-formed Automobile Club of America, had previously applied to the Park Board for a permit to drive his "pleasure carriage" through the park gates, but had been denied on each occasion, most recently in June 1899. George C. Clausen, the board's president, stated that "it was not thought proper to use the Park for such a vehicle, which might frighten horses and otherwise be a disfigurement or annoyance."¹⁷ Buzby complained later to the *Times* that he had suggested the Park be opened to one or two cars in the charge of "a few experienced automobilists," to prove to the people that the vehicles would not frighten horses. Alternatively, he suggested that the cars be allowed in for a few hours each day in order "to accustom horses who are habitually driven in the Park to the sight of the motor carriages." Although President Clausen promised to take the proposals under advisement, further inquiries to Board Secretary William Holly convinced Buzby that "there was not the slightest prospect of anything being done in the matter by the department."¹⁸ Equally frustrated by the Automobile Club's lack of action, the automobilist then decided to test the law himself.

Buzby was stopped by Policeman John P. Keenan of the "Park squad," who informed him that his automobile was not allowed in the Park. Buzby replied that he knew of "no law against horseless carriages entering the Park, and went on." Keenan stopped him a second time and as he persisted to drive on, arrested him, and escorted him to the Arsenal Station on the grounds of "disorderly conduct and resisting the police."¹⁹ Police Captain England at the Arsenal Station became particularly incensed with Buzby; upon realizing that he had had himself arrested purposefully to test the law, the Captain asserted that "if there isn't a law excluding you, we'll pass one that will!" To Buzby's postulation that the Captain was overstepping his bounds, and in fact had no such authority, the latter replied that he would work to ensure that autos were forever banned from the park, and promised to give testimony against them if called on in court. Buzby later assured the *Times* that automobiles are no different from "any other kind of pleasure carriages or bicycles," and as such should not be excluded from the park. Citing the widely accepted presence of cars in Prospect and Riverside Parks, as well as their longstanding and horse-friendly acceptance in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris, Buzby denounced the discriminatory barring of cars from Central Park as "absurd." The horse who is frightened at the sight of an automobile, he concluded, "would just as easily be scared, and with equal danger to the public, by the sight of a piece of paper blown along by the wind or at a child's sudden yell."²⁰ In its victory over the animal, the car adds insult to injury by turning the horse into a danger to its former masters. The original primary concern, then, was not that the car would be an unsightly smut in the otherwise perfect pastoral preserve of the park, but rather that the introduction of such machinery would endanger the lives of park patrons by *upsetting horses*, the very animals the car was meant to have replaced.

It is neither a coincidence that Buzby drove into the park with two lawyers, one of whom immediately posted his \$300 bail, nor that his excursion took place one week before the Automobile Club's first parade through New York. A night meeting of the Club's Board of Governors finalized the plans for the one-hundred car procession, which promised "to be a very successful affair" along Fifth Avenue, around the city, and finally to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, the management of which had recently announced its intentions to replace its horse-drawn cab service with autos in light of constantly increasing demand. The same meeting's members vowed to give their "hearty support" to Buzby in his suit against Park Commissioner Clausen "to a finish."²¹ Their support was not required for long. Magistrate Olmsted of the Yorkville Court threw out the case, ruling that Buzby was not guilty of disorderly conduct at all. When the Park Board counsel protested that the Greater New York charter empowers the Commissioners "to make rules for the use of the parks," Olmsted pointed out that the laws must be equal in all boroughs; although his testimony was ultimately not called for, the eager Captain England "broke into the discussion" with the remark that all vehicles not drawn by horses are prohibited from the park.²² Olmsted reminded the Captain that "the rules do not say any such thing," and instead clearly state that the park's loop drive "shall be used only by persons in pleasure carriages, on bicycles, or on horseback." By interpreting the phrase "pleasure carriages" as inclusive of automobiles, Magistrate Olmsted admitted that he had effectively ruled that the vehicles may be used in the park without restriction.

President Clausen and Captain England did not react well to the verdict, the former giving special orders "to continue the enforcement of the rules just as in the past," the latter declaring that he would continue to bar the motor car, "a menace to the safety of those who already frequent the Park."²³ This victory for the underdog automobile can be seen simultaneously as an easy win for high-powered Manhattan attorneys against a park council of old cantankerous curmudgeons – Buzby and his fellow auto-club car owners were eager simply to drive their cars in new places, for the automobile was still "the plaything of the few," and had not yet become "the servant of many."²⁴ Nonetheless, the immediate political and public reaction attest to the popularity of Buzby's case: the same day Olmsted delivered his decisive verdict and Clausen his obstinate promise, New York Councilman Stewart M. Brice presented an ordinance allowing for the use of motor cars in the entirety of the city, parks included. Remarking that there is no good reason that the cars should be prohibited from one side of Fifty-Ninth Street and not the other, Brice testily posited that Clausen's Park Board is in dire need of an improved education in the matter.²⁵ The New York public also weighed in heavily in support of the automobile. A week after Olmsted's ruling, the park board members heard a public debate at the Central Park Arsenal. Arguments on both sides of the "proposed invasion of the 'horseless carriage'" were heard, and "ripples of merriment were frequent" throughout the packed meeting.²⁶ Again, the debate centered on the danger frightened horses would present to the park's pedestrians. Experienced automobilists insisted that their machines had never caused runaways, including George Chamberlain, vice president of the Automobile Club, who recalled his summer-long four-hundred mile car trip through New England which had resulted only in one scared animal, who was already a "chronic runaway," he added. Horsemen weighed in as well, some insisting that reckless carriage drivers were always culpable for their own horses' fear.²⁷ Here the "French plan...of examining and licensing automobile drivers" was promoted as a practical solution to those who objected to reckless vehicle operators' lack of respect for those on horseback or on foot. Although frightening animals was the primary concern of those who wished to bar the vehicle's entry to the park, some pointed to the car's dangerous instability and untested nature. To those who mentioned the car's unreliability, automobilists were keen to point out that horses break down too. Representatives of the Hackmen's Association consented, but added that 'horses cannot explode.'²⁸

Ex-Police Magistrate Charles Simms summed up the prevailing belief with his final remarks at the public meeting. He postulated that the car will be admitted even if the law must be changed, for any argument against cars in any part of the city is irrevocably founded on an investment in, over reliance on, or fondness for an old-fashioned and outmoded system. Simms succinctly concluded: "It is the same old opposition to improvements. The locomotive, the cable car, the trolley, and the bicycle were all opposed, but they are all there and we are glad of it."³⁹ The automobile's presentation at least affected Board President Clausen's opinion, who admitted that a trial should be made in the park to determine the car's detrimental effects firsthand. While he acknowledged that everyday horses which "draw ordinary plebeian vehicles" are used to seeing anything in the street, the meeting of the car and the highly strung, sensitive animals of Central Park would surely culminate in a deadly stampede.⁴⁰ Eventually though he consented to be driven through the park in an automobile to make a final judgement on its effects: R. A. C. Smith took Clausen for a ride in his electric pleasure carriage with the aim of bringing the president to the automobile's way of thinking. The simple drive turned into an event of some spectacle, as Clausen ordered the car to be escorted by six mounted police officers, just in case. The *Times* reported that the growing crowd of interested onlookers first thought Admiral Dewey was in the car, and later generally assumed that a bank president had been arrested and was being escorted to the station house.⁴¹ Nonetheless, the vehicle's occupants were "serenely unconscious that one of them was supposed to be a defaulter." The trip went smoothly, and aside from a few horses who seemed to shy away, no animals were frightened; however, president Clausen's reservations on the future of the automobile were not improved. In an attempt to show off his car's capabilities, Smith broke an axle on his car and literally brought the first approved trial of a car in Central Park to a grinding halt. Clausen's unexpected walk home did not seem to affect his already changed mind, though, as his later statement reveals: "If... future trials are satisfactory, I will introduce a resolution to the effect that the prohibition against automobiles be rescinded."⁴² Smith's permit to drive was finally approved, the anxieties of the Automobile Club members were at last assuaged, and the car's place in New York City was firmly assured.

This was the deciding moment when the car stopped representing the apogee of American technical progression in the form of a prestigious status symbol, and instead started to become a danger to society that must be dealt with, embodying everything from a general nuisance to an instrument of death. Within five years of the car's admission into Central Park, the last bastion of New York soil that it had not yet conquered, magazines and newspapers were inundated with complaints against the motorized monstrosity's severely deleterious effects on city parks. Once they had been "allowed to join the procession of wealth, beauty, and fashion" already on display in the park, automobile flocks there in numbers.⁴³ To regain a semblance of control over the park, the Commissioners, still under President Clausen, issued a speed limit in 1901, forbidding any auto from traveling above seven miles per hour within the park limits, and half that when passing a horse.⁴⁴ The Automobile Club of America reacted strongly to this declaration, calling it wanton discrimination and a "prohibitive restriction," for it would essentially limit travel for all vehicles in the park to three-and-a-half miles per hour. Claiming that the car should not be restricted from going just as fast as other vehicles (horses were allowed to always maintain a speed of seven), the Auto club declared that it would engage in another test case of the matter.⁴⁵ Mr. Buzby's purposeful arrest had set a precedent on which many were now willing to follow suit. This new pitting of the automobile against the law would soon be tested further.

Indeed, complaints over the behavior of car drivers started pouring in. That the obtrusive and ostentatious activities of automobileists "dissipates the charms of this sweetly rural landscape" and is effectively ruining the park was a common claim by 1905. Some made claims that the process by which the park was experienced has

changed for the worse: the car driver is taking in the Park, "not as a lovely work of art, to be slowly tasted and enjoyed, but only as a short cut to his possibly lawful but certainly loud and odiferous occasions." People began to realize that smelly and unsightly cars were an intrusion of the "urban sights and sounds" from which one hopes to escape when repairing to the park.⁴⁶ Central Park had been designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux as a civilizing influence away from the built-up urban landscape of the rest of New York – many claimed that the malodorous activities of drivers is a perversion of the park's original intention.⁴⁷ These claims then grounded a "true" appreciation of Central Park firmly in the pastoral, defining it not just as a retreat from the commotion of the city but also by the total absence of the technology that had brought about that commotion. Not only was New Yorkers' ability to appreciate the park collapsing, but so too was the park itself. To the growing complaints that "Central Park was neglected, that it is unsightly in appearance, and that its lawns are ill-kept, and the roads not up to standard," new Park Commissioner Moses Herman replied that the auto-drivers, in their quest to gain the legislative authority necessary to plow their way across the landscape, were solely to blame.⁴⁸ Not only were automobileists themselves incapable of truly appreciating the park as it was meant to have been, but also they were preventing others from doing so as well.

The case against cars did not stop at this abstract notion of their prohibition of a full appreciation of the landscape; increasingly the auto was seen as a tool capable of great destruction. Responding to the slaying of a policeman in the park by a reckless auto driver, one anonymous fed-up horseman wrote in to the *Times* in 1901, stating that while nobody knows "just how many people have been killed, directly or indirectly, through the instrumentality of automobiles," certainly within the last few years "many new graves have been made in this vicinity to receive the victims of these infernal machines."⁴⁹ The "death-dealing" machines speed by at a "horrible" rate of up to twenty-five, throwing horses into a frenzy and striking terror "into the mind of any sentient being" that happened upon the park's walkways. These terrible speeds at which cars are propelled is "the main element of their mischief," the anonymous writer informs, since the average automobileist cares only about outrunning horses, and making his car "cut the wind like a demon." The massacre of innocent bystanders, the terror instilled in horses and man alike, and the destructive reign of the automobile will not end unless the authorities take action to limit the speed of these "elements of destruction and death."⁵⁰ "One Who Drives" was not alone in his derision for the car: newspapers began to run monthly summaries of the auto's death-toll, enumerating in a "record of death" every collision, auto-related injury, or instance of a "devil wagon" causing a horse to rear.⁵¹ After a failed attempt in 1902 to pass a law mandating the registering and numbering of all cars, "a large number of automobileists have concluded that there are no highway regulations which they are bound to obey."⁵² Calls for licensing, registration, legislation, and increased penalties for speeding were made in an attempt to end the "Automobile Terror."

While previously the bane of the horse's existence and soon thereafter an unsightly nuisance to the city park, the automobile was fast becoming seen as a corruptive force for *human* nature. The *LA Times* reported on a dispatch from Paris, where auto violators were being pursued more vigorously: the "core of the auto problem" is this "intoxicating joy of speed."⁵³ By 1903, New Yorkers were up in arms over the constant "outrages" committed by reckless drivers; it was believed that New York contained more of these "twentieth century daredevils" than anywhere else in the country. While newspapers splashed headlines of roving youth gangs slaying innocent bystanders in their cars as the police looked on helplessly, concerned parents, pedestrians, and horsemen alike forbade children to play in the streets, fearing the "menace to life and limb" that was motoring as it was allowed in New York.⁵⁴ The public was now taking

the consequences of the freedoms afforded to the Central Park motorists, as the motorists themselves were not being held accountable for their actions.

The “goggled fools in motors” who speed through the city streets, Central Park included, endangering the lives of children, starting horses, and mowing down policemen, paid their \$25 citations and continued onwards. The automobile was fast becoming presented as a habitual law-breaker, constantly lying about his actual speed to cover his tracks when caught.⁴⁵ Increased legislation may have standardized the regulation of autos and the enforcement of traffic laws, but the car’s popularity only continued to increase at a rate commensurate to the death-toll it was meant to have caused. A 1909 petition from ex-Judge Charles Whitman assured New York Governor Hughes that without immediate legislation and increased punishment, auto-related deaths would increase fivefold.⁴⁶ Just as speed became equated with death, so too did reckless drivers with suffering. Special emphasis on the need to punish and fine dangerous auto drivers was increasingly made: “the law isn’t half severe enough on heartless and reckless chauffeurs,” who careen around at terrific speeds, endangering the lives of everyone around while simultaneously scoffing at the ‘paltry fines’ imposed by the law they flagrantly violate.⁴⁷ Even when the law was imposed, though, suffering did not elicit the immediate relief that was hoped for: although speeding fines were increased and jail sentences were proposed for repeat offenders, by the start of the Great War the ever-increasing number of autos was still exhausting the efforts of the police force, who began to call for a special division devoted solely to the enforcement of traffic laws. Even this dire announcement of the collapsing legislation and still high death-rate came alongside a telling proclamation: “The newest motor cars have lines of much grace.”⁴⁸ The car, instrument of death or not, was here to stay.

In New York, the history of the introduction of the automobile is a complex assembly of narratives of conflict: nature versus technology, old versus new, horse versus motor, man versus law. Winslow Buzby could not have predicted that his pleasure carriage ride in 1899 could have had such far-reaching consequences, but it remains that his violation proved to be the event needed to polarize an already opinionated public. The car had been pitted against the horse from its inception, but this narrative of nature versus technology was fleshed out only when the car’s place in American society was assured. While the concept of the vehicle, still in its infancy, was praised as an awe-inspiring transportation revolution, the actual car in practice soon changed the American public’s mind: it had proved itself a danger to the landscape and its inhabitants not because of any prior misinterpretation of its purpose, but rather because of an underestimation of its potential force in the hands of human operators. Thus, the idea of the car could be lauded, while simultaneously the car itself derided. It was not the car itself, then, that triggered the conceptualization of the vehicle as a necessary evil; rather, it was its implementation at the hands of a reckless few.

Notes

¹ “Plotting against Horses,” *New York Times*, July 16, 1895.

² Ibid.

³ “Horse or Motor?” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb 23, 1896.

⁴ “Display Ad 7 – An Automobile Tricycle,” *New York Times*, Sept 25, 1897.

⁵ “Crowds at the Bicycle Show,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Jan 10, 1899.

⁶ Erwin, JM. “The Automobile in Paris” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov 28, 1897.

⁷ “The Automobile,” *New York Times*, Aug 23, 1897.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Horses and Automobiles,” *New York Times*, Feb 16, 1899, 6.

¹⁰ “The Automobile vs. the Horse,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 9, 1899, D5.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Kenneth Schneider, *Autokind vs. Mankind*, (New York: WW Norton, 1971), 28-29.

¹³ Wintrop Scarritt, “The Horse of the Future and the Future of the Horse.” *Harper’s Weekly*, 1907. Qtd in Schneider, 29.

¹⁴ Schneider, 29-30.

¹⁵ “The Horseless Carriage,” *New York Times*, Oct 2, 1898.

¹⁶ “The Coming of the Automobile,” *Los Angeles Times*, Jun 4, 1899, 2.

¹⁷ “No Automobiles in the Park – Board Decrees that the Vehicles Can-not Enter Central Park.” *New York Times*, Jun 30, 1899, 14.

¹⁸ “Automobiles in the Park – Mr Buzby Gets Arrested to Test the Law on the Subject.” *New York Times*, Oct 28, 1899, 12.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ “The Automobile Parade & The Horse Must Go,” *New York Times*, Oct 31, 1899, 8.

²² “Verdict for Automobiles,” *New York Times*, Nov 1, 1899, 5.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Schneider, 29.

²⁵ “Automobiles in the Parks – Councilman Brice Offers an Ordinance Permitting Them.” *New York Times*, Nov 1, 1899, 5.

²⁶ “Automobiles in the Park.” *New York Times*, Nov 10, 1899.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ “One ‘Auto’ in the Park,” *New York Times*, Nov 14, 1899, 8.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ “Automobiles in the Parks,” *New York Times*, May 3 1901, 16.

³⁵ “Automobilists Protest,” *New York Times*, May 4 1901, 7.

³⁶ “Automobiles in the Park,” *New York Times*, Jul 29, 1906, 8.

³⁷ David Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP), 86-104.

³⁸ “Would Bar Autos from Central Park.” *New York Times*, Jul 26 1907, 7.

³⁹ One Who Drives, “Automobiles and Man-Slaughter.” *New York Times*, Oct 11 1901, 8.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “Many Killed By ‘Devil Wagons.’” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Nov 16, 1902, 63.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ “The Auto Problem.” *LA Times*, Sep 27, 1905, II-4.

⁴⁴ “Chauffeurs who Imperil Lives.” *New York Times*, Nov 22, 1903, 11.

⁴⁵ “Automobile Speed.” *The Washington Post*, Apr 28, 1902, 6.

⁴⁶ “Lively Auto Hearing – Many for Speed Limit.” *New York Times*, May 12, 1909.

⁴⁷ “Chauffeurs.” *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ A. G. Batchelder, “Traffic Problems Loom with Insistence for 1916.” *New York Times*, Jan 2, 1916, A.7.

An Oppressive Silence: The Evolution of the Raped Woman in Medieval France and England

ZOË ECKMAN

Rape was a very prominent issue in several areas of medieval society—especially in the law, the church, literature and everyday life—and the actions of men to define and regulate rape impacted both the way women perceived themselves and the way society viewed the female. The purpose of this paper is to give an overview of how concepts of rape and sexual violence evolved, placing special emphasis on the twelfth to fourteenth centuries and primarily within the traditions of France and England. It will explore the concept of "rape" as it relates to the relationship between men and women in several contexts. The particular areas examined will be religion, literature, law, and society. The lack of any substantial work on perceptions of rape in the Middle Ages makes it difficult to construct a single framework or evolution for the raped woman. The conception of "rape" varied among the members of the Church, lawmakers, poets, kings, peasants, other women and even the raped victims themselves. While we can discern the opinions of the men involved in the process, the most elusive and crucial part of the dialogue is left out: the voice of the woman. Even if we rely on the contemporary sources we have, the facts are still terribly misrepresentative of the actual frequency of rape, as the majority of rape cases went unreported.¹ This paper will argue that the definitions of rape created and enforced by men gave rise to a masculine concept of rape that silenced the voice of the raped woman.

As defined by Roman law, the concept *rapitus* had the literal meaning of "carrying off by force" and was applied to the abduction of a woman against the will of the person under whose authority she lived.² Under its Roman definition, sexual intercourse was not a necessary element³ and the term was also used simply to describe the theft of property.⁴ *Rapitus* was not designated a public crime, but a private one between the abductor and the man who had legal power over the woman or property violently seized.⁵ Constantine, when he became Roman emperor in the early fourth century, made *rapitus* into a public crime, punishable by death.⁶ He also declared that women found conspiring with their abductors to stage their own abduction—as in the cases of women who wished to marry against their parents' wishes—were also subject to the death penalty.⁷ When Justinian became the emperor in the middle of the sixth century, however, he abolished the previous laws concerning *rapitus*, and strongly enforced both the death penalty and a new penalty: confiscation of property. Justinian also specifically described *rapitus* as a sexual crime against only unmarried women, widows, or nuns.⁸ Thus, husbands, under Justinian Law, could not be rapists. Also, the Roman law of *rapitus* was adverse to the marriage of the victim to her rapist, and this wariness—not only because staged abductions were common—continued up to time of Gratian in the mid-twelfth century.⁹

The early Christian belief in the rejection of the body for a new asceticism was grounded in an "ideological subordination of women and misogynist construction of the feminine."¹⁰ Rape, in this new environment, followed the tradition of much older beliefs that rape functioned as an extension of the customary victimization of women—simply a fact of life which was to be accepted by the male members of the Christian society and was not very troubling.¹¹ Augustine himself states that the height of holiness is the rejection of the body, and thus, the rejection of the woman.¹² But then marriage becomes a necessary evil which has to be accepted in order to prevent more serious forms of

sexual deviancy. The marital state allows for the fulfillment of sexual desires within a regulated structure, for the good of peopling the planet. Without the approval of marriage, concubinage, prostitution, and rape would have been the only ways to relieve sexual urges.

Under the teachings of the early church, the sexuality of wives and daughters became the possession and product of their husbands and fathers.¹³ Thomas Aquinas, in the mid-thirteenth century, explained the connection between rape and the male head-of-household when he redefined rape as "the use of violence to deflower a virgin," and then explained, however, that *rapitus* can also be performed on the father in cases where the daughter and her "rapist" conspire and plan abduction to attain approval for their marriage.¹⁴ Under this definition, rape is performed on the body of a woman, but it is the father who is hurt by this violence—the female figure remains completely inferior. Indeed, in the eyes of the Christian church, the only way a woman could be saved from the inferiority of her inherent female nature would be by renouncing her sexuality and "becoming like a man (*vix*) through virginity."¹⁵ In hagiographical literature, the female saint is sanctified by prizing her chastity so highly that she dies defending it.¹⁶

The idea that the female body was the source of human frailty and sinfulness continued to achieve a central position in ideas of rape and masculine application of force on the feminine. It is mentioned in several early penitentials that a man who has sex with a pretty woman is less guilty because her beauty "compelled" him to feel overwhelming sexual attraction. If a man has sex with an ugly woman, then his lust is at fault, but a beautiful woman is something which cannot be resisted and most of the sin lies with her as she is too great a temptation.¹⁷

Another male conception of the guilt of the female body is present in medieval law—derived from the Galenic physiological model—that a woman could not conceive a child unless she consented to intercourse. Not only did she have to consent but, because a woman was believed to conceive only by releasing female sperm through orgasm, she also had to enjoy the intercourse.¹⁸ This "guilt" of the female body would, due to a raped woman's pregnancy, betray the fact she had enjoyed being raped, ending her right to accuse her rapist.¹⁹

Continuing in the vein of the great Christian teachers, the canon lawyers—"those who controlled the production of legal discourse"²⁰—shaped, for the most part, the conceptions of rape between 1140 and 1500.²¹ Of course, these lawmakers were all men. The greatest of these men was Gratian, who, around 1140, revolutionized canon law regarding rape. He moved away from the Roman tradition of rape towards a more sexually-based meaning. He characterized rape as sexual corruption involving both the abduction of the woman, in addition to unlawful intercourse; likewise, rape could only occur if there had been no previous marriage negotiations between the victim and rapist.²² The most defining feature was that coitus was now necessary, and violent abduction for any purpose other than sex did not count as rape.²³ Also, because sexual defilement was not a crime in church law, abduction was also made an essential component.²⁴

The Christian "moralists continued[d] to view rape as an extreme variety of fornication, the inevitable end of lust that has no 'licit outlet'.²⁵ For younger sons, clergymen and lusty knights, rape was the only way they could release their sexual energy. Rape was performed on the female body by the male, and these moralists rarely differed from the common constructs. Occasionally, they admitted, a female may rape a male or another female, but these circumstances were very rare.²⁶ This distinction caused a blurring of the line between forced and voluntary sex. In twelfth-century legal and literary texts, the violent application of the masculine is construed as an expression of "conflicted love," the overwhelming passion that comes to characterize the romances.²⁷

As stated before, the only way a female could escape the machinations of her "lord and master" was by imitating Christ, retaining her sexual purity, and resisting sexual plot feminizes weakness and sexual transgression, and also legitimizes the use of temptation.²⁸ In the hagiographic tradition, the representation of female sinfulness in a

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sexual violence as a test of the "saintly female."³⁹ The male clergymen, however, are in no way held to the same rigid standards, and it is these young clergy who are accused of the majority of the rapes⁴⁰ and then let off very easily by the canons.³¹ Interestingly, these young clergy are also often charged with performing gang rapes as a rite of passage.³²

Throughout the Middle Ages, chastity was viewed as the most important element of female honor.³³ By 1230, the rape of a virgin was considered a felony in the civil law courts and punishable by death or blinding.³⁴ Also, if a man saved a woman from a rapist he was granted the right to marry her, or to approve of her match to another—regardless of her choice in the matter.³⁵ Because a daughter's virginity was her greatest treasure and a financial asset for her father in the business of marriage brokering, these fathers saw rape as the most heinous crime and did everything they could to protect their daughters.³⁶ This inherent value in a virgin's purity probably accounts for the large amount of documents written up for nobles which all center around the practice of "heir and heiress snatching."³⁷ One imagines that a ransom for such a one-of-a-kind treasure must have made the rape of a virgin body (or, in this case, abduction with the threat of rape) very tempting.

Within marriage, however, the protection of the female body became virtually nonexistent. In Roman law, it was clearly stated that a wife could certainly be raped.³⁸ She did not change her physical status upon marriage, so she did not lose any of her legal right to protection against her husband. Quite opposite to this was the Christian view, in which the bonds of marriage that united the husband and wife delegitimized the female body. The body of the wife was no longer her own possession as she had given full rights to both her sexuality and her physical form to her husband during the marriage ceremony.³⁹ The abduction of a fiancée was likewise not classified as rape.

Clearly, the evolving representations of rape have reified the male power structures in other aspects of society.⁴⁰ There is nothing, however, which sticks out in the modern mind like the literary tropes of rape. Ovid, the famous Roman poet, alone had fifty examples of rape, attempted rape, or sexual coercion which was close to rape in his *Amores*.⁴¹ Georges Duby, connecting a male-created literature with the male-political system, called courtly love a "masculine game of power, property and violence."⁴² It is true that the "courtly" medieval literary society to which he was referring viewed sexual aggression as an expression of the natural animal forces of the universe—beneath the notion of *amor*, it was simply an extreme form of intense sexual desire carried through to its natural end.⁴³ The man is powerful and wants to possess the subservient female, so why should he not?

Andreas Capellanus gives a startling description of what one should do if this feeling of *amor* strikes when a peasant is the object:

If you should, by some chance, fall in love with some [peasant] women,
be careful to puff them up with lots of praise and then, when you find a
convenient place, do not hesitate to take what you seek and to embrace
them by force. For you can hardly soften their outward inflexibility so
far that they will grant you their embraces quietly or permit you to have
the solaces you desire unless first you use a little compulsion as a
convenient cure for their shyness.⁴⁴

It is not clear how serious he was, but as Gravdal points out in relation to the equally comic *pastourelle* form, these types of literary representations of rape give it an acceptance, institutionalization, and humor which again ignores the pain and suffering of the female subject.

The male authors of these forms did the greatest harm to the conception of the female body by insisting that the female desires to be ravished.⁴⁵ The male authors, like the sculptors of rape scenes where "the springtime landscape, dainty gestures, controlled

emotional expression, and elegant costumes all serve to prettify the rape," thus silenced female voices and portrayed rape as something which did not harm women, and actually put forward the notion that women did not mean what they say.⁴⁶

The literary tropes built around rape all function for a male audience, and in a masculine context. Often, in the romances, the wife of a noble man is carried off (sometimes even a queen) and the abduction of her body then acts as a display of power within noble spheres as if she were merely the flag in a game of "capture the flag."⁴⁷ Hanawalt and Gravdal both suggest that romances also serve an erotic function, where the male listeners (and writers) could enjoy the sexual domination and violent oppression of the female vicariously through the hero.⁴⁸

The literary traditions of the twelfth through fourteenth centuries brought about a return to legitimization of male force in socially approved relations between men and women.⁴⁹ For example, in tales of courtly love the "theme was violent sudden 'love,' which, like a flame, once kindled was irresistible. It heated the blood, inciting a man to attain at no matter what cost [sexual consummation]."⁵⁰ Virility was an extremely important aspect of masculinity—another factor which suggests the prominence of group rapes by primarily young men.⁵¹

The belief that women enjoyed being raped has a long literary tradition dating back to the early hagiographic writer Wace, who said the "experience of rape is stuporous and trancelike; a woman suffers no pain from sexual assault."⁵² As early as the thirteenth century, in France the conflation of rape and ravishment, and the literal meaning of sexual violence were being erased behind a romantic troping of ravishment. The believed effects of rape on a woman are clearly given by this "romantic" verse: "Never would a woman dare say with her own mouth what she desires so much; but it pleases her greatly when someone takes her against her will, regardless of how it comes about. A maiden suddenly ravished has great joy, no matter what she says."⁵³ Here it is stated that a woman will say something against being raped, but encourages the rapist to ignore what she says as she does not mean it; the victim's voice is taken away from her.

Christine de Pisan, one of the only women to write contemporarily about rape, responded in the early fifteenth century to this silencing masculine monologue with her own resonant voice:

I am therefore troubled and grieved when men argue that many women want to be raped and that it does not bother them at all to be raped by men when they verbally protest... She answered, 'Rest assured, dear friend, chaste ladies who live honestly take absolutely no pleasure in being raped. Indeed rape is the greatest possible sorrow for them.'⁵⁴

Sadly this one voice speaking out against the oppressive masculine authority gets lost in the majority.

Indeed, the voices of women are often forced, if not into obscurity, into contradiction. The popular songs of the thirteenth and fourteenth century become a paradigm for the tolerance and normalization of sexual violence. Due to the sing-song, repetitions, echoing form of the *pastourelle*, a woman becomes a ridiculous figure who contradicts herself and, with her own voice, legitimizes her rape. In a particular *pastourelle*, when a knight spies a peasant, she is singing a happy bit of a nonsense verse that goes: tu-re-lu-re-li, tu-re-lu-re-lay. Then, after the knight has torn off her skirt and raped her, she is forced (by the verse form) to sing the same nonsense refrain.⁵⁵ When the poet isn't busy taking away the victim's voice, he is using it against her.

The first development in medieval rape law was, as stated above, the growing distinction between *rapitus* as a crime against a person, and crimes against property—which eventually became distinguished as only *rapina*.⁵⁶ Gratian was the next great modifier of the rape laws, and he distinguished four separate elements which he claimed distinguished a rape from either an abduction or fornication: the use of violence,

abduction, coitus, and accomplishment without the free consent of one partner.⁸⁸ The amount of non-consent did not have to be extraordinary; in fact even just crying out or weeping was designated as enough resistance to qualify it as a rape.⁸⁹ Cases involving minors, the elderly, or incest were treated the most seriously; cases concerning the rape of marriageable women, wives, widows, or members of the lower class usually ended with just "a slap on the wrist."⁹⁰ The church had jurisdiction over rape, as with all sexual crimes; but in English courts, rapes show up as "trespass" cases rather than felonies because civil action secured a remedy for the victim, while sparing the criminal from death.⁹¹ Rape was a crime where the victim sought the punishment of the accused; if rape victims only wanted monetary compensation, however, they could prosecute for abduction instead, which held similar penalties to those of trespass cases.⁹² This is a clear example of how early medieval laws on *rapibus*, no matter whether they were harsh or lenient, were for the maintaining of peace among men and not necessarily designed to secure justice for the women.⁹³

The French state during the Middle Ages remained within the tradition of Roman law vis-à-vis the death penalty for the rapist—the same punishment for murderers or those convicted of treason: to be dragged through the streets and hanged.⁹⁴ In England, the thirteenth century Bracton laws stated that a rapist should suffer "the same for same"; that is, by taking away the female's member—her hymen—the accused should be castrated.⁹⁵ As terrifying and justifying as these punishments may sound however, because they were so severe, they were hardly ever meted out.⁹⁶ A sure way to escape the worst would be to flee to the sanctuary of a church where one was tried by ecclesiastical courts, which were far more lenient.⁹⁷

It was Gratian who really changed the penalties for convicted rapists: no death or mutilation; the punishments ranged from excommunication, public penance, even imprisonment, a whipping, monetary fines, marriage to the victim as penance, even enslavement (or a combination of these).⁹⁸ Mostly, however, it depended on the circumstances of the case.⁹⁹

As deterring as these punishments might be, they were not applied with any regularity. The ecclesiastical courts of Northern France were notoriously lax with their sentencing, and openly flouted canon law.⁷⁰ Within the secular jurisdiction, penalties were also usually softened to mutilation (castration) and fines instead of death.⁷¹ In both England and France, despite strict laws and rulings which imposed harsh penalties for rape where peasants were concerned, actual punishment was usually just a monetary fine, with no dismemberment.⁷² A common idea was that men shouldn't even be indicted unless the victim was a virgin, and even then, the low incidence of indictment indicated that opinion was not strong about punishing rapists.⁷³ The new leniency was to the advantage of the male rapist, and scarcely protected the rights of the woman.⁷⁴ For example, a man raped a widow and was charged five sous, but the widow was charged fifteen sous for allowing a man "carnal knowledge" of her.⁷⁵ In another case, a cleric was fined five sous for rape; by the same court a layman was fined five sous for throwing a loaf of bread at someone's head.⁷⁶

With so much disregard for the basic tenets on which the court stood, it is obvious ever more apparent loopholes were available which would allow the rapist to escape any punishment at all. A majority of cases were settled by marriage between the victim and the rapist,⁷⁷ and as Germanic custom influenced the legal canon, and ecclesiastical laws began to relax, these marriages became more and more prevalent and socially accepted.⁷⁸ However, these marriages also offered an "escape hatch" for the rapist—if he could persuade the girl, he could escape heavy punishment.⁷⁹

Another way to escape legal procedure was for the rich and well-connected defendants to have the crime erased from the legal record.⁸⁰ The male controlling force was at work here, too. Most law codes included the possibility that a woman could falsely charge a man, either to force him to marry her, or as revenge to have him killed or mutilated.⁸¹ Even where there was no doubt as to the occurrence of the act, there would

be suspicion that the woman had enjoyed it,⁸² and the court would do all it could to get the case thrown out on these grounds.

During the trials, a woman was oppressed by the rapist, sometimes the jury, and even the law itself.⁸³ There was a commonly held belief among men that appeals of rape were a way for a woman to avenge wrongs done to her family, or to ensnare husbands. One woman did not tell her husband that she had been raped because she was afraid he would accuse her of enjoying the act.⁸⁴ Another obstacle which barred women from receiving justice was a lack of witness.⁸⁵ Furthermore, a woman who brought an unsuccessful charge of rape could find herself in the dock, accused of defamation of her attacker, or of having consented to have sex with him⁸⁶ at which point she would be completely ruined.

These tactics to undermine a woman's claim to justice worked extremely well because a medieval woman was obsessed with her reputation. She did not really have much else. Rape was so underreported because the embarrassment to victims and victims families was severe, and they faced the added threat of retribution from the rapist's family or rapist himself.⁸⁸ Rape victims in England were treated "as no more than damaged goods."⁸⁹ Thus, "in addition to the difficulties and embarrassment that would be involved for a woman in bringing a charge of rape, and the very low conviction rate for this offense, a rape victim would be advertising the fact she was no longer virgin, thus diminishing her own marriage chances."⁹⁰

For these reasons, adult women preferred to claim "attempted" rape to avoid admitting they had been violated, or having their morals subjected to a court's scrutiny.⁹¹ The poet John Gower wrote that even the innocent raped woman still feels shame because of ideas of pollution and the public exposure of intimate details.⁹² Christine de Pisan sympathized and stated that rape victims are shamed and often flee to prostitution as they have nowhere else to go and no more reputation to protect.⁹³

In pastourelles, fictional seduction and rape are staged as a struggle between the powerful (knight) and powerless (peasant) in order to give expression to the conflict between social classes.⁹⁴ And in approximately eighteen percent of the extant Old French pastourelles that Gravdal studied—thirty-eight out of one hundred sixty—the shepherdless is raped by the medieval knight.⁹⁵ In one case, a raped noble woman lost her status completely, so she went to the châtelaine to accuse one of the men of raping her, and the châtelaine took her "into service" and made her work among the hands, placing her on level with the peasants simply because she was raped.⁹⁶

The story for raped widows is often as depressing as for peasants. In one case in England, two adult women who claimed in church court to have been raped were told to prove it—suggesting that the court was unsympathetic to them merely because they were sexually experienced.⁹⁷ Unprotected widows were common targets and if rapists were after money too, then a wealthy married woman or widow would be his victim of rape and robbery, or of rape and burglary.⁹⁸ Hanawalt says that "there are many instances of gang rape ... in which the victim was a widow or wife of a titled gentleman or wealthy merchant or gentry. I suggest that these were revenge rapes."⁹⁹ Once again, one sees here that men used women as tools to damage other men, and that the humiliation of the female is really only thought of in terms of how it will affect the man to whom she is connected.

The story was even worse for prostitutes: because only "honest women" could be raped, a prostitute who claimed to have been raped was completely ignored.¹⁰⁰ The loss of social standing was so severe that often, along with the medieval women with no other choice, rape victims would turn to prostitution to make a living.¹⁰¹ Because prostitution was so widely criticized by the clergy, lawmakers, and the world at large, a prostitute was viewed as having no right to claim rape at all.¹⁰² If, for example, a regular client had intercourse with her and then raped or tried to rape her there could be no charge; she was a body for hire, and a body for hire cannot be raped.¹⁰³ She also could not be raped because "she was considered to belong to all men and therefore had no right to withhold

consent.¹⁰⁴ Consistent with Roman law, prostitutes could not denounce a criminal and the court could not hear a harlot's complaints about wrongs done to her.¹⁰⁵

Various studies have reported that a large proportion of prosecuted sexual assaults were against little girls,¹⁰⁶ and the rape of these minors was treated very seriously.¹⁰⁷ It was not uncommon for children even as young as seven to be violently seized and raped.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, by the middle of the 1500s, rape law extended to include any intercourse (violent or not) with a child under six or seven years old due to the impossibility of a child that young giving their consent.¹⁰⁹ The predominance of children or young girls among alleged victims suggests that, although secular courts seem to have treated rape as felony, and treated some attempted rape seriously, much sexual violence, at least to adult women, likely went unprosecuted.¹¹⁰

Gravdal suggests that the fourteenth century legal definition of rape was derived from a thirteenth century literary concept which itself, in turn, was based upon definitions in twelfth century law books.¹¹¹ With such a multi-layer history of precedents, it is easy to see why the concept of rape was so varied and so hard to define. However, it is clear to see that the trend was moving away from the idea of rape as a sexual crime of passion to see that the more modern idea that rape is a crime of domination and aggression.¹¹² By the late fourteenth century, rape no longer was characterized as being a violent crime against a woman's body, nor was it about a girl's loss of virginity; it dealt more with notions of consent.¹¹³ While this is clearly an evolution towards the modern definition of rape, it also serves to decentralize the figure of the woman until all there is - is an ambiguous question with no real way to present proof. Even today, the question of female consent emerges in rape trials, and it is just as difficult to prove now as it must have been in the Middle Ages.

Women's sexuality and the victimization of male-defined crimes were tried by men at every level of society.¹¹⁴ In a society where women were virtually the property of men, fathers (genetic and spiritual) and husbands debated with urgency the questions tied to rape that impacted themselves: proof, punishment, and reparation. Rape continues to be "a crime that reduces a woman to the status of object by divesting her body of her voice and, consequently, of her person."¹¹⁵

Ultimately, within every sphere, right next to the raped woman, was a man who had control. Whether it was the emperor, the churchman, the poet, the father or the husband, the raped woman clearly did not make up her own rules. She was living in a masculine world, under a masculine thumb, and according to masculine rules of life. Eventually, the raped woman would get to speak for herself, but even in the present day, there are many ways a voice can be silenced.

Notes

- ¹ Kathryn Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law in Medieval France," *Rape and Representation*, ed. Lynn A. Higgins and Brenda R. Silver, (New York, 1991), 212.
- ² James A. Brundage, "Rape and Seduction in Medieval Canon Law," *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church*, ed. Vern L. Bullough and James Brundage (Buffalo, 1982), 141.
- ³ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.; see also, Kathryn Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens: Writing Rape in Medieval French Literature and Law*, (Philadelphia, 1991), 6; Monica Brzczinski Pofkay and Regula Meyer Eytz, *Minding the Body: Women and Literature in the Middle Ages*, 800-1500, (New York, 1997), 143.
- ⁵ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 141-142.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 142.
- ⁷ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 7.
- ⁸ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 142.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 146.
- ¹⁰ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 21.
- ¹¹ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 210.
- ¹² Vern L. Bullough, "Sex Education in Medieval Christianity," *The Journal of Sex Research* Vol. 13, No. 3 (Aug., 1977), 185-6.
- ¹³ Kim M. Phillips, "Written on the Body: Reading Rape from the Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries," *Medieval Women and Law*, ed. Noel James Menugo, (Woodbridge, 2000), 142.
- ¹⁴ Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologicae*, trans. Thomas Gilby, (Westminster, 1967), 231-233.
- ¹⁵ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 22.
- ¹⁶ Bullough, 169.
- ¹⁷ R. Howard Bloch, "Medieval Misogyny," *Representations* No. 20, Special Issue: Misogyny, Misandry, and Misanthropy (Autumn, 1987), 3-5.
- ¹⁸ Shulamith Shahar, *The Fourth Estate: A History of Women in the Middle Ages*, trans. Chaya Galai, (Cambridge, 1983), 17.
- ¹⁹ Pofkay, 144.
- ²⁰ Phillips, 1.
- ²¹ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 141.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p.142
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p.144
- ²⁴ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 10.
- ²⁵ Tracy Adams, *Violent Passions: Managing Love in the Old French Verse Romance*, (New York, 2005), 32.
- ²⁶ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 145.
- ²⁷ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 41.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 125.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.
- ³² Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 212, 1460-1560, (Woodbridge, 2006), 77.
- ³³ Karen Jones, *Gender and Petty Crime in Late Medieval England: The Local Courts in Kent*, 1460-1560, (Woodbridge, 2006).
- ³⁴ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 123.
- ³⁵ Isabelle Mast, "Rape in John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and Other Related Works," *Young Medieval Women*, ed. Katherine J. Lewis, Noel James Menge and Kim M. Phillips, (New York, 1999), 105.
- ³⁶ Phillips, 141.
- ³⁷ Barbara A. Hanawalt, *Crime and Conflict in English Communities 1300-1348* (Cambridge 1979), 106.
- ³⁸ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 144.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.
- ⁴⁰ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 208.
- ⁴¹ Mast, 112.
- ⁴² Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 208.
- ⁴³ Adams, 22-23.
- ⁴⁴ Andreas Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love*, trans. John Jay Parry, (New York, 1941), 150.
- ⁴⁵ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 209.
- ⁴⁶ Diane Woithal, "A Hue and a Cry: Medieval Rape Imagery and Its Transformation," *The Art Bulletin* Vol. 75, No. 1 (Mar., 1993), 39.
- ⁴⁷ Antonia Gransden, "The Alleged Rape by Edward III of the Countess of Salisbury," *The English Historical Review* Vol. 87, No. 343 (Apr., 1972), 340.
- ⁴⁸ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 45.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.
- ⁵⁰ Georges Duby, *The Knight, the Lady, and the Priest: The Making of Modern Marriage in Medieval France*, trans. Barbara Bray, (New York, 1983), 211.
- ⁵¹ Jones, 71.
- ⁵² Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 40.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 5.
- ⁵⁴ Mast, 105.

- ⁵⁵ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 219.
- ⁵⁶ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 117.
- ⁵⁷ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 142.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid., 143.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., 144.
- ⁶⁰ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 210.
- ⁶¹ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 145.
- ⁶² Potkay, 159.
- ⁶³ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 8.
- ⁶⁴ Shahar, 16.
- ⁶⁵ Corinne Saunders, "A Matter of Consent: Middle English Romance and the Law of *Rape*," *Medieval Women and Law*, ed. Noël James Menage, (Woodbridge, 2000), 113.
- ⁶⁶ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 215.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid., 213.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid., 210.
- ⁶⁹ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 145-146.
- ⁷⁰ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 211.
- ⁷¹ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 145.
- ⁷² Shahar, 16.
- ⁷³ Hanawalt, *Crime and Conflict*, 105.
- ⁷⁴ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 210-211.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid., 213.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid., 218.
- ⁷⁷ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 145.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., 146.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid., loc. cit.
- ⁸⁰ Potkay, 151-152.
- ⁸¹ Shahar, 16.
- ⁸² Ibid., loc. cit.
- ⁸³ Phillips, 143.
- ⁸⁴ Jones, 78.
- ⁸⁵ Shahar, 17.
- ⁸⁶ Mast, 124.
- ⁸⁷ Jones, 78.
- ⁸⁸ Mast, 104.
- ⁸⁹ Potkay, 160.
- ⁹⁰ Jones, 78.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., 77.
- ⁹² Mast, 116.
- ⁹³ Ibid., 106.
- ⁹⁴ Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens*, 105.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid., loc. cit.
- ⁹⁶ Duby, 260.
- ⁹⁷ Jones, 82.
- ⁹⁸ Hanawalt, *Crime and Conflict*, 153.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., 109.
- ¹⁰⁰ Brundage, "Rape and Seduction," 144.
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- ¹⁰⁴ Karras, 405.
- ¹⁰⁵ Brundage, "Prostitution," 156.
- ¹⁰⁶ Jones, 79.
- ¹⁰⁷ Gravdal, "The Poetics of Rape Law," 214-215.

Governments Against Terror, Governments of Terror INBAR GAL

It is important to correct one important misconception that is often held about the French Revolution, and that is that the era of Terror was that of a political dictatorship. The government at the time was a democratically elected government with an extremely active citizenry which regularly played a direct role in influencing the government's actions. It was far closer to an actual democracy than the current American system, which usually has "abyssmally low voter turnout rates" and which only influences the government indirectly through regularly spaced elections.¹⁰ The Terror was urged upon the government by a very influential group of Parisian citizens, the *sans-culotes*, who primarily employed democratic means including assembling, petitions, and voting. One petition sent to the Convention – the legislative and, technically, the executive government of France – on November 12, 1793, happily announced, "You [the Convention] have just given a terrifying example, made to astonish the universe and strike fear into the most guilty." The William Tell Section congratulates you. It will congratulate you still more if you maintain fear and terror as the great order of the day."¹¹ The language used by the petition references the direct adoption of the term Terror and the moniker of *terroristes* by the leaders of the revolutionary government.

The establishment of the Terror itself was not a government action. On September 5, 1793, a large number of *sans-culotes* filed into the Convention to present a petition. This petition demanded, "No more quarter, no more mercy for traitors... it is time that equality pass the scythe over every head. It is time to terrorize all conspirators. Well then! Legislators, make terror the order of the day! Let us be in a state of revolution! Let the blade of the law hang over all who are guilty!"¹² The government, in the form of its impromptu executive branch, the Committee of Public Safety, was obligated to concede to the public all that it demanded.¹³ It was perhaps best summed up with the simple statement by Robespierre, one of the leaders of the Revolution, that "the mainspring of popular government...amid revolution is at the same time both virtue and terror: virtue, without which terror is fatal; terror, without which virtue is impotent. Terror is nothing but prompt, severe, inflexible justice; it is therefore an emanation of virtue."¹⁴ This government defined itself as a government of terror.

In post-9/11 America, the government more and more defines itself as an anti-terror state. On September 20, 2001, President Bush declared a war on terror, saying that "it will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."¹⁵ The terrorists became the enemy that all of America had to fight for its own preservation. In the same speech, Bush continued and said, more pointedly, "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."¹⁶ There can be few clearer statements of the "us" and "them" divide. The terrorists were one thing; the people of America were something quite different. In the recent presidential election, an implication that then presidential candidate Barack Obama was unfit for leadership of the American people stemmed from the accusation that he had been "palling around with terrorists."¹⁷ The mere implication of connection with terrorists – domestic or foreign – was sufficient, in the mind of some, to make a person "un-American" and therefore suspect.

In both situations, the regime in question began with a traumatic incident which led to an escalation of paranoia and violence. For the United States, it was the events of September 11, 2008. Americans reacted with overwhelming grief and anger to the event which represented one of, if not the first, large-scale terrorist attack on American soil in recent memory. The reaction gave President Bush the highest approval ratings of his presidency, up in the ninetieth percentiles. It also led directly to a situation of war – Bush declared America in a state of war, a "war against terror." It has been argued by some that the declaration of war was specifically designed to "allow the president to assume war powers, which made him politically immune from serious criticism and gave him extraordinary domestic power to carry the agenda of the radical right."¹⁸ At any rate, Bush's declaration of "the war on terror" led almost directly to pre-emptive attacks on

The terms "terrorist" and "terrorism" have become increasingly commonplace in post-9/11 America. Indeed, the term seems to have sprung fully formed into the consciousness of America's masses on September 11, 2001. Everywhere "there is talk of terror, of terrorism and of terrorists."¹⁹ Yet America's war on terror is not the first appearance of the word "terrorist" in the political realm. Politically speaking, the term "terrorist" originally referred to a supporter of the Terror during the French Revolution, a period usually defined as being between late 1793 and late July 1794. The two periods, under the Terror under the French Revolution and the post-9/11 American government, seem to be distinct not only in time but in substance. The current war on terror would not be possible if America had not defined itself as a state fighting against terrorism, while the Terror defined itself as a state implementing terror against its enemies. Yet these two regimes, post-9/11 America and the period of the Terror of the French First Republic, are in many aspects quite similar, particularly in the way that both regimes dealt with issues of violence, religion, and gender.

Most people in modern times associate "terrorists" with "disenfranchised groups desperately attempting to gain a shred of power or influence."²⁰ The events of 9/11 stand out as the first example of terrorism in most people's minds, but Al Qaeda, the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah, or any other well-known "terrorist" organization may also come to mind. Yet few people could give a coherent explanation of *what*, precisely, a terrorist is. The Dictionary.com Princeton definition of a terrorist is "a radical who employs terror as a political weapon; usually organizes with other terrorists in small cells; often uses religion as a cover for terrorist activities."²¹ This fits in quite well with the modern view of a "terrorist." The Oxford English Dictionary, in contrast, begins by defining a terrorist first and foremost as "a political term: applied to the Jacobins and their agents and partisans in the French Revolution."²² Only then does the OED go on to define terrorist as "any one who attempts to further his views by a system of coercive intimidation." In dictionaries that undergo a regular editing, the term "terrorist" remains primarily a description of the French Revolutionary Terror.

Perhaps the simplest definition is that "terrorism is meant to terrify."²³ The act of terrorism, removed from moral judgment, is an act designed to terrify those it attacks. Originally, the term "terrorist" referred not to marginalized groups, religious or otherwise, which resort to violence to convey their often impossible demands. Instead, it referred to state-controlled violence that was usually aimed *against* the sort of violent, disenchanted groups that make up the modern conception of the term "terrorist." The word terrorist has become "highly pejorative; it is a badge which denotes a lack of legitimacy and morality."²⁴ Originally, though, it possessed positive connotations. The Terror was a program implemented by the Revolutionary Government of France during the years 1793-4. It was state-mandated violence that was to be aimed against political subversives, suspected traitors to the state, and those groups who tried to destroy the government. Unlike modern views of the term, "guerrilla warfare was not practiced by the French revolutionaries, but by their opponents."²⁵ Many of the victims of the Terror were sent to the guillotine as punishment, death being viewed as the only suitable punishment for traitors – as indeed it still is. In America, "treason is the only crime specified in the Constitution" still punishable by death.²⁶

both Afghanistan and Iraq, nominally to prevent the terrorists within them from attacking the United States.

A similar sequence of events occurred in French Revolution. Prior to the declaration of a republic, the National Assembly was attempting to create a constitutional monarchy, with the consent of the recently absolute monarch, Louis XVI. Despite many promises of adherence to the new constitution, Louis XVI, accompanied by his wife, Marie Antoinette, decided to flee the country to the Austrian border. This, if successful, would have led to almost certain civil war and foreign invasion, but the famous "Flight to Varennes" was stopped through a combination of luck, circumstance, and foolishness on the part of the royal family.¹⁹ This caused a national crisis, for to install the carefully crafted constitutional monarchy would mean putting a known traitor on the throne. Despite attempts to install the king anyway, a Republic was declared less than a year later and the king done away with. The king's flight is considered one of the major turning points of the revolution, as it permitted the dramatic rise of the previously marginal radical left into power. Furthermore, the king's attempted flight in the direction of Austria led to widespread suspicions that Austria would attack France. This led to a pre-emptive strike by the French in April 1792. In both post-9/11 America and the French Revolution, then, there was a key event which traumatized the nation, leading to a state of war and the rise to power of a radical political faction.

Interestingly, both of these descriptions are incredibly similar to the self-descriptions of modern day terrorist groups, which view their culture as being "under attack."²⁰ and violent reprisals being the only possible response. In the same way, all three groups view themselves as being "soldiers for liberty": America is fighting against terrorism, the First Republic utilized terrorism, and modern-day terrorist organizations are called – often correctly – terrorists.²¹ Yet each of them uses the same language to define itself and its goals.

Both the terror tactics used by the French Revolution and the anti-terror tactics utilized by post-9/11 America are incredibly violent and often have similar purposes. The Terror was created as a method by which the government was empowered to attack those which were believed to be a danger to the nation. The Law of Suspects, as passed by the Convention on September 17, 1793, permitted the immediate detention of suspected peoples without trial. In America, shortly after 9/11, the infamous Patriot Act was passed. This Act, passed by the majority of Congress, permitted the Attorney General "indefinite detention of immigrants and other non-citizens."^{22,23} The Patriot Act also gave the government a broad definition of "domestic terrorism" as well, possibly "including people who engage in acts of political protest."^{24,25} In similar fashion, the wiretapping scandals of recent years occurred because the government had acted on the belief that such acts were necessary for the security of the nation.²⁶

The French Revolution – which lacked such complicated technology as wiretapping, or for that matter the telephones which the taps were put on – had the "surveillance committees". In these committees, people could come to make denunciations, which could be made if they suspected counter-revolutionary behavior. These denunciations were not secret tips but publicly issued denunciations which were always investigated carefully by the committee to ensure that no false denunciations were made out of spite.²⁷ In general, the period of the Terror in the French Revolution is generally known for illegally imprisoning many people on uncertain charges. A comparison quickly arises between that and the current situation of Guantánamo Bay, where many claim that there are innocent people being held.

All of these acts were aimed, at least implicitly, against a certain part of the population. In his essay, Sewell points out that "the nation form as it developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is built on a powerful, often deadly logic of exclusion: the nation...is defined in opposition to foreign peoples."²⁸ These people are the "other." Profoundly important and traumatic events, such as 9/11 or the King's Flight, sometimes

lead to a society looking for an enemy which does not entirely exist. These traumatic events ensure "the creation of an 'enemy-other' which becomes the repository of collective self-loathing, rage, and anxiety."²⁹ This "enemy-other," previously a part of the whole, is now foreign. The violence against this "enemy-other" is often more severe and emotional than violence against other nations. Post-9/11 America follows this trend perfectly. The "other" that America defines as its enemy is the stereotypical Arab and Muslim, and those that fit that description are seen as enemies whether or not they are also Americans. Numerous human rights abuses, either by the government or by other individuals, have occurred on the basis of this racial appearance.³⁰ The famous cases of "racial profiling" in American airports is another example.³¹

In the French Revolution there was a similar exclusion and attacks upon a part of the population. Yet the people that the French Revolution "denigrated...as enemies, or simply as unworthy of inclusion in the national community" were not members of a different nation, racial group, or religion – the usual reasons.³² Instead, "during the French Revolution, the nation was defined far more by its antagonism with aristocrats, [the counter-revolutionary priesthood] and royalty than by an antagonism with foreigners."³³ The priesthood, of which only those who preached against the revolution were considered negatively, and the aristocracy made up 14.5% of the people who died in the Terror. However, keeping in mind that the aristocracy and the refractory priesthood (which was often made up of scions of the nobility) comprised between five and ten percent of the population, a person could be said to be ten times more likely to be executed if they were an aristocrat or a priest.³⁴

It is interesting to notice that in both eras the government proclaimed its undying attachment to the rights of humankind. In America, the very liberality and human rights of the American system were held up as what separated "us," the patriotic citizen, from "them," the terrorist.³⁵ In France, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen was written to ensure human rights for all men, beginning with the proclamation that "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights."³⁶ In both countries, however, it appeared that this devotion to human rights was quickly forgotten or side-stepped by the governments. Or perhaps this devotion was not forgotten, but rather certain members of the population were excluded from being the subjects of these human values – namely, kept from being human at all. If this is true, even unconsciously, there are certainly signs of it, particularly in the French Revolution. Even at the very beginning of the revolution, in January of 1789 – before the Bastille fell or the convocation of the Estates-General – Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès wrote a famous pamphlet titled "What Is the Third Estate?" The Third Estate represented the vast majority of the French population, meaning everyone except for the mostly noble clergy, the First Estate, and the nobility itself, the Second Estate. In his pamphlet he declared, "The Third Estate...contains within itself everything needful to constitute a complete nation...nobility is not part of our society at all; it may be a burden for the nation, but it cannot be part of it."³⁷ The nobility, then, are not part of society, nor of the nation. The move towards thinking and therefore treating them as less than human is only a step away. In both America and the First French Republic, "criteria for national membership had to be identified and bonds of solidarity cultivated to foster political allegiance and compliance... Solidarity was forged positively through symbols and festivals, but also negatively through exclusion and even executions."³⁸

As well as being the focus of the domestic terrorism of both eras, the targeted minority – the Arab/Muslim in America and the aristocrat/rebel priest in the French First Republic – led to a preemptively declared war in which acts of terror were also performed. America made preemptive attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq because of the fear of terrorist attacks, via the Taliban in Afghanistan or Saddam Hussein with his supposed weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The revolutionary government declared war on Austria for fear that it was going to be attacked. The Austrian emperor was the

brother of Marie-Antoinette, the passionately counter-revolutionary queen of France, and it was generally assumed that the king had been fleeing to obtain Austrian support for a war against the revolution to restore his throne.³⁹ Furthermore, the most vocal pro-war group, the *Briissolins*, called for a successful war against the enemy so that internal enemies, the counter-revolutionaries, would be revealed by their lack of passionate support for the French armies. Indeed, the Paris Commune on September 11, 1793 said that suspected persons could be considered “those who, having done nothing against liberty, have also done nothing for it...also, those who speak with contempt of the constituted authorities.”⁴⁰ In a similar way, many people felt overwhelming pressure in the days following 9/11 to wear American flags or act excessively patriotic; furthermore, many felt that they could not insult the government without appearing unpatriotic. During the 2008 presidential campaign, Barack Obama was criticized for not wearing a flag pin – not appearing to be American enough.⁴¹ Both governments were almost overwhelmingly for the war, with only a very few people willing to stand up and state their disagreement. In the French Revolution, Robespierre – later an important political figure during the time of the Terror – was almost the sole protestor, claiming that “no one loves armed missionaries.”⁴² In modern times, Obama, in his campaign, made himself famous having said prior to the Iraq war, “I’m not opposed to all wars...what I’m opposed to is a dumb war.”⁴³

During the wars that each regime experienced, both sides employed means that might have been classified as terrorist by the original definition of state-mandated violence. Acts of terror are “meant to terrify.”⁴⁴ Various acts of post-9/11 America and of the Terror of the French Revolution can be described as terrorism by this definition. The most obvious means of terror in the French Revolution was obviously the guillotine, a public form of execution performed as a spectacle to scare others who might think to do the same. When counter-revolutionaries were sentenced to the guillotine, their sentences were read aloud, and their executions were equally public.⁴⁵ Perhaps a better example of the terror tactics of the revolutionary government was the campaign of the Vendée. The Vendée was a region of France in which counter-revolutionaries raised an army to attempt to defeat the government. The government decided that the normal terror was insufficient and a particularly militant political wing, the *Hébertistes*, invented the idea of the “hell columns.” These were groups of about two to three thousand soldiers, sent out in a crisscrossing formation across the Vendée, which were given orders to destroy everything in sight as an intimidation tactic against both the people of the Vendée and against any other group that would think about rising up against the government.⁴⁶ In a similar way, the American government’s first attack strategy for Iraq was called “shock and awe.” It, too, was meant to serve the purpose of terrifying the enemy into surrender – there would be “air strikes so devastating they would leave Saddam’s soldiers unable or unwilling to fight.”⁴⁷

Neither campaign of terror was successful. Both resulted in bitter guerrilla war and involved the death of thousands of innocent victims. Yet both campaigns represented something else important that occurred in each regime at the time. There began to be, for the first time, something very much like a “cult of the military.” The French Revolution was the first time there was the entire mobilization of a country for war, the *levée en masse*. It became a sign of patriotism to volunteer for the armies and as a result, for the first time, the public view of soldiers transformed into public veneration rather than public dispraise.⁴⁸ In modern times, as well, there seems to be a sort of “halo effect” around soldiers.⁴⁹ Furthermore, this halo around soldiers has extended to the military itself as a whole, which “puts war critics on the defensive, ties the hands of Congress to cut war funding [and] questions the patriotism of decorated anti-war veterans.”⁵⁰ In both eras, it was difficult to be against the war and still be considered patriotic, although in this case the American government used it more efficiently as a means of domestic political gain, while the terrorists of the French Revolution were reacting to the war rather than justifying the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; “In the Taliban regime...religion can be

utilizing it. In both eras, furthermore, there was a romantic and fantasy element in the planning of war. In the French Revolution, the belief “that freedom gave citizens’ something close to supernatural abilities” was widespread.⁵¹ Similarly, they were meant to achieve the liberation of the peoples of the various neighboring states that had not yet revolted and thrown off the monarchy and the aristocrats. There was an imagery of a population waiting to rise up and greet the invaders with flowers.⁵² Similarly in post-9/11 America, Bush and Rumsfeld were accused of not listening to any military advice when planning the attack on Iraq and also of simply expecting that the grateful Iraqis would greet American troops as liberators.⁵³

In his book “The Total War,” Bell compares this belief in spreading revolution to a religious crusade.⁵⁴ This is not only analogous; it also emphasizes an important aspect of both regimes: their important relationships with religion. These relationships were very different in numerous aspects, but in both regimes religion played a major role. In the French Revolution, religion was important in creating the “enemy-other.” Priests, as mentioned before, were one of the categories which the revolutionaries defined as the “enemy-other.” There was a large rise in secularism and de-Christianization during the French Revolution, and it is there that the origins of the strict division of church and state in France – called *laïcité* – can be found. The revolutionaries, influenced by the Enlightenment, believed that the Church was oppressing the population and using “popular belief...as a cover for unsavory clerical manipulation.”⁵⁵ Many revolutionary deputies also believed as Voltaire did: “orthodox religion is the source of all the follies and tumults imaginable; it is the mother of fanaticism and civil discord; it is the enemy of mankind.”⁵⁶

The National Assembly passed the Civil Constitution of the Clergy on July 12, 1790. It turned the church hierarchy into a state-run and financed operation dictated by principles of popular sovereignty – for example, priests were elected by their communities, Catholics or not, and salaried by the state.⁵⁷ This was in direct opposition to the Catholic Church’s hierarchical traditions. When some priests seemed reluctant to accept the Civil Constitution, the National Assembly required that all priests take an oath accepting it. This requirement split the priesthood between those who accepted it and the refractory priests, who denied it.⁵⁸ The split created great tensions and led to uprisings such as the Vendée, a band of militant religious Catholics that believed they were being persecuted for their faith and sought to resist through violent means.⁵⁹

At the same time, there was a great resurgence in interest in religion through untraditional means. While the Church was being attacked economically, politically, and religiously, there was at the same time the “establishment of new religious cults – the Cult of Reason and the Cult of the Supreme Being.”⁶⁰ The Cult of Reason, a *sans-ceremonie* movement, was meant to be “a rational form of worship in contrast to the modes of worship enjoined by the religions of Revelation.”⁶¹ It enjoyed some success based almost entirely on the urban people of Paris. Notre-Dame was rebabeled the “Temple of Reason” so that a ceremony of worship for the Cult of Reason could be held, the “Fête of Liberty and Reason.”⁶² The Cult of the Supreme Being was soon created to replace it. It resembled Christianity more, except that this Christianity would be in service to the state – a civil religion compatible with the state, rather than a religion that would have a role in commanding the actions of the state, as the Catholic Church had.⁶³

Post 9/11 America experienced a resurgence of religious feeling as well as an increased feeling of secularism. The term “God Bless America” was banded around quite often by everyone from authority figures to people on the street; yet, at the same time there was a feeling of repulsion around religion – in this case, Islam or Islamic fundamentalists. Islamic fundamentalist terrorists were seen as “a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam.”⁶⁴ Indeed, in his opening remarks on the subject, Bush began to say what would become a repeated mantra of his administration in

practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough...we condemn the Taliban regime. It is repressing its own people.⁶⁴ America defined itself as secular and therefore against the religious fanatics. The Enlightenment belief that the only way to be free and modern is through the liberal environment of the West has not changed since the French Revolution. Generally, "western...achievements are [viewed as] the universal ideal without any further discussion of the content."⁶⁵ American Christianity is supposedly moderate and separate from the state and therefore superior to the religious theocracies of Islamic states.

Both regimes considered themselves to be secular regimes fighting against extremist religious theoretic dominance of the state. Both states believed that "being faithful to their ethical and political principles meant embracing a liberationist mission."⁶⁶ For America, which saw its enemies as the extremist Arab/Muslim, this meant invading Afghanistan and Iraq with the justification that the people there were being oppressed by the religious theocracies in power. In contrast to a strong Christian fundamentalist spirit in America, fundamentalist Islam was viewed as evil and demonized by the post-9/11 American regime. The French revolutionaries were fighting an internal enemy – the Catholic Church – but the adherents of the church were also viewed as evil, revolutionary and intolerant. Both regimes saw themselves as fighting for the freedom of religion, for secularism, and against religious fanaticism. It is an important point to note that the guerrilla anti-establishment organizations which used acts of violence as their means of conveying their demands both considered themselves religious warriors fighting against an oppressive secularism. But it is also interesting to note that America declared these groups "terrorists," while the French Revolution declared themselves to be the "terrorists."

For post-9/11 America, rescuing people from the oppressive religion was inexorably tied to rescuing the *women* that were being oppressed – regardless of the opinion of the women they were rescuing.⁶⁷ For the French Revolution, the issue they faced was internal rather than external – they struggled with women's rights within France itself. Both countries had difficulties dealing with gender issues within their borders. The specific problems each regime dealt with were different, as were their responses, but both had to deal with the problems of feminism, masculinity, and homosexuality. Dealing with women was, as mentioned above, one of the more important issues for both regimes. America generally regards its problems with feminism as settled; it identifies itself as a pro-feminist nation. When Bush made his first address attacking the Taliban, right after the 9/11 attacks, his first example of Taliban oppression was neither religious intolerance nor legal injustice, but the fact that "women are not allowed to attend school."⁶⁸ Females are seen, in a way, as "the embodiment of a culture's authentic core," the medium through which societies are compared.⁶⁹ As a result, the modernization – some would argue that a more appropriate term is westernization - of the women of Afghanistan and Iraq has been linked to the progression of modernity in those countries. This cause is deeply tied to America's fight against its cited enemy, Islam. In an academic meeting titled "Empowering Women in Iraq: Defining a Blueprint for Moving Forward," it was emphasized that there are three major "obstacles" to progress for Iraqi women: 1) patriarchal society, which empowers men over women; 2) the society-based, collective culture of Iraq, which subsumes a woman's rights to the needs of the whole; and 3) "Islam also itself presents obstacles."⁷⁰ At the same time, Western conceptions of freedom rely upon "the capacity for self-mastery and self-government...and the absence of restraints of various kinds on one's ability to act as one wants."⁷¹ In her book *Politics of Piety*, Saba Mahmood reviews the Islamic revival and critiques the secular-liberal principles which are essentially being imposed upon Islamic women who have a different cultural understanding of what the West views as their "oppression."⁷² Within America itself, the argument regarding "women's right to choose," or abortion, brings a new difficulty to the post 9/11 Bush regime's claim to be

acting for the freedom of women – in this situation too, the rights of women to choose their life seems to not entirely comport with the regime's view of what it is doing to "help" women make free choices.

In the French Revolution, the question of women was not nearly so settled as supposedly in the case of the American example. Feminism played little part in the *ancien régime* of France, but during the revolution some feminists saw it as a good time to establish the rights of women alongside the rights of men. Female revolutionary clubs were formed and many other *sociétés Populaires* accepted women. Feminists began to send delegations to the Convention with petitions that announced bluntly, "Men enjoy all the rights of free beings, but women are very far from sharing these glories. Women count for nothing in the political system. We ask for primary assemblies and...we demand the full exercise of rights for ourselves."⁷³ One feminist, Olympe de Gouges, even crafted a document titled "Declaration of the Rights of Women" calling for full equality between men and women.⁷⁴ Women, furthermore, played a large role in the Revolution itself, particularly in the famous women's march to Versailles. Some even joined the army, both in secret and via petitions requesting permission.⁷⁵ In general, these women utilized their biological roles as the mother of future citizens to argue that they deserved more rights under the new system.⁷⁶

Legally, women certainly benefited from the Revolution: divorce was legalized on grounds of incompatibility and women were given the right to file for it, inheritance law was changed so that women were given an equal share, women received rights over their property and their children, and they were given the right to appear in court.⁷⁷ Yet the government quickly moved against female activism even as it protested that it was attempting to do what was best for women. The *terroristes* of the Convention sought to "exclude women, as a group, from public life."⁷⁸ Women compensated for such removal from public life by attaching themselves to the means of aiding the Revolution that they could be a part of, thus, famous *tricoteuses*, the knitting "furies of the guillotine" who cheered at executions and provided even more ammunition to anti-feminists who wished to keep women in their "natural vocation" were born.⁷⁹ Both regimes wished to protect women, yet the line between where what women as independent agents wished and what the regimes believed was best for women was blurred.

The issues that both post 9/11 America and the Terror in the French Revolution had with gender were not limited to their struggles with the position and rights of women. The issues of masculinity and homosexuality were also dealt with by both regimes. In America, the idea of the "masculine" seems to be tied into a violent, machismo-soldier culture – away from the effeminate, sexual deviant "other."⁸⁰ In general, if the major gender issue for the French Revolution can be said to be women, the major gender issue in post-9/11 America is that of homosexuality. The Bush regime possessed a seeming anti-homosexual bias and the fights over gay rights and gay marriage occur with increasing frequency. In contrast, during the French Revolution, homosexuality was decriminalized.⁸¹ It was even tolerated within the Government, and the change passed with little fuss or notice. The tension between heteronormative and homosexual culture, important in American self-conception, was non-existent during the French Revolution, which instead attempted to draw a firmer line between women and men.

In conclusion, post-9/11 America and the period of the Terror under the French Revolution dealt with their problems in ways that were quite similar. The major issue that both regimes dealt with was violence, but they also dealt with serious issues of religion and gender that were central to self-conceptions of themselves as virtuous and the enemy as evil. Both regimes faced a traumatic incident and coped with it by engaging in acts of terror against enemies and against their own people. Both regimes had to deal with violent religious organizations turned against them, but the name of "terrorist" was applied very differently in these cases. Lastly, both regimes dealt with issues related to different aspects of gender, but their techniques in these dealings were

similar. The term “terrorist” began as a description of a government fighting against perceived enemies within and without its territory, which resembles our “anti-terrorist” government far more than it does the modern conception of the word “terrorist.” Perhaps it is important in the modern age to recall the origin of the word and to think about what precisely it is that separates a terrorist from those that fight against it.

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A Comparison of Humanitarian Factions In the Antislavery Movement in Britain and the United States through 1808

EMILY HARROLD

In the two centuries since Britain and the United States abolished the Atlantic Slave Trade, historians have debated the reasons for the decision to end slave trafficking across the Atlantic Ocean. The arguments divide into primarily economic, political, and humanitarian categories. Concentrating on the humanitarian argument, W. E. H. Lecky, in his famous work *The History of European Mores*, claimed that in 1859 that the British abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade could "be regarded as among the three or four perfectly virtuous acts recorded in the history of nations."¹ Since that claim, much has been published refuting Lecky's idea, most famously Eric Williams's 1944 *Capitalism and Slavery*. Nevertheless, in comparing the Britain and American anti-slave trade movements, it is increasingly clear that while both movements sparked wide interest in the question of slavery through a variety of similar methods, the two countries, because of differing political situations, arrived at antislavery legislation in contrasting manners.

In discussing the different British and American paths toward ending the Atlantic Slave Trade and slavery itself, many historians have claimed that the economic benefit alone was the deciding factor. Yet, this reasoning does not take into account the humanitarian background of the abolition movements in the countries. After all, humanitarian sentiment—supported by Christian morality—existed in both countries at the same time as the economic developments that favored the end of both the Atlantic Slave Trade and slavery. Without a strong boost of support and campaigning from moral reformers, the movements in each country may have never gained enough attention to evoke change. While the anti-slavery movements in the two countries were similar, each traveled different routes after the abolition of the Atlantic trade. Differing domestic issues in Britain and the United States overshadowed the common humanitarian root of antislavery sentiment. The end of slave trafficking and slavery directly affected many more Americans than Britons. Thus while Britain abolished slavery in 1834, the United States did not do so until 1865, at the end of a bloody civil war. Although domestic politics determined the differing sequences of antislavery legislation in Britain and the United States, humanitarian factions played the dominant role of facilitating and motivating each movement throughout its progression.

The Impact of Humanitarian Sentiment on Economic Theory

Eric Williams argues that British motivation for ending the Atlantic Slave Trade was purely economic. During the Industrial Revolution, Britain pushed for abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade for three reasons. Overproduction, a change from mercantilism to laissez-faire economics, and a sharp decline in the British New World economy were crippling the British market. Williams asserts that change in economic theory was especially important, stating, "The rise and fall of mercantilism is the rise and fall of slavery."² Throughout the Industrial Revolution, the British economy had come to depend on the export of manufactured goods rather than the import of raw materials produced by slave labor. In contrast, rival European countries depended on critical imports from the New World. By banning the Atlantic Slave Trade, and thereby cutting off the raw material lifeline of their rivals, the British believed they could control the world economy.

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In response to Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery*, many historians re-examined the British push to abolish the Atlantic Slave Trade and came to different conclusions. Distancing themselves from Williams, a collection of historians introduced a new economic reasoning to account for the British abolition movement. For instance, Seymour Drescher's *British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (1977), *The Mighty Experiment* (2002), David Eltis's *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (1987), and David Brion Davis's *Inhuman Bondage* (2006) are three prominent responses to Williams. Drescher argues that abolition was based on the British "faith in the ultimate economic superiority of free wage labor."³ In agreement with Drescher, Eltis maintains that by first abolishing the slave trade, and later slavery itself in 1834, the British government hoped to allow Africans to join both the class of wage earners as well as the consumer pool. The incentive of wages, versus a threat of punishment, was a way to boost worker productivity as well as increase consumption.⁴ In *Inhuman Bondage*, Davis builds on Eltis' thoughts and Drescher's reliance on "free labor ideology" as reasoning for the abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade at such a seemingly inopportune time. Britain, as a result of triangular trade, seemed to be reaping enormous profits; however, Davis explains, "British leaders became committed to colonial labor reform only when they became convinced that free labor would be less dangerous than slavery and more beneficial for the imperial economy as a whole."⁵ In the 1800s slavery became wrapped up in a wider transition from one economic system to another, introducing free labor as a mechanism to generate further wealth. Historians have relied upon this emphasis on capitalistic motivations to form a distinct approach to nineteenth century Atlantic history. Thus, historians such as Drescher, Eltis, and Davis argue that it was the promise of creating an economy based on a wage-earning consumer, and the desire to "dignify" labor, which led to the ending of the Atlantic Slave Trade, and later—during what seemed the height of Atlantic trafficking—to emancipation.

In Britain's American colonies, advocates of abolishing the slave trade also used economic arguments. Applying a strictly economic paradigm to the question of abolition, notable political figures within the colonies appeared to ignore the humanitarian implications of the slave system to get their messages across. Chief Justice Samuel Sewall of Massachusetts, in his book *The Selling of Joseph* (1701), recognized the economic hindrance of the cost of importation when slaves arrived unwilling to work.⁶ Nathaniel Appleton, in *Considerations on Slavery* (1767), extrapolated on Sewall's economic argument by arguing that the presence of slaves prevented poor whites from finding work. Appleton explained that even if there were jobs available, no white person would resign himself to work alongside a slave.⁷ Benjamin Franklin, who historian Mary Stoughton Locke considers the first individual to view the anti-slavery movement from a purely economic standpoint, offered yet another economic reasoning against slavery. Franklin argued that slavery limited population increase and industry growth, caused the depreciation of lands in the South, and offered no stimulus to the subjects of the arts and sciences.⁸ Given the multitude of economic arguments posited by individuals in both Britain and its colonies, it may seem unlikely that the humanitarian objections to slavery and the Atlantic Slave Trade overpowered this market-based thinking.

Yet, among all these claims that it was economics that led to the abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade, the role of humanitarian sentiment in the anti-slavery movement should not be ignored. In her work *Anti-Slavery in America 1619-1808*, Mary Stoughton Locke supports the prominence of the humanitarian movement when she states in reference to the economic movement, "the last undoubtedly had influence in determining or intensifying the sentiment with regard to slavery; but there was no organized movement of importance distinctly based on economic considerations."⁹ Instead of an absence of any organized collective arguing against slavery on economic grounds, the humanitarian faction was in fact visibly mobilized. In Britain, the Society for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade and its counterpart in the United States, the Quaker Society of Friends, were vocal advocates of the moral dimensions of Atlantic Slave Trade

and slavery. As Locke points out, it was as a result of these humanitarian and morally-motivated organizations that the anti-slavery movement gained momentum and force.

Though they were separated by the Atlantic Ocean, the humanitarian sentiments and moral movements against slavery in the United States and Britain were very similar. In both countries the ideals of Christianity—the "sinfulness of slavery"—motivated the movements. The republican sentiments set forth during and after the American Revolution played major roles as well, for the ideas of natural rights such as liberty weighed heavy on the minds of many, particularly in the United States. Yet, with all these similarities, the anti-slavery movements of Britain and the United States, after the abolition of the slave trade in the early nineteenth century, travelled separate routes. Britain, only a little over two decades later, abolished slavery, while the United States did not see similar changes until 1863 with Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment in 1865. If Locke's conclusion that humanitarian ideals brought the anti-slavery issue to the forefront, perhaps through a comparison of these humanitarian thoughts and organizations it will be possible to identify why the United States and Britain did not follow the same path in anti-slavery legislation.

The Humanitarian Anti-Slavery Movement in America

Although many historians date the beginning of the humanitarian movement against slavery to 1770, the roots of the movement stretch back much further. Many of these early movements were religious and moral, the Quaker Society of Friends being the most well known among them. However, the religious convictions of Puritans, Methodists, and Baptists also emerged in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In this period, activists that focused their attention on religious sects characterized the humanitarian antislavery movement; however, catalyzed by the introduction of the concept of natural rights during the American Revolutionary War, antislavery sentiment and efforts to reach the American public amplified.

The progression of antislavery thought amongst evangelicals is successfully illustrated in James D. Essig's *The Bonds of Wickedness*. Essig credits the original antislavery stimulus to the Great Awakening of the mid-eighteenth century, a period that generated a revival of religious concerns.¹⁰ As the desire to spread the Christian religion throughout the country grew, many evangelicals decided to reach out to the American slave population. A concern for the "slave's spiritual and temporal welfare" had existed within the religious culture of the American colonies.¹¹ However, many slave-owners, especially those in the South, refused to admit spiritual equality with their human property and, as a result, created resistance to the evangelical Great Awakening. The binary dynamic created by the slaveowners' opposition to the religious objectives of the Great Awakening served to attract many Americans to the antislavery cause.

Many individuals, in response to this resistance, appeared to support black spiritual equality. Some prominent examples include Jonathan Edwards, David Rice, Benjamin Rush, Jacob Green, Samuel Hopkins, and Francis Asbury. Hopkins—who studied with Edwards—became minister at the First Congregational Church in Newport in 1769. Since Newport was one of the major slave trading ports in Rhode Island, Hopkins was intimately familiar with the horrors of the Atlantic Slave Trade.¹² In 1771, Asbury joined in the growing concern for African slaves. Known for following in the footsteps of the British founder of American Methodism, John Wesley, Asbury voiced his support for slave freedom and his belief that the success of Methodist religion hinged on this need for freedom.¹³ Joining under the banner of religious conviction, these individuals invoked spiritual arguments to condemn slavery.

As the ideals of the Great Awakening spread, many Americans emphasized the "wealth of religious experience and the favor of the Lord" over material wealth.¹⁴ This offered an easy transition into religious focus on the victims of misfortune. John Wesley, though he was an early British anti-slavery activist, had much influence on the early American movement. In the 1730s, he introduced the idea of including African

slaves in the ranks of the misfortunate. Slowly, over the course of the eighteenth century, reports of their suffering spread through evangelical sects, and the need for spiritual and physical emancipation began to cascade from the lips of many.¹⁵ Both Samuel Hopkins, in *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of Africans* (1776), and John Wesley, in *Thoughts on African Slavery* (1774), voiced their concern for the oppression of slaves. They directed their appeals at slaveholders, hoping to evoke emotional sentiment. Essig quotes Wesley's appeal to the slaveholding aristocracy:

Have you no sympathy, no sense of human woe, no pity for the miserable? ... Did not one tear drop from your eye, one sigh escape from your breast? ... But if your heart does not relent, thought in a small degree, know it is a call from God of love. And to-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.¹⁶

In responding to the religious stimulus of the Great Awakening, evangelical antislavery activists hoped to create sympathy and support for the spiritual equality of slaves. Thus, they rallied around individuals, such as Wesley, who were actively encouraging humanitarian convictions against slavery.

Antislavery appeals incited the opposition of evangelicals, and thereby stimulated further debate within the religious community. Rather than allowing this persecution to become discouraging, however, the anti-slavery activists employed it as a vehicle to understand the plight of the oppressed slaves and consolidate their dedication to the movement. More individuals, namely John Leland, David Barrow, James Meacham, and David Rice, voiced their support for the anti-slavery movement. These leaders began to consider more seriously the need for emancipation so that sin could be overcome. David Rice also addressed the “idleness” that slavery both creates and encourages among the slave-owners, noting laziness to be a sin and additional vice of the institution of slavery.¹⁷

The work of other individuals, notably James O’Kelly in his *Essay on Negro Slavery* (1784) and John Aspuld in his addition to *The Annual Register for 1790*, completed the religious progression of anti-slavery thought to support total emancipation. These men argued that only when the corruption of slavery was ended could there be a restoration of “primitive Christian simplicity.”¹⁸ Thus, the period beginning with the Great Awakening until the end of the eighteenth century marks the progression of religious thought that leads to the birth of the American humanitarian movement against slavery.

Even before the goals of the humanitarian movement had fully cemented, the Quaker and Puritan religious sects were devoted to the slavery question from early on. Although both movements were based on the scriptures and contained similar ideology, as Locke points out, there were nonetheless outstanding differences between the Quaker and Puritan approaches. First, while the Puritans emphasized the Old Testament, the Quakers concentrated on the New Testament. Secondly, while the Puritans believed that actions were foreordained, the Quakers felt that human will was free, and thus argued that slaves possessed an inherent freedom against the constraints of slavery. Thirdly, while the Puritans valued the equality of human souls, they placed no importance on the physical presence of man on earth. The Quakers, however, valued the “dignity of man” and the universal brotherhood of all men socially and before God.¹⁹ Thus, as each sect strove toward humanitarian repression of slavery in America, they followed similar, but notably distinct paths.

The Puritan anti-slavery movement, though is not so universally recognized as influential in comparison to the Quakers, did include many individuals who held prominent roles in the early anti-slavery movement. Among them were John Eliot, Cotton Mather, Richard Baxter, Chief Justice Samuel Sewall, and Nathaniel Appleton. Through a variety of mediums, these leaders preached anti-slavery sentiment throughout the American colonies. Locke claims that the guiding principle of Puritan anti-slavery thought was the Calvinist theory, or the idea that election ignores distinctions of rank and

power as well as skin color.²⁰ Puritan thought also “objected” to the abuse that slaves suffered and the immorality of human bondage.

Early Puritan proponents, John Eliot and Cotton Mather, voiced their concern that African slaves were being treated as animals rather than human beings—that there was no concern for the spirituality of the slaves. Richard Baxter built on these issues when he stated “Remember that they [slaves] are of as good a kind as you; that is, they are reasonable Creatures as well as you, and born to as much natural liberty. If their sin have enslaved them to you, yet Nature made them your equals.”²¹ These words reflect the Puritan ideals of predestination and religious concern, yet are oriented towards the question of benevolent treatment. These early Puritans were concerned with the treatment of slaves within the institution of slavery, and only addressed the question of outright abolition in the later stages of the movement.

It was not until the appearance of Chief Justice Sewall at the turn of the century, and his aversion to the slave trade, that the Puritans thought of emancipation. In his most famous work, *The Selling of Joseph* (1701), Sewall addresses Old Testament concerns of righteousness and justice in relation to slavery. He explains: “Originally and naturally, there is no such thing as slavery” because “all Men, as they are the sons of Adam, are Cohesirs; and have equal Right unto Liberty, and all other outward Comforts of Life.”²² Sewall’s argument is a precursor to the ideology against slavery that results from the American Revolution. Though his Puritan colleagues offer striking arguments against the institution of slavery, it is not until Nathaniel Appleton in the early 1800s, that a “Puritan antislavery writer took an uncompromising attitude” towards slavery.²³ Appleton argued that slaves deserved freedom and gradual movement toward this was not acceptable. Nevertheless, the Puritan movement, limited in its infancy to gaining support within its sect, was based mainly on concern for the spirituality of the slaves as well as the idea of regard for all God’s creatures.

The Quaker movement, claims Locke, far outran that of the Puritans. The organization of their efforts into societies that were specifically concerned with antislavery efforts better served the overall movement.²⁴ Betty Fladland, in *Men and Brothers*, supports this claim and also suggests that the Quakers were more advanced than the Puritans in the general goals of their movement. Fladland explains:

By the late 17th and early 18th centuries Quaker teachers were beginning to formulate the doctrine of the sinfulness of slavery, as conviction that was to be the basis of the later involvement of the evangelical sets in the shift antislavery movement and that was such a powerful factor in the “Great Revival” from gradualism to immediatism in the wake of the “Great Revival” [1820s and 1830s] in the United States.²⁵

The Quakers, early on, evoked the claims of universal brotherhood, rejecting pride and idleness and embracing the need for kindness to all creatures, as Christian reasoning against the institution of slavery. The Quakers voiced their concern over the issue of slavery in a variety of ways, including petitions and anti-slavery literature. The Germantown Protest of 1688 was the first document in America to endorse the anti-slavery movement and for many years the Quakers based their protest on gaining support for the document.²⁶

Much literature followed the Germantown Protest as the Society of Friends gained momentum in their anti-slavery initiative. George Keith, another Quaker who supported anti-slavery sentiment, in his *Exhortation and Caution to Friends* (1693), was the first to suggest the idea that once a slave is freed he should never be returned to bondage.²⁷ In 1714, John Hepburn added his *American Defense of the Christian Golden Rule*, in which he argued that anti-slavery support is based on the Golden Rule, to the collection of anti-slavery literature. Soon presses published anti-slavery writings by Quakers. Most famous were Ralph Sandiford, who in 1729 published a *Brief*

Examination of the Practice of the Times, and Benjamin Lay, who in 1737 released *All Slave Keepers...Apostates*.²⁸ The works of Sandiford and Lay reflected their Biblical education. Lay especially expressed anger against those whom he believed to be speaking the Christian word but not acting in accord with it.²⁹ The early part of the Quaker movement, centered in Pennsylvania, was mostly directed at ending the slave trade. As more and more colonies brought an end to the slave trade, the Quakers' movement spread throughout the country. Other sects, namely Methodists and Baptists, expressed antislavery convictions, however, in comparison to the efforts by the Quakers and Puritans, they were small scale. The antislavery efforts of this constellation of religious groups within the United States were then complemented in the late-eighteenth century by the emerging American independence movement.

With the onset of the ideals of the American Revolution in the 1760s, there was an explosion of sentiment concerning the well-being and rights of America's slaves. As Fladeland notes in *Men and Brothers and Locke in Anti-Slavery in America 1619-1808*, the ideas set forth by the Revolution sparked involvement not only in the religious Puritan and Quaker sects, but throughout the country. The humanitarian movement, until this point, had only been based on religious and moral principles. Now, the institution faced "intellectual scrutiny."³⁰ Transitioning from a movement confined to religious groups, slavery captured the attention of a wider audience amongst the colonists.

As colonists demanded their natural rights and liberty from their British oppressors, the question of oppression was turned on them. The philosophy of Montesquieu and John Locke, which stated that every man deserved natural liberty and equality, was taken from the Revolutionaries to address the slavery question.³¹ Suddenly the reasoning for the independence of the colonies became the reasoning for the ending of the Atlantic Slave Trade and slavery. Along with this "propaganda of the Declaration of Independence" came a growing and more convincing humanitarian argument against slavery.³² This argument for natural rights inaugurated a new point in the struggle for abolition and emancipation.

Enthused by revolutionary rhetoric, new anti-slavery leaders surfaced at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1761, James Otis voiced his anger against the Wrts of Assistance, which addressed the rights of men to life, liberty, and property, for not break every yoke and let these oppressed ones go free without delay—let them taste the sweets of that liberty, which we so highly prize, and are so earnestly supplicating God Swan supplemented the work of Otis and Webster with a pamphlet in which he states that America cannot call itself free until every man on its soil is free.³³ David Cooper, in "Rulers of America," encouraged leaders to prove that the ideals of the United States were applied to all men.³⁴ The ideals of the Revolution could not be ignored.

The revolutionary climate reinvigorated the antislavery dialogue of the Quakers, who now expanded their efforts to speak to a wider audience. John Woolman and Anthony Benezet, whose antislavery literature had been circulating on a small scale, now rose to prominence in the Quaker anti-slavery movement. Woolman encouraged members of his sect to turn against slavery and allow religion, morality, and natural rights to serve as the voice of reason.³⁵ Benezet, who came to America from France, glimpsed potential in the African race. As a result, he started a school to teach blacks, arguing that if given the chance the race in bondage could tangibly contribute to intellectual society. In his anti-slavery efforts, he preached that slavery destroyed potential, and published his thoughts in *A Short Account of that Part of Africa Inhabited by Negroes (1762)*.³⁶ Though they were against decisions forced upon people by law, following the Revolution the Quakers began to work with other anti-slavery activists in circulating petitions and gaining support from others through their humanitarian arguments.

Antislavery literature, public addresses, and petitions were the most prominent means of inciting antislavery reactions in the American population. They focused on religious and enlightenment arguments to gain support among the masses. Religious ideas citing scripture that claimed every man to be a brother, the Golden rule, and equating slavery with sin were coupled with the moral propaganda of the horrors of the slave trade and human bondage. Arguments supporting natural rights, liberty, and justice combined into the Enlightenment ideology that backed antislavery propaganda as well. The mass support for humanitarian anti-slavery movement thus hinged on the fusion of these religious and Enlightenment arguments. By the 1790s it seemed that national emancipation would follow the abolition of slavery in many states.³⁷ In framing the Constitution, writers agreed to end the trafficking of slaves in 1808, and, as agreed upon, in 1807 Congress approved an act abolishing the Atlantic Slave Trade starting on the first day of 1808; it seemed that the combined efforts of anti-slavery humanitarians had paid off. Though this period of the American antislavery movement has been characterized as the "era of gradual abolition" and the "era of sentiment rather than of vigorous purpose," efforts made on the parts of Humanitarians ensured that the 1808 legislation to end the Atlantic Slave Trade in the United States was enforced.³⁸ The combined arguments of the religious and Enlightenment sects proved powerful enough. The Humanitarians achieved the first step in bringing slavery to an end.

The Humanitarian Anti-Slavery Movement in Britain

Like the movement across the Atlantic Ocean, early antislavery sentiment in Britain resulted from the Society of Friends. In *The Politics of English Dissent*, Raymond G Coward states that by 1727, the Quakers had ended slave importation in the American Colonies and by 1758 had stopped their own participation in the slave trade.⁴¹ Their motives were coupled with those of their religious brethren in the American Colonies. After forming missionary societies intent on teaching those enslaved in the British West Indian colonies the word of God, many were struck by the horrors of the Atlantic Slave Trade and slavery itself. They returned to Britain with a newer, more socially unapproved of mission: the abolition of the trade and then total emancipation.⁴² However, this early movement did not have significant support from outside the religious sect.⁴³ In 1783, after forming a committee to "agitate against slavery and the slave trade," the British public was still unaware of the small antislavery movement.

Along with the small movement spearheaded by the Quakers, another small group of abolitionists was growing and gaining momentum. Following the British decision of the Somerset Case in 1772 that made Britain completely free soil for anyone, no matter race, and the Zong Case of 1783—in which over one-hundred and thirty slaves were thrown overboard under the claims of over-stock and then insurance was claimed for each slave—Granville Sharp arose as the leading British activist against slavery.⁴⁵ For the first time, British society received a glimpse of the horrors of slavery. The newly graduated Thomas Clarkson soon joined Sharp. While writing a paper addressing the question: 'Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?' Clarkson discovered the work of American Anthony Benezet, and joined the antislavery movement. He was so struck by the horrors of the African Slave Trade and the questions of morality it involved, that he threw himself into the movement. After meeting Sharp, Clarkson published his paper, which became one of the primary antislavery documents of the early movement. If addressed, as Adam Hochschild in *Bury the Chains* describes, "a mixture of biblical citations, philosophical argument, and secondhand accounts."⁴⁶ Like in the American colonies, early British Humanitarian antislavery thought was divided into two motivations: religious and natural rights.

In 1787, the Quakers and other British abolitionists joined forces in the Society for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. They focused on the ending of the trade, thinking this would be a more manageable battle to fight. However, as many historians have stated, their evidence seemed to support ending both slavery and the trade. The

Committee was made up of nine members, with only three—Clarkson and Sharp included—not being part of the Society of Friends.⁴⁷ Unlike their American counterparts, once the Committee was formed, its members wasted no time in starting campaigns to grab a wider audience in support of antislavery.⁴⁸ Clarkson, wanting to see first hand the horrors of the trade, set out to visit the larger slave ports of Britain: Liverpool and Bristol.⁴⁹ Believing that firsthand accounts of the atrocities occurring in their native land would incline the hearts of the English population to the antislavery cause, Clarkson stood at the wharves, walked on the cramped ships, and spoke with many involved.⁵⁰ He even collected shackles and handcuffs that were used aboard the ships during the Middle Passage to show his audiences.⁵¹ Overall he met with distaste and discontent. However, when visiting Manchester, the outpouring of support surprised Clarkson. While in Bristol, Alexander Falconbridge, who served as a doctor on slave ships from 1780 to 1787, joined him. Falconbridge, under Clarkson's direction and with the assistance of publisher Richard Phillips, turned a series of interviews with slave ship doctors as well as his own experience into a short book published in February 1788.⁵² Falconbridge's descriptions still create empathy for those who suffered in bondage:

The place allotted for the sick Negroes is under the half deck, where they lie on the bare planks. By this means, those who are emaciated, frequently have their skin, and even their flesh, entirely rubbed off, by the motion of the ship, from the prominent parts of shoulders, elbows, and hips, so as to render the bones in those parts quite bare...The utmost skill of the surgeon here is ineffectual...The surgeon, upon going between decks, in the morning, to examine the situation of the slaves, frequently finds several dead; and among the men, sometimes a dead and living Negro fastened by their irons together.⁵³

Though Clarkson's travels were useful in stirring the emotion of audiences, the Committee very quickly realized that if they were to make any significant change in the slave trade, they needed someone who knew how Parliament worked. For this job, the Committee selected William Wilberforce. Wilberforce, who had represented his birthplace Hull in the House of Commons at the age of twenty-one, had recently converted to Evangelical Christianity.⁵⁴ With this religious motivation, Wilberforce addressed the sinfulness and immorality of slavery. As Hochschild notes, "Clarkson, the agitator, needed Wilberforce, the insider."⁵⁵

With Wilberforce in the political arena in support of the anti-slavery movement, the humanitarian propaganda that gained public support could take effect in Parliament. In *Moral Capital* (2006), Christopher Leslie Brown describes this time best with a metaphor:

The convergence of antislavery "coadjutors"—Quakers, theologians, philosophers, Evangelicals, even Thomas Clarkson himself—stretched the banks into rivers bloated by antislavery favor that, finally, merged and emptied into the political landscape, which Clarkson conceived as a flooded alluvial plain, swamped by the deluge of popular support for abolitionism.⁵⁶

This popular support developed in a variety of ways. Like the antislavery activists in the United States, British abolitionists created a compelling antislavery cannon. Stretching from Methodist John Wesley's *Thoughts upon Abolition* (1774) to Clarkson's *Essay to Olaudah Equiano's The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African* (1789), they published and distributed a good deal of literature. However, nothing was as universally compelling as Clarkson's synthesis of

testimony of antislavery evidence and support, which he delivered before the House of Commons in 1791. *The Abstract of the Evidence delivered before a Select Committee of the House of Commons in the years 1790 and 1791, on the part of the petitioners of the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, or the *Abstract* for short, became one of the most widely read non-fiction accounts of the time.⁵⁷ It also stood apart from much of the other antislavery literature because Clarkson's arguments did not reference the Bible. It seemed that the Committee, under the influence of Clarkson, believed that by simply appealing to the pathos of readers they could evoke a stronger case against the slave trade.⁵⁸ From Clarkson's words, it is easy to see why this may have been the case:

When [slaves] are flogged on the wharves...they are described by H. Ross, Morley Jeffreys, Town, and Captain Scott, to have their arms tied to the hooks of the crane, and weights of fifty-six pounds applied to their feet. In this situation the crane is wound up, so that it lifts them nearly from the ground and keeps them in a stretched posture, when the whip or cowskins is used. After this they are again whipped, but with ebony bushes, (which are more prickly than the thorn bushes in this country,) in order to let out the congealed blood.⁵⁹

Coupled with these reports, many petitions against the slave trade circulated. Clarkson's supporters in Manchester were extremely successful in this branch of evoking antislavery and anti-slave trade sentiment. In 1788 they were responsible for one hundred and three petitions with somewhere between 60,000 and 100,000 signatures. Their efforts set the bar for petitioners throughout Britain to lead the charge against slavery.

English efforts also introduced to the movement two projects that American abolitionists of the time did not consider. The first was sparked by Parliament's 1791 rejection of the Abolition Bill. Protestors, symbolically stating that they would rather go without slave-produced products than support the institution, boycotted the use of sugar. The sugar boycott allowed for a mass participation that included workers and middle class who had not been touched by antislavery literature. The boycott also put pressure on Parliament, which was "not accustomed to feeling the pressure of public opinion on issues framed as burning moral questions."⁶⁰ Clarkson stated:

There was no town, through which I passed, in which there was not some one individual who had left off the use of sugar. In the smaller towns there were from ten to fifty...and in the larger from two to five hundred...They were all ranks and parties. Rich and poor, churchmen and dissenters...Even grocers had left off trading in the article...By the best computation I was able to make from notes taken down in my journey, no fewer than three hundred thousand persons had abandoned the use of sugar.⁶¹

The use of visual propaganda to reach a mass audience followed the sugar boycott. As Michael Jordan in *The Great Abolition Sham* (2005) states, British abolitionists recognized the power of images in rousing public support. One of these images was the seal (Illustration 1) of a 'black slave kneeling in chains with the epigraph: "Am I not a Man and a Brother" above him.⁶² Even more famous than this was the poster of the Brooks ship that depicted the cramped quarters of the slaves during the middle passage. After discovering a plate with the diagram, Clarkson reworked the image to create a poster that became world famous (Illustration 2). In addition, and as Hochschild points out, it was an eerie reminder of Noah's ark.⁶³ These two images combined to create a visual representation of the repulsiveness of the Atlantic Slave Trade. They increased mass public support for the British abolitionists.

United States torn apart—by the politics of the land. As a result, British and American antislavery movements followed divergent progressions through time.

With such an outpouring of emotion and support evoked by the humanitarian movement against the slave trade, Wilberforce, in 1804, again pushed for legislation ending the Atlantic Slave Trade.⁶⁵ This time it seemed everything was working in his favor and that Britain was finally convinced of the evils of the slave trade. On January 2, 1807, a bill to abolish the slave trade was introduced to the House of the Lords, and it passed with much support. With a movement that really only got going in 1787, Britain saw results in twenty years. The English abolitionists, in more than half the time of their American counterparts, ended their nation's participation in the Atlantic Slave Trade.

The Impact of Domestic Politics on the Humanitarianism of Britain and the US

Why is it that the abolitionists of Britain, in less than half the time of the United States, succeeded in abolishing the Slave Trade and ending slavery in the British Empire in 1833, thirty years before America? Given their similar humanitarian arguments and campaigns, the contrasting political issues of each country emerge as the catalyst that caused the roads of antislavery legislation to diverge.

In the midst of the humanitarian push by Clarkson and others of the Committee, British abolitionists realized that the survival of their movement depended upon enlisting governmental support. Rather than appease them, the positive vote in 1807 to abolish the Slave Trade only encouraged abolitionists to continue lobbying the government. Shortly after 1807, Clarkson published another book, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade by the British Parliament*.⁶⁶ This work, along with others that followed, refocused the movement's attention to ending slavery. In 1833, less than twenty years later, that objective was accomplished as well. The abolition movement in the United States, in contrast, could not gain political support throughout the country. Christopher Leslie Brown states most succinctly, “Abolitionists in the United States would fail to acquire the same kind of moral prestige [as in Britain] in the mid-nineteenth century because their cause, inescapably, threatened dissolution of the nation.”⁶⁷ After Eli Whitney’s invention of the cotton gin in the 1790s, the institution of slavery, which had earlier seemed on its last legs, became an apparently essential requirement of the Southern economy. As more and more Southern states threatened to secede if slavery was outlawed, the Congress viewed the question of abolition as too dangerous to consider.⁶⁸ With the ending of the slave trade in the United States, leading politicians, and many other Americans, felt the abolitionists should be satisfied.⁶⁹ Slaveholders also had far more power in the American central government than in Britain. The slave states and free states became pitted against each other, arguing over the questions of states’ rights year after year. The issue grew into the largest rift the country has ever experienced, until the North finally forcibly addressed it in 1863 during the Civil War. After many years of conflict in and out of Congress over fugitive slaves and slavery expansion, the issue of slavery ended on the battlefield.

Domestic politics led each country astray of its common humanitarian root. Thus, though the humanitarian movement is credited for starting antislavery sentiment in both the United States and Britain, and though both movements were based on the same religious and moral values, the British movement, especially following the ending of the slave trade in 1807, proved more efficient. The political situation, in which British slaveholders were located away in the colonies and had relatively little power in the central government, resulted in anti-slave trade legislation in 1807 and then, less than two decades later, antislavery legislation in 1833. The United States in contrast, with slaveholders at the core of its central government, experienced a sectional split between the North and the South that tore the country apart. The humanitarian movements, in the United States and Britain played a major role in facilitating the emergence of antislavery sentiment throughout the countries. However, it was the political situations that determined the progression of the antislavery movements. Although born of the same root, the antislavery movements in both countries were reshaped—and in the case of the

Notes

¹ W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals* (Grand Rapids: Kessinger, LLC, 2003) 153.

² Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944) 136.

³ David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage* (New York: Oxford UP, 2006) 245.

⁴ Ibid., 247.

⁵ Ibid., 249.

⁶ Mary Stoughton Locke, *Anti-Slavery in America* (Gloucester, MA: Radcliffe College Monographs, 1965) 20.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 57.

⁹ Ibid., 9.

¹⁰ D. J. Essig, *The Bonds of Wickedness: American Evangelicals Against Slavery, 1770-1808* (New York: Temple University Press, 1982) 4.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 15.

¹³ Ibid., 19.

¹⁴ Ibid., 31.

¹⁵ Ibid., 42.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 55.

¹⁸ Ibid., 62.

¹⁹ Ibid., 19.

²⁰ Locke, 21.

²¹ Ibid., 13.

²² Ibid., 15.

²³ Ibid., 17.

²⁴ Ibid., 19.

²⁵ Betty Fladland, *Men and Brothers*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1972), 4-5.

²⁶ Locke, 24.

²⁷ Ibid.

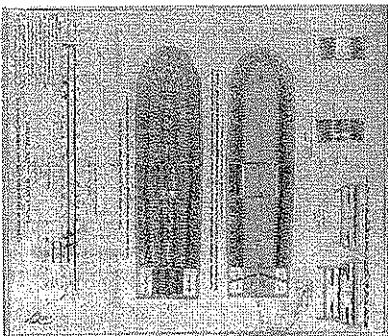


Illustration Two: Brooks Diagram Poster

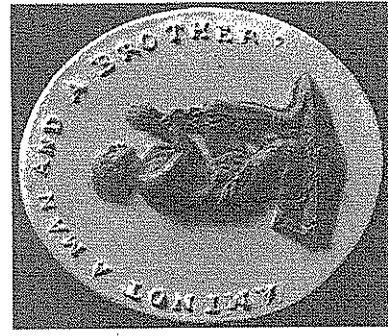


Illustration One: Bondage Seal

²⁸ Ibid., 25.
²⁹ Ibid., 25-26.

³⁰ Fladeland, 14.
³¹ Locke, 49.
³² Ibid., 46.
³³ Ibid., 49.
³⁴ Ibid., 49.
³⁵ Ibid., 51.

³⁶ Fladeland, 33.

³⁷ Locke, 4.

³⁸ Ibid., 27-28.

³⁹ Fladeland, 63.

⁴⁰ Locke, 4.

⁴¹ Raymond G Cowherd, *Politics of English Dissent*, (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 47.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Fladeland, 50.

⁴⁴ Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves*, (New York: Mariner Books, 2006), 78.

⁴⁵ Locke, 105.

⁴⁶ Hochschild, 92-93.

⁴⁷ Cowherd, 47.

⁴⁸ Fladeland, 49.

⁴⁹ Michael Jordan, *The Great Abolition Sham : The True Story of the End of the British Slave Trade*, (Grand Rapids: Sutton, Limited, 2006), 89.

⁵⁰ Jordan, 89.

⁵¹ Hochschild, 114.

⁵² Ibid., 132.

⁵³ Ibid..

⁵⁴ Cowherd, 49.

⁵⁵ Hochschild, 125.

⁵⁶ Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism*, (New York: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 4.

⁵⁷ Hochschild, 196.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 198.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 197-198.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 139.

⁶¹ Ibid., 193.

⁶² Jordan, 93.

⁶³ Hochschild, 156.

⁶⁴ Cowherd, 51.

⁶⁵ Brown, 5.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 459.

⁶⁷ John R. Spears, *The American Slave Trade*, (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1967), 112.

⁶⁸ Locke, 3-4.

Confucius, Ignatius Loyola, and the Jesuit Mission to China: A Study in Spiritual Lives and Encounters

SAM KESSLER GILBRIDE

Matteo Ricci, Jesuit scholar and missionary, arrived in China with a plan. Settling in Macao in 1582, he brought not only his religion and zeal, but also a memory device, a trick used by students at the Jesuit academies back in Europe.¹ The device consisted of a series of palaces constructed in the mind—palaces with many rooms and walls where knowledge could be “set,” “stored,” and “hung.” This knowledge was organized systematically, so access to its content was simple: the trick was to imagine the room where something was stored and to create for it a metaphor in the form of an image. Then, if needed, the image could be found within the palace, and translated back into its original content. The Jesuits believed that anyone could learn the method with proper training.²

For Ricci, as a missionary, such a technique of interlocking palaces seemed to present the perfect method of introducing Catholic iconography into Chinese society. The very nature of the palace model made this an appealing system to the men of the Chinese court—the literati—who saw themselves as men of great learning. Memory images, when used in connection with biblical stories, allowed the Chinese a connection with the Western tradition in a way that had failed through liturgy and ritual. The system was Ricci’s novel attempt at inter-cultural transfer, of bringing Catholic iconography to a land where nothing like it had ever existed.

With the image as metaphor, Ricci’s method was a first attempt at Jesuit cultural accommodation, of the inclusion of native practices into the sanctification of the unifying power of what Catholicism considers to be its One True God.³ As Liam M. Brokey writes, “The China Jesuits were motivated by a firm belief in the universal applicability of Christian teaching and by a conviction that the Christian language had an elasticity that permitted it to conform to the contours of even the most widely disparate cultures . . . the missionaries’ spiritual ambition knew few limits.”⁴ Indeed, this was not a case of Western imperial conquest through warfare; rather, these early East-West interactions were to a large degree about political ingratiation and adaptation, on the part of the missionaries. The early Jesuits did not view their mission sites as places where land had been conquered for a superior West; instead, the principles they believed in—which they called the Truths and were revealed by Jesus in the Holy Land—were universal. And just as the Apostle Paul had brought them to Europe, not as a conqueror but as a savior, so too would the Jesuits bring the Truths to China.

The discussion of Ricci’s memory palace above introduces one of the basic difficulties faced by the Jesuit mission in China: How was Catholicism, with its long and intricate history (including theologies and names that were distinct to the West), to be introduced into an already established, many-millenia old Chinese society? The following essay addresses subsidiary components of that question: at the moment of meeting, what were the historic philosophical tenants underlying the two chief protagonists (the Jesuits and the Chinese literati), and was that meeting an instance of Western imperialism or of a true cultural learning and exchange? This paper argues for one to consider the Jesuits as valuable and active conduits of learning, without pretensions to conquest beyond mirroring the journey of Paul. To understand that answer, this essay is divided into three main parts: Confucius, the man and his teachings—the philosophy in practice among both the Chinese peasants and courtiers at the time of the Jesuits’ arrival; the life and ideas of Saint Ignatius Loyola, founder of the

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Society of Jesus (the Jesuits); and the life and times of Matteo Ricci, whose legacy more than anyone's truly reveals the nature of the first meetings of East and West in modern times.

Confucius

The Master, as his Chinese disciples would later call him, did not speak when he sat for meals.⁵ At the table he was completely silent, focused, conscious not of those around him but of another world entirely, a world that to others was unreachable and only vaguely knowable. It was a world that held the essence of all things, and that could, if properly taught, lead a man to a life of morality and happiness. He called it the Way. The Master was the teacher of truths. The Master's name was Confucius.⁶

Confucius was born in the eastern Chinese state of Lu sometime in the mid-sixth century B.C.E. (classical Chinese tradition gives his dates as 551–479 B.C.E.), into a household of simple means.⁷ Not much is known about his career until he reached middle age, when at fifty he was appointed Minister of Public Works and Minister of Crime to the Duke of Lu. In the intervening years he began his studies, always teaching as well as learning. According to *Analects* 2.4, a record of the life of Confucius, he said,

"At fifteen I set my heart on learning."⁸

In 497 B.C.E. Confucius began fourteen years of wandering.⁹ He would gather groups of disciples and that they would spend the days together, contemplating the existence of man and the proper forms of living.¹⁰ Confucius spoke often and about many subjects and could discourse with the most knowledgeable men of his time, but he did not imagine himself the founder of anything, and quite certainly nothing as grandiose or as rigid as a school of philosophy. "Confucian fragility" is how Raymond Dawson has described his methods.¹¹ He was a man who allowed his mind to be taken wherever those truths might lead him. Certainly, Chinese culture and history were as essential to who he was as his own fat and muscle, but he was not a court philosopher, espousing an Order to please the king. The world for him was too big and too complicated to be limited by the blinders of a professed ideology. Confucius was a teacher, and he pursued

"At fifteen I set my heart on learning."

Importantly, Confucius's engagement in rigorous thought (outside the bounds of the academy and court) and his understanding of the powerful and important voices of history allowed him to be open toward the possibility that truths were hidden in the simple and virtuous lives of China's peasant classes. Time and again his method proved itself, focusing his sights on the attainment of the 'spiritually noble man'.¹¹ Such a man was one who followed the Way, whose life reflected the morality and virtue that Confucius sought daily. Liu Wu-Chi notes that "Confucius put himself in the world of men, allowing himself the experience of being a neighbor, a friend, or a subject, because he wanted to understand what was appropriate and right in human relationships."¹² Confucius often found himself among the humble classes, whose poverty gave his life a simplicity into which meaning could be seen, and the Way could be taught.

For Confucius, the Way was of incredible and incomparable importance. The Way created the structure for a moral and ethical life and imposed discipline through inner restraint and knowledge. Confucius seemed to have come upon the Way slowly, through patient observation, and he had an "intense concern . . . that a person should carry out his duties and act according to what is right."¹³ The Way had to be learned and was not intrinsic in of men. Only the ability to learn it at the foot of a master was inherent in humanity; the teacher bore the responsibility for the moral character of society. As Herbert Fingarette notes, "The central moral issue for Confucius...[was] the factual question of whether a man is properly taught the Way."¹⁴

Confucius believed that once a teacher taught a student the way, the choice to act honorably would be a simple one; that the student would naturally choose morality over sin, and that there would be no recourse to alternate action. Confucius viewed moral corruption as an active disease, an inner sickness that was a metaphor for ignorance that

had to be fought with proper schooling and education. Like an infection, one could beat ignorance, whereupon the individual would emerge morally healthy and pure—a spiritually noble man, a man who followed the Way.

Key to the Confucian moral character was humaneness. As a passage from *Analects* 12.22 shows, "Fan Ch'ih asked about humaneness. The Master said: 'It is to love others.'" This statement characterizes the center of his ethics: a peacefulness among men that could be found through proper understanding of the Way. The love of others was the bulwark erected against the loneliness and fragility of mortal life, of the hate and fear and cold that so often follows men to their graves. Confucius believed deeply in the importance of *this* life, of the actions made in this world and in this time. He saw his duty as being foremost to the living.¹⁵ He was not a theologian in the Western sense; rather, Confucius saw the spiritual as being in the interaction between individuals, a type of holiness in the very existence of community itself. Altruism was what Confucius called *shu*, which means "to cherish the other's heart as if it were one's own."¹⁶

Throughout Confucius's work there is the deep and echoing voice of history. The Way demands filial piety and a respect of elders as well as ancestors who have passed. In China even before Confucius, "history's purpose was to serve as a moral guide to present conduct; for in the common Chinese metaphor, history was a mirror in which men could see their own actions, understand their own motives, and judge their own behavior."¹⁷ Deep Chinese isolation from the rest of the world meant that Confucius could not look to other cultures for the solutions to his philosophical problems. He had only his own historical tradition from which to learn.

In the pages to come, as I begin my discussion of Saint Ignatius Loyola, some important similarities with Confucius should become apparent immediately. Like Confucius, Ignatius was also a teacher, a gatherer of disciples, and a man whose travels made an important impact on his spiritual life. Like Confucius, he was also outside of the academy and courts, making his accomplishments uniquely personal. And in some ways they were both idiosyncratic men—men who lived every day with the (perhaps fantastical) notion that they could seek and find what they considered to be the Truth of this world.

Still, the biography of Ignatius Loyola also presents contemporary observers with a fundamental difference—Ignatius was a Roman Catholic, a man deeply involved in the orthodox practices of a monotheistic and deity-fearing religion. His teachings reflect his investigation of an already established creed dating back fifteen hundred years. This use of tradition is not on the scale of Confucian ritual and history; Catholicism is essentially more dogmatic, with far more iconography and a much larger body of foundational texts. Furthermore, unlike Confucius, who never espoused a particular school of philosophical thought, Ignatius went on to form his own, the Jesuits, whose blend of scholarship and adventurism mimics their founder's extraordinary life.

Noting what I have briefly sketched above, in the third section of this essay the

Jesuit missionaries arrived in Confucian China.

Ignatius Loyola

Canonized into the Holy Roman Catholic Church in 1622, Ignatius Loyola was born in 1491 and would die in 1556. The youngest of thirteen children, by the end of his life Ignatius was to become one of the most recognized and celebrated of the great Spanish mystics (the ranks of which include St. Teresa of Ávila and St. John of the Cross) and the founder of the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, whose members had a dramatic influence on the course of Catholicism in China. As a young man, Ignatius served as a page in the court at Loyola, receiving the proper education of a nobleman's son. It was at the court, probably in his middle teenage years, that he strengthened "his sense of fidelity toward the *Reyes Católicos* (the Catholic Monarchs), a sense for what pertained to country

ritual, a sense for ‘etiquette.’¹⁸ Little else is known of his early life or work, though he speaks of a love of drink and gambling. In 1521, as a soldier in the Spanish army, Ignatius was badly wounded in the leg, and during his recovery his religious conversion began.¹⁹

Unlike Confucius, Ignatius left the world an autobiography, which is called *The Reminiscences*. It was dictated over a number of years to a secretary, and the text provides a fairly plausible biographical account that allows modern readers to follow the awakening of Ignatius’s spirituality throughout his life. However, the dictations Ignatius made were in no way comprehensive; scholars have very little idea of what his daily routine was like, or about the people he met, or who influenced him throughout his journeys. What modern observers do know is that after a religious conversion in his thirtieth year, Ignatius spent the rest of his life in search of what he believed to be the spirit of God. He prayed almost without end, often for hours at a time, weeping at the foot of the cross, asking for the presence of the Word to be made known to him. There is one unusual passage in *The Reminiscences*, a long and thoughtful paragraph describing an event that Ignatius viewed as formative in his spiritual development that illustrates the type of meditative searching to which Ignatius had dedicated his life.²⁰

Once he was going in his devotion to a church...Going along thus in his devotion, he sat down for a little with his face towards the river, which was running deep below. And as he was seated there, the eyes of his understanding began to be opened: not that he saw some vision, but understanding and knowing many things, spiritual things just as much as matters of faith and learning, and this with an enlightenment so strong that all things seemed new to him. One cannot set out the particular things he understood then, though they were many: only that he received a great clarity in his understanding.²¹

Such visions were the sign of a life properly led. They were like portals, gates into the great interior castle of the soul—to use one of Saint Teresa’s most powerful metaphors. As each gate opened it led deeper toward reaching God, toward the ineffable, toward that place where the soul and the Word are united as one. He sought to completely submit his will to the divine, a submission that became the focus of his life.

In 1523, when Ignatius was thirty-two years old, he set off on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In the years after his journey but before the founding of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius began to conceive of himself as what he called a soldier of God, an *ecclesia militans*, a Church militant. He wrote that “God, to whom all things, even our inmost hearts, are known, knows what desire for the salvation and progress of souls he has given to me.”²² Ignatius had always traveled in the company of others, but as time progressed his fight for the soul’s salvation became even more of an outward one. Increasingly, he began to spread his message through teachings, always phrasing his motives in soldiery terms, as a Church militant. Ignatius believed that only Jesus Christ could save souls, but that proper education was needed to ensure that salvation.²³ He also believed that all men, regardless of class or rank or wealth, could be taught what he considered the Truths of the Church.²⁴

The Society of Jesus, as Ignatius called it, reflected these educational ideals. It was founded upon the principle of *ecclesia militans*, with an ethos of strife and a crusading spirituality.²⁵ Its battle was against Satan, as a bulwark on the side of the light in the “civil war raging between . . . knightly senses of honor and the shameful yielding to ‘dark’ inclinations.”²⁶ The Society under Ignatius believed that such “inclinations” were the lustful and distracting needs of the physical body, the impurity of the flesh surrounding the divinity of the soul. There must be a triumph of the Kingdom of Christ over the Kingdom of Satan, Ignatius declared, of Jerusalem over Babylon. History’s

wrong was to be forever righted by the purity and holiness of the Church. According to the Society, where the Jews had failed, the Catholics would triumph.

The Society of Jesus, shortening to ‘Jesuit’ (although Ignatius refused ever to call it that), quickly became an institution of power within the Church hierarchy.²⁷ The Society intended for its members, as Candide de Dalmases writes, to disperse throughout the world and that there is a “security afforded by conventional [institutional and academic] life and the unifying norms of devotional practice,” which allowed the missionaries to feel comfortable throughout the world.²⁸ Within twenty years of its founding, the Jesuit’s network of colleges stretched across Europe.²⁹ In addition, missionaries worked in every major colonial commercial center, including India, the East Indies, Brazil, and China.

Saint Ignatius Loyola lived sixteen years after the founding of the Society of Jesus, long enough for him to watch its rapid global expansion fulfill his dreams of a Church *militans*. But his death came seventeen years shy of Matteo Ricci’s arrival in China, an event that caused stir both among the Chinese literati and back home at the Vatican, where Jesuit tales about Confucian ethics and the wonders of Chinese philosophy created a momentous scandal. The final section of this essay focuses on the first Jesuit missions to China, especially those led by Matteo Ricci and his followers. These first missionaries were extremely learned men, whose education and training had taught them to see in foreign cultures not hostility to Western Christian values, but traditions whose intrinsic ritual and practice could be constructively mixed with the Trinitarian views of Catholicism. “Cultural accommodation” became the catchphrase for Ricci’s activities in China. As I will show, it was the teachings of Confucius and Ignatius Loyola that ultimately determined the outcome of the Jesuit’s Oriental adventure.

The Society of Jesus in China

The Jesuit experience in China is profoundly important in the history of interaction between East and West. China enamored the early missionaries, and its ancient culture significantly influenced their thoughts and attitudes toward the Orient. As Brockey states, “By creating a new image for themselves, one echoing the Chinese cultural register, the Jesuits gained acceptance among members of the later Ming elite.”³⁰ The goal of these missionaries was certainly one of foreign introduction, of a type of religious grafting, but not necessarily of wholesale replacement.

The latter sixteenth century saw the closing years of the Ming Dynasty in China, which had been founded in 1368 after the collapse of the previous Mongol-led dynasty. This era was the beginning of the economic crisis that later brought down the Ming a century later, in 1644, as the global market carried on the ships of Spain and Portugal began to find permanent moorings in the deep, spacious harbors of the Far East. Indeed, the Western economic imperialism that was arriving on those ships has painted the Jesuits in its wide brush. The Jesuits arrived in China in 1549, midway through the century, and only nine years after the Society was founded in Rome. Saint Francis Xavier, who had been a close friend of Saint Ignatius and co-founder of the Society of Jesus, led them on this excursion.³¹ He died three years later, in 1552, and for the next three decades his works languished. There was no one, it seemed, in all the Jesuit missions of the Far East, or in the academies of Europe, who possessed the vision, talent, interest, and force of will essential to penetrating the Chinese dragon. Then, in 1583, a thirty-one year old minister from central Italy found his way east. His name was Matteo Ricci.³²

Ricci was born in Macerata, a city along Italy’s Adriatic coast, on October 6, 1552. He studied at the Jesuit College in Rome, beginning in 1571, under Father Christopher Clavius, then one of the most celebrated and important natural philosophers in Europe.³³ In 1577, Ricci asked for and received an assignment to the Portuguese East Indies. In 1582, he moved to Macao, residing there for a year before journeying north into the Chinese heartland. Within a decade, starting in 1591, Ricci began a translation of

the *Four Books*, an important classic of the Confucian canon. He sent copies of this book, in addition to long, enthusiastic letters about and ethnographic descriptions of Chinese people and culture, back to his colleagues and superiors (including the Pope) in Europe. Through these actions, he “attempted to summarize the meaning of China’s ethical and philosophical stances in a language that [would] be intellectually precise to his friends back home in Portugal and Italy.”³⁴ He even related parts of Confucian texts to the writings of Seneca, Cicero, and Plato.

Ricci’s embrace of China was all-consuming—he and his missionaries dressed like Confucian scholars, shaved their heads, and lived in the manner of peasants.³⁵ Yet no matter how much Ricci may have enjoyed his life in China, all of his effort was dedicated toward the goal of spreading Catholicism. He read the Confucian canon to find connections with Catholic doctrine, and he learned Chinese to be better able to minister to his converts. He is quoted as saying, “We hope for the greatest service to God, since as the Chinese put little trust in their idols it will be an easy thing to persuade them of our truth if we can deal with them directly;” i.e. in Chinese, using Confucian examples.³⁶

In 1597, Ricci was named Superior of the China mission. He died thirteen years later, in 1610, and in those intervening years he worked and succeeded in getting the Jesuits recognized by the Ming court literati. As this era was very unstable politically, such political protection and recognition were helpful to the organization’s survival. Ricci always sought the highest level of political patronage, and he and his fellow missionaries, men who had been educated at some of the best colleges in Europe, yearned to be accepted “in Chinese terms as learned men.”³⁷ Still, few converts were found at the courts; the farther provinces, out beyond the capital city, were the truly fertile fields for sowing a new religion. Yet, even there, progress was slow; in a country whose population was counted in the tens of millions, converts numbered only in the thousands. A century later, the spirit and strength of Ignatius—with his endurance of hardship and pain in the name of Jesus and the Father, and his dream of an *ecclesia militans* and an international embrace of Catholic principles—found itself manifest in the soul of Matteo Ricci, whose perseverance in that far-away land is remembered for its empathy and perspicacity. The Jesuits may have arrived as conquerors, as *militians*, bent on the replacement of the existing system with their own; but once they became settled, they learned the inherent value of the culture they were trying to replace and began to integrate its values into the religion they already espoused. In his embrace of both Catholicism and Confucianism, Ricci proved what Herodotus, the ancient Greek historian, had thought impossible: the coexistence of East and West.

By the latter half of the seventeenth century, as the Jesuit mission continued to follow Ricci’s example of cultural exchange and mutual respect and ignored warnings emanating from Europe, the Papacy decided to act. To protect its supreme authority over the actions of its missions, it began a campaign to systematically discredit Jesuit writings and treatises being sent home to Europe from China. H. G. Creel points out that “it was concluded [in Rome] that the virtues of Confucius and of Chinese government had alike been inventions of the Jesuits, perpetrated for purpose of propaganda.”⁴⁰ In the end, the Jesuit order had been so thoroughly discredited that it was dissolved by the Pope in 1773.⁴¹ As many in the Church would later acknowledge, many regretted this fate of the first Jesuit mission and thought it an ironic cruelty that the Church would bring down the group that found Confucius for the West and that was so much a part of the sixteenth century Western *militians* ideal, in shame.

After the end of the first Jesuit mission to China, as the empires of Europe gazed with covetous eyes on the riches of foreign lands, a new wave of businessmen and soldiers buried the philosophical connection between East and West that Matteo Ricci and his followers had sought beneath their greedy quests. By the eighteenth century, the Orient had become a land of easy wealth, and Westerners thought that its people were uneducated and backward and in need of the redeeming powers of a Western religion. Under the leadership of Ricci, a connection had been made between the cultures of Europe and China, which was empowered by the deep empathy of a single man and a small number of his followers. Those followers, the Jesuits, lived the spirit of Ignatius—his love of learning through travel; of conversation and dialogue; of religious yearning across the ache and pain of time.

The end of the first Jesuit mission remains a lost opportunity, the echoes of which resound today as the world renews its struggle toward positive interaction and peaceful coexistence with the societies of the Far East. In addition, Chinese culture is now more ubiquitous than ever before, its art and literature increasingly represented among some of the West’s most prestigious galleries and awards. The Jesuits’ encounter with Confucius reveals their common values, for he too shared their principles, albeit in a Chinese sense. To sit and learn at the foot of a master, whether in the organized academies of Europe or the courts and villages of China, proved to be a unifying value.

Notes

¹ The legacies of Ignatius and Confucius, as well as of the man who spent his life bringing them together, Matteo Ricci, stand as a reminder of the possibility of true and lasting inter-cultural empathy. By actively incorporating aspects of Chinese life and philosophy into traditional Catholic practice, the Jesuits opened a space for active and deep learning, a corollary to Paul and his embrace of Greco-Roman ritual. Yet, in a sad reminder of the potential of man’s cruelty in the face of the unknown, the first Jesuit mission in China ended in ignominious failure. In the decades after Ricci’s death, the Jesuits continued to send manuscripts, books, and letters home to Europe. As the Confucian influences in their work became clearer, the Papal authorities began to doubt the rigors of the Jesuit’s Catholic teachings. Unlike Ricci, who understood that converts were made and kept through cultural accommodation and mutual respect, Rome saw the Jesuit mission as a direct affront to its authority. As Brocley explains, “in the eyes of some . . . the Jesuits had expanded the limits of acceptable Catholic practice so far as to be abetting paganism among their flocks.”³⁸ In light of increasing hostility and accusation fomenting in Europe against the China mission, the Jesuits were accused of being too flattering toward the Chinese and their Confucian practices.³⁹

Conclusion

² See the opening passage in: Jonathan D. Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci*, (New York: Viking, 1984).

³ Ibid., 9. Scholars believe that Ricci, who was known for his extraordinary memory, could mentally scroll through tens of thousands of images.

⁴ Throughout this paper, I capitalize terms such as “True,” “Word,” “Way,” and “Master” to reflect how my subjects would have used and thought of these terms.

⁵ Liam M. Brockey, *Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China, 1579-1724*, (Cambridge: Belknap, 2007), 6-7.

⁶ Julia Chin, *Confucianism and Christianity*, (New York: Harper & Row, 2007), 175.

⁷ Raymond Dawson, *Confucius*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 6.

⁸ See Liu Wu-Chi, *Confucius: His Life and Times* (Westport: Greenwood, 1972).

⁹ Jeffrey Riegel, “Confucius” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (2006), <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/confucius> (accessed May 2008). Most of the extant knowledge of Confucius’s life is recorded in a book called *The Analects*, the most significant collection of Confucian sayings. It includes personal reminiscences and biographical references gathered together in the two centuries following the Master’s death. Scholars suggest that these

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⁵ Julia Chin, *Confucianism and Christianity*, (New York: Harper & Row, 2007), 175.

⁶ “Confucius” is a Latinized form of the two Chinese characters that compose the Master’s name, and was given by the Jesuits who brought manuscripts of Confucian writings back to Europe. A more modern English equivalent of those letters would translate roughly to ‘Master Kong’.

⁷ Raymond Dawson, *Confucius*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 6.

⁸ See Liu Wu-Chi, *Confucius: His Life and Times* (Westport: Greenwood, 1972).

⁹ Jeffrey Riegel, “Confucius” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (2006), <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/confucius> (accessed May 2008). Most of the extant knowledge of Confucius’s life is recorded in a book called *The Analects*, the most significant collection of Confucian sayings. It includes personal reminiscences and biographical references gathered together in the two centuries following the Master’s death. Scholars suggest that these

sayings represent the most accurate remaining composite of actual Confucian teachings and signals the type of philosopher Confucius chose to be: he was a teacher and not a writer—² a similarity that he shared with Ignatius Loyola, as I will show.

¹⁰ Dawson, 11.

¹¹ See Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred*, (Prospect Heights: Waveland, 1998), 12. Chin, 180.

¹² Fingarette, 25.

¹³ Ibid., 35.

¹⁴ Wu-Chi, 149.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Dawson, 13-14.

¹⁷ Hugo Ranner, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola*, trans. by Francis John Smith, (Chicago: Loyola, 1953), 7.

¹⁸ Ignatius Loyola, *Personal Writings*, ed. and trans. by Joseph A. Munitiz and Philip Endean, (New York: Penguin, 2004), 13.

¹⁹ I use this in the third person because that is how Ignatius's secretary recorded the dictations—substituting the 'he' for 'I'.

²⁰ Passage [30] 5, quoted in Loyola, 26-7.

²¹ Quoted in Frederick Wulf, *Ignatius of Loyola: His Personality and Spiritual Heritage*, (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977).

²² Rahner, 104.

²³ Wulf, 10.

²⁴ Paraphrased from *Ignatius of Loyola*.

²⁵ Rahner, 9.

²⁶ Claudio de Dalmases, *Ignatius of Loyola: Founder of the Jesuits*, trans. by Jerome Aixala, (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985), 232.

²⁷ Ibid., 247.

²⁸ See Paul Van Dyke, *Ignatius Loyola*, (Port Washington, Kennikat, 1968).

²⁹ Brocton, 25.

³⁰ Pope Gregory XV canonized both him and Ignatius in the same ceremony on March 12, 1622.

³¹ Summarized from: "Matteo Ricci" in the Catholic Encyclopedia Online and Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci*.

³² Among much else, Clavius was instrumental in the institutional acceptance of Galileo's observations of the moons of Jupiter. One should also credit him as the reformer of the calendar under Pope Gregory XIII; his version is still in use today.

³³ Charles E. Ronan and Bonnie B. C. Oh, eds., *East Meets West: The Jesuits in China: 1582-1773*, (Chicago: Loyola, 1988), 15.

³⁴ Ibid., xx.

³⁵ Ibid., 11-12.

³⁶ Brocton, 43.

³⁷ Ibid., 11.

³⁸ H. G. Creel, *Confucius: The Man and the Myth*, (New York: John Day, 1949), 258.

³⁹ Ibid., 263.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 263.

⁴¹ Ibid.

In May 1902, seven years before the uprising of 20,000 garment workers, which would be a quintessential moment in the history of women's organized labor protests in New York City, thousands of Jewish housewives took to the streets of the Lower East Side of New York and violently boycotted in response to the rise in price of kosher meat.

For nearly a month, the meat boycott spread to Brooklyn and other northeastern cities, receiving considerable attention both within the Jewish community and in larger urban society. Though this event has received minimal attention from labor historians, perhaps because it was short-lived and no prominent female labor leaders emerged from it, the labor consciousness of these housewives cannot be ignored. This boycott, or more precisely, this *strike*, demonstrated a highly developed sense of political and labor consciousness among non-wage-earning Jewish women. Where and how did Jewish housewives develop this heightened sense of social justice and labor consciousness and what were the motives that justified their radical actions? Analysis of the boycott itself in addition to the sociological history of the Jewish housewife in Eastern Europe and America largely explain why the kosher meat boycott became an issue of working-class social justice, rather than solely an economic issue.

Before analyzing the long-term developments of the Jewish housewife's social and political consciousness, the immediate causes of the boycott must be understood. On May 11, nearly fifteen-hundred kosher butchers met in New Irving Hall and agreed to suspend business for the following two days in response to the sharp increase in the price of kosher beef, from twelve to eighteen cents a pound.¹ In *Fraud, Corruption, and Hobness*, Harold P. Gaswirth describes the special relationship among kosher butchers, the wholesalers, and their customers, which made their response to increased prices more desperate than non-kosher beef retailers. Not only were kosher butchers expected to keep prices reasonable, but they had to work under supervision to assure that their beef was religiously sound.² The butchers were responsible for the health of their customers and for their spiritual purity. The butchers were likewise dependent upon their Jewish workers and customers because their products were ethnically particular.³ Predictably, kosher butchers were not always able to satisfy the customers' demands, as was true during the 1902 boycott. After two days, the butchers relinquished their boycott because wholesalers refused to lower beef prices, though they promised to support the butchers in their struggle to keep shops open on Sunday.⁴ Despite the "scabbing" of the kosher butchers, who would absorb the physical fury of the Jewish women, the political brunt of the boycott fell upon the Beef-Trust, called the "Big Five," including Armour, Swift,

Morris, Wilson, and Cudahy, which "virtually controlled the eastern meat market."⁵ Though the kosher butchers themselves rioted against the few butchers who opened their shops during the first two days of the strike, the media paid little attention to the strike until Jewish women embraced the boycott. On May 15, when the butchers dropped their boycott, fierce riots, all led by women, broke out against butcher shops in the Lower East Side. Early that morning a crowd of five hundred persons, nearly all women, packed into New Irving Hall to plan their boycott outside of the one hundred or so kosher butchers in the area. Thousands more boycotters excitedly paced outside. Within hours, thousands of women coursed through the Lower East Side. The *New York Tribune* reported that "shops were smashed upon, the meats hurled through the windows, into the streets, and the shops generally wrecked."⁶ Of the eighty persons arrested the

The Kosher Meat Boycott of 1902:

The Working-Class Mentality of Jewish Housewives in the Lower East Side

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first day, seventy-five of them were women. The coverage of the first days of the boycott was extremely sensational. There were numerous reports of female shoppers having meat ripped from their hands and trampled in the street before they were also attacked by mobs of women “armed with sticks, vocabularies, and well-sharpened nails.”⁷ The *New York Times* described such scenes as women boycotters following shoppers to their homes and taking meat from their table, pouring cans of kerosene over meat and setting fire to it in the streets, and throwing refuse from the streets onto meat in shops.⁸

By May 18, most kosher butcher shops in the Lower East Side closed their doors, and the boycott had spread to Brooklyn, Harlem, Newark, Boston and Philadelphia. That morning, the central female leaders of the boycott also met to create a permanent organization to oversee the boycott. In an open meeting of over five hundred men and women, the boycotters established the Ladies’ Anti-Beef Trust Association and elected Mrs. Caroline Schatzburg its president.⁹ A committee of women was appointed to canvass the neighborhood to persuade Jewish women, and in some cases Christian women, not to buy meat until the prices returned to twelve cents. However, internal conflict within the Association pushed leadership into male hands. On May 21, a committee of male communal leaders, lead by David Blaustein of the Educational Alliance, held a conference of over three hundred representatives of *hevras* (burial societies), synagogues, Landsmanshaften (mutual aid societies), and unions.¹⁰ Their goal was to seize leadership from the Ladies’ Anti-Beef Trust Association. Insisting that “the women should be quiet, and let the men do the fighting,” the new Allied Conference for Cheap Kosher Meat offered some support for butchers who would sell cheap meat according to the conference’s supervision. Over the next few weeks, violent boycotts erupted only periodically. Following the pledged support from the Retail Butchers Association on the 22nd and the endorsement of the Orthodox Jewish leaders on the 27th, the boycott was officially concluded on June 5. By June 9, the price of kosher meat had dropped to fourteen cents a pound. Though women lost some control over their movement, the boycott was an undeniable success.

As Joseph Baondess, the famed union leader and “King of the Cloakmakers” remarked: “The women on the east side had no organizers or leaders, but they formed an organization of their own as strong as any labor union.”¹¹ Who were these women? How were these they able to spontaneously join forces and rally their entire community behind them without any union experience? They acted with such self-assurance and militancy because they were Jewish housewives. The boycotters were quite different from the young, unionized female activists of their time. Of the central female leaders of the boycotters who could be traced in the 1905 New York state manuscripts census, all of them were housewives and mothers, all of whom were in their mid-thirties or older at the time of the boycott. They averaged 4.3 children at home and none of them had less than 3 children.¹² Moreover, none of these women were new immigrants. Though only two women were United States citizens, most of them had been living in New York City an average of eleven years.¹³ None of these women held wage-earning positions outside of the home, yet they openly referred to the economic boycott of kosher meat as a strike and those who bought meat as “scabs.” The mentality that facilitated their radical actions was two-fold. First, their Jewish heritage formed their class-consciousness and sense of social justice. Secondly, their central roles as wives and mothers in the Jewish household shaped their economic assertiveness.

As Tony Michel describes in his study of radical Jewish Socialism in New York City, the Jewish immigrant environment was steeped in a highly developed working-class mentality and sense of social justice. He writes: “Hardly a single family was left untouched. Sooner or later just about every individual walked a picket line, marched in a parade, protested some injustice, or knew someone who had.”¹⁴ As a diaspora group, the Jews viewed their individual struggles as that of their entire people. Therefore, any hardships they experienced had a world historical significance. Hasia Diner and Beryl Lieff Benderly discuss this mentality in their history of Jewish women in America:

Whether because of Judaism’s traditional emphasis on social justice and community or East Europe’s Socialist labor movement, Jewish workers tended to understand the hardships they faced as examples of class conflict rather than personal problems, as injustices afflicting the great mass of working people rather than as misfortunes affecting particular individuals.¹⁵

This inbred social consciousness was clearly reflected in women’s activities during the 1902 boycott. The boycotters expected fellow Jewish women to abstain from meat for the collective good of the neighborhood. If a neighbor bought meat for their own, selfish reasons, the boycotters had no qualms about wrenching said meat from their neighbors’ hands or dinner tables. In her own study of the kosher boycott, Paula E. Hyman stresses that “they assumed the existence of collective goals and the right to demand shared sacrifices. Individual desires for the consumption of meat were to be subordinated for the larger public good.”¹⁶

This social and class-consciousness only increased with influence of Socialist thought, which was deeply ingrained in the Jewish community in New York’s Lower East Side. The socialist ideal that the personal hardships of the American working-class were part of a worldwide struggle struck a chord with Jewish immigrants. Furthermore, many Eastern European Jewish immigrants had previous experience with the Bund, the General Jewish Labor Union of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia. The strong representation of Jews in the Socialist party in New York assured that, by the turn of the century, they “were among the best organized of semi-skilled immigrants.”¹⁷

Consequently, it was all but impossible for Jewish housewives to avoid the class-conscious thinking that saturated their neighborhood. Yiddish Socialist newspapers dominated in the Lower East Side, and “everyday one could hear socialism preached on street corners and in parks.”¹⁸ Jewish housewives were confronted with working-class ideology on the streets, but also within their own homes. By and large, the husbands of the boycotters were artisans in the garment industry, which was by far the most unionized and politically active trade in New York City.¹⁹ Allusions to the Socialist leanings of the boycotters, symbolized by the waving of red flags, inundated the news coverage of the boycott in both conservative and liberal publications. For example, in a particularly sensational narration of the May 15 riots, the *New York Times* discussed a “woman waving a red handkerchief” who urged the boycotters to attack a policeman.²⁰ Similarly, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, a decidedly liberal publication, described the extension of the violent boycott to Brooklyn on May 22: “pieces of meat were raised aloft on pointed sticks and carried in the crowd like red flags. The women bore most of these gory looking banners and used them to encourage their followers to further violence.”²¹ Whether or not these women aligned themselves with socialism, they were strongly influenced by its sociopolitical message, which was so similar to their brand of Jewish social justice.

However, neither the traditional cultural predominance of social and class-conscious thinking nor the influence of socialism was the sole reason why women took the initiative to boycott. The traditional authority granted Jewish housewives within the home and the Jewish community gave them the economic and political agency to stage the boycott and assured that they would receive widespread community support. While their roles developed somewhat from the Eastern Europe *shetl* to the immigrant community in the Lower East Side, the *balehuste*—the capable, efficient housewife—remained the crux of a strong Jewish household. In the *shetl*, men were expected to pursue religious studies while women took the role of secondary breadwinners to facilitate their husbands’ religious pursuits. While “all poor women in Russia, regardless of their religion, worked hard to care for their families...only Jewish women—and men—considered it appropriate for a wife to act in addition as a breadwinner for a scholarly husband.”²² This did not necessarily require that a Jewish housewife take on

outside work, but that she assisted in the family business during her husband's frequent absences from the home. This gave wives "some family authority, a knowledge of the marketplace, and a certain worldliness."²³ It also provided Jewish women a firm grasp on economic realities, especially how to shop comparatively and bargain for lower prices. The highly-developed consumer consciousness of Jewish housewives derived from the *shefet* market proved useful in America. Furthermore, the social consciousness and economic shrewdness held over from the "Old Country" blended with the radical Socialists' influence in the Lower East Side, causing the Jewish housewife to become even more economically assertive. This amalgamation of traditional Jewish culture with Socialist teachings and American consumerism set the scene for the 1902 kosher meat boycott.

On June 15, 1902, the *New York Tribune* printed special interest piece on the Anti-Trust women, explaining: "It has been a woman's strike throughout, and its efficiency shows what power lies in the hands of the administrator of the family funds."²⁴ Once in America, Jewish housewives' traditional economic authority not only prepared them to thrive in the American consumer market, but it motivated them to act politically.

Upon the Jews' immigration, American producers and advertisers recognized the adeptness of the Jewish women as consumers as well as their "desire to be American," and advertised extensively in Yiddish newspapers.²⁵ Even the United States government took notice. A government document observed: "The women of the Jewish race are rarely deceived when trading with the vendor."²⁶ Consequently, Jewish housewives were the gateway between their homes and American culture. They controlled which old world traditions they would forfeit to achieve the "markers of American identity and mobility—from American food products to a piano for the parlor."²⁷ What Jewish housewives would not surrender was their ability to provide their family with the sustenance they needed and deserved. Meat, once a delicacy for the rich alone, was a new fixture on the Jewish table in America. However, Jewish women understood that, at least in America, the ability to provide meat for their family at affordable prices was their inalienable right. Furthermore, because food marked the physical and spiritual health of the Jewish family, the quality and affordability of kosher products was vital. Accordingly, Jewish housewives felt that it was their right to act politically when the price of kosher meat rose beyond their means. They were fighting for their right to "eat like Americans and Jews."²⁸

Given that the *bailehuste* was the dominant cultural ideal in the Jewish community, the actions of the boycotters were ambitiously supported by the Lower East Side community. As policemen attempted to rein in the violent female mobs, missiles, including "old shoes, brushes, combs, and brooms" were hurled at the police from the windows of the surrounding tenements.²⁹ Despite the dispatch of over a thousand policemen throughout the Lower East Side, massive crowds of men and women rallied outside the Essex Market Court on the morning of the 16th to support the women arrested the previous day. This support remained within the lower-class boundaries of the neighborhood, however. The boycotters were ignored or admonished by the upper-class Jewish press and seen as bizarre by the non-Jewish, English-speaking press, especially since these women were seen in opposition to the ideal, passive Western housewife.

By contrast, in the Lower East Side, not only was women's political activity accepted, but it was encouraged, especially by the Yiddish press. For example, the *Jewish Daily Forward*, the leading Yiddish newspaper in New York, provided women with articles on politics, labor, and international affairs in addition to those of home economics and fashion.³⁰ Local rabbis openly welcomed the women into synagogues to advocate their cause. Even the more conservative *Yiddishes Tageblat* newspaper was sympathetic to the boycotters and admonished the police for their excessive use of force.³¹

Much of the boycott's success rested in the fact that the women were able to supersede ideological boundaries within the Jewish community. This was primarily

because, despite differences in politics or religious practice, the cultural ideal of the strong *bailehuste* was maintained in the Jewish community at large. Within the Lower East Side, the Jewish housewives were able to breach ideological rifts between liberal, Reform, and Socialist Jews and the traditional Orthodox Jews: "...socialist rhetoric tripped easily from the tongues of women who still cared about kosher meat, could cite Biblical passages in Hebrew, and felt at ease in the synagogue."³² This accounts for the broad range of support the boycotters received from unions, Jewish mutual aid societies, as well as Orthodox leaders.

By the turn of the century, the combination of traditional Jewish culture and American and Socialist ideologies in the Jewish Lower East Side propelled thousands of Jewish housewives to strike against kosher butchers. Though the kosher meat boycott of 1902 was a short lived eruption of political activity by Jewish housewives, it showed the potential of women as strong activists in the political and labor sphere, whether or not they were wage-earners. The traditional role of the Jewish housewife as the aggressive economic leader of the household endured in the American Jewish community. Especially in New York's Lower East Side, the center of radical Socialist feelings, the housewife's old inclinations became intensified and politicized. What may have been a boycott for the simple goal of relieving economic strain became, in the Jewish housewife's mentality, a fight to secure the rights of the entire working-class society. The kosher meat boycott of 1902 was the first uprising of over 20,000 and, given their status outside of the working-class, it is of no less significance to the labor struggle than that of the young female garment workers in 1911. These were the mothers, both literally and figuratively, of the young women in the garment industry who would fortify the women's labor movement in New York by the end of the decade.

Notes

- ¹ "East Side Butchers will Boycott Meats," *New York Times*, May 12, 1902, 5.
- ² Harold P. Gastwirt, *Fraud, Corruption, and Holiness*, (Port Washington: National University Publications, 1974), 38.
- ³ Hacia R. Diner, *Hungering for America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 206.
- ⁴ Gastwirt, *Fraud, Corruption, and Holiness*, 39.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ "Mobs in Meat Riots," *New York Tribune*, May 16, 1902, 1.
- ⁷ "Rioters use the Torch," *New York Tribune*, May 17, 1902, 1.
- ⁸ "Trouble Renewed on Lower East Side," *New York Times*, May 17, 1902, 2.
- ⁹ "Meat Rioters Rest," *New York Tribune*, May 19, 1902, 4.
- ¹⁰ "East Side Anti-Beef Action," *New York Times*, May 22, 1902, 6.
- ¹¹ "East Side Boycotters Meet and Organize," *New York Times*, May 19, 1902, 5.
- ¹² Paula E. Hyman, "Immigrant Women and Consumer Protest: The New York City Kosher Meat Boycott of 1902," *American Jewish History* 70 (1980): 96-97.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Tony Michels, *Fire in Their Hearts*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2005), 8.
- ¹⁵ Hacia R. Diner and Beryl Lieff Benderly, *Her Works Praise Her*, (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 178.
- ¹⁶ Hyman, "Immigrant Women," 98.
- ¹⁷ Alice Kessler-Harris, *Gendering Labor History*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 40.
- ¹⁸ Michels, 89.
- ¹⁹ Hyman, "Immigrant Women," 98.
- ²⁰ *New York Times*, May 16, 1902.

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²³ Paula E. Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 68.

²⁴ "Anti-Trust Women," *New York Tribune*, June 15, 1902.

²⁵ Diner and Benderly, *Her Works*, 208.

²⁶ Ibid. 209.

²⁷ Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation*, 98.

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³⁰ Hyman, *Immigrant Women*, 113.

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Declaring War From Your Living Room: The Paradox of the War on Drugs and the Values of the American Suburbs

PAMELA SCHWARTZ

The 1988 World Series. Fans eagerly fill a California baseball stadium waiting for the game to commence. Moments before she walks onto the field to throw the honorary first pitch, First Lady Nancy Reagan addresses the American people on camera. "So to all of you watching, I ask you, please help us get the message out to the children. If they're offered drugs, tell them to just say no."¹ As Mrs. Reagan tosses the baseball to home plate, her speech is punctuated by the throng of children teeming around her, each wearing a matching hat and T-shirt emblazoned with a battle cry that defined a generation: "Just Say No."

The 1980s were marked by the Reagan administration's zealous effort to obliterate drug use in the United States, a movement encapsulated by the phrase the "War on Drugs." But though Ronald Reagan certainly amplified the dialogue and shaped the policy of the "War on Drugs," he did not invent it. Richard Nixon launched the modern drug campaign in 1971, when he brazenly declared drugs to be "public enemy number one."² Nixon's resignation put the drug war on the back-burner throughout the Ford and Carter administrations and subsequently set the framework for the Reagan administration, which, in 1981, inherited an America with an alarming rate of drug use.³ Reagan would pick up Nixon's "supply-side" tactics, which focused on the exporters of drugs consumed in America because he initially believed drugs to be a foreign threat. Later, he would shift to "demand-side" strategies, which took a domestic approach to drug reform.

The shift, spearheaded by Reagan policymakers, reflected a disconnect between stringent and aggressive military action abroad and increasing rates of drug use at home.⁴ This increase indicated that the American people were not the innocent and impressionable victims of international drug cartels that the White House imagined they were—Americans themselves were somewhat to blame for the rampant rate of drug usage. Reagan reevaluated his anti-drug strategy accordingly. In 1986, he and the first lady initiated an all-out domestic offensive that not only called for a substantial increase in government policing and policy, but for a "massive change in attitudes"—a reshaping of the way Americans viewed drug use.⁵ This change in attitude would frame the "War on Drugs" as a direct threat to security, family, homeownership, and individuality—issues near and dear to the white middle-class suburban population. By changing the rhetoric on the "War on Drugs," the Reagans were able to galvanize support for their plan.

As a result, suburbanites responded overwhelmingly to the anti-drug crusade. Grassroots organizations mobilized by concerned parents as well as privately funded anti-drug education programs—in schools and in the media—reflected the staunch "zero-tolerance" campaign perpetuated by the President and the First Lady. This "zero-tolerance" rhetoric redefined the way Americans approached drug use by drawing a sharp line between drug-users and non-drug users without much room in between. However, it would seem that the campaign was less than effective. Ironically, the very generation that underwent the rigorous "Just Say No" education would become increasingly skeptical of the "zero-tolerance approach" and even include many casual drug users.⁶

This paper will focus on the paradoxical "war" Ronald Reagan launched in the 1980s. Though well-known for his sentiment that "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem," President Reagan not only increased government funding and

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control during his involvement with the “War on Drugs” but also garnered the support of American families by “suburbanizing” the government’s rhetoric on the War on Drugs.⁷ The Reagan administration effectively linked the crusade against drugs to the idea that drug use was an immediate threat to core American family values. As a result, American suburbanites enthusiastically embraced and promulgated a variety of anti-drug education programs, all of which took a zero-tolerance approach to drug use and changed the way most of America viewed drugs and drug abusers. But there was a growing discrepancy between Reagan’s desire for the government to have a limited role and the actual increased government involvement in the lives of American citizens. This, combined with an excessive zero-tolerance approach, may have contributed to what many consider the failure of the War on Drugs, especially in the suburban areas that Reagan’s “war” sought to protect.

The Reagan Drug Strategy—“Supply” and “Demand”

President Nixon’s drug policies provided the scaffolding for the anti-drug strategies of the 1980s. The massive influx of heroin-addicted Vietnam War veterans and the hazy legacy of a drug-filled 1960s counterculture contributed to domestic drug use by making drugs seem popular and fashionable.⁸ Drugs also offered an escape from the overwhelming anxieties of a faltering economy and an undesirable war in Vietnam.⁹ Estimates put the number of heroin users in the US alone from 400,000 to 600,000 each year during the 1970s.¹⁰ Nixon was the first to officially declare a “War on Drugs” in 1971, as well as categorize this war into domestic versus international efforts when he designated that there were “demand-side” and “supply-side” fronts. “Demand-side” tactics promoted drug rehabilitation as well as education and prevention programs domestically, while “supply-side” tactics sought to eradicate the threat of drugs from abroad by cutting off the supply sources of international drug traffickers, usually through military action.¹¹ The Nixon administration funneled a total of \$3 billion dollars into both sides of its offensive. It carried out a fairly balanced supply/demand strategy by setting up the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to handle all aspects of the anti-drug movement, including military operations abroad and drug prevention programs and clinics geared toward U.S. citizens at home.¹² President Nixon’s ardent campaign, however, was cut short by his resignation; the drug war would be abandoned for the next two administrations until the arrival of Ronald Reagan in 1981, as other issues, such as the energy crisis and the economy, took center stage.¹³

The election of Ronald Reagan marked a shift in American political thought as the “free love” liberalism of the 1960s and 1970s gave way to the staunch conservative moralism of the 1980s.¹⁴ Reagan’s landslide victory was attributed to the perceived failings of the liberal Carter administration, particularly on issues such as “race, economic discontent, and its own internal contradictions.”¹⁵ With the government’s attention captured by the energy crisis, the weak economy, and the hostage situation in the Middle East, the drug problem flared up again, with reports of cocaine use alone doubling between 1977 and 1979.¹⁶ Carter, and by extension all liberals, were famously seen as not being “tough enough.” American citizens blamed the Democratic administration for the increased rate of drug use, especially since the decriminalization of marijuana was one of the President Carter’s political platforms.¹⁷ Though he never explicitly linked broader societal problems in the U.S. with drug use, Carter did say that America was in the midst of a spiritual vacuum and had lost a sense of moral direction and purpose.¹⁸ President Reagan, who regularly evoked God and morality in his speeches, was able to attract voters with a deep concern for moral issues, such as members of the evangelical church who had over 200,000 members and were considered to be a “major Christian Right electoral vehicle” in the 1980s.¹⁹ Apparently, America had finally found its moral compass in Ronald Reagan.

During the first five years of his presidency, Reagan plunged into a heavy international offensive through radical supply-side approaches: federal drug control spending on supply-side

tactics tripled from \$437 million to \$1.4 billion, while yearly demand-side spending fell slightly from \$386 million to \$362.8 million.²⁰ The “War on Drugs” metaphor conditioned Americans to believe that the problem was primarily overseas and that Americans were “helpless victims” being “invaded” by “evil Latin American drug traffickers”—Latin America being the primary region shipping illegal narcotics into the U.S.²¹ Perhaps Reagan saw international influences as the main reason behind America’s drug problem and thought that by eliminating drug sources, he could eradicate the drug problem. But despite record-setting numbers of drug seizures, investigations, indictments, arrests, convictions and asset forfeitures, crack use soared: crack-related hospital emergencies rose from 4,277 in 1982 to 9,946 in 1985 to more than 46,000 in 1988.²²

Supply-side tactics were failing. President Reagan could no longer solely condemn international drug cartels for the country’s drug problem because overseas drug sources were being successfully purged.²³ Suddenly, it was clear that the American people were partly to blame for the notable increase of illegal substance abuse.²⁴ The national outcry at the cocaine overdose of Len Bias, a promising college basketball player, prompted Congress to put pressure on the executive branch to increase demand-side spending, which resulted in the \$1.7 billion Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986.²⁵ Ostensibly, this bill incorporated Reagan’s “zero-tolerance” militant policies from the drug battle abroad—i.e. law enforcement, interdiction, investigation, eradication, etc—but scaled them down to better fit domestically.²⁶ Policymakers sought to mobilize national intolerance of drug use through increased law enforcement and by putting an emphasis on user accountability through measures such as random urine testing in the workplace and mandated minimum sentences for drug traffickers and offenders, which were applied to both major and minor drug offenders equally.²⁷ Reagan would also reframe the government’s rhetoric as well as the image of the “War on Drugs,” literally right from his living room.

Suburbanization of the War on Drugs—“From Our Family to Yours”

When Ronald Reagan declared a “War on Drugs” in September of 1985, he did not address the American people from the Oval Office or a military base, as was customary. Rather, “as grandparents and parents” and “from our family to yours,” Mr. and Mrs. Reagan launched the offensive from a couch in their living room.²⁸

But why employ such a measure? Part of this revitalization involved situating the war on drugs within a suburban context—which meant evoking suburban sentiments and ideals. In order to understand how the Reagans did this, it is essential to recognize the power of the primarily white middle-class suburban citizen. In *Homeward Bound*, Elaine Tyler May writes:

Although all groups contributed to the baby boom, it was the values of the white middle class that shaped the dominant political and economic institutions that affected all Americans. Those who did not conform to them were likely to be marginalized, stigmatized, and disadvantaged as a result.²⁹

Surely, by appealing to the sentiments of suburbanites, Reagan—dubbed the Great Communicator—would gain a powerful ally in his conquest for domestic anti-drug support. As a 1980 census revealed that more than 40% of the national population lived in the suburbs—more than lived in rural areas or cities.³⁰

The living room scene also tapped into specific suburban values. As May pointed out, security was “idealized” by suburbanites as “they wanted secure jobs, secure homes, and secure marriages in a secure country. Security would enable them to take advantage of the fruits of prosperity and peace,” permitting them to live comfortable lives and allowing suburbanites to protect two other values—family and homeownership.³¹ In fact, during the 1970s and 1980s, there was a renewed call for the “traditional” family as the best avenue to achieve national and

personal security.³² As Jackson notes, homeownership—the right of Americans to have individual space—and the family were both middle-class values because they represented the notions of individuality and the individual himself.³³ Matthew Lassiter points to the suburban population as the “silent majority” of American politics. As one suburban resident in Lassiter’s work mentions, “I have never asked what anyone in government or this country could do for me; but rather have kept my mouth shut, paid my taxes, and basically asked to be left alone...”³⁴ It was security, family/homeownership, and individuality that suburbanites valued at this time.

In addition to physically affecting suburban undertones in his nationally televised declaration of the drug war, the President also used strong, threatening language to contextualize what he perceived to be a hazard to the country: “Drugs are menacing our society. They’re threatening our values and undercutting our institutions. They’re killing our children.”³⁵ In short, drugs posed a direct threat to American safety and security. Nancy Reagan supported this view in her personal statements as well:

Today there’s a drug and alcohol abuse epidemic in this country, and no one is safe from it—not you, not me, and certainly not our children, because this epidemic has their names written on it...drugs...[concern] us all because of the way it tears at our lives and because it’s aimed at destroying the brightness and life of the sons and daughters of the United States.³⁶

By evoking children, Mrs. Reagan suggested that present and future security standards would be direct casualties of drug use. The President called his anti-drug policies a “crusade” and said “[Drug abuse [was] ... a repudiation of everything [that was] America,” a dangerous force that meddled with the American heritage of freedom and individuality.³⁷ This episode demonstrates how the Reagans were able to tap into the country’s suburban mindset and deftly shape suburban views on drug abuse. There were no gray areas—drugs users were a direct threat to American values, and they needed to be eradicated.

Reagan’s policies did not diverge far from these ideals. He emphasized the concepts of individuality and minimal government intervention in both of his inaugural addresses, in 1981 and 1985.³⁸ His vision of the American patriot bore a likeness to the silent majority living in the suburbs: “They’re individuals with families whose taxes support the government and whose voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art, and education. Their patriotism is quiet, but deep. Their values sustain our national life.”³⁹ Reagan’s belief that government should be a muted presence in the everyday life of the family-oriented, individual citizen aligned very well with the beliefs of the suburbs and gave him a good amount of political sway over the suburban populations. In an effort to make a smoother transition between the international/supply-side features of the drug war to demand/domestic sphere, Reagan relied on heavily on suburban support. Additionally, the support from the middle class would gloss over the apparent contradiction within Reagan’s policies and the drug war — the immense involvement of the federal government in private affairs.

The First Family did not only designate drugs as America’s arch nemesis, but they ventured even further by suggesting means to combat the problem that went against their own staunch individualistic ideologies. They urged the nation to mobilize within their own communities as “combat veterans” to intervene on behalf of friends, family members and neighbors with drug problems.⁴⁰ They summoned businesses, media, educators and families to aid in the crusade against drugs because of their “enormous influence to send alarm signals across the nation.”⁴¹ A year later, Congress would pass the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986, which introduced urine testing at work and mandatory prison sentences for even minor drug offences; it passed overwhelmingly because of public concern over drug use.⁴² These measures encroached upon an individual’s right to privacy, and thus went against the theme of minimal

government that the President’s administration was known for.⁴³ Despite this inherent contradiction, both individual communities and the mass media responded by helping President and Mrs. Reagan launch one of the largest anti-drug campaigns in the nation’s history.

Reaction in the Suburbs: Parents and Media “D.A.R.E.” to “Just Say No”

The Reagans’ words hit home—Americans latched onto their anti-drug rhetoric and began to take action. Before the 1980s there was little to no research that school-based anti-drug education was an effective means of prevention—in fact, the research that was available indicated that the programs usually had adverse negative effects that encouraged drug use and needed to be studied more.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the “social influence approach,” which resembled Reagan’s national plea to communities to encourage drug abstention through positive peer pressure, was incorporated into privately-funded anti-drug programs and implemented in schools across the country at the express actions of local parents.⁴⁵

An example of a widely used drug program was Me-ology, which was developed by the C.E. Mendez Foundation of Tampa, FL, one of many private nonprofit organizations for drug prevention. Like many of the other popular anti-drug programs, including Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) and the “Just Say No” clubs that Nancy Reagan personally sponsored, Me-ology aimed to instill in children positive peer pressure, strengthen self-esteem, and to teach children to refuse not only illegal drugs but also alcohol and tobacco—a resolute zero-tolerance curriculum.⁴⁶ This education emulated the Reagan’s supply/demand zero-tolerance policy approach, and though funded in part by the 1986 Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (part of the broader Anti-Drug Abuse Act), it was carried out primarily through private industries, distressed parents and local organizers.⁴⁷

Me-ology, like various other drug education programs during Reagan’s tenure, was introduced to schools by concerned parents in the community.⁴⁸ Barbara McQueeney and Kathy Johnston, co-chairmen of a parents’ Junior League, said that “we felt Bridgeport certainly was in need of [a] program,” and brought Me-ology back with them to Connecticut after they attended a Parent Resource Institute on Drug Education conference in Georgia.⁴⁹ The program was primarily funded by the Junior League, which allocated up to \$5,000 dollars toward teachers’ kits and materials and wanted to spread Me-ology to all of Connecticut “with the help of some corporate funding.”⁵⁰ This all seems to indicate that Me-ology was entirely dependent upon community support. Other programs, such as The Robert Crown Center for Health Education in Chicago, IL, also reported getting private funding through corporations or donations by community programs, such as women’s auxiliaries. In San Diego, a parents’ coalition was able to pass a drug education program into the curriculum despite inadequate funds. “If we say it’s too expensive, what are we talking about?” one concerned mother asked. “Too expensive in dollars or in lives?” The proposition passed 4-1.⁵² These examples suggest that suburban communities were responding to Reagan’s “demand-side” suburbanized rhetoric; the demand for these programs coincided with the President’s living room announcement.

However, by contextualizing drug education through a zero-tolerance approach, these programs are also exemplarily of the inherent contradiction in the “War on Drugs.” By teaching positive peer pressure, these programs depicted young people who have used or have occasionally experimented with drugs as being “socially incompetent.” As D.M. Gorman points out, there was little evidence to support this point of view.⁵³ In retrospect, these social influence-based programs are considered to be unsuccessful; any positive effects they had decayed after a few years.⁵⁴ Rather, this zero-tolerance approach more likely inspired skepticism amongst youngsters; studies show that it might have actually lead to increased instances of drug experimentation, contributing to a “Just Say No” backlash among these youngsters in adulthood.⁵⁵

The mass media campaigns supplemented and amplified the zero-tolerance approach. The Partnership for a Drug-Free American, a private nonprofit group that aimed to use communications to bring about public intolerance of drugs, produced a variety of public service announcements and pamphlets for the public.⁵⁶ One service announcement claimed that “Drugs erode our lives...Drugs cause second-rate workmanship in our industry, and second-rate students in our schools. They take parents away from kids and kids away from home. And drug compromise the quality of life everywhere they’re found...[they] warp our system of values and turn honest kids into scheming dependents.”⁵⁷ This demonstrates once again how, by mentioning industry, children, and quality of life, these ads suburbanized the rhetoric on drugs. Moreover, the lack of white suburban teenagers and affluent white adults in anti-drug ads gave the impression that white middle-class citizens were not affected by drugs. Instead, drug users were usually depicted as African American or Latino, thus perpetuating negative racial stereotypes.⁵⁸ This may have been a deliberate maneuver to avoid upsetting or offending white-suburban populations in order to win their favor in the anti-drug movement.

Overall, there was little evidence to indicate that the zero-tolerance “social influence” programs that most schools took on during this period would actually succeed, but as suburban parents were flooded with suburbanized rhetoric in the media, the demand for these programs suddenly began to increase. The drug abstinence message used in schools and in the media, besides never having been proved to be successful, contributed to racial prejudice by ascribing negative roles to minorities. In the long run, these programs and ads may have directly led to a spiked interest in illegal substances and thus had the opposite effect of what was intended.

Backlash—“We’re your good neighbors. We smoke pot.”

Fast forward twenty years later, and the “Just Say No” generation is coming of age. They now reside in the very same suburbs that vowed allegiance to the Reagan’s campaign, becoming foot soldiers in demands-side prevention. One might think that the children of this era would subscribe to the zero-tolerance that their education pointed them to. That isn’t quite the case. “I now my lawn on Saturdays. I put chlorine in the pool. I put gas in my SUV. I go to my kid’s play at school. ... I also happen to enjoy marijuana,” says Bob, a successful Web designer and San Diego suburbanite.⁵⁹ A 2000 Gallup poll found thirty-four percent of Americans in favor of legalizing marijuana — twelve percent higher than when the question was first asked in 1969 and a far cry from when even marijuana was targeted as a gateway drug that would eventually lead to heavier drug use in the “Just Say No” era.⁶⁰

What happened to the all-out offensive on the “War on Drugs”? According to the Students for a Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP), a modern day international grassroots network of students concerned about marijuana use, abstinence-only education failed to address the “very real harms of drug abuse...[which] are not adequately addressed by current policies...we seek solutions to society’s problems through...informed debate, instead of unquestioned extremism, punishment, and propaganda.”⁶¹ As Tracy Jarvis, a homemaker and marijuana-advocate, wrote in an article, “We set out to counteract the propaganda being put forth by groups like the Partnership for Drug Free America that portrays drugs in general and pot smokers in particular as losers and bums.”⁶² This demonstrates how zero-tolerance drug education and propaganda has failed; even its key demographic, suburbanites, have rejected the ‘staunch’ policies advocated by these programs. Perhaps they grew tired of being preached to and didn’t agree that any sort of drug usage, even brief experimentation with marijuana, made them America’s scourge.

Conclusion

America’s struggle with drugs existed long before the 1970s, but it wasn’t until President Reagan’s shift from the international supply-side prevention to the more domestic demand-side techniques that the “War on Drugs” was put into a context that threatened suburban lifestyles.

This launched an extensive education and media based campaign all centered on zero-tolerance policies. By evoking suburban ideals such as security, family, homeownership and individuality, Ronald Reagan was able to not only rile up suburban communities to his cause but also to hide his contradictory strategy of increased government involvement in the midst of an administration that was founded on the principles of reducing the government involvement’s in private affairs. However, this contradiction backfired. There was no evidence to suggest that the “social influence” education models, which were introduced and available in schools because of community demand, actually prevented drug abuse. Indeed, it may have done quite the opposite, as the charged rhetoric of the Reagans and the media left no wiggle room for the many Americans who were casual users or merely experimenting with more innocuous drugs; both were treated with harsh penalties that may have seemed incongruous to the crime and alienated them from the rest of society. Now that this generation has come of age, there is little to show for the billions of dollars thrown into abstinence-only education and public relations. The children who stood alongside Mrs. Reagan on the pitcher’s mound during the 1988 World Series may very likely be adults who hold respectable jobs, pay their taxes, raise their families, and casually enjoy a joint when with friends. They are not dangerous or destructive, but rather the same silent, patriotic heroes that Ronald Reagan portrayed in his inaugural address. The “War on Drugs” failed, not only because of ineffective propaganda and education, but because of the inherent contradiction of preaching nominal federal involvement in daily affairs and then having intense government intervention in respect to drug policy. Today, the suburbs continue to ask what place the government has in its citizens’ lives, neighborhoods and homes.

Notes

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family or ethnic community—were used, through oaths and loyalty testing programs, to construct a national identity that incorporated the private rituals of everyday life.⁶ In other words, the government drew on the community-oriented loyalties to define a homogenous American image that could withstand the dangers of communist infiltration.

The loyalty oath was one of the means used to achieve this sense of national community. By introducing oaths in federal and local governments, in universities and in schools, Americans were forced to expose their personal viewpoints and swear allegiance to the nation on terms that directly opposed certain private loyalties, such as membership in the Communist Party, that did not conform to the 1950s anticommunist definition. This essay examines the discourse surrounding the fear of disloyalty in America's pluralistic society through an analysis of Truman's loyalty-security program, the California Loyalty Oath Controversy, and the public reactions and discussions surrounding these loyalty debates. It also discusses the place of the loyalty oath in a democratic society, and its validity as a means of defining a national community.

Truman's Loyalty Tests: Communists as Disloyal Americans

In March of 1947, President Truman launched a loyalty investigation program designed to expose any “disloyal or subversive” public employee of the executive branch of government, on the grounds that they threatened the “democratic process” of the United States government.⁷ The purpose of the order was to ensure maximum governmental security by dismissing or refusing the employment of persons with ties to “any foreign or domestic organization, association, movement, group or combination of persons, designated by the Attorney General as totalitarian, fascist, communist, or subversive.”⁸ A response to the fear of communist infiltration, this program represented a step towards the political repression and communist exclusion of the McCarthy era. As an investigation of government employees’ loyalty, it also pronounced an anti-American identity inherent in communism: the order singled out communists as “seeking to alter the form of government of the United States by unconstitutional means.”⁹ The idea that American Communists were agents of the Kremlin, and therefore disloyal to the American Constitution, is one that can be traced to the beginnings of the Cold War.¹⁰ As Historian William Wiecek writes, these so-called “dangerous revolutionaries” were “hostile to democracy, to religion, to capitalism, to human freedom as Americans had traditionally understood and cherished it.”¹¹ In this sense, every American member of the Communist Party could be accused of treason; the party was thought to be, as one *L.A. Times* writer put it, “a subversive organization which plan[ned] the overthrow of American democracy by bloody revolution.”¹²

The Loyalty program of March 1947 marked a larger trend in the rise of loyalty oaths, one that progressed steadily through the first half of the 1950s. After Truman passed the loyalty-testing program for federal employees, local governments, universities, schools and other private institutions also began to institute them. Harold Hyman notices that both national and local institutions seemed to have “discovered” the loyalty oath since the end of the Second World War; by 1956, forty-two states and more than two thousand local subdivisions and administrative commissions required a loyalty oath for “teachers, voters, lawyers, union officials, residents in public housing, recipients of public welfare, and, in Indiana, wrestlers.”¹³ Truman’s program, Hyman argues, came in direct response to the national conservative movement to broaden loyalty-security programs’ scope and efficiency. Therefore, the multiple transformations of these tests, between 1947 and 1950, can be seen as reflections of the anticommunist political ideology of the time, and as an increasing fear of communist anti-American infiltration.¹⁴ J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the F.B.I., commented in a statement before the House Un-American Committee in 1947 on the need to increase the breadth of the loyalty programs, stating that, “there is no doubt as to where a real Communist’s loyalty rests. Their allegiance is to Russia, not the United States... The Communists have been, still are, and always will be, a menace to freedom, to democratic ideals, to the worship of God, and to America’s way of life.”¹⁵ Similar statements

American Loyalities: Anticommunism, Conformity, and the Oath in the 1940s and 1950s

GABRYEL SMITH

In March of 1949, the board of regents of the University of California instated a loyalty oath for all faculty members requiring professors to denounce personal ties to the Communist Party. Established “to protect our government and our way of life,” the oath sought to expose Communist teachers who would use their positions as supposed agents of a foreign power to infiltrate and teach “doctrines inimical to our society.” The U.C. oath represents a larger movement in American postwar culture, a movement of anticommunism and political repression. Loyalty oaths such as this one rose in popularity at the beginning of the Cold War; they signified a new anticommunist discourse that emerged out of the Truman administration—one that would later be known as McCarthyism.² The discourse reflected deep insecurities and fears within the American government, fears that would influence not only government officials and university professors, but ordinary citizens as well.

Historians use many different terms to describe the phenomenon of anticommunism in action, phrases such as the “Red Scare” and the “Anticommunist Crusade,” indicating fears of infiltration, indoctrination and eventual takeover by a foreign power. Each of these phrases describes an aspect of the aggressive stance that the government took against American affiliates with the Communist Party, seeking to alienate and dismiss them through loyalty tests. On the surface, the acts of political repression stem most clearly from the policies of Senator Joseph McCarthy and F.B.I. director J. Edgar Hoover, but most scholars agree the actions of these two officials reflect a broader mentality that predated their tenures and even lingered after McCarthy’s death in 1957. In order to study the repercussions of anticommunism, therefore, it is necessary to access the language and mindset of a generation that condoned the persecution of communists and those perceived to be communists in the name of national security. Not only were the democratic values of diversity and heterogeneity called into question, but the very notions of American nationality and patriotism were centered on the exclusion of communism: communists were labeled as traitors, anti-Americans, and Soviet spies.³

The debates surrounding the U.C. loyalty oath of 1949 and the Truman administration’s 1947 loyalty testing program present a rich lens through which to view the politics of anticommunism in action. As the California academics fought for their right to teach in a free environment, administrators mimicked the voices of Truman administration officials, calling for a ban on communist teachers in the name of national security.⁴ The board of regents, as well as the many journalists, politicians, and writers that supported them argued that Communism was inherently opposed to American democracy and therefore constituted a threat to the government.

The debates that surround this loyalty oath are an example not only of disagreements over professors and other liberal thinkers deemed the oath contrary to American ideals of freedom. Teachers’ political affiliations and rights to academic freedom, they reflect a crisis of the American definition of loyalty. Equally demonstrated by the introduction of Truman’s loyalty-testing program in 1947, the definition of loyalty to the American nation shifted from one centered on the tolerance of diverse world-views to one that supported political repression and practiced xenophobia.⁵ In the name of the communist threat, politicians in Truman’s administration instilled policies that directly infringed upon the personal lives of citizens, blurring the lines between the public and the private spheres. The American tradition of multiple private loyalties that previously defined the heterogeneity of American democracy—those of church,

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made by Hoover and later by McCarthy led Truman to change his loyalty standard. The adjustment legalized dismissal on "reasonable doubt as to the loyalty of the person involved,"¹⁶ revised from the "demonstrated" disloyalty required by previous versions.¹⁷

Public reaction to the revisions of Truman's program ranged from disapproval and suspicion on the left, to charges that the President was "soft on communism" on the right.¹⁸ In letters and editorials throughout the country, liberals and conservatives critiqued Truman's tentative but steady move towards communist exclusion. Columbia professor Henry Commager, in a *New York Times* article, criticized the loyalty checks for their inadequacy and "disregard of elementary principles of fair play," saying that the "fear of Communist infiltration into the Government...led to a vast and expensive series of investigations into 'un-American' activities."¹⁹ He wrote that the real danger did not lie in the actions of government workers, but "in the techniques evolved to prevent communist infiltration."²⁰ Conversely, a writer for the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1951 accused Truman of "sheltering corruption and communist inclinations," while other officials tried to "establish a commission on ethics in government, in the hope of restoring respect for common honesty and loyalty to country..."²¹ These opposing viewpoints reflect the controversy over loyalty oaths that entered the national language in the years following WWII. Their legality was profusely debated during the loyalty oath controversy at University of California, discussed in a subsequent section.

The late Truman years, and the transition to a stricter security program under Eisenhower, led to stronger insights on the "un-Americaness" and disloyalty of communists, and even to the belief that communism was so distant to American culture and tradition that its members did not deserve to be protected by the Constitution.²² One particular document that encompassed this particular political ideology is the 1950 state paper "NSC-68" that thoroughly described the loyalty threat as perceived by Truman and his administration.²³ In a section on the present risks to the U.S. government, it stated that the "Kremlin seeks to bring the free world under its dominion by the methods of the cold war," the preferred instruments of subversion being "[t]hose that touch most closely our material and moral strength...: labor unions, civic enterprises, schools, churches, and all media for influencing opinion."²⁴

The perceived communist infiltration, depicted here as a threat to the moral strength of Americans, was clarified in this statement and was an essential issue of the argument for loyalty oaths in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In practice, however, the anticommunist movement and the rise of loyalty oaths did more than brand communists as un-American. It led to the perception of weakness in the American national identity—the numerous communities, religions and cultural traditions across the country came to threaten the unity of the nation, making it susceptible to a possible takeover by the Kremlin. As the NSC-68 document notes, "every advantage is taken of the fact that our means of prevention and retaliation are limited by those principles and scruples which are precisely the ones that give our freedom and democracy its meaning for us. None of our scruples deter those whose only code is 'morality to that which serves the revolution.'"²⁵ The induction of loyalty tests and oaths during the Truman administration was inspired by viewpoints such as the one mentioned above. The application of these oaths, however, sparked a debate over the American definition of freedom and democracy, and even the concept of an American morality. The next section will discuss the impact of loyalty oaths on national discourse concerning anticommunism as an American identity.

Affirmations of Loyalty

The idea that communist morality, lifestyle and political ideology represented the antithesis of the American way of life is one that was held by many Americans, including both political leaders and ordinary citizens. In response to governmental procedures to expose communist adherents, writers from around the country professed their support for loyalty oaths in the name of national security. A correspondent for the *Washington Post* wrote, "it is well known that communism has a special morality of its own, which is wholly in conflict with traditional

morality, and that Lenin has taught deception and dissimulation...to be the most effective instrument of the revolution."²⁶ The viewpoint of the U.S. First Army Headquarters in 1955 with the distribution of a pamphlet entitled "How To Spot a Communist," projected that "[t]he 'Communist Logic'...is diametrically opposed to our own... the Communist has implicit faith in Marxist philosophy... and will not engage in a detached examination of ideas."²⁷ Therefore, "who can object," a *New York Times* writer asks, "to swearing or affirming that he does not believe in or advocate the violent overthrow of the United States Government?"²⁸

The objection, Henry Commager and many U. C. professors noticed, lied in the institution of the oath itself. The requirement of an oath in a country where citizens may think and speak freely was paradoxical because the oath bound the oath taker to the views that it projected.²⁸ We therefore come to the central dilemma concerning loyalty to the American nation: by defining a community through loyalty and consent, the exclusion of other world-views was necessary in constructing a sense of homogeneous identity. This debate was not specific to the postwar time period—indeed it can be traced to the origins of the oaths themselves—but it became particularly relevant as the oath became a tool for excluding Communists. Furthermore, as W. Solors and Sanford Levinson write, the importance of a loyalty oath is a distinctly American dilemma: in a nation of immigrants, national loyalty is not inherent, for American citizens do not belong to a unified race where loyalty acts as a hereditary trait. "American allegiance, the very concept of citizenship developed in the revolutionary period, was—like love—based on consent, not on descent."²⁹ The idea of membership based on consent, or on a "chosen identity," makes the formal statement of loyalty all the more meaningful, as adherence to the national community is not overtly obvious.

Particularly in the sphere of education, the paradoxical nature of the oath defined the debate of the late 1940s and 1950s as teachers and professors fought for academic freedom and the objective exposure of facts.³⁰ In a 1954 article, professor N. William Newsom wrote that loyalty oaths for teachers and students, such as the pledge of allegiance, existed since the very beginnings of the American educational system, but that they were widely implemented only after WWI. The state of New Jersey required a loyalty oath for its schoolmasters as early as 1777, on the grounds that "the rising generation should be instructed in the Principles of publick Virtue and duly impressed with the amiable Ideas of Liberty and Patriotism and at the same time inspired with the keenest Abhorrence of Despotick and arbitrary power."³¹ However, according to the National Education Association, it was not until the 1930s that 25 states required some form of loyalty oath in schools, with half of these states approving this law since 1929.³²

This increase in popularity of the oath, said Newsom, was quite clear: the rising power of Russia and Communism presented the U.S. with the biggest ideological threat so far in its history. He continued, stating that the communists operated "an international conspiracy under a social philosophy or ideology foreign and obnoxious to our conception of life and liberty."³³ In a similar tone, an ex-college professor wrote to the *New York Times* editor that the method communist teachers used to indoctrinate students "is accomplished by thought control...The effective anti-American, pro-Soviet teacher, calculating to encourage treason against the United States, would...use all sorts of underhanded weapons to discredit the loyal American who believes in the free enterprise system."³⁴ The affirmation of teachers' loyalty was therefore of utmost importance to the preservation of American democracy: Newsom warned the readers of his article that the loyalty oath is a "responsibility of citizenship," and that it was required to "protect the government and our way of life." He also reminded the readers that in the fight against communism, "we are not dealing with a political party, but rather with a conspiratorial group controlled from Moscow."³⁵

The example of the University of California loyalty oath that follows addresses the debate over the legality of loyalty oaths and public renouncement of communist ties in detail. It is a discussion of a case that challenged the validity of anticommunist political repression and the creation of an education based on the exclusion of certain political views.

should have been signed by all faculty without hesitation. The opinion held by these writers, and supported by many other faculty and administrative officials can be found in most major California newspapers in the Spring of 1950; editorials in the *San Francisco Examiner*, the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin*, the *Los Angeles Evening Herald Express*, the *L.A. Examiner* and the *L.A. Times* upheld the Regents' position in relation to the oath.⁴⁷ This overwhelming support for the regents demonstrates the perceived gravity of the Communist threat; many were supportive of legislation to alienate and dismiss dedicated faculty members if they did not sign the referendum.

Another widely held opinion that relates to the arguments regarding the communist threat to American democracy and morality is the viewpoint that a loyalty oath would not stop communists from their subversive teachings. In the words of the NSC-68 document, communists's "morals only in support of the revolution" will take advantage of the American principles that support liberty and freedom.⁴⁸ As a graduate of the UCLA school of journalism told the editor of the *New York Times*, "You and everyone else knows that the Communists are the biggest liars. Lying is the most powerful instrument they've had in winning the cold war...They [communist U.C. professors] will sign the loyalty oath and go ahead with their undercover activities."⁴⁹ Along similar lines, Hollywood writer Mott Lewis told the *L.A. Times* on April 6, that "no Communist worth his salt will refuse to take such an oath...Thus, the people who refuse...cannot be dangerous, because if they were, swearing to a loyalty they do not feel would be of no importance to them."⁵⁰ This statement accesses the ideas presented by Gardner and Schrecker, that the oath became more about discipline and internal government of the faculty than about the exposure of communists.⁵¹ This leads to the opinions of the opposition, voiced by many professors and liberals, that it was the presence of the oath itself that undermined the mission of the Regents to keep subversive teaching outside of the university.

Columbia professor Henry Steele Commager stated that the real danger in outlawing certain viewpoints in education was that it created an "atmosphere in which teachers find safety not in orthodox ideas...but in no ideas."⁵² Warning his readers of this dangerous trend, he invoked the words of Harvard Dean Wilbur J. Bender:

The world is full of dangerous ideas, and we are both naive and stupid if we believe that the way to prepare intelligent young men to face the world is to try to protect them from such ideas while they are in college. Four years in an insulated nursery will produce gullible innocents, not tough-minded realists who know what they believe because they have faced the enemies of their beliefs.⁵³

This brings us to the aspect of conformity engrained in the loyalty oath, that the exclusion of such principles harmed not only the freedom of professors in their teaching, but that it fostered a climate of repression counter to the ideals of democracy. As U.C. professor Ernst Kantorowicz said at an Academic Senate meeting on June 14, 1949, the oath "tyrannizes because it brings the scholar sworn to truth into a conflict of conscience. To create alternatives—'black or white'—is a common privilege of modern and bygone dictatorships."⁵⁴ He further accused the supporters of the oath, and notably the board of regents of bringing the loyal citizens into a "conflict of conscience" by branding them, as un-American, in other words, "by placing them before an alternative of two evils, different in kind, but equal in danger."⁵⁵ These dictatorial tendencies harbored by anticommunists and defended in the name of national security forced loyal citizens to swear against policies and ideologies to which they never adhered. Kantorowicz said that the creation of alternatives, or to put complicated issues in black-and-white situations forced people either to conform to the trend, or to accept exclusion from the community, as did many California professors. By describing the two choices as the difference between two evils, he suggested that community based on the exclusion of communists and the restriction of free speech is just as bad as the communism itself.

The California Loyalty Oath Controversy
On March 25, 1949, the University of California Board of Regents decided to instate an oath for all university faculty, stating, "the need to strengthen and delineate University policy prohibiting the employment of, and use of facilities by, Communists."³⁶ The oath required professors to swear:

I am not a member of the Communist Party, or under any oath, or a party to any agreement, or under any commitment that is in conflict with my obligations under this oath.³⁷

As an addition to a 1942 loyalty oath required by the state of California swearing to uphold the constitution and government of the United States, the new amendment was administered to the faculty in March and required hence forth for all new hires.³⁸ Controversy quickly ensued after the announcement; academics and liberals around the nation protested what they deemed an encroachment on academic freedom. As the largest system of higher education in the nation with a faculty of over 3,200, the U.C. oath controversy was also widely covered by the press.³⁹ Respondents in newspapers throughout the country shared different opinions on the legality of such an oath. Throughout the academic year of 1949-1950, debates between the university administration, the board of Regents, the Faculty Senate and the American Association of University Professors led the board to a decision in Spring 1950 to change the "oath" to a "ultimo." The "sign-or-get-out" ultimatum, as it was referred to by many professors, kept the anti-Communist legislation but changed its form; it still required each faculty member's recognition and support of the university's policies of Communist exclusion.⁴⁰ Professors were told that they would be dismissed if they did not sign this form before the start of the next academic year.

The significance of debates that ensued between regents and non-signers is unique; the problem quickly shifted from the investigation of actual communists to the expulsion of 31 liberal professors in August of 1950 who refused to sign the oath on matters of principle.⁴¹ "The irony," says David P. Gardner, "was that not one of those dismissed was accused by any Regent of being a Communist or in sympathy with any other organization allegedly subversive."⁴² Thus, the discussion quickly turned into a controversy over the meaning of academic freedom, over the suitability of the oath itself, and over the very meaning of loyalty in an academic setting. Defenders of the oath seemingly could not comprehend why the professors would not agree to an act instituted to protect them and their institution. "What faculty member can object to saying 'I am not a Communist?' In what manner can such a statement affect his academic freedom?" a *Los Angeles Times* writer asked in March of 1950.⁴³ "The people of the State—taxpayers who through the years have generously supported this university—demand an assurance of good faith from those who...are responsible for the guidance of so many thousands of our young people."⁴⁴ A spokesman for the Native Sons of the Golden West—an organization committed to benefiting the social activities of Californians—furthered that "We want no slanted foreign ideologies taught here in our State universities, and those teachers who are squeamish about taking the loyalty oath as prescribed should be dismissed and replaced by those who desire to inculcate the time-honored American traditions into the hearts and minds of the students."⁴⁵ Other writers insisted that not only was the protest to the oath uncalled for, it was offensive to other Americans committed to spreading loyalty and anticommunism. An editorial in the *San Francisco Examiner* in August of 1950 stated: "While American youth is being conscripted to die fighting Communistic barbarism in Korea and elsewhere it is proposed to accord to thirty-nine professors and assistant professor on the many campuses of the University of California the privilege of defying a simple regulation to protect the institution which is engaged in research vital to national defense."⁴⁶ This "simple regulation," as this columnist called it,

This opinion, as well as others mentioned, did not deter the Regents from continuing their purge. It was not until three years later that the California Supreme Court ruled against the Regents and voted against the oath. The damage, however, had already run its course; the university administration demonstrated that it was willing to expel innocent professors on the basis of non-conformity.

The Loyalty Oath Paradox: Violations of Freedom in the Name of Allegiance

As the University of California case demonstrates, the rise in popularity of loyalty oaths and the fear of the American Communist Party all represent the extent to which the discourse of anticommunism indoctrinated the American public and threatened the constitutional freedoms of expression. With such an attack on professors and teachers, the board of regents and those who supported them seemed to be calling for an anticommunist conformity among professors around the exclusion of communist ideas. The discussion below seeks to place this phenomenon into a broader redefinition of American identity, from one tolerant of diverse communities, cultural traditions and political ideologies, to a homogenized society defined by anticommunism.

The regents, in their defense of the oath, recalled logic presented by Truman's loyalty tests, promoting the "vigorous, old-fashioned Americanism" that Hoover suggested as the "best antidote to Communism."⁵⁵ However, the trouble was that Hoover's "old-fashioned Americanism" was, until this time, ambiguous there were no specific prerequisites for American loyalty besides support for the constitution. The prying tests of Hoover and Truman, with their sole purpose to uncover communists, represent an active transformation of American loyalty and identity, from an eclectic collection of cultural traditions based on tolerance to the creation of a culturally homogeneous community of exclusion.

As a signifier of this trend, the rise of loyalty oaths not only exposed a fear of a communist takeover; it exposed insecurities in the very foundations of the diverse American identity and the many American communities. Commager writes that the comparison of nineteenth-century loyalty tests to the Truman administration tests uncovered the lengths to which the questions were modified to address the personal lives of citizens. He notes that the Civil Service Commission in 1884 ruled that "no question in any form of application or in any examination shall be so framed as to elicit information concerning the political or religious opinions or affiliations of any applicant."⁵⁷ However, questions suggested by Hoover to reveal disloyalty in 1949 included: "What do you think of the third party formed by Henry Wallace? Is your wife a churchgoer? Do you read a good many books?... Which newspapers do you read?"⁵⁸ The change in nature of the questions, from impersonal to personal, represents a crisis in the plurality of the American nation, and its perceived threat to political sovereignty. The leaders of the Anticommunist crusade legitimized their actions in the name of national security and in protection of a certain view of the American identity—one that they deemed most contrary to Communism.

Therefore, the loyalty tests of the late 1940s and 1950s, which subsequently came to define one's membership in the American nation, faced an inherent problem: the diverse community-based population was loyal to many different traditions and did not constitute a precisely defined identity. As mentioned above, American loyalty was ambiguous; it was made up of individuals' private loyalties to family, ethnic origin, religion, as well as to the freedoms of the Constitution. Morton Grodzins, in an analysis of the political repression of his times, mentions that it is this ambiguity that makes up the loyalty to the democratic state.⁵⁹ In an attempt to define the nation to which democratic loyalty is required, he asks the questions: "Is it the government in power? Is it the system of government: Is it the moral creed or the historic ideas on which government rests? The answer is that national loyalty is all these things and more."⁶⁰

Loyalty to the nation was therefore defined by the multiple private loyalties of the many communities, and it is from this idea that the American government formed the illusion of a homogenous identity. Demonstrated by the inquiries proposed by Hoover, loyalty tests of this

period based their questions on the personal preferences and private identities of citizens. By asking about the books read by each respondent, and about the importance of community values of family and church, the loyalty tests sought to expose the presence of communist principles. As Hyman says, however, this approach "brought loyalty-testing perilously close to disrupting much in the American system of government which the loyalty-security system was designed to protect."⁶¹ It is because of their personal nature, he further notes, that the loyalty-security program has been a major factor in the unsavory tendencies toward a fearful conformity which have marked the domestic American scene since the victorious close of World War II.⁶² The fearful conformity, in other words, was brought on by anticommunist crusaders in their attempt to exclude communism from the American nation.

Many other thinkers, including Commager, Grodzins and the U.C. non-signers agreed that this idea of exclusion was hostile to the ideals of a democratic government. Offering a solution to the communist threat, said Commager, "Nothing would seem easier than to deny to the Communist Party...a place on the ballot, or to require from candidates proof of loyalty to the American form of government. But this solution was, in fact, fraught with complexity and danger."⁶³ These dangers, he wrote, are not in the threat of actual communists, but in the requirement of the loyalty oaths: "if we adopt these tyrannical weapons we have in fact succumbed to the philosophy which justifies them."⁶⁴ Like professor Kantorowicz said, by forcing someone to choose between ideas, one deemed "American" and one not—by making the alternatives black or white, we approach the policies of totalitarian regimes.⁶⁵ The homogeneous identity sought out and promulgated by the loyalty oaths and testing programs was thus condemned as an appropriation of the very political policies that the Truman administration was trying to eliminate. Grodzins also added a similar concern, describing the political patterns of the 1950s in his conclusion: "Today's stylish patriot sings songs of xenophobia and conformity. It is unfashionable to praise democracy for its diversity of social and moral systems... Today's fashion in patriotism leads in the direction of the totalitarian model of loyalties."⁶⁶ The paradox of anticommunist patriotism and of the loyalty oath, therefore, is clear: by illegalizing certain ideologies, even in the name of national security, one violates the ideals of democracy and the freedoms of the Constitution.

Conclusion

The California loyalty oath as well as Truman's loyalty tests propelled a new definition of loyalty to the American nation in the postwar period. In their attempt to protect Americans from communist infiltration and indoctrination, they succeeded not only in punishing loyal citizens, but they reverted to policies of totalitarian regimes to expose communists. The loyalty oath, as the primary tool for the purge, symbolized not only support for the American government, but rejection of Communism. Its ambiguity and openness were lost; Hoover's loyalty determinants imposed a distinct anticommunist weight to Truman's original loyalty tests.

This phenomenon represented an acute transition in the nature and purpose of loyalty oaths. As Grodzins states, legal documents up until the end of World War II only defined *disloyalty*—"treason, espionage, sabotage"—because imposing a definition of loyalty, of "Americanness," would have constituted an infringement on the freedoms protected by the constitution.⁶⁷

The debates surrounding the loyalty oaths around the turn of the decade articulated the gravity of the dilemma. As the example of the 31 U.C. professors shows, the faculty members were willing to sacrifice their jobs on matters of principle, not because they were communists. The debate thus turned from the issue of communism to the issue of conformity and discipline of loyal Americans. The paradox that these loyalty oaths inhibited was revealed: by asking Americans to define their allegiance in this manner, the oaths violated the very nature of this allegiance. Harold Hyman calls this an "unprecedented crisis of political democracy," writing that the "uncritical search for security in the future is to turn a deaf ear to history."⁶⁸ By emulating the policies of failed dictatorships, in other words, politicians in support of the loyalty

oaths steered Americans towards an undemocratic model. As the definition of loyalty became synonymous with anticommunism, so these definitions became undemocratic. This example not only exposes the fragility of the democratic system in a time of crisis, it serves to warn future Americans to avoid such oaths that force citizens to conform to a specific model of American identity.

Notes

- ¹ N. William Newsom, "Teacher Loyalty Oaths and Related Issues," *Peabody Journal of Education* Vol. 32, No. 3 (Nov., 1954), 175.
- ² There is a wide discrepancy among historians as to the definition of McCarthyism; in this paper I will use the term "anticommunism" to denote what many scholars describe as McCarthyism. For a complete discussion of this topic see Ellen Schrecker, *The age of McCarthyism: a brief history with documents*, (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994).
- ³ J. Edgar Hoover and The American Bar Association, "Brief on Communism," (*Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1952*), 54.
- ⁴ David P. Gardner, *The California Loyalty Oath Controversy*, (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1967).
- ⁵ Morton Grodzins, *The Loyal and the Disloyal* (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1956), 52.
- ⁶ Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, (New York: Little, Brown & Co, 1998), 51.
- ⁷ Code of Federal Regulations, Title 3, *Prescribing Procedures for the Administration of an Employees Loyalty Program in the Executive Branch of the Government*. March 21, 1947, 1943-1948 Compilation.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ William M. Wiecek, "The Legal Foundations of Domestic Anticommunism: The Background of Dennis V. U.S.," *The Supreme Court Review* Vol. 2001 (2001): 408.
- ¹¹ Ibid., 408.
- ¹² "Communist Party as a Problem," *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1948, A4.
- ¹³ Harold Hyman, *To Try Men's Souls: Loyalty Tests in American History*, (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1959), 338.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., 334.
- ¹⁵ Hoover, 54.
- ¹⁶ Wiecek, 421.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 420
- ¹⁸ Henry Steele Commager, "Should We Outlaw the Communist Party?" *New York Times*, Aug 22, 1948, SMT.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ "Where There's A Fire There's A Fire," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Aug. 17, 1951, 16.
- ²¹ Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 8.
- ²² Wiecek, 418.
- ²³ National Security Council, *United States Objectives and Programs for National Security*, April 7, 1950, NSC-68. For a full reprinted version of this document see Ernest May, *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC-68*, (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin Press, 1993), 26-27.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ "Loyalty," *The Washington Post*, Nov 19, 1947, 10.
- ²⁶ U.S. First Army Headquarters, "How to Spot A Communist," (1955) <http://www.sfu.ca/~jclossey/commie.htm>
- ²⁷ "Loyalty in the Schools," *New York Times*, October 10, 1949, 22.
- ²⁸ Stanford Levinson, "Constituting Communities through Words That Bind: Reflections on Loyalty Oaths," *Michigan Law Review* Vol. 84, No. 7 (June 1986), 1442.
- ²⁹ Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and descent in American Culture*, (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 6.

³⁰ "Loyalty in the Schools."

³¹ Newsom, 195, 174.

³² Ibid., 174.

³³ Ibid., 175.

³⁴ Ex-College Professor, "Communists as Teachers," *New York Times*, May 5 1949, 26.

³⁵ Newsom, 179.

³⁶ Gardner, 21.

³⁷ Schrecker, 116.

³⁸ Ibid., 116.

³⁹ Gardner, 4.

⁴⁰ Schrecker, 119; Gardner, 133-139.

⁴¹ Schrecker, 117; Gardner, 3.

⁴² Gardner, 3.

⁴³ "Disavowal of Red Ties Enough, Regent Says," *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 1950, 4.
Ibid.

⁴⁴ "Native Sons Favor UC Loyalty Oath," *Los Angeles Times*, March 6, 1950, 23.
"Native Sons Favor UC Loyalty Oath," *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 1950, 4.

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⁴⁷ Gardner, 127.

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⁵⁷ Commager, SM7.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Grodzins, 52.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 52.

⁶¹ Hyman, 343.

⁶² Ibid., 343.

⁶³ Commager, SM7.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Gardner, 35.

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