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The Thetean is an annual student journal representing the best of historical writing by current and recent students at Brigham Young University. All papers are written, selected, and edited entirely by students. Articles are welcome from students of all majors, provided they are sufficiently historical in focus. Please email submissions as an attached Microsoft Word document to theteansubmissions@gmail.com. Manuscripts must be received by mid-January to be included in that year's issue. Further details about each year's submission requirements, desired genres, and deadlines should be clarifed by inquiring of the editors at the same address.

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Every historical journal has a focus. Some journals center on a geographic region, others on a time period, and yet others on patterns common to every civilization. At first glance at this journal, however, there seems to be little thematic continuity between the articles. Topics range from medieval Portuguese legends to Missouri judicial politics. Despite varied subject matter, however, this journal's selections reflect important emphases on historical practice itself. First, the geographic, chronological, and thematic diversity of this journal serves to express the value of all kinds of history. The articles represented here feature inquiry into the history of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and North America. They discuss issues ranging from the influences of one country over another to the daily life of individuals and their families. Even the methodologies vary, from quantitative social histories to intimate microhistories. No matter the subject matter or methodology, however, each article features relevant insights into understanding past civilizations.

Yet, there is another characteristic that ties these articles together; each author that contributed to this journal is relatively new to the world of historical inquiry. For many of this year's authors, this is the first time they have published anything. Though the future careers of each of these authors will certainly diverge, each young historian has recently discovered the excitement and value that history holds, and each has taken the initiative to discover evidence and draw conclusions. Ultimately, then, that is what the *Thetean* is and will continue to be; it is a place for first-time historians to venture into the world of academia, stretch their wings, and learn to fly.

—Travis Meyer
Editor-in-Chief

Article

All Those Who Shall Pass

An Italian's Resistance & Nazi Occupation

Alexandria Willis

Introduction

The song "Bella Ciao" was originally written as an anthem for the struggles of the 19th century Italian working class.[1] Amidst the beginning of Italy's monumental wrestle against fascism (both from Italy's own government and Nazi forces), the words were changed to reflect the struggle of the resistance fighters, known as partisans. "Bella Ciao" was now a song mourning the loss of their beautiful Italy. It was not just a song of grief, but also a song of belligerent determination to resist.

Benito Mussolini was the fascist Prime Minister of Italy, a one-party dictatorship, at the start of World War II. In June of 1940, he would officially align himself and Italy with the Axis powers. However, in 1943 he was removed from power by his own people. Imprisoned and powerless, he watched as the new Italian leaders signed a peace agreement with the Allies. It took only days for Hitler to send German troops pouring into Italian towns to occupy the country. Mussolini was freed and returned to power as a puppet for Hitler and Axis powers. It was at this time that a resistance movement would grow throughout Italy to fight Nazi occupation and the return of Mussolini's dictatorship. The

1. Vladimir L. Marchenkov, *Arts and Terror* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 34.

resistance movement was supported through airdrops and military training, most significantly by American, Soviet, and British forces. By August 1944, it is estimated that there were 100,000 partisans resisting Nazi occupation. This number would escalate from that point on, reaching its peak around 250,000 in April 1945 at the time of Mussolini's death.[2] While the Italian resistance is certainly not the most well known resistance of WWII, it is one of the most brutal efforts in any sphere to fight against Nazism and fascism, and can be seen as one of the most successful.[3]

The lyrics of Bella Ciao move through the stages of many partisan fighters' lives.[4] As heroic as the effort to resist Nazi forces was, the successes of the partisans seemed quite bleak due to a lack of resources, centralized leadership, and overwhelming Nazi cruelty. They awoke literally to invaders in their homes and would go on to resist until being laid to rest as martyrs. This micro-history follows a man named Luciano Righi through the stages of partisan life. Each section will be based on a verse of the partisan anthem "Bella Ciao." Additionally, each individual section will reflect on Luciano's relationship with a specific person embodied by that verse.

As verse one mentions awakening to an invader, we will see the connection of our main partisan, Luciano, to the invader. The voice of the next verse pleads for salvific rescue, explaining that they feel death approaching. And so, in this second section, we will witness Luciano interacting with an American pilot, shot down over Nazi-occupied Italy and rescued by the partisans. The voice of the third verse asks that if they die resisting, they be buried. In this third section, we will view Luciano's relationship with a Catholic priest who served the partisans and would bury and bless their dead. I will leave it to you to draw your own conclusions regarding the final verses.

The song is well known among Italians and has been sung from memory by every surviving partisan I have ever had the honor of meeting. It is sung with tears and an awesome combination of both reverence and power. Just thinking of the song brings great emotion to my heart, and I highly recommend that before continuing through this micro-history, you pause and listen to a recording of "Bella Ciao."

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2. R.J.B. Bosworth, *Mussolini* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

3. Maria de Blasio Wilhelm, *The Other Italy: Italian Resistance in World War II* (New York: Ishi Press International, 2013).

4. John Greenway, *American Folksongs of Protest* (New York: Octagon Books, 1970), 52.

Bella Ciao
Italian Partisan Anthem

Italian lyrics	English translation
Una mattina mi son alzato, o bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao! Una mattina mi son alzato e ho trovato l'invasor.	One morning I awakened, oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao! (*Goodbye beautiful*) One morning I awakened And I found the invader.
O partigiano portami via, o bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao o partigiano portami via che mi sento di morir.	Oh partisan carry me away, oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao oh partisan carry me away Because I feel death approaching.
E se io muoio da partigiano, o bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao, e se io muoio da partigiano tu mi devi seppellir.	And if I die as a partisan, oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao and if I die as a partisan then you must bury me.
Seppellire lassù in montagna, o bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao, seppellire lassù in montagna sotto l'ombra di un bel fior.	Bury me up in the mountain, oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao bury me up in the mountain under the shade of a beautiful flower.
E le genti che passeranno, o bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao, e le genti che passeranno mi diranno «che bel fior.»	And all those who shall pass, oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao and all those who shall pass will tell me "what a beautiful flower."
Questo è il fiore del partigiano, o bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao, questo è il fiore del partigiano morto per la libertà	This is the flower of the partisan, oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao this is the flower of the partisan who died for freedom

Part One: The Invader

One morning I awakened,
oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao! (Goodbye beautiful)
One morning I awakened
And I found the invader.

On March 24, 1944, men and boys were gathered from the streets of Rome by Nazi forces. They were ushered into the Ardeatine caves, man-made tunnels on the outskirts of the city. Every local prisoner with a potential death sentence already stood waiting in the caves. Seventy-five Jews also stood pushed into the

tunnels. Boys as young as fifteen were pulled from the streets, men as old as seventy, all at random. Their hands were tied behind their backs, they were lined up, forced to kneel on the dying bodies of those shot before them, and executed, bodies falling on top of bodies. Three hundred thirty-five dead in hours. Those murdered were "rich, and poor, doctors and lawyers, workers and shopkeepers, artists and artisans, teachers and students, men and teenage boys from every walk of life, and even a man of God to walk among them."[5] Some were tortured with blow torches, having their nails and teeth ripped from their bodies.[6]

The events of this day are known as the Ardeatine Massacre. Days before the massacre, an attack from the Italian resistance had successfully killed thirty-three Nazi officers. However, there was an unfathomable cost associated with any partisan success. Nazi leaders recommended that for every fascist soldier killed, ten Italians be executed, be they rebels or civilians.[7] Soldiers in the area were given complete immunity by their supervisors for any atrocities committed.

Ten for every one.

Three hundred thirty-three for the thirty-three.

And when Nazi leaders counted the men corralled into the caves and found 335, they chose to include five extra lives in the final count. There was a name for acts like this in Nazi occupied Italy, "*rastrellamento.*" This is to mean, the roundup/the mop up.

Six months before this brutal massacre in July 1943, Italy signed a peace agreement with the allies. The people rejected Mussolini, fascism, and the Axis powers. A prominent partisan, Ada Gobetti wrote that the days after Mussolini was removed from power felt like "a whirlwind . . . a joy . . . so superficial and free, almost with a spirit of innocence, a state of mind being on vacation."[8] The armistice was a betrayal that Hitler and the German leaders would not allow. Gobetti then recalls the day that the Germans arrived in her home of Turin,

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5. Robert Katz, *The Battle for Rome: the Germans, the Allies, the Partisans, and the Pope* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 23.

6. Former General Simoni was among the tortured and murdered. He was 64 years old and told his executioner before his death, "My only regret is that I was not younger because there was so much more I could have done [for my country."

7. Richard Raiber, *Anatomy of Perjury: Field Marshal Albert Kesselring,* via Rasella, and the Ginny Mission (Newark, Delaware: Univ. of Delaware Press, 2008).

8. While this microhistory focuses almost exclusively on the stories of male partisans, it would be an extreme mistake to remove women from this narrative. Ada is a powerful example of the role that women played as a main pillar in the resistance movement.

"the absurd incredible hope that (her) heart had nourished . . . crumpled. [She] started to cry and could not stop." Italian soldiers were locked in buildings and given the option to continue fighting with the Axis or be moved to death camps. Walking through Turin, you could see the young men and boys pushing their faces to the windows, begging every passerby to send messages to their families.

Hitler was clear that Italy was to be punished brutally for betraying the Axis. Nazi General Albert Kesselring issued the following order: "The fight against the partisans must be carried out with all the means at our disposal and with the utmost severity. I will protect any commander who exceeds our usual restraint in the choice of severity of methods he adopts against the partisans."[9]

The Italian people, military leaders, and the Nazi forces were all informed of the armistice in the same moments. The prisoners of war in Italian prisons were suddenly allies, and the Germans were now enemy invaders. With no time to prepare, the Italians found themselves under attack. Allied prisoners were released and encouraged to flee quickly into neutral Switzerland.[10] Though the citizenry could do little more than wait and watch as the German forces poured in, women and men continued in those early days of Nazi occupation to oppose the fascist movement, organizing themselves as partisans.

The events surrounding the Ardeatine Massacre were far from unique. Men and young boys were rounded up and sent to the Russian front or to brutal work camps. Those who refused to fight for Germany were imprisoned, sentenced to camps, and killed in mass executions. On June 16, 1944, around 1,600 men were gathered up from the local factories in Genoa, put on trains, and sent to Germany. Their destination was the merciless work camps that would kill more than they spared. The remaining men and older boys were suddenly forced to decide how they would survive. There were few options. In northern Italy along the coastline, many chose to flee to the mountains, where they organized an underground resistance. This resistance, though its membership varied in philosophy and belief, is collectively known as the Partisan Movement.

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9. Kesslinger, "*From Cloak and Dagger,*" 145.

This order would be used as evidence of war crimes committed against the Italians, and was used to convict Kesslinger at the Nuremberg Trial.

10. One of the most fascinating Partisans stories comes from Piacenza, Italy where several POW British officers were released and chose to stay behind in Italy to build and train the resistance members. For more information, see *Captains Courageous: Gunner Gregg, Donny Mackenzie & the liberation of the Nure Valley* by Shaun Hullis.

One partisan wrote of these bleak days of early Nazi occupation: "from the despondent weariness I felt around me, from the emptiness where I seemed to find myself, initiatives and hope were born. The desire for resistance was taking shape."[11]

—

Amidst this chaos stood a 21-year-old boy named Luciano Alessandro Righi, suddenly caught in a cross wind. He felt the rush of bodies around him, bodies put on trains never to be seen again, bodies falling in his streets, and bodies marching in to occupy his land. Weeks after Mussolini was elected Prime Minister, in November 1922, Luciano Alessandro Righi was born. His birth coincided with Mussolini's rise to power, and their deaths would later align as well. As Luciano was learning to walk, the campaigns raged for the election of 1924. At this age of two years old, the last multiparty election in Luciano's lifetime occurred, ushering in Mussolini's dictatorship, and opening an era of undeniable fascism in the country. This was the only Italy Luciano would ever know.

His mother, Caffarena, died when Luciano was young, and he grew up an only son.[12] His father, Alessandro, raised his "dear boy" alone.[13] We don't have any written memoirs of Luciano's childhood, but what we know about who he was as a young adult helps us to draw some conclusions. Luciano was able to speak English and French, something rare even today in that region.[14] He was passionate about philosophy, education, and the written word. These interests and abilities speak to his above average level of education and privilege.

This privilege leads us to assume that Alessandro must have complied, at least outwardly, with the demands of the Fascist party. During Luciano's childhood, businesses were closed for refusing to comply with Mussolini's standards, which included simply being a party member. People would regularly

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11. Ada Gobetti, *Partisan Diary: A Woman's Life in the Italian Resistance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

12. Bosworth, 382.

Luciano may have been an only child as well, but we only know with certainty that he was an "only son," as written in a letter from Luciano's father after Italy's liberation.

13. In the same letter referenced in the note above, Alessandro refers to Luciano as his "dear boy."

14. Curtis Willis's memoir mentions Luciano's ability to hold a conversation in English. He also writes that Luciano studied in America at some point. A relative of Curtis believes that Curtis mentioned that Luciano studied in Chicago, but that has not been confirmed.

Mauthausen camp documents list French and English as languages that Luciano was fluent in.

disappear at the hands of Mussolini's secret police. Fascist policies directed his world during Luciano's adolescence, his future corralled by Mussolini's control of the people.

The streets of his youth wound down to the sea on cobblestones. Genoa was a brilliant port city with a deep history. Statues of Christopher Columbus, old churches, and sea breeze filled the city. Even in the deepest winters, it rarely froze and the sun shone.

While Luciano would see many invaders in his Italian home, Mussolini's fascism was the first. Luciano, as part of a mandatory draft, joined the fighting against the Allied powers. He served as a driver in the fascist military. Like many Italians, he was forced to fight in a war he opposed. Following the armistice in 1943, he was required to continue working for Nazi leaders.

Partisan fighters often worked to free Italian soldiers who had been forced to join with the Nazi military.[15] In late July 1944, Luciano would be among a group to escape, climb the mountain, and join the resistance movement. One must wonder what his father knew of his life then. When a man joined the resistance, it was said simply that he "came up the mountain."[16] Going up the mountain was an act of rebellion, a bold defiance of faciscm. It was to risk your own life and well-being, to be compelled to hide in the shadows, and to accept that you may never see your loved ones again.

Among these defiant souls was Luciano—a 21-year-old boy, college educated, a philosopher, musician, an only son who spoke at least three languages, who had lost his mother as a boy. He had dark hair, a crooked nose, gray eyes, and *now* he was a partisan.

Part Two: Going up the Mountain, Carry Me Away

Oh partisan carry me away,
oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao
oh partisan carry me away
Because I feel death approaching.

15. Tom Behan, *The Italian Resistance Fascists, Guerrillas and the Allies* (London: Pluto Press, 2009).

16. Berto Bartolomeo Ferrari, *Sulla Montagna con i Partigiani.*

Only two weeks after Luciano officially enlisted with the Partisans, on August 20th 1944, an American pilot named Curtis L. Willis stood on an island off the coast of western Italy. He reflected on the options in front of him. Planes took off all around, ruffling the short red hair that was his most distinctive feature. In front of him was a P-38 reconnaissance aircraft. This particular plane had a reputation for faultiness and carried with it a general aura of bad luck. Without it though, there would not be enough planes to complete all the missions at hand. He pulled out his flight log, and logged the plane–he would take it out today on a reconnaissance mission.[17]

His objective was the photographing of a key bridge in the Po Valley. The Allies were close to liberating Italy from Nazi occupation and were in the preparatory stages of their final offensive. Before embarking, he was briefed regarding a partisan stronghold near Genoa. Should something go awry, his best bet would be to land as near to there as possible. Just after 11 am, Curtis entered the plane and flew toward northern Italy.[18]

Almost immediately after crossing enemy lines, his plane began billowing dark smoke, alerting Nazi forces to his location. A pair of German aircraft soon began following, forcing him to continue onward rather than abort the mission and return to the Allied base. His instruments began to malfunction, and he was left with very few choices. Given the state of his plane, there was no way to escape his pursuers. And so, he continued his northward flight, deeper into enemy territory. His only option was to hope that the partisan stronghold was still intact, and that he could somehow find them. As his plane entered a bank of clouds, he bailed out. In an effort to elude the Nazi pilots that followed him, he tucked his knees into his chest so that he might be mistaken for a piece of tumbling debris, and prayed. "He . . . launched with a parachute and descended near the lakes of Olbicello, just within the Partisan area."

"At 11 o' clock he was still at the canteen in an aviation team in Sardinia, just before 12 o' clock he was already a partisan." Curtis's journey with the partisans would last for several months. Within a few days, he had joined the Carlos Divisione de Garibaldi. The camp was made up of about 200 partisans, mostly men. Among these partisans was a man named Morris (Moritz). This name was a cover to protect his family, but he shared with Curtis one night that his given name was Luciano Righi.[19] Curtis would take the name "Red" as his battle name while with the partisans.

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17. Curtis Willis flight log, Aug. 1944.
18. Curtis Willis, Ms., *My Time with the Partisans* (University of Utah, n.d.).
19. Wilhelm, 69.

Curtis wrote of Luciano after the war in the fall of 1945, saying that he had become his "best friend."[20] His ability to speak English fluently drew them even closer together. Luciano was an intellectual and would keep them up at night discussing the war, the source of these invaders, and the future of Italy. To him, they were not fighting Nazis, or Mussolini, or any other single army; they were fighting fascism. This was a war of philosophies and morals. His dream was to liberate Italy through rebirth and education. Words and ideas would be what won back their country from more than 20 years of a sleep-like death. Every spare moment was spent discussing and planning.

Often, nights would grow too dark for discussions of a new Italy. The Germans were now more aggressive than ever. The rastallamente was growing, round-ups reaching further and further up into the mountains. The deaths were increasingly brutal, often completely unprovoked, gathering innocent men and women.

Ten for every one.

The goal of the Nazis was not justice, but the demoralization and conquest of the Italian people. It was at times like these that Luciano would stray from his normal talk of politics and philosophy. Sitting next to Curtis, the small young man would instead play the guitar he carried with him through the mountains. On one such night, a fellow partisan named Don Berto recounts the feelings that came from his music:

> Everyone ponders. Everyone's imagination processes the same images, the same paintings. The thought of all and one is identical: your own distant home. What will our loved ones do? What will they say of us?
>
> How much melancholy in our homes- even if they are crowded, they will feel our absence. And who will suffer for us more than our mothers, certainly in this moment our mother's will always think of us, everyday. How many spasms and how much pain for her poor heart! Our mother's soul will muster a prayer.[21]
>
> A soft voice awakens us from that dream. Bill had sung a partisan song. In an instant everyone formed a chorus. The powerful voice of all the partisans. The mighty voice of all the partisans rose to the heavens. It seemed that everyone wanted their song to carry to their home. The ears of their mothers, to console them.
>
> "The wind ceases, calm is the storm, the partisan returns home"

20. Curtis L. Willis, *Memoirs of Curtis L. Willis.*
21. Bartolomeo, 157.

Moritz accompanied us on his guitar.[22] He was back in good spirits. The singing had made us rediscover the joy and enthusiasm of the whole day. The enthusiasm of all time.[23]

In mid September, Curtis and Luciano would experience the roundup personally. The Germans would often surround an area with a strong partisan presence and close in, killing any men within the circle. One evening, Curtis and Luciano received notice that thousands of fascist mount troops, known as Alpinis, were closing in on the area. Soon after being warned, the area was bombed. They packed immediately in the night and spent the next three days slowly working around German offensives.

Curtis writes, "we slipped through the German enclosure and concealed ourselves in a small grove of trees about one-half mile from the German headquarters near Genoa. We stayed there under their noses for four days while they searched for us."[24] While waiting in this grove of trees with Luciano, they saw hundreds of B12 and B24 American aircrafts fly overhead during an air raid on German camps in Genoa and the surrounding area. In the weeks and months that Curtis spent with Luciano and the partisans, he would see signs of the allied movement and success in southern Italy. Curtis writes that he lost about "twenty-five pounds on this trip due to food shortage and hard traveling." They traveled by foot, carrying more than 50 pounds each in makeshift packs. After several more days in hiding, this small group of partisans was able to return to their original camp- most other groups were not so lucky. In those weeks, hundreds of other partisans were captured and killed in these same roundups.

Despite the brutality of the Nazis' retaliation, the partisans continued to gain ground through guerilla warfare. They would attack then withdraw, back to the sheltering safety of the mountains. Their numbers had grown to an estimated 100,000 and were growing quickly. In the next six months this number would more than double to 250,000. Allied forces were continuing their slow advance north from southern Italy with the help of the partisans. In northern Italy the partisans were isolated from almost all allied support. However, with the aid of occasional airdrops, even this northern resistance was able to gain complete autonomy in certain remote towns. The more success the partisans saw, the more brutal the German occupation became. German General

22. Code name for Luciano Righi.
23. Bartolomeo, 67.
24. Willis.

Kesselring wrote in his memoir "It was clear to me . . . that the partisans might critically affect the retirement of my armies. The best (Nazi) troops were only *just* good enough to be used in fighting (the partisans)."[25]

In the final days of September, Curtis and Luciano parted ways. Curtis was moving to a new division in the slopes of Mount Antilla where U.S. paratroopers were stationed, staging coming airdrops that would provide life-giving resources to the partisans in the mountains near Genoa. Luciano would continue with the Carlos division. Luciano gave Curtis his family's address in Genoa, and they promised to reconnect in a liberated Italy.

Part Three: The Fight, And if I die

And if I die as a partisan,
oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao
and if I die as a partisan
then you must bury me.

In October of 1944, a young and unassuming man walked through Tiglieto, close to the coast. Bartolomeo Ferrari Berto was on his way to visit his sister in town. As soon as the rain stopped, he would climb the mountain to Rosiliogne, and his sister would follow in the coming days. He knew he could expect hospitality upon his arrival in the mountains. He was a partisan and a priest and there was always help for the partisans in his commune. The climb was not abnormal for him, as he often traveled by foot going from towns to partisan strongholds, bringing with him both information and comfort.

Often, he followed death. Don Berto was a priest to the partisans in the Mingo/Carlos Division. His job was to bury the dead, redeem the living, and educate the masses.[26] Over the course of the Nazi occupation, his feet traveled thousands of miles through the mountains. He acted as spy, informer, consoler, and, most importantly, Father to the partisans. During the roundups, he spent days blessing and burying the dead, offering their final sacraments. After roundups, he would go into town and speak of forgiveness. He led funeral marches for the dead unflinchingly through Nazi-occupied Italy and blessed the partisans openly.

25. Raiber.
26. Bartolomeo.

In the summer of 1944, he, along with others, began to gather printing equipment with the goal of printing and distributing anti-fascist partisan propaganda. He believed, with Luciano and others, that education would be the greatest tool in overthrowing fascism and the Nazi regime. Perhaps his greatest accomplishment was to organize and publish the newspaper of the Mingo/Carlos Division.

In the endeavor to free Italy from intellectual slavery, he enlisted the help of Luciano. They and a few others, including one new recruit with the code name Aldo, set to the task of creating a newspaper. Initially titled "Il Ribelle" (*The Rebel*), the paper was meant to be a testament to the resistance against fascism and Nazism. The name was later changed to "Il Patriota" (*The Patriot*). This movement was not about rebellion; it was to reclaim the Italy that they knew still lived somewhere. The task was arduous, requiring printing presses, paper, material, and ideas.

Nestled within their early editions was the following prose:

> In this decisive moment in which all of our will is strained from the luminous goal of liberation/freedom/liberty. We must unite together in our conviction, our ideals, to temper the spirit and the weapons of the resolute phase of a battle that is now turning to a victorious conclusion. This is the goal of our little newspaper, to reflect all of our lives, to educate and more than anything to re-educate our soul to sincerity to honesty to acts and to thoughts, to lucidity and objectives to views and analysis to love of the homeland and to brotherhood, to the right sensation all these values.
>
> We have had a sad twenty years of awe and moral degradation that has, if not destroyed, at least slept in all of us.
>
> **Everything we write and read in our newspaper will be a living expression of this common desire of rebirth.**[27]

Despite Luciano's dream of a newspaper, the roundups were increasing. In late October, the paper was nearing its maiden printing. Gathering the materials needed for printing was incredibly dangerous, and possession of such materials was punishable by death with no trial. Luciano, Don Berto, and Aldo kept the equipment at a sympathetic family's farmhouse in Mertolla, south of Genoa. They were always prepared to hide the materials to protect the lives of all those who lived there.

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27. Bartolomeo, "Il Ribelle."

Part Four: Bury Me

Bury me up in the mountain,
oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao
bury me up in the mountain
under the shade of a beautiful flower.

In November 1944, the weather began to turn to winter for the last time in Mussolini's Italy. There was a pervasive sense that liberation was near: the Allies were continuing to move their line steadily northward, and the Partisans were maintaining their own strongholds. However, the threat had not passed. While it may have been tempting to lean into the warmth and promise of the coming spring, this winter would yet prove cold, deep, and permanent for some. German forces had begun their boldest effort yet to destroy the partisans with roundup–a winter-long, brutal effort to find and destroy all resistance. Though the German forces would later be held responsible for the war crimes of that winter, this offered little comfort to the hundreds of men and boys slaughtered in mass executions with no trial.

As the weather turned, Luciano's brigade found refuge in a farmhouse beside the river in Mertolla. On November 17th, the morning crept in with a heavy fog and quiet stillness. Tullin, a partisan who often took early-morning lookouts, sat watch as his partisan family slept among the farmhouses. Perhaps because of the darkness, perhaps because of the fog, approaching German forces went unnoticed until they had almost come upon the group. Tullin raised the alarm, and the partisans immediately began disappearing into the woods and traveling down the river. Even with the late warning, all were able to escape. All, except for those who chose to stay behind. Luciano and Aldo scrambled to hide and destroy evidence of the partisan newspaper.

Luciano and Aldo, understanding the need for a potential hiding place, had prepared a foxhole several days in advance. It was completely camouflaged and indiscernible from the surrounding forest. They made it into their shelter in the final moments before the Germans descended on the farmhouse and began their search. Luciano hid with Aldo, breathing shallowly and listening intently. He soon recognized a familiar voice among the Germans. He knew the voice as one of his partisan comrades. The voice was even and calm as it came closer to their spot, leading the Germans to their foxhole. They had been revealed by a traitor to the rebels.[28]

28. Bartolomeo.

Aldo was pulled from the hole first, then Luciano. The cold air bit at their skin as they were forced to load the German vehicles with any valuables left behind, and burn the farmer's land and equipment. This was their first day of captivity. Don Berto outlined all he knew of Aldo and Luciano's story after being captured.

> The evening after beating down the local citizens in their houses, the Germans left the area. The people of Garonne later spoke of what happened, Moritz and Aldo were exhausted. It was from more than hard work, they were demoralized. Maybe they were omens of what awaited.[29]

The journey north began soon after for Aldo and Luciano. They were close to the home where Luciano's father was still living, but he had no opportunity to bid him farewell before moving further north. Eventually they traveled by train, making their way toward what would be their final destination in Melk, Germany.

> The news arrived to us in the mountains in the following days. That made us see the long and hard Calvary, after they were taken to Marassi, the student house, and Bolzano, and ultimately to one of the hellish concentration camps in Germany.[30]

As they traveled in brutal conditions, the Mingo division published its first edition of *The Patriot* and distributed it through all the local communities. The words seemed to catch fire. Don Berto buried a copy of the first printing in a tin box, preserving at least one copy for Luciano, should he ever have the chance to return. In the months of Luciano's imprisonment, 11 more editions were printed.

Only weeks after Luciano's arrest, Curtis journeyed south into safety, arriving at Florence behind Allied lines. Luciano continued north, not knowing if his American friend had survived.

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The beautiful hills of Austria offer a strange contrast to the hellish camps constructed in the countryside. Luciano and Aldo were first taken to the base camp at Mauthausen. The trains that carried them stopped almost two miles from the camp, where the prisoners began their march through town. People watched on,

29. Bartolomeo.
30. Bartolomeo.

witnessing the fate of those who had dared to question Hitler's authority and resist his regime. How different this town of complacency was to the villages in the hills that previously hid them.

Luciano's name was replaced with the number 114085. It was tattooed onto his arm. His information was recorded:

> Last name: Righi
> First name: Luciano
> Born: November 26, 1922 in Genova
> Status: single
> Father: Alessandro
> Admitted: December 19, 1944
> Reason: Protection given to Allies
> Size: 5′2″, slim face, green eyes, crooked nose, normal ears, 2 missing teeth, black hair

The camp at Melk was classified as stage 3, the toughest of camps, reserved for the "incorrigible political enemies of the Reich."[31] Upon arriving, prisoners were ushered through the front gates into a courtyard where all were beaten brutally by the guards. Many died in these first moments. The Jews among the prisoners rarely lived longer than 24 hours. Suicide rates were high, with prisoners throwing themselves into the massive charged fences along the perimeter. They died slowly from the burns. The so-called infirmary was a place of death, where the only treatments offered were lethal injections.

After the beatings, Luciano and Aldo were deemed strong enough to be moved to the granite mines, a sub-camp. Here, the means of execution was death by labor. Luciano and the other slaves spent every day carrying granite up the "stairs of death" until they collapsed from exhaustion. At this point, they were either executed, or more likely left to succumb to the elements. In the isolation of the camp, Aldo and Luciano received no news of the outside world. But they were just 4 months from liberation. They just had to survive for 4 months. The average life expectancy for a prisoner in the quarries was less than eight weeks.

> I went down to the city after the liberation, and we reunited with great joy to dear Aldo, who returned healthy and safe from Germany.

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31. Amy Schmidt and Gudrun Loehrer, *The Mauthausen Concentration Camp Complex: World War II and Postwar Records* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2008).

> He brought us the sad news of the death of Moritz. One sad day, he had been thrown into a crematorium.[32]

Surviving camp records show that Luciano died April 2, 1945. Mauthausen and the surrounding sub-camps were liberated 2 weeks later. The records held in the Italian Partisan Archives state that Luciano "died for the fight for liberation," the highest honor given to fallen partisans.

> The news was another blow to our comrade hearts. Who didn't love Moritz? All the partisans remembered him with deep sadness. How many evenings he had cheered us up with the sound of his guitar! How many times did he entertain us with his long philosophical reflections![33]

While attending college in Utah, Curtis wrote to Luciano several times in the later months. His letters received no response. Finally, after almost a year, he received a piece of mail back from Luciano's father, Alessandro Righi. Alessandro wrote of his "dear boy," whom he would never see again.[34] With the letter he sent a copy of a memoir written by Don Berto, the Catholic priest who had loved his son, and a small photograph of Luciano's youthful face. Luciano had been beaten to death, he wrote. Though the camp records state he died in the infirmary, we know there was no true care given. This was a place of death. He wrote that he could never escape the "everlasting sorrow."[35] Alessandro now lived in reborn Italy, one dreamt of by his son. And Curtis never removed the picture of Luciano from his home.

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The day before Luciano's recorded death, the Allied forces began their final campaign in northern Italy. On April 2nd, Luciano's death was attributed to severe beatings. Three weeks later, on April 28th, Mussolini was captured by partisan fighters, executed and hung upside down in the Milan square, 90 miles north of Luciano's boyhood home.[36]

Just one month after Luciano's death, Italy was liberated from Nazi forces. In Austria, Luciano's surviving inmates were liberated from Mauthausen Camp by Allied forces. Aldo was released and returned to a reborn Italy where he

32. Bartolomeo.
33. Bartolomeo.
34. Alessandro Righi, *Letter to Curtis Willis.*
35. Alessandro Righi, *Letter to Curtis Willis.*
36. Bosworth.

reunited with Don Berto. The Partisan movement of rebirth and liberation was finally successful.

Epilogue: All Those Who Shall Pass, Bella Ciao

And all those who shall pass,
oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao
and all those who shall pass
will tell me "what a beautiful flower."

This is the flower of the partisan,
oh bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao
this is the flower of the partisan
who died for freedom

In 2018 I found a letter in an old trunk. The letter was from Luciano's father to my grandfather, Curtis Willis, an American pilot rescued by the partisans. The letter was a response to Curtis's most recent attempt to contact Luciano after returning home from the war. Though hard to read, the tear-stained letter with its compact, sloping cursive is seared in my memory. Alessandro wrote of his "dear boy" and of his "everlasting sorrow," knowing Luciano's body would never come home.

Soon after reading the letter, I found out that I was pregnant with my first child, and as I lay in bed that night I thought of my hopes and dreams for my child. I thought of Luciano's father, his everlasting sorrow. I thought of how he too must have had dreams for his child, and how those dreams were unwillingly sacrificed for my own. His dreams for his son, ripped from his hands, and my dreams for my daughter made possible. That night I curled my body around my stomach and thought of my own existence, the life of my child, and the survival of my grandfather, Curtis Willis, who would never have made it home from war without Luciano Alessandro.

The next year, in 2019, I stood in the basement of an "infirmary" in Northern Austria within the Mauthausen Concentration Camp. The room to my right was a crematorium, and the room to my left was a gas chamber. The room I stood in had been transitioned into an archive of over 83,000 names, with Luciano Righi's name among them. It was a list of the dead.

The day was cold and windy, and the camp was nearly empty. My husband was carrying our six month old daughter as we toured the area. There are no

words to offer in such a place, and so we were mostly silent. I realized here that I have always studied this part of history by averting my gaze a bit, by looking right beside the atrocity, not letting my eyes really focus in or settle on what I was reading. On this day there was nowhere for me to look to escape the raw reality of what had happened here. A nearby woman asked a guide, "How could anyone have ever done this to a human being? I could never be capable of this."

The man responded by pointing at my daughter and I, and asking me "What would you be willing to do to prevent your baby from being here? Would you allow some stranger to take her place? Would you be willing to help put that person here to protect your daughter?" I have considered that question many nights since. And again, I am grateful that my child is safe. And again, I am grieved by the loss of a son, a dear boy and the "everlasting sorrow" of Luciano's father.

And should I die as a partisan
you must carry me
and bury me up there in the mountains
O beautiful farewell
Bella Ciao

Article

USSR Influence on the Antiapartheid Movements of South Africa

Brooke England

On 21 March 1960, the Pan Africanist Congress urged people to join together to protest passes—identifying documents required to be carried at all times by black Africans—by surrendering themselves without the passes for arrest in defiance of the discriminatory law.[1] Thousands of protesters gathered in front of the Sharpeville police station. After hours of singing and peaceful protest, a policeman was accidentally knocked down and the crowd rushed forward to investigate. Terror ensued when the policemen opened fire on the crowd. Humphrey Tyler, the assistant editor of Drum magazine, witnessed the chaos firsthand. He recounts that after a cheerful and peaceful day, suddenly men, women, and children were being mowed down by the guns of the officers. Tyler wrote, "Hundreds of kids were running, too. One little boy had on an old blanket coat, which he held up behind his head, thinking, perhaps, that it might save him from the bullets."[2] At the end

1. "Pass Laws in South Africa 1800–1994," South African History Online, last modified August 27, 2019, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/pass-laws-south-africa-1800-1994.

2. Humphrey Tyler assistant editor of *Drum* magazine as quoted in, "Eyewitness accounts of the Sharpeville massacre 1960," South African History Online, last modified March 20, 2016, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/eyewitness-accounts-sharpeville-massacre-1960.

of the carnage, 69 people were dead and over a hundred wounded.[3] The Sharpeville Massacre, as it came to be called, was a turning point in South African history and the antiapartheid efforts. In the wake of this tragic event, the USSR, a global power on the world stage and a proponent of equality, and antiapartheid organizations in South Africa developed more formal ties. Throughout the following years, the Soviet Union played a significant, if not always obvious, role in the antiapartheid movements in South Africa. While historians have been largely interested in Soviet motives for assisting the antiapartheid movements, the oral histories of the South Africans involved in the movement, many of whom differed in race, background, and political views, each emphasize their appreciation of the Soviet Union's ideological example, financial support, and active military support.

Though at first glance one may be skeptical of the reality of a connection between South Africa and the Soviet Union, there were many things going on in Southern Africa that drew the USSR into the volatile environment of South Africa. At a time when the United States and other Western countries' biggest priority was the containment of communism, those oppressed by their systems of government saw communism as an attractive alternative. In the countries surrounding South Africa, there were conflicts between communist and capitalist leaning groups. The Portuguese fought socialist-leaning groups in their colonies of Angola and Mozambique in the 1960s. Upon their independence, a civil war broke out between the sovereign government of Angola, backed largely by the Soviet Union, and the opposition which joined forces with the South African army backed by the United States. Eventually, Angola won the civil war with assistance from the USSR and other communist nations and retained its sovereignty, conveying the willingness of the Soviets to intervene.[4] Meanwhile apartheid laws controlled many aspects of black South Africans' lives and prevented them from enjoying equality and freedom at home. South Africans who opposed this regime had already been traveling to the Soviet Union to find a degree of support, but after the Sharpeville massacre, the USSR was more willing to get involved in another Southern African country to offer their help.

For many years the focus of scholars was on the USSR's political gains in South Africa. Scholars argued that the Soviet Union only saw South Africa and

3. "Sharpeville Massacre, 21 March 1960," South African History Online, last modified March 26, 2021, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/sharpeville-massacre-21-march-1960.

4. Dennis Laumann, "Colonial Africa:1184–1994" *African World Histories: Second Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2019), 83.

its peoples' struggles as a pawn in the much larger game of chess between the East and West during the Cold War. People saw what the USSR was doing and assumed it was to bolster their own position on the world stage. It is now more widely acknowledged, however, that the Soviet Union also played an important role in the antiapartheid movement there. Still, most scholars agree South Africa was not a priority to the USSR. This change in perspective is due to the fact that more and more historians have moved away from a Eurocentric view of this period and studied how it affected black Africans, not just the government. For example, an early history by Kurt Campbell explores the Soviet relationship to the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), concluding that the Soviet Union was involved for a wide variety of reasons, but South Africa was ultimately "peripheral" rather than the focus of the USSR.[5] In contrast, a later work by Vladimir Shubin claims the USSR supported liberation movements in Southern Africa in part because of the Cold War, but mainly because their own ideology, quoted in the 1977 Soviet Constitution, supported "the struggle of people for national liberation and social progress."[6] More recently, historians seem to agree that the USSR ideology to help oppressed people was their true motive. There have been some holes in the research, however. Since most of these histories were written, the South Africans who played a role, front and center, in antiapartheid movements published their oral histories. These interviews have confirmed that the Soviet Union's involvement made a lasting impact and accelerated the rate at which the antiapartheid movement progressed in South Africa. Those interviewed recounted the ideological influence as well as financial and military support the USSR provided.

The interviews make it clear that those directly involved agree with Shubin that the USSR either had good motives or their motives did not matter. These oral histories are important because they provide a clear window into the minds of the people who experienced the antiapartheid movements firsthand. Even if the USSR entertained ulterior motives for their support of the antiapartheid movements, their goals were the same, and they both benefited from the end of oppression. For example, if South Africa was eliminated as the Soviet Union's largest competitor in the gold market by "inefficient management by a black

5. Kurt Campbell, *Soviet Policy Toward South Africa* (London: The Macmillan Press LTD, 1986), 164.

6. Vladimir Shubin, *The Hot "Cold War": The USSR in Southern Africa* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 2.

majority government," then the USSR could then control the price of gold.[7] Still, many who worked directly with the USSR in the fight against apartheid never felt that manipulation was the goal of the Soviets. Brian Bunting, a member of the SACP and deeply involved in the antiapartheid movements, said,

> People say that we were being manipulated by the Russians for their own purposes. I think this is a misreading of the reality of the situation . . . the national interests of the Soviet Union and the interests of the liberation movement in this country were the same. We wanted to put an end to oppression. We wanted to put an end to capitalism and colonialist control of South Africa and all colonial countries. And from that point of view I think that our interests and the interests of the Soviet Union ran together. We never felt that we were manipulated.[8]

Instead, the people engaged in the struggle for equality in South Africa recognized the benefits of working with the USSR as well as their benevolence.

The ideologies of the Soviet Union, namely communism and socialism, were the first things the Soviet Union offered to those engaged in the antiapartheid movements, and their influence cannot be overstated. The deadly Sharpeville massacre was just one example of abuse that the black South Africans had to face from their white supremacist government even after the country gained independence from Great Britain. They knew what it meant to be oppressed. The liberation movements in South Africa looked to the communist and socialist ideals of the USSR to gain inspiration for what they wanted to see in the future of their own country. Communism as an ideology was an obviously attractive alternative to the oppressive apartheid government that existed. To a communist, race was irrelevant: they saw the world by class. They wanted people to exist on equal terms and to prevent people from taking advantage of the capitalist system to become obscenely rich at the expense of the poor. Unfortunately, that was exactly what people in South Africa had experienced for years. First, black South Africans were forced to labor for a colonial regime while their natural resources were only making the rich richer and benefiting the majority of black South Africans nothing. Then, after the country gained its independence, the same black South Africans were oppressed under a different

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7. Gustav Radloff. "The USSR and Gold in South Africa." *International Journal on World Peace* 5, no. 3 (1988): 5–7. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20751261.

8. Brian Bunting interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 72.

system that divided the country based on race and denied them progress. In that context, there is little wonder then that the communist ideology took hold and played an important role in the liberation movements. A 1962 program of the South African Communist Party reads, "As its immediate and foremost task, the South African Communist Party works for a united front of national liberation. It strives to unite all sections and classes of oppressed and democratic people for a national democratic revolution to destroy White domination."[9] Communism gave the people a clear ideology to follow and a future to strive for.

In 1962 when this program was written, communism was not new to South Africa, yet the ideology gained traction amongst those involved in liberation movements as time went on. In fact, the SACP, then named the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), was created in 1921, just 4 years after the Russian Revolution took place in Europe. Radical white members of the working class who were inspired by the Bolsheviks made up the majority of the party in the beginning, but by 1925, black Africans claimed the majority. In 1950, the apartheid government put forth the Suppression of Communism bill, partly in response to the amount of communists cropping up in the non-white political movements. The CPSA changed its name to the SACP soon after and went underground to continue its work. The ANC, though they rejected communism at first, later formed a very strong relationship with both the SACP and the Soviet Union. Both the ANC and SACP were important to the people in the antiapartheid movements. They not only provided the funnel through which the USSR gave money and other means of support, but also an organized front that was built on ideas of equity and justice for the people being oppressed.[10]

Brian and Sonia Bunting, Ruth Mompati, and Joe Gaobakwe Matthews were all involved in the antiapartheid movements, and their interviews attest to the ideological effects the USSR had on both individuals and the movements as a whole. Before any money was given by the Soviet Union, or before the MK, the militant branch of the ANC, was invited to be trained in Moscow, members of the South African Communist Party took informal visits to the Soviet Union to see other like-minded individuals committed to fight against the current systems of government. The Buntings were some of those people. Brian

9. "Programme of the South African Communist Party 1962: The road to South African Freedom." (London: Inkululeko Publications, 1962).

10. "South African Communist Party (SACP)," South African History Online, last modified August 13, 2021, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/south-african-communist-party-sacp.

Bunting, quoted earlier, was the son of two founding members of the SACP and an active member himself. He was a writer for the *Guardian* newspaper, where his wife Sonia also worked, and later became the chief editor. Brian and Sonia Bunting were no strangers to the oppression that black South Africans faced, and they used their positions at the newspaper and as members of the SACP to help the cause.[11] Brian said, "Well, we eventually came to the conclusion that the pluses of the Soviet Union outweighed the minuses . . . we felt that what the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries had done was to greatly reduce the gap between the rich and poor."[12] Despite acknowledging that there were, in fact, minuses to working with the Soviet Union, Bunting was no doubt drawn to the hope of equality expressed in the ways the USSR implemented socialism. This ideological influence from the Soviet Union was invaluable to those fighting for the rights of the oppressed in South Africa.

Other people in South Africa came into contact with Soviet ideology another way. Many were able to be educated in the Soviet Union, further embracing socialist/communist ideas. In 1961, the USSR reestablished the International Lenin School for the purpose of providing education and training to those from other countries. The SACP sent several people to go learn there, including Ruth Mompati.[13] Mompati was a teacher before she joined the ANC in 1952. She was forced to work underground after the SACP and ANC were banned, and she later went into exile. She said of her experience in the Soviet Union, "This was one of the most interesting parts in my life. . . . We started classes immediately, learning about the history of the working class, political economy, socialist philosophy, surveillance, topography, sabotage, etc."[14] Ruth Mompati was only one of many South African students that experienced this kind of education. Not only did she learn about the history of the working class, but also how to apply Soviet philosophy to her own situation in South Africa. The USSR was one of the places where she learned more about the ideology that she believed in so much that she was willing to go into exile for it.

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11. "Brian Percival Bunting," South African History Online, last modified April 9, 2021, https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/brian-percy-bunting.

12. Brian Bunting interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 74.

13. "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Anti-Apartheid Struggle," South African History Online, last modified August 27, 2019, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/union-soviet-socialist-republics-ussr-and-anti-apartheid-struggle.

14. Ruth Mompati interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 307, 315.

However, not everyone was initially attracted to working with the Soviet Union because of their ideologies. For other South Africans involved in the struggle for equality, Soviet ties were more about practicality than personal beliefs in communism or socialism. Joe Gaobakwe Matthews, a member of the SACP early in his life who later switched to the Inkatha Freedom Party, recalls that he looked at past global conflicts and realized all winners had something in common: allies. He said, "We knew that African states, generally speaking, were too weak. They didn't have the military resources to support such a plan . . . we took a decision . . . that, as trading partners of our country, the West was not going to support our armed struggle. But we had the Soviet Union as the other power. So we had to go with the Russians."[15] Despite any political differences and his belief that communism would not work in South Africa, he recognized the importance of Soviet involvement in the struggle. To a degree, this was still a matter of ideology since the broader Cold War conflict between East and West was at play. Antiapartheid activists knew that the American-led West would not support their cause because of its Cold War dedication to suppressing communism, which aligned the West with South Africa's own apartheid government. Any support would have to come from the East, which was led by the communist USSR. In the case of Matthews and others, their own individual ideologies were swallowed up in the bigger picture and the practicality of having the help of the Soviet Union.

One practical way in which the Soviet Union aided the antiapartheid movements was through financial support. Immediately following the Sharpeville Massacre, the Soviet Union showed its support of the antiapartheid movement—and its sympathy—by giving the South African Communist Party $30,000 to support the families of those affected by that tragedy. The USSR continued to fund the liberation movements indirectly through the SACP for a time. This was the beginning of more formal ties between the Soviet government and the liberation front in South Africa. Following that donation, came many others, and the USSR even promised to put sanctions against the apartheid South African government.[16] The Soviet Union was selective of the liberation movements it supported, however. Joe Gaobakwe Matthews said of the

15. Joe Gaobakwe Matthews interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 25.

16. "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Anti-Apartheid Struggle," South African History Online, last modified August 27, 2019, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/union-soviet-socialist-republics-ussr-and-anti-apartheid-struggle.

USSR's financial support in Southern Africa, "it's a scandal that you can give $10,000 to FRELIMO and then give $900,000 to the ANC."[17] Matthews says that the USSR was hesitant to give help to the liberation movements that did not support their communist ideologies. FRELIMO is a nationalist party in Mozambique that was also committed to liberation movements of the 1960s. However, they were rumored to be a puppet of the United States and the West. The President of FRELIMO, Eduardo Mondlane, claimed that they were open to contacts with both the East and the West in order to reach their ultimate goal of liberating Mozambique; they therefore claimed neutrality in the Cold War.[18] In response to these claims, the Soviet Union chose to give more money to the SACP and ANC whose positions they trusted more. Nevertheless, the money given to support the ANC and the SACP was to the benefit of the South African antiapartheid movements, especially in the form of funding lawyers to represent the leaders of the movements in legal matters.[19]

The Soviet Union also provided military assistance to the antiapartheid movements, particularly in the form of training the militant wing of the ANC, uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), Zulu for "the spear of the nation." The threat of violence from civil wars and other forms of internal conflict was already looming over Southern Africa as a whole, but the bloody Sharpeville Massacre rocked South Africa nonetheless. Following these events, some leaders of antiapartheid movements were concerned that their nonviolent efforts were not making enough headway by themselves, so they formed MK. In a meeting of SACP members, Michael Harmel is said to have claimed, ". . . peaceful methods of struggle were over; that one had to now look at alternatives; and that the alternative was armed struggle—violence. And it set this in the context of Marxist theory and communist theory, and revolutionary practice."[20] Again, before the USSR took direct action, the people of South Africa were turning to communist ideology to gain inspiration and justification for their own action.

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17. Joe Gaobakwe Matthews interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 28.

18. Vladimir Shubin. *The Hot "Cold War": The USSR in Southern Africa* (*Africa* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 121–22.

19. "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Anti-Apartheid Struggle," South African History Online, last modified August 27, 2019, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/union-soviet-socialist-republics-ussr-and-anti-apartheid-struggle.

20. "uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK)," South African History Online, last modified January 1, 2021, https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/umkhonto-wesizwe-mk

In this case, ideological inspiration led to physical help for the MK as the Soviet Union allowed soldiers to come and be trained for combat in their country. The invaluable knowledge instilled in the soldiers trained in the Soviet Union helped move the antiapartheid movement in a new and provocative direction. Isaac Makopo was one of these soldiers. He took part in a number of sabotage operations before he left the country for training. He says, ". . . I trained in Moscow for about a year. . . . There were also comrades from MPLA, FRELIMO, SWAPO, and other groups from Latin America, Vietnam, and various other countries that were fighting against colonialism in their respective countries, who were being assisted and trained by the Soviet Union."[21] The Soviet Union then was not only committed to helping South Africans out of oppression, but those from other countries whose people were being taken advantage of by the West. The type of training that they received in Moscow was rigorous and important. Makopo explained the training as "basic guerilla warfare, concentrating on specialized clandestine urban guerilla warfare, sabotage, explosives, weapons, politics, and organizing military and guerilla units."[22] Other soldiers who trained in Egypt, such as Grassen Moagi, did not feel that the training they received was on par with those who trained in Moscow. A farmer by trade, Moagi was recruited by the ANC to be trained militarily in another country. He says of those trained in Moscow, "you could tell a difference, these were real soldiers."[23] Along with operations in South Africa that Makopo was involved in, soldiers from the ANC even fought in the Angolan civil war and helped the people defend their sovereignty from the Western backed opposition.[24]

The USSR also provided more traditional military training along with the guerilla warfare tactics. Lawrence Phokanoka, who spent some of his childhood years in Alexandra Township, said he saw "violence as something very common" there.[25] Later in life he joined the SACP and was trained militarily in the USSR

21. Isaac Makopo interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 200.

22. Isaac Makopo interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 200.

23. Grassen Moagi interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 294.

24. Dennis Laumann, "Colonial Africa:1884–1994" *African World Histories: Second Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2019), 83.

25. Lawrence Phokanoka interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 409.

to fight back against the violence inflicted on those oppressed by the apartheid government. He said, "We were trained in typical guerilla warfare. Hundreds of MK units that were to come later went to Odessa to a proper military academy for training in conventional warfare."[26] The Soviet Union took care that the soldiers from MK and other antiapartheid organizations were prepared to fight in whatever way necessary. This military support from the USSR further shows how big of an impact they made on the antiapartheid movements in South Africa.

Upon reflecting on the role of the USSR on the antiapartheid movements, Brian Bunting insisted, "The Soviet Union gave us whatever support they could in every way possible. They gave military support to MK. They gave financial support. They provided a home from home for people. Anybody that was sick could go and get treated in Moscow hospitals. . . . Anybody who needed further education could get it in the Soviet Union."[27] Though historians have differing opinions on the role that the Soviet Union played in South Africa, the words of those who experienced this movement firsthand prove that they did indeed play a significant role in the antiapartheid movements. The people interviewed about their involvement were different races, backgrounds, and political views, yet they were united in their acknowledgement of Soviet influence and Soviet help. Long before—and after—the USSR gave money and military support, the people of South Africa found inspiration and direction through the ideologies of communism and socialism that were championed by the Soviet Union. Through informal traveling, schooling, and formation of their own communist party, the hope of equality shined a guiding light to those in opposition to the apartheid government. Financial assistance came after, and provided funds to help leaders of these movements deal with lawsuits, as well as provide families with relief after tragedies such as the Sharpeville Massacre. Later with the formation of MK, the USSR provided both conventional and guerilla military training for those who were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for the chance to live in a country not separated by white supremacist laws. Those interviewed about liberation of South Africa played different roles in the antiapartheid movements, but their testimony of Soviet help was a common thread that wove their stories together.

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26. Lawrence Phokanoka interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 418.

27. Brian Bunting interview in *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories* (Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2008), 72.

Article

Forgotten Fallout

The Missing Impact of the SL-1 Disaster

Darren Bradley

Nuclear energy has long been a volatile subject in American history and public discourse. Reactor accidents, domestic and foreign, such as the meltdown at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania and the disaster at the Chernobyl plant in Pripyat, Ukraine have been major milestones in shaping public opinion of nuclear energy in the United States. While these events have remained atomic milestones of sorts, due to the fact that nearly everyone has heard of them, the 1961 explosion of the SL-1 reactor at the Nuclear Reactor Test Site in Idaho, the first in the world to inflict casualties, has never held anywhere near the same space in American memory, or had any semblance of the effect on opinion and approval ratings other disasters have had. The SL-1 accident did not have a long term or wide-reaching impact on American memory or public opinion of nuclear power due to the remote location of the NRTS, the military nature of the operation, the nature and limitations of the media coverage SL-1 received, and the cultural timing of the event itself.

SL-1 and the NRTS

SL-1 was one of more than 20 reactors operating on the Nuclear Reactor Test Site (NRTS), located about 40 miles west of Idaho Falls. Chosen for its location in an abandoned gunnery range, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC)

envisioned NRTS as a new scientific community, similar to other atomic projects in remote locations such as Los Alamos and Richland. The nearby town of Idaho Falls would receive the wealth and jobs that come with government contracts, and the AEC would have the workers it required to run its new testbed of experimental military reactors.[1]

SL-1 was the Army's part in what was, in the 1950s, something of a competitive nuclear reactor race between the different branches of the US military, all of which converged with the AEC at the NRTS. The Navy had built miniaturized reactors which, powering the submarine Nautilus, had allowed them in 1958 to sail underneath the North Pole. The Air Force, likely in a misguided effort to keep pace with the Navy, went down a rabbit hole attempting to build a nuclear-powered bomber, capable of remaining in flight for indefinite periods of time. The Army, for its offering, applied resources to developing a reactor for a much less dramatic, but perhaps far more pragmatic issue than the Air Force: providing power to bases and outposts in isolated or remote locations.[2]

Thus, SL-1, or Stationary Low Power Reactor #1, received its name. The Army and AEC contracted Argonne National Laboratory from Chicago to build SL-1 as a prototype, or demonstrator for reactors that could be easily assembled, would require little water, and could be run by just a few crew members.[3] Unlike a large commercial nuclear power plant, SL-1 was only designed to output around 3 thermal megawatts of power,[4] or as some soldiers put it, just enough to "heat the general's bath water."[5] Ultimately, reactors following SL-1's blueprint were intended to provide power and heat for arctic radar stations along the "DEW line," America's Distant Early Warning System designed to detect soviet bombers long before they reached the continental US.[6]

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1. Jack M. Holl, "The National Reactor Testing Station: The Atomic Energy Commission in Idaho, 1949–1962," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* Vol. 85, no. 1 (January 1994): 15, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40491427

2. Todd Tucker, *Atomic America: How a Deadly Explosion and a Feared Admiral Changed the Course of Nuclear History* (New York: Free Press, 2009): 105

3. The SL-1 Report Task Force, *IDO Report on the Nuclear Incident at the SL-1 Reactor: January 3, 1961 at the National Reactor Testing Station* (Idaho Falls: U.S. Atomic Energy Commission Idaho Operations Office, January 1962): 1, https://www.osti.gov/servlets/purl/4809634

4. Walter C. Patterson, "Chernobyl: Worst but Not First," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 42, no.7 (1986): 44, https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.1986.11459405

5. William McKeown, *Idaho Falls: The Untold Story of America's First Nuclear Accident* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2003): 44.

6. Tucker, *Atomic America*, 96–99.

From the very beginning, SL-1 had serious safety issues. Supercriticality is the point of reaction in a nuclear reactor where fission has essentially escalated out of control. This is mitigated by control rods, which contain a "poison," that slows or blocks nuclear fission. Control rods can be lowered into a reactor to gain control of the amount of fission occurring. Typically, a reactor will have numerous control rods, and, as an added measure of safety, will never rely on any given rod to control the entire reactor. However, in effort to prioritize efficiency, Argonne National Labs designed SL-1 with an unconventional manually lifted 9-rod configuration[7], with a large center rod that had a very high degree of control over the whole reactor, creating a potentially dangerous situation if an issue were to arise with that rod.[8]

There were also problems with the poison elements of the rods. Boron strips were the poison used to slow reactions, but because they were "spot welded" to the rods they were prone to sticking when being pulled out by operators.[9] Eventually, by what was called "some undetermined mechanism" in an AEC report, the rods began shedding boron.[10]

These issues in the design and construction of SL-1 opened the door for what likely destroyed it: human error. By 1961, SL-1 had become somewhat obsolete within the echelon of NRTS reactors, and badly needed repairs were often neglected.[11] Although Combustion Engineering Inc. had been contracted to oversee the operation of SL-1, the reactor's operating crews consisted completely of military personnel, who had been selected based on their "good" backgrounds and performance in Army conducted courses.[12]

The Accident

Three servicemen, Jack Byrne, Dick Legg, and Richard McKinley were operating SL-1 on the night of January 3rd, 1961. On that night, the three men were tasked with routine maintenance, which included lifting the center control rod. Byrnes

7. Combustion Engineering Inc, *SL-1 Reactor Accident on January 3rd, 1961: Interim Report* (Connecticut: Atomic Energy Commission, May, 1961): 9, http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2017/ph241/berriosi/docs/ido-19300.pdf

8. Tucker, *Atomic America*, 107.

9. Tucker, *Atomic America*, 109–10.

10. The SL-1 Report Task Force, *IDO Report on the Nuclear Incident at the SL-1 Reactor*, 2.

11. David Mosey, *Reactor Accidents: Institutional Failure in the Nuclear Industry* (UK: Nuclear Engineering International Publications, 2006): 48–49.

12. David Mosey, *Reactor Accidents*, 38–40.

lifted the rod, while Legg crouched over it, ready to clamp a spacer on it to hold it in place, and McKinley watched from nearby in the room. For some unknown reason, Byrnes hoisted the nearly 100-pound control rod around a foot higher than the required 10 inches, instantly sending the reactor into a supercritical reaction. The 9 feet of water that covered the reactor core immediately turned to steam, exploding with enough force to launch the 13-ton steel reactor lid 9 feet into the air. Byrnes and Legg were killed instantly, and Legg's body was pinned to the ceiling with debris from the control rod. McKinley died just a few hours later, deeply irradiated and suffering horrific head and body wounds.[13]

The explosion required a massive cleanup effort, requiring 13 months and 2.5 million dollars of funding. The bodies of the three men were so highly irradiated that they had to be taken to a nearby chemical plant and stored in ice and alcohol baths.[14] Custom poles with blades and tools on the end of them had to be furnished by local metalworkers in order to allow autopsies to be performed from a safe distance.[15]

General Electric was contracted to perform the investigation, which included full-scale mockups of the reactor for reenactments and simulations of possible scenarios that could have caused the explosion.[16] Investigations were launched into uncovering Jack Byrne's motivation for pulling the rod out nearly a foot further than necessary. Although theories ranging from an effort to unstick a jammed rod, to a practical joke,[17] to a murder-suicide in revenge for an alleged affair between Legg and Byrne's wife were entertained, no motivation was ever truly determined.

SL-1 in Memory

Despite its death toll and costly aftermath, SL-1 has played such a small part in the narrative surrounding nuclear energy in the United States that it has even been forgotten by insiders in the field. In an informal poll of professors,

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13. James Mahaffey, *Atomic Accidents: A History of Nuclear Meltdowns and Disasters: From the Ozark Mountains to Fukushima* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2014): 139–41.

14. The SL-1 Report Task Force, *IDO Report on the Nuclear Incident at the SL-1 Reactor*, 185–86.

15. McKeown, *Idaho Falls*, 127.

16. General Electric Company, *Final Report of SL-1 Recovery Operations* (U.S. Atomic Energy Commission: July, 1962), http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2017/ph241/berrios1/docs/ido-19311.pdf

17. Mahaffey, *Atomic Accidents*, 142.

students, and professionals, a professor at Fordham University failed to find anyone who knew the world's first nuclear reactor deaths took place in SL-1, just outside Idaho Falls. Most, including a professor with a degree in nuclear engineering, assumed that the Three Mile Island Meltdown had been the first fatal nuclear reactor accident in US history, despite the fact that Three Mile Island caused no immediate fatalities.[18]

Historians have also overlooked the SL-1 disaster. Only a select few books solely dedicated to the history of the subject exist. These include William McKeown's *Idaho Falls*,[19] in which McKeown blends a journalistic reconstruction of the culture in the Lost River Desert during the early Cold War with interviews and firsthand accounts of the accident, and Todd Tucker's *Atomic America*,[20] which leans heavily into Tucker's insider experience as a nuclear technician in the Navy along with in-depth historical analysis. Despite the quality of these works, they are a far cry from their counterparts from better known reactor accidents in terms of sheer abundance and popularity.

The extent of SL-1's disappearance from memory extends beyond the academic world. In fact, evidence shows that SL-1 never entered the public consciousness to much of a degree at all. In data gathered from 1955 to 1983 measuring "host community attitudes toward nuclear power plants," 1961, the year the SL-1 accident occurred, shows no notable drop in attitude, with an estimated 85% percent in favor of nuclear power plants. This is down just 5% from 1960, but when viewed with the rest of the data, is not at all inconsistent with the general trend from 1955 to 1978. In 1979, however, there was an extreme drop off in the amount of people who favored nuclear power, which was clearly influenced by the events at Three Mile Island. In the wake of Three Mile Island, the percentage of those in favor of nuclear power plummeted from approximately 75% to under 40%.[21] Clearly, Three Mile Island was occupying a space in the American public consciousness that the SL-1 accident never had.

This is further reinforced not only by the results of polls, but by the content of polls themselves. In 2017, the American Enterprise Institute compiled polls that referenced nuclear energy as an issue. In the forward of the section, the AEI lists Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima as nuclear accidents that caused clear dips in public opinion of nuclear power but makes no mention

18. McKeown, *Idaho Falls*, 253.
19. McKeown, *Idaho Falls.*
20. Todd Tucker, *Atomic America.*
21. William R. Freudenburg, Rodney K. Baxter, "Nuclear Reactions: Public Attitudes and Policies Toward Nuclear Power." *Policy Studies Review*, Volume 5, Issue 1 (1985): 103.

of SL-1.[22] Additionally, Three Mile Island is mentioned by name in questions asked by CBS, NBC, Harris, AP, and Gallup, even decades after its occurrence. One 1979 Gallup poll even showed that 96% of participants had heard or read about Three Mile Island. Clearly, this event entered American memory and was shaping public opinion in a way that SL-1 never did.[23]

Remote Location

One reason for this boils down to the geographics of where SL-1 occurred. While 3 Mile Island is in Pennsylvania and was located near a population center of over 600,000, SL-1 was situated on the NRTS facility, in the middle of the Lost River Desert. This location was, from the very beginning, selected for its remoteness.

Argonne National Laboratories, which was based in Chicago, specifically sought out a remote area, and was willing to accept the distance from their headquarters as a tradeoff for testing their reactors at a safe distance from urban populations, where the only modification necessary to the land would be "displacing a few cattle and sheep from their ranges."[24] The main allure of the Lost River Desert area was that it offered a space for experiments that was close enough to the community of Idaho Falls to receive the support that it needed, while simultaneously distant enough to prevent a major disaster from reaching urban areas or causing panic amongst a large population. As nuclear scientist James Mahaffey put it, "Frankly, if an experiment happened to go rogue and self-destruct, there was not much there to be harmed, and it was good practice to concentrate all dangerous stuff in one place."[25]

In practice, this strategy proved to be quite effective. Despite an explosion, deaths, and a period in which there were unknowns about how much radiation was being released into the surrounding area, SL-1 was remote enough that no

22. Karlyn Bowman and Elanor O'Neil, *Polls on the Environment, Energy, Global Warming, and Nuclear Power*. (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 2017): 137, https://heinonline-org.erl.lib.byu.edu/HOL/Page?collection=amenin&handle=hein.amenin/aeiaaofo001&id=1&men_tab=srchresults

23. Bowman, *Polls on the Environment, Energy, Global Warming, Nuclear Power*, 157–59.

24. Jack M. Holl, "The National Reactor Testing Station: The Atomic Energy Commission in Idaho, 1949–1962," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* Vol. 85, no. 1 (January 1994): 15. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40491427

25. Mahaffey, *Atomic Accidents*, 113.

evacuation of civilian populations was ever deemed necessary. This is in stark contrast to other nuclear accidents, such as Three Mile Island, where nearly 150,000 people fled their homes in a matter of days;[26] Fukushima, where 100,000 evacuated in the wake of a horrific earthquake and tsunami;[27] and Chernobyl, where an enormous population of around 350,000 people were forced from their homes.[28] While the families of those who died in the explosion were deeply affected, without a major population displaced, the SL-1 accident simply did not cut as deep of a scar into the psyche of a large population like other significant nuclear accidents did.

Military Nature of Operations

While population density is certainly a factor on the long-term impact of a nuclear accident, the ownership, operation, and purpose of the plant can also be factors. Unlike the commercially operated and financed nuclear power plants that would follow it, SL-1 was, from the beginning, part of a military operation taking place on the NRTS (a military base) being run by military personnel. While all the other reactors mentioned in this essay (Fukushima, Chernobyl, and Three Mile Island) were created to provide commercial power, SL-1 was created strictly for proof of concept. Its military purposes were novel and disconnected from civilian life. Although private companies were involved in its creation and oversight, SL-1 would have been viewed by outsiders as a purely military endeavor, which reduced the effect the accident had on public opinion.

This is largely because there was, in the early 1960s, an assumption that significant danger and risk existed in military operations. As the son of one of the firefighters who entered the reactors put it, "In this era, we approach things with such skepticism. But these guys had a very different reference point back

26. Robert Starlings, "Evacuation Behavior At Three Mile Island," *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* (1984): 12.

27. World Nuclear Association, "Fukushima Daiichi Accident," *World Nuclear Association*. April, 2021, https://world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/fukushima-daiichi-accident.aspx

28. World Nuclear Association, "Chernobyl Accident 1986," *World Nuclear Association*. May, 2021, https://world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/chernobyl-accident.aspx

then. They were like Chuck Yaeger; they were guys out in the Wild West—one minute they're up in the hills plinking with guns and the next they're jumping into hot reactors or flying X-15s at twice the speed of sound."[29] To some degree, the expectation that danger exists and accidents happen on military bases would have lessened the shock of the news for many people.

The military nature of NRTS and SL-1 was also important in the way that it affected the public, because, despite being the result of contracts with companies that would run the impending nuclear industry, it ultimately had a degree of separation from what would be the nuclear power industry. This was, after all, a reactor at a test site, a facility that implies inherent risk, rather than a reactor within a community, touted as perfectly safe, like Three Mile Island. In the end, much of the public ire regarding nuclear power was actually directed towards the nuclear *industry*. This is supported by polls taken at the time, which in 1986 showed 45% approval of nuclear power, but only 19% approval of the nuclear power *industry* just three years earlier.[30]

Another significant aspect of SL-1 being a military reactor, was that military intentions and desires had the power to shape the narrative of operations under their control. No evidence exists of a direct coverup occurring at SL-1, as the media was immediately allowed to cover the event, but the military clearly took efforts to shape the narrative around SL-1, although suppression and alteration of information would have been nothing new in the history of nuclear experiments conducted by the United States.

This was a pattern that began as soon as the first atomic weapons were used. Fearing backlash, the brutal extent of the damage and suffering caused by the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the final days of WWII were initially suppressed, and the effects of radiation poisoning was initially lied about by government officials. The American public would learn more details about the bombings in the coming weeks, but some, like the fact that they killed a dozen or so American POWs, were suppressed much longer.[31]

Government control of negative atomic information would continue through decades of nuclear weapons testing. The Accident at Bikini Atoll and the harmful fallout from nuclear tests in the Nevada desert were both covered up and lied about. At one point the AEC even prevented Herman J. Muller, a geneticist who

29. McKeown, *Idaho Falls*, 233.

30. Bowman, *Polls on the Environment, Energy, Global Warming, Nuclear Power*, 137.

31. Barton J. Bernstein, "Nuclear Deception: The U.S. Record," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 42:7 (1986): 40–43. https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.1986.11459404

had been studying the effects radiological genetic damage could have on future generations, from presenting his work abroad. To save face and hide their intentions, the AEC blamed their censorship on a bureaucratic "snafu" by lower-level staff and never admitted their true intentions. All these coverups and government actions were to suppress information that, as a Corps of Engineers Intelligence officer put it, "might well cause injury to the interest or prestige of [the] nation or government."[32]

While knowledge of the SL-1 accident may not have been suppressed as drastically as knowledge of these other events, it is likely that the military engaged in a soft coverup, or misdirection. While interviewing sources to try and learn more about the cause of the accident, nuclear engineer Rod Adams of the *Atomic Insights* podcast reported that while "the term 'cover-up' was not used, the phrase 'let sleeping dogs lie' was used more than once."[33] Rather than lying about what happened at SL-1, the government probably took actions to shift the attention to something else. The love triangle theory, which proposed that Byrnes pulled the rod out an extra ten inches to intentionally detonate the reactor in order to enact revenge on Legg, who was supposedly having an affair with his wife, may have been the attention shift the Army was looking for. This theory was stated as the official cause of the accident by AEC investigator Stephen Hanauer after a hastily conducted investigation, consisting of inconclusive and speculative interviews, even though he was never present at SL-1 during its operation or initial accident investigation. The theory's validity was denied by the those who knew and worked with Byrnes and Legg, and eventually even Hanauer himself expressed regret at having been instrumental in furthering it.[34]

This focus on a "whodunit" murder mystery, embedded with sexual scandal and intrigue, shifted the focus away from long-term implications about government responsibility and toward more tabloid-esque matters. This intentional shift of focus had implications for the way SL-1 was remembered. Rather than spelling doom for the future of nuclear power, or highlighting major safety concerns, the SL-1 incident was trivialized through portrayal as a titillating sex scandal.

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32. Bernstein, *Nuclear Deceptions.*

33. Rod Adams, "Letter from the Editor: Solving the SL-1 Mystery," *Atomic Insights*, July, 1996, https://atomicinsights.com/1996/07/

34. McKeown, *Idaho Falls*, 227, 245.

Limited Coverage

Another factor that seriously impacted the way SL-1 was remembered by many people was the nature and limitations of the media coverage that it received in 1961. Although the SL-1 accident did receive media coverage within a day of the explosion, it was nearly all in print, rather than the televised news cycle that later disasters would receive. Additionally, the reporting was largely confined to the here and now of the explosion and did not make bigger connections or implications to the future of the community, country, or nuclear industry.

In the first few days, the reporting was done primarily by somewhat local papers, such as *Deseret News* and the *Spokane Daily Chronicle,* who both published brief articles covering the event on January 4th, just one day after the explosion.[35] These articles were both very brief, very limited in scope, and very accurate, save for the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* attributing the explosion to "a chemical explosion."[36] A day later, on January 5th, the accident was covered in similar detail and scope by papers such as the *Spokesman Review*[37] and *Lewiston Morning Tribune.*[38] It even gained national recognition in a *New York Times* story titled "3 Killed By Blast in Atom Reactor."

A common aspect of all these published stories is their brief, factual nature. They seemed to make no effort to sensationalize the events of the accident or to raise questions about the nuclear industry or the safety of Idaho Falls residents, and in fact even went out of their way to stress the exact opposite message. For example, *The New York Times* stated that "4,500 men employed at the station went to work as usual this morning," and confidently declared "there is no danger to the surrounding area."[39] Perhaps the furthest the media went in connecting SL-1 to the bigger issue of the future of nuclear energy was when it was listed as one of a number of setbacks in a Time magazine article titled "Atomic Slowdown," published nearly five months after the explosion. It was spoken of only very briefly and was presented as one of several obstacles preventing

35. Steve Hale, "3 Killed in Severe Blast at Idaho A-Reactor Site," *Deseret News*, Jan 4, 1961. https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=uHkvAAAAIBAJ&pg=6455%2C479786

36. Associated Press, "3 Die in Reactor Blast," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, Jan 4, 1961, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=EaASAAAAIBAJ&pg=4433%2C513325

37. Associated Press, "Three Technicians Die in Reactor Blast," *Spokesman Review*, Jan 5, 1961, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=zTJWAAAAIBAJ&pg=5509%2C1196197

38. Frank Casey, "Reactor Blast Kills Three, Pours Out Radiation," *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, Jan 5, 1961, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=zntfAAAAIBAJ&pg=3951%2C484527

39. Associated Press, "3 Killed by Blast in Atom Reactor," *New York Times*, January 5, 1961, https://www.proquest.com/docview/115451042/45EC22FA354948PQ/1?accountid=4488

the nuclear industry from delivering the affordable power that Americans were hoping for.[40]

Future reactor accidents would receive more comprehensive and sensational coverage. For example, by the second day of the accident at Three Mile Island, reporters swarmed officials at the site, with major newspapers sending staffs of up to two dozen men to cover the crisis.[41] Officials at the plant, unprepared for the sheer amount of press at every meeting and caught off guard by the antagonistic nature of their questioning, eventually complained that they needed to spend less time with the media so they could actually get back to solving the crisis.[42]

Despite causing no direct fatalities, Three Mile Island was generally covered in a way that spun the public into much more of a frenzy, which both carved out a larger space for it in public memory and took a bigger toll on the way the public saw atomic power. The television news stations reported several facts incorrectly which caused varying degrees of panic. At one point, a woman who decided to evacuate stated that "they came on and basically said in very definite terms that nobody was going to get back to Middletown . . . it was pretty much over as far as being a resident there." Shortly thereafter, the station walked back their report, but the mark had been left on this woman's memory.[43]

Less than a week after the event, the Los Angeles Times published a cartoon titled "The Unthinkable," in which Rodin's *"The Thinker"* clutches his face in fear, eyes bulging, as a huge mushroom cloud envelops Three Mile Island behind him.[44] Clearly, the media took an active part in stoking public fears of the Three Mile Island accident, and creating a public memory of it as a near death experience—the exact opposite of what the media had done in the case of SL-1, when papers like the *Post Register,* which, less than one week after the explosion, set out to reassure the public that the plant could not blow up like a bomb.[45]

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40. "Public Policy: Atomic Slowdown," *Time Magazine*, May 19, 1961, http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,872432,00.html

41. Samuel J. Walker, *Three Mile Island: A Nuclear Crisis In Historical Perspective* (London: University of California Press, 2004): 105.

42. PBS, "Meltdown at Three Mile Island: 40 Years Later," March 26, 2019. *PBS.org video*, https://www.pbs.org/video/meltdown-at-three-mile-island-40-years-later-yj2jx2/

43. PBS, "Meltdown at Three Mile Island."

44. Walker, *Three Mile Island: A Nuclear Crisis In Historical Perspective,* 166.

45. Tucker, *Atomic America,* 158.

Cultural Timing

The media coverage of SL-1 and other nuclear accidents did not occur in a vacuum, so when attempting to understand why the American public was affected differently by atomic accidents at different periods, the culture of those times must be taken into consideration. The cultural timing of the SL-1 accident, near the peak of the Cold War, had a profound effect on the attitudes and memory of the American population who were exposed to the accident.

This was a period of time, less than two decades separated from the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when potential nuclear war with Russia was looming large in the minds of many Americans. A 1961 poll showed that 59% of Americans were at least "fairly worried" about "the chance of a world war breaking out in which atom bombs and hydrogen bombs would be used."[46] Rather counterintuitively, proximity to total nuclear annihilation was not driving Americans in 1961 away from nuclear energy; the prospect of nuclear destruction made nuclear power plants seem *more* appealing.

A major reason for this was that in the eyes of many Americans, death raining from above, via nuclear bombs or missiles from a communist foe, overshadowed and minimized the threat that any domestic health hazards, like radiation from a small reactor explosion, could really pose. As William Faulkner put in his Nobel Prize banquet speech, "There is only the question: When will I be blown up?"[47] Because this question loomed so large in the minds of so many, it had a profound impact on attitudes toward controversies and toward government entities like the AEC. The son of an SL-1 rescue crew member said his father "described it as a different time. . . . It was a time [when] we all lived under the threat of nuclear annihilation by the Soviet Union. What's judged by today's standards to be improper was, in those times, clearly thought to be in the national interest and in the best interest of the American public."[48] Nearly anything that could propel the United States ahead of the Soviet Union in the Cold War received less skepticism than it otherwise would have.

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46. Hazel Gaudet Erskine, "The Polls: Atomic Weapons and Nuclear Energy" *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (1963): 155–90. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2746913.

47. William Faulkner, "William Faulkner's Speech at the Nobel Banquet at the City Hall in Stockholm, December 10, 1950," *The Nobel Prize*, https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1949/faulkner/speech/

48. McKeown, *Idaho Falls,* 233.

This "put your country first and ask questions later" mentality applied heavily to the SL-1 accident and greatly impacted the way it was remembered by those who experienced it. One biologist who worked at the NRTS site stated, "you have to understand the mindset back then. . . . No one worried about what we considered low-level radiation. Everybody was excited about what we were doing and thought it was important. The Cold War was part of it. We were all worried about the Russians."[49] This filter, of skewing everything in favor of your country, had impacted how SL-1 family members would remember their lost loved ones. When asked why she and the other widows of the SL-1 explosion had not brought attention to their story via book or film, Arlene Legg, whose husband had been impaled to the ceiling of the reactor room, stated "none of us wanted to pursue any of it—we wouldn't even talk about it . . . you have to look out for your government."[50]

SL-1 may not have significantly impacted the American public's opinion of nuclear energy in 1961, because questioning something that was seen as a tool in winning the fight against the soviets would not have culturally fit in line with the mindsets of many Americans at the time. When even those involved in the accident filtered it through such a heavy layer of patriotism, it is easy to see why the public gave so little focus to SL-1.

By the late 1970s, many of these cultural factors protecting the nuclear industry from a massive dive in public opinion in the wake of an accident were, for the most part, gone. The cultural period of the Three Mile Island incident in 1979 was a stark contrast to that of the SL-1 accident in 1961. The threat of the USSR still existed, but had peaked in the 1950s and 1960s, and new terrors had been added to the public consciousness, such as the threat of domestic terrorism. While statements from the AEC after SL-1 simply reassured the public that the explosion was very different from a bomb and that they were in no danger from radiation,[51] a 1976 pamphlet from ERDA (who, along with the NRC, replaced the AEC) found it necessary to reassure the public that nuclear power plants could not explode like nuclear bombs, that they would not release poison into the air, and that their plutonium fuel could not be stolen by "radical revolutionaries" to construct their own bombs.[52] The very tool that was helping

49. McKeown, *Idaho Falls,* 237.

50. McKeown, *Idaho Falls,* 245.

51. Tucker, *Atomic America,* 157–58.

52. Energy Research and Development Administration, *Questions about nuclear power* (Washington D.C.: Office of Public Affairs, 1976), Pamphlet.

save the United States from the Soviets by powering radar stations and submarines was now being seen by some as a threat from within.

While the wives of the men killed in SL-1 had turned away from the prospect of telling their story, Hollywood was now creating fictional meltdowns on the big screen. The film *The China Syndrome*, which casts actors such as Jane Fonda in a fictional thriller about nuclear mismanagement, murder, and near disaster, premiered mere days before the Three Mile Island accident.[53] In this case, the public was primed and ready for a meltdown, small or large, fatal or not, to enter their conscious.

Conclusion

In 1983, the Diane Orr and C. Larry Roberts documentary titled *SL-1* concludes with the notion that the lesson to be gleaned from the SL-1 explosion is that if nuclear war were to break out, humanity would have no hope of survival.[54] This is a clear and interesting example of the more cynical attitude that many Americans had adopted toward nuclear energy after the Cold War. It is interesting to hear it applied to SL-1, an event not often revisited which, due to the dry and brisk media coverage it received, its sheer geographic isolation, the military influence surrounding it, and the layers of cultural patriotism that it was filtered through by those who experienced it, was not widely remembered, and did not cause a major swing in public opinion of nuclear energy. Tragically, Orr and Roberts' documentary may serve as the perfect testament of that. Since its 1983 release, *SL-1* has fallen into obscurity; almost no information regarding its creation exists online, copies are difficult to track down, and it is totally unavailable in digital formats. In the end, SL-1, both film and event, are all but forgotten by the American public.

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53. James Bridges, 1979, *The China Syndrome*, Columbia Pictures.

54. Diane Orr, C. Larry Roberts, 1983, *SL-1: Bizarre Beginning . . . Never Ending . . .* Beecher Films.

Article

Atatürk's Reforms and Legacy

Exploring a Female Novelist's Critique

David Patton

On May 19, 1919, in the post–World War I Ottoman Empire, an Ottoman military officer named Mustafa Kemal Pasha abandoned his post after he was sent to Samsun on the Black Sea coast to inspect the Ninth Army of the Ottoman Empire, taking up leadership of the Turkish Nationalist Movement against the Entente powers, Britain and France. This marked the commencement of the Turkish War of Independence, a conflict that lasted until the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, which officially drove out the Western powers from Anatolia, the Turkish heartland.[1] Under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, the Turkish people established their own nation-state, the Republic of Turkey, with Mutaka Kemal as its first president. Expelling the West and creating a new state were such significant accomplishments that the Turkish Parliament granted Mustafa Kemal Pasha the surname Atatürk or "Father of the Turks."[2]

During his presidency, Atatürk implemented numerous reforms designed to secularize Turkish society, modeling it after his European rivals; however,

1. The term "West" mentioned through this paper refers to European imperialists, such as Great Britain and France.

2. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011), 184; Andrew Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2002), 498.

he used authoritarian measures to accomplish these objectives. As an admirer of Europe and its values of nationalism and scientism, Atatürk believed that the Turkish people should Westernize to mirror European society, including in their claims to sovereignty, advocating that Turkey should not be ruled by the West and specifically not by Britain or France. Most especially, Ataturk wanted the West to respect the Turks as a "civilized people," earning a seat at the table of European nations. To accomplish these ambitions, Atatürk necessarily coerced the Turkish people through radical secular reforms designed to supplant a longstanding Islamic culture. This paper will argue that, in his pursuit to Westernize the Turkish society, Ataturk implemented radical reforms such as the Hat Law to replace centuries-old tradition, founded upon Islam. Although he received praises from outsiders for his achievements, educated Turkish elites such as Halide Edib criticized Atatürk's reforms as frivolous changes that would not have a lasting impact on Turkish society.

Given Atatürk's status as the founding father of Turkey, much has been written about his life and legacy. However, compared to the exhaustive amount of narrative works about Atatürk, there are sparsely any authoritative biographical works that demystify him. To align closely with the authoritative biographical works, this paper relies upon M. Şükrü Hanioğlu's *Ataturk: An Intellectual Biography*, Andrew Mango's *Ataturk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*, and Ryan Gingeras' *Mustafa Kemal Ataturk: Heir to an Empire*. While all of these scholars supply Turkish primary source materials such as Atatürk's speech, Mango and Gingeras' works are surveys of Atatürk's life, whereas Hanioğlu's work explores how Western ideas of nationalism and scientism contributed to Atatürk's vision for the secular Turkish state. Even as this paper utilizes approaches from these above authors, its thesis focuses on critiques against Atatürk's reforms raised by educated female elites.

The Ottoman Empire from the Tanzimat Period to World War I

To understand Atatürk's reforms and legacy, it is necessary to survey the nineteenth century Ottoman history until its collapse in the aftermath of World War I, since this significantly influenced Atatürk's rationale for secular reforms. At the height of its power during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Ottoman Empire posed a significant threat to early modern Europe. However, the Ottomans began to face troubles in the seventeenth century onward as they

struggled to compete with rising European powers such as Britain and France. This is largely due to decentralization of the imperium, loss of territory, and growing dissension among ethnic groups with the rise of nationalism.[3] Despite efforts at reforms aimed to mitigate these problems, the empire's difficulties persisted through the 19th century, which made the need for major reforms glaringly obvious.

To address this, an imperial decree known as the *Hatt-i Sharif of Gulhane* was read before the Sultan, Ottoman officials, and foreign diplomats on November 3, 1839.[4] The Ottoman government promised its subjects that, while continuing to adhere to the *Qur'an* and *Shari'a*, the administration would establish new laws designed to benefit all, regardless of their nationality and religious affiliation.[5] The inclusion of foreign diplomats in this ceremonial act served to inform European powers that the Ottoman Empire intended to become a future member of the concert of Europe through this major reform.[6] This act launched the Tanzimat era, deriving from a Turkish word meaning "reorganization," which lasted until 1876. The results of the Tanzimat era reforms are best described as ambiguous, primarily because the new laws still directly reflected *Shari'a*, which encouraged local nationalism among non-Muslims despite the effort to produce a multicultural Ottoman identity. Since *Shari'a* derives from Islamic tradition, the system still regarded Muslims as superior to non-Muslims, which weakened the faith of non-Muslims in the prospects of equality for all Ottoman subjects, regardless of faith. Furthermore, the threat of secularization led to political fragmentation. Some groups, such as the *ulama*—religious scholars of Islamic doctrine—were little inclined toward efforts that would reduce Islamic influence. Yet despite its few successes, the Tanzimat era was essential preparation for the next generation's embrace of Western modernity.[7]

The Tanzimat era was followed by Abdul Hamid II's regime, during which the Ottomans continued to struggle to compete with European powers and to establish a national identity. Initially, the sultan showed signs of modernization with the ratification of the 1876 Constitution. However, when civil unrest

3. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008), 6, 22, 24.

4. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Late Ottoman Empire*, 72.

5. See "The Hatt-i Sharif of Gulhane, 1839," in *The Modern Middle East: A History*, 5th edition, James E. Gelvin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 167–68.

6. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Late Ottoman Empire*, 73.

7. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Late Ottoman Empire*, 104–7.

broke out in the Balkans, he suspended the Constitution to consolidate his authority.[8] Furthermore, he censored critics and reinstated the requirement to swear allegiance to the sultan, creating strains of opposition to the regime. The main opposition to the regime was the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), whose leaders, Enver, Talat, and Cemal Pashas—also known as the Three Pashas—led the Young Turk Revolution, overthrowing Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1909.[9] Under the leadership of the Three Pashas, the Ottoman Empire entered World War I, allying itself with Germany. Even though the Ottomans were not militarily prepared for war, in which case the Three Pashas attempted to delay their joining, the threat of French and British imperialism forced the Ottomans to support Germany and its allies.[10]

At the early stages of World War I, the Ottomans claimed several victories over the Entente powers, such as the Gallipoli campaign in 1916 in which the Ottomans successfully defended their capital, Istanbul. However, despite its initial successes, the Ottoman Empire's fortune quickly ran out. When the Entente armies broke through the Bulgarian front in Macedonia in September 1918, the Ottomans knew they had lost the war.[11] Knowing that loss was inevitable and to prevent further casualties and destruction, the Ottomans signed the Mudros Armistice with the British on October 30, 1918. Represented by Rauf Bey, the Ottoman government agreed to an armistice treaty that withdrew them from World War I, precipitating its withdrawal of armies outside Anatolia and allowing the Entente powers to occupy forts in the Dardanelles and Bosporus.[12]

The Mudros Armistice was only the initial act of the Entente powers against the Ottoman Empire, however. This is evident from the Sykes-Picot agreement, a secret treaty in 1916 between Britain and France in which the two powers divided the Middle East into respective spheres of influence: Great Britain would occupy Palestine as well as Mesopotamia to protect India, and France would occupy Syria and southern Anatolia. In effect, the armistice enabled the Entente powers and their allies to partition the Ottoman Empire before the official signing of the

8. Ryan Gingeras, *Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: Heir to an Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 18.

9. Hanioğlu, *Late Ottoman Empire*, 123–25; 148–49.

10. Hanioğlu, *Late Ottoman Empire*, 159, 175; Sean McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame, War, Revolution, and the making of the Modern Middle East 1908–1923* (New York: Penguins Press, 2015), 118, 128.

11. Sean McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame*, 417.

12. See "Mudros Agreement: Armistice with Turkey (October 30, 1918)." Ghdi- document. https://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=4012.

Treaty of Sevres in 1920.[13] However, as the Entente powers began to divide Anatolia into their spheres of influence, they made a catastrophic mistake by allowing the Greeks, sworn enemies of the Ottomans, to occupy Smyrna/Izmir on May 15, 1919 with 13,000 foot soldiers.[14] The Greek occupation of Smyrna/Izmir fomented Turkish national resistance against the Greek and Allied occupation of Anatolia, the Ottoman heartland, which ultimately led to the Turkish nationalist movement that Mustafa Kemal and others would lead .[15]

Rise to Power, Independence War, and Defeating the West

Mustafa Kemal, born in Salonika/Thessaloniki in 1881 to a secular father, who was an Ottoman official, and religious mother, rose to fame during the Great War when he successfully halted the Entente powers' advancement to Istanbul at the Gallipoli campaign in 1915. Later in the Great War, he also halted the Russian advance on the eastern front.[16] Despite his successes throughout the war, however, Mustafa Kemal struggled to gain political influence because of Enver Pasha. Even though Mustafa Kemal and Enver Pasha joined the CUP, which focused on modernizing the Ottoman Empire, Atatürk was a severe critic of the CUP, especially its role in the coup d'état that overthrew Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1909. On the other hand, Enver Pasha loathed Atatürk for his perceived political ambition.[17] Therefore, Atatürk had little to no chance to advance his political career so long as Enver Pasha was in power. However, losing the Great War drove Enver Pasha to flee into exile for his involvements in the war and in the Armenian Genocide. Enver Pasha's exile and the Allied occupation of the Ottoman Empire offered Atatürk the opportunity to advance his political career. As

13. The Entente powers, specifically Great Britain and France, already established a plan to partition the Ottoman Empire and occupy territories in the Levant and Mesopotamia regions. This evidence is clear from the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916, in which these two countries established necessary boundaries between their soon-to-be holdings in the Middle East. See "The Sykes-Picot Agreement: 1916," from the holdings of the Avalon Project, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/sykes.asp.

14. McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame*, 446, 449.

15. McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame*, 451; Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 96; Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 222.

16. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 78–80; Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 156.

17. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 46.

Turkish nationalist resistance against Allied occupation grew in Anatolia, Atatürk sought to join their efforts. Although he continued his service in the Ottoman military, he waited for the right moment to join with the nationalists. The opportunity arrived when he was appointed as the Ninth Army inspector and was sent to Samsun to reorganize the army. Upon his arrival in Samsun on May 19, 1919, Atatürk abandoned his position and joined the nationalist movement, where he self-assumed leadership of the resistance.[18]

Under the leadership of Atatürk, the Turkish nationalist movement grew throughout the later part of 1919, basing its power in Ankara. Even though the movement existed before Atatürk joined, Atatürk's fame as a war hero helped the Turkish nationalist movement grow exponentially.[19] In his leadership capacity, Atatürk's primary objective was to establish a new Turkish nation-state. This is evident from the *Nutuk*, a speech Atatürk delivered in October 1927 over a six-day span, in which he recollects the situation in Anatolia after World War I and proposes that he and his associates respond accordingly:

> "1. To demand protection from England; 2. To accept the United States of America as a mandatory Power. . . . 3. The third proposal was to deliver the country by allowing each district to act independently and according to its capability."[20]

After laying out the propositions, Atatürk continued, "All the Ottoman districts were practically dismembered. Only the fatherland, affording protection to a mere handful of Turks, still remained and it was now suggested also to divide this."[21] Providing what seemed to be the only solution in that dire situation, he stated that "one solution was possible, namely, to create a New Turkish State, the sovereignty and independence of which would be unreservedly recognized by the whole world."[22] Independence in this sense meant autonomy from Western occupation requiring the Turkish nationalists to drive Western powers out of Anatolia.

Atatürk and the Turkish national army mobilized when the Ottoman Empire signed the Treaty of Sevres in early 1920 in an effort to regain their eastern

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18. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk,* 97.

19. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk,* 97.

20. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, *The Speech (Nutuk) English Edition*, trans. Kurt Kohler (Ataturk Research Center CT, 2020), 54.

21. Ataturk, *The Speech*, 54.

22. Ataturk, *The Speech*, 55.

Anatolia territories. While they mobilized, they also negotiated with France and Italy to withdraw from Turkey. However, the Greek threat remained, who received support from the British Empire. Unlike France and Italy, Greece had advanced its troops from a foothold in Smyrna/Izmir in hopes of destroying the Turkish national army and establishing a new Greek super-state.[23] Once Atatürk had regained the territories in eastern Anatolia, he redirected the nationalist army towards western Anatolia. It took the Turkish national army two years of bloody conflict to drive the Greeks out of Smyrna/Izmir by September 1922.[24] Upon Greece's defeat at the hands of the Turkish nationalist government, the Allied powers sued for peace. Members of the Allied powers and the new Turkish government signed the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, officially recognizing Turkey as an independent and autonomous state.[25] Ending European occupation in Anatolia not only made Mustafa Kemal a symbol of anti-imperial resistance, but it also gave him significant political power, which he wielded towards westernizing Turkish government and society under his authoritative aegis.[26]

The End of the Ottoman Empire and Birth of the Republic of Turkey

The first step towards Atatürk's ambition to modernize Turkish society was to legitimize the Turkish provisional government in Ankara, also known as the Turkish Grand National Assembly, so as to consolidate his authority. The opportunity to legitimize the new Ankara government arrived with the Lausanne conference, to which the Allied powers invited both the nascent Turkish government in Ankara and weakened Ottoman government in Istanbul. When the Ottoman government expressed its desire to act in concert with the Ankara government at the Lausanne conference, Mustafa Kemal replied that the Turkish Grand National Assembly was the only legitimate government.[27] Even though the Ottoman government no longer wielded significant political power, its longevity and continued existence still posed a significant obstacle for Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The dissolution of

23. McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame*, 468.
24. McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame*, 498.
25. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 141.
26. Gingeras, *Heir to an Empire*, 114.
27. Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 355.

the Ottoman Empire was paramount for Atatürk to legitimate his power and successfully establish a new state, a sentiment he evinces in his *Nutuk*, stating that "as long as [the sultan] exists, the present regime is only provisional."[28] With this recognition came the existential injunction to dissolve the Ottoman Empire.

However, the evidence also suggests that Mustafa Kemal had other reasons to dissolve the Ottoman Empire, stemming in part from his upbringing and his education at the Ottoman military academy—the best education an Ottoman man could receive at the time. Atatürk was born and raised in the cosmopolitan city of Salonica/Thessaloniki in 1881 in the post-Tanzimat Ottoman Empire. Because of its geographical closeness to Europe and the influence of the Tanzimat reforms, Salonica resembled a modern European city.[29] Growing up in a westernized city significantly impacted young Atatürk, drawing his mind and his values Westward.

The effects of such values had made Atatürk an ardent nationalist while he was still young. As was previously mentioned, during the Tanzimat period was marked by its attempt at reforms designed to overcome ethno-religious conflict and to construct a supranational Ottoman identity. However, these reforms as well as the concomitant Ottoman Constitution of 1876 yielded meager results because of burgeoning nationalism that continued to divide different religions and nationalities.[30] Atatürk likewise witnessed continual ethnic tension at both the local and national levels, despite the Tanzimat reforms. These childhood experiences would shape Atatürk's perspective of the Ottoman Empire and his belief that it was no longer viable.

Mustafa Kemal Pasha's admiration for the West deepened when he attended the Ottoman military academy, an educational institution that was established during the Tanzimat era and based upon German military education following its victory in the Franco-Prussian war. The Ottoman administration recruited Colmar von der Goltz to design the curriculum of the Ottoman Royal Military Academy. As Goltz implemented a new curriculum, he also disseminated new ideas about the role of the military.[31] He believed that it is important for

28. Ataturk, *The Speech*, 714.

29. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 25; Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 30; Gingeras, *Heir to an Empire*, 7–9.

30. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 26.

31. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 32.

military officers to go beyond their traditional roles through political leadership, since Goltz held that ideal military leaders should be the ruling class of both military and civil societies. Goltz's philosophy was contrary to the preexisting Ottoman beliefs that had clearly separated military and civil leadership. According to Hanioğlu, the old-school view had such a profound impact on the Ottoman Royal Military Academy that, by the time of the Young Turk Revolution, all senior Ottoman officers, including Atatürk, held it in common.[32]

While Goltz's philosophy was questioned by the Ottoman officers who believed that it would be too difficult to implement in an polyethnic empire, Atatürk became a staunch believer of Goltz, which influenced his view that it was vital to dissolve the Ottoman Empire and to create in its wake a new Turkish state.[33] Moreover, he believed that this nation-state would be led by military officers, just as Goltz professed. He believed that the outmoded Ottoman Empire was a hindrance to Turkish modernization, including the establishment of a new Turkish state that could compete with the European powers.

Furthermore, as Atatürk embraced Goltz's idea about the role of the military, he also embraced the European philosophical concept of materialism. During his time at the Ottoman Royal Military Academy, Atatürk was exposed alongside his classmates to the German philosophy of *Vulgärmaterialismus*, which combined materialism, scientism, and Darwinism. Ottoman officers generally adopted this philosophy as rejection of religion for scientific empiricism.[34] This philosophy profoundly influenced young Ottoman military officers, especially Mustafa Kemal, as it developed his negative attitude towards Islamic institutions. Moreover, Mustafa Kemal held that the inferiority of the Ottoman Empire stemmed from the fact that, unlike in the West, where European states adhered to science, the Ottoman Empire adhered to Islam, which had been embedded in Ottoman culture for centuries.[35] Mustafa Kemal, convinced that Western superiority stemmed from its secularism and that Ottoman inferiority stemmed from its adherence to Islam, became a staunch advocate for a secular Turkey.[36]

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32. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 34.

33. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 37.

34. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 49.

35. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 56–57.

36. Ali Yigit, "Lessening Impact of Religion on Turkish Muslim Identity in Westernizing and Modernizing Turkey," *US-China Foreign Language* 10, no. 1 (January 2012): 901. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287647032_Lessening_Impact_of_Religion_on_Turkish_Muslim_Identity_in_Westernizing_and_Modernizing_Turkey.

Memories from his childhood and his secular education at the Ottoman Royal Military Academy drove Mustafa Kemal to dissolve the Ottoman Empire starting in late 1922. However, removing the seat of the Ottoman Empire, the sultan himself, was a complex issue because the sultan was also the caliph of Sunni Islam. Thus, if Mustafa Kemal's government were to remove the Sultan without any caution, they would incur severe opposition from Sunni Muslims in Turkey.[37] Therefore, Mustafa Kemal sought to formally separate the caliphate from the sultanate through a legislative act passed in November 1922. He subsequently abolished the sultanate immediately after they separated the two institutions in an act of political bravado both stemming from and strengthening the legitimacy of his then-provisional government in Ankara.[38]

It was after abolishing the sultanate that the provisional government signed the Treaty of Lausanne, which formally acknowledged the Republic of Turkey.[39] In 1924, the new Turkish government dissolved the lingering Ottoman Empire by abolishing the caliphate.[40] Thus the Ottoman Empire was dissolved by the hands of its former military and political leaders after 600 years, and from its ashes a new Turkish nation-state was born.

Atatürk's Reforms and Subsequent Decline of Islamic Influence

The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the birth of the new Turkish state was only the first step for Mustafa Kemal to Westernize Turkish society. The next step required secularization, and Atatürk was prepared to sacrifice Islam for the cause. Soon after abolishing the Caliphate in early 1924, the new Turkish government also abolished the *Shari'a*, the Islamic legal system that has been part of the Ottoman Empire for centuries.[41] Atatürk thought that the removal of the traditional religious institutions would enable Turkish society to adopt

37. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 135.

38. Ataturk, *The Speech*, 848.

39. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk,* 141, 143.

40. Birol Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?" *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 21, no. 2 (March 2010): 145, https://doi.org/10.1080/09596411003619798; Andrew Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2002): 412.

41. Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?," 145; Gingeras, *Heir to an Empire*, 133.

European materialism and scientism, a crucial step towards his definition of progress. Moreover, he was also likely aware that the *ulama* opposed past efforts at modernization, which would hinder his political vision for Turkish progress.[42]

The ratification of the new Turkish Constitution of 1924 also reflects Atatürk's ambition to transform Turkish society into European society, moving away from Islamic tradition. This is evident in its differences from the Ottoman Constitution of 1876. For example, Article 87 of the Ottoman Constitution states that "Affairs concerning the [*Shari'a*] shall be judged by the tribunals of the *Shari'a*."[43] However, *Shari'a* law and courts have no power in the 1924 Turkish Constitution.[44] Moreover, according to Korkut, while the Ottoman Empire based its laws on the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* and the Ottoman Constitution was coherent with the *Qur'an*,[45] the preamble of the Turkish Constitution abolishes Islamic jurisprudence in favor of a secular government.[46] The assembly later amended the Constitution in 1928, in which they removed all references to Islam. This included the removal of the phrase, "The religion of the Turkish state is Islam," to reflect Atatürk's philosophy. While Islamic religious institutions persisted at the local, including Mosques, Atatürk fundamentally transformed the role of Islam at the national level..

Mustafa Kemal continued to diminish Islamic influence by implementing radical reforms, one of them being the Hat Law of 1925. The intent of the Hat Law was to abolish the wearing of the fez and turban, Islamic vestments. Atatürk explained his rationale for replacing the fez and turban with a European hat:

> "Gentlemen! It was necessary to abolish the fez, which sat on our heads as a sign of ignorance, of fanaticism, of hatred to progress and [civilization], and to adopt in its place the hat, the customary headdress of the whole [civilized] world, thus showing, among other things, that no difference existed in the manner of thought between the Turkish nation and the whole family of [civilized] mankind."[47]

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42. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk,* 52; Gingeras, *Heir to an Empire*, 134–35.

43. "The Ottoman Constitution, Promulgated the 7th Zilbridie, 1293 (11/23 December 1876)," *The American Journal of International Law* 2, no. 4 (1908): 381. doi:10.2307/2212668.

44. Edward Meade Earle, "The New Constitution of Turkey," *Political Science Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (March 1925): 95. doi:10.2307/2142408.

45. Huseyin Korkut, "Critical Analysis of the Ottoman Constitution (1876)," *Epiphany: Journal of Transdisciplinary Studies* 9, no. 1 (2016): 116, 121. http://epiphany.ius.edu.ba/index.php/epiphany/article/viewFile/219/162.

46. Earle, "The New Constitution of Turkey," 88.

47. Ataturk, *The Speech*, 1071.

Atatürk's statement here suggests that traditional Muslim dress codes subverted secularization and his views of what constituted modern civilization. Atatürk argued that for the Turkish people to display their modernity, it was necessary for them to conscientiously to change cultural practices that were amalgamated into their identity. With the replacement of the fez and turban with a European-style hat, Atatürk intended to create a new Turkish cultural identity that rejected old customs considered "backwards" in favor of European customs that would demonstrate the Turkish propensity for cultural progress and modernization.

After implementing the Hat Law, the Atatürk's regime also carried out a set of reforms in which they closed madrassas, religious seminaries, and even banned Sufi orders, a mystic Islamic tradition that had existed for several centuries in Anatolia. In 1926, Atatürk's regime adopted European civil and penal codes. Furthermore, in 1928, they also created a new Turkish alphabet modeled after the Latin alphabet to replace the Arabic alphabet. In 1934, Mustafa Kemal's regime issued the Surname law as another form of Westernization,[48] since Muslim Turks traditionally did not have surnames but were known by other forms of appellations.[49] With the passage of the Surname Law, Mustafa Kemal himself adopted the surname of Atatürk. Besides these reforms, Atatürk promoted women's rights with the adoption of the European civil codes, which replaced the veil with western clothing and granted extensive rights to women including the right to vote and to stand for both municipal and national elections.[50] All these secular reforms in aggregate demonstrate Mustafa Kemal's attempts to radically transform the social fabric of Muslim Turkish society and to reduce the cultural role of Islam.

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48. Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?," 145; Hanioğlu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, 213; Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 498.

49. Hanioğlu provides the following explanation: "by their personal names, by a combination of their birth names and personal names, by a combination of an adjective indicating place of birth and a personal anime, by a combination of birth name and father's birth name, or by a combination of a patronymic indicating family genealogy and a persona name." See Hanioğlu, *Atatürk,* 213.

50. Hanioğlu, *Atatürk,* 208; Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 437–38.

Atatürk's Authoritarianism and Its Discontents

Even given the radical extents of Atatürk's secular reforms from 1925 to 1934, Atatürk's regime ostensibly faced little resistance or opposition. According to Başkan, however, Atatürk had faced opposition from his opponents since arriving in Samsun in 1919. Başkan moreover argues that Atatürk and his party faced criticism from the opposing party, the Progressive Republican Party, after the war of independence and birth of the Republic of Turkey.[51] Despite this opposition, Atatürk's regime was substantially bolstered in its legitimacy by the Kurdish Rebellion of Sheikh Said in February 1925.[52] Although the Kurdish Rebellion was quickly subdued, Atatürk's regime capitalized on the moment to suppress political opposition through the Maintenance of Order Law, a draconian measure that greatly strengthened presidential powers.[53] This law empowered Atatürk and his followers to suppress the media and to dissolve the Progressive Republican Party, making Turkey a one-party system.[54]

Interestingly, Atatürk's suppression of Islam faced little to no resistance from the religious community. According to Başkan, this fact was predicated upon the decline of Islamic institutions during the secular reforms of the Tanzimat era.[55] Religious institutions already diminished over the course of a century could not resist Atatürk's further efforts at secularization.

Atatürk's regime not only benefited from the long-term waning influence of religion, but also from population decline precipitated by a decade of war. From the Balkan wars in 1912 to the end of the Turkish war of independence in 1922, Turkey lost significant numbers of working-age males, who could have posed the greatest threat to Atatürk's regime.[56] Economic ties between the government and corporations also prevented opposition from the business community whose wealth could have easily been curtailed by the state. In order to protect their assets and lucrative government relations, the business community opted by and large to remain silent in regard to Atatürk's style of governance.[57]

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51. Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?" 148.
52. Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 422.
53. Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography*, 423.
54. Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?," 149.
55. Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?," 150.
56. Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?," 151.
57. Başkan, "What Made Ataturk's Reforms Possible?," 152.

Although the above conditions allowed Atatürk's government to push reforms without much resistance, some critics nevertheless spoke out. This is highlighted in the writings of Halide Edib, who had initially supported Atatürk but later asserted that Atatürk's means for implementing reform was tyrannical. Her criticism of Atatürk began when he proposed the Maintenance of Order Law. In response to this, Halide Edib stated, "The dictatorship thus created never called itself by that name in Turkey. . . the long tradition of oppression and spies became at once a part of the new regime. The press was terrorized by the arrest of leading journalists who had criticized the government before the passing of the Maintenance of Order Act."[58] Halide Edib's views were also shared by a contemporary journalist, Sabiha Sertel, who remarks how "as soon as the Law on the Maintenance of Order was passed, the police shut down the papers . . . [and] many writers and publishers were taken into custody and packed off."[59]

Halide Edib further criticized the actions of Atatürk's dictatorship throughout the late 1920s, especially during his secular reforms. Concerning the Hat law, Halide Edib stated that:

> "It was . . . the most futile and superficial . . . the *only one* which accomplished a change overnight even in outside appearances. In a week it made [the Turks] look like Westerners, although the manner in which it was accomplished was utterly un-Western. . . . To tell the Turks to put on a certain headdress and 'get civilized' or be hanged, or imprisoned, is absurd, to say at the least."[60]

Halide Edib argues that Atatürk's reforms brought the threat and use of coercion, since the regime oppressed the people at will by insisting upon westernization and threatening dissenters with cruel punishment. Atatürk's approach to implementation was to compel his people to root out their tradition, with violent consequences to those who object—a system that subverts law and order. In this vein, Halide Edib criticized Atatürk's reforms in general:

> [The] process of reform has been going on for merely a century, but within the last twenty years it has moved with tremendous rapidity. The story in

58. Halide Edib, "Dictatorship and Reforms in Turkey," *Yale Review* 19, no. 1 (1929): 27–28.

59. Sabiha Sertel, *The Struggle for Modern Turkey: Justice, Activism and a Revolutionary Female Journalist*, trans. David Selim Sayers and Evrim Emir-Sayers (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2019), 60.

60. Edib, "Dictatorship," 30.

> the Western press, unusually the outcome of the most superficial . . . is that Turkey was changed overnight from an Eastern into a Western country. This view is more than superficial; it is false. . . . Naturally, one includes among those which were sure to come only the fundamental reforms that will last.[61]

She criticized Atatürk's regime for claiming to have reformed the country themselves, when in fact, the majority of reforms had actually been carried out in the last century of the Ottoman Empire. Using women's rights as an example, Halide Edib argued:

> All Turkish men of the progressive type, regardless of the political party to which they belonged, especially from 1908 on, have been in favor of the progress of women and have helped to give them rights and opportunities—educational, economic, and social. From the moment Turkish women entered the economic field there has been no discrimiantion whatever of the kind which European feminists complain of.[62]

Halide Edib held that reforms had been taking place in Turkey since the Ottoman Empire, which meant that the reforms for which Atatürk took credit were not only superficial, but that they were an invalid justification for his dictatorial politikas he repressed any and all resistance. She also thought that Atatürk's reforms would not have a long lasting impact since they dealt with non-fundamental issues.

When examining Halide Edib's severe criticism against Atatürk, it is most likely that her critique against him stems from the fact that he was lustfully ambitious and determined to demonstrate to the West that the Turkish people were capable of becoming civilized. This is evident from Halide Edib's memoir, *The Turkish Ordeal*, in which she recollects her experiences working with Atatürk during the Turkish War of Independence. Halide Edib recalls Atatürk's lustful ambition by stating that "Throughout his whole career Mustafa Kemal Pasha has shown untiring persistence… He has one of the intensest ambitions known in history, the sort of ambition that is sure to prevail."[63] She also recalls a meeting:

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61. Edib, "Dictatorship," 29.

62. Edib, "Dictatorship," 32.

63. Halide Edib, *The Turkish Ordeal: Being the further memoirs of Halide Edib* (New York: The Century Co., 1928), 141.

> [Mustafa Kemal Pasha] flew into one of the most violent rages I have ever seen him in. . . . His low voice became loud and hoarse as he spoke out his indignation at the long old-fashioned sentences which on other occasions had such weight influence. 'They shall know that we are as good as they are! They shall treat us as their equal! Never will we bow our heads to them! To our last man we will stand against them till we break their civilization on their heads!'[64]

The combination of Atatürk's characteristics and his reaction to the Western description of the Turkish people as "no longer the empire builders" destined to be inferior to European states demonstrates Atatürk's internal motives. It was apparent to his contemporary critics as well that he was willing to resort to any means to achieve his ends of establishing his political power and demonstrating to European states that the Turkish people are civilized, capable of acting as an equal member of the European concert.

When Atatürk encountered criticism from people such as Halide Edib, he justified his actions by explaining his rationale to the public. This is evident again in the *Nutuk*, in which he states that the Turkish state has "never used the exceptional measures, which all the same were legal," but that "on the contrary, we applied them to restore peace and tranquility in the country."[65] Regardless of criticisms levied against Atatürk's regime, his reforms were successfully implemented throughout Turkey. As the nation Westernized both culturally and politically, Atatürk was lauded by president Franklin Roosevelt, who expressed in a letter to the Turkish leader, "I would like to express to you all the enthusiasm I felt on seeing the numerous and marvelous things you have accomplished in a space of time so relatively brief."[66] Even though Roosevelt's high praise for Atatürk was based on a film made by an American, this still demonstrates the extent to which Atatürk had accomplished his objective of changing how Westerners saw the Turkish people. As leaders of the West praised Atatürk for his accomplishments, his own people, such as Sabiha Sertel, praised Atatürk's legacy and justified likewise his authoritarian measures:

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64. Edib, *The Turkish Ordeal*, 151.

65. Ataturk, *The Speech*, 1070.

66. "Roosevelt Lauds Ataturk's Regime: Turkish President, in reply, expresses admiration for Administration here—early meeting hoped for invitation to visit in Ankara is extended—countries said to share same ideals," *New York Times,* August 1, 1937, https://www.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/102352061/A81C41D800EC40C1PQ/1?accountid=448.

> "Atatürk built the new Turkey out of the rubble of an empire that had utterly collapsed . . . fought a national war of independence against imperialist states . . . liberated Turkey, tied down by religious law and obsolete doctrines. . . . He tried to apply democracy . . . [but] circumstances forced him to shift to an oppressive system."[67]

Although Sabiha Sertel includes in her eulogy that Atatürk's regime had failed to implement reforms in other aspects of Turkish society and had severely oppressed the Turkish people, her statement nevertheless suggests that it is still essential that Atatürk be given credit for his efforts to secularize Turkey and ensure its autonomy as a modern nation-state.

Conclusion

Born in the late period of the declining Ottoman Empire, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was deeply influenced by his interpretation of western ideals. He was further molded by the West during his years at the westernized Ottoman Royal Military Academy. As the first president of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk served as president from 1923 until his death in late 1938 at the age of 57. According to Sabiha Sertel, upon his death "the whole country went into mourning. For three days and three nights, statesmen, youths, unionists, and representatives of other organizations stood at attention before his catafalque in the palace."[68]

Although extremely ambitious, Atatürk held to his commitment to modernize Turkey according to normative European customs of his day, enabling his government to bring Turkey into the twentieth century. When the opportunity arrived, Atatürk acted swiftly by dismantling the Ottoman Empire and establishing a new regime equipped to carry out his objectives. While he was praised by the West for his accomplishments in modernizing Turkish society, he was criticized by the educated Turkish elites such as Halide Edib who believed that Atatürk's reforms would not prove to be a long term and permanent change. This is evident in modern-day Turkey under the administration of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose policies threaten women's rights. Persistent rates of domestic violence against Turkish women and Erdogan's withdrawal from

67. Sertel, *The Struggle for Modern Turkey,* 119.
68. Sertel, *The Struggle for Modern Turkey*, 119.

the international stage demonstrates that Atatürk's reforms were indeed surface level, subject to change by the ideological whims of his successors.[69] Just as Atatürk held his own convictions about the imperative for progress,Erdogan's conservative misogynism represents an uncertain future for women's rights in Turkey.[70]

Atatürk's legacy lives on to this day in both popular memory and in the academy. While his feats are commendable and worthy of praise, his use of authoritarian methods to achieve his ambitions ought not to be forgotten as the Turkish government still wrestles with the multivalent possibilities of its geopolitical future.

69. "Turkish women losing faith in government determination to effectively tackle gender based violence," Stockholm Center for Freedom (SCF), March 22, 2022, https://stockholmcf.org/turkish-women-losing-faith-in-government-determination-to-effectively-tackle-gender-based-violence/.

70. "Reccep Tayyip Erdoğan: 'women not equal to men,'" *The Guardian*, November 24, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/24/turkeys-president-recep-tayyip-erdogan-women-not-equal-men.

Article

Two Murder Confessions and the Struggle for Black Authority in Early 19th Century Philadelphia

Garrett Gaither

As Richard Allen headed to the prison to help facilitate the confessions of a murder that shook the city of Philadelphia, he let his mind wander. It felt just like yesterday that he arrived in the city and started preaching and helping his Black brothers and sisters. They had made so much progress over his few decades in Philadelphia: an independent church they were still fighting to hold onto, the new law against the Atlantic slave trade, and a large Black community that was active in his church.[1] Despite all of this success, racial tensions were rising in the city.[2] This recent murder was a shock to the community and was not going to help Allen win the conflict over his ability to lead the Black church.[3] Allen knew this as he headed to the jail. The White Methodist leaders did not want his church to gain its independence and this murder created a serious question that must have been on their minds and Allen's; was Richard Allen able and qualified to lead this Black congregation

1. Gary B. Nash, *Forging Freedom* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 189–90.

2. Nash, *Forging Freedom*, 2.

3. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers: Faithful Narrative of the Murder of Mrs. Sarah Cross, with the Trial, Sentence & Confession of John Joyce & Peter Mathias, Who Were Executed Near Philadelphia on Monday 14, March 1808.* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 5, https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.trials/abnt0001&i=1.

and community in a racially divided city? More importantly, were Black people capable of holding religious services on their own?

Allen knew that in order to mitigate and help with the racial tension and to address the other questions pressing him, he had to be involved in recording these murder confessions, and more importantly, publishing them.[4] Publishing books in early 19th century America was not common or cheap.[5] In the early 1800s newspapers were expensive to print and had small areas of circulation.[6] However, newspapers and books were the only way to transmit information without it being refashioned. It was also a main way to refute false rumors traveling around the city, from words or other publications. Richard Allen knew that publishing would help to "inform the public that a FALSE confession" was offered to them.[7] A publication could help the Black community stay above suspicion or slander that would come against them from false confessions in this racial murder case. Furthermore, publishing the confessions that he personally facilitated offered Allen a chance to demonstrate his authority as a Black minister and his authority over Bethel church.[8] In a wider context Allen's life and his act of publishing the confessions would also show that Black people in Philadelphia were capable of holding religious services under their own leadership as any of the White people were and thus offer a look at racial dynamics in American society at this time.

Richard Allen and the Free African Society

Richard Allen was born on February 14th, 1760, in Philadelphia to slaveholder, Benjamin Chew. Allen and his family were sold to another owner in Delaware where Allen found the Methodist religion and was converted. After his conversion, neighbors warned his owner that allowing Allen to attend religious

4. Richard S. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet* (New York University Press, New York, 2008), 151–52, ProQuest Ebrary.

5. Saylor Academy, *Understanding Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication* (Saylor Academy, 2012), Section 3.2 and 4.1. https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_understanding-media-and-culture-an-introduction-to-mass-communication/s06-00-books.html

6. Saylor Academy, *Understanding Media and Culture,* Section 4.1; "American Newspapers, 1800–1860: An Introduction" Illinois Library, accessed April 12, 2021, https://www.library.illinois.edu/hpnl/tutorials/antebellum-newspapers-introduction/

7. "Just Published," *Political and Commercial Register,* March 31, 1808, GenealogyBank

8. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 151–52.

meetings would "ruin him." To fight this notion Allen and his brother counseled that they would "attend more faithfully to our master's business, so that it should not be said that religion made us worse servants."[9] Not only did this method work but Allen's master began to brag that religion made his slaves better. With Allen's invitation his master heard the message from the methodist preachers and a few months later allowed Allen and his brother to buy their freedom for 60£ in 1780.[10] Allen left and worked the following years to earn money for his freedom while also endeavoring to preach the gospel. In 1784 he made his way to Pennsylvania.[11] Allen would travel throughout the north preaching the next two years, and was received warmly by a White community.[12] After his religious travels in the north of Pennsylvania, Allen made his way to Philadelphia in 1786 because the Methodist elder in charge repeatedly asked for him.[13]

When he arrived in Philadelphia, Allen was assigned to preach to the Black community in the early morning at St. George Methodist church.[14] In Allen's personal autobiography he describes how preaching at 5 am in the White church was difficult for him but he soon saw a "large field open in seeking and instructing my African brethren, who had been a long forgotten people and few of them attended public worship."[15] With his increasing success at St George, he soon realized the benefits that could come from uniting his Black brothers and sisters together in their own place of worship. When Allen proposed this plan to the "most respectable people of color in this city" he was met with resistance. Only three agreed to join him in this endeavor, one was Absalom Jones. He also faced opposition from the White clergy as they used "very degrading and insulting language" to try and stop them from pursuing the development of a Black church.[16] Likely due to the opposition from the White clergy Allen and the other prominent Black members that joined with him took a slightly different course. In 1787 they started the Free African Society.[17] Although this

9. Richard Allen, *The Life Experience and Gospel Labors of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen* (Abingdon Press, New York, 1960), 15–16.
10. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 16–17; Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 95–96.
11. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 18–20.
12. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 20–21.
13. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 21–23.
14. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 96.
15. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 24.
16. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 24.
17. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 98.

society was not religious it was a demonstration that Allen and other Black leaders could work and serve the Black community.

The Free African Society, or FAS, was a secular society established for the benefit of the Black community. Allen and Jones adapted to the religious opposition they faced and formed a society that could help their race progress in this new era after the American Revolution.[18] Julie Winch describes that the FAS was important because of its significance "as the first independent black organization in the city and as the forerunner of the black churches."[19] It also was an elite group. The leaders of the FAS, like Richard Allen, were financially well off. The FAS required a membership fee and monthly deposits that would help those in need, but without access to that money many Black people could not join the FAS. Nonetheless, this society created and developed the "leadership group composed of individuals who considered themselves best able to speak for the rest of the community."[20]

As the FAS developed, Allen continued to preach at St George's church and saw the attendance of the Black community increase. Although he had previously been shot down in his attempt to arouse support for a Black church, Allen kept this idea in sight.[21] His continued devotion to the idea of a Black methodist church and holding methodist meetings through the FAS got him ejected from the society in 1789 because it was solely secular.[22] Although he was separated from the FAS it did not lessen his standing in the community and he continued to grow the hope of a Black Methodist church.[23] Allen describes how the "Lord blessed our endeavors" as he established prayer meetings and "meetings of exhortation" that were for the Black community. Although he was experiencing success preaching at St. George, the opposition ensued. The White elder in charge at St George's opposed Allen's preaching and stopped the extra meetings.[24] Newman describes that Allen was "forbidden to exhort in an ecstatic manner and instructed to give services in a sober, deferential, quiet way."[25] Allen must have struggled knowing that the White leadership opposed

18. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, eds. Elijah Anderson and Isabel Eaton (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1996), 19–20.
19. Julie Winch, *Philadelphia's Black Elite* (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1988), 5.
20. Winch, *Philadelphia's Black Elite*, 6.
21. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 59–61.
22. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 62.
23. Winch, *Philadelphia's Black Elite*, 6; Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 62.
24. Allen, *The Life Experience*, 25.
25. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 59–60.

a separate Black church and also opposed his method of preaching.[26] It was at this time he surely realized that in order to develop the Black church and community he envisioned, he needed to go against the cultural norms and develop his authority as a Black religious leader.

The Black Church, The Yellow Fever Epidemic, and the Power of Publishing

A Black church could give a sense of identity to the ever increasing Black community in Philadelphia. Many of the Black people in Philadelphia were individuals escaping from slavery and finding solace in a city that had their freedom as a right.[27] But without a church the members of the Black community in Philadelphia, as Allen described when he found them, were "a long forgotten people."[28] "Black religion, writes Gayruad S. Wilmore, was 'never so much a matter of social custom and convention as it has been for White people. It was a necessity.'" In the early 1790s Black people argued and fought for a Black church while the White church community life was "diminishing."[29] The struggle to establish the Black church in the 1790s was more than just to have religious services, it was to strengthen, unite, and give Black people authority in the community and validity as people – to give them a voice in society that expected so much of them and gave them so little.[30] In 1791, two years after Allen was ejected from the FAS, he was readmitted and helped formulate the plans to finally create a separate Black church.[31] Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, with the help of Benjamin Rush, worked to raise money for the construction of a Black church. Even though up to this point Allen had faced increased discrimination from the White leaders at St. George's church with them opposing a separate Black church and restricting Allen's preaching, there was one event in 1792 that spurred the development of the Black church arguably more than anything else.[32]

26. George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 62–63.
27. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 65, 135.
28. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 24.
29. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 113–14.
30. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 113–14.
31. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 113.
32. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 113, 118.

Due to Allen's efforts in the Black community the attendance at St. George's started to increase. The response from the church community was to have the Black attendees stand in the back until they could build onto the church. To add more space the church constructed a gallery.[33] They Black members donated money, effort, and time to help build the gallery to accommodate for the increased attendance.[34] After the construction Allen recounted that when he and the Black members arrived one Sunday the usher at the door "told us to go [to the gallery], and we would see where to sit." Once they took the seats in the gallery, the meeting began and they knelt in prayer with the congregation. Allen recorded, "We had not been long upon our knees before I heard a considerable scuffling and low talking. I raised my head and saw one of the trustees . . . having hold of Rev. Absalom Jones, pulling him up off his knees, and saying, 'you must get up —you must not kneel here.'" Jones asked to wait till prayer was over but the White trustee continued to attempt to pull him off his knees while he motioned for another to come help forcefully remove Jones. After the prayer had ended Allen and the Black members, a large part of St. George's attendance, left the meeting. Allen wrote, "we all went out of the church in a body, and they were no more plagued with us in the church."[35] This incident only strengthened Allen's resolve to establish an autonomous Black church with their own authority.[36] Allen, Jones, and other Black people at St. George's that day had been attending there for years. Fueled by the opposition and this most recent event they continued raising money for the church that they now desperately needed.

After Allen and the others left St. George's, they found a room where they could hold services until they could build their own church. Even as they tried to worship on their own they were threatened to be "disowned, and read publicly out of meeting" if they kept worshiping on their own. Allen and the others were even harassed by the White elder in charge of the area as they worked to raise money for their own church. John McClaskey threatened to remove their names from the Methodist church if Allen and others did not stop trying to raise money.[37] Allen asked McClaskey if they had violated any of the Methodist rules. They had not but that did not matter. McClaskey replied, "I have the charge given to me by the Conference, and unless you submit I will read you publicly out of the meeting." They responded that since they had

33. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 25.
34. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 26.
35. Winch, *Philadelphia's Black Elite,* 6; Allen, *The Life Experience,* 25.
36. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 26.
37. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 26.

broken no rules, if he read them out they would seek redress because they had been "dragged off our knees in St. George's church, and treated worse than heathens" and had done nothing wrong.[38] While the persecution from Elder McClaskey did not stop, Allen, Jones, and their brethren did not stop collecting money either.

By 1793 they had bought a vacant lot from the money they collected and Allen "put the first spade in the ground to dig a cellar" for the first Black Church in the United States.[39] Allen recounts that he and Jones wanted to have it connected with the Methodist church but with all the ensuing opposition from the Methodist church they held a vote with the group that had been with them since they left St. George's, to decide what denomination to follow. The majority voted for the Church of England.[40] After it was organized they asked Allen to be their minister but he declined because he felt indebted to the Methodist religion and believed it was the best denomination for the Black community.[41] The group turned to Jones who decided to lead them.[42] Despite Allen's devotion to the Methodist church, the leadership did not see Allen as someone who could lead a separate racial church. There may have been several reasons, but Allen was left still trying to establish his authority as a Black preacher in an interracial community.

Around the same time, Philadelphia faced a major yellow fever epidemic which would provide an opportunity for Allen to establish his authority as a community leader and use a publication to his advantage in this pursuit. In the fall of 1793, Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, and many other Black people were called upon to help the sick because of the incorrect understanding from Benjamin Rush that this fever "passes by persons of color."[43] On September 6, after having discussed the request for aid with the FAS, Allen and Jones told the mayor they could help and he "immediately placed notices in the newspapers notifying citizens that they could apply to Jones and Allen for aid."[44] As White physicians started to succumb to the fever Allen and the Black community stepped up to help even more. They administered medicine, bled over

38. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 27.

39. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 113; Allen, *The Life Experience,* 28.

40. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 29.

41. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 29.

42. Carol V. R. George, *Segregated Sabbaths; Richard Allen and the Emergence of Independent Black Churches 1760–1840* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1973) 58.

43. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 48; Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 122.

44. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 48–51; Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 123.

800 people, and buried dead bodies. They even spent their own money to cover those who could not pay for the medical service or burials. Allen and Jones labored for 70 days and paid some 5 hired men at various times ending in over 177 pounds of debt.[45] Almost 3 times the cost Allen had paid for his freedom.

This information of their service to the community was published in a pamphlet titled, *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Colored People During the Awful Calamity in Philadelphia, in the Year 1793; and a Refutation of Some Censures Thrown upon Them in Some Publications.*[46] This narrative was published by Jones and Allen in response to a slanderous publication by Mathew Carey that described how the Black nurses took advantage of the situation and charged exorbitant fees.[47] In this publication Allen and Jones strongly defend the work that the Black community did during this sickness. They acknowledge that there were some Black people who pilfered but argue that White people who did the same were seen as "privateers." They write, "We wish not to offend; but when an unprovoked attempt is made to make us blacker than we are, it becomes less necessary to be over-cautious on that account; therefore we shall take the liberty to tell of the conduct of some of the whites."[48] A majority of the publication describes how there were many White people who stole, charged exorbitant fees, and dealt unjustly with the sick they were helping. They also describe how Carey, the one who wrote the slanderous account they were responding to with this publication, fled from the city during the crisis.[49] Allen and Jones understood that publishing this pamphlet could not only help clear up any slanderous and dangerous reports that lied of their honest involvement in the epidemic, but that it could also demonstrate and solidify their authority in the community as Black leaders. Publishing written material was a valid way to send a strong message to and throughout the community. This pamphlet helped move Allen closer to establishing his authority in the community.

Despite the negative slander towards them and the Black community, the progress of the Black church pressed on. By 1794 Allen had an old blacksmith shop brought to "Sixth near Lombard street" and made into a place of worship. This was a lot he had previously purchased and it was only a few blocks from the construction of St. Thomas's, the church that had previously asked

45. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 51.
46. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 48
47. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 52; Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 124.
48. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 53.
49. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 53.

Allen to lead them.[50] In June of 1974, with the help of Bishop Asbury, the old blacksmith shop that Allen had turned into a place of worship was opened for services.[51] Unlike Absalom Jones at St. Thomas's, Allen fought for complete independence. While Jones had accepted to be overseen and directed by the White Episcopal church, Allen refused such an idea. His reluctance to succumb to the racial control caused troubles to follow.[52]

Quickly after the opening of Bethel, Allen describes how their troubles over authority began again. Mr. Cooper, a White Elder from the Methodist church, came and told them that they needed to "make over the [Bethel] church to the Conference" and "that we could not be Methodist unless we did." After all the hard work to create an autonomous Black church Allen must have cringed at the idea of his church under control of the White clergy. The Methodist leadership did not acknowledge Allen as an admissible person to lead the new Black church. Allen rejected the idea to be controlled by the White Methodist leadership and Mr. Cooper offered them the option to be incorporated instead. With incorporation Cooper mentioned that it would benefit Bethel because they could get any money that was left for them. He also offered to draw up the incorporation for them to save money. Allen and the church members "cheerfully" consented to this proposal. It was not until 10 years later that Allen and those in his church realized that Cooper had, through the incorporation, given Bethel over to the White Methodist Conference. However, unaware of this deception, Allen was running what he thought was an autonomous church.[53]

Philadelphia and Race Relations, 1793–1806

The conflict that Richard Allen was facing with the White Methodist church largely stemmed from race. Although Philadelphia was a place that had been better to Black people than many other areas after the American Revolution, it became increasingly hostile in the decades after.[54] Despite the racial conflicts, from 1790 to 1800 the Black population doubled in Philadelphia while the White population barely increased.[55] Black people were coming from all over

50. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 130.
51. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 30–31.
52. George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 58–63.
53. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 30–32; George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 66.
54. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 2.
55. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 137.

because it was a city that provided a refuge to escaped enslaved persons and hope for those freed from slavery. The population also grew because of a major revolution in Santo Domingo. In 1793, 5,000 White people and 2,000 enslaved Black people came from the French island. Coming from a rebellious place these people added more political feeling to Black society in Philadelphia.[56] Freed from slavery many Black people also came to Philadelphia from Delaware and other nearby states further increasing the population and concentration of Black people so much so that by 1800 almost half of the Pennsylvania's Black population lived in Philadelphia.[57]

Even though the Black community increasingly grew in population they faced very different expectations than the White community. Instead of being seen as free, Nash describes how in 1798 the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery recorded that it was the responsibility of the free Black people in Philadelphia to demonstrate that Black people were qualified to enjoy freedom and by living rightly would "contribute your part towards the liberation of such your fellow men as yet remain in the shackles of slavery." Black people faced attacks from White people that argued they were not fit for freedom and this argument fell on the Black community in Philadelphia to disprove.[58] This was clearly already visible after the 1793 Yellow Fever epidemic when Allen and Jones had to defend themselves and their Black brethren.

While racial relationships in the 1790s were not great, in the first decade of the 19th century things took a turn for the worse. On July 4th, 1804, "several hundred young blacks" got in military formations and marched through the city. They assembled in Southwark, a predominantly Black neighborhood near Bethel church, and marched from there.[59] They harassed White people that got in their way and "at least once entered the house of a hostile White person and pummeled him and his friends." They gathered again the following night and would call out to white community saying they would show them St. Domingo, referencing the slave rebellions taking place there.[60] The following year race relations further deteriorated. In Philadelphia July 4th was usually celebrated by the gathering of the city residents of both races to commemorate the signing

56. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 140–41.

57. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 137–38.

58. "Address of the American Convention of Antislavery Societies to the Free Africans and Descendants of Africans in the United States," 1789, PPAS, reel 25, quoted in Gary B. Nash, *Forging Freedom* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 5.

59. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 166–69.

60. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 176.

of the Declaration of Independence. However, the year following the 1804 incident when the black residents headed to the square to celebrate this event in American history they were met with hostility. This time on July 4th, 1805, the White community turned on the Black people who were there to celebrate and drove them away.[61]

The hostilities against the Black community continued. Thomas Branagan, a converted Methodist and former slave driver had published an antislavery pamphlet in 1804, to help the abolitionist cause. He was involved with Richard Allen and Absalon Jones who had helped him publish an epic poem the following year. However, later in 1805 he stirred the racial tension by publishing a lengthy 80-plus page article that described how the north was being overrun by the Black race and "in the course of a few years . . . half the inhabitants of the city will be people of Colour."[62] His reasoning for this statement was because the races were intermingling and Black people were thirsty for White women.[63] While tensions were increasing the legislature of Philadelphia tried to pass discriminatory laws against Black people in 1806 but failed to do so largely because of the Black communities intervention.[64] With this increase of racial tension taking place, John Joyce and Peter Matthias entered Philadelphia and Allen again took up the fight for Bethel church.

John Joyce, Peter Matthias, and Richard Allen

In 1806 John Joyce, a self freed Black man, arrived in Philadelphia.[65] Joyce had traveled around the northern United States, living in multiple locations and serving various recognized military leaders in the navy. Leaving his wife and kids behind, Joyce arrived in Philadelphia on a horse he had stolen from a man in Washington. For the next year in Philadelphia, Joyce worked as a stable hand, servant, and coachman. He was fired from his job as a coach man because he stole a watch. He then got a job as a waiter. Joyce was involved in the late night

61. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 177.

62. Branagin, Serious Remonstrances (Philadelphia, 1805), 65–73, 80, quoted in Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 178–79.

63. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 178–79.

64. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 180–81.

65. Linda Myrsiades, "Law, Culture, and Race: The 1808 Murder Trial of John Joyce and Peter Matthias," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 86, no. 2 (2019): 159. muse.jhu.edu/article/721313.

dances that would happen within the Black community in Philadelphia. It is most likely through these gatherings that he met Peter Matthias.[66]

Peter Matthias and John Joyce became acquainted in September of 1807. Mathias had come to Philadelphia before Joyce, around the beginning of 1807. However, he had been to the city before because of trips for former work. After he arrived in Philadelphia to stay, Matthias spent his time picking oakum and playing the violin at nightly dances.[67] Picking oakum was a poor job that involved pulling apart old ropes to turn the fibers into calking for ship building. It was extremely difficult work often leaving sore covered fingers and was a common work in prison as a punishment.[68] Both Matthias and Joyce were experiencing work related issues which were increasing in the early 19th century.

Apart from the increase in racial tension, Black residents in Philadelphia at the start of the 19th century faced a decrease in wages and job opportunities. Cost of living also rose steadily after 1790s. Maritime labor, which was a staple in Black employment, began to decline after Jefferson's embargo of 1807 took effect. Along with the increase in living costs, Black unemployment began to rise in the first decade of the 19th century.[69] In 1803 and 1805 the percentage of mariners that were Black was above 20%. This was a staple work for the Black community and arguably caused a major shift when the work decreased.[70] Joyce was gainfully employed on multiple ships during the 1790s but likely could not find more work through maritime labor and headed to Philadelphia.[71] It is important to remember what Philadelphia promised to free Black people. It was a place of refuge and promise, hence the reason it was growing so much.[72] But as described, the economic opportunity for free Black people was lessening and with the Embargo of 1807, that year was especially difficult for unskilled Black people to find work. This also would have increased the number

66. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias* (No. 12, Walnut-Street, Philadelphia. 1808), 13, https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/joyce/joyce.html, see bibliography for full title.

67. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 31.

68. "How Your Workhouse and Criminal Ancestors Picked Oakum," History House, accessed April 14, 2021, https://historyhouse.co.uk/articles/junk_and_oakum.html

69. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 145.

70. Gary B. Nash, "Forging Freedom, The Emancipation Experience in the Northern Seaport Cities, 1775–1820," in *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution,* ed. Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman (Published for the United States Capitol Historical Society by the University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1983), 8.

71. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 12–13.

72. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 137.

of Black people looking for work because of the maritime labor decrease. With less employment opportunities, rising living costs, decreased wages, and a struggling economy, the year 1807 proved to be one of difficulty for Black people in Philadelphia. This may have been a large reason Joyce saw the need to steal to try and cover what he could not provide through work.

At the same time Joyce and Matthias were getting accustomed to Philadelphia, Allen was facing more difficulties with the church. The incorporation that was drawn up by Mr. Cooper years earlier had not caused any issues of authority between Richard Allen, his Bethel Church, and the White Methodist Conference until 1805.[73] Bethel church had just built a new brick building and was continuing on their path of relative autonomy until a new White elder of the Methodist church was appointed over St. George's in Philadelphia.[74] When the incorporation was created by Mr. Cooper, he included a section that essentially gave the Methodist church and the leaders authority over Allen's Black church.[75] This new Elder, James Smith, saw the charter as a way to preach at the Black church when he wanted and the payment would be given to the White church.[76]

In Allen's description James Smith came and "soon waked us up by demanding the keys and books of the church, and forbid us from holding any meetings except by orders from him." Allen and the church members denied his request and told him that "the house was ours, we had bought it, and paid for it."[77] The elder responded to him that the articles of incorporation stated that it belonged to the White Methodist Conference.[78] So Allen along with other church members took the counsel of a lawyer who told them that their articles could be changed if they had a two thirds vote by the church.[79] This proposal was unanimously passed and they drew up another charter, called the African Supplement. In Allen's short autobiography he includes this supplement because of its magnitude and importance in re-establishing authority and autonomy in the Black church.[80]

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73. George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 66.
74. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 193; George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 67.
75. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 195–97.
76. George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 67.
77. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 32.
78. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 32.
79. George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 68; Allen, *The Life Experience,* 32.
80. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 37–41.

The passing of this charter was not met without resistance. Allen recorded that it "raised a considerable rumpus" since it had been passed without James Smith's consent and signature.[81] This supplement gave the right to the property and the church to the Black trustees in Bethel church.[82] The African Supplement was officially made legal in early 1807 by the Philadelphia court and bore the signature of one Justice Tilghman.[83] The methodist leaders attempted to repeal the charter but when they were unsuccessful they tried to use financial means to control the church.[84] With this renewed battle for autonomy taking place the whole Philadelphia community was broadsided with a murder.

The Murder

On the night of December 18th, Peter Matthias became much more involved with John Joyce whether he wanted it or not. It was a Friday evening and Matthias was preparing to play violin at the local dance.[85] Joyce came to Matthias's home and asked Matthias to come with him to get his wages. Matthias told him he could not because he was going to play at Jenny Miller's in Pine Alley that evening.[86] Joyce promised him money which Matthias eventually obliged and went with him.[87] On their way Joyce stopped a few times for some gin. After they had made it to Mr. Kennedy's, where Joyce was to collect his money, they found that Mr. Kennedy was not at the tavern. Unable to collect the money and receive his promised amount, Matthias turned to leave down market street when Joyce called out to him and said, "here is a near way to go out."[88] They then headed down Black-Horse Alley near the bank of the Delaware river. As they walked down the alley Joyce told Matthias to come into this store with him because he knew the women in there.[89]

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81. Allen, *The Life Experience,* 32; George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 69.

82. George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 69.

83. Richard R. Wright Jr., *The Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: The Book Concern of The AME Church, 1947), 332–34, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b000847473, see bibliography for full title.

84. George, *Segregated Sabbaths,* 69.

85. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 13.

86. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 31.

87. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 14.

88. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 32.

89. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 32.

This store was also the home of an elderly lady named Mrs. Cross. When they entered the story Joyce engaged in conversation with Mrs. Cross and purchased some apples. Joyce had just lost his job with Mr. Kennedy because he had neglected to close the door late one night when he went to a dance. Mrs. Cross inquired about this and Joyce related to her that he "thought he could suit himself better" and that was the reason he left Mr. Kennedy's, not because of any neglect on his part.[90] They continued in conversation while Joyce gave Matthias an apple to eat. Matthias, tired of following Joyce around the city and not having received his promised money, asked Joyce if he was to leave soon. Joyce responded that he was but minutes later they were still there. Matthias inquired again. Joyce asked "what is your hurry?"[91] Matthias then got up and said goodbye to Mrs. Cross and told Joyce to join him because they had spent enough time there and needed to head to the dance where Matthias was to play. Joyce told him he would be right out and to just wait outside. Mr. Cross questions Joyce, "why do you not go with the man?"[92]

Mathias made it to the street corner and waited a few minutes. Joyce still not having come out, caused Matthias to turn back to see if Joyce was really going to come. Matthias describes,

> On returning to the house, I found the door locked, lifted the latch, and called to John, and asked him whether he would go or not, he answered "he would go directly—stop," said he "come in." I then opened the door and went in: at this time there was no light below. I did not see Mrs. Cross, until John lighted a candle.
>
> At this time a little girl came in, and asked for something out of the shop, then John went to the door locked it, and put the key in his pocket. I then saw Mrs. Cross laying on the floor."[93]

Mrs. Cross was on the floor with a rope around her neck. After Matthias had previously left the store Joyce had struck Mrs. Cross over the head and then tied a noose around her neck. When Matthias realized what was going on he asked Joyce if he had killed her and Joyce in a drunken state, replied that he hadn't and he swore "he would have his money and property, and that she had more

90. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 32.
91. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 32.
92. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 32.
93. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 32–33.

than two hundred dollars of his money."[94] Joyce did not allow Matthias or the girl to leave.

Matthias did not know what to do. He tried to avoid helping Joyce as he rummaged through the place. Joyce had tied up his stolen goods in a sheet and then addressed the young girl who had come in. "I demanded of the little girl whether she knew me? She said no. I asked her if she would go with me? She replied 'yes.'" [95] Matthias left the house first and headed towards his home. As Joyce walked outside with the little girl she screamed murder. Joyce took off running and caught up to Matthias and then proceeded to Matthias's home which was located near Bethel church, less than a tenth of a mile away.[96] As they were walking home Matthias asked Joyce repeatedly if he had killed Mrs. Cross to which Joyce eventually responded that, "he had killed her, he had knocked her down, and she was dead as hell!"[97]

As they were feeling from the scene, others were running to it. Immediately after the the young girl screamed murder a few men who ran to the home and attempted to resuscitate Mrs. Cross. Later they described the disturbing scene of the murder, finding her body contorted as it had been drug over near the stairs. A doctor arrived shortly after these men and upon examining Mrs. Cross he still felt a pulse. Unable to resuscitate her, she quickly went into convulsions and expired.[98] In all this commotion a large crowd had gathered around the home.[99] Murder rates had been declining in Philadelphia and an account mentioned that the effect of the "cry of murder Mr. was electrical"[100] They wrote how it was "unusual" in the city of Philadelphia and "is happily almost unknown."[101] Nash describes how the black crime rate had been rising in the early 1800s but most was petty theft.[102] This surely due to the economic state that the African-American population was facing. Nonetheless, this murder brought quite the attention on the Black community and probably the Black

94. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 33.
95. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 15.
96. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 14–15.
97. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 34.
98. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers,* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 6.
99. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers,* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 7.
100. *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, "Crime," by Eric C. Schneider, accessed April 13, 2021, https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/crime/; *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 5.
101. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 5.
102. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 157–58.

church. A police man and constables also arrived at the scene and were told where they could find Joyce and Matthias. A Black man named Barnes had "rejected any impulse but that of justice" and told the police where to find Joyce and Matthias. Armbuster and Colewater, two constables, went and searched for them.[103]

In the meantime while those at the home of Mrs. Cross were trying to resuscitate her and decide where to look for the murderer, Joyce and Mathias arrived at Matthias home. Joyce drank some more and counted some of the money he had in his pocket. He did not tell Matthias if that was his or from Mrs. Cross's but it can be assumed it was. Matthias, still scheduled to play at the dance that evening, got up and left. He wasn't able to play at the place previously scheduled and ended up coming across Joyce again at a dance nearby. The woman who lived with Matthias, who Joyce gave his stolen loot to, came and told them both at the dance that they were being looked for. They were arrested later that night but Matthias, on the testimony of the two women at his home, was let go. However the next day around 11 o'clock he was arrested and taken to prison.[104]

The trial was held two months later on Monday February 15th, 1808, by Chief justice Tilghman. The courthouse was filled with spectators early in the morning ready to hear the trial. Not just the courthouse but "the adjoining streets, and the state house yard, were all the day, crowded with people."[105] This case garnered a lot of attention from the local people in Philadelphia. After the defense and prosecution gave their arguments, the chief justice reminded that it was the jury's purpose to decide the verdict. Before stating that he said to the jury that "the extension of mercy did not fall within their province" and that "if they thought the facts proved a murder in the first degree, they should say so. That it was his duty, though a painful one, to say, the facts has made that impression on the mind of the court, though it was the right of the jury, exclusively to decide."[106] The jury took only 15 minutes to decide the verdict.

It was Saturday, February 20th, at 12 o'clock when the verdict was given to the accused. Even before the men were brought from the prison there were many who had gathered around the courthouse and in the streets to hear the verdict the jury had decided. When the doors opened for the public to come in so many intruded that the spaces for the jurors and the bar were filled with

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103. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers*, (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 7–8.
104. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 34–35.
105. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers,* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 9.
106. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers,* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 13.

spectators. After much effort they were able to quiet down the people.[107] Chief Justice Tilghman, the same justice who had approved the African Supplement months earlier, rose and read the verdict to Joyce and Matthias. He was full of emotion as he gave what may have been his first sentence of death. Having to pause because of the "painful situation [that] his functions place before him," he read to them "You have been convicted after an impartial trial, of an offence of the blackest dye—the only offence, which by the law is punished with death." He continued, "You have injured society in general, and the people of your own colour in particular; by rendering them objects of disgust and suspicion. I am happy however to be informed, that they view your conduct with horror, and I hope they will profit by your example."[108]

One report of the situation in the courtroom described that the prisoners were also overcome with horror and remorse. More so was Joyce because he was the "most intelligent of them."[109] It's recorded that Matthias "by no means discovered the fortitude and strength of mind of Joyce. He frequently denied his participation in the guilt, and appeared as if he expected a pardon." What is interesting is that it continues to record that the clergy urged him to accept his guilt.[110] From the confessions that were later given to Richard Allen by Joyce and Matthias one can see why Matthias would insist that he was not guilty. Both Matthias and Joyce confirmed that he, Matthias, had no part in the murder and was only there afterwards. Interestingly, after the verdict of the trial and after Joyce had given his confession, the mayor visited Joyce in jail and "closely interrogated him as to the guilt of his fellow prisoner."[111] The mayor was questioning him if Matthias was there when he committed the murder. The main witness, a young girl, claimed they were both in the room but she had not see the murder. Matthias's testimony made it appear as if he was innocent and that the court was about to hang an innocent man. Consequently, the Mayor questioned Joyce whether Matthias was there or not, and a bystander recorded Joyce's response to the mayor:

> John answered "that he was [there], and also a second time, repeated it, on the same question being proposed." But as soon as the Mayor had

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107. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers,* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 14.

108. Zachariah Poulson, *"The American Daily Advertiser,"* Poulson's American Daily Advertiser, February 22, 1808, GenealogyBank

109. Poulson, *"The American Daily Advertiser,"* February 22, 1808

110. *Joyce John; Mathias, Peter. Fate of Murderers*, (Philadelphia, Pa., 1808), 22.

111. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 17.

> withdrawn from the cell, an awful horror seemed to seize his mind he exclaimed, "Lord forgive me for I have told the Mayor a falsehood." Being asked by one present, what he had told, he answered, "I have told him, Peter was present, when I killed Mrs. Cross but he was not. Lord! forgive me for it, for he is an innocent man."[112]

With the mayor's answer in hand Joyce and Matthias were hanged March 14th, 1808.[113] It was extremely crowded with one estimate putting the amount of people watching at about 20,000.[114] It was at this time that Richard Allen must have been recognizing the benefit that could come from publishing the recorded confessions of Joyce and Matthias.

The Authority to Publish, Publishing the Confessions

Years before when the Black community had faced slander and discrimination from the mistakes of a few during the yellow fever epidemic, Allen and Jones saw that publishing could not only help quell the slander but also instate their authority as community leaders and Black leaders. Now in 1808, after having fought again to keep the autonomy of the Black church, Allen was facing a much bigger topic of slander. The Black church wasn't working. This was not a type of slander Allen wanted being spread around the city. The Black community had seen major success in the last year, especially with the passage of the act prohibiting the slave trade by congress. On the 1st of January, 1808, the Atlantic slave trade became illegal.[115] In Philadelphia the Black community celebrated. Jones in his church called for this day to be "set apart in every year, as a day of publick thanksgiving."[116] But three months later the hanging of Joyce and Matthias, which drew a massive crowd, echoed the words by Justice Tilgman, "You have injured society in general, and the people of your own colour in particular;

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112. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 17.

113. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias,* 2, 20.

114. "Life and Adventures of John Joyce and Peter Mathias," *Tickler*, Mar 16, 1808, GenealogyBank

115. US Congress, An Act to Prohibit the Importation of Slaves in Any Port or Place within the Jurisdiction of the United States, from and after the First Day of January 1808. 9th Congress, 2nd Session, 1807. https://catalog.archives.gov/id/7873517, National Archives Identifier: 7873517

116. Nash, *Forging Freedom,* 189.

by rendering them objects of disgust and suspicion."[117] While Tilghman mentioned that the Black community saw this "conduct with horror," Allen surely knew the White community may have thought differently.[118]

In a biography about Richard Allen, Newman argues that Allen published the confessions of Joyce and Matthias for various reasons. First to help ease the racial tension of the White community. Just like with the Yellow fever epidemic Allen used publishing to help diffuse negative feelings towards the Black community. Second, they were published to demonstrate "his moral authority in the black community." Allen since he arrived in Philadelphia had been a moral leader to the Black community through his effort at St. George's church and now through Bethel Church. Third, not only did Allen help facilitate the confessions but he helped mediate the interracial communities though this publication.[119] Apart from those former reasons Richard Allen surely saw this publication as a way to strengthen his authority over Bethel church, his own church he had fought so long for and would for years to come. When the confessions were published in two pamphlets the publication read "Philadelphia: Printed at No. 12, Walnut-Street, For The Benefit of Bethel Church."[120]

Richard Allen would go on to face more difficulties in establishing his authority over the Church he had dutifully led for years. More attacks would come by the Methodist elders but none would sway Allen from his vision of an independent Black church. This publication did more than just mediate the racial tension and share his moral insights as he encouraged White and Black people to "Break off, O young man your impious companions."[121] This publication demonstrated that Allen could lead Bethel church, and that he was going to no matter the obstacles. It demonstrated Allen's authority as a Black minister and his authority over Bethel church.

117. Poulson, *"The American Daily Advertiser,"* February 22, 1808.
118. Poulson, *"The American Daily Advertiser,"* February 22, 1808.
119. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet*, 151–53.
120. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias*, 1.
121. *Confession of John Joyce, Confession of Peter Mathias*, 5.

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Article

The Politics of Removing Politics from the Bench

The Development of Missouri's Nonpartisan Court Plan

Grant Baldwin

"THE GREATEST SCOURGE AN ANGRY HEAVEN EVER INFLICTED UPON an ungrateful and a sinning people, was an ignorant, a corrupt, or a dependent judiciary." —Chief Justice John Marshall[1]

Today, the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan—known informally as the "Missouri Plan"—informs the judicial selection processes in 38 of the 50 states. Put simply, the Plan operates through a nonpartisan commission that produces a list of potential judges to fill judicial vacancies. The state's governor then selects from the commission's list when making judicial appointments. After one year of service, the judges' names are then placed on a nonpartisan and noncompetitive retention ballot, in which the voters simply select whether the judge will retain his or her position or be removed. Despite its ubiquity, scholars have paid very little attention to the Missouri Plan's development. The sparse scholarship that does consider the Plan typically only analyzes the types of judges it produces or points to its inadequacies.[2]

1. Quoted in the United States Congress Senate Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Improvements in Judicial Machinery, *Judicial Discipline and Tenure: Hearings Before the Subcommittees on Judicial Machinery and Constitution of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Ninety-Sixth Congress, First Session, on S. 295, S. 522, S. 678, May 8 and June 25, 1979* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979): 479.

2. In most scholarly examinations of the Missouri Plan, its historical development is treated either as a footnote or only provided as a brief background. Even in Richard A.

This paper will unpack the origins and development of the Missouri Plan. I will argue that like other early twentieth century reforms, the Missouri Plan sprung from intellectual elites' calls for institutional change as solutions to social problems. In this case, legal scholars and social scientists contended that judicial selection via partisan elections allowed political machines to pollute the state courts and their decisions. Thus, by taking the courts away from the realm of partisan electoral politics, the public could count on more just and impartial decisions. Judges liberated from politics could pay greater attention to their next case rather than their next election. The irony of the Missouri Plan's development resides in its method of adoption. Because Missouri's legal elites did not win the support of the Missouri legislature, they turned to the people through a ballot initiative. These elites faced a situation where they needed to persuade and educate Missouri's voters that the voters themselves could not be trusted to select their judges.

Historians typically characterize the early twentieth century reform movements' relationship with the courts by describing activists' frustration with what they deemed an illiberal system. Especially regarding legislation aimed at curtailing the power of big business, courts often halted widespread change.[3] Because of the law's traditional conservative nature, Progressives often found themselves in what Brain Tamanaha coined "a problematic asymmetry," in which they needed to work within a system bent toward preserving the status quo.[4] Yet,

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Watson & Rondal G. Downing's (1969) extensive work on the Missouri Plan, *The Politics of the Bench and the Bar,* the Plan's historical development is hurriedly summarized, leaving the bulk of the book to center on the Plan's judicial outcomes. More recent research also considers the *effects* of the Missouri Plan by studying what types of judges the Plan selects or the incentives the Plan gives it judges, while ignoring the questions of how and why the Plan exists. *See* Larry T. Aspin and William K. Hall, "Retention Election and Judicial Behavior," *Judicature* 77, no. 6 (1994): 306–15; Lawrence Baum, *Judges and Their Audiences: A Perspective on Judicial Behavior, Judges and Their Audiences* (Princeton University Press, 2009), https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400827541; Melinda Gann Hall, "State Supreme Courts in American Democracy: Probing the Myths of Judicial Reform," *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 2 (2001): 315–30, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055401002234.

3. *See* Harding C. Noblitt, "The Supreme Court and the Progressive Era, 1902–1921" (PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1955); John E. Semonche, *Charting the Future: The Supreme Court Responds to a Changing Society, 1890–1920* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978).

4. Brian Z. Tamanaha, "The Progressive Struggle with the Courts: A Problematic Asymmetry," in *The Progressives' Century: Political Reform, Constitutional Government, and the Modern American State*, ed. Stephen Skowronek, Stephen M. Engel, and Bruce Ackerman (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 71.

Melvin Urofsky's reevaluation of protective legislation in the early twentieth century found that the state courts were indeed much more friendly to change than their federal counterparts.[5] The Missouri Plan's story differs from these characterizations because rather than attempting to push reform through the courts, concerned Missourians aimed to reform the courts themselves.

Debates over the role of judiciaries and the institutions that govern them must always find a delicate balance between two key principles: judicial independence and public accountability. These principles center on the types of incentives the citizenry would like to place on the judiciary. Quantitative political science provides ample evidence that the incentives presented to judges play a heavy role in judges' decision-making processes.[6] To create a truly independent judiciary, institutions must incentivize judges and courts to make their decisions based on their interpretations of the law without the meddling of outside influences. On the flip side, a truly accountable court faces heavy incentives to make decisions that the public would find agreeable, lest the public remove the judges from office or change the nature of the judiciary. Concerned Americans through the development of their judiciaries—both state and federal—seem to hold both of these somewhat contradictory standards as equally important. We want the courts to be free to interpret the law and make decisions based on legal merits alone, yet at the same time, we respond with outrage and cries for change when the courts make decisions we disagree with.

The federal nature of the United States allows for a great deal of experimentation in the way courts operate in each of the states. While Article III of the federal Constitution outlined a comparatively simple process for selecting federal judges, the states at the time of ratification had already established a myriad of methods whereby the judges on their courts were determined.[7] A popular method in the early-nation states gave legislative bodies the responsibility to determine who sat at the bench. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Jeffersonian and then Jacksonian philosophies of democracy fostered favorable

5. Melvin I. Urofsky, "State Courts and Protective Legislation during the Progressive Era: A Reevaluation," *The Journal of American History* 72, no. 1 (1985), 63.

6. *See* Baum, *Judges and Their Audiences*; Aspin and Hall, "Retention Election and Judicial Behavior"; Brandice Canes-Wrone, Tom S. Clark, and Jason P. Kelly, "Judicial Selection and Death Penalty Decisions," *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 1 (February 2014), 23–39.

7. James A Gleason, "State Judicial Selection Methods as Public Policy: The Missouri Plan" (PhD Dissertation, West Lafayette, Indiana, Purdue University Graduate School, 2016), 63–64.

attitudes toward the democratization of political institutions. General feelings shifted away from constitutional mechanisms and filters of consent and toward a view that the voters should elect their desired candidates to all public positions. Accordingly, states shifted away from their original arrangements for judicial selection and toward selection by partisan popular elections. Missouri followed suit in 1848.

Partisan arrangements yanked state judicial branches into partisan politics—leaving a largely uninformed electorate to select their states' judges based on issues that did not typically concern the courts. Reflecting on the strange politics that dominated state judicial campaigns, Former Missouri Supreme Court Justice Fred L. Williams told his associates in 1937,

> I was elected because Woodrow Wilson kept us out of war. I was defeated in 1920 because Woodrow Wilson did not keep us out of war. In both of the elections not more than five percent of the voters knew I was on the ticket.[8]

On top of dealing with an uninformed electorate, judicial selection via partisan elections also allowed urban political machines to often determine who would sit on the bench before the votes had been cast. Especially as great cultural and economic change in the early 20th century attracted immigrants and low-income families into urban centers, party leaders colluded with one another to choose judges by promising jobs, security, and political favors to vulnerable voters. Once in office, the judges served under the expectation that their decisions would satisfy the desires of the party machine, lest they lose the machine's support and their reelection bid alongside it. Often, the influence of a political machine meant that any candidate without its support had little to no chance of securing victory. This allowed bosses to select nearly anybody to fill vacant offices regardless of their qualifications. In Missouri specifically, party leaders used the support of their machine to secure the election of one of their party members to the St. Louis Circuit Court—who, as a pharmacist by trade, had never practiced law—despite local surveys demonstrating that St. Louis lawyers ranked him as the least desirable on the list of potential candidates.[9] The press frequently criticized Missouri's political machines and their ill-equipped judges,

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8. Quoted by R. Lawrence Dessem, "Mulling Over the Missouri Plan: A Review of State Judicial Selection and Retention Systems," *Missouri Law Review* 74, no. 3 (2008), 477.

9. Richard A. Watson. and Rondal G. Downing, *The Politics of The Bench and The Bar* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969), 10.

but the machines' support in urban centers lingered for the greater part of the '10s, '20s, and '30s.

Whispers about judicial selection alternatives in the states that would move away from partisan elections began as early as 1914. Much like other Progressive-era calls for change, these whispers germinated in the academe.[10] Northwestern University School of Law professor Albert Kales's seminal work, *Unpopular Government in the United States*, provided an overview of the undemocratic nature of many of the United States' governing institutions. Kales argued that many of the United States' institutions authorized outcomes contrary to majority will and the common good. The book's final chapter argued in favor of a merit-based system of judicial selection—one in which judges would be appointed based on their qualifications rather than as a means to provide political favors.[11] According to Kales, the only judicial official that should be elected is the state's chief justice. An independent body referred to as the judicial council—staffed by already tenured judges—should then produce a list of potential justices to fill vacant seats based on their legal careers. The elected chief justice would fill vacancies with judges from the judicial council's list. The appointed judges would then serve a short term of two to three years, after which they would answer to the voters in a non-competitive yes-no referendum.

Kales's proposal sparked other academics to speak out on the subject of judicial selection reform. Shortly afterward, notable scholars and jurists such as Chief Justice and former President William Howard Taft, Dean of Harvard Law Roscoe Pound, the American Judicature Society's Herbert Harley, Cornell Law Professor Robert Cushman,[12] and British Socialist leader Harold J. Laski either supported Kales's proposition publicly or published their own tweaks to the system Kales presented.[13] Each proposed plan held the removal of partisan elections in common, and grappled with methods whereby the courts could be institutionally independent and publicly accountable.

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10. For a fuller discussion on the role of academics in the Progressive era, *see* chapters 1 & 2 in Thomas C. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics & American Economics in the Progressive Era* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2016).

11. Albert Martin Kales, *Unpopular Government in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1914), 252–61.

12. Robert E. Cushman, "Our Antiquated Judicial System," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 181 (1935): 90–96. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1019366.

13. Charles B. Blackmar, "Missouri's Nonpartisan Court Plan from 1942 to 2005," *Missouri Law Review* 72, no. 1 (2007): 199–219. https://scholarship.law.missouri.edu/mlr/vol72/iss1/8.

Although popular among the country's legal and intellectual elites, the legal community outside academia did not embrace the need for reform until the ills of partisan judicial elections became painfully evident. One such example came from the political climate of Missouri in the 1930s, which was dominated by the control of the Pendergast political machine. As previously alluded to, the machine decided many elections for local offices behind closed doors, and the voters merely ratified their decisions. In 1936, the Pendergasts supported gubernatorial candidate Lloyd Crow Stark, who secured victory by a wide margin. Once assuming office, however, Stark publicly abandoned his loyalty to the machine and endorsed his own desired candidate for the upcoming Missouri Supreme Court election in 1938. This campaign erupted into a brutal intraparty battle over the judiciary, later tagged as "one of the bitterest campaigns for a judicial post in the state's modern history."[14] Voters and the press viewed the election as a chance to vote for either the pro-Stark or the pro-Pendergast candidate and gave little to no attention to their qualifications for the judicial role they would occupy.

Despite having controlled Missouri politics for nearly three decades, the 1938 state supreme court election resulted in a harrowing defeat for the Pendergasts. Judge James M. Douglas, the Kansas City candidate that had displeased Pendergast, won by more than 100,000 votes.[15] By most accounts, the bitterly fought campaign "demonstrated the deficiencies in the popular election of judges, at least in urban and statewide contests."[16] Douglas and the anti-Pendergast coalition had undoubtedly emerged victorious over a corrupt political machine. However, Missouri's legal community realized that the partisan selection of judges left open the possibility for the Pendergasts to regain control of the court in the next election. Securing victory in '38 alone did not solve the problem of a corrupt state judiciary.

With the ills of partisan elections made apparent leading up to the 1938 election, the St. Louis Bar Association called the state's key legal actors to a convention with the goal to deliberate alternative methods to select Missouri's judges. First, the St. Louis Bar put together the Committee on Judicial Selection under the leadership of the prominent Missouri lawyer, Ronald J. Foulis, in February

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14. Supreme Court of Missouri, *Proceedings on the Presentation of Portraits of the Honorable James M. Douglas and the Honorable Clem F. Storckman* (Jefferson City, MO: Supreme Court of Missouri, 1977), 9.

15. Richard M. Morehead, *Missouri Court Plan, A Series of Articles on How Missouri Gets and Keeps Able Judges.* (The Dallas Morning News, 1948), 5.

16. Blackmar, "Missouri's Nonpartisan Court Plan from 1942 to 2005."

of 1937.[17] St. Louis attorney Thomas McDonald described the initial findings of this special committee as follows:

> The committee first examined the existing elective system and found it defective in three important particulars: it did not encourage those best qualified for judicial service to become candidates for the bench; it was not conducive to the highest type of performance of judicial duty after election; and it was elective and democratic only in theory, being actually a system of selection by persons with political power.[18]

After reaching these conclusions, the Committee bore the task of looking into the existing scholarship on judicial selection methods—including Kales's influential work—and what reformers in other states had already proposed as alternatives. By the end of the year, Foulis enlisted the help of nationally renowned legal thinkers such as Judge John Perry Wood of the American Bar Association to assist in drafting a complete rework of the state's judicial selection system.[19] Once complete, the Committee forwarded its desired changes to the Lawyers Association of Kansas City for feedback and input. By doing so, Foulis formed an integral and strategic coalition consisting of the legal professionals from the two largest urban centers on opposite sides of the state as well as allies from national legal organizations.

At first, the Committee considered simply changing the state's judicial elections from a partisan to a nonpartisan format. Under this system, judges would still be determined via competitive elections, the only differences being that candidates' party labels would not accompany their names on the ballot and that their elections would not be concurrent with other state and federal offices. However, experimentation with nonpartisan judicial elections in other states led many to believe that these elections were merely a "placebo" treatment rather than a cure for corruption in the judiciary.[20] Removing the partisan

17. Ronald J. Foulis, "Missouri Institute Sponsors Plan for Improving Selection of Judges," *American Bar Association Journal* 26, no. 3 (1940): 221–22.

18. Thomas F. McDonald, "Missouri's Ideal Judicial Selection Law," *Journal of the American Judicature Society* 24, no. 6 (1941), 194.

19. Ronald J. Foulis, "Missouri Non-partisan Court Plan Adopted," *American Bar Association Journal* 27, no. 1 (1941): 9–10. Also present at the deliberations were representatives from the Missouri State Bar Association and former Missouri Supreme Court Justice Fred L. Williams, the aforementioned judge that attributed his defeat at the ballot box to President Wilson intervening in the Great War.

20. Gleason, "State Judicial Selection Methods as Public Policy: The Missouri Plan," 80.

label in Chicago a little over a decade earlier did help ensure that voters looked toward other considerations beyond party cues when deciding their vote choice. However, direct competition between judicial candidates still resulted in elections becoming popularity contests, where candidates with more appeal were selected over those that may have been more qualified or better fit. Further, voters paid little to no attention to off-cycle judicial elections—with less than nine percent of Chicago's registered voters typically casting ballots in their April judicial elections.[21] Thus, in nonpartisan off-cycle elections, small factions in the electorate still determined who sat on the bench.

The Committee abandoned the prospect of nonpartisan judicial elections in favor of a "merit" system, built off the back of Kales's suggestions from decades prior.[22] As the name suggests, the merit system operated on the assumption that judges should be selected because of their merits. The Committee believed merit selection was possible through the removal of popular competition from the selection process. In its place, a nonpartisan nominating commission, consisting of the state supreme court's chief justice, three lawyers selected by the Missouri Bar Association—one from each Court of Appeals district—and three laymen (who were not members of the Bar) selected by the governor, would assemble a list of qualified individuals to fill any judicial vacancies. When a vacancy opened up, the governor would then select an individual from the nominating commission's list to fill that seat. These judges would serve probationary terms of up to one year on the bench, after which their names would go on a noncompetitive retention ballot that reads as follows, "Shall Judge XXX be retained in office? Yes, or no?"[23] This method came to fruition only after some back and forth between the Committee on Judicial Selection and the Lawyers Association of Kansas City on the particulars. Once the two groups were satisfied, the Committee asked Washington University in St. Louis law professor Israel Treiman to formally draft these provisions into a proposed constitutional amendment—titled "The Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan"—before the end of 1937.

With the advent of the Nonpartisan Court Plan, Missouri's legal elites believed they had struck a perfect balance between judicial independence from political influences and accountability to the public. The Committee summarized

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21. McDonald, "Missouri's Ideal Judicial Selection Law," 194.

22. Herbert M. Kritzer, *Judicial Selection in the States: Politics and the Struggle for Reform*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 20–21.

23. Morehead, *Missouri Court Plan, A Series of Articles on How Missouri Gets and Keeps Able Judges*, 13.

its findings into what it characterized a "one well-worded sentence which deserves to be quoted":

> We strongly favor a system whereby judges are to be appointed by an official and responsible authority, whose power of appointment, however, is to be guided by a body of intelligent opinion and subjected to final control by popular will effectively voiced through the ballot.[24]

The Plan's lack of direct competition over judicial vacancies and the nominating commission's responsibility to seek out qualified candidates worked to ensure that the most qualified judges sat at the bench rather than the most popular candidates. Further, the commission believed the nominating commission's members would be too virtuous to yield to lobbying influences in formulating their lists. An appeal to the public's ability to check the actions of the judiciary remained, but the public would evaluate individual judges' judicial performances when casting votes. Chairman Foulis upheld this belief of balance between independence and accountability as he described the Plan's merits to the American Bar Association,

> The report of the Committee which submitted the plan to the Missouri Bar Association, point out that [the plan] is no way novel or revolutionary, but is founded upon a principle of judicial selection tried and found successful in the oldest states of the country and by the Federal Government, that it is a plan which retains the democratic idea of ultimate control over judges by the people, *along with an intelligent method of selecting* qualified candidates for judicial office, regardless of political considerations.[25]

Not long after, the American Bar Association and American Judicature Society publicly endorsed the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan as the new standard of judicial selection policy for the states.[26]

Understandably eager, the Missouri Bar Association dedicated considerable effort to lobbying the state legislature to affix the Plan as an amendment to the state's constitution. The amendment was introduced to the General Assembly in February 1939 and shortly passed on to the legislative committee of the House on Constitutional Amendments with a public hearing scheduled for March 15. Dozens of representatives from the Missouri and St. Louis Bar Associations,

24. McDonald, "Missouri's Ideal Judicial Selection Law," 194.
25. Foulis, "Missouri Institute Sponsors Plan for Improving Selection of Judges," 211.
26. Gleason, "State Judicial Selection Methods as Public Policy: The Missouri Plan," 97

alongside a select few non-attorneys, attended and testified in favor of the Plan during the hearing. At the same time, no dissenters of the Plan appeared nor spoke at the House Committee's hearing.[27] After hearing multiple testimonies given on the Plan's strengths, the House Committee commented that they would not act on the proposed amendment until any that opposed it had testified. Nevertheless, as the hearing went on and no opposition arrived, the House Committee adjourned the meeting and classified the proposal as unfavorable without providing any explanation to those present.[28] Without the House Committee's endorsement, neither legislative chamber addressed the amendment any further.

The Plan's defeat in the legislature only encouraged Missouri's legal elites to push even harder for their desired reform. Many cited the legislature's inaction as further evidence that partisan politics should not have a place in the courtroom. After weighing their options, the Missouri Bar, St. Louis Bar, and Lawyers Association of Kansas City decided to move forward by submitting the proposed amendment to Missouri's voters by initiative in the upcoming general election. To do so, however, they found themselves in a sticky situation. In essence, they planned on asking voters to voluntarily give up their ability to select their state's judges, a privilege provided in Missouri for nearly a century. Along those lines, they needed to convince Missouri's layfolk that they themselves could not be trusted to select worthy judges. Adding to the complexity, a mere two years earlier judicial reform initiatives had failed at the polls in Michigan and Ohio.

Aware of these difficult obstacles, members from each of the state's three legal organizations and interested citizens joined forces under an organization they named the Missouri Institute for the Administration of Justice. Foulis, also appointed as a leading member of the Institute, conducted extensive research to determine the failures of Michigan and Ohio's recent campaigns. Further, proponents from those failed campaigns happily provided insight to the Institute concerning their campaigns' shortcomings.[29] Primarily, the Michiganders and Buckeyes encouraged the Institute to carry out an educational campaign on top of its political one. In large part, Michigan and Ohio's efforts failed because their voters perceived the proposed plans would bring benefits to the

27. Jack W. Peltason, "The Missouri Plan for the Selection of Judges," *University of Missouri Studies* 10, no. 2 (1945), 51.

28. Foulis, "Missouri Institute Sponsors Plan for Improving Selection of Judges," 221–22.

29. Peltason, "The Missouri Plan for the Selection of Judges," 52–54.

Bar rather than to the states' larger populations. The formation of the Missouri Institute for the Administration of Justice proved a genius political strategy, because by detaching itself from the Bar associations and presenting itself as a political action group, voters began to perceive the amendment as more than just a legal issue.

Both the educational and political campaigns rolled out immediately after the Institute established itself by organizing local volunteer groups in each of Missouri's counties. Interested attorneys used their extensive networks to gather volunteers and support in every corner of the state. The Institute started circulating petitions in April to secure the amendment's place on the ballot in the November 1940 general election. By July, the Institute successfully organized 20,000 volunteers, only 3,000 of whom practiced law. Further, the Institute's initial petitioning efforts received double the minimum number of signatures required to place the initiative on the ballot. On July 2, the Institute organized a caravan of supporters to travel from St. Louis to the capitol in Jefferson City to deliver the signatures. The group packed all 74,075 signatures into an armored car that drove straight to the steps of the secretary of state's office.[30]

From July to November, the Missouri Institute for the Administration of Justice's primary tactic consisted of persuasion through education. To appeal to broader sets of voters and to curb illusions that the amendment would only serve the interests of the Bar, organized volunteers reached out to one hundred different citizen action groups across the state. The Institute appealed to each group's desire to receive equal and just treatment from the courts and cited the ills made evident by the Pendergast machine's influence in the 1938 election. Group after group came out publicly endorsing the amendment, including state-wide women's service groups, religious organizations, local newspapers, business lobbies, and both 1940 gubernatorial candidates and the incumbent governor. Organized labor, however, required an extra level of convincing. Foulis led a group of legal researchers to produce a myriad of studies to suggest that appointed judges would supposedly produce more liberal decisions in favor of labor legislation than those elected. Eventually, these findings seemed to appease many labor unions' concerns.

The education of layfolk not affiliated with the aforementioned groups occurred through the Institute's persistent presence in the state's press. This task also proved challenging. Coverage on the war in Europe and the 1940

30. Peltason, "The Missouri Plan for the Selection of Judges," 53.

presidential election dominated the states' news markets. So, the campaign took advantage of the major papers' sympathies to the amendment and lobbied to publish new campaign information as frequently as possible. The Institute repeatedly published a four-page educational pamphlet titled the "M.I.A.J. News" in each of the state's major papers. The pamphlet provided a simply worded explanation of the value of each aspect of the Nonpartisan Court Plan and the disadvantages of the current system. The pamphlet closed with the following list of succinct bullet points summarizing its main arguments,

- The plan is designed to abolish the evils of the present primary and elective system.
- Many men will be willing to serve on the bench under this plan, who would not submit themselves to the ordeal of seeking office under the present political system.
- It will free our judges from demands upon their time from political sources.
- It should cause the courts to function more efficiently.
- The plan contains effective checks and balances.
- It is *not* an outright appointive system.
- It *does not* destroy the right of the people to have a voice in the selection of judges.
- It does, however, eliminate entirely the necessity of judges, for the courts affected, running in a primary election against probably a dozen or more opponents. The plan also makes it unnecessary for a judge to run against an opponent in the general election. The judge will run solely on his record, and his name will appear on a separate judicial ballot without party designation.[31]

The Institute's education efforts in the press proved successful. Despite the popularity of national and international news, voters still recognized the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan—to the point where press-initiated polls leading up to the election suggested that ninety percent of the readers, both lawyers and laypeople, were aware of and approved of the Plan.[32]

The support for the campaign across various citizen organizations and the press made it difficult for any of the Plan's critics to make their voices heard. In

31. Foulis, "Missouri Non-partisan Court Plan Adopted," 10.
32. McDonald, "Missouri's Ideal Judicial Selection Law," 194–95.

fact, very little opposition to the Plan made an appearance in the press or public discourse leading up to the November 1940 election. Among the few key critics of the Plan were Kansas City lawyers Ellison Neel and Cliff Langsdale and Democratic state legislator H. P. Lauf—all of whom had ties to the Pendergast machine. Their principal counterarguments pointed to the fact that the elective system had served the needs of Missouri for nearly one hundred years and that better government comes when power is closest to the people.[33] Moreover, they spoke against the claim that the courts would be taken out of politics, instead contending that an "insidious" new type of politics would erupt among the seven nonpartisan nominating commissioners. However, the opposition mostly remained hush leading up to the election, most likely due to the Plan's apparent and growing popularity.

The Missouri legal elites' success leading up to a toilsome initiative election in 1940 can thus be attributed to their superior political strategy of educating laypeople and involving social and political groups throughout the state. Amongst themselves, the legal community believed the advantages of their proposal to be self-evident. However, they recognized that for the Plan to succeed at the polls, they needed to garner support among the voters outside the legal community. Through extensive persuasion through education campaigns and coalition-building with other influential state organizations, the Missouri Institute for the Administration of Justice successfully avoided the charge that the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan was merely a piece of legislation that benefited the Bar, but rather a necessary change that any reasonable Missourian ought to support. In November, the Institute and its allies secured victory by a wide margin of between 90,000 and 100,000 votes.[34] In the same election, six other proposed constitutional amendments "met overwhelming defeat."[35]

The election's results brought encouragement to the Plan's allies and bitterness to its enemies. The very next year, Representative Lauf spoke on the legislature's floor and insisted that the populace had been ill-informed by the Missouri Institute for the Administration of Justice leading up to the election. Soon after,

33. Peltason, "The Missouri Plan for the Selection of Judges," 69.

34. McDonald, "Missouri's Ideal Judicial Selection Law," 56; Laurance M. Hyde, "The Missouri Plan for Selection and Tenure of Judges," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology (1931–1951)* 39, no. 3 (1948), 280.

35. Martin L. Faust, "Popular Sovereignty in Missouri," *Washington University Law Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1942): 312–29; "Missouri Voters Approve Judicial Selection Amendment Note," *Journal of the American Judicature Society* 24, no. 4 (1940): 118.

Lauf and his allies in the legislature demanded a repeal of the Plan to be put on the ballot in 1942, which was suitably nicknamed the Lauf Amendment. The repeal's presence encouraged opposition to the Plan to speak louder than they had in 1940. Nevertheless, the Missouri Institute for the Administration of Justice's organized efforts were no match for Lauf and his Pendergast allies. The proposed repeal fostered larger amounts of support for the Nonpartisan Court Plan than in the original 1940 election, and in 1942 the Plan emerged victorious once again by a margin of more than 180,000 votes.[36] The Plan's popularity reached near unanimity a few years later when the state called for a new constitutional convention in 1945, to the point where none of the convention's delegates dared alter its provisions for judicial selection in the new constitution.

In hindsight, the Missouri Plan seems a near perfect solution to the ills of corrupted state judiciaries. It proposed a seemingly proper balance between the ideals of judicial independence and public accountability. In an attempt to convince the legal community to adopt their own versions of the Plan, Missouri Institute for the Administration of Justice's William W. Crowdus explained,

> The average judge wants to be honest and do the right thing. Now our judges have no political strings on them, and there's a spirit of independence they never knew before. They're no longer under pressure. Clients formerly hired lawyers because of real or imaginary influence with the judge. Now all it costs a judge to run for re-election is a 3 [cent] stamp to mail his application.[37]

Lawrence P. Hyde, the first Missouri Supreme Court Justice to be appointed under the Plan, reinforced Crowdus's statement to the Texans by saying, "No plan is perfect, but I don't see how anybody could devise a better one. One of the best features is that a Governor cannot use court jobs to pay his political campaign debts anymore."[38] The Plan satisfied the fundamental American desire to ensure virtuous officeholders the independent ability to govern as they see fit, while also providing for the possibility for the people to step in and prevent any abuses of power. Furthermore, the Plan's satisfaction of this desire led

36. Hyde, "The Missouri Plan for Selection and Tenure of Judges," 280.

37. Morehead, *Missouri Court Plan, A Series of Articles on How Missouri Gets and Keeps Able Judges*, 4.

38. Morehead, 5. See also "Missouri's Plan on Judges Praised: State's Chief Justice Asserts in Speech Here That Courts Now Are Out of Politics," *New York Times*, 1949, sec. books.

a supermajority of the states to adopt similar judicial selection methods by the end of the 20th century.

Reflecting on the Missouri Plan's development, its story provides a satisfying tale of ordinary Americans emerging victorious over corrupt influences on government through democratic means. What makes the Missouri Plan's story so unique, however, is that, for the ordinary voter, to support the Plan was at the same time to support giving up the privilege of having a direct say in who governs. Such a phenomenon is practically unheard of in the history of direct democracy in the United States. Herein lies the irony of the Missouri Plan's development: intellectual elites alone could not bring to pass their desired reform, and the people, through popular election, conceded from themselves the ability to determine their government officials through popular election.

Article

Rivalries at Red Cliff

Recasting Historical Figures in Modern Chinese Film and Television

Jackson Keys

When accomplished strategist Zhuge Liang (諸葛亮) visits the funeral of his bitter rival Zhou Yu (周瑜), he does something no one expects. Most of the attendees are loyal to Sun Quan (孫權), Zhou Yu's lord who controls China's southernmost provinces, and are well aware of the intense power struggle that ensued between Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang as the two cooperated in repelling Cao Cao's (曹操) advances at Red Cliff. Zou Yu attempted multiple times before and after the battle to have Zhuge Liang killed, and each time Liu Bei's (劉備) brilliant strategist was one step ahead of him. Zhou Yu's deathbed message, penned for Sun Quan, warns of the growing danger Zhuge Liang presents to Sun Quan's hold on the south. Zhou Yu's warnings proved correct and timely; it didn't take long for Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang to begin carving out of Sun Quan's lands a kingdom of his own.

It is for this reason that the funeral's attendees are shocked when Zhuge Liang bows down in front of Zhou Yu's coffin and weeps. "I weep for your untimely demise, head bowed, heartsore," the strategist says. ". . . You preserved your integrity with simple devotion, and it will survive the mists of death and time."[1] The question of how sincere his words are is left for the reader to answer.

1. Luo Guanzhong, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, trans. Moss Roberts (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1995), 430.

But his statement that Zhou Yu's legacy will "survive the mists of death and time" is undeniable, as the tale of these two rivals as written in the Ming dynasty novel, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (三國演義), has been retold again and again well into the modern age.

In a modern world where *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* adaptations have expanded far beyond the world of drama and art—appearing in film, television series, video games, and collectible card games, just to name a few—it is to be expected that the canonized details of Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu's rivalry will be altered, or even reversed, to serve the interests of the re-tellers. By examining the ways that television and film adaptations of *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* have depicted the relationship between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu, two of the most iconic and memorable characters in the novel, it becomes clear that below the details of the rivalry a dynamic conversation between the opposing central and local powers of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is taking place; Zhuge Liang representing the centralized force of Beijing, Zhou Yu the localized force of low-ranked cadres and autonomous regions.

While a military victory for Sun Quan, whose armies are led by Zhou Yu, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* depicts Zhuge Liang as the true hero of the Battle of Red Cliff.[2] The Battle acts as a turning point in the novel; it is Cao Cao's first major defeat and eventually leads to the creation of three warring kingdoms. As told in the novel, the very first instance leading to Sun Quan's involvement in the battle happens in a conversation between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu. Uncertain of whether or not he should confront Cao Cao, Zhou Yu is persuaded to do so after Zhuge Liang cleverly instigates him by suggesting they pacify the northern warlord by sending him the two beautiful Qiao sisters. Zhuge Liang feigns ignorance of the fact that Zhou Yu is married to the younger of the Qiao sisters, and his trick works when Zhou Yu, furious at the thought of Cao Cao stealing his wife, resoundingly advises his lord to prepare for battle.

Although Zhou Yu agrees to work alongside Zhuge Liang and Liu Bei's forces to repel Cao Cao, he is all too aware of Zhuge Liang's cleverness and political ambition. Zhuge Liang's political ambition is vital to understanding the nature of their rivalry: Zhuge Liang is attempting to regain the central control of the dynasty for his lord, while Zhou Yu is attempting to hold onto his lord's local power in the south. Their rivalry becomes much more than two brilliant strategists trying to outplay one another; it is a battle that will determine

2. Xiaofei Tian, *Halberd at Red Cliff: Jian'an and the Three Kingdoms* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2018), 301.

whether the empire will be able to maintain central control over its land or let power stay within the hands of regional rulers.

This underlying power struggle was important to understanding the nature of Chinese history after the fall of the Han, but it is just as important to understanding the era in which Romance of the Three Kingdoms was written. Creating an empire that could unify "ten-thousand places" was important to the Ming founder Zhu Yuanzhang (朱元璋), and even if it was never carried out to the extent of the Mongols, it was nevertheless an important part of Ming dynasty rhetoric.[3] But the Ming court was well aware that no matter the size of their border, extending court authority over each local region within that border, especially those furthest from the capitol, was an incredibly difficult task. Zhu Yuanzhang borrowed much from Mongol communication technology in order to more fully extend centralized control over his empire, a prime example being the courier system. While this network of roads was able to rapidly increase the rate of communication and official movement across the empire, it was exploited by corrupt officials who found ways to use the system to benefit them, one example being a corrupt official who was punished in 1284 for using the system to procure prostitutes for him.[4]

This form of corruption existing on the local levels of administration is a good example of a principal-agent problem that arises out of information asymmetries.[5] To give another example from the Ming dynasty, magistrates were required every year to update the household data of the area they governed. While the central power, existing in the court, wanted this data to be accurate so their grain tax quota would accurately represent the population, the officials on the lower level were incentivized to fudge the numbers, subtracting a few here or there to create an appearance of fluctuation, to avoid the higher tax quotas their growing population would require.[6] This information asymmetry made it extremely difficult for the court to extend its power over each local region. While the Ming may be remembered for a higher level of authoritarianism than many previous dynasties saw, there were strict practical limits on the distance that power could realistically be enforced.

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3. Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 28.

4. Brook, *The Troubled Empire,* 31.

5. This asymmetry and its relationship to PRC corruption is explored in great detail by Joseph Fewsmith in his book, *The Logic and Limits of Political Reform in China.* His arguments will become increasingly important later on in this paper to understand how modern *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* adaptations comment on CCP corruption.

6. Brook, *The Troubled Empire,* 44.

With this push and pull between central and local power in mind, the rivalry between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu becomes much more than a struggle between two ambitious military leaders. Zhou Yu is mainly interested in preserving Sun Quan's power and autonomy; any personal reasons for his fear and/or jealousy of Zhuge Liang are less important than the fact that Zhuge Liang threatens Sun Quan's regional hold on the south. Zhuge Liang's main purpose throughout the entire novel is to recentralize China's power in favor of Liu Bei, suggested by the novel to be the rightful heir of the Han dynasty. Zhuge Liang's involvement in the Battle of Red Cliff is part of a greater plan to divide control of the empire into three kingdoms, the north ruled by Cao Cao, the south by Sun Quan, and the southeast by Liu Bei, after which Liu Bei will be able to play his opponents off of one another and gradually take control of the entire empire. The theme of reuniting the empire under a new central authority is vital to the novel itself. It is telling that the narrative continues many chapters after the death of the novel's primary heroes including Zhuge Liang, ending finally with the lineage of Sima Yi reuniting the empire. If we view *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* as a novel that reflects the unifying dreams of the Ming dynasty, then the victory of Zhuge Liang over his rival Zhou Yu has much less to do with the former's intelligence, and everything to do with the fact that Zhou Yu's goal of maintaining regional autonomy is fundamentally opposed to some of the novel's core themes.

The dream of unifying and centralizing Chinese rule has continued long past the Ming dynasty and well into the present day. *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* as a tale of reunification is as relevant today as it was when it was first written, perhaps even more so as the PRC wrestles with the difficulty of maintaining centralized authority. Television and film adaptations of *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* have proven to be some of the most ambitious and successful media projects of the post-Mao era, and the way they retell Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu's rivalry says much about the unique times and circumstances each adaptation is created in. The first adaptation that attempted to retell the entirety of the novel was televised in 1994, a time when the importance of enforcing central power was burned in the recent memory of PRC leaders from events of the last decade.

Romance of the Three Kingdoms (1994) in post-Tiananmen China

The causes and consequences of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests have been examined in great detail by scholars of modern China. The demands of the protestors can be summarized well by a statement released when they began their

hunger strike in May 1989: "our nation has come to a critical juncture: inflation is sky-rocketing, government corruption is rampant, power is in the hands of a few high-ranking officials, bureaucrats are corrupt, a large number of patriots have fled into exile, and social order grows daily more chaotic."[7] Early 1989 saw the cries against government corruption growing louder than ever before, though it is a problem that has existed in the PRC since its inception in the mid-twentieth century.

In his detailed analysis of corruption and reform in the PRC, Joseph Fewsmith argues PRC corruption often stems from the principal-agent problem between central authority and local officials mentioned above. The local officials, much like Ming dynasty magistrates, benefit from information asymmetries that allow them to increase their wealth and rank in a meritocratic system. While Beijing may endlessly attempt to reduce government corruption through a variety of programs, the promotion system that requires lower-level cadres to please those above them in order to advance consistently incentivizes bribery, which almost always goes unnoticed due to the information asymmetries. This promotion system quickly affects the lives of PRC citizens when a cadre's desire to advance takes precedence over their goal of maintaining social security.[8] This is the world in which students took to Tiananmen Square and demanded reform, and although Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平) violently silenced the protestors, their demand for reform was not forgotten, nor could it be if the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) wanted to ensure another such protest never happened again.

This need for reform, if not to democratize then at least to lessen corruption, was reflected in the television of the mid-1990s. Many television dramas of this era can be categorized as anti-corruption dramas, a term coined by film scholar Ying Zhu. Anti-corruption dramas were filled with heroes, often emperors or magistrates in period pieces, who courageously battled against corruption and injustice. These dramas often engaged in a sort of historical revision. The popular series *Yongzheng Dynasty* (雍正王朝) took the life of the Yongzheng emperor, historically infamous for his neglect and often hostility towards the intellectual class, and created a drama focused on his tireless attempt to reduce and repel injustice in the empire. For the next decade or so, the television

7. "Open Declaration of A Hunger Strike, May 1989," *Jiushiniandai,* June 16, 1989, in *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, edited by Pei-Kai Cheng, Michael Lestz, with Jonathan D. Spence (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1999), 493.

8. Joseph Fewsmith, *The Logic and Limits of Political Reform in China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 19–23.

industry was highlighting the evils of corruption, and at the same time implying to the viewers that something was being done to erase it in all levels of the PRC government.[9]

This is the world in which Wang Fulin's (王扶林) iconic 1994 drama, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms,* was televised. Television series based on different characters and events from the novel had been produced in both mainland China as well as Hong Kong in decades past, but no one had yet attempted to adapt the novel in its entirety. But by the early '90s, producing this kind of Three Kingdoms television series was not just demanded by the market — demand largely generated after the widely popular television adaptations of other literary classics such as *Water Margins* (水滸傳), *Journey to the West* (西遊記), and *Dreams of Red Chambers* (紅樓夢)—but a decision made by the central government who named the novel a "national historical treasure" and made sure that the project was free from overseas influence or investment. Wang Fulin was a suitable choice for lead director; he was a director of the very first Chinese television serial drama, *Eighteen Years in the Enemy Camp* (敌营十八年), in 1981, as well as the director for the 1987 television adaptation of *Dream of the Red Chamber.* Wang's inspiration for his television adaptations came from observing the success of BBC period dramas, a vision that he quite fully realized with the immense success of both *Dream of the Red Chamber* and his subsequent *Romance of the Three Kingdoms.*[10] The series was viewed and distributed throughout East Asia and beyond, reaching twelve other countries and a total audience of more than 1.2 billion people.[11]

Romance of the Three Kingdoms (1994) stands out in its commitment to accurately depict the events of the novel and historical details of the era. The narrative preservation of the rivalry between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu is no different, and both actors give believable performances. Wang Fulin makes good use of the visual nature of television in helping the audience feel the tension between the two rivals. Episode thirty-four, where Zhou Yu commands Zhuge Liang to

9. Ying Zhu, "From Anticorruption to Officialdom: The Transformation of Chinese Dynasty TV Drama," in *Oxford Handbook of Chinese Cinemas*, ed. Carlos Rojas and Eileen Cheng-Yin Chow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 344.

10. Chen Nan, "The Day a Blockbuster Was Born" *China Daily,* August 5, 2017, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/weekend/2017-08/05/content_30348886.htm.

11. Junhao Hong, "Three Kingdoms the Novel to Three Kingdoms the Television Series," in *Three Kingdoms and Chinese Culture* ed. Kimberly Besio and Constantine Tung (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 127.

obtain 100,000 arrows or face execution, is a good example of this. When Zhou Yu formally discusses military preparations with Zhuge Liang, the two smile and laugh as though they were close friends. After the order to obtain the arrows is issued, Zhou Yu offers his rival ceremonial wine, continuing to smile and laugh as he wishes him luck.[12] This simple interaction is a good example of how this drama differed from much of the anti-corruption drama discussed earlier; while the audience is not left to doubt who is good and who is bad, the interactions between those characters are filled with unspoken implications. In this scene, both Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu exemplify the Chinese phrase "人心隔肚皮" (*different hearts in different breasts*, meaning you can never tell what is going on in another's mind). Zhuge Liang is less a moral paragon, and more an adept navigator of political webs who can use them to further his centralizing ambition. This is not to say Zhuge Liang is looked down upon for this, but his character texture as a hero is remarkably different than many other heroes appearing on television screens of the '90s.

If we focus on the information asymmetries that give rise to corruption at the local level of the PRC government, we see Zhou Yu exemplifying this phenomenon in a variety of ways. While the general may never engage in corrupt behavior such as bribery, he frequently makes decisions that prioritize removing Zhuge Liang over the success of the upcoming battle. For example, Zhou Yu orders Zhuge Liang to lead a task force to burn Cao Cao's supplies, knowing full well that it is a suicide mission. When asked by politician and general Lu Su why he thought to send Zhuge Liang on such a mission, Zhou Yu replies that by allowing Cao Cao to kill Zhuge Liang, he will free himself of future troubles. When Zhuge Liang spreads a rumor to Zhou Yu that people think he is only capable of naval victories, Zhou Yu lets his pride get the best of him and decides to assume leadership of the raid himself. He only decides to call off the suicide mission after Lu Su reminds him to put the needs of his country first. Neither decision is made to protect his army, rather they are to secure his regional power and maintain his pride. In the eyes of contemporary viewers, Zhou Yu may become an even more dislikeable villain who parallels traits of corrupt or incompetent local officials in the PRC.

In a similar light, Zhuge Liang becomes an even more likable hero who exemplifies a more realistic solution to the problem of corruption than heroes such as Emperor Yongzheng of anti-corruption drama. (Though it should be

12. *Romance of the Three Kingdoms,* season 2, episode 34, directed by Wang Fulin, https://www.bilibili.com/bangumi/play/ep327642?bsource=douban.

noted for pure interest's sake that Zhuge Liang and Emperor Yongzheng are both played by the fabulous Tang Guoqiang (唐國強).) Rather than an idealized official with the ability to clean corruption, Zhuge Liang is an official with a complete understanding of political webs and the ability to use them to his advantage. By playing the same game Zhou Yu is playing, Zhuge Liang is able to further his Lord's goal of centralization and bring greater power to morally pure leaders such as Liu Bei and the other heroes of Shu. In this way, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (1994), by nature of talented actors and writers that stay true to the source material, may still appeal to an audience craving the anti-corruption ideal without neatly fitting into the genre itself.

A variety of reasons can be attributed to the great success of Wang Fulin's series, which received average ratings of around 60 percent. The drama's faithful adaptation of a culturally significant tradition, the attention to historical accuracy, the scale of production, and the quality of actors all resonated greatly with audiences of the time and ushered in a new wave of interest in all things related to Three Kingdoms.[13] Whether by nature of the novel itself or by the insight of the producers, the television series did not simply connect with the audience through flashy imagery and exciting episodes, it faithfully depicted characters of the novel whose interpersonal conflict resonated with the most widely discussed social issues of the day.

Three Kingdoms (2010): Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

By the mid-2000s, corruption in China was not something anyone could realistically eliminate. Although PRC officials declared victory over corruption in 2002, for many the reality of continued corruption, especially visible at the local level, only became more and more prevalent. Events such as the 2008 Weng'an riots are telling examples of the public unrest that can ensue when officials test the limits of the amount of corruption and deceit a population is willing to put up with. The proud fight against injustice applauded in the anti-corruption dramas could only carry steam for so long; eventually, the anti-corruption drama was out and replaced by what Ying Zhu calls the officialdom drama. She defines this type of series as one that "actually gives a new treatment

13. Hong, "Three Kingdoms the Novel to Three Kingdoms the Television Series," in *Three Kingdoms and Chinese Culture*, 127.

to official corruption, normalizing corruption as inevitable, just part and parcel of a bureaucratic system," and series with this tone began to take over prime time the saw the anti-corruption drama had in the previous decade.[14]

At the same time, a trend only slightly related to the dilemma of government corruption began to emerge. After the Qigong movement, ending with the persecution of Falun Gong in the late 1990s, China began to experience a grassroots Confucian revival that was well met by the PRC, who has increasingly viewed the acceptance and promotion of Confucius as an important part of its push to extend its soft power.[15] The promotion of Confucius at the government level is less a genuine adoption of Confucuan principles (which will never replace Marxism's place in current PRC ideology) and more a way for the PRC to consolidate aspects of Chinese tradition as part of their brand.[16] This effort has given rise to the construction of Confucian institutes throughout the world, and even television series based on classic Confucian texts. Understanding these two quite seemingly unrelated phenomena set the stage for the type of Three Kingdoms adaptation that premiered on television in 2010 and is vital to understanding the way that it portrays Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu's rivalry.

The first time Gao Xixi (高希希) was approached to direct a new television series based on Three Kingdoms in the late 2000s, he rejected the offer on account that the project itself was daunting and possibly disrespectful to the 1994 series, as well as the fact that he had never directed a series set in ancient China. The most historically distant series he had directed up to this point was a series set in Shanghai during the 1930s. When the second offer came, this time with a script proposal from actor Chen Jianbin who would end up depicting Cao Cao in the series, Gao Xixi accepted.[17] The series, released in 2010 and given a shorter title than its predecessor, simply *Three Kingdoms*, broke the record for the most expensive television series produced in China up to that point.[18]

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14. Zhu, "From Anticorruption to Officialdom," in *Oxford Handbook of Chinese Cinemas*, 349–50.

15. The discussion of Chinese film and soft power in the west is explored in great depth by Yanling Yang in the article "Film Policy, the Chinese Government and Soft Power" published in New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film, Volume 14 Number 1.

16. Timothy Cheek, *The Intellectual in Modern Chinese History* (Cambridge: University Printing House, 2015), 307.

17. "【三国】剧一且做客【——有约】" Baidu video, 00:07, https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E9%AB%98%E5%B8%8C%E5%B8%8C/10970569

18. "New 'Three Kingdoms' The Most Expensive of All Time," CRI, September 27, 2009, http://www.china.org.cn/culture/2009-09/27/content_18612367.htm

Unlike Wang Fulin's series more than fifteen years prior, Gao Xixi's adaptation was less focused on directly adapting the source material, but rather using the characters and narratives to create a television series with even broader appeal than those before it. In an interview, Gao Xixi noted, "*Three Kingdoms* is mainly based on *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (the novel), but not entirely, we took it as reference and also added our own ideology, we call it operating plastic surgery to Romance of the Three Kingdoms, but not gender changing surgery."[19] In depicting the rivalry between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu in this series, evidence of the creators 'adding their own ideology' is immediately present. For starters, Xiao Qiao (小橋), Zhou Yu's wife, is given a much larger role than in Wang Fulin's series. She convinces her husband to let her come with him to Red Cliffs, where she acts as a moral foil to Zhou Yu; encouraging her husband to rid himself of his ambition to kill Zhuge Liang. She goes so far as to protect Zhuge Liang after Zhou Yu sends officers to kill him after he changes the direction of the winds at the Seven Stars Altar by hiding him in her carriage. When Zhou Yu learns of this, he lashes out at Xiao Qiao, telling her to leave and never come see him again.[20]

The implications of this plotline can be seen in a few different ways, the first being an attempt to make the series more marketable to a larger audience that includes women, thereby increasing the soft power the series can generate for the PRC. If this were the goal, it was no doubt successful as the series was released across East Asia and beyond, even going so far as to release dubbed versions in a few European countries. That is not even mentioning the overseas Chinese community, for many of whom this series was and is their first exposure to Three Kingdoms television. Xiao Qiao's role also serves to develop similar themes that the 1994 *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* emphasized in Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu's rivalry: the centralizing force rising above that of the local level. If Zhou Yu represents local power then watching him lash out at his wife multiple times only serves to depict him in a more negative light. Neither series attempts to demonize him, and both depict him having occasional heroic and strategic moments, but if asked which character the audience identifies with most, few would choose Zhou Yu, who repeatedly treats his wife poorly, over the resourceful and cunning Zhuge Liang.

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19. "Ancient Classic, Modern Tale," Global Times, May 28, 2010, http://www.china.org.cn/arts/2010-05/28/content_20136982.htm.

20. *Three Kindoms,* season 1, episode 41, directed by Gao Xixi, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERkdc-3BfiI&list=PL33A390995E9A7F00&index=48.

In many ways, *Three Kingdoms* is always attempting to add *more* to the narrative. This can be largely attributed to the growing popularity of the officialdom genre mentioned above. If *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (1994) was beginning to step into the waters of officialdom drama long before the trend began by presenting a more nuanced narrative than most anti-corruption dramas, then Gao Xixi's *Three Kingdoms* is more completely submerged in it by adding offering more narrative angles to characters including Zhuge Liang, Zhou Yu, and others. The inclusion of Xiao Qiao as mentioned above does just this, allowing the viewer to look deeper into Zhou Yu's character and intertwine it with his struggle against Zhuge Liang. Minor characters, such as Lu Su (魯肅), are given more texture as well. An official who is usually one step behind both Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu in the novel, Lu Su's own intelligence and strategic mind is put on display in *Three Kingdoms* as he attempts to aid both Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang in an effort to ultimately ensure this his lord Sun Quan is not outpaced by Cao Cao or Liu Bei's growing influence. When Zhou Yu censures Lu Su for preventing Liu Bei from committing suicide after Guan Yu's failure to kill Cao Cao, going so far as to question Lu Su's loyalty, Lu Su explains that he intentionally tried to save Liu Bei's life, knowing that were the warlord to die, Sun Quan would be ever more vulnerable to attack from Cao Cao.[21]

Whether these narrative additions add much to the narrative's depth is debatable. Oftentimes, characters are more prone to explicitly describe their motivations and secret intentions than in previous adaptations. For example, after Zhuge Liang baits Zhou Yu into joining the war against Cao Cao, he is seen having a conversation with Lu Su in which Lu Su asks him whether he was truly unaware that Xiao Qiao was Zhou Yu's wife or not. Zhuge Liang explains his intentions and says that he is willing to lie for a good cause. For a viewer that is less familiar with the source material and characters, this may help them immediately grasp the nuance, although it may also feel on-the-nose for longtime fans of *Romance of the Three Kingdoms.*

The fundamental similarities between *Three Kingdoms'* portrayal of the Zhuge Liang/ Zhou Yu rivalry and the portrayal in previous adaptations do little to further the discussion of the tensions between central and local powers in China other than to remind us that they have not disappeared, and likely never will. What the portrayal does uniquely suggest is that the Three Kingdoms narrative is becoming a part of the PRC's attempt to consolidate traditional

21. *Three Kindoms,* season 1, episode 43, directed by Gao Xixi, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gF1WG-L8X_A&list=PL33A390995E9A7F00&index=50.

Chinese culture into their brand and extension of soft power. The portrayal of Zhuge Liang and Zhou's Yu rivalry, with its increased details and explicit explanation of motivations, more closely aligns the series with other popular dramas of the era. Three Kingdoms has never been solely adapted by China; Japan and Korea both have long histories of adapting the novel that continue to the present day. But few of those adaptations made outside of China are attempting to retell the entire series, the success of *another* series on this scale further places the "ownership" of the Three Kingdoms narrative in the PRC, an increasingly important task, especially when considering the nature of the relationship between the PRC, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, all of which may potentially claim ownership of parts of the Chinese cultural legacy.

Red Cliff: Rivalry Turned Friendship

Since Hong Kong was returned to the PRC in 1997, the identity and relationship between Hong Kongers and mainlanders have been complex and in flux. Hong Kong may be part of the PRC but enjoys a regional autonomy most other cities lack (though this is changing rather quickly in recent years). This history has instilled many Hong Kongers with a unique sense of national and ethnic identity. One native of Hong Kong, for example, identifies first and foremost as a Hong Konger, it being a more important distinction to them than their Han Chinese identity, especially as the Han Chinese identity becomes more and more intertwined with the political influence of the PRC.[22] While many in Hong Kong maintain this distinction, it is vitally important to the PRC with their one-China policy that Hong Kong, as well as Taiwan, lose their regional autonomy and legitimate right of sovereignty in the eyes of the rest of the world.

As the power balance in the Chinese-speaking world shifts, the story of Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu's rivalry is more topical than ever, especially to those in Hong Kong or Taiwan. It is in this world that the 2008 and 2009 films *Red Cliff Parts I–II* were released, and a case can be made that it contributes to either one or both sides of this Chinese power struggle. Directed by the legendary director John Woo (吳宇森) just a few years before Gao Xixi's *Three Kingdoms* series, *Red Cliff I–II* are large scale war epics, over four and a half hours in total, that depict the battle of Red Cliffs from the beginning of Zhuge Liang's

22. Anonymous student at Brigham Young University in discussion with the author, February 2022.

intervention in Sun Quan's court to Cao Cao's final defeat. The films are a showcase of a media strategy led by the CCP to take renowned Chinese filmmakers from outside the mainland and include them in the world of mainland-produced cinema.[23] The director is from Hong Kong, the film was filmed and produced in mainland China, and included among the actors are stars from Hong Kong, mainland, Taiwan, and even Japan.

If we examine this film in terms of generating the PRC soft power in the west, then it can be seen as yet another period piece that fails to gain the PRC substantial soft power. The film's first part stands with a lifetime gross of just $627,047 in domestic markets. But interestingly enough, the film's top market was Japan, where its lifetime gross is over 52 million, almost 6 million dollars more than the film grossed in China.[24] The lesson gleaned from the box office is that a film need not be popular in the west for the PRC to potentially gain soft power from it. The film's success in the Japanese market is an especially large victory for China, as the Japanese media market has been producing Three Kingdoms adaptations in great numbers for decades. The implications for a Hong Kong audience are even more profound; a film such as this sees a Hong Kong director, along with many of Hong Kong's biggest stars such as Tony Leung, moving on to larger markets in the mainland, speaking Mandarin Chinese, and placing the cultural world of Three Kingdoms more firmly into the hands of the PRC. If we are to view the current political world of China as divided into three kingdoms; mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, then this film may symbolically unite them under the mainland kingdom.

If we look past the film's success and further into its narrative, especially the way it modifies the previously discussed rivalry between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu, *Red Cliff* may be telling a very different story. In this film, the feuds and mind games between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu of previous adaptations are replaced by friendship. Despite a few jabs at one another during the beginning of Part I, the majority of these two films sees Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu—the latter played by Tong Leung (梁朝偉)—uniting their minds to fight against Cao Cao and win a heroic, moral victory. The film's final minute does much to force the viewer to remember that Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu are, in fact, friends. Zhou Yu's final words in the film, spoken to Zhuge Liang moments

23. Stanley Rosen, "Film and Society in China: The Logic of the Market" in *A Companion to Chinese Cinema* ed. Yingjin Zhang (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2012), 210.

24. Information from online database Box Office Mojo by IMDBpro: https://www.boxofficemojo.com/title/tt0425637/?ref_=bo_se_r_1

before they depart, are, "In this alliance, I found true friends. No matter what happens, this experience is engraved in my heart."[25] It is a heartwarming ending that turns the original text, or any other modern film adaptations for that matter, on its head. This aspect of the film reveals much more than John Woo's desire to give Tony Leung a spotless starring role; it completely reverses the rivalry narrative we have discussed above with its theme of centralism. Xiaofei Tian in her book, *Halberd at Red Cliff*, suggests: "For a viewer who is sensitive to the mainland Chinese government's tireless promotion of Chinese unification and a nationalistic agenda and to the Hong Kong identity of director John Woo, [*Red Cliff*] becomes a sly commentary on a localist perspective as opposed to the grand discourse of the empire."[26] With this interpretation in mind, these films become more than a simple revision of historical tradition, but reverse the centralism over localism theme that has prevailed in the story of Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu since the Ming dynasty. Whether or not this was John Woo's intent, his films are the first modern adaptations of the Three Kingdoms narrative to take the side of the autonomous locality and portray defending that autonomy as the moral obligation of the heroes.

While much of the audience is no doubt familiar with Zhuge Liang's character and motivations in the novel, the films throw most of it out the window by depicting the Battle of Red Cliff as an end to itself rather than the means for Zhuge Liang to increase Liu Bei's regional influence. As such, Zhuge Liang is depicted as a loyal ally of Zhou Yu, who is the real star of the battle. Zhuge Liang takes this loyalty so far as to abandon his lord, who decides to retreat before the battle begins, and chooses instead to continue offering his aid to Zhou Yu.[27]

Red Cliff's Zhou Yu is substantially different from the Zhou Yu we have seen in past adaptations. He is not deceitful as in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (1994) or as prideful and angry as in *Three Kingdoms* (2010); he may actually be seen as much more akin to the moral paragons that starred in mid-'90s anti-corruption drama who fight against injustice and corruption. In a scene that never would have been placed in a pre-modern adaptation of *Romance of*

25. *Red Cliff*, directed by John Woo (Beijing, China: Magnolia Pictures, 2008), https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Red-Cliff-Original-International-Version-/175534.

26. Tian, *Halberd at Red Cliff*, 338.

27. To be fair, it should be mentioned that later on in Part II, it is implied that Liu Bei never truly intended to retreat, and he returns for the final battle against Cao Cao.

the Three Kingdoms, Zhou Yu learns that Cao Cao's army is experiencing an epidemic and is pressured to use the opportunity to strike. In reply, Zhou Yu says, "This is a battle of honor. Even war must be fair."[28] The decision almost leads to crisis when Cao Cao piles deceased soldiers on rafts that float to Zhou Yu's camp with the intent of infecting his army. Through the scene, Cao Cao's lack of morality as a leader contrasts sharply with Zhou Yu's strict moral code.

Without Zhuge Liang's goal of helping his lord reunite the empire, the only character who represents centralized power is Cao Cao. John Woo does much to make Cao Cao even more villainous than he was portrayed even in the novel. His lust is repeatedly emphasized throughout the film, both in his disdainful treatment of consorts as well as his longing for Xiao Qiao. Xiao Qiao's role in the narrative becomes much greater than in other adaptations, even more so than *Three Kingdoms* (2010). By Part II's climax, she has left Xiakou and journeyed to Cao Cao's forces where she gives herself up to Cao Cao, hoping to stop the impending battle, and the very last scene of the battle has a sort of Mexican standoff between the heroes and Cao Cao, who is trying to kill Xiao Qiao to spite Zhou Yu.[29] With the inclusion of these details, Cao Cao, a corrupt warlord from the north hoping to conquer the self-ruled south, may parallel quite well with the PRC from the viewpoint of many Hong Kongers.

Although the reversal of roles in *Red Cliff* helps us better understand the role of localism in Hong Kong, remembering that the films are international collaborations that achieved international success leaves us wondering what the true legacy of the films is. Any 'sensitive viewers' that pick up on the films' reversal of the PRC's one-China policy are most certainly outnumbered by those that simply watched the films hoping to see more of John Woo's masterful kung-fu cinematography and consume more quality Three Kingdoms media. But even if the implications of Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu's found friendship are lost on most viewers, the films succeed in offering a new perspective on a story that has been retold since the historical Battle of Red Cliff was fought at the end of the Han dynasty, and perhaps generate some sympathy for a thriving southern locality that lost its autonomy nearly two centuries ago.

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28. *Red Cliff*, directed by John Woo, https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Red-Cliff-Original-International-Version-/175534.

29. *Red Cliff Part II*, directed by John Woo, https://www.vudu.com/content/movies/details/Red-Cliff-Original-International-Version-/175534.

Conclusion

In each of the three adaptations analyzed, the relationship between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu becomes much more than the backdrop of one battle in an epic cycle filled to the brim with others. Rather, everything leading up to the battle as well as the consequences of it depicts the larger forces of centralism and localism that are in constant war with each other. The years during and after the fall of the Han dynasty were chaotic and uncertain; it took centuries for another power to effectively control an empire on the same scale of the Han. The novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* reflects this chaos and uncertainty, but the book says much more about the time in which it was written than the era it was writing about. The Ming was an empire that pushed the limits of what a centralized power could do, but also realized the inherent limits of extending that power across a great distance. The struggle between Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu is representative of these contrasting forces, and the way their struggle ends only exemplifies how chaotic these forces can be when pitted against each other; Zhou Yu dies while attempting to preserve Sun Quan's power in the south, and Zhuge Liang, while greatly outliving his rival, dies without seeing Liu Bei's dream of reunification realized.

When adapting their story to the television screen, both Wang Fulin and Gao Xixi depict a similar push and pull between centralism and localism in the episodes that feature Zhou Yu and his endless attempts to best his rival. And similar to the novel, both television series come from a state that is actively attempting to increase its central power and realizing the difficult reality that entails, even in a modernized world where communication is faster than ever. Wang Fulin's 1994 series came just a few years after the Tiananmen Square Incident, a time when the government corruption largely caused by the interaction between central and local powers was a hot-button issue. Gao Xixi's series came years later when a growing majority realized that the corruption they saw was not about to vanish, and following the media trends of the time, it depicted an overtly complicated political web that the Zhuge Liang must navigate in order to accomplish his reunification goals while aiding Zhou Yu during the Battle of Red Cliff.

John Woo's *Red Cliff I–II*, by doing away with this politicking web created when central and local forces collide, creates a film that emphasizes the strength of local power when protected by allies Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang, and in the end, their moral union is enough to send Cao Cao, the central force, back to his home in the north. It is possibly a dream for Hong Kongers who wish to retain

local autonomy while facing greater political control from the PRC, possibly a decision to make the movie more marketable to a broader East Asian audience who get to see their favorite movie stars fight side by side in a battle against evil; either way, the reversal of the novel's narrative is significant in a world where the question of "what/where is China and who should control it?" becomes ever more important to answer.

As China continues to deal with internal corruption as well as expand its central and global influence, the story of the rivals Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu will likely continue to be retold on television screens, in movie theaters, and on smartphones. Whichever rival comes out on top will largely be the outcome of whether the PRC continues to follow the pattern of its Ming dynasty forebears and attempt to ever increase its central influence, or whether local forces, be they local cadres or disputed territories, will prove to make that goal impossible.

Article

The Becket Family of Salem, Massachusetts

Kaitlyn Richardson

Though notorious for the Salem witch trials of the 1690s, history moved on in Salem after the trials. During the eighteenth century, Salem grew increasingly prominent in the seafaring trade, and by 1800 had a population of 9,400, making it the sixth-largest city in the United States and the second-busiest port in Massachusetts.[1] Indeed, Salem and her trade contacts are considered by historians to be integral in the beginnings of United States international relations during the early nineteenth century.[2] This port town had contacts with such far-flung places as other North American Colonies, the Caribbean, Asia, Europe, and the West Indies, and thrived on a maritime and trade-based economy.

While most of the historical scholarship about Salem has focused on the Salem Witch Trials and Salem's inhabitants during the Witch Trials, Salem still had a rich history after the Witch Trials, a history that has often been ignored. This paper seeks to fill that gap by applying a genealogical and historical examination of a

1. Shastri, Vanita. *The Salem-India Story: Maritime Trade between Salem, Massachusetts, and India 1788–1845* (Lexington: Meru Education Foundation, 2009).

2. Shastri, Vanita. *The Salem-India Story: Maritime Trade between Salem, Massachusetts, and India 1788–1845* (Lexington: Meru Education Foundation, 2009); James Duncan Phillips, *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1937), 175, 272; William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley* vol. 2, 363.

three-generation family that lived in Salem between 1710 and 1839. This paper examines the contours of these individuals' lives, which can then be applied to the lived realities of Salem's everyday people during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Combined, this study reveals that people's lives were largely shaped by Salem's maritime community and economy, international trade networks, and the broader circumstances of American history during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, this paper demonstratess that the rapid expansion of Salem during this time period is reflected in the circumstances of each generation's life experiences. The biographies of multigenerational members of the Becket family demonstrate Salem's evolution and expansion between 1710 and 1839, as they both shaped and were shaped by trends in Salem, New England, and the new nation at large during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

William Becket

William Becket was the son of John Becket and Susanna Mason, born in about 1710 in Salem, Essex, Massachusetts Bay Colony. William married Susanna Fowler on 6 April 1745 in Salem.

William was the oldest child born to John and Susannah Becket, and was followed by four younger siblings. As a boy growing up in colonial New England, William likely engaged in household chores such as farming or gardening, chopping firewood, and caring for livestock.[3] Around the age of ten to fourteen, boys were expected to select their occupation and start training in that field. Often, boys either learned the trade of their fathers or learned a field through an apprenticeship.[4] It appears that William inherited his father's trade as a shipbuilder, and learned the trade from him. John Becket's will in 1763 left his shipbuilding yard to William and to William's brother, John.[5] A 1761 land grant from John Becket Sr. to William Becket and John Becket Jr. describes the location of his shipbuilding yard and wharf. The description is as follows:

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3. Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Harper and Row, 1966).

4. Beales, Ross W., Jr. "In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England." *American Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1975): 379–98.

5. "Essex County, Massachusetts, probate records and indexes 1638–1916," testate will of John Becket 29 December 1763, citing *Old Series: Probate records, vols. 339–341, Book 39–41, 1762–1764*, FHL microfilm 007704824, image 561.

"All that my Wharfe with the Land and Platts thereto adjoining and belonging in sd. Salem (being the westerly half or part of what formerly belonged to my Father Willm. Becket deceased)
Bounded Westerly on Land formerly belonging to Abraham
Purchase since decd. Northerly on a Way Easterly on the other half or part of the said Wharfe Land and Platts which did belong to my Brother Retire Becket deceased now owned by his son William Becket jun. & Southerly By the Harbour or however otherwise the same is bounded with the Priviledges and appurtenances thereof"[6]

This yard and wharf sat on an ideal location on Salem's coastline, and was a significant amount of land for the area and time period. Shipbuilding was an especially lucrative business in Massachusetts during the colonial era, with miles of coastlines, harbors and bays, and with rich natural resources.[7] Salem, in particular, featured many shipbuilding yards. In the early colonial period, people built their own boats for fishing and transportation. By the late 17th century, experienced shipbuilders built a new vessel each winter, fished in it during the summer, and then sold the vessel during the fall.[8]

In addition to his work as a shipbuilder, it appears that William at least dabbled in innkeeping: in 1749, he applied for an innholder's license in Salem.[9] In eighteenth- century New England, inns were used for both lodging and for food and drink. They also provided an important gathering place for the community: frequently, court sessions were held in taverns, and political matters were often informally discussed there.[10] Though it is unknown if William ever actually opened an inn, he surely frequented the local inn to participate in the political discussions, and to hear the news and gossip of his community.

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6. "Deeds, 1639–1866; index to deeds, 1640–1879 (Essex County, Massachusetts)," deed from John Becket to William Becket 28 July 1761, citing Deeds, v. 106–107, 1757–1762, FHL microfilm 866062, image 505.

7. Pitt, Steven J. "Building and Outfitting Ships in Colonial Boston," *Early American Studies* 13, no. 4 (2015): 888.

8. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 242.

9. "Essex County, Quarterly Court of General Sessions of the Peace," Court records 1749–1778, entry for William Becket December 1749, citing FHL microfilm 007842330, image 581 of 1093.

10. Sabin, Douglas B. "The New England Tavern: A General Study," *Minute Man National Park Information Services* (October 1982).

William Becket married Susanna Fowler on 6 April 1745 in Salem.[11] She was the daughter of Philip Fowler and Susanna Jacob and was born on 14 May 1723 in Ipswich, Essex, Massachusetts.[12] William and Susanna were the parents of William, their eldest, born in about 1745,[13] followed by Susanna[14] and Samuel[15] who were born in 1747 and 1749 respectively.[16] Puritan men were instructed to govern firmly, wisely, and gently within their households.[17] William's roles within his family likely consisted of providing for his family through his shipbuilding business, providing religious instruction to his children, especially by teaching them the catechism, representing his family to the outside world, and presiding over household affairs.[18] Contrary to the image of the somber Puritan, many Puritans believed in pleasure in moderation. They

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11. "Massachusetts Marriages, 1695–1910, 1921–1924," Salem, Essex, marriage of William Becket and Susannah Fowler 6 April 1745, digital images, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021); citing FHL microfilm 007821604, image 56.

12. "Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626–2001," Ipswich, Essex, baptism of Susannah Fowler 19 May 1723, digital image, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021), citing births, marriages, deaths 1663–1739, image 75 of 352.

13. "Tree of William Becket." Database. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *FamilySearch*. familysearch.org: 2021.

14. "Massachusetts Marriages, 1695–1910, 1921–1924," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021); citing FHL microfilm 007821604, image 478; "Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626–2001," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021), citing Marriages 1738–1848 vol 5, image 18 of 263. (Her birthdate was calculated from a marriage record which stated her age at marriage to be 18).

15. "Family Tree of Samuel Becket." Database. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *FamilySearch*. https://familysearch.org: 2021.

16. Bentley, William. *Record of the Parish List of Deaths, 1785–1819* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1882), p. 152, death of Susanna Becket 21 April 1817, digitized book accessed via *HathiTrust* (https://bable.hathitrust.org: accessed 8 March 2021), citing image 166 of 204. The record states Susanna had eight children. Documentation has been found for their children William, Susanna, and Samuel. Additionally, a son named Philip appears with the family on FamilySearch Family Tree. No documentation appears for Philip on FamilySearch, and no documentation was found for him over the course of this project. According to FamilySearch Family Tree, Philip was born in about 1749 in Salem and died in about 1809.

17. Westerkamp, Marilyn. "Engendering Puritan Religious Culture in Old and New England," *Pennsylvania History,* Pennsylvania State University Publication, 1997.

18. Morgan, Edmund S., *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Harper and Row, 1966).

would allow themselves pleasures in eating, relaxing, and socializing in the community.[19] Perhaps William engaged in such activities, taking time to enjoy this life while still ensuring that he was well-prepared for the life to come.

William Becket was a member of the East Church in Salem. He regularly paid rates and donations to the church[20] and was voted as a committeeman on multiple occasions as well.[21] This suggests that William was involved in the church and community, and was devout enough to be so involved. Several beliefs separated Puritans from other Christians: Puritans believed in predestination, the idea that belief in Jesus and participation in the sacraments could not alone determine one's salvation. Instead, all features of salvation were determined by God's sovereignty, including choosing those who will be saved and those who will receive God's irresistible grace. They distinguished between "justification," the concept of God's grace being given to the elect, and "sanctification," evidence of one's salvation. The concept of being a covenant people pervaded especially heavily in Puritan thought, determining religious and social behavior. Thus, Puritan congregations were considered to be congregations of individuals who had entered into covenants with God.[22] Church leaders were elected to their positions by the congregation members; thus William had to be elected as a committeeman, instead of appointed.[23]

The year 1754 ushered in the French and Indian War, an armed conflict within the colonies due to French expansion into the Ohio River Valley, but also part of a larger imperial conflict between Great Britain and France.[24] Two regiments of colonial troops were enlisted in Massachusetts, among whom were

19. Daniels, Bruce C. "Did the Puritans Have Fun? Leisure, Recreation and the Concept of Pleasure in Early New England." *Journal of American Studies* 25, no. 1 (1991): 7–22. Accessed March 16, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27555420.

20. Salem East Congregation, Church Records; entry for Wm. Becket rate payer 1757, online images, *New England's Hidden Histories* (https://nehh.com: accessed 21 February 2021), citing Church records, 1757–1792, image 9.

21. Salem East Congregation, Church Records; entry for Wm. Becket committeeman election 3 March 1757, online images, *New England's Hidden Histories* (https://nehh.com: accessed 21 February 2021), citing Church records, 1757–1792, image 127.

22. Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Harper and Row, 1966).

23. Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Harper and Row, 1966).

24. "French and Indian War," online database, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (https://britannica.com: accessed 7 April 2021).

Salem residents.[25] Though William did not serve in these regiments, he likely provided a crucial resource in the conflict by providing ships. Ships were needed to transport men from the English colonies north into Canada,[26] and William's shipyard likely supplied at least some of these ships. The war created a population of displaced French Acadians, two hundred of whom settled in Essex County. Among the refugees was Thomas Rue, who would go on to marry William's daughter Susanna.[27] The year 1763 marked the end of the conflict, which exacted a far greater toll than the colonists expected upon its outbreak nine years ago. As a result, New France was firmly held by the British, and France ceased to be a significant colonial power in the New World. Salem celebrated the end of the war by reading Thanksgiving sermons at church and in public.

Through the course of William's life, Salem expanded from a mere village to a major shipping and exporting town.[28] In 1750, Salem primarily consisted of a town square, with a couple of tight streets stemming out from it. William likely lived along Becket Street,[29] which was only a few paces away from his shipyard. Shops primarily existed for the shipbuilding business, with many including hardware, ropes, and navigation tools in their stock. By the 1770s, Salem expanded to become a major international port. In some senses, it was more important than Boston: though ships would unload their goods in Boston, many of them had to reload with lumber, dried cod, and furs in the port of Salem.[30] This meant that Salem attracted new people, goods, and ideas, and thus expanded from its humble roots into a major economic hub with shops selling international luxury goods, academic societies, and new churches to accommodate the larger population.[31] William saw this expansion take place

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25. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 198.

26. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 198.

27. Bentley, William. *The Diary of Rev. William Bentley D.D., Volume 1: April 1784–December 1792* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1905), 13.

28. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 168.

29. His father and daughter lived on Becket Street, so it would make sense for William to have lived there too.

30. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 340.

31. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 342.

over the years, perhaps speculating on the quieter Salem of his childhood during his later years. Though the year of William's death is unknown, historical records indicate that he died sometime after 1770.[32]

Susanna Becket

Susanna Becket, the daughter of William Becket and Susanna Fowler, was born in approximately 1747 in Salem, Essex, Massachusetts Bay Colony.[33] *Susanna married Thomas Rue on 24 January 1765 in Salem.*[34] *She died on 1 November 1805 in Salem.*[35]

Susanna Becket was born in approximately 1747 in Salem, Massachusetts. According to her mother's death record, Susanna had seven siblings.[36] In Puritan New England, children were christened within days of his or her birth in the local church. It appears that Susanna's parents attended the East Church in Salem, a congregational church that was formed in 1717 after some of the parishioners split from the First Church of Salem,[37] so this church is likely where Susanna was christened.

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32. "Church records, 1757–1792," Salem East Congregation, entry for Wm. Becket rate payer 1770, online images, *New England's Hidden Histories* (https://nehh.com: accessed 21 February 2021), image 170.

33. Her birthdate was calculated from a death record which stated her age at marriage to be 18.

34. "Massachusetts Marriages, 1695–1910, 1921–1924," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021), citing FHL microfilm 007821604, image 478; "Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626–2001," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch;* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021), citing Marriages 1738–1848 vol 5, image 18 of 263.

35. Bentley, William. *Record of the Parish List of Deaths, 1785–1819* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1882), p. 91, death of Susanna Rhue 1 Nov 1805, digitized book accessed via *HathiTrust* (https://bable.hathitrust.org: accessed 8 March 2021), citing image 105 of 204.

36. Bentley, William. *Record of the Parish List of Deaths, 1785–1819* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1882), p. 152, death of Susanna Becket 21 April 1817, digitized book accessed via *HathiTrust* (https://bable.hathitrust.org: accessed 8 March 2021), citing image 166 of 204. The record states she had eight children, though additional documentation has been found for only three of the children.

37. "Salem, Mass., East Church," online database, *Congregational Library & Archives* (https://congregationallibrary.org: accessed 18 February 2021).

Children were primarily taught by their parents in their homes: fathers were expected to teach their children the catechism every week, and children were expected to be literate so that they could read the Bible.[38] Many children attended local dame schools, schools that were taught in the home of a local women's home for a small fee.[39] Perhaps Susanna attended one such school, and given the Puritan tradition of childhood education, it can be fairly certain that she knew how to read.[40] Children were also expected to work to contribute to their family household: children often began working as early as age four or five with small, menial tasks like weeding or sweeping, and then worked up to more difficult tasks as they grew. Girls' work was closely related to the work of their mothers: they learned to sew, prepare food, and care for younger siblings.[41] All of this was intended to prepare girls for when they would be wives and mothers in their own households.

At the age of eighteen, Susanna married to Thomas Rue,[42] a French Acadian refugee who had fled from New France to Salem during the French and Indian War.[43] Within her husband's household, Susanna was likely expected to engage in running the household, especially while her mariner husband[44] was

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38. Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Harper and Row, 1966).

39. Higginson, J. H. "Dame schools," *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 22, Issue 2 (1974): 166–181.

40. Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Harper and Row, 1966).

41. Beales, Ross W., Jr. "In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England." *American Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1975): 379–98.

42. "Massachusetts Marriages, 1695–1910, 1921–1924," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021); citing FHL microfilm 007821604, image 478; "Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626–2001," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021), citing Marriages 1738–1848 vol 5, image 18 of 263.

43. Bentley, William. *The Diary of Rev. William Bentley D.D., Volume 1: April 1784–December 1792* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1905), 13.

44. "Massachusetts Marriages, 1695–1910, 1921–1924," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021), citing FHL microfilm 007821604, image 478; "Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626–2001," Salem, Essex, marriage of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket 24 Jan 1765, digital images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 29 January 2021), citing Marriages 1738–1848 vol 5, image 18 of 263.

away at sea. She likely was involved in crucial household labor activities such as food preparation, weaving and sewing clothing, and household maintenance. Given her husband's frequent absences, she may have had an expanded role, taking care of things that might normally be in his charge such as engaging in commerce and managing household finances.[45] In many situations, the wives of mariners even worked in separate businesses themselves to ensure that ends were met. Activities commonly undertaken by women included keeping taverns, running boarding houses, doing laundry, and distilling molasses.[46] Thus, it is likely that Susanna participated in similar activities to maintain her household economy and provide for her family.

When Susanna was 28 years old, the United States declared its independence from Great Britain, ushering in the American Revolutionary War. When soldiers from Salem left to join their regiments, people flooded into the streets to wish their soldiers victory as church bells rang throughout the town.[47] Among those soldiers was Susanna's husband Thomas, who served as a private in the Tenth Massachusetts Regiment during the war.[48] With her husband away at war, Susanna likely continued as she would while he was away at sea. Additionally, Susanna may have participated in the war effort in a multitude of other ways: during the war, it was common for Patriot women to boycott British goods, sign pledges in colonial newspapers, and knit clothing for the soldiers.[49] As the war pressed on, fewer and fewer ships came into Salem port, cutting the trading town off from much-needed supplies. The price of food and fuel inflated to unaffordably high prices, and bread was scarcer than anything

45. Vickers, Daniel and Walsh, Vince. "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring in Eighteenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts," *Social History* Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan 1999), 17–38.

46. Vickers, Daniel and Walsh, Vince. "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring in Eighteenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts," *Social History* Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan 1999), 17–38.

47. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 353.

48. "Revolutionary War Service Records," entry for Thomas Rue private in the Tenth Massachusetts Regiment (Revolutionary War), online image via Fold3, accessed 30 March 2021, citing NARA Publication M881.

49. Damiano, Sara T. "Writing Women's History Through the Revolution: Family Finances, Letter Writing, and Conceptions of Marriage." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 74, no. 4 (2017): 697–728. Accessed April 7, 2021. doi:10.5309/willmaryquar.74.4.0697.

else because shipments of flour from the Middle Colonies had been completely cut off.[50] Susanna was undoubtedly impacted by this: especially with a husband off fighting, she probably wondered how she could feed her family. On 26 October 1783, relief finally came to Salem, when the news of Washington's success at Yorktown finally reached Salem. Salem citizens celebrated by filling the streets with the noises of cannons, small arms, bells, and clattering pots and pans.[51]

The end of the war ushered in a movement known as "republican motherhood." This movement esteemed that women must revere republican values, virtues, and morals and teach those things to their children so that they would go on to be good citizens. Thus, as wives and mothers, women were seen to have a profound, albeit indirect effect on the political well-being of the nation as a whole.[52] Susanna herself was the mother of at least seven children,[53] and perhaps this newfound emphasis on republican motherhood influenced the way that she raised her children. Many of her duties and responsibilities likely revolved around her children.

Delivery took place in the home, where midwives and other experienced women would assist the mother. After birth, the mother and child remained in the bedroom until the mother was well enough to move about the house. It was common for mothers to swaddle their children tightly as infants, breastfeeding them and going about their daily chores with them.[54] Once a child learned to walk, he or she wore a shorter dress which allowed for movement. At about age seven, boys were "breeched" and sent to work with their fathers.[55] Indeed, most of Thomas and Susanna's sons went on to be mariners like their fathers.

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50. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 374.

51. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), 379.

52. Zagarri, Rosemarie. "Morals, Manners, and the Republican Mother." *American Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (1992): 192–215. Accessed April 7, 2021. doi:10.2307/2713040.

53. Documentation has been found for seven children. It can be assumed that there are some missing children: Thomas and Susanna were married in 1765 and their first documented child was born in 1773. Multiple searches were made to find these missing children, but these searches were largely unsuccessful.

54. Beales, Ross W., Jr. "In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England." *American Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1975): 379–98.

55. Beales, Ross W., Jr. "In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England." *American Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1975): 379–98.

Mothers knew the risk that their sons took in embarking on such journeys: the potential for storms and the looming threat of foreign diseases made seafaring a dangerous trade.[56] Tragically, two of their sons died on seafaring journeys at young ages: Philip died at sea when he was 22,[57] and Samuel died of yellow fever at age 14 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.[58] Girls stayed in their dresses, learning the household chores and duties from their mothers:[59] Susanna's own daughters went on to marry and create families of their own. Republican motherhood and family-centered New England society meant that Susanna was likely an invested mother who played a crucial role in her children's lives.[60]

Susanna and her husband evidently owned a house on Beckett's Lane within the East Parish of Salem. In 1784, however, Thomas Rue sold that house to Joseph Lambert and Nathaniel Silsbee, and the family moved to another home in Salem.[61] Susanna and Thomas attended the East Church in Salem, a Puritan and Universalist denomination, where several of their children were christened. Church membership provided women with a social distinction and an important role in their society. Though men were the ones appointed to offices in the church and made the ultimate decisions regarding the management of funds, women were the force behind all of it, attending to the needs of the poor and needy in their church community, participating in church meetings (at least to an extent), and teaching religion to their children.[62] Indeed, due to the large number of Salem's men who were at sea, the majority of church attendees were

56. Vickers, Daniel and Walsh, Vince. "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring in Eighteenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts," *Social History* Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan 1999), 17–38.

57. Bentley, William. *Record of the Parish List of Deaths, 1785–1819* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1882), p. 53, death of Philip Rhue Dec 1799, digitized book accessed via HathiTrust (https://babble.hathitrust.org: accessed 8 March 2021), citing image 67 of 204.

58. Bentley, William. *Record of the Parish List of Deaths, 1785–1819* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1882), p. 26, death of Samuel Rhue 1795, digitized book accessed via *HathiTrust* (https://babble.hathitrust.org: accessed 8 March 2021), citing image 36 of 204.

59. Beales, Ross W., Jr. "In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England." *American Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1975): 379–98.

60. Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Harper and Row, 1966).

61. "Deeds, 1639–1866; index to deeds, 1640–1879 (Essex County, Massachusetts)," deed from Thomas Rue to Joseph Lambert & Nathaniel Silsbee 24 April 1784, citing *Deeds v. 136–137, 1776–1785*, FHL microfilm 866077, image 526.

62. Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England 1650–1750* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 218.

women. For Susanna, the church was a place of community and solace. On October 17, 1800, Susanna requested her church congregation join her in praying for the death of her sons at sea.[63]

Susanna died at the age of 58 of a fever in Salem. According to her death record, she "had been faltering throughout the summer." She was survived by five of her seven or more children (two sons and three daughters), and by her husband Thomas.[64] She was buried in the cemetery of Salem's East Church.

William Rue

William Rue, the son of Thomas Rue and Susanna Becket, was christened on 27 August 1786 in Salem, Essex, Massachusetts[65] *William married Helen Tytler on 21 August 1808 in Salem.*[66] *He died on 14 March 1839 in Salem.*[67]

William Rue was born into a newborn nation: only five years prior to his birth, the colonies won their independence from Britain at the decisive Battle of Yorktown. As such, much of William's own childhood mirrored that of a growing and developing nation. The United States Constitution was signed in 1787, when William was only a year old. William's father, Thomas Rue, fought for American Independence in the Revolutionary War,[68] so it must have been especially satisfying for Thomas to see his young son grow up in a newly freed

63. Bentley, William. *The Diary of William Bentley* vol. 2, 60.

64. Bentley, William. *Record of the Parish List of Deaths, 1785–1819* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1882), p. 91, death of Susanna Rhue 1 Nov 1805, digitized book accessed via HathiTrust (https://bable.hathitrust.org: accessed 8 March 2021), citing image 105 of 204.

65. Emmerson, James A. *Eighteenth century baptisms in Salem, Massachusetts, hitherto unpublished* (Salem: Salem Press, 1886), p. 99, baptism of William Rue 27 Aug 1786, digitized book accessed via *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 18 February 2021), citing image 100 of 127.

66. "Massachusetts, U.S., Compiled Marriages, 1633–1850," Salem, Essex, index entry for marriage of William Rue and Eleanor Tytler 21 August 1808, index accessed via Ancestry, citing FHL microfilm 0761210.

67. "Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records 1620–1988," Salem, Essex, death of William Ruee 14 March 1839, compiled source via Ancestry, accessed 17 March 2021.

68. "Revolutionary War Service Records," entry for Thomas Rue private in the Tenth Massachusetts Regiment (Revolutionary War), online image via Fold3, accessed 30 March 2021, citing NARA Publication M881.

nation, one in which "the blessings of liberty" were to be secured for their posterity.[69]

As was typical of the time period,[70] William eventually adopted his father's occupation as a mariner. The first known journey that William embarked on was aboard the ship Harper bound from Salem for the West Indies when he was eighteen.[71] Due to its strategic position, by 1790 Salem Harbor was the sixth-largest port in the United States.[72] During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, international trade was conducted from Salem "to the farthest ports of the rich east," importing such goods as ceramics, furniture, decorative arts, textiles, spices, and dye.[73]

Going to sea offered young men the opportunity for several years of steady work and an opportunity for promotion, in addition to the exciting adventure of experiencing new cultures, seeing new things, and mixing with strangers.[74] Because of the insulated community of Salem, these young men often embarked on seafaring journeys with people they already knew: their relatives, friends, and acquaintances. Single and still based at home, young men divided their time between sea and shore; sailing abroad, fishing, doing odd jobs, helping out at home, and waiting for their next adventure.[75] William likely enjoyed the thrills that seafaring provided, and for a Puritan-stock boy who grew up in a relatively small town in New England, the exposure that he had to nations, peoples, and cultures flung across the globe was significant. William continued as a mariner for the rest of his life, and over the

69. "The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription," online database, *The National Archives* (https://archives.gov: accessed 6 April 2021).

70. Beales, Ross W., Jr. "In Search of the Historical Child: Miniature Adulthood and Youth in Colonial New England." *American Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1975): 379–98.

71. "Massachusetts, Essex County, seamen's records: crew lists and shipping articles for Beverley and Salem, 1797–1934," entry for William Ruee 1804 online images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 18 March 2021), citing NARA NAID 1600758.

72. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1937), 175, 272.

73. Phillips, James Duncan. *Salem in the Eighteenth Century* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937).

74. Vickers, Daniel and Walsh, Vince. "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring in Eighteenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts," *Social History* Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan 1999), 17–38.

75. Vickers, Daniel and Walsh, Vince. "Young Men and the Sea: The Sociology of Seafaring in Eighteenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts," *Social History* Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan 1999), 17–38.

course of his travels visited such destinations as Calcutta,[76] Cayenne,[77] Surinam,[78] Martinico (in the present-day Dominican Republic),[79] and Martinique.[80]

On 21 August 1808, William married Helen (alias Eleanor) Tytler in Salem.[81] Helen was born in about 1788 in Edinburgh, Scotland.[82] Though William was married, he still embarked on many seafaring activities. Despite that, William still had a family with his wife, Helen. William and Helen had at least three children: William Rue, Susan Rue, and Judith Rue.

Tragically, their oldest, William Rue, died of atrophy when he was only fourteen months old. The description of young William's death reads, "Oct. 2 [1810] William, son of William and Helen Rhue. Atrophy, 14 months. Only child. The mother a daughter of the celebrated James Tytler, who emigrated from Scotland. Married three years. [Of] Webb street."[83] The "celebrated" grandfather, James Tytler, was a Scottish scholar and the chief editor of the second edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1776. He was the first Briton to make a successful ascent in a hot air balloon, embarking on his journey on 27 August 1784 in Edinburgh. Using his political connections, he moved to London in 1792

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76. "Massachusetts, Essex County, seamen's records: crew lists and shipping articles for Beverley and Salem, 1797–1934," entry for William Ruee 1817 online images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 18 March 2021), citing NARA NAID 1600758.

77. "Massachusetts, Essex County, seamen's records: crew lists and shipping articles for Beverley and Salem, 1797–1934," entry for William Ruee 1825 online images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 18 March 2021), citing NARA NAID 1600758.

78. "Massachusetts, Essex County, seamen's records: crew lists and shipping articles for Beverley and Salem, 1797–1934," entry for William Ruee 1825 online images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 18 March 2021), citing NARA NAID 1600758.

79. "Massachusetts, Essex County, seamen's records: crew lists and shipping articles for Beverley and Salem, 1797–1934," entry for William Ruee 1827/1828, online images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 18 March 2021), citing NARA NAID 1600758.

80. "Massachusetts, Essex County, seamen's records: crew lists and shipping articles for Beverley and Salem, 1797–1934," entry for William Ruee 1832/33, online images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: accessed 18 March 2021), citing NARA NAID 1600758.

81. "Massachusetts, U.S., Compiled Marriages, 1633–1850," Salem, Essex, index entry for marriage of William Rue and Eleanor Tytler 21 August 1808, index accessed via Ancestry, citing FHL microfilm 0761210.

82. "Genealogy of the Descendants of Richard Man of Scituate, Massachusetts," entry for Susan F. Ruee, p. 199, entry 57, digitized book, Ancestry; "Biography of James Tytler," online database, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (https://oxforddnb.com: accessed 6 April 2021).

83. Bentley, William. *Record of the Parish List of Deaths, 1785–1819* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1882), p. 116, death of William Rhue 2 October 1810, digitized book accessed via HathiTrust (https://bable.hathitrust.org: accessed 8 March 2021), citing image 130 of 204.

to mingle with the capital's political circles. His essay "*To the people and their friends*" was decried as an attack on members of Parliament, Prime Minister William Pitt, and King George III. He was arrested and charged with seditious libel, after which he fled to Salem to avoid imprisonment with his wife, Jean, and their twin daughters, Helen and Grace.[84] James Tytler and his family lived in Salem for the rest of their lives.

On 12 June 1812, Congress declared war on Great Britain. This war was largely provoked by American frustration with economic sanctions against the United States (within the larger scheme of the Napoleonic Wars) and outrage over the British practice of impressment.[85] At the time, Great Britain was the largest naval power in the world, largely due to the fact that it had such a widespread, global empire to attend to. Thus, the United States responded by bolstering up a navy of its own.[86] William Rue joined in the United States' efforts by embarking in the United States Navy aboard the U.S.S *Rattlesnake*.[87] The ship primarily cruised back and forth from the New England area to the Caribbean, successfully capturing multiple British merchant ships.[88] William served onboard the U.S.S. *Rattlesnake* from 8 July 1813 to 31 December 1813.[89] His skills as a mariner likely served him well in this endeavor. Shortly after William left the ship, it was captured by the H.M.S. *Leander*.[90]

William divided his time for the rest of his life between Salem and the sea: Salem crew lists indicate that William embarked on a multitude of seafaring journeys, and he only appears in Salem in the 1820 census,[91] likely because he was at sea for the others. These crew lists provide a physical description of him,

84. "Biography of James Tytler," online database, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (https://oxforddnb.com: accessed 6 April 2021).

85. "War of 1812," online database, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (https://britannica.com: accessed 6 April 2021).

86. "War of 1812," online database, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (https://britannica.com: accessed 6 April 2021).

87. "War of 1812 Pension Files," entry for William Ruce and Helen Tytler Ruce, online image via Fold3, accessed 30 March 2021, citing NARA roll RG15-1812.

88. "Rattlesnake," online database, *Naval History and Heritage Command* (https://history.navy.mil: accessed 6 April 2021).

89. "War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812–1815," file of William Ruce, pension no. WO 815, Roll number 81, digital image via Ancestry, citing NARA microfilm M313.

90. "U.S.S. Rattlesnake," online database, *Naval History and Heritage Command* (https://history.navy.mil: accessed 6 April 2021).

91. 1820 United States census, Salem, Essex, Massachusetts, household of Wm Reue, digital image, *Ancestry* (https://ancestry.com: accessed 12 March 2021), citing NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 49.

and stated that he was five feet and six inches tall, with dark hair and a dark complexion.

William Rue died at the age of 52 of stomach cancer in the Salem Almshouse,[92] an institution designed for housing Salem's residents who could no longer provide for themselves. Though William worked as a mariner for his entire life, his trade evidently was not a stable enough income to support him and his family in his old age. He was likely buried in the burial ground of the Almshouse since a gravesite in Salem was too expensive for his family to afford. He was survived by his wife, Helen, and by their daughters Susan and Judith.

Conclusion

History is made by individuals—individuals with unique life circumstances and experiences. Thus, the history of a place and time period is defined by its inhabitants. The biographies of William Becket, Susanna Becket, and William Rue provide insight into the lived history of Salem, Massachusetts during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a period of rapid growth and expansion for Salem. As suggested by primary genealogical sources and supplementary scholarly historical work, the Beckets' and Rues' lives were largely shaped by Salem's maritime community and economy, international trade networks, and the broader climate of American history.

92. "Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records 1620–1988," Salem, Essex, death of William Ruee 14 March 1839, compiled source via Ancestry, accessed 17 March 2021); "War of 1812 Pension Files," entry for William Ruce and Helen Tytler Ruce, online image via Fold3, accessed 30 March 2021, citing NARA roll RG15-1812.

Article

The Jewish Assimilation of Europe

Noah Allen

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, historians consistently framed Jewish crises as conflicts between the forces of assimilation and preservation, or in some cases liberalism and orthodoxy. Israeli scholars like Katz helped reinforce this frame in volumes like *Tradition and Crisis,* describing rationalist trends in modern Judaism like the Haskalah movement as an assimilating reaction to the liberalizing force of the European Enlightenment.[1] Szajkowski extended this narrative to the French Revolution, asserting that French Jewry was faced with a choice between the defense of ancient tradition and absorption into a radical new movement that was unappreciative of the nuances of their way of life.[2]

The reality is that French Jews were not constrained by this binary. Contemporary historians like Schechter and Sepinwall now contend that European Jews found ways to retain the essential elements and rituals of their religion and cultural identity while engaging with the broader gentile society

1. Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages*, Syracuse University Press, 2000, 196–97.

2. Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Revolutions of 1789, 1830 and 1848*, KTAV Publishing House, 1970, 1074.

of post-Enlightenment Europe.[3] Indeed, Jewish leaders, thinkers, and authors assimilated revolutionary language into the Jewish economy of ideas to benefit their communities and secure political capital for themselves in the new regimes. In a process that reflected the Haskalah movement in Eastern and Central Europe, French Jews carefully integrated Enlightenment and republican ideals into their own system of values, retroactively transforming the language of liberalism and eventually Napoleonic imperialism into ideas that, they proposed, were actually central and original to Judaism. In this way, the Jewish leaders and thinkers of France resisted assimilation into the gentile setting that surrounded them while adapting to the intellectual currents of the Revolution.

The relationship between the Revolution and French Jewish communities was complicated by the debt that revolutionary language owed to the *philosophes* of the European Enlightenment, who had sometimes tasked themselves with formulating answers to "the Jewish question." Schechter proposes that the Jews were of great interest to Enlightenment thinkers in that they provided potent fodder for thought experiments about human nature and the reformation of character by education. The *philosophes* had so unanimously conceived of Judaism as both a people and a religion consumed by civic and financial vice that, Schechter argues, they felt comfortable discussing them in broad terms and intellectually experimenting with them as theoretical patients of regeneration.[4] In most propositions, however, Jewish integration into French society was conditioned on the dissolution of the Semitic identity and absorption into Christianity.

Many of the authors of the Enlightenment were explicit in their condemnation of the participation of Jews in French society. In his *Philosophical Dictionary*, Voltaire infamously remarked that the Jews were "an ignorant and barbarous people," complaining of their supposed greed and hatred for the people of the gentile nations that host them.[5] Thus, influential elements of the European Enlightenment argued against Jewish participation in French society on the grounds that the integration of their religious culture (which allowed interest

3. Ronald Schechter, *Obstinate Hebrews: Representations of Jews in France, 1715–1815*, University of California Press, 2003, 35.; Alyssa Sepinwall, "Napoleon, French Jews, and the Idea of Regeneration," *CCAR Journal: the Reform Jewish Quarterly* 54 (Winter 2007): 57.

4. Ronald Schechter, "The Jewish Question in Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 1 (1998): 90.

5. Francois Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary* (Penguin UK, 2004), 94.

collection as a legitimate financial practice) posed a threat to both the unity of the state and the contents of its purse.

The bitter irony of the most ardent defenders of social egalitarianism directing venomous attacks against the integration of a persecuted minority group into society at large was not lost on authors like Zalkind Hourwitz, a Polish Ashkenazi Jew who had relocated to Metz. In "Vindication of the Jews," his answer in essay form to the question of Jewish participation and betterment in France, he lamented that "we are hard pressed even in an enlightened century, not to repair all the evils that have been done to [the Jews]... and to leave them peacefully to enjoy the rights of humanity under the protection of general laws."[6] Hourwitz's response to the "Jewish question" appealed directly to the post-Enlightenment intellectual community of France by invoking the progression of society from a quixotic "Dark Ages" to rationalistic modernity and contrasting the vision of an Enlightened Europe with the reality faced by some of its most hated minorities.

Hourwitz also applied the theory of rights and social rehabilitation to the Jews themselves, positing that the simplest means of making the Jews "happy and useful" would be to "stop making them unhappy and unuseful. Accord them, or rather return to them the right of citizens, which you [the French gentiles] have denied them against all divine and human laws and against your own interests, like a man who thoughtlessly cripples himself."[7] Core to the theories of government proposed by Rousseau, John Locke, and other intellectuals of the Enlightenment was the sacred and inalienable nature of certain human rights supposed were considered to be fundamental to the expression and agency of the free man. Hourwitz, in constructing a rights-based argument for Jewish emancipation, forced the intellectual opposition to take the difficult step of arguing against universal rights. This modification in the argument was made all the more difficult by the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, a document central to the ideological economy of the early days of the liberal Revolution that could be interpreted as granting full rights to all French persons. In response to a similar argument made by Ashkenazic leaders in Paris, Count Clermont-Tonnerre, a deputy to the National Assembly known for his support for Jewish emancipation but fearful of reprisal by the anti-Semitic deputies to Alsace, qualified his position by asserting that "the Jews should be

6. Zalkind Hourwitz, "Vindication of the Jews," Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution.

7. Ibid.

denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals. They must be citizens."[8] The conservative approach to the Jewish question, in the face of Jewish thought leaders invoking the principles of the inalienable rights of man supposedly guaranteed to them by the Declaration, was to then shift the discussion from the personhood of Jews to their allegiance to the state.

Indeed, some Jewish authors had anticipated questions of their allegiance and made concessions to gentile society in hopes of the attainment of full participation. Hourwitz was no exception in this regard: to the modern eye, Hourwitz's argument for full Jewish civil participation appears moderate, even conciliatory in tone. Some of the contentions he enumerates seem to apologize for the Jewish character and appeal to the desire among gentiles for Ashkenazic assimilation, as in the passage where Hourwitz argues that the granting of full rights and citizenship would be "the best means of converting [Jews] to Christianity" insofar as the deliverance of the French Jews from material hardship would help them to look to a "spiritual Messiah" instead of a "temporal one."[9] In the same essay, Hourwitz argued against the continuation of Jewish traditions that contradicted European legal customs, particularly the juridical role of the rabbi in secular matters.[10]

It is clear that Hourwitz regarded Judaism as a voluntary religious affiliation first and a political or ethnic identity second—this was notably in direct opposition to the emerging Hasidic movement, which was itself a reaction to the Jewish Enlightenment of Eastern Europe. Despite his compromises on Judaism as a distinct and separate legal and political organization, Hourwitz's essay nonetheless articulated an argument for Jewish freedom in the vocabulary of the intellectual moment. In doing so, he adapted the language of revolution to suit his people's collective socio-economic needs, striking a nuanced balance between the preservation of his identity as a Jew and concessions made to the incongruities that necessarily arose from interacting with a prejudiced society that presumed legal and political authority over its citizens.

As might be expected, the partisans for Jewish rights were far from a unified front. Semitic authors used the language of revolution to support different visions of Jewish participation in French society, some more willing to compromise the rites and traditions of Judaism than others. The most pronounced

8. Count Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre, quoted in David Englander, *The Jewish Enigma: an Enduring People* (New York, NY: George Braziller, Inc., 1992), 92.

9. Hourwitz, "Vindication of the Jews."

10. Hourwitz, "Vindication of the Jews."

division in the French Jewish community was between the Ashkenazim in the northeast and the Sephardim in the southwest. The Sephardim in Bordeaux and Avignon were descendants of Jews expelled from Iberia and forced into the Christian tradition. Those who wished to retain their original faith were compelled to do so in secrecy until late into the seventeenth century.[11] Perhaps as a result of forced assimilation, France's Sephardic Jews had embedded themselves much more deeply in the economy of the southwest and enjoyed a relatively high degree of social and financial freedom compared to their Ashkenazic counterparts.

The Sephardim leveraged their socio-economic position by writing a petition to the National Assembly in 1789 for full civil rights predicated on the contention that the Jews of Bordeaux had more fully integrated into gentile society and thus could better live by the principles of the Revolution than the Jews of Alsace, who they characterized as superstitious separatists.[12] The petition triggered a debate in the Assembly over the extent to which the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen applied to Jewish persons, a thorny subject given the heated exchanges over the Protestant question fresh in the deputies' memories. During the debates, Sephardic leaders tried to distinguish themselves from the Ashkenazic leaders (also present at the Assembly) by arguing that their centuries-long integration into the economy and culture of southern France had acculturated them to Christian norms and regenerated their moral and political character. In their presentation to the council, southern Jewish leaders stressed that they had extricated religious authority from judicial power in their communities and that Sephardic Judaism was a voluntary faith and not a national identity, much as Hourwitz had. Unlike their counterparts in the north, they had relinquished the religious norms that supposedly conflicted with the values and norms of an enlightened nation, or so their argument went.[13]

These contentions were expressed in terms agreeable to the post-Enlightenment mind, predicated as it was on a belief in the possibility of regeneration on an individual and communal level. The Sephardic leaders also appealed to

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11. Jonathan I. Israel, "Crypto-Judaism in 17th-Century France: An Economic and Religious Bridge between the Hispanic World and the Sephardic Diaspora," in *Diasporas within a Diaspora*, Brill, 2002, 245.

12. David Sorkin, "Jewish Emancipation in Central and Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Jewish Enigma: an Enduring People*, ed. David Englander (New York, NY: George Braziller, Inc., 1992), 93.

13. Sorkin, 94.

the concept of social covenants, arguing that the rights granted them by the Monarchy two hundred years prior distinguished them as viable French citizens, insofar as they had remained faithful to the contract made between them and the state. This proved a wise rhetorical maneuver, as Rousseau's theory of the social contract remained a powerful influence on Revolutionary legal thinking. The strategy of distinction from the Ashkenazim worked after an initial aborted vote, and Sephardic Jews were nominally granted the full rights and privileges of French citizenship by January of 1790.

The Ashkenazic leaders were, needless to say, disappointed that the National Assembly had not extended those same rights to the Jews of the northeast. On 28 January 1790, the Jews of Paris, Alsace, and Lorraine drafted a petition to the Assembly that a date for a deliberation on the extension of rights to the French Ashkenazi be determined as soon as possible. In this petition, the authors repudiated the claim that the Jews of northeast France were a separate people from the French (and the Jews of the southwest, for that matter), and that the so-called "tolerance laws" passed in regard to Protestant persons were just as applicable to them as they were to the Sephardim, who had cited them in their own defense a month earlier.[14] The Ashkenazic leaders also turned the argument of citizenship and questions of foreign loyalty in their favor by recalling Rousseau's maxim that there exist two kinds of persons in relation to the state (foreigners and citizens), and then identifying themselves as non-foreigners by enumerating their essential functions in the local economies and their own patriotic desire to support the Revolution after suffering various financial abuses under the *ancien regime*. By attempting to disprove their foreignness, the Ashkenazic leaders identified themselves as citizens worthy of the nation, whether the nation recognized them as such or not.

They also refused to distance themselves from or compromise their religious beliefs; instead, they argued that the ideals of the Enlightenment were to be found in the oldest of Jewish traditions, that is, the Mosaic Law as related by the Torah. Far from encouraging civic malpractice, "[The Jewish] religion authorizes neither deception nor dishonesty; that far from ordering that foreigners be hated, it stipulates that they love them, that they be offered consolation and help; that the law of Moses is full of these principles of love and charity &c."[15] The practice

14. *Petition of the Jews of Paris, Alsace, and Lorraine to the National Assembly*, quoted in Philip G. Dwyer and Peter McPhee, *The French Revolution and Napoleon: a Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2002), 36.

15. *Petition*, 37.

of usury, a controversial practice and a frequent locus of anti-semitic criticism, was therefore not to be abused according to the founding documents of the faith. Furthermore, the Ashkenazic leaders contended that the practices encouraged by ancient Jewish law were fully compatible with participation in French society as lawful citizens and that the dictates of the faith would encourage the fulfillment of their side of the social contract, rather than discouraging it, as some anti-Semitic deputies argued.

In this way, the Ashkenazi formulated a rights-based argument similar to the Sephardic petition to the Assembly but claimed the language and principles of the Revolution as original to the Jewish faith and its most ancient traditions. By incorporating the rhetoric of post-Enlightenment Europe into their economy of ideas, the Jews of Paris, Alsace, and Lorraine assimilated the thinkers of Europe into Judaism, rather than being absorbed and homogenized as a people into the currents of Revolutionary politics and ideology. Instead of renouncing their Semitic identity, French Ashkenazi leaders forcefully defended their right to meaningfully participate in the society of the nation using the language of the very same *philosophes* who argued for their complete assimilation. Their efforts bore fruit when the increasingly radical government of 1793 ratified a new constitution that effectively guaranteed their full rights and citizenship.

The Jews of France were remarkable for their ability to adapt both themselves to the political and intellectual currents of the day and to adapt the features of those currents to their own ends. This tendency extended to the conservative reactions to the Reign of Terror that culminated in Napoleon's personal rule of France. The Jewish response to the Thermidorian Reaction, the Directory, and Napoleon's political ascendancy was in no way homogeneous, but the maneuverings of Jewish leaders throughout the period were generally marked by pragmatic enthusiasm for the political order of the moment. Both the Ashkenazim and the Sephardim presented outward support, and even religious approval, of Napoleon as their political ruler, but did so in the context of a difficult relationship with the Consul-cum-Emperor.

Though Napoleon privately expressed distaste for the Jews as "the most despicable of mankind,"[16] he pursued a strategy of socio-economic integration with the purported intention to, in his own words, "make them leave off usury, and become like other men . . . by putting them upon an equality, with Catholics, Protestants, and others, [he] hoped to make them become good citizens,

16. Napoleon Bonaparte, *New Letters of Napoleon I: Omitted from the Edition Published under the Auspices of Napoleon III,* Edited by D. Appleton, 1897, 71.

and conduct themselves like others of the community..."[17] This rhetoric is comparable to the regenerative language of the Sephardic leaders in the Assembly debates and reflected Napoleon's eagerness to maintain social order cloaked in the verbiage of the Revolution. The Sephardim were the most receptive to Napoleon's overtures to the Jews, in spite of legal missteps like the so-called "Infamous Decree" of 1808 that limited Jewish economic participation and freedom of movement while encouraging renewed persecution against Sephardim and Ashkenazim alike.[18]

Regardless, the Jewish community of France quickly adapted to the changing political climate. Where Semitic leaders once used liberal language to argue their case, they now gave religious sanction to the Empire. Perhaps the most dramatic manifestation of this was the Jewish celebrations throughout France and its colonies of Napoleon as a quasi-Messiah. His decree emancipating the Ashkenazim and Sephardim to practice their religion freely on 30 May 1806 produced an outpouring of Jewish support. A striking depiction of Napoleon in the garb of King David granting freedom to the Jews of France was distributed in French newspapers, indicating a sort of naturalization of Napoleonic imperialism into the Jewish economy of ideas.

To settle the Jewish question, Napoleon convened a consistory of notable Jews to answer a series of leading questions regarding Jewish loyalty to the state versus their identification as a distinct nation. The purpose of the organization, which was later reconvened as the auspiciously named "Grand Sanhedrin," was transparent: to solidify minority support for the Emperor by granting French Jews symbolic and actual rights while curtailing their independence as a nation apart from the nation. The Sanhedrin responded to Napoleon's questions accordingly, issuing a regulation that encouraged French Jews to seek employment other than money-lending and to "treat [their country's] citizens as their own brothers according to the universalist rules of moral conduct, and Jews who have become citizens of a state must regard that country as their fatherland."[19] In the same way that Napoleon blended imperial policy while claiming the

17. Napoleon Bonaparte, quoted in Barry Edward O'Meara, *Napoleon in Exile: Or, A Voice from St. Helena. The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events in His Life and Government, in His Own Words*, Vol. 1 (AC Armstrong, 1885), 183.

18. Lisa Moses Leff, "Jewish Solidarity in Nineteenth-Century France: the Evolution of a Concept," *The Journal of Modern History* 74, no. 1 (2002): 10.

19. "Declaration Adopted by the Assembly and the Answers to the First Three Questions," *Confronting Modernity, 1750–1880* (2019), 176.

principles of the Revolution, the Grand Sanhedrin awarded Napoleon status as an enlightened pseudo-Messiah, incorporating foreign concepts into their religious culture and adapting them to their own historical benchmarks.

Far from either dissimulating their identity or retaining it in conservative isolationism, the Jews of France proved remarkably adaptable to the changing political atmosphere surrounding them. From the early stages of the Revolution to the ascendancy of Napoleon, Sephardim and Ashkenazim adopted the language of the times to argue for their rights and full participation in French society, as is evident in the forceful arguments of Zalkind Hourwitz, the Sephardic and Ashkenazic representatives to the National Assembly, and the Jewish response to Napoleon's rising political star. In doing so, the Jews of France assimilated the rhetoric and ideals of European gentile intellectuals and leaders. In defiance of the usual question of Jewish assimilation or separation, they preserved their own culture while successfully adapting to the rapidly changing world around them, and indeed, adapting the world itself to them.

Article

Binding Interdependence

The Necessity of Marriage in the Stonor Letters

Sarah Emmett

Upon her marriage to William Stonor in 1475, Elizabeth Stonor, née Croke, was no wedding amateur. Twice before, she had stood on the steps of the church, as was the custom, and promised to share her wealth and her body with her husband. Twice before, her husband had promised to provide for her and leave her a dower portion upon his death. Both grooms had offered Elizabeth gold and silver coins and a ring to seal their union, and both times, Elizabeth and her husband had prostrated themselves before the altar of the church and heard mass among their family, friends, and all the parishioners.[1] By the time of her third marriage, Elizabeth had seen her fair share of dowries, weddings, babies, and death, and yet, once again, she found herself in her best dress and veil, standing on the steps of church, ready to relinquish herself and her sizeable fortune to William Stonor, the young head of the aristocratic Stonor family. Three years later, in 1478, Elizabeth would once again put her experience to good use at the wedding of her daughter Katherine and her man of business Thomas Betson. Through the letters exchanged between these two couples and their associates, Elizabeth, William, Katherine, and Betson subtly make the case for medieval marriage as a means of mitigating insecurity and benefitting from interdependence.

1. Peter Fleming, *Family and Household in Medieval England.* Social History in Perspective. (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 45.

In 15th-century England roughly 10% of households were headed by widows, and, of those widows, 73% of them remarried.[2] So, although Elizabeth was experienced with both marriage and widowhood, she was by no means exceptional. Born the daughter of a London alderman and merchant, Elizabeth married Thomas Rich sometime in the early 1460s, and together they had four children: Anne, Joan, Katherine, and John. Rich's will was formalized in 1471 and by 1472, he had been dead long enough for Elizabeth to have married John Fen, who was also a successful textile merchant, like her father and first husband. In 1474, Fen died, leaving Elizabeth with two more children, a will to execute, and a significant fortune.[3]

Widows like Elizabeth Stonor enjoyed significantly more independence than other women, both married and unmarried. For possibly the first time in their lives, widowed women owned their own property outright and had control over their own finances after a lifetime of financial dependence on male relatives.[4] On the death of her second husband John Fen, Elizabeth Stonor received the dower portion due her, which constituted a third of her husband's goods, an amount which she alone controlled.[5] She was also named the executor of her husband's will, which gave her further control over the remaining two thirds of Fen's estate which would be reserved for his children. Fen's choice of Elizabeth as his chief executor speaks to her capabilities as a woman of business; however, it was not uncommon for wives to serve in this capacity. Chief executors were required to be deeply familiar with the properties, debts, clients, and desires of the deceased, and, wives, as partners in the family business, were often the natural choice.[6] While Elizabeth was already experienced with the business and property that Fen left behind, as a widow, she now had direct and legally recognized control over a significant portion of her husband's affairs.

The increased independence of widowhood was, however, coupled with increased vulnerability, even among family members. Many widows were forced to sue their relatives for the payment of their dower portion, and others, disadvantaged by their lack of experience with the law, lost their portions altogether.[7]

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2. Anne Crawford, ed, *Letters of Medieval Women* (Thrupp, U.K., 2002), 22. Barbara Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 96.

3. Alison Hanham, "The Stonors and Thomas Betson: Some Neglected Evidence," *The Ricardian* 15 (2005), 34.

4. Fleming, 84.

5. Fleming, 85

6. Hanham, 34.

7. Fleming, 22–23.

Because Hugh Fen was no more than a toddler when his father died, Elizabeth was faced with a different set of problems. She was now responsible for maintaining her son's inheritance until he came of age, all while raising five other children. And though Elizabeth was the chief executor of the will, she was not the only executor, as Fen had appointed some of his business associates to the position as well.[8] Elizabeth's independence was therefore limited by the opinions of men with little incentive to prioritize her well-being. In a letter dated to May 1478, four years after Fen's death, Elizabeth wrote of a meeting with the other executors, commenting that they were "reasonably well cooled: they be not so hot as they were, and yet they will be better hereafter, I doubt not."[9] While the rest of the letter indicates Elizabeth's satisfaction with the meeting, it appears that two of the executors had previously been "hot" (passionate or intense) about some of their business. Negotiating the personalities and interests of men with little investment in her personal well-being could not have been easy for Elizabeth, and the supposed independence of widowhood was likely soured by its difficulties.

In this vulnerable position, Elizabeth sought a reliable ally and associate, her husband's former apprentice and business partner Thomas Betson. Betson was finishing up his eight-year apprenticeship around the same time that Elizabeth married John Fen, and, as the mistress and apprentice of the house, they were often in each other's company. Though Elizabeth was positioned above Betson in the household hierarchy, they were both below John Fen and dependent on his sense of duty and generosity. When Fen died, Elizabeth was left widowed and overwhelmed by the affairs of her late husband, and Betson was left insecure of his position in his master's business, of which he had only recently assumed more leadership.[10] It was therefore practical for Elizabeth to trust Betson with the continued buying and selling of wool on which her fortune and the inheritance of her son relied. In return, she could expect Betson's guaranteed loyalty, as his future in wool was dependent on the Fen business, given his relative youth in the industry. Elizabeth couldn't leave her family to haggle over wool in Calais, and Betson couldn't rapidly amass the connections and fortune of his late master, so this alliance was beneficial to them both. However, even a reaffirmed business relationship with Thomas Betson couldn't fully alleviate Elizabeth's vulnerability.

8. Hanham, 34.
9. Hanham, 35.
10. Hanham, 34.

Elizabeth knew from experience that remarriage was a successful solution to the difficulties of widowhood. After the death of her first husband, Elizabeth's marriage to John Fen had provided her and her four children with a stable home, and, in his will, Fen had even set aside £100 for each of his stepchildren, indicating his sense of responsibility for them as members of his household.[11] While marriage would mean giving up her dower portion, the combined wealth of a successful union could ultimately prove more useful than her own independent resources. Additionally, remarriage would provide her young children with the male caretaker, educator, and benefactor that they would need to successfully navigate medieval society. And so, within months of Fen's death, Elizabeth was ready to find a new husband, and, with a now significant fortune, she could set her sights beyond the merchant class she was born and twice-married into.

Sometime in 1475, Elizabeth met William Stonor, the young head of a wealthy, landed Oxfordshire family. The Stonors were exceptional in two ways: first, their direct male line had lasted for eight generations, in comparison to the typical three, and, second, the family preserved their papers and letters in a collection spanning two centuries, from 1290 to 1483. Under William, the family would reach its zenith, with his knighthood and the enhancement of courtly connections. [12] A letter dated to 1474 or 1475, sent to William Stonor by his brother Thomas, contains what might be the first mention of Elizabeth in the collection. Thomas writes that he is puzzled by his brother's absence from London given how "greatly in conceit," or high regard, he stands "in London with a gentlewoman." Thomas then warns William that he might lose his chance with this London gentlewoman, writing: "greatly it is noised and has been told me with many persons that but ye be ware she shall be taken from you."[13] If Elizabeth was the woman in question, then we know that William took his brother's advice and returned to London to fend off his challengers. The couple was married in 1475, and Elizabeth's property, money, and stake in her husband's business passed to William.[14]

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11. Hanham, 34.

12. Elizabeth Noble, *The World of the Stonors: A Gentry Society* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2009).

13. *The Stonor letters and papers, 1290–1483; ed. for the Royal historical society, from the original documents in the Public record office, by Charles Lethbridge Kingsford,* Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse, University of Michigan Library. http://name.umdl.umich.edu/ACA1723.0001.001, No. 142.

14. Crawford, 70.

From a practical perspective, the marriage was advantageous to both parties. The intensity of William's competition for Elizabeth speaks to her desirability, both financial and personal. For William, who already had significant landholdings, Elizabeth was his opening into the wool industry and the world of London trade. Marriage between the mercantile and aristocratic classes was already common; for example, in the 15th century, a third of the wives of London aldermen came from gentry families.[15] William clearly valued not just the financial benefits of his relationship with Elizabeth, but also the connections it provided. In letters sent by Elizabeth to William, she often thanked him for gifts of venison and rabbit intended to be shared with her father, an example of William's commitment to the connections forged by his marriage to Elizabeth.[16] Elizabeth, in turn, benefited from the support and security that William provided. She now had a male advocate to aid her in the execution of her late husband's will and the administration of her son's estate. Though her wealth technically became William's upon their marriage, Elizabeth assumed the position of mistress of the house, which put the resources of the wealthy Stonor family at her and her children's disposal.

Though William Stonor, as a young and wealthy landowner, might have seemed like the natural choice for the ambitious widow Elizabeth, there was another option. It was not uncommon for women of the mercantile class to marry their husband's senior apprentices, and that option, no doubt, crossed Elizabeth Stonor's mind.[17] Betson and Elizabeth already knew each other well from living in the same household, and Elizabeth was closer in age to Betson than she was to William, who was only 25 at the time of his marriage.[18] Additionally, their later letters indicate a mutual concern and respect for each other, and nearly all of Elizabeth's letters to her husband include some comment about either hearing or not hearing from Betson. Elizabeth's choice of William Stonor as her next husband may have been purely based on his superior financial and social position. However, from Elizabeth's affectionate letters we know that they genuinely cared for one another and missed each other while separated. The relationship between Elizabeth and Betson, for whatever reason, was to remain that of a patron and her client, and, later, a mother-in-law and her son.

15. Fleming, 34.
16. Nos. 168, 172.
17. Fleming, 97.
18. Hanham, 35.

Though Elizabeth chose not to marry Thomas Betson, she did have other plans for him: his marriage to her young daughter Katherine Rich. There is some disagreement among historians about the precise age of Katherine Rich at the time of her engagement. She was certainly alive in 1465 when she was included in the will of her great-grandfather.[19] Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, original transcriber and compiler of the letters, suggested that Katherine was fourteen upon her engagement and sixteen when she was married in 1478, which fits with trends for upper class women of the era.[20] However, Kingsford based his estimate on the incorrect assumption that Katherine was the eldest child of Elizabeth and Thomas Rich, when in fact, Katherine's sister Anne was married in 1477 and gave birth to a child in 1478, as reported in a letter from Thomas Betson to Elizabeth Stonor. Alison Hanham, the first to point out Lethbridge's mistake, estimates that Katherine was closer to eleven or twelve at her engagement and thirteen or fourteen when she was married, earlier than the norm for most medieval maidens.[21] In medieval England, twelve was the minimum age for marriage, and the average age of marriage for daughters of dukes was seventeen.[22] For peasant women, the average age was closer to twenty. Katherine was no duke's daughter, so, if Hanham is correct in her challenge of Kingsford, then there must be a reason why a merchant's daughter was married at an earlier age than some of the most desirable heiresses of the time.

Though Katherine was not an heiress, she did inherit some money, and this inheritance would have been enticing to a man like Thomas Betson. In his will, John Fen left a sum of £100 to each of his four stepchildren, including Katherine.[23] The average dowry for the daughters of aristocratic families at the time was upwards of 100 marks, or around 66 pounds, as a mark was equal to two thirds of a pound.[24] However, if a family hoped to marry their daughter to a knight, the dowry would be closer to 800 marks. [25] This means that Katherine's inheritance from John Fen, a merchant, was comparable to that of a lesser

19. Hanham, 38 and No 166.

20. No. 166 and Kim M. Phillips, *Medieval Maidens: Young Women and Gender in England, 1270–1540* (Manchester; New York, 2003), 38.

21. Hanham, 39.

22. Phillips, 38.

23. Hanham, 35.

24. University of Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, "Money," Accessed November 18, 2021, https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/researchguidance/weightsandmeasures/money.aspx

25. Fleming, 37.

nobleman's daughter. In addition to this amount, Katherine would have also been entitled to her share of the third of her father's estate set aside for his children, further adding to her financial value as a bride. Katherine's dowry wasn't enormous, but, for a previously obscure merchant like Betson, it was enough to make him all the more eager to tie the knot.

As Katherine's new stepfather, it is not unlikely that William Stonor might have also augmented Katherine's dowry, especially to incentivize her departure from his household. Unmarried daughters were seen as wasted assets by medieval families, and the fact that Katherine's sister Anne also was married at a young age suggests a certain urgency, probably on Elizabeth and William's part, to outsource the maintenance of as many of their children as possible.[26] In a letter written September 12, 1476, Elizabeth, in London, wrote to William, at Stonor: "And Sir, as touching my children I heartily thank you that it like you [pleases you] so for to tend them."[27] William, it appears, was an affectionate stepfather. However, Elizabeth's use of "*my* children" and the fact that she even felt it necessary to thank her husband for tending them in her absence suggests that she was still somewhat insecure about the consolidation of the two families. By marrying off her eldest daughters, Elizabeth could reduce whatever stress the maintenance of her children from past relationships placed on her current marriage.

It is also possible that Katherine's early marriage was more a product of Betson's value as a groom than of her value as a bride. The engagement was certainly finalized by April of 1476, when Betson enters the family letters in a brief, but deferential note to William informing him of a recent wool shipment to Calais, dated to April 12, 1476. Betson addresses his "right worshipful sir" and "good mastership," and recommends himself to both his "right worshipful mistress" Elizabeth Stonor and his "mistress Katherine." He continues, "thanked be the good lord, I understand for certain that our wool shipped be comen in best to Calais." [28] Betson's discussion of "*our* wool," and his promise of a further report of his actions in Calais indicates the beginning of a partnership between Betson and his mistress's new husband, now the owner of part of the business. Betson's recommendation of himself to Elizabeth also reminds us of the once-again crucial role that Betson played in Elizabeth's maintenance of her affairs. By continuing her business relationship with Betson and facilitating his partnership with her husband, Elizabeth continued to benefit from Betson's

26. Fleming, 22 and Hanham, 39.
27. No. 169.
28. No. 162.

expertise in the industry and his dependence on her patronage. By betrothing Betson to her daughter, Elizabeth formalized her relationship with him and his position in the family economic circle, while also maintaining his subordination to her in the household hierarchy.

The engagement of Thomas Betson to Katherine and Elizabeth's marriage to William Stonor provided the stability and status for which Elizabeth had hoped. Elizabeth and William shared the administration of their joint business, and their business associates deferred to both of their judgement. For example, on May 12, 1476, Goddard Oxbridge, an assistant of William's, wrote to William to report on some property and an agreement regarding its tenants. Oxbridge asks for further information about the agreement, and then writes: "for I can nothing say to [the tenant] till I have an answer from you or from my mistress."[29] Oxbridge defers to either Elizabeth or William's judgement, indicating their equal involvement in certain affairs. A few months later, July 12, 1476, Oxbridge wrote directly to Elizabeth in reply to a letter of instruction she sent. He apologizes for his failure to carry out certain instructions, which are not entirely clear from his letter, and he reports on various purchases that she had requested, including fish and gowns.[30] Years later, on June 18, 1478, Betson reports to Elizabeth that Goddard Oxbridge has yet to be paid and would like for Elizabeth to speak to William about the matter, indicating her continued oversight of Betson's work on her behalf.[31] Oxbridge's trust in Elizabeth and his deference to her orders is evidence of her leadership in both the Stonor household and the family business. In the words of Anne F. Sutton, Elizabeth was "an active merchant in her own right."[32]

As William's wife, Elizabeth was neither totally dependent on her husband nor completely independent from him. Even for aristocratic families without connections in trade, medieval marriages were clearly intended to be business partnerships concerned with the business of expanding the familial wealth and property. According to Anne Crawford in *Letters of Medieval Women,* "what in theory looked like total dependence of a woman on her husband, when examined closely begins to look much more like inter-dependence."[33] This

29. No. 165.

30. No. 167.

31. No. 216.

32. Anne F. Sutton, *Wives and Widows of Medieval London* (Lincolnshire: Shaun Tyas, 2016), 305.

33. Crawford, 21.

interdependence is evident in Elizabeth's letters to William, which discuss both the independent affairs of the couple, and their continued reliance on each other in certain matters. In the fall of 1476, Elizabeth was away in London, still wrapping up her late husband's affairs. In one letter, she asks William to bring candlesticks so she can light a candle for John Fen's soul.[34] In another, from September 12, 1476, Elizabeth reports that she "[has] not been merry in [her] heart," and that she wishes that William had been with her, writing: "for I would will that ye could an answered in certain matters better than I."[35] In the 15th century, the word "merry" was more an indicator of overall health than of mood, so, it appears, that Elizabeth had not been well and sought her husband's counsel in her own business matters, likely related to the execution of Fen's will and the administration of his estate.[36] It appears that Elizabeth's decision to marry, rather than remain a widow, paid off, for she had gained a trusted advisor and advocate in William.

William also relied on Elizabeth in his efforts to augment his family's prestige among the nobility. In October of 1476, Elizabeth attended the royal court with William's sisters and waited on the queen mother, Cecily Neville, Duchess of York. Elizabeth's letter is a full report on the people she talked with and the connections she made. She also discusses her desire to safeguard the family reputation after the unsatisfactory clothing of her sisters-in-law drew the criticism of a "lady Southfolk," probably Elizabeth of York, Duchess of Suffolk, sister of Edward IV.[37] It is possible that such efforts by Elizabeth contributed to William's eventual knighthood in January of 1478.[38] Elizabeth ends her letter on the grandeur of court with a simple note that she is sending William a bladder of powder to drink at bed because it is "wholesome."[39] Regardless of the wealth and business that Elizabeth brought to her marriage, she was valuable in and of herself, using her lively, determined nature to further the family's ambitions, and caring deeply for William's well-being.

34. No. 168.

35. No. 169.

36. Deborah Thorpe, "I Haue Ben Crised and Besy': Illness and Resilience in the Fifteenth-Century Stonor Letters," *The Mediaeval journal* 5, no. 2 (2015): 85–108, doi:10.1484/J.TMJ.5.108526.

37. No. 172.

38. Noble, 34.

39. No. 172.

Though Elizabeth clearly augmented her family's wealth, prestige, and connections, she remained unsuccessful in one crucial marital responsibility; she had yet to produce a Stonor heir. As a mother of six living children, part of Elizabeth's appeal to William must have been her history of fertility. Despite this, Elizabeth and William remained childless, and not for lack of trying. In the postscript of one letter, Elizabeth writes fondly to William of "the bed when you and I lay last together."[40] Elizabeth and William's efforts were not entirely fruitless, as it appears that Elizabeth was pregnant at least once in March of 1477. In another postscript, the part of the letter generally reserved for sensitive information, Elizabeth tells William: "I am crazed in my backet: you wott [know] what I mean."[41] Multiple historians have interpreted this statement as a subtle pregnancy announcement. In middle English, the word crazed denoted a general unease of a person's physical or emotional condition (like that caused by pregnancy) or it could be an alternate spelling for "cresen," a word for growing larger or increasing. The word "backet" could refer to the small of Elizabeth's back, which, if increasing, would denote pregnancy, or it could be an alternate spelling of "bucket," a simple euphemism for Elizabeth's womb.[42] This pregnancy was either unsuccessful or the child it produced died shortly after being born, which is not entirely surprising given that Elizabeth was now in her mid- to late- thirties. A letter from Betson a year later year in April of 1478 could indicate a possible second pregnancy. Betson writes: "My lady your wife is reasonably strong waxed, the good lord be thanked: and she took her will in that matter like as she doth in all other."[43] It's unclear exactly what matter Betson is referring to, but his remark that Elizabeth is strong waxed suggests that, when he saw her, Elizabeth was increasing in size, perhaps, specifically, in her belly. Unfortunately, if this letter does indeed refer to a second pregnancy, that pregnancy would have also been unsuccessful. Though William and Elizabeth's marriage had proved to be a profitable romantic and financial partnership, it still retained a degree of uncertainty due to its lack of issue. Elizabeth had already experienced a significant degree of dependence in her marriage, due to her gender, but it was now William who found himself entirely dependent on Elizabeth for the heir he needed to secure his family line.

40. No. 175.
41. No. 180.
42. Thorpe.
43. No. 207.

Though Elizabeth and William were often occupied with their own private matters at court and in the bedroom, their business and personal connection with Thomas Betson remained constant over the course of their letters. In letters between the three of them, we can follow the financial and personal connections that they shared. None of William's letters to his wife and future step-son-in-law survive, but many of Elizabeth and Betson's letters acknowledge his having written previously, suggesting reciprocal correspondences. Out of the ten letters that Elizabeth wrote to William between 1476 and Katherine and Betson's marriage in 1478, eight of them mention Betson—either visiting with him, hearing from him, or expecting a letter. And of the six letters sent by Betson to William between 1476 and 1478, five of them contain either a request to be remembered to Elizabeth or of a report of a visit with her. Of Betson's four surviving letters to Elizabeth, three contain recommendations to William. Though Elizabeth's letters to William are full of her children, her family, her business associates, and her court connections, no other figure is mentioned as frequently as Thomas Betson. In one letter, Elizabeth mentions her "son Betson's chamber," indicating that his place in the family was not restricted to the London world of business, but also extended to the more personal Stonor estate.[44] Betson's discussion of Elizabeth's possible pregnancy further suggests this closeness with the Stonors, while also exemplifying the three-way network of communication between him and the Stonors.

Though Thomas Betson's social circle expanded to include the elite Stonor family, the details of his work mostly remained the same as before Elizabeth and William's marriage. Betson's first duty was buying wool in the Cotswolds from local farmers and middlemen. The wool would then be sent to London where it would be packed and shipped to Calais, the city designated by the Company of the Staple for the selling of wool. It was illegal for British merchants to receive payment for their goods within England, so merchants like Betson would travel to Calais for months at a time to oversee the sale.[45] One summer, he shipped 2,348 fells (unsheared pelts) to London "in the name of Sir William Stonor knight and Thomas Betson."[46] Betson would have liked the look of the word "knight" right next to his own and the prestige that it brought to his business. He also would have felt proud that his connection to such a noble family was

44. No. 172.
45. Eileen Power, *Medieval People* (New York, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1963), 121.
46. Power, 136.

more than nominal, given his engagement to Katherine, his friendship with Elizabeth, and his position in William's household.

Despite these strong connections, Betson still exhibits a certain degree of insecurity in his letters, especially regarding his relationship to William. While his letters to Elizabeth grow increasingly familiar, often including gossip about her family members or gentle financial advice, his letters to William remain flattering and deferential.[47] In one of his first letters to William, written April 22, 1476, Betson expresses his intense gratitude for William's "gentle cheer" and "faithful love… of [Betson's] behalf nothing deserved." He continues: "how be it God knowing my good heart and will, and my prayer shall ever by ready for your mastership and all your household."[48] Alison Hanham notes that "such ingratiating phrases rarely occur in similar collections. When they do they mean that the writer is begging a favour, whether from superior or equal. In Betson's letters to Elizabeth and William they suggest insecurity."[49] Despite the obvious advantages of his newfound Stonor connections, it is not unsurprising that Betson's relationship with William, a man five years his junior and ten times his superior, was uncomfortable. While Elizabeth's marriage allowed her to successfully occupy both the world of trade and the world of the aristocracy, Betson and William were more firmly planted in their respective positions. Their difference in background and social class, not to mention the fact that Betson had worked closely with Elizabeth's late husband, surely made things awkward at times. It is not surprising that Betson's relationship with William was an unequal relationship and, for Betson, a discomforting one.

Betson's letters also indicate his insecurity in his relationship with his young fiancé Katherine. On June 1, 1476, Betson, still working in Calais, attempted to write a love letter to Katherine, a girl he had shared a household with since she was eight and he was twenty-three.[50] Historian are divided on the tone and effectiveness of this love letter. To Eileen Power, who wrote a life sketch of Betson in *Medieval People,* the letter was charming, romantic, and most likely sealed with a kiss, since she was still functioning under Kingsford's assumption that Katherine was fourteen, rather than twelve.[51] To Peter Fleming the letter "reads like the awkward solicitudes of a rather distant uncle to his teenage niece."[52] Taking into

47. Noble, 168.
48. No. 162.
49. Hanham, 36.
50. No. 166.
51. Power, 129.
52. Fleming, 35.

account Katherine's young age and her familiarity with Betson, Alison Hanham treads the middle ground and characterizes the letter as playful and familiar, while still indicative of Betson's discomfort with Katherine's youth.

Throughout the letter, which appears to have been written over the course of a few days, Betson's tone towards Katherine is more like that of an affectionate older brother than a fiancé or a "distant uncle," though he occasionally waxes romantic. He can't seem to decide whether Katherine should be treated like the child he knew or the wife he hoped for. Writing to Katherine the child, Betson advises her to eat her meat so she can grow fast, asks her to greet his horse and take care of it in his absence, and promises to arrive shortly "with all hands and all feet." He jokes that Katherine must commend him to a personified clock and "pray him amend his unthrifty manners, for he strikes ever in undo time… and that is a shrewd condition." Consistent with his child-friendly address, when Betson speaks of Katherine's womanhood, it is a developing condition, not fully realized. When advising Katherine to eat her meat, it's "like a woman" that she must do it, and, in the last lines of his letter, he prays that "almighty Jesus make [her] a good woman" and give her a long life, once again referring to future, rather than present, womanhood. Only at one point in the letter is Katherine's womanhood discussed as a current condition: when Betson references the recommendations or greetings that Katherine sent him, "full womanly and like a lover."[53] Betson has no delusions about his fiancé's young age, but his frequent reference to her womanly growth indicate that he was impatient for her maturation.

Betson's comments about the clock and the speeding of Katherine's growth through meat consumption are essentially playful in nature; however, they also suggest Betson's underlying insecurity about Katherine's young age. As a twelve-year-old girl, Katherine had barely entered the stage of life known as "maidenhood" to medieval people. Maidens, or unmarried girls between the age of twelve and their mid-twenties, were viewed as the peak of femininity: young, beautiful, and pure. Historian Kim M. Phillips suggests that maidenhood was defined by its paradoxical combination of virginity and sexual maturity.[54] In his letter to Katherine, we can see Betson's hope for her speedy maturation. Though she was technically a maiden, she had yet to develop the inherent sexuality that defined maidenhood. The onset of menarche in well-nourished young women in medieval England was usually around the age of 12–15.[55] For malnourished

53. No. 166.
54. Phillips, 7.
55. Phillips, 36.

young women, it could occur even later.[56] Menarche itself was not always the sole condition for marriage, and many medieval people felt that it was best for girls to wait a couple years after menarche to begin having children.[57] With everyone around her eager for her marriage to take place, this would not be the case for Katherine.

Though no more of Betson's letters to Katherine are included in the Stonor collection, we know from Betson's correspondence with Elizabeth that he continued to write to Katherine—with no response. In a letter dated to December of either 1476 or 1477, Betson writes: "I am wroth with Katherine, because she sendeth me no writing. I have to her diverse times and for lack of answer I wax weary." Katherine's lack of response reinforces our perception of her youth and lack of maturity. It is possible that Katherine disliked Betson, but it is more likely that she was only acting as any twelve- or thirteen-year-old girl would act if she were expected to carry on a correspondence with a man closer to her mother's age. In his letter to Elizabeth, Betson advises that Katherine get a secretary, if the physical act of writing is what was preventing her reply. He concludes: "and if she will not it shall put me to less labour to answer her letters again."[58] By threatening to not answer Katherine's letters, it appears that, at some point, Katherine might have written to Betson, but that she had failed to respond more recently. In either case, Betson's complaints to Elizabeth once again point to Katherine's youth. Betson likely hoped that Elizabeth would use her motherly influence to encourage her young, inexperienced daughter to respond to his letters. Betson's application to Elizabeth also remind us of her crucial role in the relationship between Katherine and Betson, as both the mother of the soon-to-be bride and patron of the soon-to-be groom. She was the one who had facilitated their match, and, as such, Betson found it appropriate to air his grievances with Katherine to the woman that connected them.

Betson's letters to William and Elizabeth also suggest the same impatience for Katherine maturation that is expressed in the love letter. In a letter to Elizabeth written May 12, 1478, Betson writes: "I dreamed once [Katherine] was thirty winter of age; and when I woke I wished she had been but twenty, and so by likelihood I am sooner like to have my wish than my dream, the which

56. Mary Lewis, Fiona Shapland, and Rebecca Watts, "On the threshold of adulthood: A new approach for the use of maturation indicators to assess puberty in adolescents from medieval England," *American Journal of Human Biology* 28, no. 1 (2015). https://doi.org/10.1002/ajhb.22761.

57. Philips, 36.

58. No. 185.

I beseech all mighty Jesus heartily may be when it shall please him."[59] Like his imagined feud with the slow-ticking clock, Betson's account of his dream is a playful anecdote which also suggests his impatience and insecurity in his relationship with Katherine, and, consequentially, the whole Stonor family. In another letter from June 18, 1478, Betson expresses his sadness that he was unable to see Katherine in London, but he also concludes that it might be for the best, since seeing her would only bring him more pain. He laments: "I must needs suffer as I have done in times past, and so will I do for God's sake and hers."[60] Betson, once only impatient, was now distraught after two years of engagement.

Why was Betson so distressed by the length of his engagement? His compliments to Katherine, in his letters to both her and her mother, would suggest the simple possibility that Betson respected and loved his fiancé, and was eager to start a family with her, though to our modern sensibilities, love between a twelve-year-old and a thirty-year-old seems unsavory. Beyond the sentimental reasons, marriage would also provide Betson with more independence in the wool industry and financial opportunities. According to the shipping quotas of the next century, married members of the Staplers Guild were permitted to ship more wool than unmarried merchants.[61] Though, with William's partnership, this restriction was likely not an issue for Betson, it could potentially become one should Betson ever leave the Stonor orbit and strike out on his own. Katherine's dowry, which has already been discussed, would also allow for more financial security and investment of his own.

Additionally, Betson was probably uneasy about his complete dependence on the Stonors. When Elizabeth facilitated Betson's partnership with William and his engagement to Katherine, she secured Betson's loyalty, but she also relegated him to a state of insecure dependence on the Stonor family. For Elizabeth, Betson's continued administration of her business was ideal, given their history together and their mutual regard for one another; however, despite its convenience, her partnership with Betson was not entirely essential, since Elizabeth, now the wife of a wealthy landowner and knight, had significant resources at her disposal should Betson's service prove unsatisfactory. Betson, on the other hand, relied on his business with the Stonors, and his dependence on their continued trust and generosity heightened the insecurity of his position. Through his marriage to Katherine, Betson could formalize his connection to the family

59. No. 211.
60. No. 216.
61. Hanham, 38.

and perhaps slightly correct the balance of power, which was heavily in William and Elizabeth's favor.

Disagreement between some of the Stonors' associates were even more reason for Betson to feel insecure of his position. In a letter sent by Goddard Oxbridge at Betson's request we learn that Davy Wrixham, one of the Stonor's servants, had accused Betson of seeking to undermine his position with William. Oxbridge explains his own role in the spread of the rumors, and, since he writes at Betson's request, he emphasizes Betson's innocence in the matter.[62] Betson's apparent fear that William had lost his trust in him over a servant's rumor shows how precarious Betson perceived his position to be. And if any part of the rumor was true, and Betson really had sought to undermine Wrixham within the business, that would be further indication of Betson's anxiety.

As if Betson was not already insecure enough, a downturn in the wool market also impacted his perceived position with William. In 1476 and 1479, inflation slowed the Flemish wool market, corresponding exactly with the commencement of Betson's partnership with William.[63] Even worse, Betson struggled to find buyers for his wool within the same week that Oxbridge wrote to William. In a letter from May 17, 1478, Betson tries to reassure William that, although business had been slow, his priority would always be their mutual profit. He writes: "And sir, I trust to God's mercy, if the world be merry here, to somewhat that shall be both to your profit and mine. As yet there cometh but few merchants here; here after with God's grace there will come more." Later in the letter, Betson once again emphasizes his commitment to the Stonors and their financial success. Betson probably also had his dispute with Wrixham on his mind, in addition to his business troubles when he wrote: "And sir, I trust to God as for my part so to endeavor me for your mastership that with God's grace both ye and my lady your wife shall well understand and know that I love both your worships, and your profit, and so it shall prove in deed with God's help."[64] After six years in Elizabeth's household and two years as William's right-hand man in the wool industry, Betson still felt the need to assure the couple of his love and commitment to their financial interests. He still viewed the loss of their favor as a possibility. For him, his wedding to Katherine could not come soon enough.

And come it did, despite Betson's anxieties. The Stonors still had reason to strengthen their connection with him, however precarious he perceived it to be. In a letter from June 24, 1478, only a month after the drama with Davy

62. No. 213.
63. Hanham, 37.
64. No. 212.

Wrixham, Betson, still harried and anxious, wrote to Elizabeth, but this time for a happier purpose. He was tasked with purchasing clothing for Katherine, in preparation for their wedding, and he reported to Elizabeth that he had no idea what he was doing: "Therefore, I must beseech your ladyship to send me [advice] how I shall be demeaned in such things as shall belong unto my cousin Katherine, and how I shall provide for them: she must have girdles, three at the least, and how they shall be made I know not: and many other things she must have, ye know well what they be, in faith I know not."[65] Katherine, though still only about fourteen, was now officially woman enough to wed, and she would need new clothes to do it properly. That same day, Betson wrote to William, apparently responding to a letter from William which details Katherine's behavior and education. Betson gushes that without William's attentive parenting "she could not be of that disposition virtuous and goodly, her youth remembered and considered."[66] Betson is still all too aware of his bride's youth, but he is satisfied by her reportedly "womanly disposition" and "goodly demeanor" adding that "she can do right well if she lists [wants]."[67] (Though grown up, it appears that Katherine remained willful.) Betson's flattery of Katherine's education and personality is not insincere, but in his letter to William, it serves mostly as a way of complimenting William and thanking him for his attention. Though his marriage was now on track, Betson's business difficulties were not over, and he found it wise to strengthen his relationship through praise and flattery with William whenever he could. In Betson's words: "I fair like a sorry piper, when I begins I cannot leave."[68]

Since the family was all together for the wedding, we have no letters to report on it. However, on August 1, 1478, Thomas Henham, a servant of the Stonors sent a letter inquiring if Elizabeth would like him to order beer and ale "against [her] coming home unto London."[69] Though Elizabeth had spent her time moving between her townhouse and her country estate, London was truly her home, the city of her childhood, two of her marriages, and her business. She had made the match between Katherine and Betson in the wake of her widowhood, using it to secure her late husband's business and her young daughter's future. Surely the sight of Katherine, daughter to her first husband, and Betson, apprentice to her second, standing outside a church, perhaps the

65. No. 217.
66. No. 218.
67. No. 217.
68. No. 218.
69. No. 225.

same one she had been married in once, reminded her of her own weddings, her own veils, rings, coins. By October 5, 1478, we know that Katherine and Betson had definitely been married, as Elizabeth reports in a letter to William that the newlyweds send their greetings as a unit.[70] The clock had finally "amended his unthrifty manners;" Betson got his bride, a degree of financial security, and a solidified relationship with his business-partner and patron.[71] William and Elizabeth had one less child to care for and a family tie with their partner in the wool industry. And what about Katherine? She got an early leap from maidenhood to womanhood, and at least three new girdles, handpicked by a harried Betson at her mother's advice.

Thomas and Katherine Betson and Elizabeth and William Stonor all had different reasons for marrying, some economic, some personal, some a combination of the two. However, for all four of these medieval people, marriage mitigated insecurity and converted unstable dependence into binding interdependence. Betson depended, first, on John Fen and then on the Stonors for his employment; marriage to Katherine formalized his dependency, but it also stabilized his position in the Stonor household. Katherine depended on her parents and then two different stepfathers for her support and survival; as Betson's wife, she was equally dependent on him, but she was now his only wife, as opposed to one of six stepchildren. As a widow, Elizabeth depended on strangers and business-associates; marriage to William meant giving up her independent wealth, but in exchange, it offered support, security, and prestige. Even William, high up on the medieval hierarchy, depended on Elizabeth for an heir, but this dependency was ill-fated, as none of Elizabeth's pregnancies by William were successful. Elizabeth died in late 1479, perhaps in childbirth, and, with her death, Betson's relationship with William all but ceased. The dissolution of Elizabeth and William's marriage meant the end of Katherine and Betson's secure ties to the Stonor family. A tragic, but compelling example of how entire families and business structures depended on marriage, just as husbands and wives depended on each other.

70. No. 229.
71. No. 166.

Article

Geraldo the Fearless
The Unsung Hero of Portugal

Jacob Badal

It is well known that Western Europe has enjoyed a longstanding fascination among scholars and students. So much so that calls to move beyond the region towards a global focus in academia are increasing daily. Yet, much of Western Europe's history beyond England, France, and Germany remains unexplored. Spain, as of late, has enjoyed a resurgence of interest, but Portugal has largely been ignored. Indeed, many do not even consider the two Iberian nations and their entangled histories with Islam and North Africa as part of Europe proper, despite the many advancements contributed by both nations to science, cartography, navigation, exploration, and countless other domains. Even more isolating is the fact that much of the recent effort at recovering the Portuguese past remains confined to studies in Portuguese. This piece, therefore, aims at tackling both lacunae by examining the deeds and achievements of an important, but forgotten hero of a forgotten nation, Geraldo the Fearless.

The historical record of Geraldo the Fearless and his deeds has enjoyed various states of interest. The earliest records are either contemporary or near contemporary and are almost entirely composed in Arabic. Only a few Spanish sources exist, while Portuguese records are surprisingly silent. The most extensive primary sources come from Ibn Sahib al-Sala and Ibn Idari.[1] Ibn Sahib

1. Lópes, David, "O Cid português: Geraldo Sempavor: novas Fontes árabes sôbre os seus feitos e morte," *Revista portuguesa de história*, Vol. 1 (Coimbra, Universidade de Coimbra, 1940), 93–94; Mattoso, José, 298.

al-Sala provides the most detail concerning Geraldo's exploits in his history of the Almohads.[2] Geraldo also appears in the *Chronica latina regum castellae* and *Chronicon Lamecense,* of Castile and León, though usually only comprising a single sentence and almost always as an afterthought.[3] The only exception is the *Chronica Gothorum,* which is an early history of Portugal written in the twelfth century; yet, even this history only gives a single sentence that brusquely states that Geraldo captured the city of Évora before moving on.[4]

Instead of praising Geraldo for his accomplishments, the contemporary Portuguese documents often attribute his deeds solely to Dom Afonso Henriques, the first king of Portugal.[5] These false attributions have the effect of obfuscating Geraldo's story and are the main reason that only a few studies on this amazing figure exist.

The first substantive work on Geraldo appeared in the seventeenth century in the *Crónica de D. Afonso Henriques* by Frei António Brandão. Yet, Brandão follows the tendency of earlier writers and focuses almost entirely on Geraldo's famous capture of Évora.[6]

Interest faded for two more centuries until the works of Alexandre Herculano and Fortunato de Almeida, both renowned Portuguese historians to this day, appeared. Both continue the focus on the conquest of the city of Évora from the earliest records.[7] Fortunato de Almeida's book titled *História de Portugal* in 1922 was the first historical work highlighting Geraldo's feats beyond the conquest of Évora and was the first Portuguese historian to record the details of Geraldo's involvement in Badajoz. The lack of any mention beyond these two

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2. al-Sala, Ibn Sahib, *Al-Mann bil-imāma / Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Salā: estudio preliminar, traducción e índices por Ambrosio Huici Miranda.* (Valencia, Anubar: 1969).

3. Lópes, David, 93.

4. Lópes, David, 105.

5. Lópes, David, 94; This is despite the fact that many of Geraldo's operations and raids would have been considered too rash and dangerous for a King to undertake, especially in a world where if a King dies, often so too does his kingdom.

6. Camões, Luis de., *Obras do grande Luís de Camões,* ed. by Manoel Corrêa (Lisbon, Impressor da Serenissima Raynha Nossa Senhora, 1720), 92–93. However, this account of the capture of Évora appears to have become the dominant version for a long period of time, as is evident by the various annotated versions of *Os Lusíadas* as across versions the footnote on Canto III, Verse 63 follows Brandão's narrative. There are some versions that deviate in some details, but these are almost always spectacular claims that are hard to substantiate.

7. Alexandre Herculano falls into the same pattern as other historians before him in that he mentions Évora but then fails to mention Geraldo anywhere else, including his participation in the significant siege of Badajoz.

conquests even among more modern scholarship is most likely the result of a lack of access to the much more expansive Arabic records. These Arabic records finally became accessible with the publication of David Lopes's article *O Cid português: Geraldo Sempavor: novas Fontes árabes sôbre os seus feitos e morte,* which presented and translated many of the original Arabic sources. With this new information, Lopes was able to correctly demonstrate the gaps in the history and the portrayal of Geraldo the Fearless in other previous accounts. In 1993 and 2007, respectively, José Mattoso recounted a much more complete history of Geraldo in his second volume of *História de Portugal* and then his biography *D. Afonso Henriques.* Yet, these still recount the story of Geraldo as it relates to Dom Afonso Henriques. Thus, the details of the knight's life are often scattered across each book. In 2008 Armando de Sousa Pereira published *Geraldo Sem Pavor: Um gerreiro de fronteira entre cristãos e muçulmanos c. 1162–1176,* which was the first book to primarily focus on Geraldo and gather all the scattered pieces but presents it in a novelesque manner. In 2013 Miguel Gomes Martins published *Guerreiros medievais portugueses: De Geraldo, O Sem-Pavor, ao Conde de Avranches; Treze biografias de grandes senhores da guerra (séculos XII–XV)* with an entire section devoted to Geraldo. Both Pereira and Martins go beyond simply collecting the dispersed pieces of information of the knight's life but also start to look at circumstantial evidence in an attempt to fill in the unknown parts of his story. As such, they suggest the theory of him being a Muslim slave as a boy, among other similar ideas.

Considering all this, until now, the majority of the details of Geraldo and his life have remained hidden within the Portuguese language. This article then is the first comprehensive history of Geraldo the Fearless.

The Career of Geraldo Sem-Pavor

The exploits of Geraldo occurred during the turbulent period of Portugal's formation as an independent kingdom through a southern reconquest into Moorish lands. The chaotic nature of the period resulted in an almost complete dearth of primary source material concerning Geraldo, however, a few vital sources survived. When conjoined with the broader context of the time, it becomes possible to cobble together a relatively solid trajectory for both man and nation.

There are no sources documenting the birth and origins of Geraldo Geraldes before he abruptly and impetuously appears in the historical record with the conquest of the city of Évora in 1166. However, estimates place his birth

sometime between 1130 and 1140.[8] Most scholars agree that Geraldo came from the northern regions of Portugal, from either the regions of Porto or Minho. This assumption is primarily due to the fact that in many of the contemporary Arabic chronicles his name is recorded with the appellation of *Galego*.[9] Nevertheless, the exact area is impossible to determine considering that the term Galego in Arabic records refers to any lands north of the Douro River.[10] Additionally, a recent theory has posited that Geraldo could have been captured and enslaved at a young age by the Moors during the 1144 raids that reached as far north as Coimbra.[11] The theory is further supported by the fact that Geraldo is often referred to as a 'traitor' in Arabic sources of the time. Furthermore, it is evident that Geraldo was familiar with the Arabic language and exhibited a considerable understanding of the Moorish lands and their defensive systems.[12] Therefore, it is well within the realm of possibilities that Geraldo spent considerable time in the Muslim territories of Iberia prior to his participation in the reconquest of Portugal.

Portuguese national identity was forged during the reconquest. The first Portuguese king, Dom Afonso Henriques, rose in power and prestige through the siege of Lisbon in 1147. In March of the same year, Dom Alfonso Henriques took another important city on the Tagus River, that of Santarém, which became a major stop for Portuguese forces before fording the river to raid Muslim lands further south.[13] Thus, Lisbon and Santarém became essential gateways to the Alentejo region (beyond the Tagus) and a natural border between Christian and Muslim domains.[14] In the aftermath of these two monumental conquests, there came about a profitable business of ransoming captured prisoners from raids conducted by both

8. Martins, Gomes Miguel, *Guerreiros Medievais Portugueses: De Geraldo, O Sem-Pavor, ao Conde de Avranches Treze biografias de grandes senhores da guerra (séculos XII–XV)* (Lisboa: A Esfera dos Livros, 2013), 31.

9. Pereira, Armando de Sousa, *Geraldo Sem Pavor: um guerreiro de fronteira entre cristãos e muçulmanos c.1162–1176* (Porto, Papel Munde SMG LDA, 2008), 43.

10. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 31–32.

11. Carr, Raymond, *Spain: A History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), 76: This is not an unreasonable possibility as there were frequent raids deep into Christian territories, with the famous raid of Almanzor in 997 on the cathedral of Compostela; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 32; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 43–44.

12. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 32.

13. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 33.

14. Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, *História de Portugal Direcção de José Mattoso: Segundo Volume: A Monarquia Feudal (1096–1480)* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1993), 76; Ramos, Julián Clemente, "La Extremadura Musulmana (1142–1248) Organización Defensiva y Sociedad," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales,* Vol. 24 (Barcelona, CSIC: 1994) 664.

Christians and Muslims.[15] Generally, these raids were conducted by *cavaleiros-vilãos*, or soldiers from various social classes that could maintain a horse and were given a loose license to operate under the name of the King in much the same way as the privateers did during the early modern naval battles of the Atlantic world.[16] The constant raids over the next twenty years were never a serious concern for the Almohad rulers of the Alentejo and Extremadura regions (figure 1) considering Portugal was the weakest of the new Christian kingdoms. Fortifications and defensive structures were neglected as a result.[17]

Figure 1. Alentejo Extremadura
All rights to original image reserved to El Mono Español, Blank map of Iberia *(2021), https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Blank_map_of_Iberia.svg, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license; color removed and shading added.*

Fernão Gonçalves broke the *status quo* on 1 December of 1162 with a significant attack on the major Alentejo city of Beja.[18] With a contingency of *cavaleiros-vilãos,* Fernão sallied from Santarém under cover of night, caught the local garrison entirely off guard, and captured the city in a matter of hours. Subsequently, the Portuguese knights used the city as a base of operations to raid the surrounding areas during that spring and summer. Nevertheless, logistically speaking, Beja was simply too far from Portuguese lands to maintain and was eventually abandoned.[19] The capture of the city did, however, mark an important change in the nature of raiding across the Tagus, and the accounts of the event detail unmistakable parallels to the tactics and *modus operandi* for

15. Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 44.

16. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 33; Mitre Fernández, Emilio, *La La España medieval: Sociedades, estados, culturas,*(Madrid, Ediciones ISTMO, 1979), 208, 221.

17. Ramos, Julián Clemente, 648–49, 650.

18. Mattoso, José, *D. Afonso Henriques* (Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 2007), 297–98; Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 77.

19. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 33–34.

which Geraldo would later become famous.[20] Thus, some argue that Geraldo participated in the taking of Beja and was working as a *cavaleiro-vilão* at the time. Nevertheless, this is far from definitive proof. However, one account from Abd al-Malik ben Sahib Asala, who is thought to have been a native of Beja and who had family in the city at the time, claimed that the attack was the result of Geraldo's urgings.[21] Altogether, there is simply not enough documentation to ascertain with certainty if Geraldo was present at the siege.

Geraldo bursts onto the historical record in the year 1166. First taking the city of Trujillo on the 15th of April, which at the time was a major stronghold of the area.[22] Then soon followed by the taking of Évora in either September or October.[23] Évora was an important and influential city, being the most significant urban center of the Muslim territory of the Al-Gharb (comprising of modern Alentejo and Extremadura), seconded only by Badajoz.[24] The most complete account of the taking of the city was recorded by Frei António Brandão in his *Crónica de D. Afonso Henriques,* written some time at the end of the sixteenth century. In it, Brandão recounts that Geraldo left from the staging point at Santarém with a small contingency of men at nightfall. A watchtower was guarding the road to Évora, so Geraldo, leaving behind his forces, covered himself with greenery for camouflage and approached the tower in the dark. Brandão recounts that a portcullis secured the entrance to the tower; therefore, Geraldo used wooden wedges inserted in between the rough stonework and climbed the tower with his lance in hand. The account goes on to relate that the guard posted on duty brought his daughter along with him that night and left her to hold vigil while he slept; however, the girl fell asleep at the window. After Geraldo climbed the tower, he found the girl asleep and cast her out the window, where she died on impact. Then entering the tower, he found the guard and decapitated him. Geraldo returned to his men hiding out of sight with the heads of the guard and his daughter in hand.[25]

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20. Herculano, Alexandre, *História de Portugal: Desde o começo da monarquia até o fim do reinado de Afonso III Vol. III* (Lisboa, Livraria Bertrand, 19--), 57–59; Martins, Miguel Gomes, 34–35. This type surprise tactic is not unique as it was used in various other sieges in that time period, such as the siege of Santarém in 1147 as is dramatically portrayed in Roque Gameiro's 1917 painting, *Conquest of Santarém.*

21. Lópes, David, 94–95; Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 77.

22. Ramos, Julián Clemente, 670.

23. Herculano, Alexandre, 82.

24. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 35.

25. Brandão, Frei António, *Crónica de D. Afonso Henriques* (Porto, Livraria Civilização, 1945), 224.

Having cleared the road to Évora, Geraldo's force split into two groups. The first group entered the tower and sent an alarm signal to the city. The others mounted their horses and made themselves visible to the town. The garrison in the city saw the small number of Christians, and, thinking they would be easily overcome, dispatched the greater part of their forces in pursuit of the retreating Portuguese. In the meantime, the first group, being led by Geraldo, quickly broke through the city gates, overran the city, and killed anyone who offered up any resistance.[26]

The garrison that pursued the decoy force eventually lost them and decided to return to their stronghold, only to discover the loss of the city to a small band of Portuguese *cavaleiros-vilãos*. Brandão states that after hearing the cries of the people trapped within, the Moors threw themselves at the city gates. Geraldo and his men held them off in a fierce encounter until the second group returned and took them by surprise from the rear. This brilliant tactic effectively crushed the Moorish resistance, and many fled to the countryside. Those who remained turned the city over to Geraldo. For his part, Geraldo gave any that wanted safe passage to Moorish lands.[27] Having demonstrated fearless valor in the face of superior forces in the conquest of Évora, Geraldo was given the epithet "Sem Pavor," or "the Fearless."

The capture of Évora was a radical break from the previous twenty years of raids and ransoming. Various reasons are cited as Geraldo's motivation to begin taking cities, with the most traditional story stating that Geraldo was either a noble of low status or in king Dom Afonso Henriques' service in some way and was forced to flee to the lawless borderlands after committing a serious crime.[28] Another source states that he was tired of the "shame of his vile craft" of being a *cavaleiro-vilão.*[29] Either way, both concur that Geraldo decided to take Évora to regain the favor of Dom Afonso Henriques. It is equally likely that the impetus for the conquest came from a desire for fortune and prestige. Much like his famous Spanish counterpart, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, or El Cid, this behavior was typical at the time for those devoid of opportunities for social advancement in the crowded north. These instead campaigned in the south and carved out a living for themselves where the lands were plentiful and famed for prosperity and richness.[30]

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26. Brandão, Frei António, 224–25.
27. Brandão, Frei António, 225.
28. Brandão, Frei António, 222–23.
29. Herculano, Alexandre, 80.
30. Almeida, Fortunato de, *História de Portugal: Tomo I, Desde os tempos prèhistóricos até a aclamação de D. João I (1385)* (Coimbra, Imprensa da universidade, 1922), 150; Fernández, Emilio Mitre, 162, 216; Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 79–80; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 48.

Regardless of the motivation, the capture of Évora had a profound effect. Previous to the conquest, Dom Afonso Henriques had effectively left the southern border to the *cavaleiros-vilãos* as his focus was absorbed with military activities on the Galician border in the north.[31] In March or June of 1166, Dom Afonso Henriques was busy officiating a crucial marriage between his daughter Urraca and Ferdinand II of León. Being soon informed of the conquest of Évora, he quickly returned to the south to negotiate with Geraldo.[32] That meeting saw the city of Évora turned over to the Portuguese ruler and Dom Afonso Henriques, understanding the importance of maintaining the stronghold, quickly seized and rebuilt the castle at Coruche, which was strategically located between Santarém and Évora.[33] Even more consequential, the capture of Évora inaugurated a new wave by Dom Afonso Henriques and the Portuguese crown of conquest and settlement south of the Tagus river. It was soon after that Dom Afonso Henriques took Moura, Serpa, and Alconchel.[34]

Sources disagree on how Geraldo was rewarded for his generosity to the crown. Brandão and Herculano argue he was made captain-mayor of the new town.[35] Brandão also says he was awarded the ancient house of Quintus Sertorius.[36] Meanwhile, Mattoso declares he was awarded substantial material compensation.[37] Whatever the reward, the gift of Évora to the crown by Geraldo marked the beginning of a longstanding, cooperative relationship in the newly begun southern campaign.[38]

With royal backing and new recruits, Geraldo embarked on a new string of attacks, which took various cities in rapid succession. Cáceres fell first in 1166, followed by Montánchez, with Serpa and Juramenha surrendering soon after.[39] Other conquests included Monfragüe, Lobón, Valle de Matamoros, and Monsaraz.[40]

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31. Mattoso, José, 296–97.

32. Brandão, Frei António, 225–26; Mattoso, José, 299.

33. Mattoso, José, 299–300; Herculano, Alexandre, 82.

34. Brandão, Frei António, 229; Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 92.

35. Brandão, Frei António, 226; Herculano, Alexandre, 81; Lópes, David, 96.

36. Brandão, Frei António, 226.

37. Mattoso, José, 299.

38. Powers, James F., "The Evolution of Portuguese Municipal Military Policy During the High Middle Ages," *Mediterranean Studies,* Vol. 8 pp. 105–27 (Penn State University Press, 1999), 110.

39. Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 77.

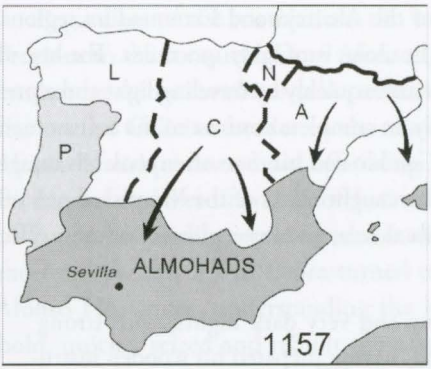
40. Lópes, David, 100. The exact list of cities captured by Geraldo is uncertain as there is confusion over which cities were taken by him or Dom Afonso Henriques. This list of cities has been compiled by comparing several sources.

These cities and forts cover a vast area of the Alentejo and Extremadura regions; the distance between Beja and Monfragüe alone is roughly 190 miles. The key to Geraldo's success was his force's ability to strike quickly by traveling light and a preference for nocturnal assaults. Additionally, in complete contrast to the accustomed tactic of raiding in spring and summer, Geraldo and his men often took advantage of bad weather and winter conditions that caught many of the Moorish forces off guard.[41] The Arabic chronicler, Ibn Sahib al-Sala, gives us a glimpse of these effective tactics:

> The dog [Geraldo] marched on rainy and very dark nights, with strong wind and snow, towards the cities and, having prepared his wooden instruments of scaling very large [walls], so that they would surpass the wall of the city, he would apply those ladders to the side of the tower and catch the sentinel [by surprise] and say to him: "Shout, as is your custom," in order that the people would not hear him. When the scaling of the group had been completed on the highest wall in the city, they shouted in their language with an abominable screech, and they entered the city and fought whom they found and robbed them and captured all who were there in [the city, taking] captive and prisoner all who were there.[42]

While covering a vast area, the cities and fortifications seized by Geraldo were not random targets but strategic vantage points in the overall reconquest effort. The key to this effort was the city of Badajoz. Badajoz was the Muslim capital of Extremadura and was, therefore, the largest urban center of the region. The city was an important trading and military hub for Islamic Al-Andalus and was accompanied by a strong fortress.[43] If Geraldo could capture the city, Portugal would control the whole of the ancient Roman province of Lusitania, which gave the Portuguese people their name of 'Lusos.' Each of the fortifications and cities conquered to that point by Geraldo were part of an interconnected defensive system centered on Badajoz. With the fall of these, the city was virtually isolated.[44] By the time Geraldo and his men installed themselves in Juromenha, a mere 18 miles away from Badajoz, it became clear to the neighboring Christian kingdom of León and to the Moorish Almohads that Portugal intended to expand eastward as well as south. The only question that remained was when the assault would begin.

41. Mattoso, José, 299; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 38.
42. Ramos, Julián Clemente, 653 note 14.
43. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 39; Ramos, Julián Clemente, 648, 655.
44. Mattoso, José, 298.



Political map of 1157 that shows the rough boundaries between Christian Portugal (P), León (L), Castile (C), Navarre (N), Aragón (A), and the Muslim Almohad state. *Image is in the public domain. Country Studies program,* Map of Spain at the time of the Almohads *(Library of Congress Country Study: 1988). Source Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Almohad_map_reconquest_loc.jpg.*

Stationed at Juromenha, Geraldo constantly harassed the roads and hinterland of Badajoz for the next three years. He finally made his gambit in 1169 and laid siege to the city. His forces breached the outer walls and took the majority of the city on May 3rd, 1169. Only the Alcázar, or citadel with the remaining defenders, continued to resist. Meanwhile, Dom Afonso Henriques was in the process of expanding Portuguese territory eastward into Leonese lands. When news of Geraldo's siege reached the Portuguese monarch, he quickly gathered his forces and rushed to Badajoz in order to help secure that important city.[45] Simultaneously, the surrounding Christian kingdoms grew uneasy with Geraldo's activities. For Ferdinand II of León, the conquest of Badajoz invalidated the 1158 treaty of Sahagún, which had been made between the kingdoms of León and Castile and which reserved the conquest of Badajoz along with the lands of Alentejo and the Algarves to León.[46] Predicting Geraldo and Dom Afonso Henriques' actions, Ferdinand II sent an envoy to Sevilla in July or September prior to the assault on Badajoz. The envoy was meant to secure a defensive pact with the Almohad Caliph, Yusuf I. As a result, when Badajoz was on the brink of defeat, Yusuf sent his forces from Sevilla to join the Leonese, who were already en route to neutralize the threat.[47]

Once the combined Hispano-Moorish force was camped outside the city, Ferdinand sent a message to the defenders in the Alcázar, encouraging them to continue resisting. Abu Ali Umar ibn Timsilt then led the defenders in a sudden and desperate sortie out of the Alcázar and managed to reach the exterior

45. Almeida, Fortunato de, 163. Mattoso, José, 303–4.

46. Powers, James F., 109. Furthermore, Badajoz was also a tributary state to the kingdom of León, which means its capture by the Portuguese would result in a loss of *parias.*

47. Almeida, Fortunato de, 163; Powers, James F., 110.

gates, opening them for their allies.[48] With the situation rapidly deteriorating, the combined Portuguese force abandoned the city. During the panicked flight, Dom Afonso Henriques struck his right leg on the gate bolt and broke his femur.[49] The extreme pain slowed his retreat, and he was soon captured by Leonese forces in Caia. To secure his release the Portuguese king was forced to return the lands he previously conquered in Galicia in the north and the recently captured cities in Extremadura.[50] Thus, the whole debacle became known as the Badajoz Disaster.[51] The catastrophe had further consequences for Portugal as the once valiant warrior-king, now unable to mount his horse, was effectively forced to prematurely abdicate his campaigns to his son, Dom Sancho I.[52] More importantly, it put an end to Portugal's meteoric expansion into the north and east, signaling the end of Portuguese control of Extremadura and a switch from offensive to defensive policies.[53]

Sources disagree on the fate of Geraldo. Some state that he managed to escape to Juromenha, while others argue that he too was captured. Regardless, he lost several of the forts he had conquered to the kingdom of León. Yet, he managed to maintain the holdings immediately south and west of Badajoz.[54] After this first failure, Geraldo dug into Juromenha and continued to harass Badajoz for the next several years. On one notable occasion in May 1170, in the aptly named Valle de Matamoros, Geraldo and his men, now consisting of *cavaleiros-vilãos* and local Moorish forces[55], ambushed an Almohad force guarding a supply chain of 5,000 mules on its way to relieve Badajoz with food and weapons.[56] Low on food in the midst of a drought and rocked by an epidemic, this reversal placed Badajoz in a perilous situation considering that the city's defenses were still in ruins.[57]

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48. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 40.

49. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 42.

50. Almeida, Fortunato de, 163–64; Powers, James F., 110; Martins, Miguel Gomes, 42.

51. Lópes, David, 96.

52. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 42.

53. Mattoso, José, 305; Powers, James F., 112; Ramos, Julián Clemente, 649; Almeida, Fortunato de, 165; Powers, James F., 112. This siege also caused a retaliatory attack by the Almohads on Santarém in 1171.

54. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 42.

55. Just like *cavaleiros-vilãos* that worked similar to privateers, there were often Muslim forces that acted in a similar manner. Thus, it is not uncommon to see bands of mixed forces operating on the borders, such as what happened in *El Cantar de Mio Cid*.

56. Lópes, David, 96, 98; Martins, Miguel Gomes, 43.

57. Mattoso, José, 337; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 43–44.

Seeing another chance, Geraldo once again laid siege to Badajoz in September of 1170. This time, Geraldo skillfully waited to breach the outer walls until Dom Sancho himself arrived with reinforcements on 15 August.[58] Once again on the brink of collapse, a combined Christian and Muslim force led by King Ferdinand and Abu Hafs Umar rapidly struck a counterattack and saved the city.[59] Tired of the Portuguese threat, the Caliph sent a sizable armed force ahead of a supply chain from Sevilla to aid Badajoz in 1171. The goal was to remove Geraldo and reprovision the city. This Almohad force managed to retake many of Geraldo's forts, and he fled to the last stronghold in the area in Lobón, where the Almohad forces laid siege, eventually taking the fort and capturing many of his men.[60]

Frustrated by subsequent defeats and the loss of his own strongholds, Geraldo began to focus his efforts elsewhere.[61] Accordingly, on an August night of 1172, he and his men overtook the city of Beja to the south. The city was easy prey as it was still being repaired from an attack years earlier and was defended by a small armed force. The goal was to retain the city, but Geraldo's weakened forces and Dom Sancho's unwillingness to send more troops resulted in the new Portuguese monarch ordering the evacuation of the recently conquered city.[62] Beja was the beginning of divergence between Geraldo and Dom Afonso Henriques, whose relationship must have soured with the recent events.[63] This division further grew when Portugal, Castille, and the Muslim Almohads signed a five-year non-aggression treaty.[64] Dom Afonso Henriques was one of the main forces behind the agreement because it allowed him time to consolidate his territorial gains of the recent decades.[65] Knowing the unruly knight would not remain inactive during that time, Dom Afonso Henriques disavowed Geraldo

58. Lópes, David, 96–98. David Lópes states that this force was headed by Dom Alfonso Henriques himself, but this is unlikely due to his injured leg.

59. Lópes, David, 97–98; Martins, Miguel Gomes, 44.

60. Lópes, David, 98; Mattoso, José, 338. Mattoso states that there is evidence that after fleeing to Lobón, Geraldo continued to pester the Badajoz highways a little longer before the fort was also besieged and overtaken; Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 78.

61. Collins, Roger, 34–35.

62. Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 78–79; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 45–46.

63. Lópes, David, 99, 103; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 68–69. This is further manifest as Geraldo's presence in the area was replaced by religious orders of knights as D. Afonso Henriques was worried about the security of his successors' throne.

64. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 46.

65. Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 68.

since his usefulness to the crown had ended—not unlike the Cid's exile nearly a hundred years earlier.

The king's actions struck Geraldo hard as he depended on the crown's support to maintain and reinforce his constant push into enemy lands. Furthermore, frontier men like Geraldo required ongoing campaigns to maintain themselves and pay their men.[66] As such, without the support of Portugal, peace was not an option.[67] With these considerations, Geraldo surprised all in 1173, when he suddenly abandoned his remaining holdings and appeared in Sevilla with 350 of his men and offered his services to the Caliph.[68] Surprisingly, the Caliph, Abu Yaqub Yasuf, welcomed Geraldo without reservation despite the rogue knight's decade-long campaign of terror.[69]

This decision had further consequences for Geraldo. One of the reasons for this willful forgetfulness is probably due to the strained relationships after the Badajoz disaster, which was further alienated after Geraldo later switched camps and offered his services to the Caliph. This switch must have appeared to the Portuguese host as a betrayal, one that would not be easily forgiven. Furthermore, it is significant to take into consideration the precarious political position of the Kingdom of Portugal at the time. Portugal had only become its own kingdom in 1139, and though it was gaining territory rapidly, it was surrounded by giants. After Geraldo changed his allegiance, Dom Afonso Henriques sought approval and approbation from the Pope, and was forming ties to various religious orders, such as the knight's templars, in order to secure the sovereignty of the kingdom and as insurance for his son's reign.[70] Therefore, it is easy to see why it would be advantageous for the Portuguese scribes to attribute as many heroic deeds to the first king as possible in order to strengthen his legitimacy.

After this shift, Geraldo and his men participated in various expeditions under the Caliph against the Kingdom of Castile until around 1176, when the

66. Collins, Roger, *Medieval Spain: Culture, Conflict, and Coexistence, Studies in Honour of Angus Mackay*, ed. Roger Collins & Anthony Goodman (Hampshire, Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 37; Lópes, David, 96; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 68–69.

67. Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 68. Furthermore, it is important to note that the peace treaty would have been harshly enforced as it would be seen as invalidating the sacred word and troth of the King.

68. Mattoso, José, 339.

69. Lópes, David, 100; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 69.

70. Valente, José, "The New Frontier: The Role of the Knights Templar in the Establishment of Portugal as an Independent Kingdom," *Mediterranean Studies,* Vol 7, pp. 49–65 (Penn State University Press, 1998), 57–58.

Caliph was obligated to return to Morocco to quell a rebellion in the Maghreb region.[71] Geraldo was ordered to accompany the Caliph, who wanted to use his tactical prowess to end the rebellion and perhaps separate Geraldo from Portugal and thereby ensure his loyalty.[72] After arriving in Africa, Geraldo and his men were stationed in the valley of the river Sus, most likely around the city of Taroudant, which is a distance east of the important coastal city of Agadir.[73] Some evidence points to his being awarded a fiefdom in the region.[74] However, at this point there is a general dearth of evidence regarding Geraldo's activities.

In addition to the rebellion of the Berber tribes against the Almohads, economic and military issues joined discord among the ruling family to create instability in the Almohad dynasty; Geraldo saw his opportunity and began sending secret letters to Dom Afonso Henriques urging the Portuguese king to send a naval fleet to Agadir. For his part, Geraldo promised to aid the naval attack with his force augmented with various allies among the rebellious Berber tribes.[75] Nevertheless, Geraldo's overtures arrived in Portugal during the period of non-aggression, and it seems his letter received no response.[76]

Sometime between 1177 to 1178, the Caliph sent Geraldo and his forces further inland to Sijilmassa in the Draa region (modern Tafilalt).[77] However, at the same time, a missive was sent to the regional governor with orders to detain Geraldo as the correspondence between him and the Portuguese king had been discovered.[78] Once again, in this final period, there are few concrete details. What is known is that after some time in prison, knowing the indomitable spirit and restless character of this knight, the Caliph made his decision. Thus, this Portuguese knight who had fought so long and who was so far from his homeland, was decapitated.[79]

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71. Collins, Roger, 31; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 47; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 71.

72. Collins, Roger, *Medieval Spain: Culture, Conflict, and Coexistence, Studies in Honour of Angus Mackay*, ed. Roger Collins & Anthony Goodman (Hampshire, Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 31; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 49.

73. Lópes, David, 102.

74. Collins, Roger, 31.

75. Collins, Roger, 28. There is also the possibility that he was also attempting to negotiate his return to Portugal; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 47–48; Pereira, Armando de Sousa,71.

76. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 48–49.

77. Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 72.

78. Collins, Roger, 28; Martins, Gomes Miguel, 48–49.

79. Lópes, David, 101–2; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 71–72.

Despite the historical record only covering a short twelve years, Geraldo's impact on the trajectories of modern Spain and Portugal is beyond doubt. Before he first appeared in 1166, Portugal's southern progress had floundered, devolving from campaigns of conquest into mere raids. A dramatic shift occurred in the geopolitics of the Alentejo and Extremadura regions with the capture of Trujillo and Évora. Until the Badajoz Disaster in 1169, he and his *cavaleiros-vilãos* were able to take every fort and town with surprising ease and efficiency, including the most critical Extremadura strongholds, excluding Badajoz.[80] His impact on the region continued after his 1172 departure for Sevilla and his service to the Caliph as the Almohads began an intensive effort to retake cities and fortify weaknesses exposed by Geraldo.[81] In the immediate aftermath many of the fortresses conquered by a few dozen men became nigh-impregnable castles by the end of the century. Many Portuguese and Leonese soldiers lost their lives fighting to take these same regions a century later.[82] Cáceres, in particular, shows how dramatic this transformation was as it withstood four sieges in 1184, 1213, 1218, and 1222 respectively. The city finally fell to the Castilians in 1229.[83] Cities that were once conquered in a single night now took years to subdue.[84]

The Portuguese city of Évora followed a different trajectory. In the aftermath of the conquest in 1166, Dom Afonso Henriques awarded Évora a new type of *foral*, or a city charter, making it the first city across the Tajo in the Alentejo region to receive such.[85] Geraldo's presence looms large to this day in the city, and he is portrayed in the coat of arms on horseback above the severed heads of the Moorish watchman and his daughter. The central plaza was even named after the conquistador.

80. Ramos, Julián Clemente, 653.

81. Mattoso, José, 346–47; Ramos, Julián Clemente, 651.

82. Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 91–91; Ramos, Julián Clemente, 653–54, 677–79. In the vital city of Badajoz, the extensive damages caused by Geraldo were repaired, and it was transformed into an impressive work of defensive engineering that posed serious issues for Christians when they attempted to take the city, taking them until 1230 to finally conquer it; Ramos, Julián Clemente, 653–54. The same happened to the cities of Cáceres and Trujillo, which were easily retaken by the Muslim forces in 1174, showing how weak and incapable they were, and thus they were rapidly converted from minor holdings into a formidable stronghold in the area, becoming considered as the keys to the Extremadura frontier.

83. Ramos, Julián Clemente, 655, 670. Meanwhile, Trujillo was the last city taken in the Extremadura region, holding out until 1234.

84. Ramos, Julián Clemente, 654.

85. Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 80; Powers, James F., 110, 125.

More influentially, Geraldo the Fearless featured in a portion of the famous 1572 epic *Os Lusíadas* by Luís Vaz de Camões. That poem, often compared to the Roman *Aeneid,* celebrates the discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco de Gama and is considered Portugal's national epic. In Canto III verse sixty-three, Vasco de Gama recounts the early history in Portugal, with particular mention of Geraldo:

> Here is the noble city, sure seat
> Of the rebel Sertorius formerly,
> Where now the bright waters of silver
> Come from far to sustain the land and people
> By the royal arcs,[86] that, hundred by hundred,
> our airs are nobly lifted up
> Obeyed through the courage
> Of Geraldo, who had no fear

Geraldo is mentioned once again in Canto VIII verse twenty-one:

> Look at he who descends by the lance,
> With the two heads of the watchmen
> Through the hidden ambush, with which he reaches
> The city, by artfulness and bravery.
> She for crest has taken the likeness
> Of the knight who [with] the cold heads
> In hand he carried (deed never before done!)
> Geraldo the Fearless is the courageous one.[87]

Clearly, his impact on Portuguese identity and his "fearlessness" surpassed his own lifetime to influence later generations of explorers and intellectuals.

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86. Refers to the aqueduct built by Dom João III, which watered the city.

87. Monteiro, Campos, *Os Lusíadas de Luís de Camões anotados e parafraseados por Campos Monteiro* (Porto, Livraria e Imprensa Civilização, 1925), 190, 482. "Eis a nobre cidade, certo assento / Do rebelde Sertório antigamente, / Onde ora as águas nítidas de argento / Vêm sustentar de longo a terra e a gente / Pelos arcos reais, que, cento e cento, / Nos ares se alevantam nobremente, / Obedeceu por meio e ousadia / De Giraldo, que medos não temi."(3.63) "Olha aquele que dece pela lança, / Com as duas cabeças dos vigias, / Ande a cilada esconde com que alcança / A cidade, por manhas e ousadias. / Ela por armas toma a semelhança / Do cavaleiro que as cabeças frias / Na mão levava (feito nunca feito!): / Giraldo Sem-Pavor é o forte peito." (8.21)

More importantly, his actions, when carefully scrutinized, open important debates on the trajectory of Portugal as a nation and empire. As soon as the non-aggression pact between the Muslims and the Portuguese expired after 1178, Dom Sancho headed an attack on the lands around Sevilla.[88] Had Geraldo's letters not been discovered, there is a real possibility that the Portuguese could have staged a two-pronged attack against the Almohads, a terrestrial campaign in Sevilla and a naval expedition against Agadir.[89] More concretely, Geraldo's actions, when fully analyzed, rewrite the Iberian reconquest narrative of Portugal being a junior partner alongside other aggressive Spanish kingdoms in the reconquest of Iberia. Furthermore, Geraldo's letters clearly outline Portuguese territorial ambitions beyond the peninsula long before the age of discoveries that, according to historians, only began under Prince Henry the Navigator in 1415 with the conquest of the North African city of Ceuta.

Had Geraldo succeeded in his designs, Portuguese expansion would have begun nearly 240 years earlier. An earlier Portuguese conquest of North Africa most likely would have tipped the balance of power in the Iberian Peninsula, which very well could have elevated Portugal as a major player among the European monarchies. As intriguing as it is to consider hypotheticals, there is no way to know for certain what would have occurred. What is certain is that Geraldo the Fearless rose from obscurity, and with his sword, left an indelible mark on Luso-Hispanic history before disappearing once again.

88. Almeida, Fortunato de, 165; Brandão, Frei António, 287–91; Mattoso, José & Armindo de Sousa, 91.

89. Martins, Gomes Miguel, 48; Pereira, Armando de Sousa, 71–72.

Student Awards

Awards for Outstanding Papers Written in 2022

African or Middle Eastern History Award

Paul Guajardo "Equatorial Guinea: How Nature Nurtured a Nation"

American Indian Studies Indigenous History Award

Colin Tompson, "Navajo Nation Self-Determinism"

Bertis L. and Anna E.C. Embry Award in Global Latter-day Saint History

Ellie Hancock, "The Ground Where Hares, Foxes, and Hounds Ran: The Missionary Work and Persecution of the Mormons in 1840s Britain"

Carol Cornwall Madsen Award in Latter-day Saint Women's History

Taylor Tree, "Latter-day Lesbians: An Exploration of Queer Women and the Mormon Church, 1979–1990"

Cultural History Award

Charity Ford, "Progressive Regression: Failures of the Progressive Era Through the Working-Class Lens of Betty Smith's A Tree Grows in Brooklyn"

De Lamar and Mary Jensen Award in European History

Charles Toronto, "Merchants of Menace: Italian Politics and the Robbery of Merchants en Route to the Trade Fairs of Champagne, 1242"

Eugene E. Campbell Award in Utah History

Makoto Hunter, "Secede and Come to Dixie: The Lost Cause, Community Identity, and White Supremacy in the 'Secessions' of Utah's Dixie, 1987–1990"

Faith and Reason Essay Competition

Kate Peless, "Faith and Reason"

Family History Award

Pamela Peterson, "Wonser Family Compiled Lineage"

Fred R. Gowans Award in Nineteenth-Century American Western History

Ruth Hardy, "Reimagining Indigenous Female Power: Intermarriages in the North American Fur Trade"

Friedrich Schiller Award for Historical Representation

Madeline Carter, "Fit for Freedom: Suicide in Ex-Slave Narratives"

History of Empire Award

Alisa Greenhalgh, "Ainu Lives Through Western Eyes: Analysis of British and American Accounts of the Ainu Between 1877 and 1924"

History of the Family Award

Sarah Emmett, "Binding Interdependence: The Necessity of Marriage in the Stonor Letters"

History of Religious Liberty Award

Emma Lowe, "An Analysis of the Changing Freedoms of Black Latter-day Saints, 1830–1930"

Interdisciplinary History Award

Sara Grundvig, "Deaths of Despair and Meriwether Lewis: An Interdisciplinary Study of Suicide"

Latin American History Award

Heidi Riboldi, "Angel Babies Ascending to Heaven—A Family Saga of Death across Cultures"

Leroy R. Hafen Award in North American History

Elyse Slabaugh, "We Want Religion in Prisons: An Analysis of the Historical Legacy and Impact of Religion and Religious Freedom in America's Prisons"

Mark R. Grandstaff Award in Military History

Daniel Martin, "Harbingers of Hate: How Racist Ideology Affected the Philippine-American War"

Political History Award

Bethany Erickson, "Novel, Unlawful, Tyrannical, and Oppressive: The Life and Political Career of Lilburn Boggs, the Extermination Order, and His Relationship with the Latter-day Saints"

Sechin Jagchid Award in Non-Western History

Aiden Titel, "The Tokugawa Mystique: Informal Interaction with Tokugawa Japan before Perry"

U.S. Constitutional History Award

Brady Early, "Contagions, Congregations, and Constitutional Law: Reciprocity and Religious Freedom in the 1918 and 2020 Pandemics"

William J. Snow Award in American West or Latter-day Saint History

Grace Soelberg, "Peculiar Students of a Peculiar Institution: A Historical Analysis of Racial Minority Students and Race Relations at Brigham Young University as Presented in the *Banyan* from 1911–1985"

Women's History Award

Kaitlyn Richardson, "Blessed in Her Life and in Her Death: Female Economy, Social Networks, and Coming of Age in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts"