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Editor's Note

The writing of history, an ever elusive, ever maddening process, is enough to leave any student, by the end, in some form of catatonic shock. However, somewhere between the endless frustrations of analytical and critical thinking and the euphoria of reaching the finish line is a cathartic state, when weeks of research and understanding coagulate into intellectual cohesion. As I write this reflection I am in that absolute state of catharsis; when everything falls perfectly into place.

After four months of tactically balancing the organization of other students' hard work with my own, I am just as much relieved as I am delighted to present you with the 2007 edition of Pangaea, the Dalhousie Undergraduate History Journal. To say the least, the following essays showcase the academic adroitness of some of Dalhousie's senior history undergraduates, and at the same time, reflect the diversity of the Dalhousie History Department. The pool of submissions was deep this year so I must thank my editorial team as well as the faculty advisors, Christopher Bell and Jaymie Heilman, for providing much needed advice on a variety of issues. I would especially like to thank Matt Sugrue, our society's president, for his words of wisdom; Eric Topping, my assistant editor, for supporting most of my creative decisions; and Saman Jafarian for her comprehensive understanding of the editing process.

So, as you read, keep in mind George Santayana's old aphorism that "History is always written wrong, and so always needs to be rewritten," and remember that the following essays are merely new chapters in the ongoing process of historical writing. But until more research is accumulated and theses are developed further, I hope that Pangaea 2007 will satiate your desire for historical thought and lead to hours of enjoyment and enlightenment.

Contents

Missed Opportunities: The Failed Anglo-Soviet Negotiations of 1939

Christy Lee

It is a testament to the precariousness and complexity of the British position as it stood on the eve of the Second World War that a standard policy of appeasement, and the subsequent catastrophes it spawned, still remains a topic full of debate nearly seventy years later. Despite the vast amount of scholarship on the subject, the inevitable issue at the heart of the matter continues to persist: "What could Chamberlain and his Conservative-dominated government have done differently?" One alternative that received serious consideration by Chamberlain's contemporaries (and has since) was an alliance with the Soviet Union, the doomed negotiations for which were overwhelmingly accepted by the Cabinet in May 1939. Past historical analysis has tended to pinpoint the virulent anticommunism of the Prime Minister in the British aversion to the Soviet Union following Germany's annexation of Prague. However, more recent scholarship, most likely due to the greater accessibility of archival evidence, suggests otherwise. Ultimately, the wariness that characterized the British government's rapprochement with the Soviet Union in 1939 did not primarily stem from overriding fears of communism; it was a cautious approach based largely on political considerations, bolstered by secondary military, ideological and domestic concerns, and convoluted by a lack of "off-the-shelf contingency plans" that could be brought into play at a moment's notice.[1]

In assessing how and why the British approached negotiations with the Soviet Union, it is important to first understand the power dynamic that existed between Chamberlain and his Cabinet in the formulation of foreign policy.

[1] Christopher Hill, *Cabinet Decisions on Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 19.

During Chamberlain's term in office from 1937 until 1940, foreign policy was monitored daily by the Prime Minister and the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Edward Halifax.[2] Occasionally referred to as the "foreign policy executive", the actual degree to which this partnership influenced British foreign policy in relation to the Cabinet was subject to high variability. In his analysis of six case studies, foreign policy analyst Christopher Hill pinpoints certain key factors that were crucial in determining the extent of control and leadership wielded by Chamberlain and Halifax. Such factors included how comprehensible and open-ended alternative solutions were (and thus how easy it was for non-specialist ministers to comprehend and dispute them), as well as whether or not a problem had been expected and could be settled by existing conventions.[3] In other words, the lengthy deliberations of a large Cabinet were not conducive to a crisis situation requiring rapid decision; yet this was precisely the environment into which the British entered on 15 March 1939. On that date, the principle of ethnic unity that had been so successfully exploited at Munich, came to an abrupt end with the German occupation of the remainder of Czechoslovakia, and the seizure of Prague, Bohemia, and Moravia.

Three days after the Nazi aggression, and prompted by an unfounded rumour of a German ultimatum to Rumania over the control of Rumanian industry and export, a meeting of the British Chiefs of Staff was called on 18 March 1939.[4] Two days later, on March 20, a Four-Power Declaration was proposed to the Cabinet, in which Britain, the Soviet Union, France, and Poland would jointly state their interest in safeguarding the independence of states in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe.[5] By 31 March 1939, the Four-Power Declaration was dead, and a unilateral and unconditional guarantee had been made to Poland, at the expense of Soviet exclusion from a bilateral or multinational commitment. During this period of rapid policy changes, the Cabinet did not play as significant a role in the drafting of policies as Chamberlain and Halifax did; both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary

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[2] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, xviii.
[3] *Ibid*., xix.
[4] Robert Manne, "The British Decision for Alliance with Russia, May 1939," *Journal of Contemporary History* 9 (1974), 4.
[5] Albert Reiss, "The Fall of Litvinov: Harbinger of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact," *Europe-Asia Studies* 52 (2000), 37.

represented Britain in talks with French Foreign Minister Georges Bonnet, and both decided to place an emphasis on Polish support, deciding not to inform the Soviet Union of the abandonment of the Four-Power Declaration until March 29.[6] Halifax argued that because of its ability to provide a Second Front, and Poland's refusal to allow the Soviets on Polish territory, "we [Britain] cannot have Russia in the forefront of the picture," The Anglo-Soviet alliance would thus not be of the utmost priority, although the Russians were not to be entirely excluded insofar as they could supply war materials and arms to the Polish.[7] Militarily weak compared to Germany or the Soviet Union, Poland could hardly constitute a second front. As a speech from the former Liberal Prime Minister David Lloyd George noted, the Poles were in possession of "worse than mediocre armaments," a negligible air force, and a weak economy.[8] While the Polish army was declared to be "well led and trained, tough, and of great endurance" (according to the British Military Attaché in Warsaw), what the Poles lacked were the material resources needed to wage a long war of attrition against the Nazis.[9]

The Poles were, however, in possession of a shared border with Germany, with an uneasy existence between the latter to the west and the Soviet Union to the east. It was, in fact, this proximity to the Soviets that had fueled Poland's rejection of the Four-Power Declaration proposed by the British. Under the leadership of the dictator Jozef Pilsudski, the Poles were situated precariously in the 1930s between the Soviet Union (which had recently lost territory to the Poles in the Russo-Polish War of 1920) and expansionist Germany. It was this delicate balance between two aggressor nations that had prompted Polish Foreign Minister Colonel Jozef Beck to conclude a pact of non-aggression with the Soviets in 1932, and a similar pact with the Nazis in 1934. Now, with the Four-Power Declaration so clearly placing Poland in the Soviet camp, Colonel Beck feared that a "mad-dog" attack by Germany on

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[6] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 33.
[7] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 35.
[8] Simon Newman, *March 1939: The British Guarantee to Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 206.
[9] *Ibid*., 139.

Poland would not be far behind.[10] In any case, the Poles were one of many peoples (including the Rumanians, the Estonians, the Latvians, and the Finns) who were not about to let the Russians plow through their territory for fear they would never leave, particularly when such territory had been so recently won from their "rescuers."

On 24 March 1939, James Eric Drummond, the British Ambassador in Rome, made the following warning: "If Great Britain linked up with Soviet Russia in European security, she would be cutting her own throat, as this would automatically indispose a large number of countries, who […] were violently anti-Soviet."[11] One such country that happened to be "violently anti-Soviet" was Poland, the most powerful state in central Europe, and one that Chamberlain had pinpointed as the "key" to the Eastern Front. But why was Poland so important from the British Conservative perspective? Why did Britain, which had intended to provide Poland with a bilateral and conditional guarantee after the German takeover of Prague, end up providing the Poles with a unilateral and unconditional promise of aid along with a guarantee to Rumania on April 13? The importance ascribed to both Poland and Rumania in the mindset of the foreign policy executive is indicative of the extent to which Anglo-Soviet negotiations proceeded largely on the basis of political considerations; it is also useful in explaining why Britain would not seriously get involved in the Second World War until the Battle of France in 1940, despite Hitler's aggression against the Poles in September 1939. When it was put forth on March 20, the guarantee to Poland was not intended to protect the Poles; its purpose was chiefly to salvage Britain's international reputation as a Great Power and serve as a pretext for going to war with Germany.[12] As Halifax remarked on 27 March 1939, "There was probably no way in which France and ourselves could prevent Poland and Rumania from being overrun…if we did nothing this in itself would mean a great accession to Germany's strength and a great loss to ourselves of sympathy and support in the United States, in the Balkan countries, and in other

[10] G. Bruce Strang, "John Bull in Search of a Suitable Russia," *Canadian Journal of History* 41 (2006): 58.
[11] Ibid., 140.
[12] Strang, "John Bull in Search of a Suitable Russia," 153.

parts of the world."[13] Alexander Cadogan would later confess to Ian Colvin, the American ambassador in Warsaw, "Of course our guarantee could give no possible protection to Poland in any imminent attack upon her. But it set up a signpost for [Chamberlain]…in the event of a German attack on Poland he would be spared the agonizing doubts and indecisions."[14]

The threat of Poland being "overrun" by the Germans was a danger that loomed in 1939, and one that was primarily due to Germany's aggressive expansionism in the name of racial unity and Poland's occupation of former German territory lost in the 1919 Treaty of Versailles. Within this newly-acquired Polish Corridor was the Free City of Danzig, which served as a Baltic Sea port for the Poles and also harbored an overwhelmingly German population. Following the events at Munich in September 1938, Hitler had approached the Poles for an alignment with Germany, in what German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop called a "general settlement."[15] Among several stipulations, the "general settlement" called for Danzig to be returned to the Third Reich, an extension of the German-Polish non-aggression pact of 1934 for another ten years, the construction of a German freeway and railroad linking Germany to Prussia via the Polish Corridor, and a guaranteed market for Polish goods in Danzig.[16] Colonel Beck had been firm in his refusal to allow a German annexation of Danzig, but such staunchness did not prevent Britain from fearing the extent to which Poland was willing to take the negotiations with Germany. Such a fear was especially well-founded following the German annexations of Bohemia, Moravia and Lithuanian Memel that placed the German threat to Poland on three fronts.[17] Matters were also not helped by the fact that Poland had appeared at times to be a revisionist (and pro-German) power in its recent disregard for the status quo. In September 1938, the Poles had joined the Germans in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, and had acquired from the Czechs the town of Teschen and regions in northern Slovakia in the process.[18]

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[13] Strang, "John Bull in Search of a Suitable Russia," 153.
[14] Alexander Cadogan, *The Cadogan Diaries, 1938-1945* (London: Cassell & Company, 1971), 167.
[15] Newman, *March 1939*, 157.
[16] *Ibid*., 157.
[17] *Ibid*., 160.
[18] R.A.C Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 78.

Even more distressing from the British perspective were the rumors circulating the Foreign Office in February 1939 that Germany's next attack would not occur on the Eastern Front, as had long been expected, but would be launched against the West instead; Germany might well advance through the Netherlands and Belgium rather than satisfying its appetite in the East, providing the Nazis with bases across the English Channel from which to launch naval and air assaults against the British. If such rumors proved true, Britain would benefit from a second front to stave off the German onslaught that would buy much-needed time. A solid commitment from Poland, as the nation bordering the aggressor nation to the east, offered a chance (albeit a small one) of diverting German resources elsewhere.[19] Further fueling the ambiguity surrounding Polish intentions was the reluctance of Beck and his colleagues to keep the British up-to-date on the state of their negotiations with Germany. In addition to the Polish willingness to spread misinformation, one particularly damning entanglement involved Polish Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Arciszewski, who told a British official on March 28 that the Germans had put forth no proposals, while revealing to the British Ambassador in Warsaw that three such proposals had been communicated since March 14.[20] If the Poles were truly serious about fighting for Danzig and the Polish Corridor, why were they being evasive about their negotiations with the Germans, and not exaggerating the enormity of the German threat to the British in the hopes of prompting British support?

It was in this atmosphere of uncertainty that British motive for negotiating with the Soviet Union was deterred; no one was sure of where the Germans would attack next, nor did they know the true intentions of the Poles. While rumors of a Western invasion were inundating the Foreign Office in January and February, other reports, such as the March 15 communication from the British representative in Danzig, suggested an imminent occupation of Danzig over the weekend by German forces. The Poles themselves were unaware of these "alarming" developments, and such dispatches foretelling Nazi invasions ultimately did turn out to be unfounded.[21] In any case, the British perception of the Poles in 1939 was that, despite their determination to fight for

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[19] Newman, *March 1939*, 164.
[20] *Ibid.*, 171.
[21] Newman, *March 1939*, 170.

Danzig, they were largely in danger of falling under the German sphere of influence, either by force or by negotiation, unless a firm commitment were given to secure their independence. If Britain did not commit its resources to Poland, or if Britain tried to cajole the Poles into permitting Soviet presence on Polish territory, the probable consequence would be Beck's guarantee of Polish neutrality to the Nazis in return for Germany receiving "less than 99% of her demands" regarding Danzig.[22] This declaration of Polish neutrality would also create a buffer zone between Germany and Russia, effectively eliminating the possibility of a secondary Eastern front as a diversion of German resources from a Western offensive.[23] A guarantee provided to Poland, on the other hand, in complete disaccord with the Polish-German non-aggression pact of 1934, would likely result in German aggression against the Poles; while the Germans successfully overran Poland the British would have more time to mobilize, and the Germans would find themselves on the Soviet doorstep, a position which would likely require a fifty-division *Wehrmacht* defense by Halifax's calculations.[24] Chamberlain, ever the optimist for a negotiated peace settlement with Germany, was also averse to an Anglo-Soviet alliance largely because he feared that the "encirclement" of the aggressor nation would provoke a German attack. As he would write in a letter dated 29 April 1939, "Russia [is] a very unreliable friend…with an enormous irritative power on others…I can't believe that she has the same aims or objects as we have…the alliance would definitely be a lining up of opposing blocs", or a return to the alliance diplomacy that had sparked the First World War.[25]

It was in this manner that the Polish guarantee was placed before the Cabinet by Chamberlain and Halifax on March 20. Dissenters, such as Minister of Health Walter Elliot, were unable to effectively counter the proposed course of action because a definite and specific alternative was lacking, and they only had a "general appreciation" of the situation. The papers of the chiefs of staff, proposed initially on March 18, had recommended that Germany be engaged on two fronts, and that "if the U.S.S.R. were on our side and Poland neutral, the

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[22] Newman, *March 1939*, 172.
[23] *Ibid.,* 220.
[24] Strang, "John Bull in Search of a Suitable Russia," 59.
[25] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 59.

position would alter in our favour." These papers were not shown to cabinet ministers until April 3. What *was* enumerated in the March 27 cabinet meeting, however, was the fact that German control of Rumania would give Germany access to Rumanian oil, effectively nullifying Britain's key weapon since the eighteenth century economic blockade.[26] In a similar vein of selectivity, Soviet Ambassador in London Ivan Maisky had approached Halifax on March 19 for a five-power conference in Bucharest, but after a consultation with only the Prime Minister and two other colleagues, the conference was rejected.[27] Thus, on March 31 the primary involvement of the cabinet lay in rejecting or accepting the Polish guarantee, and there was strong pressure for acceptance. If the guarantee was rejected, the government would be left without a policy, the Poles would likely not be willing to accept anything less, and the Soviets would be even more wary in dealing with the evasive British.[28] Certainly from Munich until the 1941 Soviet entry into the war, and especially when disagreement arose, consensus was a major priority at 10 Downing Street. Hill has attributed this sentiment to the consideration within Parliament of itself as a team, but more so to the instinct for political survival, and the realization that with disagreement over key issues there would be resignations and the probable downfall of the Chamberlain government.[29]

On May 16, 1939, Alexander Cadogan wrote, "Chiefs of Staff have now swung round to 'whole-hog' alliance with Soviet. P.M. annoyed."[30] Two months prior, the British guarantee to Poland had effectively ignored the recommendation of the Chiefs of Staff for a Soviet rapprochement; had Chamberlain's anticommunism been responsible for the March 1939 overruling, and what was now responsible for the volte-face of May 1939? Certainly no one within Chamberlain's government (with the exception of the greatly marginalized Communist Party of Great Britain) was an outright proponent of communism, and there is no question that the Soviet ideology was a component of Chamberlain's distrust of the Russians. However, the difficulties in approving

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[26] Tor Egil Forland, "The History of Economic Warfare: International Law, Effectiveness, Strategies," *Journal of Peace Research* 30 (1993), 160.
[27] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 30.
[28] *Ibid.*, 35.
[29] *Ibid.*, xx.
[30] Cadogan, *The Diaries*, 180.

the Anglo-Soviet negotiations were not solely the result of irreconcilable ideological differences, whether on the home front or internationally, as has been suggested by some scholars. According to this school of thought, the socialist-minded Labour and Liberal Parties championed an Anglo-Soviet alliance in support of their ideological brethren in Russia, while the Conservative-dominated government chose the extreme right-wing of fascism and Nazism as the lesser of two evils, and directed their foreign policy accordingly.[31] However, support for an Anglo-Soviet alliance had little to do with whether a British Party's inclination was anticommunist or not, as the history of Conservative minister, blatant anticommunist, and advocate of an Anglo-French-Soviet alliance Winston Churchill would suggest.[32] The 1920s, for example, saw the Labour Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald ban Communists from holding Labour Party membership, and follow the Liberal lead in championing social reforms in matters of unemployment, education, health, and housing. While neither the Liberals nor the Labourites were enamored with Communism, both parties had domestic reform at the heart of their platforms and desired improved political and commercial relations with the Soviets so as to revive depressed industries in Britain. As the Labour Party's campaign manifesto in 1928 stated, "[Russian] orders for machinery and manufactures, which would have found employment for thousands of British workers, have been lost to this country."[33]

As R.A.C. Parker has observed, Chamberlain was always the "most hopeful" of British statesmen in reaching a peaceful settlement with Germany.[34] With increases in British rearmament and defense expenditures picking up speed in 1936, as well as an expressed willingness for discussion and peaceful resolution, the Prime Minister failed to see how rational Germans (perhaps even Hitler himself) could not be dissuaded from the warpath. Chamberlain's confidence in British rearmament was not shared by his chiefs of staff. In 1939, amongst the great powers, only the Americans were spending less on defense measures as a percentage of the national income than the British, who spent 5.7 percent as compared to the Soviets' 26.4 percent, France's 9.1 percent, and

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[31] Kevin Narizny, "The Political Economy of Alignment: Great Britain's Commitments to Europe, 1905-39," *International Security* 27 (2003): 187.
[32] Hugh Dalton, *The Fateful Years: Memoirs 1931-1945* (London: Muller, 1953), 249.
[33] Narizny, *The Political Economy*, 210.
[34] Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement*, 203.

Germany's 23.5 percent.[35] Chamberlain was most likely confident in Britain's rearmament measures because he still believed that war was preventable, and that Britain's harder line, when done "inoffensively" and "quietly," was forcing the Germans to reconsider their actions without seeming to encircle or provoke them. As Permanent Secretary of the Treasury Sir Horace Wilson argued on 21 March 1939, "It would have to be borne in mind that if we took a major step to accelerate our readiness for war, this would be certain to be interpreted as an earnest of our intentions to encircle Germany."[36]

While Chamberlain's position stagnated, that of his colleagues in the Cabinet certainly had not. Less than three months after the Polish Guarantee, in May 1939, an overwhelming number of Cabinet members (including Home Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare, Minister for the Coordination of Defence Lord Chatfield, President of the Board of Trade Oliver Stanley, Walter Elliot, and Secretary of State for War Leslie Hore-Belisha) would show themselves strongly in support of opening Anglo-Soviet negotiations. Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir John Simon remained undecided, and only the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, W.S. Morrison, stood by the reluctance of Chamberlain and Halifax; the latter wavered on the issue.[37] Hill does not believe that the Service Chiefs' mention on May 16 of a Nazi-Soviet rapprochement was responsible for the Cabinet's acceptance of Anglo-Soviet negotiations; the possibility was breached, of course, but it was not one that seemed imminent, given the fanatical Nazi opposition to Jews and Communism. Instead, he attributes the acceptance of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations to the non-crisis atmosphere of May in which discussion, debate, written proposals, and disagreement with Chamberlain were allowed stronger representation in Cabinet meetings.[38] In addition to the greater atmosphere of deliberation, there were also a clear and limited number of choices available to the Cabinet: the Soviets were not willing to yield to anything less than the proposal Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissar Maxim Litvinov had submitted on April 18, that of a three-power military alliance between France, Britain, and the Soviet Union to "render each other and all Eastern European

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[35] Martin Pugh, *State & Society* (London: Arnold, 1994), 246.
[36] Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement*, 208.
[37] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 248.
[38] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 63.

states…bordering on USSR…all manner of assistance including that of a military nature."[39] As Alexander Cadogan put it on May 19, 1939: "Soviet alliance (or pact of mutual assistance) and breakdown- with all consequences."[40]

In deciding to undertake negotiations for an Anglo-Soviet alliance, political matters proved not to be the only stumbling block. When Chamberlain chose to emphasize the recruitment of Poland in March 1939, one of the main factors that had confirmed his decision was the poor state of the Soviet military, though the Soviet Union was not without strategic potential and Poland was far from a military superpower. In a report published in April 1939, titled "Military Value of the USSR," the British chiefs of staff countered any numerical advantages the Soviets might present with the overwhelming administrative and economic weaknesses that the British believed could largely negate them. Such drawbacks included: a beheaded Soviet military command in the wake of the Stalinist purges, a weak Soviet navy (with only thirty-eight submarines, as compared to Britain's seventy-one), an out-of-date air force with no bases from which to launch an attack on Germany, and an inefficient transport system that would hinder the transfer of supplies to countries such as Poland.[41] Regardless of Russian military ineptitude, however, it remained a fact that the Soviet Union was the only European country with enough manpower to launch a major war against Germany in 1939, with 1.3 million soldiers, as compared to Germany's 1.5 million, France's 700,000, and Britain's 154,000; as acknowledged by the Chiefs of Staff, the only power which could give Poland direct support and thus deter Hitler, making a guarantee to Poland without the active help of the Soviets essentially a sacrifice of the former.[42]

Aside from Poland, a potential increase in Japanese animosity in the wake of an Anglo-Soviet alliance provided another concern for the British, though the Japanese and Italian threats had been considered secondary to that of Germany ever since the Defence Requirements Sub-Committee Report of 1933.[43] Over the course of the twentieth century, a string of conflicts had

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[39] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 51.
[40] *Ibid*., 58.
[41] Frank McDonough, *Neville Chamberlain, Appeasement, and the British Road to War* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), 82.
[42] Pugh, *State & Society*, 246.
[43] Newman, *March 1939*, 141.

erupted between the Soviet Union and the Japanese over interests in Manchuria and Korea. Beginning in 1904 with the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese had attacked the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, defeated the Russians in the sea battle of Tsushima in 1905, and had occupied Russian-owned Northern Sakhalin in 1920 (an island which would ultimately be restored to the Soviets). They had also attempted to penetrate Soviet defences twice, first at Chankufeng in Eastern Manchuria in 1938, and then later at Nomonhan on the Manchurian-Mongolian border in 1939.[44] Mongolia had been a Soviet satellite ever since the establishment of a provisional Communist government in the region by the Mongolian Revolutionary Army and Soviet troops.[45] Soviet interests were also threatened by the Japanese in Manchuria, the northern region of which had been annexed by the Russians in 1900 following the Boxer Rebellion against the Chinese.[46] Matters were also not helped by the Japanese government's decision to sign the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1936 with Germany, pledging cooperation against 'international Communism,' although, the pact was initially intended as political support only.[47] The Russians countered with a Sino-Soviet non-aggression treaty, concluded in 1937 between Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese National Government; by its terms, the agreement provided the political basis for loans to China for the purchase of Soviet military equipment, which was to be used against the Japanese in the Second Sino-Japanese War of that same year.[48] The Soviets would also lash out at the Japanese at the November 1937 Brussels Conference, during which Litvinov joined the Chinese in pressing for collective sanctions against Japan.[49] Needless to say, Russo-Japanese animosity was alive and well during the Anglo-Soviet negotiations, and the British government was concerned that any sign of support for Japan's enemies

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[44] Peter Berton, "Soviet-Japanese Relations: Perceptions, Goals, Interactions," *Asian Survey* 26 (1986): 1260.
[45] Robert A. Smith, "Mongolia: In the Soviet Camp," *Asian Survey* 10 (1970): 25.
[46] Steven E. Lobell, "Second Image Reversed Politics: Britain's Choice of Freer Trade or Imperial Preferences, 1903-1906, 1917-1923, 1930-1932," *International Studies Quarterly* 45 (1999), 685.
[47] John Garver, "The Soviet Union and the Xi'an Incident," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 26 (1991), 148.
[48] John Garver, "Chiang Kai-shek's Quest for Soviet Entry into the Sino-Japanese War," *Political Science Quarterly* 102 (1987), 300.
[49] Garver, "Chiang Kai-shek's Quest," 303.

would provoke Japan into signing a three-power military alliance with Germany and Italy, which by 1939 they had still refrained from doing. The Japanese military alliance with the Axis powers would be concluded a year later, in 1940.[50] However, not everyone within the Foreign Policy Committee meeting on 25 April 1939 agreed that an Anglo-Soviet alliance would provoke Japan: Lord Chatfield and Secretary of State for the Dominions Thomas Inskip argued that an Anglo-Soviet alliance might actually restrain Japanese aggression by guaranteeing the Soviet position in Europe and thus leaving the Russians free to intervene in Asia.[51] However, given the *fait accompli* of the Polish Guarantee and the all-or-nothing April proposals of the Soviets, an Anglo-Soviet alliance was still not without serious misgivings, even for those such as Samuel Hoare who desired one: as the Home Secretary concluded on April 25, it would impair "a barrier against aggression in Eastern Europe on behalf of the States directly menaced by Germany."[52]

Although Chamberlain was by no means orchestrating foreign policy alone in 1939, he still believed after the German takeover of Prague that war was not inevitable, and that if Germany was willing to make overtures for a negotiated peace settlement, he would not be averse to discussing military, political, and economic arrangements. During the summer of 1939, the German Ambassador to London, Herbert von Dirksen, wrote several memorandums articulating the secret discussions which had taken place between Robert Hudson of the British Department of Overseas Trade, Sir Horace Wilson, and Helmuth Wohlthat, a prominent German economist.[53] Although not negotiations in themselves, the meetings resulted in a proposal from Wilson of a pact of non-aggression, as well as a pact of non-intervention delineating Anglo-German "spheres of interest"; where the non-aggression pact was concerned, the British proposal was that its conclusion within a treaty would entail mutual renunciations of unilateral actions, essentially freeing Britain of her commitment to Poland.[54] Dirksen would later comment that the significance of Wilson's

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[50] Cadogan, *The Diaries*, 159.
[51] Garver, "Chiang Kai-shek's Quest," 311.
[52] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 56.
[53] Herbert von Dirksen, *German Documents on the Eve of World War II, Vol. II* (Salisbury: Documentary Publications, 1978), 67.
[54] *Ibid.*, 117.

proposals was brought home by his invitation to Wohlthat to have them confirmed by Chamberlain personally.[55] It is doubtful that any substantial developments could have arisen out of these discussions, given the "inflamed" attitude towards Germany of public opinion (both domestic and international), as well as the general sentiment within the Cabinet that nothing short of outright warfare would deter Hitler from further European expansion. However, it is an indication of the degree to which the British (and to a large extent Chamberlain) pursued a "dual policy," as Dirksen would refer to it: Britain was looking to strengthen her position with the acquisition of Eastern alliances and armaments, while political, strategic, economic, and ideological doubts in these very allies had prompted the British executive to continue seeking adjustments with Germany.[56]

As a result of the deliberations from March to May of 1939, a total of fourteen long, drawn-out, and ultimately unsuccessful meetings on Anglo-Soviet relations would serve to characterize the months from June until the outbreak of war in September 1939. The British approach to the Soviet Union in the months leading to the negotiations could hardly be characterized as enthusiastic by even the alliance's most ardent supporters. However, the decisions both for and against opening Anglo-Soviet discussion were based first and foremost on British political interests, the international consequences of a full alliance, strategic and military ramifications, ideological distrust, and the balance of power between Chamberlain and the British Cabinet.[57]

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[55] Dirksen, *German Documents*, 184.
[56] *Ibid.,* 176.
[57] Hill, *Cabinet Decisions*, 73.

Eggs and the Historical Moment: Interpretations of Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5

Susan Zakaib

When we think of art illuminating history, we tend to think of art forms such as literature, film or visual art. Usually, these forms have identifiable topics, characters, historical settings and viewpoints which we can associate with historical moments. Instrumental music, on the other hand, is generally far more difficult to pinpoint in terms of subject matter and perspective; thus, if it is to illuminate history, it must do so in a different way than literature, film or visual art.

A particularly fascinating piece is Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, which was composed and premiered during Joseph Stalin's Terror in 1937. This work is the subject of intense discussion among musicologists due to the tense political and artistically critical atmosphere in which it was created, as well as the unclear emotions expressed in the piece—particularly in the fourth movement, the finale. This essay will examine the atmosphere in which Shostakovich wrote the Fifth Symphony, which will set a background against which the opinions of various musicologists regarding interpretation of the symphony can be articulated. These interpretations vary considerably, and each requires a different interpretation of the historical moment. This suggests that our understandings of the symphony and of the historical moment are fundamentally intertwined. The enormous variance in interpretations of the Fifth Symphony implies that its relationship to history is different than that between history and other forms of art. This is because the symphony does not offer the audience a clear interpretation of history; rather, historical opinions and musical examination inform the symphony's interpretation.

The atmosphere in which Shostakovich wrote his Fifth Symphony was extremely tumultuous. Stalin's Terror involved a litany of arrests, executions and propaganda, such that at its height half a million people were executed by the state, and by 1938 an estimated one in ten adults were imprisoned.[1] The Terror—also called the Yezhovshchina, named after Nikolai Ivanovich Yezhov, Commissar of Internal Affairs from 1936 to 1938—is considered by many to be the bloodiest political terror in history.[2] The infamous 'show trials' and purges began in 1936, wherein political enemies of Stalin were "forced into abject confessions and humiliation prior to their liquidation."[3] Moreover, the arts were strictly controlled by the state; as the Terror progressed, it became increasingly dangerous for artists to deviate from state-instituted aesthetic requirements.

In July 1925, the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party passed a resolution for literature which supported the proletarian writer in principle, and allowed for a fair amount of creative flexibility. A similar attitude was held towards music.[4] This attitude changed drastically in December 1928, when the Central Committee passed a resolution that established strict ideological controls over the diffusion of art.[5] The resolution emphasized the importance of art serving the political aims of the Party. By 1932, the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM) had enough members and state-appointed control that it had monopolized authority over the Soviet music world. The RAPM policy involved the re-education of musicians and listeners in the Marxist image. As such, it objected to any musical style that supposedly bore bourgeoisie connections, such as Western, jazz and modern music.[6] The Central Committee passed yet another resolution in 1932, titled "On the Reconstruction of Literary and Artistic Associations." Artistic associations were to be liquidated and replaced by single unions, each containing a Communist faction.

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[1] Ian MacDonald, *The New Shostakovich* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990), 122.
[2] Richard Taruskin, "Public Lies and Unspeakable Truth: Interpreting Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony," in *Shostakovich Studies*, ed. David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 24.
[3] Elizabeth Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered* (Boston: Faber and Faber, 1994), 120.
[4] Boris Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917-1970* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972), 48-49.
[5] Taruskin, "Public Lies and Unspeakable Truth," 19.
[6] Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life*, 57-58.

Membership—crucial in this political climate—was only open to artists "upholding the platform of the Soviet regime and striving to participate in Socialist construction."[7] With this resolution, all artists and their works came under control of the Soviet regime, and any remaining creative flexibility after the 1928 resolution was demolished.

A few years later, Shostakovich came under direct attack as a result of such tight artistic control. On 28 January 1936 an unsigned article was published in the USSR's main newspaper, *Pravda*, called "Muddle Instead of Music." The article attacked Shostakovich's recent popular opera, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* for rejecting easy, accessible musical language and the principles of classical opera. [8] The opera was also accused of pandering to the formalist tastes of the bourgeoisie. Formalism is technically defined as the separation of form from content, but is hard to characterize in musical terms. More importantly, the 'formalist' accusation meant that the opera apparently did not meet the requirements of the regime—the concept of 'Socialist Realism' demanded that music be accessible, tuneful, stylistically traditional and folk-inspired in order to be worthy of the working class, and thus the Soviet state.[9] The actual authorship of the *Pravda* editorial is disputed, but it is certain that the compelling force behind it was Stalin himself.[10]

On 10 February 1936 Platon Kerzhenstev gave one of his first speeches as leader of the All-Union Committee for Artistic Affairs, which had recently been formed by the state. In this speech, he made it clear that the reach of the criticisms laid out in "Muddle Instead of Music" (as well as another *Pravda* editorial, attacking Shostakovich's *The Limpid Stream*) extended to all Soviet music, as well as other art forms. Kerzhenstev publicly advised Shostakovich that he should begin to write Russian folk music, and that he should travel the Soviet Union, acquainting himself with a variety of musical folklore.[11] In December of the same year, Shostakovich decided to cancel the premiere of his Fourth

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[7] Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life*, 109-110.
[8] Laurel E. Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 84-85.
[9] *Ibid*., 88-89.
[10] *Ibid*., 304. See note 67.
[11] *Ibid*., 89.

Symphony—most likely out of fear that it did not conform to the musical restrictions of the state.[12]

Alongside Shostakovich's troubles with state criticism came the increasing intensity of the Yezhovshchina. By 1937, many of his friends and colleagues had disappeared. As well, his brother-in-law had been arrested, his sister had been exiled, and his mother-in-law had been sent to a labour camp.[13] This is the tense and dangerous atmosphere in which Shostakovich wrote his Fifth Symphony in 1937; he was under great pressure to create music which would please Stalin, or he would put himself—and his family and friends—at great risk of imprisonment or execution.

Despite the previous year's criticisms of *Lady Macbeth* and Shostakovich's suspicious cancellation of his Fourth Symphony, the Fifth premiered in November 1937 to tremendous audience approval. One reviewer, Alexey Tolstoy, interpreted the new symphony as an example of 'Socialist Realism'—music which properly served the Soviet state. The only interpretation Shostakovich himself offered was that it was, to some extent, autobiographical, concerning the "suffering of man, and all-conquering optimism." He also released a statement in which he expressed pride in creating art for the Soviet state and people.[14] The symphony was interpreted by the authorities as conforming to the values of the Soviet state, and Shostakovich did not make any statements to the contrary; thus, he had succeeded in creating a symphony that would not endanger himself or his family.

Most musicologists' interpretations of the Fifth Symphony previous to 1979 are similar to that of Tolstoy, in that there is no sense that Shostakovich rejected the aesthetic rules of the state. In 1972, Boris Schwarz even suggested that Shostakovich's cancelled Fourth Symphony did not reject Soviet artistic ideals, and that he was submissive to the *Pravda* article's criticism only due to fear of alienation: "It is wrong to picture him as a misunderstood rebel oppressed by an inimical regime. Even at the height of his modernism… he never thought of challenging Marxist-Leninist aesthetics."[15] The interpretations by Tolstoy and the

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[12] Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life*, 94-95.
[13] *Ibid*., 97-98.
[14] *Ibid*., 100-102.
[15] Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life*, 130.

Soviet authorities are informed by an understanding of the Soviet Union in the 1930s in which people—or more specifically in this case, musicians—did not desire to challenge state authority, because creating music to serve the state and the people was honourable. According to this interpretation, the restrictions imposed by the state were not actually restrictions, but guidelines for better music-making, which would improve the Soviet state and the lives of the people living within it. Schwarz does not indicate whether Shostakovich desired to conform to state guidelines or not. However, according to Schwarz's historical interpretation, Shostakovich's desires are of no consequence—dissidence was too dangerous for a composer who wanted a successful career.

In 1979, Solomon Volkov published *Testimony: The Memoirs of Shostakovich*. This book reveals a Shostakovich who, as opposed to previous interpretations, was quite bitter towards the Soviet state and its oppressive measures. Volkov's Shostakovich states that the optimism of the finale of the Fifth Symphony is false and meant as a criticism, not a glorification, of the Soviet state:

> The rejoicing is forced, created under threat… It's as if someone were beating you with a stick and saying, 'Your business is rejoicing, your business is rejoicing,' and you rise, shaky, and go marching off, muttering, 'Our business is rejoicing, our business is rejoicing.'[16]

Since then, however, many scholars have argued convincingly that *Testimony* is most likely the work of Volkov himself, rather than Shostakovich.[17] Authentic or not, *Testimony* caused scholars and musicologists everywhere to re-evaluate Shostakovich's music and the context in which it was created.[18] The depiction of the historical moment conveyed by Volkov's interpretation of the Fifth Symphony is almost opposite that offered by the previously discussed authors. Volkov's history involves two opposing factions: the good—comprised of

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[16] Solomon Volkov, *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich as related to and edited by Solomon Volkov*, trans. Antonina W. Bouis (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1979), 183.

[17] Laurel E. Fay, "Shostakovich versus Volkov: Whose Testimony?" *Russian Review* 39 (1980), 485.

[18] Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered*, xi.

Shostakovich and other innocents oppressed by the state; and the bad—Stalin and his regime. The historical moment is depicted as a bleak battleground in which rebellion is possible only in musical form, and only if it is sufficiently inexplicit. For Volkov, Shostakovich is the quiet hero who manages to express the dissident sentiments of the people and simultaneously gain the favour of the state.

Despite strong criticisms of *Testimony*, its reversal of the traditional interpretation of both the Fifth Symphony and its historical context could not be ignored; thus, its influence was felt almost immediately. The very year it was released, Roy Blokker and Robert Dearling portrayed Shostakovich similarly in their description of the Fifth Symphony, arguing that it did not represent any sort of submission to the *Pravda* criticism: "It was as if he were providing his critics with an answer and then silently laughing at them."[19]

The effects of Volkov's book were evidently still felt in 1990 when Ian MacDonald's *The New Shostakovich* was published. MacDonald, too, agrees with Volkov's revisionist interpretation of the Fifth Symphony. Like Volkov, he portrays Shostakovich as a hero in repressive times: "[The Fifth Symphony], stripped of its protective shell of nonsense, is so outspoken an attack on Stalinist tyranny and the sinister inanities of Socialist Realism that one can only marvel at its composer's courage and self-belief…"[20] However, while Volkov's Shostakovich contends that audiences immediately understood exactly what the Fifth Symphony was about, MacDonald argues that even the conductor who premiered the symphony—Yevgeny Mravinksy—did not understand it. MacDonald examines the testimonies of audience members present at the premiere, arguing that they felt intense emotion rather than complete understanding of what Shostakovich was trying to say. [21]

MacDonald attempts to come to a complete understanding of his own by examining the symphony and associating musical ideas with the events, people, ideas and emotions experienced under Stalin's reign. For instance, he contends that a series of one-note figures followed by a series of two-note

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[19] Roy Blokker with Robert Dearling, *The Music of Dmitri Shostakovich: The Symphonies* (New Jersey: The Tantivy Press, 1979), 65.
[20] MacDonald, *The New Shostakovich*, 133.
[21] *Ibid.*, 124-125.

figures is representative of a master-slave relationship, because two-note figures signify brute authority in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*: "Are these configurations musical ways of saying 'Stalin'?"[22] He goes on to argue that the next passage, with a menacing theme, represents a political rally—again, the source of the menace is supposedly Stalin. The slow movement, the third, apparently speaks for the Russian people. MacDonald contends that this tragic movement caused the audience at the premiere to cry because it is easy to understand; "particularly if half your family have been arrested and you are alone and terrified and trying to smile."[23] The glorious-sounding finale, MacDonald argues, is in fact sarcastic optimism: "If this is to be a new and brighter day, it is evidently to be a conformist one."[24] The historical moment informing MacDonald's interpretation is similar to that of Volkov and Blokker and Dearling. Unlike these authors, however, MacDonald argues for an extremely inexplicit form of musical resistance within the symphony. According to his interpretation, rebellion not only had to be hidden within music, but veiled as a novel which can only truly be read by a musicologist; others understand it only through emotions. Perhaps this suggests that at the time, rebellion could only be understood by those who shared the experience and emotions, but decades later, after the danger has passed, the true narrative can be decoded. In this sense, the Soviet regime was so oppressive that rebellion can really only be understood today in historical memory, but not when it was actually occurring.

Laurel E. Fay, the author who in 1980 exposed *Testimony*'s lack of authenticity, wrote her own biography of Shostakovich in 2000 titled *Shostakovich: A Life*. She states in her introduction that her purpose in writing the book is to come as close as possible to the truth, portraying Shostakovich's life as objectively as possible.[25] Thus, in her discussion of the Fifth Symphony, she offers little of her own interpretation. Instead, she provides the few clues given by Shostakovich and disproves some common myths in the interest of offering an objective history. Fay notes that "A Creative Answer of a Soviet Artist to

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[22] MacDonald, *The New Shostakovich*, 128-129.
[23] *Ibid*., 130. Presumably, MacDonald means that the audience understood the emotions Shostakovich was trying to convey, rather than the actual criticism of Stalin—otherwise, he would be counteracting his previous point.
[24] *Ibid*., 132.
[25] Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life*, 4.

Unjust Criticism"—popularly considered to be Shostakovich's official subtitle for the Fifth Symphony—was in fact only a critical interpretation given by someone else which "gave [him] great pleasure."[26] Fay contends that Shostakovich never accepted the criticism from "Muddle Instead of Music" or from Kerzhenstev, partially because the subtitle was not his, and also because the Fifth Symphony showed no signs of acceptance of the advice to write folk music or of "any of the other most obvious recipes for rehabilitation."[27] She notes the widespread belief that the jubilance of the finale was intended to convey a sense of forced rejoicing under duress, but does not make any claims for or against the truth of this interpretation. Rather, she notes Shostakovich's unwillingness to speak specifically about the meaning of his music. This, she says, was an instinct for survival under Stalin's reign which stuck with him all his life. She also acknowledges Shostakovich's preference to let his music 'speak' for itself: usually, when asked about his music, he would simply direct the questioner to his scores.[28] Fay takes a largely neutral position on the subject of interpretation of the Fifth Symphony, but in doing so she rejects the interpretations of Volkov, Blokker and Dearling, and MacDonald, as well as earlier interpretations which portray Shostakovich as a good Soviet Communist. Fay's neutrality regarding the meaning of the symphony is, unsurprisingly, backed by a fairly neutral stance toward Stalin's regime. She discusses the criticisms of Shostakovich's previous work and the disappearances, exiles and imprisonments which must have influenced his mindset when he wrote the Fifth Symphony, but she conveys only what are considered to be established facts and quotes—she states no personal convictions regarding the historical moment or the symphony.

In "Public Lies and Unspeakable Truth: Interpreting Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony," Richard Taruskin much more actively and vehemently opposes the idea that Shostakovich was a rebellious hero. He presents the two main sides of the argument over interpretation of the Fifth Symphony, asserting that the deciding factor is whether the coda of the finale fails by accident or on purpose; if it fails on purpose, then the symphony is characterized by mockery. If one interprets it in such a way, Taruskin argues, one judges Shostakovich to be a

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[26] Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life*, 102.
[27] *Ibid.*, 103.
[28] *Ibid.*, 104.

dissident—a judgment Taruskin believes is a "self-gratifying anachronism."[29] He contends that there *were* no dissidents in the Soviet Union in 1937; by then, any old opponents had been executed or imprisoned, and no one dared speak out against the regime for fear of these same punishments. Taruskin quotes Adam B. Ulam, who argues that even a casual remark to an old friend could produce dire consequences in this atmosphere. According to Taruskin, "dissidence resulted from the loosening of controls, not the other way around"—no one could even verbally rebel and escape the consequences until the mid-1950s.[30] Taruskin contends that the anachronism of dissidence during the 1930s is simply an empty comfort for people who want to believe that resistance existed, and that Shostakovich acted as we would have liked to in his place: "now that the dissidents have won, it seems nobody ever really believed in the Soviet way of life."[31]

Taruskin also attacks MacDonald's literal, local interpretation of the Fifth Symphony, arguing that it is built on selective evidence.[32] He asserts that Shostakovich created the sounds of the finale's coda using dissonances and melodic progressions, which he employed in other works to evoke a gloomy mood. This, he says, does not suggest that Shostakovich was attempting to be rebellious, but rather to give voice to tragedy, like in the third movement: "this may be viewed as irony, perhaps; but it is not mockery."[33] Taruskin argues primarily for a reading of the Fifth Symphony and its historical context which is not black-and-white. If we acknowledge the grey areas, he says, we can learn a great deal from such cultural artifacts of the era.[34] This is a strange statement for Taruskin, as it is evident that his historical interpretation informed his musical interpretation, not the other way around—his argument refuting the presence of mockery in the finale is based on what he considers to be a historical truth, that dissidence was not possible under Stalin's reign.

In another article, entitled "Shostakovich and Us," Taruskin contends that Soviets living under Stalin's regime probably *did* sense protest in

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[29] Taruskin, "Public Lies and Unspeakable Truth," 45-46.
[30] Ibid., 46.
[31] Ibid., 47-48.
[32] Tarushkin, "Public Lies and Unspeakable Truth," 53.
[33] Ibid., 52.
[34] Ibid., 56.

Shostakovich's music, whether he intended it or not. They sensed it because they needed to, for consolation; whether Shostakovich intended this or not, he argues, is irrelevant.[35] He again attacks MacDonald, asserting that attempting to define or paraphrase music as he has done is to limit and control it. To label the Fifth Symphony as an attack on Stalin and the Soviet regime, he says, is to undermine its achievement as a musical work.[36]

Inna Barsova, in "Between 'Social Demands' and 'The Music of Grand Passions': The Years 1934-1937 in the Life of Dmitry Shostakovich," argues for a more ambivalent interpretation of the Fifth Symphony. She contends that the presence of two diametrically opposed planes in the work—one triumphant, the other representing a more mournful 'final journey,' counteracting the triumphant plane—is obvious and intended. Some believed the optimism of the finale to be genuine, while others believed the opposite; Barsova argues that this is because both these planes of meaning exist in the finale.[37] This interpretation may be in keeping either with Volkov's—that rebellion was possible if hidden correctly—or Fay's more neutral stance, since Barsova does not necessarily associate the 'final journey' plane with an attack on Stalin. Barsova's interpretation may be informed by an ambivalent view of the historical moment: there are two understandings of life under the Stalinist regime, and of the emotions present in the finale—we each choose for ourselves which understanding we believe based on our own experiences and beliefs. According to this view, there is no actual truth about whether or not rebellion existed under Stalin's rule; rather, there is only personal opinion regarding the matter.

Solomon Volkov published a new biography (as opposed to testimony) of Shostakovich in 2004, titled *Shostakovich and Stalin*. His statements are perhaps best taken with a grain of salt, considering the widely-believed claims regarding the authenticity of *Testimony*; however, in his preface he states that he has tried to keep quotes from the earlier book to a minimum, and refers to *Testimony* as 'collaborations' and 'conversations', which may be taken as a sort of

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[35] Richard Taruskin, "Shostakovich and Us," in *Shostakovich in Context*, ed. Rosamund Bartlett (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5.
[36] Tarushkin, "Shostakovich and Us," 12.
[37] Inna Barsova, "Between 'Social Demands' and 'The Music of Grand Passions': The Years 1934-1937 in the Life of Dmitry Shostakovich," in *Shostakovich in Context*, ed. Rosamund Bartlett (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 94.

acknowledgement of the criticisms directed towards him in the past.[38] Nevertheless, despite the assertion of authors like Fay that Shostakovich never provided any definite insight into the Fifth Symphony, Volkov insists that Shostakovich interpreted his own finale as a "procession of the condemned to their execution: a shocking and horrifying yet absolutely accurate, almost naturalistic image, if we remember the Great Terror and the mass hysteria of the period."[39] He also notes that some scholars have found quotations in the finale from works of composers like Berlioz and Strauss which are known to depict execution processions. These finds, he argues, lend extra support to the notion that the finale is not meant to be purely jubilant.[40] Moreover, Volkov contends that the finale cannot possibly be wholly optimistic if one considers the political atmosphere in which it was written.[41] Here then, as in Taruskin's writings, historical interpretation directly informs musical interpretation.

Shostakovich himself might have scoffed at most or all of the preceding interpretations of his Fifth Symphony, as he was quite averse to the study of musicology. He offered his own definition of a musicologist: "Our cook, Pasha, prepared the scrambled eggs for us and we are eating them. Now imagine a person who did not cook the eggs and does not eat them, but talks about them—*that* is a musicologist."[42] Besides Shostakovich's few statements regarding the symphony, we have no way of knowing its actual meaning. Even those statements might not be entirely useful; those from the 1930s could have been driven by fear of the regime, and the more recent ones may be supported by memories distorted with time. It seems, then, that there is no one true interpretation of the symphony.

The major difference between history and art is the historical moment is gone, and yet the art remains as an artifact. Literature, film and visual art can affect our historical memories by re-enacting the moment; they create pictures in our minds of what happened, and who was affected positively or negatively.

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[38] Solomon Volkov, *Shostakovich and Stalin* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), x-xi.
[39] *Ibid*., 148-149.
[40] *Ibid*., 149.
[41] *Ibid*., 148.
[42] David Fanning, "Introduction. Talking About Eggs: Musicology and Shostakovich," in *Shostakovich Studies*, ed. David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1.

They necessarily subject our historical memories to specific interpretations of events, because written or visual language can clearly convey specific events and relay specific opinions in an understandable fashion. Instrumental music, on the other hand, normally does not convey such clear, specific messages, as evidenced by the large variety of interpretations of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony. Any interpretation of the symphony generates a certain view of the historical moment in which it was created, but the fact that it is impossible to tell exactly what the symphony means suggests that it cannot definitively direct our views in one way or the other. Some interpretations may be more convincing than others due to levels of scholarship (especially in Volkov's case) or to newly discovered facts regarding the creation of the symphony or Shostakovich's life at the time; but if one listens to the symphony without checking these facts, one does not find a definitive answer or interpretation of history. Barsova's ambivalent view of the symphony's finale is significant—one's interpretation of the symphony is informed by previous historical understandings regarding the historical moment, as opposed to the symphony creating an historical understanding for the listener. MacDonald's writings suggest this as well: he believes that, without any in-depth musical examination or historical study, all the audience understands in the Fifth Symphony is emotion. The audience at the premiere might have equated this emotion with their own trials and tribulations under Stalin's regime, but only because their experiences informed their interpretation of the music. Taruskin's argument that those who see Shostakovich as a rebellious hero do so because they want to is also significant; again, this is the application of historical interpretation to interpretation of the symphony.

Shostakovich wrote his Fifth Symphony during what historians consider to be a tremulous time for Soviet politics, human rights and artistic license. Several people close to Shostakovich were victims of Stalin's Terror, and he himself was the target of intense artistic criticism from the state. One would imagine that such an intense atmosphere must have had some effect upon the creation of the symphony. However, we know little more than this regarding the actual meaning of the symphony. The symphony itself does not offer much help in this matter—the sheer variance in interpretations of the symphony (especially the finale) attests to that. Each interpretation requires a different understanding of the historical atmosphere in which it was written, which means that

interpretations of the symphony and of history are fundamentally intertwined. However, the relationship between the Fifth Symphony and history is different than that between history and other art forms. Literature, film and visual art create specific and understandable ideas for the audience regarding the historical moment, whereas the Fifth Symphony cannot, as it lacks clarity in terms of its own point of view. Instead, one's historical opinions inform one's interpretation of the symphony. In some sense, the Fifth Symphony gives us a clearer view of historical truth than do other art forms, precisely because it offers no definitive truth—history is not made up of a single truth, but rather of a series of interpretations, and the same can be said for the Fifth Symphony.

Nazism and the Voices of the Working Class

Vincent Hopkins

If there was a German economic 'recovery' in the early 1930s, its centrality to German history has rarely been questioned. However, a thorough understanding of revival lies not solely in statistical analysis, but also in what was said, what people felt, and what actions were taken by German workers between 1933 and 1939. Recovery can be defined best by the perceptions of those involved rather than through mathematics.

Attempts to increase state authority over labour began early. Workers found little room in which to maneuver until the massive rearmament push in 1936 gave way to illicit, yet atomized, wage increases. An examination of primary sources including Socialist reports from within Nazi Germany, post-war testimony and secret police files shows that German workers often responded to the economics of recovery as flexibly as the state would allow. Before 1936, workers coexisted alongside mounting domination through active opposition, passive resistance and compliant acceptance. Between 1936 and the war's outbreak in 1939, workers in armament industries negotiated with what little bargaining power they had, and often without the consent of the state.

As early as 2 May 1933, the Third Reich's labour leader, Robert Ley, acknowledged that the National Socialist movement did not yet have the full support of industrial workers.[1] That same day, Ley's police raided the offices of the Free Trade Union—Germany's largest labour union—arrested its leaders and assaulted employees.[2] Germany's unions were dismantled within months, and by the end of 1933 virtually all major opposition groups were broken. As Tim

[1] Geoffrey Pridham and Jeremy Noakes, "Nazism and the Working Class," in *Nazism: A Documentary Reader, 1919-1945*, ed. J. Noakes and G. Pridham (Exeter: Exeter University Publications, 1998), 332.
[2] Ibid., 328.

Mason has said, by the end of 1933, the working people of Germany "did not have a single ally, whether in the political or in the economic arena."[3]

Although the full range of reactions expressed by Germany's workers in 1933 is difficult to assemble, the preceding years allow possible insight. As the economic crisis deepened, Nazi labour groups—National Socialist Factory Cell Organizations (NSBO)—grew larger in size. By December 1931 the national NSBO had 39,000 members. May 1932 saw the 'union' rise to 106,000, and by January 1933 the NSBO had approximately 294,000 members.[4] Competing against established trade unions with over five million members, the NSBO had little more than six years to swell its ranks.[5] So, do NSBO membership numbers represent a latent tendency of workers to divest freedom to attain of perceived economic and national stability? If not, do they begin to explain the origins of the apathy later expressed by many Germans in 1933?

In an appraisal of the workers in the early 1930s, Francis Carsten cites a Berlin police report that feared metal workers would "fall 'for the lively propaganda of the National Socialists in the factories'."[6] Carsten believes the Communist party's unwillingness to cooperate with other trade unions contributed to NSBO gains. To Carsten, the NSBO was an inchoate "left wing" of the Nazi movement, participating in work stoppages in Mansfeld, Berlin, Hanover and Saxony in 1930.[7] In 1932 the NSBO organized a walkout of over 1,300 Berlin transit workers in an attempt to resist wage cuts.[8]

NSBO popular acclaim before 1933 should not be exaggerated. The 1931 Berlin factory elections saw the Free Trade Union (FTU) attain 81.5 percent of worker support, while the NSBO a mere 0.014 percent.[9] Many NSBO strikes failed, including the 1931 Berlin transit action, and it appears that prior to 1933 the NSBO was rarely equated with genuine support for the working

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[3] Timothy W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich* (Providence, RI: Berg Publishers, 1993), 72.
[4] F.L. Carsten, *The German Workers and the Nazis* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Scolar Press, 1995), 7.
[5] Mason, *Social Policy*, 65. The figure of 5.8 million, as Mason points out, does not include the one million members of the *Reichsbanner*.
[6] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 8.
[7] *Ibid*., 8-9.
[8] *Ibid*., 9.
[9] *Ibid*., 8.

classes.[10] These figures, however, were almost entirely reversed in the factory elections of March 1933. Months before the destruction of free unions, the NSBO received wide gains of support: at a Krupp factory in Essen, the Nazi Factory Cell Organization received 26.9 percent of worker support; in the Ruhr mines, 30.9 percent; in an August-Thyssenhütte Factory in Dinslaken, 55 percent; and in Cologne's public transit, a majority of 66 percent.[11] The NSBO's overall membership grew to over 371,000 in March 1933, and by May it stood at 727,000 members.[12]

In the wake of the 1933 elections, violent arrests and mass unemployment coerced many hesitant workers to accept the new Nazi government. The arrest of 10,000 KPD and SPD functionaries was followed by an estimated 20,000 more after opposition parties were outlawed.[13] Surprisingly, reactions were mixed: two men from Augsburg believed workers no longer "[want] to know any more of the old Weimar Republic… [or] to hear the name Social Democracy. They only laugh about it."[14]

SPD files identify strong resentment to both the old government and the new one. One file maintained: "the problem for [workers] today is: what have the old leaders done wrong, not, what is Hitler doing wrong?"[15] A report in Bavaria said that industrial workers did not place "any hope in the SPD."[16] Compounding this resentment was the growing strain on workers to accept Nazi rule. As Ian Kershaw's study of Bavaria notes:

> The experience of repression was not confined to witnessing the arrest and hearing of the maltreatment of party activists and functionaries. The threat of instant dismissal and of being ignored in the distribution of Winter Aid and unemployment benefit was a constant sword hanging over the head of any worker who felt tempted to show his disapproval of

[10] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 9.
[11] Carsten, *The German Workers,* 15.
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich, Bavaria 1933*-1945 (New York: Clarendon Press, 1983), 70-71.
[14] *Ibid.*, 74.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*

> the way things were being run… Industrial workers…were now subjected to continual surveillance, harassment, and intimidation.[17]

Reaction to these pressures varied, from open support to struggle, and from passive resistance to a resigned admission of Nazi authority.

Early attempts by workers to protect leftist groups were often smashed through organized attacks, arrests, insults and threats.[18] Open resistance took form in different capacities wherever possible. At a brewery in Munich, only 72 workers out of 800 appeared at a May 1934 factory assembly, where the speaker was forced to flee amid taunts from those in attendance. The meeting was cancelled and replaced with mandatory "duty roll calls" instead.[19] Similar instances occurred throughout Munich. In 1933 a group of Bremen SPD supporters marched unimpeded by the police to the graves of those killed during 1919 Socialist revolts.[20] The unsteady days of 1933—1934 were marked by irregular repression and attempts at cooperation by authorities.

Acts of passive resistance were rarely politically-minded. One group of workers from Frankfurt held a mock gathering in the woods on May Day 1933.[21] Of the 425 offences the Special Court of Munich received, ranging from refusal to perform the Hitler salute to derisive remarks against the regime, more than half were from individuals without any political affiliation.[22] This is not to say all passive resisters were apolitical; polls of working class districts in August 1934 demonstrated a heavy refusal to acknowledge the regime.[23] In Bremen, negative votes reached 25.2 percent, while other industrial areas showed votes of "No" as high as 29.2 percent.[24]

As violent repression continued, the longevity of Hitler's government grew clear. Conduits of open dissent such as marches and protest became less

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[17] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 73.
[18] Detlev Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 104.
[19] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 77.
[20] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 20.
[21] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 19.
[22] *Ibid*., 29.
[23] Ian Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth': Reality and Image in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press), 68.
[24] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 28.

visible, and were seen only when they were possible without retribution, such as public 'works councils' elections in Weiden, in which Nazi candidates received only 40 percent of the vote.[25] Between 1933 and 1934 Germany endured a lack of "broad opposition" with infrequent and isolated resistance.[26]

To much of the working population, the years following 1933 were marked with growing acquiescence. An SPD man from Offenbach recounted an instance in which he:

> Could not recognize [his] town…Swastikas flags…hanging so thick…that it was almost impossible to get through. [Offenbach had been] the main stronghold of the KP and [SDP]… Where on earth had they got all the flags from? Well we knew, of course, there was a lot of despair involved.[27]

Other SPD reports said that many "previously indifferent [workers…had] gone over into the NSBO,"[28] and that "no opposition was noticeable in factories."[29] One report from southern Bavaria reported that "viewed generally, workers seem to be stuck at present in a condition of uncertainty and waiting."[30] Many workers simply sought anonymity.

Unemployment and violence produced an overall compliant populace. As repression continued and employment increased, passive resistance and general indifference marked typical reactions of the working classes. Created to assist in dismantling trade unions, the German Labour Front (DAF) increasingly became the focus of worker opinion. It is difficult to establish workers' attitudes to the DAF precisely, but it is clear that many associated it with widespread corruption.[31] In Augsburg, workers were reported to have said that "the new 'Bigwigs' [DAF officials] were far outdoing the old in their exploitation of material advantage."[32] Kershaw notes many workers criticized the DAF in

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[25] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 76.
[26] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 29.
[27] Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 105.
[28] *Ibid*., 108.
[29] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 74.
[30] *Ibid*., 77.
[31] See Kershaw's "five typical Germans" in *Ibid*., 96-97.
[32] Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth*, 101.

moralistic terms: organization head Robert Ley's rampant drinking was the subject of common gossip;[33] and the Nuremburg party rallies were well known for their rumoured "nocturnal debaucheries."[34]

The DAF's attempt to reform work places through the "Beauty of Labour" (*Schönheit der Arbeit*) campaign often had little effect. The organ of examination—the Factory and Mine Inspectorate—existed before the Nazi assumption of power, and in many instances still acted independently.[35] The Inspectorate's reports document a cement factory in Prussia where the "roof threatened to fall in,"[36] a button factory in Prussia in which workers were exposed to "hot dry air [surrounding] the steam heated press,"[37]and a uniform facility in Mecklenburg so congested it was "obviously unsuitable for the accommodation of the 145 persons of the working staff."[38]

Despite spending RM 200 million on inspecting and implementing changes in over 38,000 businesses—approximately half of which acted upon DAF recommendations[39]—most workers either did not appreciate the alterations or were not affected by them. One SPD report from central Germany stated that "Beauty of Labour makes no impression whatsoever – the splendours are normally built near the entrance to the plant so that visitors can see them."[40] Another report from Berlin in February 1938 affirmed that "Beauty of Labour [has created] …great indignation…and many are of the opinion: 'it is simply intended to look good.'"[41] Interestingly, some did not accept the Beauty of Labour campaign as adequate recompense for the removal of previous labour rights.[42]

Workers participating in the Labour Front recreational program "Strength through Joy" (*Kraft durch Freude*, KdF) enjoyed films, concerts and

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[33] Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth*, 101.
[34] Mason, *Social Policy*, 160. See note 20.
[35] *Ibid*., 163.
[36] Jurgen Kuczynski, *Germany: Economic and Labour Conditions under Facism* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 146.
[37] *Ibid*., 148.
[38] *Ibid*., 147.
[39] Mason, *Social Policy*, 163.
[40] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 352.
[41] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 352.
[42] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 95.

vacations at subsidized prices and in large numbers. Implored to view employment as the "highest duty in life," members were persuaded to disregard wage increases.[43] The spying and political messages injected into KdF events were frequently received poorly by participants: in 1936 a number of workers noted "the presence of strangers (on vacations) prevented them from talking freely."[44] SPD reports portray workers as "generally unimpressed with the Nazi community propaganda associated with [KdF] and yet quite happy to take advantage of the benefits on offer and prepared to give the regime some credit for them."[45] On 19 July 1934, a KdF representative in Lauf told 400 workers to participate in a march before a group screening of a film about a Nazi official. Only four workers attended and the movie was promptly cancelled.[46] Thousands of Krupp workers in Magdeburg drafted for a KdF-organized May Day parade in 1935 left amidst celebrations because they "disliked being marshaled about and having to listen to boring speeches."[47]

One SPD report notes a 1936 KdF swim meet in Saxony in which "over fifty [women] took part, and…there was very little [Nazi] Party atmosphere. The participants were all ordinary people. There were scarcely any 'Heil Hitlers'."[48] Women in the Ruhr reportedly did not appreciate that their free time was organized by the DAF for Nazi purposes.[49] Their opinions of the DAF reflect those of one worker in Bavaria who saw the KdF *Volkswagen* as a "lump of meat thrown to the workers so that they would not see what happened to the millions collected by the [Nazi Labour Front]."[50]

Tim Mason has argued that the KdF's recreational side was undone by relentless DAF propaganda. Many workers, he says, saw vacations, cruises and films as rare few chances to escape the strain of politics and economy. Robert Ley himself made comments to vacationers that "regarding KdF as simply an

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[43] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 347.
[44] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 36.
[45] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 351.
[46] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 77.
[47] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 36.
[48] Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 195
[49] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 83.
[50] *Ibid.*, 36.

institution for having fun" was wrong: "letting oneself go…had little to do with real joy."[51]

Millions of workers did indeed engage happily in KdF events. A 1936 SPD report read: "KdF events have become very popular. Even ordinary workers can afford [the] walking trips…almost all national comrades rate KdF as one of National Socialism's really creditable achievements."[52] Although created to help blur the distinction between economic classes, KdF retained elements of social hierarchy as large KdF functions such as cruises and foreign vacations were inaccessible to much of the working population. In Zweisel, Bavaria, some workers perceived trips abroad as primarily beneficial to the well-to-do.[53] Workers could afford only less exotic and overcrowded trips, while businessmen used the more expensive voyages to mingle with potential clients.[54] Many Germans grew to identify large crowds with less expensive excursions. SPD reports of April 1939 from Central Germany and Bavaria reported irritation from crowds on a worker's second trip abroad, and stated that "people look for places where there are no KdF visitors."[55] In 1934 alone, over two million trips were organized, and by 1938 the figure grew to almost seven million.[56] It appears the majority of these participants enjoyed KdF functions as non-political and recreational activities, quite apart from what authorities intended them to be.

While Strength through Joy's mitigation of DAF-directed resentment was marginal, some Germans expressed ambiguous or even negative accounts of economic 'progress'. Detlev Peukert demonstrates that many post-war accounts of 1933 to 1939 note a prosperous *direction* of economic progress instead of a content *reality*.[57] Those employed in non-rearmament sectors worked difficult jobs for little pay. As the Factory and Mine Inspectorate archives indicate, worksites were frequently uncomfortable, and wages continued to stay low after 1933. In January 1934, the town of Marktredwitz, Franconia, reported higher unemployment *after* the Nazis came to power than before. There, the prospects

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[51] Mason, *Social Policy*, 160.
[52] Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 195.
[53] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 80-81.
[54] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 353.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 349.
[57] Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 56.

of porcelain and textile consumer factories were reported as "hopeless," and worker opinion was phrased as "apathetic [and] ignored."[58]

As wages became stagnant, food prices rose. Bavaria saw increases in food costs as high as 33 percent for meat and 25 percent for bread.[59] The material hardship of the early 1930s is captured in a Westphalian song: "We've got a leader now, they say / Bread's gone up, but not your pay / Soon the lot'll blow sky-high / Then once more we'll say 'Heil Hitler.'" In Dortmund, the *Gestapo* reported that scant food was becoming "simply catastrophic for morale."[60] In May 1935 the Munich police wrote:

> Forced] work-places are…hot-beds of communism… For the most part workers complain about insufficient wages. They do not satisfy the needs of food, clothing, and accommodation... The people also complain about poor treatment. No consideration is shown for their needs and there is no place where complaints or grievances can be aired.[61]

Grievances were not always so silent. Workers in the Ruhr, for instance, marched to the local DAF office to request refund of their member dues because they "had not joined to be shat upon."[62] Unemployed workers often viewed compulsory Labour Service with derision. One *Autbahn* worker is described as saying:

> We work outdoors in all kinds of weather, shoveling dirt for 51 pfennigs an hour. Then there are the deductions, and the voluntary contributions they take out automatically, and 15 pfennigs a day for a straw mattress in a drafty wooden barracks, and 35 pfennigs for what they ladle out of a cauldron and call dinner… Six months ago we were still getting 66 pfennigs an hour, and now they're pushing us harder and harder.[63]

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[58] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 78.
[59] *Ibid*., 83.
[60] Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 55.
[61] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 83.
[62] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 55.
[63] Bernt Engelmann, *In Hitler's Germany: Daily Life in the Third Reich* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 107.

Some towns withheld welfare benefits to those unemployed who would not join the Labour Service.[64] During a 1934 work-finishing celebration in Hanover, one worker sang, "we are the working men, the proletariat," to which many other conscripted workers joined in shortly before being arrested.[65]

In Duisburg, compulsory labourers appealed to the local municipality to raise their wages to par with industrial workers. In protest, the labourers distributed a brochure entitled "Down with Punitive Labour," and asserted the Duisburg welfare office was led by a "social fascist."[66] Municipal and city DAF headquarters were responsible for wages and conditions on work sites. Workers were clearly aware where protests were to be levied, as situations in the Ruhr and Duisburg illustrate.

Compulsory labour was highly unpopular. SPD contacts reported that upon discharge from the Labour Service, "the majority of [workers] had not become conscious anti-fascists, [but] they had at least become embittered and rebellious non-Nazis."[67] The Gestapo reported government-directed hostility at its highest among *Autobahn* workers. The "Heil Hitler" was a rarity on highway construction sites, and trucks were frequently painted with anti-Nazi sayings.[68] In Upper Franconia a work party of approximately thirty "downed [their] tools on a pay day…as a protest at not being given the extra mark"[69] required to travel to the work site everyday.

Richard Overy and Daniel Silverman tend to emphasize the insignificant relation of work-creation projects and fiscal recovery. In the 1930s those Germans who were not forced into Labour Service projects viewed them as positive attributes of a benevolent and proactive Nazi state helping to end unemployment. Tim Mason put it well when he said that the "successes of employment creation projects were more apparent than real."[70]

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[64] Dan P. Silverman, *Hitler's Economy: Nazi Work Creation Projects, 1933-1936* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998), 127-128.
[65] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 55.
[66] Silverman, *Hitler's Economy*, 129.
[67] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 355.
[68] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 82.
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] Mason, *Social Policy*, 160-161.

The appearance of recovery is a powerful belief that dominates the post-war testimony of many Germans who were not forced to work. Ursula Kretzchmar, who came from a poor family in Umstäden, said after the war that "through the construction [of the *Autobahn*, the Nazis] got rid of unemployment all at once!"[71] This point is reiterated by Anna Rigl, the daughter of a bricklayer, who believes "when Hitler came [the unemployed] built the *Autobahn* [and] got paid 50 cents an hour… People were happy they earned a little something."[72]

Optimistic sentiment was widespread during the recovery. Two Labour Service men on a train to Berlin in 1936 were told by a woman active in the National Socialist Women's League that "[the men] should be grateful that [they] have work and [should] thank the Führer for getting rid of unemployment!"[73] Those men fortunate to have found work in factories, however, increasingly found life during 'recovery' unnecessarily intolerable. Worker sentiment increasingly found articulation in strike actions. By 1936, labour shortages improved the selective bargaining position of skilled labourers, and the desire to switch to higher paying jobs became stronger. SPD files from the time report employees in southern Bavaria who struggled to change employment after resistance from the government and management.[74] As shortages occurred, workers who were able to fill vacancies could superimpose a degree of pressure over the wishes of the state *without* the presence of trade unions, through an increase of worker solidarity and belligerence.[75]

Before 1936, industrial action focused on preventing wage *reductions*; after 1936 workers struck or threatened to strike to affect wage *increases*.[76] In Augsburg November 1937, payday erupted in workers' protest and riot at the receipt of a low weekly wage.[77] Time regulations were resisted by 130 workers stopping production in 1937,[78] while brick makers reportedly gave notice in such

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[71] Alison Owings, *Frauen: German Women Recall the Third Reich* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 187.
[72] *Ibid*., 284.
[73] Engelmann, *In Hitler's Germany*, 107.
[74] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 81.
[75] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 98.
[76] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 98.
[77] *Ibid*., 100.
[78] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 88.

large numbers that arrest would have meant virtually no production.[79] Workers could reduce productivity when unhappy, such as the three-hour work stoppage by Bavarian glass makers to resist piece-rates, who afterwards felt a "moral victory which [gave] them again the feeling of their own strength."[80] A Bavarian SPD report from 1938 said that "slackness and criticism [were] increasingly evident"[81] in the workplace. Nazi works councils describe numerous refusals to work more than 48 hours per week.[82] Some workers even feigned illness to convey displeasure, while some sites reported weekend absenteeism. Time away from work was clearly enjoyed; in a Thuringian mine, attendance plunged after Christmas 1938.[83]

These power struggles are illustrative of specific changes brought about by bottleneck shortages in the armaments labour market. 50,000 more metal workers were needed in the aviation industry to meet Four Year Plan targets. Skilled labourers lured to the industry often saw wages of up to *three times* higher than the tariff minimum.[84] A 'wage-contest' erupted in Nuremburg between M.A.N. Industries and Siemens-Schuchert, following massive resignations at a Zündapp-Werke factory after wage cuts.[85]

In efforts to retain control, the Nazi Labour Ministry instituted individual rates of pay, forcing each worker to independently lobby for a raise or to resist a wage cut. An SPD report from Saxony in May 1936 noted this system "atomized [workers and destroyed] class solidarity… Each man [became] the enemy of the other and [envied] him."[86] A 1935 SPD file stated that the individual worker "often goes to the boss on his own to try to avert a deterioration in wages…and gets a concession out of the boss on the condition that he tells his workmates nothing about it."[87] Sometimes the actions of an individual were manipulated to attain a type of collective achievement, such as in the Henschel aviation works in Berlin, where one worker followed another to

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[79] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 88.
[80] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 100.
[81] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 372.
[82] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 86.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 87.
[85] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 100. Also see Carsten, *The German Worker*s, 87.
[86] Noakes & Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 373.
[87] Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 114.

fight with management for better wages.[88] Sometimes the most effective way a worker could guarantee a hearing for wage changes was to give notice.[89]

Wages certainly did increase. The Defence Industry Inspectorate report from December 1936 notes:

> Many firms…have voluntarily raised the wages of skilled workers. Wage increases in firms supplying the army are particularly noticeable… Export industries in particular cannot keep pace with these wage trends, which lead to migrations by skilled workers into armaments firms… [These migrations] create ill-feeling among workers in firms whose commercial position does not allow…wage increases.[90]

There was a greater level of maneuverability than previously available for workers in the rearmament industry after 1936. In consumer industries, however, the majority of workers laboured relentlessly for small, static wages.

The acts of resistance taken by those in arms industries were isolated and sporadic; collective action was contained from factory to factory and industry to industry. Although opposition was, compared to 1933—1934, relatively frequent, it represented no concerted effort to overcome the system of repression—only its demands. One man in 1939 relayed his brother's situation, employed at a metal works in Wittenau creating airplane parts:

> [Aviation employees work] up to twelve hours a day now, and they're constantly being forced to increase their output – all for 35 marks a week. And half of that gets deducted for dues, food, and contributions. [He makes] 24 marks a week, but [takes] home only 15. [One] can't live on that.[91]

A 1938 central German SPD report stated many workers "often complain about the fact they earn much less than in…1929 [and] the further one goes

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[88] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 87.
[89] Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 100.
[90] Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 111.
[91] Engelmann, *In Hitler's Germany*, 157.

down into the poorer sections the more opposition there is."[92] Still, this opposition came to no great action on the part of the worker. Forced labour continued well into 1939, with one estimate of almost 1,300,000 workers sent away from their homes. Men obliged to leave the Lower Rhine to Württemberg were unable to send assistance to their families.[93] SPD reports imply a resignation on the part of workers who appreciated employment and harboured no desires to cause regime change.[94] A 1937 Saxony report aptly said "the present attitude of the German worker must be seen as similar to the way the soldier installed himself comfortably in the trenches so as to make that life if possible tolerable [sic]."[95]

As workers entered the spring of 1933, they suddenly found themselves without collective negotiation legal advocates. Through resistance, passive opposition and quiet acceptance, workers lived alongside restrictive control. As rearmament began to affect those employed in munitions industries, a small percentage of workers found themselves in high demand, and willing to use this pressure to generate better conditions. Their requests stopped well short of establishment overthrow. Repressed by police without formal standing, these workers found irregular successes beside utter defeat. Before the outbreak of war in 1939, many saw economic recovery as a 'miracle', brought about through Hitlerian genius and some notion of German efficiency. For those affected, the forced labour and wage restrictions of "recovery" often created arduous and demanding hardship.

In the end, National Socialist 'recovery' was a complex series of interactions between worker and state, in which the government "oscillated between concession and terror," and the workers alternated between collective and individual strategy and reconciled tolerance.[96] These dynamics created an

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[92] Noakes and Pridham, "Nazism and the Working Class," 373.
[93] Carsten, *The German Workers*, 94.
[94] See: Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, 107-110; Noakes & Pridham, 370-374; and Carsten, 93-95.
[95] Carsten, *The German Worker*s, 92.
[96] Gerald D. Feldman, "Review of Sozialpolitik im Dritten Reich: Arbeiterklasse und Volksgemeinschaft, by Tim Mason," in *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 50, No. 3. (Sep., 1978), 553

illusory set of realities, in which recovery and prosperity became manufactured products for consumption.

From White to Black: A Historical Materialist Reading of the Islamic Revolution in Iran

Ari Najarian

For many contemporary commentators and analysts in 1979, the Islamic Revolution in Iran came as a completely unexpected and bewildering surprise.[1] By all Western standards, the Shah's regime seemed to be doing fine: oil revenues were growing exponentially (2400 percent from 1968 to 1976);[2] industrialization had been increasing steadily – in all sectors – for nearly two decades; literacy had increased by over 300% between 1956 and 1976;[3] and the labour force had grown by nearly 3 million workers over the same period.[4] Western nations also enjoyed favourable trading conditions with Iran, reflecting and encouraging international support for the regime.[5] In Iran itself, the repressive organs of the state ensured ostensible political stability in large measure. To what, then, could the Revolution be attributed? Popular explanations point to the oppressive nature of the regime, the corruption of the bureaucracy, the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism, internecine power struggles within the administrative ranks and, from the Shah's own perspective, an elaborate conspiracy among Western powers against an increasingly independent, financially-solvent state.[6]

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[1] Mohsen Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1994 Reprint), 11.
[2] Robert Looney, *Economic Origins of the Iranian Revolution* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), 3.
[3] Milani, *The Making,* 67.
[4] *Ibid*., 61.
[5] Robert Looney, *The Economic Development of Iran* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 96.
[6] M. R. Pahlavi, *Answer to History* (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1980), 145-170.

There is a place for all of these factors in the narrative of the Revolution. However, their plausibility and different spheres of emphasis restricts us from assigning primacy to one specific factor. This does not mean, though, that we should necessarily argue for a specific historical conjuncture of forces with no common, underlying cause. On the contrary, the following argument seeks to establish a common context for these disparate factors. It will be suggested that the Shah's White Revolution, in its social and economic dimensions, created and conditioned the revolutionary elements of Iranian society and thus ultimately brought about the Islamic revolution in Iran.

The proposed relationship between the Shah's programme of modernization and the Revolution is hardly clear. In order to establish the necessity of this relationship, it is necessary to approach our subject from an historical materialist standpoint. This entails a critical consideration of the material conditions and class relations within Iranian society before and after the White Revolution. It will be suggested that the Shah's programme fundamentally transformed Iran's mode of production, and by extension created a sudden and dramatic change in the composition of the dominant class. One of the consequences of this transformation was an incompatibility between the interests of this new class in Iran and the political system upon which the old order was predicated. In a word, the Shah's social and economic reforms failed to reproduce the conditions of existence for his rule.

To substantiate this claim, it is first necessary to introduce the conceptual tools that will inform this analysis. The 'mode of production' is the familiar Marxist notion of a system of productive relations upon which the dynamics of a society depend. The classification of Iran's mode of production before the era of modernization has been widely debated among theorists from a variety of disciplines. Some have pointed to the (ostensible) similarities between pre-modern Iran and feudal Europe, suggesting that some variant of feudalism provided the material base for Iranian society.[7] Others have insisted on a variation of the classical Asiatic despotism model, though this view was widely

[7] Homa Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1981), 7-21.

dismissed even as it was being invoked.[8] Bizhan Jazani (a contemporary Iranian Marxist and revolutionary) argued for a composite mode of production comprised of feudalism and what has variously been termed 'comprador', 'dependent', or 'neo-colonialist' capitalism.[9] While this synthesis moves away from the oversimplified notion of a single mode of production in a complex society, it would be beneficial to go a step further and complicate our understanding of 'feudalism' itself.

To this end, Bryan Turner has proposed a re-evaluation of the Asiatic mode of production, which he determines is inconsistent in its original formulation.[10] According to Turner, most Middle Eastern societies can be broken down as a dynamic relation between pastoral nomadism, feudalism, prebendalism and limited commodity production.[11] In Turner's construction, the term 'feudal' is not a Eurocentric category imposed onto the Middle East, but rather a late stage of prebendalism, where the arrangements for the distribution of land are adjusted to accommodate the sedentarization of landowners after a period of expansion. For the purposes of this argument, I will rely on this formulation of the Asiatic mode of production—with an emphasis on prebendalism, feudalism and petty capitalism—to characterize the period immediately before the era of modernization.

The second unit of analysis in this investigation is socio-economic class. This does not simply describe society or divide it into groups of haves or have-nots, nor is it tied strictly to the possession of capital. In the abstract Marxist sense, class refers to one's relation to the means of production; thus, individuals – regardless of their relative wealth – who are engaged in the same activities in the productive process, share the same class. If relations of production are conditioned by the mode of production itself, then, in the case of Iran we can expect to see several different class structures co-existing. This will result in one

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[8] Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran,* 9. "Prebendalism" refers to the distribution of land by the state to appointed military governors, as well as all the social arrangements and conditions that are implied with this arrangement. This term does not carry a religious connotation, and the prebendary for Turner is not a religious official.
[9] Bizhan Jazani, *An Introduction to the Contemporary History of Iran* (London: The Iran Committee, 1974), 84-7.
[10] Bryan Turner, *Marx and the End of Orientalism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), 33-4.
[11] *Ibid.*, 52.

composite dominant class and another composite subordinate class. Following the above description of pre-modern Iran's mode of production, we can expect to see a dominant class composed of prebendaries (as well as Shi'a custodians of *waqf* property), feudal landlords, and *bazaari*s engaged in auto-exploitation. Conversely, the subordinate class is made up of the social groups dependent upon the means of production from each different mode: village communities assigned to prebendaries, peasants who pay the tax/rent couple in return for a subsistence lifestyle, and those urban residents – including *bazaaris* themselves – who depend upon the cash and credit economy for their subsistence.

Finally, it is important to consider the role of the political system. This argument hinges on the premise that the state apparatus exists to reproduce the conditions of existence for the dominant class.[12] This formulation may seem somewhat reductive, particularly in light of more recent theories of the state that explore its relative autonomy from social classes; it is important to note that this autonomy is indeed *relative*, i.e. constrained within certain bounds. This suggests that the Shah must seek legitimacy for his office by negotiating policies that favour those elements of society occupying positions of power within their own systems of productive relations. Thus, the shah's system of autocratic rule, and the state apparatus that supported it, are seen as contingent upon the consent and support of various groups of elites, even though the first two have the capacity to act autonomously from the latter. If the state enacts policies that alienate the dominant class, or the nature of this class changes such that its interests diverge from the state, then the political apparatus no longer serves its purpose and loses its relevance. It is possible that this is what happened to the Shah's regime by means of the White Revolution in Iran. The Shah's economic policies transformed Iran's composite mode of production, thereby marginalizing certain classes while creating new ones whose interests the current regime overlooked.

It remains to be demonstrated how the White Revolution actually managed to transform Iran's mode of production, and to draw out the implications of the new order in Iranian society. What follows is a summary of the principles of the Shah's modernization programme, and an exploration of its

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[12] Ralph Miliband, "State," in *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought,* ed. T. Bottomore et al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 465.

implications vis-à-vis the system of productive relations and socio-economic classes.

In January of 1963, a national referendum endorsed the original six points of the White Revolution: land reform; nationalization of forests; sale of state-owned enterprises; workers' profit sharing; female suffrage and the literacy corps.[13] These six points grew to nineteen by 1975, including provisions for urban and rural reconstruction, administrative decentralization and modernization, increased social services and harsh economic controls against speculation, profiteering and corruption.[14] These were measures directed towards modernization along Western lines. In the Shah's own words, "… if [Iran] wished to remain in the circle of dynamic, progressive and free nations of the world, it had no alternative but to completely alter the archaic order of society…"[15] Mohammed Reza Pahlavi saw as his goal a complete transformation of his nation, stating explicitly that:

> …the feudal landlord-and-peasant system [should] be abolished… labor should not feel exploited… *backwardness* in the villages should be ended… and in general, that conditions in harmony with today's *civilized world* should prevail.[16]

Clearly, the Shah contrasted the relations of production of his regime against the early post-industrial, developed capitalist relations of modern Western nations. His project, then, was to establish the same productive relations in Iran. To be sure, the White Revolution brought dramatic changes to the socio-economic landscape of Iran; however, it is doubtful that these changes mirrored what the Shah had anticipated.

It is useful at this point to return to both Turner and Jazani for assessments of the context in which Iran developed economically. While Turner makes no direct reference to Iran, he observes that theories of modernization and especially dependency have historically sought to impose Western categories

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[13] Pahlavi, *Answer*, 193.
[14] *Ibid.*, 193-4.
[15] Pahlavi, *Answer*, 101.
[16] *Ibid.*, 101-2. Emphasis mine.

and stages onto Third World societies. He describes a process of "combined and unequal development" as the context in which non-capitalist modes of production become incorporated into the international market.[17] This transition is often characterized by the dissolution of petty commodity production and suppression of local industry, an export-heavy economy (normally based on raw materials, e.g. monoculture), a decline in the food supply, rural overpopulation, urban unemployment and the large scale emigration of middle class; in a word, all the trappings of an underdeveloped society.[18]

This is an alarmingly accurate description of the conditions in Iran following the White Revolution. While petty commodity production was not completely squashed, there was a clear threat to the *bazaari* merchant class' mode of subsistence in the form of highly rationalized commodity markets (supermarkets, department stores, etc.) that did not depend on auto-exploitation to extract surplus value for their owners. Local, small scale industry did in fact develop, but its contribution to the economy was only significant in the intermediate goods sector.[19] The non-durable sector actually declined in productivity as large scale investment pulled out, whereas infrastructure and capital accumulation projects increased greatly due to large scale capital investment, a substantial part of which was foreign.[20] In the 1970s especially, we see the dramatic increase in oil production and exporting, to the point where it accounted for 97 percent of all exports from Iran in 1976, not to mention almost 35 percent of the country's GDP.[21] The food supply did in fact decline throughout the 1960s as agriculture sustained a net decline in productivity, leading to an increasing dependence on food imports starting in the 1970s.[22] The Land Reform effectively displaced 60 percent of the population, which could not afford to purchase the redistributed land. This created a rural middle class, while displacing rural workers who accounted for 80 percent of the agricultural labour force.[23] These displaced workers naturally moved to the urban centres, where

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[17] Turner, *Marx*, 19.
[18] Turner, *Marx*, 20-24.
[19] Looney, *Development*, 114.
[20] *Ibid.*, 108-9.
[21] *Ibid.*, 91.
[22] *Ibid.*, 42-3.
[23] Looney, *Development*, 3-4.

they either found work in the growing industrial sectors or created a substantial lumpenproletariat class.

All these factors indicate a transformation in the underlying mode of production. We can deduce this by examining the social formation of Iran in 1977, which John Foran conveniently outlines.[24] According to Foran, after the White Revolution, the dominant class was composed of agrarian capitalist landlords, *waqf* administrators, the state-as-capitalist, as well as native and especially foreign capitalists. These groupings correspond to two distinct modes of production for Foran: agrarian and industrial capitalism. While petty commodity production still existed, the *bazaari* element was relegated to the middle class. This is contrasted with the social formation three decades earlier, where the dominant class was composed of private landlords, *waqf* custodians, the Shah, *bazaaris* and native capitalists.[25] Furthermore, the feudal and prebendal modes of production, which once contributed almost 70% of economy, now represented a mere 28% after being transformed into agrarian capitalism, while the industrial capitalist mode grew in importance from 10% to 48% of the economy.[26] These changes in class structure and emphasis on productive relations can be seen as direct effects of modernization.

Jazani reaches a similar conclusion about Iran's mode of production under what he terms neo-colonialist influence. In this context, he examines the resulting changes in Iran's social formation. Designating it 'dependent capitalism', Jazani identifies a distinct class of 'comprador' bourgeoisie; people of this class act as the local mediators of international capitalist expansion in Iran.[27] This class, while not fully independent or free of exploitation itself, corresponds to Foran's dominant classes under agrarian and industrial capitalism. Jazani takes this designation a step further by differentiating the elements of the 'comprador' bourgoisie: the commercial, industrial, financial, agricultural and bureaucratic.[28] It

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[24] John Foran, *Fragile Resistance: Social Transformation in Iran from 1500 to the Revolution* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), 340.
[25] *Ibid*., 242.
[26] Foran, *Fragile Resistance,* 340.
[27] Bizhan Jazan, *Iran: The Socio-Economic Analysis of a Dependent Capitalist State* (London: The Iran Committee, 1973), 18.
[28] Bizhan Jazani, *Capitalism and Revolution in Iran* (trans. Iran Committee. London: Zed Press, 1982), 78-87.

is important to note that while these bourgeois elements do comprise part of the dominant class, their designation as 'comprador' serves to highlight the intermediacy and contingency of their interests upon a predominantly foreign industrial capitalist class.

Therefore, there was a fundamental restructuring in the Iranian social formation as a more-or-less direct result of the Shah's programme of modernization. What remains is to examine the implications of this transformation with regard to the state apparatus. First, consider the effect of modernization on the pre-modern dominant classes must be considered. The Land Reform ended the system of crop-sharing and the exploitative relations between prebendaries and villagers, and feudalists and peasants. By limiting the amount of land that farmers were entitled to, the mode of appropriation of surplus value was altered. This limited the wealth and status of prebendaries and feudal landlords, and forced them to relinquish ownership of large tracts of land that distinguished their socio-economic class. In a word, this section of the pre-modern dominant class was alienated by the reforms. Furthermore, those dependent villagers and peasants who could not afford to purchase land under the new provisions were also no longer able find work in agriculture, as their labour power was replaced by mechanized, large scale agricultural concerns. In addition, these members of the lower class, were adversely affected by the land reform. The Shah's reform was basically an appeal to the middle class; these petty capitalists were given the opportunity for upward mobility under the new order, but at the expense of both the upper and lower classes of the feudal, prebendal formations.

The influx of workers into the cities caused by rural destabilization did not necessarily create a commensurate growth in the labour force; those peasants and villagers who could not find work either in the countryside or the cities became increasingly disillusioned with the current regime, and provided a strong demographic base for mobilization by other disenchanted classes.

In the urban centres, the sites for heavy industrialization and the growth of a prominent capitalist system of relations, the Shah's profit-sharing provisions (first set at 20 percent, subsequently increased) and price controls served as an impediment to the capitalists' accumulation of wealth. This posed the greatest problem for local industrialists, who were repeatedly restricted from expanding

their operations by the various legislations concerning profiteering, redistribution of wealth, etc.[29]

Those who benefited from the modernization were, of course, the capitalists employed in the sectors of the Iranian economy that saw substantial growth, namely, primary industry and state infrastructure project. Both were heavily funded by foreign capital, whose concerns were chiefly their own accumulation. The export of oil, and the management of construction and public service projects were the most lucrative industrial practices in Iran, and also the most insular. Mohsen Milani speaks of a "triangle of fortune" between the Shah, native and Western industrialists that controlled vast industrial fortune and mediated access to Iran's resources.[30] While these participants may have shared certain objective interests, the notion of a 'triangle' should not obscure the fact that these three were brought together only through specific historical conjuncture. There was no guarantee that the Shah's vision would continue to maintain favourable relations with Western interests, or even with the native industrialists who felt entitled to a greater space in the upper echelons of Iranian society. In fact, the decrees from 1975 on public ownership, the extension of profit sharing in private firms, as well as the price stabilization, anti-profiteering and anti-corruption served to erode this triangle of fortune: these measures exemplify the relative autonomy of the state apparatus operating outside of its constraints.

The *bazaari* element was also marginalized by the Shah's policies. Particularly in response to the periodic anti-profiteering campaigns, the *bazaaris* began to feel increasingly hostile and resentful towards the regime as they perceived that their socio-economic status and influence would only be eroded further by the Shah's policies.[31] Finally, the growth of financial capital in the form of banks and investment firms also increased in the 1970s, replacing the old lending institutions and destabilizing *saraf* networks across Iran. Moneylenders and creditors either adapted to these conditions or, like the *bazaaris*, faced obscurity.

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[29] Looney, *Economic Origins*, 5.
[30] Milani, *The Making,* 60-1.
[31] Milani, *The Making*, 166-7.

By 1978, the Shah had antagonized large sectors of the agrarian economy, the intelligentsia (through excessive arms purchases),[32] local industrialists, urban marginals, *bazaaris*, petty financiers and the religious authorities (through secularist policies and outright aggression). Conversely, he had won the support of the agrarian upper-middle class, a small population of high government officials and wealthy industrialists; all this through primarily economic measures geared towards the modernization of the country. With such a broad base of disaffected Iranians, whose disillusionment can more or less be traced to these same economic measures, the fact of the 1979 Islamic Revolution becomes less surprising. That the religious element played such a powerful part in this revolution is, of course, due more to ideological and political factors; however, without such a broad base of disaffected citizens, all the religious rhetoric in the world would not have been able to spark a revolution. In the end, then, the Shah's White Revolution does indeed take the primary role in the narrative of the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

[32] Looney, *Economic Origins,* 6.

"Rivers of Blood and Money": The 1904 Herero Genocide and its Effects on German Rule in Colonial South West Africa

Peter McGuire

In 1904, the Herero people of South West Africa rose up against the perceived threat of German colonial rule.[1] In less than a year, their rebellion had been crushed, their population decimated, and their national cohesion rendered virtually non-existent.[2] While still 'mopping up' the residual Herero population in the North, the Germans were faced with a second rebellion by the Nama people in the south, which was put down with the same ferocity.[3] The genocidal nature of the wars between the German colonizers and the Herero and Nama peoples was so brutal and excessive that it is estimated (from a census in 1911) that out of 80,000 Herero before the war, only 15,130 were alive, and out of 20,000 Nama, only 9,781 had survived.[4] The implications of this prolonged and sadistically genocidal war on German colonial rule in SW Africa were contradictory. The most important outcome of the Herero and Nama wars was that the German authorities fully consolidated their power over the colony. Their enemies were defeated, and there remained virtually no groups within the

[1] The present day title of the nation is Namibia, but I have decided to use the historical name for the colonial state, South West Africa (which will be referred to hereafter as SW Africa). I am using this terminology primarily because the majority of my sources use this title, but also because my narrative centers on a historical period when South West Africa was the proper title of the region.

[2] Jan-Bart Gewald, *Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia, 1890-1923* (Oxford: James Currey Ltd., 1999), 141.

[3] John H. Wellington, *South West Africa and Its Human Issues* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 210.

[4] Horst Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting: The Struggle of the Herero and Nama against Germen Imperialism (1884-1915)* (London: Zed Press, 1966), 214.

territory which could challenge German rule.[5] In this way, German colonialism was strengthened and enhanced through the brutal subjection of the Nama and Herero. On the other hand, destroying such a huge part of the population in SW Africa had negative implications for colonial rule. Without a strong labor base the German authorities found it very hard to exploit the resources and land that they had won through genocidal conquest.[6] The German conduct in the Herero and Nama wars shows a contradiction, as the outcome of the wars simultaneously strengthened and weakened the social, political, and economic power of the German colonial state in SW Africa.

Before the outbreak of war in 1904, the power of the German colonial state in SW Africa was limited, but their presence was growing increasingly stronger. Due to its location and inhospitable coastal environment, SW Africa was one of the last territories in Africa to be colonized by Europeans.[7] In 1883, the first land was purchased in the territory by F.A.E. Luderitz, a merchant from Bremen, but only in small tracts near the coast.[8] In order to protect its citizen interests, Otto von Bismarck, the German Chancellor pledged his support and protection for the new colonial inroad into SW Africa.[9] While Luderitiz's purchases 'kick started' the beginnings of German colonialism in SW Africa, it would not be until the end of the German-Herero war in 1907 that direct colonial control was established in the territory.

The early German colonial penetration of SW Africa was organized by an underfinanced concession company. In 1884 the *Deutsche Kolonial Gesellschaft fur Sudwest Africka* was commissioned by Bismarck in order to keep competing British interests from developing in the territory.[10] The company proved less than competent in maintaining German interests, so much so that in 1885 Bismarck dispatched an Imperial Commissioner, Dr. Heinrich Goering, to

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[5] Ruth First, *South West Africa* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1966), 83.
[6] I. Goldblatt, *History of South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century* (Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd. 1971), 182.
[7] First, *South West Africa*, 61.
[8] Heinrich Vedder, *A History of South West Africa* (Capetown: Maskew Miller Ltd., 1960), 43.
[9] First, *South West Africa*, 71.
[10] Richard A. Voeltz, "The European Economic and Political Penetration of South West Africa, 1884-1892," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 17: (1984), 623-699.

administer the colony.[11] The development of the colony proceeded, and treaties of German protection were signed with many of the African groups in the territory, including the Herero, who were involved in a long war with the Nama.[12] In 1888, one of the most powerful Herero chiefs, Kamaherero, incited by the British trader Robert Lewis, withdrew from a protection treaty which he had signed with the Germans.[13] Goering was targeted for attack, and had to flee to the coast of the colony, an action which prompted the German government to dispatch the first 21 German soldiers to the colony in 1889.[14]

The number of soldiers gradually expanded over the next few years during which time the Germans set up their capital at Windhoek and began 'pacifying' the Africans who would not negotiate treaties, most notably the Nama chieftain Hendrik Witbooi.[15] Thus, by 1897, under the direction of the colonial governor Leutwien, the German protectorate was established and development of the new colony began, starting with the construction of the Swakopmund-Windhoek railway which helped to encourage European settlement in the territory.[16] The level of settlement was initially very low and would significantly increase only after the Herero and Nama wars against the Germans officially ended in 1907.

The German settlers were farmer-traders, who split their time between developing their agriculture and trading with the Herero and other African groups in order to build up capital in the form of cattle herds.[17] As the trade of cattle and sale of land grew stronger, the traders began giving the Herero credit, and subsequent abuses of the credit system had a significant negative impact on the Herero's cattle and land holdings.[18]

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[11] J.P. Vans. Bruwer, *South West Africa, the Disputed Land* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, 1966), 71.
[12] Vedder, *A History*, 36.
[13] Voeltz, "Penetration," 624.
[14]Voeltz, "Penetration," 624.
[15] Bruwer, *South West Africa, the Disputed Land*, 72. It is prudent to point out that these initial campaigns did not have any of the genocidal excesses that would characterize the wars several years later.
[16] Vedder, *A History of South west Africa*, 50.
[17] First, *South West Africa*, 75.
[18]Jan-Bart Gewald and Jeremy Silvester, *Words cannot be Found, German Colonial Rule in Namibia: An Annotated Reprint of the 1918 Blue Book* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 84.

> The Herero watched with consternation as treaties were abrogated, the rulings of their chiefs and old tribal custom ruthlessly replaced by the new German law, and Samuel Maherero coaxed or bullied into boundary agreements which led to the confiscation of trespassing cattle and the loss of their land.[19]

This increasing pressure on the Herero, especially in consideration to their land and cattle holdings made them fearful of assumed German plans for control of the rest of their land. As a consequence of increasing pressure on their land and herds, the Herero revolted in January 1904. The revolt came as a complete surprise to the Germans, who had the bulk of their military forces in the south of the colony, fighting a smaller rebellion.[20] The Herero were initially successful in their war, mostly due to the few numbers of German troops in the region. Their initial offensive claimed the lives of less than a hundred and fifty German traders and farmers, instilling a genuine fear of the Herero among the German population in the colony.[21]

The Herero initially had some successes in pushing the German forces out of their territory and laying siege to their isolated forts, but by June of 1904, the German governor Leutwein had had his military power stripped by the German Kaiser and given to a new commander, General Lothar von Trotha.[22] The appointment of von Trotha signaled a drastic change in German strategy. Governor Leutwein had been pushing for a negotiated truce with the Herero, but this approach was negated by Trotha's obsessive desire to annihilate the

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[19]First, *South West Africa*, 76. It seems as though it was very unclear to the Herero as to why their land was being taken from them at all. For the Herero, the land they lived and pastured their cattle on was the property of the entire group, and the sale of that land by their chief, Samuel Maherero, was contrary to their traditional customs. The confiscation of cattle occurred after a law was passed that allowed settlers to confiscate any cattle found on their land. This, combined with unfair trading practices by the settlers, led to the loss by the Herero of almost fifty percent of their herds before the war broke out in 1904.

[20] Tilman Dedering, "A Certain Rigourous Treatment of all Parts of the Nation: The Annihilation of the Herero in German South West Africa, 1904," in *The Massacre in History*, eds. Mark Levene and Penny Roberts (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1999), 206.

[21] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 143-44.

[22] Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 169.

Herero entirely.[23] Von Trotha initiated his strategy by encircling the entirety of the Herero nation, including women, children and livestock, at the Waterberg, a mountainous region to where the Herero had retreated between April and August.[24] It was at this locale that the destruction of the Herero nation began. On 11 August 1904, von Trotha's forces attacked the encircled Herero at the Waterberg and they were forced to flee to the South-East through the only hole in von Trotha's cordon.[25]

The majority of the Herero nation fled from the Waterberg and into the Omaheke (Kalahari) Desert and was subsequently pushed further into the inhospitable terrain by harassing German patrols. It was after this that Trotha initiated his policy of eradication and created a 250 kilometer cordon around the Omaheke, effectively sealing the majority of the Herero in a waterless and inhospitable terrain, where

they began to succumb to hunger, thirst, and exposure.[26] Von Trotha had essentially completed his campaign, that being the military defeat of the Herero. After the battle of the Waterberg, there was essentially no more fighting as the Herero had been decisively defeated in a single battle and had lost all military cohesion. However, von Trotha would not accept peace from the Herero, and continued his sadistic plan of complete and total obliteration.[27] On 2 October 1904, he issued his infamous "extermination order":

> I, the great General of the German soldiers, send this message to the Herero people. Hereros are no longer German subjects. They have murdered and robbed….and now out of cowardice they refuse to fight…The Herero people must depart from the

[23] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 153-54. Von Trotha had won a reputation as a brutal colonial warrior after his successes in putting down rebellions in East Africa as well as his role in the Boxer Rebellion in China. His brutal strategy toward the Herero is summed up in a letter he wrote to Leutwein. In the letter he writes; "I know enough tribes in Africa. They all have the same mentality insofar as they yield only to force. It was and remains my policy to apply this force by unmitigated terrorism and even cruelty. I shall destroy the rebellious tribes by shedding rivers of blood and money."

[24] Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 170.

[25] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 207.

[26] Dedering, "A Certain Rigorous Treatment," 210.

[27] Goldblatt, *History of South West Africa*, 131.

> country. If they do not, I shall force them to do it with large cannons. Within the German boundaries, every Herero, with or without rifle, with or without cattle will be shot.[28]

From the issue of the proclamation until the Herero were finally allowed to surrender under the new German Governor, Fredrich von Lindequist in late 1905[29], the strategy employed upon them can be called nothing but genocide. By the time the Herero were allowed to come out of the Omaheke, their entire society and way of life had been obliterated. The few who made it out of the inhospitable conditions of the desert were starved and broken, reduced to skin and bones. Very small groups of Herero who succeeded in escaping the German cordon fled eastward to Bechuanaland where they regrouped under the leadership of the chief Samuel Maherero.[30] In all aspects, von Trotha's obsessive and macabre goals had been achieved; he had swiftly and decisively obliterated an entire nation of people.[31] The Hereros captured after late 1905 were herded into forced-labor concentration camps on the coast, where many hundreds more died from disease and exposure.[32] While von Trotha may have seen his excessively brutal strategies as beneficial to building a strong German colony in SW Africa, the real consequences of his genocidal policies were very counter-productive to his intended goals.

It is interesting to note that Leutwein offered a very different strategy for defeating, but not destroying, the Herero. In a report to the Colonial Department prepared by Leutwein during the early stages of the war, he wrote:

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[28]Karla Poewe, *The Namibian Herero: A History of their Psychosocial Disintegration and Survival* (Lewiston, Queenstown: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1985), 63-64; Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 156-57. There has been some discussion as to whether Trotha's 'extermination order' was really intended to annihilate the Herero people. Some have argued that it was meant for Herero men only, since women and children were only meant to have warning shots fried over their heads to drive them away from German soldiers, and consequently, further into the Omaheke desert. While it is possible that Trotha did not understand the severity or consequences of his proclamation, it is highly improbable due to the brutality that the German forces visited on the Herero after the battle at the Waterberg.

[29] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 132.

[30] First, *South West Africa*, 79.

[31] Gewald *Herero Heroes*, 191.

[32] Drechsler *Let Us Die Fighting*, 207.

> I do not concur with those fanatics who want to see the Herero destroyed all together. Apart from the fact that a people of 60,000 or 70,000 is not so easy to annihilate, I would consider such a move a grave mistake from an economic point of view. We need the Herero as cattle breeders, though on a small scale, and especially as laborers. It would be quite sufficient if they are politically dead.[33]

Essentially, Leutwein had already written the counter-productive effects of destroying the Herero before it had even happened. Von Trotha's excessive strategy of complete and total destruction of the Herero left the German colonial state in complete power over its territory, but at the expense of significant labor and livestock resources.[34]

The war had left the German colony in dire straits. Railroad construction had been halted, and any farming or land development had been stalled because of the war resulting in a significant economic crisis for German farmers.[35] The economic crisis was partially resolved by policies that essentially made the Nama and Herero forced laborers, but there was still a significant dearth of labor as well as a devastated cattle population which meant that settlers had a difficult time restoring their herds quickly.[36]

As Leutwein had foreseen, the immediate economic consequences of the Herero rebellion on German colonialism were negative. As the rebellion drew to its close, Leutwein remarked:

> At a cost of several hundred millions of marks and several thousand German soldiers, of the three economic aspects of the colony, mining, farming, and

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[33] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 148.
[34] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 212.
[35] Helmut Bley, "German South West Africa after the Conquest, 1904-1914," in. *South West Africa, Travesty of Trust: The Expert Papers and Findings of the International Conference on South West Africa, Oxford 23-26 March 1966, with a Postscript by Ian MacGibbon on the 1966 Judgment of the International Court of Justice* (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1967), 41.
[36] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 213.

> native labor, we have destroyed the second entirely and two-thirds of the third. [37]

The immediate consequences of the war on the Herero people was their internment in forced-labor concentration camps in the coastal towns of Luderitzbucht and Swakopmund, where they were employed as laborers on harbor and railroad construction.[38] The conditions in the camps were horrendous, and many hundreds of Herero men, women, and children died from exposure, disease, and over-work.[39] As well as being forced to live in atrocious conditions, diseases spread across the camps, and syphilis became a serious problem, not only because it caused significant death and disease in the short term, but also because it left many Herero women sterile.[40] It is in this context that one can see the apparent contradictions of using the defeated and broken Herero people. The need for a significant amount of African labor to rebuild what had been destroyed in the colony during the war, as well as to continue to build a strong colonial state in its aftermath, was met by employing extremely unfit Herero prisoners. The Herero survivors provided relatively un-satisfactory labor, which, in turn, did very little to help build a strong colony.[41]

By 1908, the concentration camps had been closed down but a more comprehensive and widespread system of forced labor had been enacted by the colonial state. Horst Drechsler has referred to the period after the war ended in 1907 until 1915 as "the peace of the graveyard."[42] It cannot be disputed that the

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[37] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 213.
[38] Goldblatt, *History of South West Africa*, 145.
[39] Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 188-189; Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 213. A report by the 'High Command of the Protection Force' on the death rates in the camps indicates that nearly half of the Herero and Nama who actually made it to the camps died from 1904 to 1907.
[40]Poewe, *The Namibian Herero*, 91; Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 232. The impact that syphilis had on the Herero population cannot be overstated. The Herero population stagnated after 1904 as a direct consequence of the conditions in the Omaheke and the concentration camps. Also, the Herero increased abortion in order that their offspring would not be born into the subjugation inflicted upon them. Therefore, one can see how, as a direct result of the Herero genocide, the labor force of the colony was negatively altered in a drastically.
[41] Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 187.
[42] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 231.

aftermath of the war showed Germany to have consolidated complete political control over most of SW Africa. Although some groups of people (most notably the Ovambos and the Bastards of Rehoboth) were left politically and socially autonomous, they remained underneath the economic thumb of the colonial state.[43] However, for most of the Africans in SW Africa the German victory over the Herero and Nama signaled an end of their independence.

In August 1907, coinciding with the official end of the war, the German authorities signed into law an Ordinance entitled "Measures for the Control of the Natives" which completely dispossessed the Herero and Nama people.[44] The Ordinance expropriated all land and cattle that the Herero and Nama owned and placed it in the hands of the colonial state.[45] The amount of land that the colonial state was able to confiscate was immense. In 1903, one year before the war, the Crown land in SW Africa amounted to 19,250,000 hectares and after the war, owing to the land confiscations as well as of an agreement with the concession companies, the Government found itself with nearly 46 million hectares of land, ready for settlement.[46] Thus, immediately following the end of the war in 1907, the German colonial state directly owned nearly half of all the land in SW Africa. This consolidation of land and African resources made the profile of the colonial state much more pronounced, to the point that it penetrated virtually every aspect of life in the colony. But with the serious deficiency of African labor, developing the gains made by confiscating that land would prove to be a trying business for the colonial state.

In effect, the Herero and Nama were to be 'prolitarianized'; molded into an African working class which could be used by German settlers and the colonial government to build and develop the colony.[47]

> In his study of colonial economy in SWA (South West Africa), which met with great approval in SWA and was even used as a school textbook, Paul Rhorback wrote in 1907 that it was the German's task 'to divest the Herero as far as possible of their national

[43] Goldblatt, *History of South West Africa*, 150.
[44]Gewald and Silvester, *Words Cannot be Found*, 192
[45] Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule*, 171.
[46] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 213, 216.
[47] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 231.

> characteristics and merge them with other native groups into a single colored working-class.[48]

In fact it can be seen that the confiscation of Herero and Nama land coincided with rising levels of German settlement. From 1903 to 1913, the white population of German South West Africa expanded from 3,701 to 14,840.[49] Concurrently, the number of farms which were sold to whites increased exponentially after 1907. In 1903, the number of farms the colonial government and concession companies had sold or leased to settlers was around 450.[50] From 1907 to 1909, the period of the most rapid European settlement, the number of farms leased or sold was somewhere around 400, and it climbed by nearly 100 farms every year until 1913.[51] The reasons for steadily increased European settlement during this period can be attributed to abundance of inexpensive land the aftermath of the Herero and Nama wars.

After peace had been achieved in 1907, inexpensive and abundant land confiscated from the Herero and Nama was made available to settlers by the colonial government. Not only was this land cheap and fertile, it was also safe and secure for the new settlers. This is another consequence of the Herero and Nama wars that deeply affected German colonial rule in SW Africa. In winning the wars, the Germans had exerted their direct control over the territory of SW Africa, but also found that their coercive rule had to be constantly re-applied to the Africans in order to 'keep them in line'.[52] It is here that one can see another of the most important impacts of the Herero genocide on colonial rule in SW Africa. To put it bluntly, the eradication of the entire Herero nation made it possible for the German colonial authorities to open up the entirety of the Herero land, secure, cheap, abundant and fertile, to hundreds of white settlers who may otherwise never had had the chance. While white settlement was gaining speed, the colonial government also made it possible for the new settlers to have a widely available and malleable source of wage labor to work their land.

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[48] Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule*, 223-24.
[49] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 244.
[50] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 218
[51] *Ibid*, 218-219.
[52] Bley, "German South West Africa," 43.

The same Ordinance of 18 August 1907 which dispossessed the Herero of their land and cattle also included sections which consolidated direct control over natives by settlers.[53] The Ordinance had special provisions restricting the movement and freedom of the Herero and Nama, essentially putting them at the mercy of their settler masters. The Ordinance declared that all Africans over the age of seven had to register with the government, as well as carry an identity card without which one could not procure food, lodging, or employment.[54] Moreover, if it was found that the Africans in question could not prove that they were employed, then they could be brought to the nearest police station and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.[55] Restrictions were also placed on personal ownership; Africans were not allowed to own land or livestock without the permission of the Governor of the colony.[56] Finally, any organization along 'tribal' lines by the Herero was abolished and the actual numbers of Herero allowed to be in contact with each other was significantly restricted.[57] The result of all of these restrictions and regulations on the Herero and Nama after 1907 was that they became, in effect, forced laborers for the white settlers.

> The suppression of the great uprisings brought to a close the process of dis-possessing the Herero and Nama, an essential prerequisite for reducing them to the status of wage laborers. The forcible nature of their expropriation, however, prevented them from becoming free wage laborers.[58]

An African worker could be dismissed for even the most trivial offenses, and there were virtually no legal recourses available to those workers who felt they had been wronged.[59] The white settlers, on the other hand, were given almost

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[53] Wellington, *South West Africa and its Human Issues*, 230.
[54]Gewald and Silvester, *Words Cannot be Found*, 194.
[55] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 231.
[56] Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule*, 172. Even with this provision, it was not until 1912 that any native was allowed to own livestock or land and even then the number of people it actually affected was insignificant.
[57]Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule*, 184.
[58] Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 231.
[59]Bley, *South West Africa under German Rule*, 172.

complete control over their African workers, which often resulted in episodes of brutal and indiscriminate beatings and violence.

The treatment of the predominantly Herero laborers on European settlers' farms was a brutal and inhumane existence, characterized by vicious and regular beatings by their 'employers'.[60] This violence is an important consequence of the Herero genocide, since the reliance on savage coercion to control Herero labor was in no small part a reaction to settler's paranoia to the possibility of renewed violence:

> The Farmers spoke of their right to administer their own justice and declared that they were living in a state of constant emergency. Certainly conditions of panic and anxiety were prevalent, many farmers suffered from persecution mania and went in fear of being poisoned by their own workers.[61]

Even though this reliance on beating was not officially condoned by the colonial government, it was none the less punished, albeit rarely, and existed as an unspoken rule in the forced-labor economy of the farms.[62]

One can see how the Herero genocide thus changed the face of German colonial rule in SW Africa. Lacking anyone strong enough to oppose them, the Germans were able set into law and enforce an Ordinance which essentially made the Africans of SW Africa forced laborers for the white settlers.

> The wars that the Germans fought against the Herero and Nama tribes were the last of their kind in South West Africa- and the last that Germany won this

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[60]Gewald and Silvester, *Words cannot be Found*, 202.

[61] Bley, "German South West Africa," 49.

[62] Wellington, *South West and Its Human Issues Africa and Its Human Issues*, 230-31, 232-33. The primary example of a European being punished for excessive violence was the trial of Ludwig Cramer in 1913. Cramer was brought to court after it was alleged that he savagely beat one of his most loyal workers, as well as the man's pregnant wife (who was beaten so savagely that she gave birth to a dead child), on the allegation that they had killed a sheep. The next day, Cramer beat several other women, one so badly that she died of her wounds because he believed that they were going to poison him. He was originally given a 27 month prison term, which was appealed and reduced to a four month term and a fine of 2,700 marks.

> century; her pacification of the tribes left them scattered and weak for a new and different phase in the history of their subjection.[63]

But again, it must be stressed that while the colonial authorities had success exploiting and controlling the African population after 1907, they were still only controlling a fraction of the labor power that they could have if von Trotha's policy of genocidal annihilation had been avoided.

Aside from the lack of an abundant labor force, due to a sadistic policy of eradication, the huge herds of the Herero were also destroyed during the war and the subsequent flight of the Herero into the Omaheke. The European settlers needed cattle stocks immediately after the war to replenish and rebuild their farms and lives which had been severely disrupted during the fighting in 1904.[64] The contradictory nature of fighting a genocidal war to build a strong colony is thus highlighted yet again in this example, since even though plenty of Herero land was expropriated for settlers' use, the once mighty herds of the Herero, which, even after trading with white settlers were quite substantial before 1904, were almost totally destroyed:

> Most of the White settler's cattle were taken by Hereros in the early stages of the rebellion: by the end of the rebellion nearly all the Herero cattle had perished in the sandveld [desert] or had actually been destroyed. Only some 3,000 head had been taken as booty by the German raiding parties. The livestock situation after the rebellion was therefore not only discouraging but *prohibitive of rapid settlement* .[65]

By 1914, the numbers of livestock had stabilized with the introduction of European cattle and sheep, but this was mainly facilitated with profits made from diamond mining.[66] It is entirely plausible that if an attempt had been made

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[63] First, *South West Africa*, 83.
[64] Goldblatt, *History of South West Africa*, 150.
[65] Wellington, *South West Africa and Its Human Issues*, 218. Emphasis mine.
[66] *Ibid*., 222-23.

to save a majority of the Herero's cattle during the 1904 war, this expenditure would have been unnecessary.

After 1907, the economic makeup of the colony changed rapidly. Not only was the settlement expanding quickly, but the construction of railroads, and mining of copper and diamonds were also picking up pace.[67] Again, the colonial authorities were at a loss as to where the labor for simultaneous development in mining, agriculture, railroad construction, and industry was to come from.[68]

> Both industrial and agricultural, or rather pastoral, development were dependant upon an adequate supply of labor. So too were the commercial activities of the inhabitants of the Territory. This Labor had to be Native labor. On account of the destruction of the greater portion of the Hereros and Nama, there was at no time a sufficiency of Natives to keep pace with the demand.[69]

Because of an acute labor shortage, the colonial authorities were forced to recruit workers from any area they could find. The Ovambo, which were one of the only groups in SW Africa that still had any measure of autonomy, were recruited on a migrant worker basis, but this hardly sufficed.[70] Still, the German colonialist found that diamonds would be the most profitable resource in the colony after their discovery in 1908.[71] Mainly because of diamond mining, in 1912, exports from the colony finally surpassed imports, and the colony actually began to pay off for Germany.[72] 1912 was also the year that some of the draconian restrictions on Africans in the colony were softened somewhat.[73] Although it cannot be argued that colonial development did not proceed after the Herero genocide, it must be understood that it could have developed much more quickly and substantially if the labor power of the Herero had not been eradicated through a counter-productive and sadistic policy of genocide.

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67 Wellington, *South West Africa and Its Human Issues*, 222-23.
68 Drechsler, *Let Us Die Fighting*, 232.
69 Goldblatt, *History of South West Africa*, 182.
70 Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 216.
71 Vedder, *A History of South West Africa*, 61.
72 First, *South West Africa*, 87.
73 Bley, "German South West Africa," 50.

Thus, the development of SW Africa as a German colony proceeded until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. In January of 1915, forces under the control of the Union of South Africa's Prime minister, General Louis Botha, invaded the German colony.[74] In less than a year, the German forces had been decisively defeated by the South Africans, and German colonial rule over SW Africa was brought to a close.[75] In 1919, after the Treaty of Versailles, the Union of South Africa was given a mandate by the League of Nations to oversee and administer South West Africa.[76]

In 1904, the Herero people rose up against the apparent threat of German imperialism in their land. Their rebellion, while initially successful, was doomed to failure. As a result of General Lothar von Trotha's obsessively sadistic policy of exterminating the Herero, from 1904-1907 the Herero were nearly wiped off the face of the earth. In this policy of complete extermination, one can see an apparent contradiction between the goals of the colonial state and the forms of achieving said goals. By utterly destroying the Herero, the colonial state was made significantly stronger in its ability to exercise direct power over the majority of SW Africa and its people. Also, the confiscation of African land made it possible for increased European settlement, agricultural and industrial development, and mining. Simultaneously, by following a policy of sadistic annihilation, the most significant and necessary resource of the colony, African labor was almost entirely lost. Without the reserves of labor, the colonial state could not develop its agriculture, mining and industry to the fullest extent, and was therefore made weaker. Thus, one can see the apparent contradiction between the ends and means of the German colonial state in SW Africa.

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[74] Roger Louis, "The Origins of the 'Sacred Trust'," in *South West Africa, Travesty of Trust: The Expert Papers and Findings of the International Conference on South West Africa, Oxford 23-26 March 1966, with a Postscript by Iain MacGibbon on the 1966 Judgment of the International Court of Justice*, eds. R. Segal and R. First (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1967), 59.
[75] Gewald, *Herero Heroes*, 231.
[76] Vedder, *A History of South West Africa*, 70.

Authenticity, Power and Politics in the Writing of History: Reflections on the Stoll-Menchú Debate

Vanessa Dixon

In 1983, Rigoberta Menchu, a 23-year-old indigenous Guatemalan woman, spent a week in Paris relating her life story to anthropologist, Elisabeth Burgos-Debray. These interviews became the basis for *I Rigoberta Menchu, a Peasant Woman in Guatemala,* in which Menchu vividly describes the murders of her family members at the hands of the Guatemalan army, as well as her role in the organization of peasants resisting class and race based repression. As civil war raged on in Guatemala, the popularity of her *testimonio* turned Menchu into an international icon. In 1992, on the 500th anniversary of the European colonization of the Americas, Menchu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize at an event which rallied international pressure against the human rights abuses of the Guatemalan army and encouraged the peace talks which brought an end to over a decade of violence.

In the wake of the Guatemalan civil war and as Menchú's presence loomed large on the global stage, David Stoll's *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans* raised a rather uncomfortable question: what if much of Rigoberta Menchu's story is not true? Stoll, who visited Menchu's hometown Uspantan to conduct his own series of interviews and archival research, devotes much of his text to disproving her autobiographical claims and discrediting Menchú as an eyewitness. While conflicting claims characterize any history, Stoll argues that the inaccuracies and untruths in Menchu's *testimonio* were crafted as part of a political scheme to advance the cause of the leftist revolutionary group to which she belonged. In short, his project forces the reader to weigh one account of history against another. In the process, Stoll raises many interesting questions regarding issues of power, authenticity, bias and politics in the writing of history. Through an examination of the way standards of truth are culturally

conceived and collective memories are validated, it will become apparent that while not empirically true, Rigoberta Menchu's testimony is still a legitimate historical text and a useful tool for accomplishing humanitarian aims. In addition, a discussion of the ways in which bias, unbalanced power relationships and politics have affected Stoll's methodology will clarify the connection between historical authenticity and authority.

At the core of the Stoll-Menchu conflict, is a discordance between different standards of truth. Although both histories may be true (or equally false), the context from which they arise must be studied so that cultural constructions can be exposed. Critics have struggled to make sense of conflicting claims by distinguishing between Stoll's objective conception of authenticity and Menchú's more complicated understanding of it.[1] Arguing that "it is a mistake to assume that epistemic validity matters only in the Western tradition,"[2] Stoll applies a western model of truth, in his evaluation of Menchu, by sorting each of her nuanced expressions into the category of truth or lie. Menchu, working from a Mayan oral tradition, does not subscribe to the same empirical standard. Although Menchu's way of telling may seem mythical and un-academic when held up to Stoll's criterion of truth versus lie, it would be a mistake to discount it; even incorrect memories can reveal much about the interests of their tellers.

Rigoberta Menchu establishes a clear truth agreement with her audience which is valid, even though it does not hold up to Stoll's empirical standard. Menchu's account is a work of intricate and emotionally charged storytelling wherein personal and composite memories intertwine. This is a result of the context in which she told her story. She repeatedly reminds the audience that she withholds secrets and, from the outset, establishes a complex truth agreement in which she makes clear that objective, empirical knowledge is not her priority. At the time Rigoberta told her story, writes Leigh Gilmore in "Jurisdictions", the memory of extraction of secrets through torture could not have been far from her consciousness, and she was also aware that anyone she

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[1] Leigh Gilmore, "Jurisdictions: I Rigoberta Menchu, The Kiss and Scandalous Self-Representation in the Age of Memoir and Trauma," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28 (2003): 699.

[2] David Stoll, *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans* (Boulder: Westview, 1999), 189.

named would have been in danger of imprisonment or execution by the army. For Menchu, trustworthiness is measured by the ability to keep a secret and speech is "a nuanced arena of political and cultural sensitivities."[3] Thus, although Rigoberta's authenticity falters when held up to academic standards, it fits within the truth standard which she sets for herself in the context she told her story.

While Menchu claims authenticity on the basis of her role as an eyewitness and Stoll argues that his own version is more accurate because it "encompasses a wider range of versions",[4] neither author has a monopoly on the truth. By contradicting Menchu's testimony with that of other Mayans from her district, Stoll attempts to prove that her experiences and beliefs were different than those of the many other indigenous people she claims to represent. Challenging her claim that the indigenous people were self-mobilized, Stoll argues that the majority of peasants did not share Menchu's "revolutionary consciousness."[5] While it is naïve to believe that all peasants are true to Menchu's representation of them as revolutionaries, it is equally unlikely that all Guatemalans are fairly represented by Stoll. In her review of *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans,* Kay B. Warren suggests that an alternative way to understand the Stoll-Menchú debate is to see it as a "clash of two exposés," since "both books are highly personalized political works that marshal arguments to challenge particular power arrangements."[6] This is a valuable suggestion as it frees readers from the dilemma of distinguishing between right and wrong histories and leaves room for cultural and contextual considerations. To credit Stoll or Menchu as having a monopoly on the truth of what happened during the Guatemalan civil war, is to discount the varied experiences of those who actually lived through it and the forces that still shape the way they relate their stories.

According to Menchu's truth agreement, collective memory is a valid form of historical expression. To Stoll, claiming to be an eyewitness to events that she did not actually experience casts suspicion on the rest of her account and provides further indication of Menchu's suspect political motives. Although Stoll makes a very convincing case that Menchu did, in fact, lie in an empirical

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[3] Gilmore, "Jurisdictions," 705.
[4] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 65.
[5] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 143.
[6] Kay B. Warren, "Review, Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans," *American Ethnologist* 27 (2000): 759.

sense, his accusations are questionable because she never claimed to be telling the truth in the way Stoll understands it. In a particularly wrenching passage of her book, Menchú describes how she watched as her brother Petrocinio was burned alive by soldiers in the town of Chajul. Years later, Stoll returned to Chajul and determined that although the army had murdered Petrocinio, Menchu could not have been present at her brother's death and thus her version of history "is not the eyewitness account that it purports to be."[7] Manchu, however, is quite explicit in qualifying her testimony when she states at the outset: "I'd like to stress that it's not only my life, it's also the testimony of my people…The important thing is that what has happened to me has happened to many other people too: My story is the story of all poor Guatemalans."[8] Warren accuses Stoll of failing to recognize "the truth value of collective veracities that are not personally observed."[9] Experience of collective memory is a "hybrid way of knowing"[10] which Stoll refuses to accept.

Thus, Stoll's problem with Menchu lies less in any particular discrepancy and more in his refusal to accept the terms of her project.[11] Within the framework, Rigoberta provides for the interpretation of her narrative, a claim to have witnessed an event first hand that can be interpreted as legitimate expression of collective memory. Even if she did not personally witness the murder of a brother, many Mayan children had. In arguing that she was not there to see it, Stoll effectively casts doubt on her individual ability to remember. However, the power of Menchu's images, which speak for the tens of thousands of Mayans who lost family members in the war, remains undiminished. Her only failure is that she neglects to comply with Stoll's notion of the way history should be told. To the majority of Menchu's readers, it does not matter that she knowingly represented the experiences of others as if she had lived them because she spoke for people who were never given the opportunity to speak for themselves. While it is important to recognize collective memory as a valid form of historical expression, Stoll's assertion that Menchu does not speak for all poor

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[7] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 70.
[8] Rigoberta Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu* (London: Verso, 1992), 1.
[9] Warren, "Review," 759.
[10] Ibid..
[11] Gilmore, "Jurisdictions," 704.

Guatemalans raises questions about the legitimacy of a history based on one person's testimony.

Although oral testimony is often the only avenue by which illiterate or semi-illiterate people can participate in the creation of their own history, testimonials can be a problematic source of historical evidence. In the case of *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*, failure to critically assess how culture, context and fear may have shaped his relationships with his subjects is damaging to Stoll's argument. Stoll conducted his interviewing in towns and villages which have been traumatized by civil war and where inhabitants still live in fear of the threat of violence. Critics have remarked on Stoll's naivety in thinking that fear, anger and political affiliations would not have affected the way inhabitants answered his questions about the war.[12] Stoll's flawed methodology is characterized by his failure to consider that as a white foreign academic, invested with all the authority his position implies, his stature would affect the way indigenous peasants would respond to his questions. Only a few years after thousands were routinely murdered by the government for suspected association with revolutionaries, one can imagine how anyone, let alone a foreigner, would have difficulty obtaining straight answers from peasants regarding their involvement with the guerillas. To complicate matters, Stoll does not speak K'iche and conducts his interviews in Spanish, which is not the first language of most Mayans. These cultural, economic, and lingual gaps contribute to the disparity in power which separates Stoll from his subjects. Despite criticism of academics who "idealize peasants to serve their own moral ends,"[13] his own power relationships with the peasants he interviews are never explored.

The troubled historical relationship between the United States and Guatemala is yet another example of the way in which Stoll's position as an objective observer is compromised. Stoll overlooks the U.S.'s role in creating the environment from which civil war bloomed in Guatemala and obscures the fact that U.S. counter-insurgency training played a role in legitimizing massive human rights abuses by the Guatemalan army. The neo-colonial relationship of his country to Guatemala not only shapes his writing and opinions, but also the

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[12] Norma Stoltz Chinchilla, "Of Straw Men and Stereotypes: Why Guatemalan Rocks Don't Talk," *Latin American Perspectives* 29 (1999): 32.
[13] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 232.

way in which he collects information and selects what to include in his text. Thus, Latin Americanist Carlos Flores believes Stoll cannot be the unbiased observer he claims to be.[14] Flores makes a valuable point, as no historian is free from the context in which he or she constructs histories. A discussion of the 1954 CIA-led coup – which ousted democratically-elected Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, and replaced him with a series of neo-liberal generals, who, with the help of U.S. financing, led Guatemala down a steady path of militarization – is absent from Stoll's text. Instead of exploring the ways in which his own country may have played a role in the militarization of Guatemala, Stoll blames an "authoritarian streak in Latin American culture."[15] He criticizes a society rooted in violence without addressing the issue of why and how the model came in to being. While he blames the guerillas for provoking the army, Stoll neglects to examine the "highly intolerant system deeply shaped by the Cold War which offered very few options for change."[16] Had Stoll's only aim been to show that Menchu's account is oversimplified and partly composite, then neglecting to contextualize the roots of Guatemalan violence would not have jeopardized his argument. However, since Stoll attempts to not only cast doubt on the veracity of Menchu's claims but move from an attack of Menchu to a condemnation of Guatemalan revolutionaries, his assessment is compromised by excluding a discussion of the international framework in which a culture of violence was created.

Admittedly, history is not created in a vacuum and no historian is completely free from the circumstances in which they write it. Since overlooking the U.S.'s role in creating a framework for the Guatemalan civil war serves the purposes of Stoll's argument, it is even more important to be critical of his nationalist bias. Advocates of global history, stress that the interaction between cultures, communities and governments is one of the most important shaping forces of history.[17] A true evaluation of these forces is best accomplished when historians disentangle themselves from the assumptions and biases which come

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[14] Carlos Flores, "Review: Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 6 (2001), 169.
[15] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 154.
[16] Flores, "Review," 170.
[17] Jerry Bentley, "Myths, Wagers and Some Moral Implications of World History," *Journal of World History*, 16 (1) 2005. 51-81.

from belonging to a particular culture. As an anthropologist, Stoll must have been well acquainted with the notion that bias can play a role in compromising analysis of the 'other'. Stoll's characterizations of Guatemalans, in general, and of Menchu's politics, in particular, must be viewed in the context of a U.S. nationalist bias.

To return to specific power relationships, this striking disparity between Stoll, a western educated academic, and Rigoberta Menchu, the semi-illiterate peasant woman whose authority he challenges, creates a sensitive political situation. Charges of racism invoked by Stoll's attack of Menchu often become an issue when a white academic attempts to write a history of a victimized minority group. The power of representation has become a popular subject in recent academic debate and many critics have objected to Stoll's questioning the right of an indigenous woman to tell her own story. While it could be argued that Stoll's criticism of Menchu is admissible as an intellectual exercise, the highly personalized nature of his attack makes this interpretation hard to swallow. In reaction to Stoll's allegations, Menchu herself remarked that "whites have been writing our history for five hundred years and no white anthropologist is going to tell me what I experienced in my own flesh."[18] Menchu and many others view the act of writing history as an exercise of power and privilege. Gilmore calls attention to the way Stoll "consistently claims the privilege of referring to the Nobel Laureate by her first name," in an effort to belittle her role as the teller of her own history.[19] By discrediting Menchu as a narrator, Stoll attempts not only to set forth his own version of events, but to erase hers completely.

Next, Stoll aims his cannons at political correctness in academia. In justifying his right to question a subaltern testimony, Stoll attacks the tendency of western academia to censor itself in an effort to be politically correct. Interestingly, Stoll falls into similar methodological traps. Warning his colleagues that "deferring to the authority of fashionable forms of victimhood" will lead them to accept "a very partial version of the events."[20] Stoll argues that the "aura of unquestionability" which surrounds Menchu's story prevents it from being

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[18] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 227.
[19] Gilmore, "Jurisdictions," 703.
[20] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 40.

critically assessed.[21] Stoll is right to assert that if the desire to be politically correct is preventing critical evaluation of a historical account then it deserves to be examined. But while he criticizes other academics portrayal of Indians as "noble savages," Stoll's own characterization of them as victims denies Mayans a role as historical agents of change. In describing a fearful population, misled by the guerillas and brutalized by the army, Stoll strips Mayans of the capacity for political agency. Just as the work of other historians may be compromised by their desire to identify with the voices of the oppressed, Stoll's refusal to identify these voices is equally damaging to his argument. Nevertheless, Stoll raises important questions about the pressures on researchers to conform to established norms of political correctness.

The fact that research and representation are governed by pressure to be politically correct suggests that academics do play a role in politics. Academics have a responsibility to question the political implications of their work and if casting doubt on the authenticity of Menchu's testimony compromises the humanitarian goals that have been accomplished as a direct result of *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, it is important that these ethical considerations be taken into account. In an effort to de-romanticize the myth of guerilla warfare in Latin America, Stoll accuses the Guatemalan revolutionaries of knowingly provoking a ruthless army into attacking vulnerable indigenous peasants and then using these images of violence to fight a "war of images," in the international arena.[22] Because Stoll waited for the peace process to come to completion before publishing *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans,* his book probably did not endanger anybody's life. However, regardless of the intentions of its authors, history will always be used to serve political agendas and some critics have feared that the Guatemalan government might interpret his indictment of the guerillas as justification for the army's ten-year killing spree. While absolving the guerillas for their violent acts may be crucial in making a political point, Stoll is correct in arguing that dichotomizing the actors of a conflict into victims and victimizers can overshadow the complexity of the situation.

Although Stoll's mission to debunk Menchu's oversimplified claims is a worthy academic exercise, it remains that whether Menchu lied or not, her

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[21] Stoll, *All Poor Guatemalans*, 274.
[22] *Ibid.*, 124.

testimony played the defining role in mobilizing an international community into a campaign to stop the atrocious human rights abuses of the Guatemalan government. For this reason, it is hard to feel pity for the constraint of Stoll's right to express himself as an academic, when a more pressing need was intervention against a murderous army. This is not to say that the search for objective truth should take a back seat to international political campaigns; only that academic endeavors should be sensitive to volatile situations where human lives are at stake. For Stoll, the writing of history is an intellectual exercise in which he strives to uncover unbiased truths; conversely, Menchu was concerned with the ways in which history can best serve the aims of humanity. Of course, who decides how these aims may best be served is up for debate. Stoll's pursuit of objective truth may prove just as valuable to humanity as Menchu's distortion of it.

Contradictory versions of history can be especially problematic following a civil war when not only historians but all participants look back in order to make sense of a traumatic event. While many questions about the Guatemalan civil war remain unanswered, the Stoll-Menchu debate provides insight into the complexity of the conflict and the characterization of its actors. Stoll's flawed methodology raises many issues regarding the complicated relationship of academics to their subaltern subjects, and although Stoll makes a convincing case that Menchu's account distorts the empirical truth, Stoll's bias compromises his own claims to authenticity. In the end, Stoll and Menchu's versions of history are both flawed by partiality and power relationships. While Stoll embarks on an admirable academic endeavor in the pursuit of objective truth, the humanitarian goals accomplished as a result of *I, Rigoberta Menchu* provide a prevailing example of the power of testimony to affect and mobilize an international audience. Seven years after its publication, *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans* remains an extremely contentious book among anthropologists, historians and Latin Americanists alike. One of the only agreeable points is that Stoll's most valuable contribution was to promote discussion on issues of authority, authenticity and the politicization of academic discourse.

A Critical Review of Steven Watts' *The People's Tycoon: Henry Ford and the American Century*

Claire Simmons

In *The People's Tycoon*, Steven Watts addresses many aspects of Henry Ford's life, portraying him as a consumer, producer, celebrity, legend, moralist and bigot. He argues that Ford played a key role in shaping the twentieth century through his approach to consumption, mass culture and populism. Though all of these issues are worthy of detailed consideration, this review will focus on Ford's contribution to changing views of consumption habits during the early 1900s. It will explore the shift from Victorian values of self-control, gentility and Protestant morality, to the new commercialism that emphasized pleasure and self-fulfillment. By comparing Watts' portrayal of Henry Ford to the extensive historiography of consumer culture in the twentieth century, this review will analyze the strengths and weaknesses of Watts' arguments. Although Watts' portrayal of American consumption is consistent with other historical sources, his weaknesses include an exaggerated portrayal of Ford's influence, the failure to put forth a more global presentation of consumption during the twentieth century, an inadequate depiction of the extent of Ford's anti-Semitism, and a poor use of sources.

Watts argues that Henry Ford came to prominence while America was experiencing a period of cultural change, and claims that, with the decline of Victorian principles such as self-discipline and thrift, Henry Ford "popularized a new creed of consumer self-fulfillment."[1] Watts notes that, although Ford had little intention of abandoning Victorian morals, his consumption ethic promoted a revolution in consumer consciousness.[2] During the nineteenth century,

[1] Steven Watts, *The People's Tycoon* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006), xii.
[2] *Ibid*., 122.

American consumption practices were centered on Protestant morality, emotional self-restraint, and gentility. Goods were purchased based on necessity.[3] According to Watts, Ford's vision of consumer prosperity, embodied in the Model T, facilitated the transformation of American attitudes towards material goods. Ford's "gospel of spending" maintained that regular indulgence, as opposed to frugality, encouraged "social harmony" and "personal fulfillment" for the consumer.[4]

Watts maintains that Ford used the Sociological Department to encourage new spending habits among workers. Along with preaching the importance of sobriety and sanitation, investigators for the Sociological Department were expected to implant values of "responsible consumption" in their workforce.[5] Watts notes that the Sociological Department encouraged immigrant workers to adopt American values towards material comfort, and continues on to argue that the new consumer culture was increasingly seen as "the essence of Americanism."[6] Watts contends that Ford played a crucial role in transforming American values along with their lifestyles, stating: "Ford's articulation of the consumer ethic helped recast popular ideas about 'the pursuit of happiness' in a new mold for the modern era."[7] According to Watts, American spending habits assumed a new course away from Victorian morality, replacing self-control with self-indulgence, largely because of Henry Ford's innovative approach to consumption.[8]

Many scholars have devoted a great deal of attention to consumption patterns in the early twentieth century and have explored Ford's contribution to the evolution of consumer culture. In the article "Fordism," David Harvey recognizes that Ford differed from many of his contemporaries because he understood that "mass consumption meant mass production" and had a vision of "a new system of the reproduction of labour power, a new politics of labour control and management, a new kind of rationalized, modernist, and populist

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[3] Watts, *The People's Tycoon*, 8-9.
[4] *Ibid.*, 112.
[5] *Ibid.*, 207.
[6] *Ibid.*, 112, 207.
[7] *Ibid.,* 534.
[8] *Ibid.*, 318-319.

democratic society."[9] In *Today and Tomorrow*, Ford explained his belief in purchasing power, arguing that prosperity depended on high wages and low prices, which served to both create and supply consumers.[10] This approach encouraged a shift in consumer attitudes from frugal-minded consumption to spending that emphasized self-fulfillment.

Lizabeth Cohen contends that, in the 1920s, a new system of installment sales arose out of the belief in an American consumer revolution that emphasized luxury goods, chain stores and national brands.[11] These new spending habits were perceived as a unifying movement that would eradicate old social divisions, thus creating a classless American society. However, she notes that mass consumption may have encouraged further separation between the working and upper classes rather than unifying them because workers molded mass culture, including shopping, movies and radio, to suit their needs and tastes.[12] Although workers in Chicago during the early 1900s were influenced by advertising and other marketing techniques, they actively chose which aspects of consumer culture to adopt.

In her discussion of early twentieth-century refrigerator designs, Shelley Nickles describes the manufacturers' notion of the average consumer as a thrifty, efficient housewife who valued convenience.[13] Although this depiction is inconsistent with the 'new consumer values' of indulgence and self-fulfillment, Nickles argues that the refrigerator became a "compelling and contentious symbol of a modern American standard of living," demonstrating the fact that consumption became linked to comfort and wellbeing.[14] As the century progressed and the number of potential consumers increased, Frigidaire made revisions to its perception of American consumers, recognizing that there was an increasing demand for refrigerators among middle- and lower-class households.[15]

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[9] David Harvey, "Fordism," *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Blackewell, 1990), 125-126.
[10] Henry Ford, *Today and Tomorrow* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1926), 152.
[11] Lizabeth Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots," *American Quarterly* 41 (1989), 9.
[12] Ibid., 10.
[13] Shelley Nickles, "'Preserving Women': Refigerator Design as Social Process in the 1930s," *Technology and Culture* 43 (2002): 694.
[14] Ibid., 699.
[15] Ibid., 701-702.

With the evolution of consumption practices, manufacturers created new targets, therefore shaping who would consume their product.

According to Roland Marchand, advertising in the 1920s "cast off its sober, utilitarian outlook in favor of a new, pleasure-minded, consumption ethic."[16] He also notes that manufacturers felt the need to reeducate the public, elucidating consumption as a pleasurable pursuit rather than spending based on necessity.[17] Material goods became increasingly design oriented, paving the way for stylistic obsolescence. He argues that Ford, who rejected the need for extravagance and promoted living within one's income, was forced to give in to style-conscious consumers and did so with the introduction of his Model-A car.[18] As consumers adopted the spending ethic of self-indulgence, their demands were increasingly shaped by style. Marchand maintains that by portraying functional objects as obsolete, producers molded American perceptions of living standards; eventually consumers were expected to purchase a second model in order to maintain an adequate standard of living.[19]

While America was experiencing its revolution in consumer culture, similar changes were taking place elsewhere, including Canada, Iran and Italy. America was seen as the dominant global promoter of mass consumption, influencing and setting standards of consumption ethic across the world. According to Adam Arvidsson, advertising and mass consumption were increasingly associated with the 'American' identity.[20] He argues that the American sentiment associated with spending practices was perceived to expose all nations to the "civilizing impact of American consumer culture …[in order] to transform the inhabitants of backward societies into modern, rational consumers who behave, think, and desire the same things as Americans."[21] He maintains that Italy, along with other European countries, was exposed to and adopted many aspects of American advertising culture, affecting Italian

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16 Roland Marchand, "The Consumption Ethic: Strategies of Art and Style," *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 118.
17 Ibid., 120.
18 Ibid., 156-157.
19 Marchand, "The Consumption Ethic," 161.
20 Adam Arvidsson, "Between Fascism and the American Dream," *Social Science History* 25 (2001): 151.
21 Ibid., 152.

commercialism in the early twentieth century.[22] American culture strongly influenced European economics and consumption ethic. Mary Nolan contends that German housewives were expected to be efficient like their American counterparts; they were not, however, granted the same consumption practices. She argues that "the flamboyant consumerism of the American woman had been safely domesticated to the harsh, material circumstances of post-World War I Germany."[23] Although Europeans were exposed to many aspects of American consumerism, they attempted to filter out its less agreeable features, choosing which qualities to adopt. In "Importing 'Beauty Culture' into Iran," Camron Michael Amin discusses the influence of American consumerism on Iranian culture, and notes that the notion of 'beauty culture' emerged contemporaneously in both America and Iran.[24] He argues that the new consumer values in America and Iran were part of a growing global commercial culture, affecting many areas of Europe as well.[25]

The Sociological Department played a key role in spreading Ford's ideas of proper consumption. Management was no longer exclusive to the factory; it extended into the home with the goal of molding workers' values.[26] According to Harvey, this control included the intent to instill "'rational' consumption to live up to corporate needs and expectations."[27] Meyer argues that, like Ford, many in the upper echelons of society felt workers needed to be taught a new culture based on values that supported their industrial lifestyle.[28] By creating a Savings and Loan Association alongside the Sociological Department, Ford further increased his power over working-class consumption. Meyer maintains that the Savings and Loan was established to promote "the saving habit among

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[22] Arvidsson, "Between Fascism and the American Dream," 155.
[23] Mary Nolan, "'Housework Made Easy': The Taylorized Housewife in Weimar Germany's Rationalized Economy," *Feminist Studies* 16 (1990): 552.
[24] Camron Michael Amin, "Importing 'Beauty Culture' into Iran in the 1920s and 1930s," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24 (2004): 80.
[25] Ibid., 80.
[26] Martha May, "The Historical Problem of the Family Wage: Americanization in the Ford Motor Company and the Five Dollar Day," *Feminist Studies* 8 (1982): 275.
[27] Harvey, "Fordism," 126.
[28] Stephen Meyer, "Adapting the Immigrant to the Line: Americanization in the Ford Factory, 1908-1921," *Journal of Social History* 14 (1980): 68.

workers."[29] Workers were expected to contribute money from each paycheck, enabling the Sociological Department to have direct control over their ability to consume. Immigrants were the primary targets of Ford's Sociological Department, which attempted to inculcate proper 'American' values and, thus, standards of living.[30] Along with language lessons, the Americanization effort put forth by the Sociological Department taught foreign workers proper consumption practices, including instructions on "Buying and Using Stamps," "Pay Day," and "Going to the Bank."[31] Consumption was increasingly considered part of the American identity, and immigrant workers were expected to become new American consumers.

Watts' portrayal of consumption practices in America during the early twentieth century is consistent with the historiography on the topic. Spending habits underwent a shift from being conservative and necessity-based to being based on self-fulfillment. As Marchand's study indicates, consumption evolved from utilitarian to design oriented, and became increasingly a symbol of one's standard of living.[32] New purchasing practices, such as installment payments, arose out of this consumer revolution, emphasizing mass consumption.[33] As both Watts and Nickels maintain, consumption was increasingly associated with living standards. This change is particularly evident in the Ford Sociological Department's regulations. Like Watts, Meyer recognizes that the Sociological Department was dedicated to implanting values of consumption into the minds of workers, particularly immigrants because large-scale consumption was seen increasingly as an American quality.

Ford played a critical role in developing American spending practices. However, Watts gives Ford more credit than he perhaps disserves. Although Watts recognizes that Ford was not the only influence on consumption ethic, he fails to dedicate discussion to other pressures. Upon examining the historiography, it is clear that American consumer culture during the early 1900s

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[29] Stephen Meyer, "Toward Modern Labor Management: The Lee Reforms and the Five Dollar Day," in *The Five Dollar Day: Labor Management and Social Control in the Ford Motor Company, 1908-1921* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), 107.
[30] Meyer, "Adapting," 70.
[31] Ibid., 75.
[32] Marchand, "The Consumption Ethic," 120.
[33] Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots," 9.

was influenced by a multitude of forces, not least of all Ford. As Cohen contends, members of the working class and immigrants shaped mass culture and therefore consumption practices to meet their liking. For example, instead of shopping at large chain stores with national brands, many chose local grocers who did not require cash-and-carry payments.[34] Nickles maintains that manufacturers, particularly Frigidaire, influenced consumption practices because they were determined to target specific consumers. By expanding their line to include basic and luxury models, Frigidaire opened its market, creating more consumers.[35] Advertising also played a critical role in shaping consumer attitudes. Marchand argues that "advertisers … often wished to lift a mundane product out of the familiar, to reshape perceptions of it, to 'put some soul into the commodity."[36] Obviously Watts' intention was to portray Ford's contribution to consumer culture in America. However, further discussion of how workers actively shaped their consumption practices, how other manufacturers contributed to the movement, and how advertising was critical in developing consumer attitudes would have added more depth and accuracy to his argument.

Although Watts discusses the role of the Sociological Department in instilling 'American' saving and spending habits to Ford's immigrant workers, he fails to acknowledge that similar changes in consumption were taking place across the globe, in countries such as Italy, Germany and Iran, during the same period. As Amin notes, the shift to spending as a form of pleasure and self-fulfillment took place on a global scale.[37] Despite Watts intent to depict Ford's contribution to American consumer culture, he could have presented a more well-rounded argument had he noted the role American consumer culture played in creating an international consumption ethic, and how other nations were undergoing comparable transformations in the early twentieth century.

Ford's attitude towards consumption was ironic in many ways. While facilitating a consumer revolution through his Model T and Five Dollar Day, Ford looked to Protestant morals of self-restraint and gentility, associating the

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[34] Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots," 10.
[35] Nickles, "'Preserving Women'." 719-720.
[36] Marchand, "The Consumption Ethic," 145.
[37] Amin, "Importing 'Beauty Culture' into Iran in the 1920s and 1930s," 80.

newer principles of indulgence with Jews.[38] In *The Peoples' Tycoon*, Watts downplays Ford's attitude towards Jews. Although Watts dedicates a chapter to the discussion of anti-Semitism, throughout the book he argues that Ford is suspicious of intellectualism, Hollywood and Wall Street bankers, but hesitates to indicate that these groups were largely comprised of Jews.[39] According to John Dos Passos, Ford believed that Jews were behind all things he thought to be evil, including Bolshevism, international banking, movies and bootlegging.[40] Unlike Watts' portrayal of Henry Ford, other observers dedicate more discussion to Ford's racial views. Some even go so far as to label him a fascist. For example, David Rovic sings, "Henry Ford was a fascist / and a cunning liar, too / A brownshirt with a swastika / draped in red, white and blue."[41] Watts failure to present how Ford's anti-Semitic position affected daily aspects of his life makes it seem excusable. By dedicating one section of his book to anti-Semitism instead of incorporating the issue throughout the book, Watts separates this significant part of Ford's outlook from the rest of his life.

In order to gain a broader perspective of Ford's contribution to consumer culture in America during the early twentieth century, Watts should have examined a wider variety of sources. He depends primarily on newspapers, magazines, political speeches, as well as Ford's own writings (which were often ghostwritten) and discussions. Despite being helpful sources, none of them provide a great deal of insight to the workers' side. Most of Watts' research is based on middle- to upper- class depictions of Ford, and there is no doubt that Watts would have portrayed Ford differently had he consulted more proletariat sources.

Clearly, Watts' intention is to portray Ford in a favourable light and as one of America's most influential businessmen of the twentieth century. In many ways, Watts' discussion of Ford is accurate; he played a large role in facilitating new values of consumption, although unintentionally at times, and managed workers' spending habits through his sociological department. However, Watts neglects to discuss the role of other forces, including working-

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[38] Watts, *The People's Tycoon*, 535.
[39] *Ibid*., xii.
[40] John Dos Passos, "Tin Lizzie" in *The Big Money*, (New York: Signet, 1969),74.
[41] David Rovic, "Henry Ford Was A Fascist,"
<http://members.aol.com/drovics/fordl.htm>, December 2006.

class agency, in shaping American consumer consciousness. He also fails to address the global qualities of consumption in the early twentieth century. Along with limiting his sources, Watts minimizes Ford's anti-Semitic character. His portrayal of Ford, as well as his consumption practices, would have been much more accurate had he incorporated more of these issues into his argument.

The Socialization of Italian Youth: Educational Reforms, Youth Movements and the Cost of Disillusionment

Holly Guitard

Throughout the twenty years of fascist rule in Italy, Mussolini made continuous efforts to politically indoctrinate Italian youth. "Mussolinian" policies aimed towards youth, particularly young males, sought to create both a new ruling class and a resource of devoted soldiers that would together preserve Italian fascism beyond his era. Brought up under the guide of fascism and untouched by Liberal or Socialist experiences, the young generation seemed to offer a vast amount of candidates that could be molded easily into "the new fascist man," or citizen-soldier.[1] The successful socialization of Italian youth, however, proved to be a difficult task that required great pains to achieve even minimal results. Exploring the main components of fascist educational reforms between 1923 and 1939, reveals both how the regime sought to indoctrinate its youth and also, how these educational policies failed to create a new generation that was willing to unconditionally "believe, obey and fight."[2] Equal in importance to educational reforms, and connected on many levels, the new regime sought to "fascistize" young Italians through youth programs centered on notions of conformity and collectivism over individualism. Surveying the effects of fascist educational policies and youth movements in practice reveals what internal shortcomings hindered the successful creation of a new generation of young Fascists. Likewise, this analysis also reveals how political indoctrination

[1] Roberta Vescoui, "Children into Soldiers: Sport and Fascist Italy," in *Militarism, Sport, Europe: War without Weapons*, ed. J. A. Mangan, (Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 169.

[2] One of the more popular Fascist slogans used in propaganda aimed towards youth.

within these institutions eventually worked against the regime, as external factors, such as Italian involvement in the Spanish Civil War, the Rome-Berlin Axis, and the Second World War, created a bleak reality greatly different than what young Italians had been promised.

Mussolini recognized the importance of Italian youth, as it was to these generations that he would pass down the torch of fascism. The *Partito Nazionale Fascista* (PNF) realized that the political socialization of Italian youth required substantial state influence in the experiences of the young. State authority in the education system combined with politically driven youth movements, were the main means used in the creation of a new generation of young avid Fascists. Ideally, young Italians would be raised under the influence of fascist ideology, life and culture from birth, and not knowing different circumstances, as well as not holding any other party affiliations, Italy's youth would then be ready to be absorbed into the fascist world. Educational reforms at all levels of schooling would breed more than enough dedicated Fascists from which Mussolini could then create a new ruling elite,[3] while the regime's militaristic youth movements would foster citizen-soldiers exemplifying military vigor, national pride and unquestioned faith in the 'Duce'. Although Mussolini's efforts were not completely futile, and fascist ideology certainly inspired a substantial amount of young Italians, in reality, these two leading institutions did fail to instill long-lasting Fascist commitment within enough young Italians to create the envisioned new generation.

Two major reforms were undertaken during fascist rule in Italy, the *Riforma Gentile* in 1923 and the *Carta della Scuola* in 1939. The former, coined as 'the most fascist of all reforms' and penned by Idealist philosopher Giovanni Gentile, limited access to higher education and increased state control of school curricula. The reform sought to limit the number of students swelling Italy's universities, as unemployment and underemployment of the *laureati* and *diplomati* continued to be a significant problem.[4] Giuseppe Bottai, Minister of Education from 1936 to 1943 and editor of *Critica Fascista*, recognized that unemployment

[3] Bruno Wanrooij, "The Rise and Fall of Fascism as a Generational Revolt," *Journal of Contemporary History* 22:3 (1987), 402.
[4] R.J. Wolff, "Fascistizing Italian Youth: the Limits of Mussolini's Educational System," *History of Education* 13.4 (1984), 288.

threatened the socialization of Italian youth, as frustrated intellectuals had previously aimed their grievances towards the liberal state.[5] Thus, the regime's attempts to solve this impeding issue were not unwarranted. In an effort to curb the number of university students, graduates of technical institutes no longer had access to higher education.[6] Likewise, elementary students were guided into programs that did not lead to university study. However, despite these efforts, the *Riforma Gentile* was ultimately unable to address the problem successfully. The economic distress of the depression aggravated the situation, as lawyers and other qualified individuals worked jobs for which they were overqualified. Unemployment and underemployment levels continued to rise, and by 1938, approximately 100,000 teachers could not find suitable teaching positions.[7] Furthermore, the fact that Bottai's *Carta della Scuola* also made efforts to limit access to higher education in 1939,[8] suggests that unemployment remained a significant problem. Thus, as young Italians grew up under the impression of a new, young and vital Italy, in which the fruits of one's labour were plenty, the reality of unemployment greatly damaged this myth.

While great efforts were made to solve the problems of unemployment, these efforts did little to attract Italy's youth towards Fascism. Increasing political indoctrination in schools began only after the abolition of democratic parties in 1926; once Mussolini's regime began to consolidate its totalitarian claims. Increased state influence on the education system was reflected through the content of school curricula. The muscle of state control varied greatly from one level of education to the next. The most direct and overt political indoctrination was exercised at the elementary stage, which decreased as one moved up to secondary and university levels of education.[9] In 1928, a national board was established to review all school textbooks, which were limited to "*libro di stato*,"

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[5] Wolff, "Fascistizing," 291.
[6] Ibid., 289.
[7] R.J.B. Bosworth, *Mussolini's Italy: Life under the Dictatorship* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 431.
[8] Wolff, "Fascistizing," 290-291. Bottai's educational reform highlighted class differences in education, and openly expressed that education was not a means of social advancement. In this way, Bottai tried to limit higher education to upper social classes, and to keep the lower classes working.
[9] Tracy H. Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight: Political Socialization of Youth in Italy, 1922-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 73.

textbooks produced within Italy.[10] The effects of this law were felt mostly by elementary students, especially in history subjects. The propaganda projected through primary readers and daily class rituals, painted Italy and its infallible leader in magnificent terms. In her book, *Believe, Obey, Fight: Political Socialization of Youth in Italy, 1922-1943*," Tracy H. Koon argues that: "the children reading these state textbooks were...left with one overriding impression: the world revolves around Italy, and Italy, in turn, revolves around Benito Mussolini and the Fascist Party." [11] Fascist curricula portrayed an Italy that was leading the way, in front of Britain, France and Germany. Certainly, Mussolini was crucial to this new found national status, as he had led "his followers...courageously, in the face of extreme danger... [and] fought and defeated the deceived, the weak and the evil..."[12] Furthermore, Bottai's *Carta della Scuola* of 1939 made membership in youth organizations obligatory.[13] Thus, as arms of the Fascist regime, school education and the youth movements worked together to strengthen the party's grip on the developmental experiences of the young.

Despite such great efforts, many young Italians emerged from the schools without a strong connection to Fascism.[14] Fascist reforms failed to restructure the educational system completely. Overt political indoctrination was not as influential in the secondary schools and even less, in the universities, when students could see through simple fascist slogans and propaganda. Although classes made up solely of fascist content were created for the university level in 1934-35, these courses were not obligatory like those in the primary level.[15] Furthermore, religious education continued to be practiced throughout the Fascist years, reflecting Mussolini's wishes to have his regime regarded with the same level of respect and acceptance as the country's predominant religion.[16] In practice however, the Catholic Church's *Azione Cattolica* remained a significant competitor to Fascism's youth organizations.

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[10] Wolff, "Fascistizing," 292.
[11] Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight*, 76.
[12] Wolff, "Fascistizing," 292.
[13] Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight*, 165.
[14] *Ibid*., 88.
[15] *Ibid.,* 74.
[16] *Ibid*., 71.

The realities of Italian life often worked against the promises of an ideal Italy. Especially by the mid 1930s, when Italy's imperial agenda and involvement in the Spanish Civil War were at their peak, many young Italians began to question the incentives of this "new Italy".[17] The low number of volunteers for the Spanish campaign and the numerous youth demonstrations and pamphlets support this point.[18] Equally, images of Italy as a leading state were hampered by the Rome-Berlin Axis of 1936, as many young Italians felt that it made Italy subservient to their German ally. Likewise, the fascist regime's claim of infallibility began to crumble during the Second World War, as military defeats coupled with home front grievances revealed the truth of Italy's situation. Many Italians no longer wished to renew their party memberships and scores of students were no longer inclined to support a regime whose defeat seemed likely. In Bologna, for example, roughly half of the students asked to join the Fascist Party in 1942 declined the offer.[19] Just as the realities of unemployment hindered the successful socialization of Italy's youth, these external factors clashed with the images the regime repeatedly tried to instill in its youth. The drastic differences between what young Italians were promised and what they were now given, created strong sentiments of disillusionment. This sense of disappointment grew and fostered, in the most extreme cases, anti-fascist sentiments, or more likely, the realization that alternatives to the Fascist Party were possible.[20] Whatever route the young eventually chose, there was certainly no new generation of avid young Fascists that was ready to accept the torch of Fascism from Mussolini by 1943.

Youth organizations on all levels shared similar outcomes with the educational reforms. Their history and function, although comparable to education, were extremely militaristic in nature. The general consensus among fascist leaders that educational intervention alone could not successfully "fascistize" Italian youth opened the door for the coordination of pre-existing youth groups.[21] In 1926, with Renato Ricci as its leader, the *Opera Nationale Balilla*

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[17] Wanrooij, "Generational Revolt," 411.
[18] Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight*, 239. Out of the 78, 846 soldiers who served, only 3,364 volunteered.
[19] Bosworth, *Mussolini's Italy,* 476.
[20] Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight*, 232-233.
[21] Wolff, "Fascistizing," 293.

(ONB) was established. Enrolling children between the ages of six and eighteen, the ONB had its members declare an oath of loyalty: "In the name of God and of Italy I swear to carry out the orders of the Duce and to serve with all my strength and, if necessary, with my blood, the cause of the Fascist revolution."[22] Similar ideals of patriotism and militarism were also apparent in the two other youth organizations of the time, the *Fasci Giovanili di Combattimento and the Gioventu Universtaria Fascista* (GUF). Unlike the GUF, however, The *Fasci Giovanili* focused on overt military indoctrination, seeing that its main function was: "to constitute through a selective process based on moral, spiritual, and militaristic education an ample reservoir for the ranks and leadership."[23] Thus, through the *Fasci Giovanili*, Mussolini sought to create resources of young Fascist soldiers and military personnel. While the *Fasci Giovanili* enrolled males between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one who were not in school, the GUF rallied university students inclined towards Fascism in the aim of creating a new ruling elite. Although each youth organization had its separate audience, they shared the basic duty of "fascistizing" young Italians. The distinctions between each group remained intact when the *Fasci Giovanili* and the ONB merged under the *Gioventu Italiana del Littorio* (GIL) in 1937, leaving the GUF independent of the other organizations, but still very much under the control of the PNF.[24]

Within each youth movement, sport and military exercises were the main agents exploited to create the new generation of Fascists. Through team oriented sports, members experienced being part of a mass organization, which Mussolini hoped would influence the children to submerge their thoughts and individuality. In her 2003 article, "Children into Soldiers: Sport and Fascist Italy," Roberta Vescoui sums up the effects of the youth movements: "[a]s soon as children enrolled in the ONB, they lost their individuality: they dressed alike, behaved alike and even thought alike."[25] Sports not only sought to accustom Italian youth to a collective identity, but also to physically prepare them for military training. Thus, the activities of the youth movements complemented each other and also consolidated what young Italians learned in school.

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[22] Edward R. Tannenbaum, *The Fascist Experience: Italian Society and Culture, 1922-1945* (New York: Basic Books, 1972), 123.
[23] *Ibid*., 120.
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] Vescoui, "Children into Soldiers,"172.

However, whether the children actually behaved and thought alike is impossible to assess correctly without risking some level of generalization. The socialization of the youth was constantly susceptible to individual variants within a person and thus, was not as easily effected as Vescoui's statement might suggest. Despite favorable membership statistics,[26] evidence suggests that the actual number of active participants in fascist meetings and activities was drastically lower than the figures on paper. A provincial report from Turin in 1937 represents the common situation facing many youth leaders across Italy: "[t]he young Fascists are deserting the meetings....only the books are full of members, but the truth is that the young no longer go to the groups."[27] Thus, while statistical records might suggest an overwhelming success for the youth movements, provincial reports reveal a much different reality.

The failure of youth organizations to quell the problem of absenteeism with a firm hand further worsened the situation. Despite the high levels of absences, only severe cases were addressed.[28] Thus, without fear of consequences, many young Italians were not inclined to participate in the activities. Many found other ways to spend their time, such as going to the Saturday matinee, especially as they got older.[29] Absenteeism hindered political instruction, as it was impossible to influence members who simply did not show up. The general lack of passion and desire to attend meetings suggests that many young Italians were not enrolled in the youth movements because they felt a deep connection to the Fascist Party. This might have been the case particularly after 1939, when the membership of school children in youth movements became obligatory through the *Carta della Scuola.* Passive acceptance of the regime, thus, became standard among many GIL members, who otherwise would not have joined the youth movement. Equally, many young Italians might have joined the Party for opportunistic reasons rather than due to Fascist fervor. Self-interest might have been a determining factor for many memberships, where

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[26] See Table 6-9, Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight*, 179. Statistical evidence of 1936 shows a high percentage of participation among Italian youth, Balilla (ages 8-14) 74.6% of total population in age group, Avanguardisti (ages 15-17), 75.4%, and Giovani Fasciste (ages 18-21), 53.1%.

[27] *Ibid.*, 114.

[28] Tannenbaum, *The Fascist Experience*, 122.

[29] *Ibid.*, 121.

scholastic bursaries and awards, or the opportunity to increase one's chances of future employment, might have outweighed their interest in fascist ideology. In these ways, either out of obligation, passive acceptance or for reasons of self-interest, many memberships in the youth movements might only have been superficial. [30]

Undoubtedly, many young Italians were truly committed to fascist ideology and believed in its leaders. Especially within the GUF, which according to one historian had the most "enthusiastic supporters of Mussolini's regime," many members felt a deep connection to Fascism.[31] Many aspired to be the new ruling elite that would take over from Mussolini and guide Fascism into the future. In his article "The Rise and Fall of Fascism as a Generational Revolt," Bruno Wanrrooij explains that "the prospect of becoming part of this new Fascist ruling class was at the base of support offered by young intellectuals..."[32] The prospective new ruling elite was promised active participation in the government through apprenticeships in Mussolini's "Firm Points about Youth" in 1930. However, in reality, only a small minority was able to acquire meaningful political positions within the regime. Out of 145 new deputies appointed in 1934, 117 had either joined the Party before or in 1922.[33] Aspirations of upward mobility soon became myths as many young Fascists were unable to attain significant roles in the party.

Although Mussolini had called out to the youth in his search of a new ruling class, many Fascist leaders were in fact weary of the youth's questioning of Mussolinian Fascism. Unlike the regime's claims that it was a "system of action" not limited to any concrete doctrine, the Party was in fact unwilling to alter its political policy.[34] In this way, the same generation that had once been seen as the key in the conservation of Fascism, was now regarded as a threat by some leaders.[35] While youthful interpretations of Fascism were not disregarded by more liberal fascist leaders such as Bottai, who strongly encouraged the

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[30] Wolff, "Fascistizing," 297. Includes preceding sentence.
[31] Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight*, 184.
[32] Wanrooij, "Generational Revolt," 408.
[33] Ibid., 410. Includes preceding sentence.
[34] Michael Ledeen, "Italian Fascism and Youth," *Journal of Contemporary History* 4:3 (1969), 138-139.
[35] Wanrroij, "Generational Revolt," 409.

participation of young Italians,[36] Mussolini's personal opinion outweighed all others. Young Italians were expected to continue Mussolini's form of fascism, and not other alternatives adapted to the experiences and ideas of their generation. This general discontinuity between the "March on Rome" generation and the youth of the 1920s and 1930s made it difficult for many young Fascists to make their way through the period of, as the Duce put it, "transition from one epoch of civilization to another."[37] Thus, Mussolini's desire to create an autonomous totalitarian state and his desire to renew the ruling elite conflicted. This clash of interests eventually worked against the regime, as many young Fascists who had once sought to join the higher echelons of the party were now left empty handed.

Since the end of fascist rule in Italy, many historians have asked why the regime was unable to successfully "fascistize" Italian youth. While the internal shortcomings of educational reforms and youth programs do not provide a complete answer to this question, their importance as tools in the socialization of Italian youth, and thus in its failure, is greatly significant. Educational reforms failed to restructure the education system completely, as students at the secondary and university level were free from overt political indoctrination. Although fascist instruction was exercised at the elementary level and textbooks produced within Italy toed the party line, even these efforts proved incapable of instilling long-lasting fascist commitment within the youth. Equally, while sport and military exercises certainly gained an unparalleled level of popularity through the youth movements, they failed to thwart the individualistic identity of many members. Passive acceptance of the regime, memberships out of self-interest, or forced participation in the youth groups, often led to superficial involvement, which in turn, resulted in high levels of absenteeism.

The regime did little to address this situation and thus, limited its chances of influencing these types of members. Additionally, disillusionment played a crucial role in the demise of fascist support among the young. Images of

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[36] See Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight*, 146 and Wanrooij, "Generational Revolt, 409. Bottai and other leaders understood that young Italians could give new life to the party and thus keep it from becoming stagnant and aged. Some Liberal members also petitioned for democratic proceedings and competitive exams in the election of new leaderships positions.

[37] Ledeen, "Fascism and Youth," 151.

a leading, strong and infallible Italy were damaged as the consequences of Italy's foreign policy, high levels of unemployment among the *laureati* and *diplomati*, and limited upward mobility into the ranks of the Fascist Party made many young Italians question the incentives, abilities and credibility of the regime and its myths. Perhaps, Mussolini said it best when he judged fascism's effects on the Italian population as a "tenacious therapy of twenty years [that] has succeeded in modifying only superficially."[38]

[38] Ledeen, "Fascism and Youth,"142.

Religious Intolerance and the Decline of an Empire: The Flaws of Zoroastrian State Doctrine in Sasanian Persia

Alex Derry

The Sasanian dynasty, which lasted approximately 400 years after Ardashir I's defeat of the Parthians in 224 CE, would mark one of the greatest historical eras of Persian civilization. Having defeated Emperor Valerian's forces in 260 CE under the reign of Shapur I, the Sasanians rivaled the Romans in military strength, made significant and far-reaching cultural contributions to regions in Asia and Europe, revived the Achaemenid model of statecraft, and centralized authority under the doctrine of Zoroastrianism. The collapse of this dynasty, following the Arab invasions and the flight of Yazdgard III, the last Sasanian king, in 651 CE, would signify the end of *Iranshahr* (or 'the land of the Iranians'), a culture defined by Persian language and territory, and the beginning of a long period of foreign invasions and rule. Even the legacy of the Safavid Empire, who some declare to be the second golden age of Persia, raises historiographical doubts as to its 'Persian-ness', due to the presence of Turkic cultural elements. Gene Garthwaite identifies three key factors that are considered to be causes of the Sasanian decline: court decadence and degeneration, military overextension and exhaustion, and finally, the rigidity and intolerance of Zoroastrian state doctrine and its political manifestation in the context of the priestly class. Although there is mention of the cruelty and profligacy of Khusrau II's court, the first part of this argument is generally considered to be of lesser significance and antagonistically perpetuated by Arab sources, and in terms of military preparedness, timing and poor administration of

Sasanian forces and the Byzantine threat left the Persians vulnerable to the Arabs.

Garthwaite argues that although popular opposition to Zoroastrianism and its role in Sasanian rule was certainly a contributing factor to the decline of the Empire, this overlooks much more decisive events and issues of *realpolitik*, in particular, the emergence of the Arabs as a military power while the Byzantines were regaining influence. It is not my contention to debate this, for obviously historical and regional events play unavoidably crucial roles in the decline and fall of empires. However, although sources are somewhat conflicted on the role of Zoroastrian politics, they are generally in agreement on four fundamental points. First, although many different groups in Iranshahr practiced many different religions, from Mazdakism to Christianity, Zoroastrianism was the official state religion of the Sasanian elite, and those who enforced its tenets and patronized its growth were those in the highest positions of authority. Second, Khusrau's II reign is considered to have been the most damaging to the stability of the Sasanian Empire due to a shift from religious toleration to repression and increased patronage of the clerical elite, which left subsequent rulers with an empire that was facing bankruptcy, popular unrest and court corruption. This is also significant in that it demonstrated a stark contrast to the ecumenical approach to non-Zoroastrian religions that was adopted by Khusrau I, whose reign marked the apogee of Sasanian stability and achievement. Third, although most conversions to Islam were made by force, Zoroastrian state doctrine and political favour to those who adhered to it was an alienating prospect to many Iranians, and this made it easier for the Muslim armies to find willing converts in the Persianate world. Finally, the Arab conquerors adopted many Zoroastrian and Persian elements, and this opened up a Perso-Arab discourse that revitalized Iranian culture. With these four points in mind, it can be argued that Zoroastrianism as the state religion and institutionalized doctrine was a prevailing factor in the decline of the Sasanian dynasty, but was also an important contribution to the continuance of Persian culture in a period of foreign rule.

Zoroastrianism as Sasanian State Doctrine

Although the history of Zoroastrianism pre-dates the Achaemenid period and was widely practiced during this time, it was not until the establishment of the Sasanian dynasty by Ardashir that it was not only restored following the rule of the Parthians, but also became intrinsic to the ruling structure. Although this is mentioned directly in contemporaneous sources, such as the political manual written for Ardashir by his chief *mobad*, Tansar, Garthwaite explains that the implementation of Zoroastrian state doctrine was well documented by the 9th century in the *Denkard*, the Pahlavi history of Zoroastrianism. The Parthian empire was a loose conglomeration of kingdoms without a firmly established central authority. "Consequently, the establishment of state orthodoxy can be seen as an attempt by the new dynasty to legitimize itself in opposition to its former Parthian overlords."[1] The domination of the Zoroastrian faith is confirmed by Jamsheed K. Choksy in *Conflict and Cooperation*, which addresses the Zoroastrian encounters with Islam. In addition to the Pahlavi sources that Garthwaite mentions, Choksy draws on a variety of contemporaneous outsider perspectives, ranging from Greek, Latin and Aramaic to Chinese and Arabic, which confirm that Zoroastrianism was "supported by royal patrons" of the Sasanian state, and had "spread to each social class and every geographical area, attracting nobles, priests, scribes, traders, landlords and farmers, among others."[2] The eschatology of Zoroastrianism was such that it appealed to a wide variety of people, as man was considered his own saviour so long as he followed the triad of good thoughts, good words and good deeds. However, according to Sir Rustom Masani, only "those righteous souls who have devoutly followed the precepts of Zarathustra" could enter heaven, and this necessitates the carrying out of the various purification, initiation, consecration and liturgical rituals that complete Zoroastrian worship.[3] Therefore, such a complex eschatology required the establishment of a priestly class that would facilitate mass worship, as well as the construction of fire temples and other places of worship. In the earlier stages of Sasanian institutionalization of

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[1] Gene R. Garthwaite, *The Persians* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 94.
[2] Jamsheed K. Choksy, *Conflict and Cooperation* (New York: Columbia, 1997), 4.
[3] Sir Rustom Masani, *Zoroastrianism: The Religion of the Good Life* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 74-75.

Zoroastrianism, the priestly class of *mobads* was appointed by the *shahanshah*, and could gain his favour through loyal service and sound religious council. The role of the *mobad* is described by Shapur I's chief priest, Kartir, in the inscription at Naqsh-e Rustam:

> …[Shapur] gave me authority and power in matters of the divine services at court and in kingdom after kingdom, place after place, throughout the whole empire in the magus-estate. And by the command of [Shapur], King of Kings, and the provision of the Yazads and the King of Kings in kingdom after kingdom, place after place, many divine services in magnificence and many Warharan fires were established, and many magi became happy and prosperous, and many fires and magi were imperially installed… And Hormizd, King of Kings, conferred on me miter and cincture and created for me a higher rank and dignity, and at court and in kingdom after kingdom, place after place, throughout the whole empire he gave me more authority and power in matters of the divine services, and created for me the title "Kartir, Ahura Mazda's magus-master" after the name of Ahura Mazda, the Deity.[4]

This excerpt from the inscription suggests an eminent position that was nevertheless subordinate to the absolute reign of the *shahanshah*, and consisted of religious, not political, advisory and administration. However, according to Garthwaite, "the balance of power between Sasanian rulers and Zoroastrian rulers seems to have shifted" during the earlier period of the dynasty as Zoroastrianism became more intrinsic to the institutions of the state, "and the emergence of pre-eminent priests, the *mobadanmobad*…whose title approximated the *shahanshah*'s," resulting in the clergy becoming a much more politically independent and powerful class.[5] Richard N. Frye argues that because Zoroastrianism was a politically sanctified institution as well as a religion, and was practiced by all of the Sasanian kings, it lent itself too easily to opportunism

[4] "The Naqsh-e Rostam Inscription," *Kartir's Inscriptions,* <http://www.irantarikh.com/persia/kartir.htm>.
[5] Garthwaite, *The Persians,* 100-101.

which weakened its as appeal to the Iranian population: "one might say that in the later years of the Sasanian Empire, the state dominated the church, whereas in the west the reverse seems more true, or perhaps one could say 'used' rather than 'dominated' in both cases."[6] Garthwaite concurs with this interpretation when he cites the example of Shapur's support for Zurvanism, a Zoroastrian branch that saw Ahura Mazda as one of two divinities existing under Zurvan, which was opposed by the traditional orthodoxy, "all of which suggests that the importance of Zoroastrianism as an institution with its own self-interest in which it could support the ruler in general but oppose him in specific instances."[7] As Frye contends, the notion that Zoroastrianism functioned as an institution that was politically imposed which directly benefited the state, and not a religion that promoted its eschatology to potential converts, such as Islam or Christianity, was a significant factor to alienation of the Iranian people by the Sasanian state.

Consequences of Religious Intolerance: Comparing the reigns of Khusrau I and Khusrau II

Not only were the *magi* of the Sasanian empire estranged to the population, including those groups and individuals who practiced 'unorthodox' forms of Zoroastrianism, it also actively persecuted other religious groups and convinced some rulers to facilitate their intolerant efforts. These policies and attitudes were evident in the earliest stages of Sasanian rule. According to the Persian literary scholar Jan Rypka, Kartir, who is credited with incorporating Zoroastrian religion into the state doctrine, speaks in nothing less than a boastful tone in the inscription at Naqsh-e Rustam when describing his efforts at eradicating any hint of an ecumenical Zoroastrian state. "On his last monument, he described his career and related that he had persecuted Jews, Christians, Nasoraens, Maktiks, Brahmans and Buddhists."[8] Rypka also places responsibility for the death of Mani on Kartir, as it was he who had the founder

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[6] Richard N. Frye, "The Reforms of Chosroes Anushirvan ('Of The Immortal Soul')," *The History of Ancient Iran,* <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/fryehst.html>.
[7] Garthwaite, *The Persians*, 103.
[8] Jan Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Co, 1968), 31-32.

of Manichaeism (which incidentally incorporated many of the dualistic principles found in later forms of Zoroastrianism) imprisoned, whereupon he soon died.

However, as Garthwaite explains, the increasing amount of patronage for fire temples and emphasis of a Irano-Zoroastrian identity in the Sasanian period could not have occurred without a central authority that was at least somewhat ecumenical in its approach to the vast array of actively practiced faiths in Iranshahr, which included Manichaeism, Judaism, Nestorian Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Mazdakism. "Without toleration for the empire's ethnically and religiously diverse population, centralization of authority and administration, limited though it was, would not have been possible, nor would there have been the requisite stability to maintain."[9] Thus, the power of the *mobads* fluctuated over the course of the dynasty, which was arguably at its most tolerant during the reign of Khusrau I (531-579 CE), considered to be the apogee of Sasanian achievement and stability. His royal title, Anushirvan (meaning 'of the immortal soul') was indicative of public perception and admiration for his reforms and achievements, which included the re-establishment of central authority and the introduction of the Circle of Justice, which delineated the inexorable relation of just rule to the military, taxation, agriculture, peasantry. Although his rule represented a return to orthodox Zoroastrianism, which included a strict hierarchy with priests remaining at the top, Frye nonetheless maintains that it was also a period of extraordinary religious acceptance.[10] In an empire defined by an orthodox doctrine, and an era driven by religious radicalism, Khusrau's perspective was guided by an advantageous predilection towards rationalism and a firm understanding of past cultures. This can be seen from Khusrau's own words, which are conveyed in A. Shapur Shahbazi's entry on the Sasanian dynasty in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*:

> Paul the Persian reflects [Khusrau's] mind when he says, in his dedicatory preface to Aristotle's *Logic*, which he translated for the King, that philosophy is superior to faith; since in religious learning doubt always exist, while philosophy is the mental acceptance of explained ideas…[Khusrau] himself states that 'we examined the

[9] Garthwaite, *The Persians,* 99.
[10] Frye, "The Reforms of Chosroes Anushirvan ('Of The Immortal Soul')."

> customs of our forebears,' but, concerned with the discovery of truth, 'we [also] studied the customs and conducts of the Romans and Indians and accepted those among them which seemed reasonable and praiseworthy, not merely likeable. 'We have not rejected anyone because they belonged to a different religion or people.' And having examined 'the good customs and laws' of our ancestors as well as those of the foreigners, 'we have not declined to adopt anything which was good nor to avoid anything which was bad. Affection for our forebears did not lead us to accept customs which were not good.'[11]

Khusrau granted asylum to 'pagan' philosophers who were expelled from Athens by the Christian empire, ensured their protection under the terms of a treaty signed with the Byzantines, and even granted freedom of religion to Jews and Christians despite the ecclesiastical sympathies to that empire. However, these ecumenically-based political conciliations would prove politically fatal, and the progressiveness of Khusrau's religious tolerance would leave Iranians bereft of the morale and strength that cultural self-preservation provided in a time where competing empires were also defining themselves through religious identity, such as the Christian Byzantines and the Muslim Arabs.[12] When Khusrau II came to power, approximately ten years after Khusrau Anushirvan, the Byzantine emperor Maurice refrained from taking any hostile action towards the Sasanians as a sign of goodwill. However, these first few years of peace saw Khusrau's court descend into a state of corrupt and decadent disarray, and the population would bear the brunt of his indulgencies through heavy taxation and a new wave of religious persecution against non-Zoroastrian groups. Although Garthwaite argues that his rule was characterized by enormous military gain and cultural growth, he nevertheless concedes the following:

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[11] A. Shapur Shahbazi, 'Sasanian Dynasty', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, <http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/ot_grp7/ot_sasanian_dyn_20050301.html>, March 1, 2005.

[12] A. Shapur Shahbazi, 'Sasanian Dynasty', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, <http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/ot_grp7/ot_sasanian_dyn_20050301.html>, March 1, 2005.

> Khusrau II seems to have shifted from a policy of toleration for Christians early in his reign to one of persecution. He patronized the construction of fire temples and the Zoroastrian religious establishment, which may have antagonized the general population. Furthermore, subjects in the empire may have resented the costs both of the war and of the maintenance of the religious establishment.[13]

Shahbazi takes a much more critical stance, going so far as to say that while Khusrau I's reign represented the apex of Sasanian achievement and toleration, "the age of [Khusrau II] saw the zenith of splendor and corrupt leadership."[14] In addition to the harsh quality of his rule, Khusrau reigned at not only during a time when the Byzantine empire had shifted alliances against the Sasanians and were re-gaining military strength, but also when the Arab armies began their march toward Iranshahr. The aggressiveness of their invasion was, according to Choksy, partly motivated by Khusrau's shredding of a letter from Muhammad demanding acceptance of Islam. After hearing of the Sasanian king's dismissal of his proclamation, the Prophet declared, "his kingdom will be torn from him in the same manner."[15] After his death, Khusrau reportedly left the Sasanian court in such a state of disarray and bankruptcy that it could never adequately recover to mount an effective defense against the Arab armies.

Having lived under the intolerant and repressive regime of Khusrau II, as well as in a society that was heavily controlled by the Zoroastrian clergy, most of the Iranian population was willing to accept Islam as Muslim forces presented it to them. Duchesne-Guillemin makes the general claim as the court appointed nine different rulers coming to power between the time of Khusrau's death in 628 CE and the fall of the dynasty in 651 and struggled to keep itself from imploding, the Sasanian Empire "opposed only half-heartedly the Muslim

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[13] Garthwaite, *The Persians,* 112.
[14] Shahbazi, "Sansanian Dynasty."
[15] Choksy, *Conflict,* 51.

expansion."[16] The extent to which the self-preservation of the *mobads* and their interests as a political class brought public unrest to a boil is succinctly described by Reuben Levy in *An Introduction to Persian Literature.*

> With the material resources of the country wasted by the excessive demands of the Byzantine wars, the people had been driven into a desperate state of poverty, anarchy reigned among the upper classes as well as in the royal house itself, and there was dissatisfaction with the priests of Zoroastrianism. This was the national religion, whose priesthood, 'a state within a state,' formed a powerful group standing close to the throne. They had looked first to their own interests and cared even less for the spiritual welfare of the people than for their material needs. There had consequently been a decided stirring of revolt against their claim to authority amongst men in their flock with higher ideals, and it had taken the guise, as often, of political unrest.[17]

Conversions to Islam occurred on a mass scale and were, for the most part, imposed on captives as the Muslim armies moved closer to Ctesiphon and the other major centers of Sasanian power. However, opposition was scarce and they were even welcomed in some cases by inhabitants who belonged to the class of artisans and peasants whose very way of life was considered heretical to the Zoroastrian institutions. Furthermore, according to Levy, the ritual demands and requirements for acceptance into Islam were minimal compared to what the privileged clerics of Zoroastrianism required of their followers. "…It was no great matter to the mass of people to substitute Allah for Ahura Mazda, the principle of good and light, and Shaitan or Iblis (the Devil) for Ahriman, the principle of evil and darkness…all they were told was: 'If you worship as we worship and eat of our slaughtering, the you are Muslims.'"[18] It is also important

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[16] Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols and Values in Zoroastrianism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 11.
[17] Reuben Levy, *An Introduction to Persian Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 8.
[18] Reuben Levy, *An Introduction to Persian Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 16.

to note, in the context of the lower class' almost wholesale acceptance of Islam, that equal status among all believers was emphasized under Islamic law, and the class divisions enforced by the *magi* and the Sasanian state were not tolerated. Of course, this egalitarian stance would not extend to non-believers, such as those who continued to practice Zoroastrianism and refused to align themselves with the new regime.

Subaltern Zoroastrianism Under Muslim Dominance: The Perso-Arab Discourse

Although Zoroastrianism was essentially relegated to the margins of religious acceptance in Iran following the Arab conquest, some of its aspects were incorporated by Muslim rule such that a new Arab-Iranian dialectic emerged which would completely change the course of Iranian history and revive its culture. As Choksy maintains, "The destinies, and hence the history and historiography of both communities cannot be separated from each other," and "represent the enormity of the social changes that resulted when the two confessional groups collided then slowly intermeshed in medieval times."[19] Naturally, the Zoroastrian elite, once at the helm of the Sasanian state, were reduced to subaltern status under the Arabs, while the minority religions that were restricted were able to practice in relative freedom at least until the establishment of the Abbasid Caliphate. Frye writes that the "the organization of minority religions in the Sasanian empire served to protect Zoroastrianism after the Arab conquest, when the change from dominant, state religion to one of minority status was made, and this enabled Zoroastrianism to survive to the present."[20] One of Khusrau I's reforms was to change the very notion of Persian class, from a three level hierarchy of priests, warriors and peasants, to one which included the scribes and bureaucratic officials below the warrior nobility. According to Frye's *The Golden Age of Persia,* "The scribes and other members of the secular administration were very influential, especially at the end of the Sasanian empire when the frequent change of rulers enhanced the

[19] Choksy, *Conflict,* 6.
[20] Frye, "The Reforms of Chosroes Anushirvan ('Of The Immortal Soul')."

importance of the stability of the bureaucracy."[21] The Arabs adopted a version of this model and would initially turn to the bureaucrats to administer their new territories. These scribes also played a crucial role in preserving Middle Persian texts, particularly secular ones that were later translated into Arabic, which preserved the Sasanian heritage as well as contributed to the development of Islamic culture. Relocation of Zoroastrian groups following the Arab conquest, as Frye demonstrates, was not part of a conscientious effort at Zoroastrian persecution, but part of a long historical pattern. "Arabs were not only neighbours of the Persians but Arabs had been exiled by the Sasanian government to various parts of the Sasanian empire, including the east…the practice of deporting entire cities or districts which were rebellious was an ancient one in the Near East and the Sasanians simply followed old practices."[22] As Choksy argues, these practices demonstrate a discourse between the colonizing Arabs and the colonized Iranians, whereby those that to do not "affiliate with the emergent ruling class" are marginalized. The Arabs, in exiling communities of Zoroastrians, were continuing the historical practice of removing elements that challenged the new hierarchy, but were willing to incorporate them provided they reject the old Sasanian institutions. Thus, in many ways the Arabs adopted and perpetuated the same kind of religious bigotry practiced by the Zoroastrian elite of the Sasanian dynasty.

Although there are numerous factors that have been attributed to the fall of the Sasanians, the institutionalization of Zoroastrianism as the guiding state doctrine, which created an elite clerical class and alienated the Iranian population through religious intolerance was the principle flaw of the dynasty's statecraft. Nevertheless, many of the cultural aspects of the Sasanian state, which itself was founded upon the principles of Zoroastrianism, contributed to the reinvigoration of Persian culture under foreign rule, and were also incorporated into the Arab administrative models. Central authority depended upon a more accommodating approach to the diversity of religions in Iranshahr. This was a principle that was understood by Khusrau I, who was by far the most universalist ruler in terms of religious conciliation, who made an effort to not only institutionalize toleration of other religions, but reached out to them

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[21] Frye, *The Golden Age of Persia*, 18.
[22] *Ibid.,* 25.

beyond the borders of his own kingdom. Khusrau II, however, placated the *magi* with more restrictions on minority religions, while they increasingly looked to their own interests instead of providing spiritual guidance to their followers. Iranians, particularly the peasant class who were considered lowly and even heretical, thus felt no real affinity for a religion that had not only lost its spiritual appeal, and through its politicization had become anathema. When the Arabs overthrew the Sasanians in the 7th Century, conversion to Islam was met with little resistance and even welcomed by those Iranians who were disillusioned by state-imposed Zoroastrianism. As a result, the Zoroastrian elite was reduced to subaltern status. However, the confrontation between the Arab and the Persian, and colonization the latter by the former, would irrevocably enmesh the two cultures to create an entirely new Persian historical identity.

¿*Hijos de la Chingada*?: Octavio Paz's "The Labyrinth of Solitude" and National Identity in Mexico and Peru

Susan Zakaib

In "The Labyrinth of Solitude," Octavio Paz takes it upon himself to explain the Mexican national character. "The history of Mexico," he argues, "is the history of man seeking his parentage, his origins."[1] According to Paz, the Mexican, feeling separated from his origins, lives fundamentally in solitude. Paz discusses the nature of the Mexican, characterizing him as a Spaniard-indigenous hybrid in denial of his violent ancestry.[2] Paz admits, however, that his reflection concerns only the relatively small group of people who identify themselves as Mexicans. This essay will examine the works of various historians of Mexico, revealing that a large number of indigenous peoples throughout Mexican history have indeed considered Mexicans to be 'others,' rather than identifying with them as part of the same cultural group. In turn, many Mexicans have excluded indigenous communities from their Mexican national identity, perceiving these indigenous peoples as 'others.' Thus, as Paz admits, his characterization of the Mexican only applies to part of Mexico's population. However, Paz argues that all peoples in Mexico can *become* Mexican. Here, he fails to acknowledge the strength of Mexico's divisions; in fact, in order for all indigenous peoples to self-identify as Mexicans, Paz's definition of the Mexican must be broadened significantly. Although it is argued here that Mexico is fundamentally divided culturally, the case of Peru—a country with a very different past in terms of indigenous-colonial relations—will put Mexico's situation into perspective. An examination of some works of historians of Peru will reveal that that country is

[1] Octavio Paz, "The Labyrinth of Solitude," in *The Labyrinth of Solitude and Other Writings*, trans. L. Kemp, Y. Milos and R. Phillips Belash (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1985), 20.
[2] In this essay, Octavio Paz's Mexican will be referred to as male ('him') because this is the way in which Paz himself refers to 'the Mexican.'

significantly—and sadly—more racially divided than Mexico, making Peruvian unity a near impossibility. Paz's prediction of Mexican unity under Mexican identity is certainly more probable than Peruvian unity; however, this does not negate the fact that Paz's definition of the Mexican does not allow for the inclusion of the country's entire population into its national culture.

In his fourth chapter, "The Sons of Malinche," Paz analyzes an expression of emotion and Mexicanism: "¡Viva México, hijos de la chingada!" "Hijo de la chingada," he says, means "offspring of violation."[3] "Chingada" refers to Malinche, the violated mother of Mexico, an indigenous woman living during the Spanish conquest who became the mistress of Cortés, the *conquistador*. Paz refers to the Conquest as a violation, and Malinche as the symbol of violated indigenous women who were fascinated and seduced by the Spaniards into betraying their people. According to Paz, in shouting "¡Viva México, hijos de la chingada!" Mexicans "condemn [their] origins and deny [their] hybridism." The Mexican, Paz contends, repudiates Malinche, and thus "breaks his ties with the past, renounces his origins, and lives in isolation and solitude."[4] According to Paz, then, the Mexican is a hybrid by nature: he is an unorthodox blend of Spaniard and Indian, of violator and violated. He lives in solitude because he cannot come to terms with this ancestry, renouncing his hybridism and thus his true nature.

"The Mexican condemns all his traditions at once," says, Paz, "the whole set of gestures, attitudes and tendencies in which it is now difficult to distinguish the Spanish from the Indian."[5] Here, Paz suggests that Mexicans are so thoroughly a mixture of Spanish and Indian that neither ethnicity is any longer distinguishable; it is this hybridism that Mexicans renounce. He continues, "The Mexican does not want to be either an Indian or a Spaniard. Nor does he want to be descended from them… He becomes the son of Nothingness."[6] Thus, the Mexican renounces not only his hybridism, but his relation to either side of his ancestry. As he sees himself as neither Indian nor Spaniard, nor the

[3] Paz, "Labrynth of Solitude," 79.
[4] Ibid., 86-87.
[5] Ibid, 87.
[6] Ibid.

descendant of either, the Mexican is an orphan, and is consequently left without an identity, confused and alone.

For Paz, the Mexican is a single, confused entity. He is both Spanish and indigenous in truth, but refuses to acknowledge this ancestry. Paz's Mexican struggles with himself and his identity, but Mexico in fact is more divided than the man-with-identity-crisis metaphor allows. Indeed, Paz notes briefly near the beginning of "The Labyrinth of Solitude" that his discussion concerns only those who are conscious of themselves as Mexicans—a group, he says, which is quite small. This is most certainly the case: many indigenous, predominantly rural peoples in Mexico consider urban, mestizo Mexicans to be 'others,' and vice versa. Rather than an individual with an identity crisis, Mexico is more than one person, each with a distinct identity. Thus, as Paz suggests, his characterization of the Mexican does not apply to all those living within Mexico's borders.

The country's multiplicity arises from an ethnic divide that has been present since Mexico became a nation. In "Indian Communities and Ayuntamientos in the Mexican Huasteca: Sujeto Revolts, Pronunciamientos and Caste War," Michael T. Ducey discusses the effects of Mexican Independence and the new 1812 constitution of Cádiz upon two indigenous communities in the states of Hidalgo and Veracruz. During the colonial period, says Ducey, the Spanish colonizers conceded some degree of autonomy to indigenous communities by allowing them to create their own native governments called *repúblicas de indios*. The new constitution replaced the républicas with *ayuntamientos*—municipal governments which Ducey refers to as "ethnically blind."[7] However, the state failed to set from the beginning how the new municipal governments were to function, and the indigenous peoples harboured a "tenacious attachment to local political traditions." Consequently, Ducey contends, the républicas continued to function despite their lack of legal existence.[8]

Ducey demonstrates that these two communities learned to use the promises of the new constitution to protest local officials' attempts to maintain

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[7] Michael T. Ducey, "Indian Communities and Ayuntamientos in the Mexican Huasteca: Sujeto Revolts, Pronunciamientos and Caste War," *The Americas* 57:4 (2001): 528.
[8] Ducey, "Indian Communities and Ayuntamientos in the Mexican Huasteca," 531.

the colonial labour draft after Independence.[9] Thus, indigenous peasants in these communities were able to defend their interests in the face of threats and retain their relative autonomy despite new laws attempting to revoke it. The fact that these people desired to keep their community semi-autonomous even after Independence suggests that, although no longer dominated by Spain, Mexico was not really *theirs*. They still either perceived themselves and their communities to be separate from the state, or felt that the state failed to incorporate their own unique indigenous identities. Furthermore, Ducey's thesis statement is illuminating: "The objective of this paper is to explore the *fate* of indigenous communities under the new system and how Indians *manipulated* it in order to survive." [10] The new constitution was not perceived as a great feat expressing the identities and ideologies of these indigenous peoples—it had nothing to do with their identity. The new constitution was not theirs in any profound sense, but was something to be dealt with and manipulated in order to survive. Ducey's article suggests that the people of these indigenous communities did not consider themselves to be part of the Mexican nation, but rather people with a separate identity under the umbrella of a Mexican administration.

Like Ducey's article, Alexander Dawson's *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico* illustrates a division between indigenous identity and otherwise Mexican identity, but a century later and from the point of view of those who perceive themselves to be Mexicans. Dawson examines post-Revolutionary *Indigenistas*, who, "[r]ejecting the Europhilic traditions of the past…turned their attention to the Indian, both as the symbol of the national type and the object of reform." These people sympathized with indigenous peoples, striving to incorporate them into modern Mexico.[11] However, Dawson argues that the Indigenista perception of indigenous peoples was not necessarily entirely respectful: "Indigenistas were not engaged in studying and preserving a disappearing other, but were instead trying to facilitate the disappearance of the other."[12] Evidently, indigenous peoples were seen not as Mexicans, but as 'others' living within Mexico's borders who should be incorporated into the

[9] Ducey, "Indian Communities and Ayuntamientos," 534.
[10] Ibid, 525. Emphasis mine.
[11] Alexander S. Dawson, *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico* (Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 2004), xiv-xv.
[12] *Ibid*., xviii-xix.

nation, thereby *becoming* Mexicans. Dawson contends that the Indigenistas succeeded to the extent that they helped to ensure a lengthy single party hegemony. However, he also notes that "[the Indigenistas'] power was limited by a national context in which the word *Indian* would remain for the most part a racial slur…"[13] Thus, despite attempts to incorporate indigenous peoples into Mexican society, to some extent, these people remained 'others' in the eyes of Mexicans.

Mary Kay Vaughan's *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* examines another attempt to transform people living within Mexico's borders into modern 'Mexicans.' Vaughan discusses the role of Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) educational policy in the states of Puebla and Sonora during the 1930s. The SEP aimed to build a national culture by way of education, with teachers acting as cultural ideologues and political organizers for people living in rural communities.[14] Vaughan examines four specific areas, one of which is the Yaqui Valley in Sonora. The Yaquis, says Vaughan, viewed themselves as vastly different from Mexicans, and thus did not respond favourably to SEP education. President Lázaro Cárdenas granted state resources to the Yaquis, which allowed them to preserve the ethnic autonomy they desired. Vaughan asserts that this settlement with the state "produced new linkages, identities and empowerments that implied membership in the Mexican nation."[15] Nevertheless, since the Yaquis used these linkages in order to preserve their cultural autonomy as much as possible, one might question whether this implied membership in the Mexican nation, or only in Mexican political structure. Vaughan states that the Yaquis began to use the state-run schools after 1960, and that the first generation of university-educated Yaqui leadership appeared by the 1990s. However, she also notes that though the Yaquis accommodated cultural change, they also maintained their identity and continued to believe in their own cultural superiority.[16]

There are strong similarities between the case of the Yaquis and that of the post-Independence communities studied by Ducey, the members of which

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[13] Dawson, *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico*, 153.
[14] Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997), 29-30.
[15] *Ibid*, 138.
[16] *Ibid,* 161.

used the new constitution without identifying with the Mexican nation. Yaquis accepted state resources and eventually education, but used these for the purpose of preserving their unique culture and defending their interests as a semi-autonomous entity. They became politically connected to the Mexican state, but still identified themselves as culturally superior to Mexicans. Mexicans had laws and political structures that were useful, but they were still 'others.'

Thomas Benjamin's "A Time of Reconquest: History, the Maya Revival, and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas" reveals that a large gap still existed between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in Mexico as late as the 1990s. Benjamin discusses the emergence of a new Maya historiography in the state of Chiapas written by the indigenous peoples themselves, counteracting the commonly-held notion that the Mayas were a people without a history. They were considered to be without a history firstly because Chiapan Mayas traditionally had not written down their history, and secondly because all existing Maya history had been written by Mexican, European and North American historians rather than the Mayas themselves. An Indian revitalization movement emerged in the 1970s and 1980s throughout Mexico and the Americas, encouraging cultural vitality and activism. Part of this revival, says Benjamin, was the writing of indigenous history by indigenous peoples. The resulting Chiapan historiography, encouraged by rebel groups such as the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) and written by Mayas, "rejects the long dominant historical perspective that denied indigenous resistance to domination and exploitation." It also "presents the Maya as protagonists, not passive victims in the past, promotes a pan-Maya identity in the present, and places the Maya in the national story that is Mexican history."[17] Benjamin refers to the history championed by the EZLN as "historical syncretism combining national and indigenous history."[18]

Thus, the objective was (and is—the EZLN is still active today) to make Maya history a part of Mexican history. There is a desire to be culturally incorporated into Mexico, but not by the removal of indigenous identity. Rather, the aim is for distinctive Maya historical perceptions to be heard, and considered

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[17] Thomas Benjamin, "A Time of Reconquest: History, the Maya Revival, and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas," *The American Historical Review* 105:2 (2000): 422-423.
[18] Ibid., 447.

as part of Mexico's history. To some extent, these new Maya historians must consider themselves Mexicans, if this incorporation is one of their goals. However, the fact that there is a "Maya history" separate from "Mexican history" is illuminating—Maya history is considered by both Mexicans and Mayas themselves to be largely distinct from predominant Mexican history in its focus upon Maya identity and Maya protagonists. The Indian revitalization movement acknowledged that Mayas were not the same as other Mexicans, and sought to celebrate this cultural difference. The desire to intertwine Maya and Mexican history is not an expression of pride in mainstream Mexican culture, but of Maya uniqueness. Evidently, the Chiapan Mayas consider themselves to be culturally distinct from Mexicans.

Benjamin begins his article with a description of a 1992 indigenous protest march in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas. The protesters knocked down the statue of Diego de Mazariegos, a Spanish conquistador and founder of the colonial city: "After surviving five centuries of systemic violence and exploitation, the natives of the highlands of Chiapas destroyed the premier symbol of their oppression."[19] Paz characterizes the Spanish conquest as a violation, and it is evident that the San Cristóbal protesters would agree—as Benjamin notes, they consider the conquistador Mazariegos to be a symbol of oppression, not of the birth of a nation. However, Paz also characterizes the Mexican as one who does not want to be Indian or Spanish, claiming that in all Mexican gestures, attitudes and tendencies, it is impossible to distinguish between the Spanish and the Indian. Clearly, this characterization does not apply to the indigenous protesters who knocked down the statue of Mazariegos. They identify themselves as indigenous and feel attached to this indigenous ancestry. As a result, there is a belief in the need to defend them from the presence of a statue idolizing their oppressor, exploiter and violator. They distinguish themselves from the Spanish conquerors as descendants of the 'Indians,' not of the Spanish violation of Malinche. Therefore, these indigenous protestors do not fit Paz's definition of the Mexican.

In light of the above sources, Paz's observation that those who consider themselves to be Mexicans make up a rather small group is correct; indeed, his characterization of the Mexican as a single, confused entity, born of hybridity

[19] Benjamin, "A Time of Reconquest," 422-423.

and in denial of this ancestry, does not apply to all those living in Mexico. From Independence to the 1990s, groups of people in Mexico have considered peoples within the same borders to be 'others'—in other words, not everyone in Mexico self-identifies as belonging to the same Mexican cultural group. Indigenous peoples have perceived themselves, and have been perceived as, separate and distinct from Mexicans. Thus, while Mexico is to some extent the product of contact between 'Indians' and Spaniards, to conceive of every person in Mexico as a hybrid in denial is incorrect; rather, as Paz acknowledges, his characterization only applies to part of the country's population.

Paz argues that those who identify themselves as Mexicans are "shaping the country more and more into their own image." Moreover, he says, they are increasing in number: "They are conquering Mexico. We can all reach the point of knowing ourselves to be Mexicans."[20] Indeed, although a definite tendency exists in Mexico for indigenous peoples to define themselves, and be defined as, different from Mexicans on the whole, there have been efforts by the state to increase the number of self-identifying Mexicans. Not all communities responded to *indigenismo* and SEP education as the state expected, and whether or not it is appropriate for the state to 'modernize' and integrate indigenous communities is debatable, but at least an effort was made in Mexico to create a unified national culture. Indeed, Vaughan's examination of 1930s SEP schooling is predominantly positive—she argues that SEP teachers and rural communities largely worked together to construct political linkages and organizations that would both connect the communities to the state and empower them politically. Her conclusions do not always suggest that the communities achieved the level of integration and modernization the state might have hoped for—as is especially evident with the Yaqui case—but the attempt at cultural unification and the successful creation of political linkages is nonetheless significant.

Even so, although Paz recognizes that not all within Mexico's borders are the same, he fails to acknowledge fully the extent of Mexico's multiplicity. It is not necessarily the case that all peoples in Mexico can come to consider themselves Mexicans—at least, not under Paz's definition of "Mexican." According to Vaughan, SEP education made unifying gains not so much by imposing Mexican culture upon communities, as by allowing communities to

[20] Paz, "The Labyrinth of Solitude," 12.

help create a language of consent and dissent for themselves. Key is the fact that this creation was mutual, not imposed.[21] In order to incorporate these communities into the modern Mexican political structure, certain cultural concessions had to be made—especially for peoples like the Yaquis. The Maya historians discussed by Benjamin desired incorporation into Mexico, but as members of their own, unique culture. They desired acknowledgement of the legitimacy of their distinct Maya history. They wanted their history to be Mexican, but Mexican in that it is Maya. If Mexican identity is as characterized by Paz—a Spanish-indigenous hybrid in denial—then these Maya historians can never truly be Mexican. They do not deny their indigenous ancestry, and purposefully distinguish this ancestry from the Spanish conquistadores. If they are to become Mexicans, then that nationality must allow room for simultaneous self-identification as indigenous. Vaughan illustrates that incorporation into Mexico truly works only when concessions are made; if all indigenous peoples are to identify as Mexican, then Paz's definition must become more elastic. Paz contends that "[t]he Indian blends into the landscape until he is an indistinguishable part of the white wall against which he leans…"[22] However, such passivity should not necessarily be assumed of Mexico's indigenous peoples; evidently, not all of them will so easily give up their cultural identity in order to fit Paz's definition of the Mexican.

As much as Mexico is characterized by an ethnic multiplicity whose strength Paz does not entirely acknowledge, racial divides within Peruvian society are significantly more impenetrable. In *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru, 1780-1840*, Charles F. Walker examines Peru's transition from colonial state to independent republic, devoting a chapter to the fate of the indigenous peoples during and after this transition. He argues that almost immediately after Independence, the Peruvian state forewent liberal notions of universal rights as citizens, opting instead to restore colonial relations with indigenous peoples. Colonial attitudes towards indigenous peoples were retained, as well: "Local and regional authorities in the Andes...depict[ed] Indians as uncivilized others who required the heavy hand of the state to contribute to

[21] Vaughan, "Cultural Politics in Revolution," 196.
[22] Paz, "The Labyrinth of Solitude," 43.

the nation and possibly to be considered Peruvians."[23] The indigenous peoples solidified this divide between 'Indians' and 'non-Indians' by doing everything in their power to retain their autonomy. Thus, the actions and attitudes of the state and indigenous population implied a distinct difference between 'Indian' and 'non-Indian'—they perceived one another as the 'other.' Their actions, Walker asserts, had profound implications for the unity of Peru: "The gulf between caudillo and peasant politics and the relative success of Indians in defending their resources ultimately reinforced the notion of Peru as a racially divided nation." He notes that this colonial attitude quickly became widespread, as the "vision of Indians as inferiors made its way into national and regional circles."[24] Thus, according to Walker, Peru was racially divided from the moment of its inception.

Marisol de la Cadena's *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, 1919-1991* paints a particularly bleak picture of more recent race relations in Peru. She examines perceptions of what it means to be 'Indian' or 'mestizo' for Peruvians, and discovers severe social stigmas attached to 'Indian' identity. Like in Mexico, indigenismo movements occurred in Peru, but with far more dire consequences. Many Peruvian Indigenistas during the 1920s "defined Indians as a racially deformed group." They defended 'Indians' on the basis that they were redeemable, since their Inca race and empire had been great before the conquest. This indigenismo, says de la Cadena, "confirmed for modernity that Indians were an inferior racial/cultural type undeserving of Peruvian citizenship…"[25] The notion of inferiority of the 'Indian,' as discussed by Walker, was continually reinforced in Peru by these Indigenistas and the population at large. The result was a definition of the 'Indian' so negative that indigenous peoples seeking an empowered identity avoided referring to themselves as 'Indians,' instead often opting for class-based terms like 'compañero.'[26] Thus, de la Cadena would suggest that Peru is fundamentally split between 'Indians' and

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[23] Charles Walker, *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru, 1780-1840* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 220.
[24] *Ibid*, 221.
[25] Marisol de la Cadena, *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, Peru, 1919-1991* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 40-41.
[26] *Ibid*, 311.

'non-Indians.'[27] 'Indians,' supposedly primitive and undeserving of citizenship, are not considered Peruvians at all. This notion is so pervasive and deeply ingrained that the very term 'Indian' has come to have derogatory connotations. Evidently, the split between racial 'others' in Peru is devastatingly great.

Most discussions of indigenous peoples in Peru—including de la Cadena's book—concern peoples considered to be Andean, from the highlands and mountains. In *Salt of the Mountain: Campa Asháninka History and Resistance in the Peruvian Jungle*, however, Stefano Varese instead examines the even more secluded and ignored Asháninka peoples of the jungle. Varese argues that, despite attempted missionary, explorative and commercial incursions, Asháninka society "has remained immutable in the face of foreign advance." They have largely been able to maintain their traditions, with a minimum of community disintegration.[28] The Asháninka, says Varese, were mostly free of white penetration until the eighteenth century, at which time they gained an invented reputation for being "fearsome warriors completely lacking in humanitarian behaviour…" Thus, a "black legend" was born, in which the Asháninka were commonly perceived as immoral savages. Varese notes that this legend continued to pervade Peruvian thought into the "present day" (Varese was writing during the 1960s).[29] Considering they did everything possible to retain their independence from invading whites, and apparently largely succeeded, the Asháninka unquestionably consider themselves to be distinctly different from white or mestizo Peruvians—or even Andean 'Indians.' Peruvians on the whole evidently consider these people to be 'others,' in an exceedingly derogatory sense. Thus, Varese illustrates that the split in Peru between 'others' is even greater than de la Cadena suggests. As if the Andean 'Indians' were not discriminated against and segregated enough, the Asháninka case adds an additional level to Peru's exceedingly divided nature.

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[27] It should be noted that, according to de la Cadena, it is difficult to identify who is considered 'Indian' in Peru. The derogatory connotations of the term have apparently lead to enormously complex systems for defining who is 'Indian,' and not all Peruvians would agree as to who belongs to what ethnic category.

[28] Stefano Varese, *Salt of the Mountain: Campa Asháninka History and Resistance in the Peruvian Jungle* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 36-37.

[29] *Ibid*, 110.

Compared to the Peruvian case, Mexico's internal divisions appear minute and insignificant. Peruvian national identity seems impossible to define. A true national identity requires a sense of unity as a nation, but it is evident that this does not exist in Peru; the Asháninka are barely considered to be of the same species as other peoples living in Peru, let alone the same national identity. As previously discussed, in Mexico, certain attempts have been made by the state to incorporate all within the country's borders into a national culture. Peruvian indigenous communities evidently experienced no such attempts; instead, they retained colonial-style ethnic relations wherein 'Indians' and 'non-Indians' were perceived as two fundamentally different types of people. Nevertheless, though Mexico unquestionably suffers less from racial divisions than Peru, the divisions of the former remain. Mexico is more unified than Peru, but still nowhere near truly unified.

Peru is harshly divided by race, preventing the formation of a national identity. Until the stigma attached to indigenousness is removed, Peruvian unity will likely be impossible. It is a problem of definition—in Peru, to be 'Indian' is to be miserable and/or savage, and inherently un-Peruvian. Mexico suffers far less from racial divisions, but they nevertheless exist. Here too, it is a problem of definition, if Paz's characterization of the Mexican is taken to be the true definition of this identity. Paz acknowledges—quite correctly—that his analysis of the Mexican does not apply to the whole of Mexico. He insists that all within the country can become Mexicans, but if Paz's characterization of the Mexican is used, the country's indigenous peoples will never be Mexicans—they require a more elastic national definition that acknowledges their indigenous identity. Reviewer Irving A. Leonard expresses high regard for Paz's essay: "Clearly *The Labyrinth of Solitude* is designed to enhance the understanding of its readers, be they specialists or laymen in Hispanic American and Mexican studies, and it should be required reading."[30] However, in light of Mexico's racial history, it is difficult to recommend "The Labyrinth of Solitude" as required reading for laymen, unless they also plan to read about indigenous peoples in Mexico. Paz's admittance that he has discussed only part of Mexico's population is brief, and indigenous peoples are barely mentioned throughout the rest of the essay. As

[30] Irving A. Leonard, "Review: The Labyrinth of Solitude," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 42 (1962): 600.

such, reading "The Labyrinth of Solitude" as a sole guide to the nature of Mexico could be misleading. An uninformed reader might come to think that indigenous cultures existed only in the distant past, or that Mexico is a homogenous entity—and that would be a severe mistake.

Identities Made Flesh: Sex Reassignment Surgeries and Transsexuality

Lisa Garrett

Although cross-gendered people have existed in different societal forms in other cultures and at other times, transsexuality is a unique twentieth-century phenomenon.[1] This paper will examine the history of transsexual sex reassignment surgeries and the formation of a new transsexual identity. Beginning in Europe in the early 1900s, experiments aiming to surgically change the sex of animals were performed. At that time, the discourses of homosexuality, transvestism and intersexuality also operated, and influenced how people understood others who desired to live as 'the other sex'. By the 1930s and 1940s, sex change operations were being carried out in Europe, and knowledge of these operations was disseminated through North America by the press. During this time, the idea of a person who desired to surgically alter his or her sex began to be unhinged from definitions of homosexuality, transvestism and intersexuality. After 1953, following Christine Jorgensen's highly publicized sex reassignment surgery in Europe, the number of non-intersexed North Americans requesting sex changes from their doctors skyrocketed. Doctors were extremely reluctant to perform surgeries on transsexual patients, but by the 1960s, some North American doctors began to grant some patients' surgical requests. At the same time, social groups and advocacy organizations began to form in order to meet the new needs of transsexual people. Through the first

[1] In this paper, I will generally use the term 'cross-gendered' to refer to people who lived (or wished to live) as a gender which did not correspond with their anatomical sex. I distinguish this from 'transsexual', which I will use to refer to people who had (or wished to have) surgery in order to change their sex. However, people began requesting surgery before the diagnostic category 'transsexual' was created by the medical establishment. Therefore I will at times use 'cross-gendered' to refer to people who wanted to surgically alter their sex simply because in such cases the term transsexual would be anachronistic.

half of the twentieth century, the media, new technologies, and changing definitions of sexual diagnostic categories intersected and created a consciousness among cross-gendered people that they could change their sex through surgery. Patient demand for sex reassignment surgeries pushed doctors further in their use of these new technologies, and this demand was itself partially constitutive of an entirely new category of identity. The demand for surgery was one of the key features of being classified as 'transsexual', and thus transsexuals, in dialogue with their doctors, had a role in producing themselves as a new 'type' of person.

The history of transsexualism is tied to that of transvestism, and so I will begin with a brief discussion of the emergence of the category 'transvestite'. Before 1910, there was little consensus among medical practitioners as to what terms were to be used to describe cross-dressers. The practice was variously conflated with homosexuality, labelled as fetishism, or understood through a combination of these and other sexual categories. There were also attempts by sexologists to "create new diagnostic categories [such as] 'gynomania, 'psychical hermaphroditism', 'sexo-aesthetic inversion.'"[2] In addition, notions of "masquerade, impersonation, or disguise" often found their way into the medical discourse.[3] In this way, the idea of cross-dressing as a set of actions, performed by an individual and described through a set of nouns, existed alongside the concept of cross-dressers as a 'type' in need of categorization. The term 'transvestite' was initially created in 1910 by Magnus Hirschfeld, a German doctor who "campaigned actively on behalf of homosexual rights."[4] Hirschfeld, a homosexual himself, sought to help other sexual minorities, and in this way his motivations differed from other sexologists who were primarily concerned with creating classifications to treat and reform their subjects. Hirschfeld described transvestism as "the impulse to assume the external garb of a sex which is not apparently that of the subject as indicated by the sexual organs."[5] Hirschfeld believed that "hermaphrodites, androgynes, homosexuals, and transvestites

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[2] Dave King, *The Transvestite and the Transsexual: Public Categories and Private Identities* (Aldershot and Brookfield: Avebury, 1995), 35.
[3] King, *The Transvestite and the Transsexual,* 35.
[4] Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (USA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 18.
[5] King, *The Transvestite and the Transsexual,* 38.

constituted distinct types."[6] After 1910, a separate sexual category of 'transvestite' operated within medical discourses.[7]

During this time, experimental sex changes were being carried out in Europe on animals. Eugen Steinach was a physiologist working at the University of Vienna who experimented on rats and guinea pigs. In 1912 he published an article called "Arbitrary Transformation of Male Mammals into Animals with Pronounced Female Sex Characteristics and Feminine Psyche," and in 1913 this was followed by "Feminization of Males and Masculization of Females."[8] Steinach implanted testes into castrated infantile female rodents and ovaries into castrated infantile male rodents. The female animals implanted with testes developed characteristics associated with males and vice versa. Animal behaviour, including sexual behaviour, was thus explained through hormones. As such, Steinach's project attempted to locate "the essence of sex, gender, and sexuality in the secretions of the gonads."[9] In the beginning, research was only carried out on animals. However, this and related research programs quickly came to suggest the possibility of surgical sex alteration in humans. In this way, Steinach's project became tied to a larger project of discovering the 'truth' about the sexed human body. The 'true' sex of the physical body was appealed to in order to explain and understand human behaviours. Before long, surgical experiments were being carried out on humans; however, unlike the experiments done on animals, those on humans did not attempt actual sex changes. Beginning in 1915, human testicular and ovarian transplants were performed, from men to men or women to women, as well as from animals to humans. These experiments were not particularly successful since the available technologies were still rather undeveloped, despite "advances in anaesthesiology

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[6] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed,* 19.
[7] Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993), 131-132; King, *The Transvestite and the Transsexual*, 35-41; Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 18-19.
[8] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed,* 16.
[9] *Ibid.,* 16.

and antisepsis."[10] During this time period, surgery remained a dangerous procedure.[11]

Research continued, however, and beginning in the 1920s, European doctors began to attempt more ambitious projects at the request of their patients. In Germany, Magnus Hirschfield's Institute for Sexual Science became a centre for surgical sex experimentation. It was during this period that most sex change experiments were carried out. In the course of his work with transvestites, Hirschfield had encountered people who desired castration and the implantation of ovaries. He took these desires seriously, and rather than try to reform 'deviant' patients, he began to help people access the surgeries they wanted. Bernice L. Hausman argues in *Changing Sex: Transsexualism, Technology, and the Idea of Gender* that developments in technology "facilitated the emergence of transsexualism at mid-century."[12] Hausman contends that it was primarily the improvement in glandular technology which led to the development of new surgeries. However, in *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*, Joanne Meyerowitz argues that the emergence of sex reassignment surgeries was not simply the result of enhanced technology. Instead, Meyerowitz posits that European developments were initiated due to Germany's campaign for sexual liberation. Doctors attempted and improved surgeries "because Germany had a vocal campaign for sexual emancipation."[13] This argument helps explain why the same surgical techniques, which were available to both European and North American doctors, were used differently. In North America, doctors used the available technologies to remove genitals, breasts and reproductive organs, but only when they were damaged or diseased. What is more, North American doctors did not undertake research into sex change surgeries until significantly later than European doctors. In any case, the first complete genital sex change arranged by Hirschfield was performed on Dorchen

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[10] Bernice L. Hausman, *Changing Sex: Transsexualism, Technology, and the Idea of Gender* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995), 27.
[11] Hausman, *Changing Sex,* 27; Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 15-17; Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press: Historical Notes on Transsexuality in the United States, 1930-1955," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* (Vol. 4, No. 2, 1998), 161.
[12] Meyerowitz*,* "Sex Change and the Popular Press," 24.
[13] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 21.

Richter in 1922 and 1931. In 1922 Richter was castrated; her penis was removed and a vagina was constructed in 1931.[14]

European sex reassignment surgeries continued throughout the 1920s and 1930s and became known in North America through the media. By the 1930s, stories of European sex changes had been translated into English and reported through the press. Joanne Meyerowitz argues that this is how the possibility of sex change surgeries first became known to the majority of North American cross-gendered individuals. Sensationalized news accounts played a significant role in the formation of a new transsexual identity. Articles such as "When Science Changed a Man into a Woman!,"[15] which told the story of Lili Elbe's intersexed condition and surgical change, alerted the public to the new phenomenon of surgical sex change. "American stories of sex change attempted to lure readers with shocking accounts of unusual crossgender behaviour, rare biological problems, and astonishing surgical solutions";[16] such stories tended to be carried by tabloids and popular sensationalist magazines. The sensationalist tones of these stories caught readers' attention and helped create a growing consciousness about surgical sex changes. Such articles "depicted sex change surgery as unveiling a true but hidden physiological sex and thus tied the change to a biological mooring that justified surgical intervention."[17] In this way, popular accounts helped establish that the 'sex of the body' and the 'sex of the mind' could differ; surgical sex changes were needed to reveal the 'truth' of a body which was in conflict with the mind. In the second half of the 1930s, popular accounts tended to focus on female athletes who became male. This attention "reflected discomfort with women athletes" and played to public concerns about the 'mannishness' of female athletes.[18] Despite such negative undertones, these cultural forms of information were appropriated by cross-gendered people in order to fashion a new identity: they began to use the language of the news accounts to describe and understand themselves. Although the categories 'transsexual' or 'transgender' did not yet exist, people who recognized themselves in, and identified with, the news accounts of sex

[14] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 24; Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 18-21.
[15] Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press," 164.
[16] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 32.
[17] Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press," 164.
[18] Ibid., 165.

reassignment surgeries began to seek out more information and request medical treatment from their doctors.[19]

People began to write letters to publications requesting more information about sex changes, but these letters overwhelmingly were met with discouraging remarks. One person wrote to *Sexology* magazine to ask for more information about female-to-male sex changes, to which the editor replied: "There is no operation whereby a *normal female* can be changed to a normal male, or a normal male into normal female. The operations you have read of were performed on 'hermaphrodites'."[20] Accounts of men changing into women and women changing into men continued to appear in the press, despite the fact that American doctors only granted surgical sex changes to intersexed people. However, this did not stop cross-gendered people from requesting information or surgical intervention. It was not until after World War II that magazines began to acknowledge that sex reassignment surgeries were feasible not only for intersexed people. This change reflects a more widespread trend, since "with the dawn of the atomic age, magazines routinely expressed admiration"[21] for the power of science and technology. One article stated that "with hormones plus surgery, there's little doubt that, in the not far future . . . doctors can take a full grown normal adult and – if he or she desires it – completely reverse his or her sex."[22] In this way, stories reflected an attitude of admiration for scientific and technological progress. However, very few people would have supported real sex reassignment surgeries performed on real patients, and it is important to note that even doctors generally did not believe sex reassignment surgeries were valid or justifiable. Intersexed people may have been granted surgeries in order to remove any ambiguity about their sex, but people who wanted to move from one physical sex to another were usually met with scorn.

In 1949, the new sexual category 'transsexual' was defined and was distinguished from other categories such as 'homosexual'. The American doctor David Oliver Cauldwell wrote a report on Earl, a man who requested female-to-male sex reassignment surgery, and in the report, Cauldwell coined the term

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[19] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 15-16; Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 30-41; Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press," 161-167.
[20] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 37.
[21] *Ibid.,* 41.
[22] *Ibid.*

psychopathia transuxualis to describe Earl. Cauldwell distinguished a transsexual's desire for surgery from an intersexed person's desire, and also from someone with a glandular disorder. Another American doctor, Harry Benjamin, distinguished sex from gender and wrote that "the transvestite has a social problem. The transsexual has a gender problem. The homosexual has a sex problem."[23] Benjamin made clear distinctions between sex and gender, and this helped "identify transsexualism as a 'gender problem', a confusion of psychological sex or of masculinity/femininity."[24] This helped establish a 'sex of the self', which was different from one's physical, sexed body. Although it was gender and not sex that was identified as the 'problem' for transsexuals, Benjamin wrote that since it was evident that "the mind of a transsexual cannot be adjusted to the body, it is logical and justifiable to attempt the opposite, to adjust the body to the mind."[25] Thus, although one's gender and one's sex could be in conflict, it was only through changes to the body that one's 'true sex' could be revealed, and one's mind and body brought into agreement.

Transsexualism may have been established as its own sexological category at this time, but Cauldwell and others continued to refuse endorsing sex reassignment surgeries for transsexuals who requested them. Benjamin began to recommend patients for surgery, but "only for a few cases and 'only as a last resort'." [26] Even with this, he was in the minority. This helps illustrate the power and control with which the medical establishment was invested: doctors were given the authority to name and classify diseases, specify appropriate treatments, and act as medical gatekeepers to the categories they themselves had created. Cauldwell believed transsexualism was caused by an "'unfavourable childhood environment' and referred to the use of surgery as 'criminal mutilation'."[27] Despite this negative and pathologizing view on the part of Cauldwell and others, transsexuals clearly played a role in the establishment of their new category. Patient demand for surgery was a key feature in deciding who should be 'classified' as a transsexual, and thus patients "actively engaged in

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[23] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 125.
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 125.
[26] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 104.
[27] King, *The Transvestite and the Transsexual*, 43.

producing themselves as subjects."[28] Although doctors and patients both played a role in establishing this new identity category, the medical community was clearly invested with significantly more power. Patient demand helped establish transsexualism as a new category, but ultimately, transsexuals were at the mercy of their doctors when it came to treatment.[29]

Although transsexualism was named as such in 1949, as a new category it had a fairly low profile until Christine Jorgensen's highly publicized sex change in 1953. It is clear that by the early 1950s, sex reassignment surgery was known to medical doctors and, to a lesser degree, to some of the general public. 28 cases of transsexualism had been published before 1953. Of this number, 16 had had some kind of surgery. All 16 had undergone castration and seven had had penectomies. In six of these cases, artificial vaginas had been created: two in 1931, one in 1947, two in 1950, and one in 1952.[30] Such cases may have been reported in sensationalized news accounts, but it was not until Christine Jorgensen's case that transsexual sex reassignment surgeries were brought out of the closet and into the public eye.

Christine Jorgensen was born in 1926 as George William Jorgensen Jr. As a man, Jorgensen had a sense of his cross-gendered identification from the time he was young. He felt alienated and alone, but like others, when he heard about the possibilities of sex change surgeries in the press, he began to feel hopeful. Jorgensen read about sex reassignment surgeries for the first time in 1948, and began consulting doctors for information and treatment. He had heard of an American doctor who was researching the effects of hormones on animals (much as Steinach had done about 35 years earlier). Jorgensen thought that his condition might be the result of a hormonal imbalance. However, the doctor he consulted did not offer any kind of examination or treatment, but instead referred him to a psychiatrist. Jorgensen later summed up the experience by saying "No examination. No questions. No answers. Nothing."[31] He continued reading about medical advances in the area of sex change surgeries, however, and soon decided to self-medicate with the use of hormones.

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[28] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 111.
[29] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 118-120; King, *The Transvestite and the Transsexual*, 43; Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 42-45.
[30] King, *The Transvestite and the Transsexual*, 41.
[31] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 55.

Jorgensen obtained oestrogen, which he took for two years. In 1950, he travelled to Europe in order to seek medical help from doctors there. Jorgensen had read and heard about European surgeons who were willing to perform sex reassignments, and in Copenhagen, he met with Dr. Christian Hamburger who agreed to experiment on Jorgensen for free. After the first year of hormone treatment under Hamburger, Jorgensen told his friends "Skin clear and smooth, body contours definitely more feminine . . . Of course, I am my same old self inside only much happier."[32] Hamburger reported that Jorgensen was "now in a state of mental balance, psychically at ease; he was freed from his mental stress and worked with increased vigour and inspiration."[33] In 1951, Jorgensen's testicles were removed, and in 1952, so was her penis. It was at this point that Jorgensen renamed herself Christine and began to live as a woman. She later had a vagina constructed while in the US, against the advice of her first doctors.[34]

Christine Jorgensen's story exploded into the press in a way that the transsexual stories that preceded her did not. She became a household name, and her celebrity was covered in the mainstream press, tabloids, counter-cultural newspapers and magazines. The number of self-identified transsexuals requesting surgeries from their doctors skyrocketed. Throughout the 1950s, transsexual social networks developed, and these helped to "offer emotional support and foster a sense of community" among transsexuals.[35] Interestingly, it was overwhelmingly male-to-female transsexuals who began demanding surgery and this difference in numbers could have been due to a number of factors. [36] First, as a male-to-female, Jorgensen may not have been as much of a role model for females wishing to become male. Economic concerns may have also played a role, since women would have earned less money than men and thus would have less access to costly medical procedures. Additionally, the technologies for phalloplasty were not as developed at the time, and so females may have been reluctant to undergo new and untested procedures. Nevertheless, "in less than a

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[32] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 59.
[33] *Ibid.,* 59.
[34] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 149-150; Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed,* 51-61; Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press," 171.
[35] Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press," 177.
[36] *Ibid.,* 174-177.

year after Jorgensen entered the public domain, Hamburger received '765 letters from 465 patients who appear to have a genuine desire for alteration of sex'."[37] Of these, 180 were from the United States.

Transsexuals used stories they read in the press to find doctors who might be sympathetic to their concerns, but they also used the language and diagnostic categories of these stories to phrase their demands. In this way, transsexuals began to use the discourses available to push doctors into providing them with the surgeries they needed. Thus, press coverage "provided material resources that could give isolated readers a sense of community as well as a sense of possibility."[38] However, most doctors still did not believe sex reassignment surgeries were legitimate, and even those who did continued to be extremely reluctant to provide surgeries to people who were not intersexed. This led to issues of power and control, and often, patient-doctor relationships were characterized by mistrust on both sides. The case of Agnes' sex reassignment surgery is helpful in understanding this.[39] Agnes presented herself to doctors in 1958 as an intersexed female. Although she had been raised as a boy, Agnes had always seen herself as a girl, and claimed that during puberty she had developed breasts and began to live as a woman. Agnes wanted to have her penis removed and a vagina constructed. Doctors evaluated her and eventually agreed to the operations based on her intersexuality. Several years later, she told doctors that she had actually taken oestrogen since she was twelve, and was not intersexed at all – she was a transsexual. At the time of her surgery, Agnes was young and not very well off economically; this was her only way to obtain the surgery she felt she needed. Patients knew that if they told doctors what they wanted to hear, their chances at being recommended for surgery would be drastically increased. This power inequality did not create an environment where transsexuals could feel free to share their true feelings. In turn, doctors, scientists and researchers viewed this tendency with mistrust. Doctors concluded that transsexuals were "unreliable historian[s] . . . unable to recall very well, or inclined to distort."[40]

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[37] Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press," 175.
[38] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 92.
[39] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 117-119; Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 159-161; Vivian K. Namaste, *Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People* (USA: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 192-194.
[40] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 161.

In the 1960s, as American doctors slowly began to perform sex reassignment surgeries on patients who were not intersexed, transsexuals attempted to present themselves as 'normatively transsexual'. They would often describe their problems using a standard narrative based on the available diagnostic categories. This occurred because "the increasingly narrow taxonomic classifications of 'aberrant' gender behaviours . . . specif[ied] the exact behaviours and histories necessary to obtain the appropriate diagnosis."[41] Doctors were granted the authority to classify patients into appropriate categories, but patients were able to use these same discourses to their advantage. Transsexuals were typically well-read on their condition, whether through medical publications or popular accounts. They knew that what they told doctors could either help or hinder them in their quest for surgery, and so it was in their best interests to present a life which did not contradict their diagnostic category. In this way, patient-doctor relationships became characterized by mistrust on both sides. Nevertheless, by using the available medical language, transsexuals were able to begin pushing doctors further in their use of the new medical technologies.[42]

Sex reassignment surgery continued to be difficult to obtain in the 1960s: operations were expensive and were not covered by health plans. Additionally, most doctors still refused to perform surgery on non-intersexed patients. However, change had begun. In 1966, for example, John Hopkins Hospital announced a new program to provide sex change surgeries. Surgery seemed to become a realistic possibility, especially for transsexuals who could not afford to travel to Europe for surgery. The hospital was inundated with over 2000 requests, but only provided 24 surgeries. In this way, the program did not provide much of a practical difference, but it was symbolically important. It lent some cultural authority to transsexuals' requests for surgery, and other programs soon began to develop. Transsexuals who still could not obtain surgery because of economic reasons, or because they were not approved by doctors for treatment, continued to use strategies such as chest binding, electrolysis and cross-dressing. Transsexual social networks had developed in the 1950s, and in the 1960s, advocacy groups such as the Erickson Educational Foundation were

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[41] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 118.
[42] Hausman, *Changing Sex*, 117-118; Namaste, *Invisible Lives*, 193.

established in order to "promote research on, understanding of, and assistance to transsexuals."[43] In this way, transsexuals who wished to do so could now express their identities within a larger trans-identified community.[44]

New technologies, the press, and changing diagnostic categories converged in the twentieth century to give cross-gendered people knowledge about the possibility of surgically transforming their sex. In the 1930s and 1940s, European sex change operations were reported in North America, and non-intersexed people who wanted their own surgeries began seeking out more information. After Christine Jorgensen's sex change in 1953, sex reassignment surgeries were still commonly reviled by the general public, but the issue became a topic of household conversation. North American transsexuals flooded their doctors with requests for surgery, and patient demand for surgical sex change became fundamental to being classified 'transsexual'. By the late 1960s, social groups and advocacy organizations had begun to form in order to meet some of the new needs of a transsexual population. Change was slow in coming, however, and all too often today there is still a stigma against people who are transsexual. Because transsexuals must continue to rely on the medical community in a way that other sexual minority groups do not, it is important to understand the role patient-doctor interactions have had, and how these interactions have historically operated to form a new identity. Through dialogue with doctors and scientists, transsexuals had a role in producing themselves as a new 'type' of person.

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[43] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 210.
[44] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 185-186, 208-210, 220-222; Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press", 177.

Representations of Gender in Early Modern England through the Writings of Anne Askew

Adrienne Batke

Anne Askew, a staunch Protestant and martyr, presented to Tudor England a lasting legacy through which it could work out new problems it faced as a result of the Reformation. Askew's outspoken voice, and refusal to conform to the 1539 Act of Six Articles (which reinstated a more Catholic position on doctrine), brought her under interrogation for charges of heresy near the end of King Henry VIII's reign. Henry's judicial and religious leaders interrogated and tortured her ruthlessly; attempting unsuccessfully to indict her fellow believers and making her "perhaps the most infamous suffering female body in the English Protestant imagination."[1] Aside from being a fascinating subject in and of herself, the figure of Askew illuminates the complex and confusing social, religious, and ideological changes that occurred in early modern England. Beyond just demonstrating the potency of religious fear, Askew's case illuminates the turbulence that the religious diversity of Lutheran and Calvinist doctrine brought to English conceptions of hierarchy and gender. Her case specifically questions the role of women in private, public and religious spheres, and women's access to religion, scripture and education. *The Examinations of Anne Askew*, her account of her period under trial and torture, had an impact not only on Protestant polemics to come, but also on contemporary negotiations of gender roles in politics, society and religion. John Bale's editing, elucidation and publication of her writing offers insight into the expectations and boundaries imposed upon her sex in Tudor England, and demarcates appropriate and inappropriate female participation and presentation. The discrepancy between

[1] Suzannah B. Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature in Early Modern England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 212.

Bale's interpretation and portrayal of Askew, and Askew's own self-portrayal, provides a frame through which gender ideologies of early modern England can be observed. An investigation of Bale's and Askew's own representations of herself can shed light on the changes that occurred in sixteenth-century England, including the modes and tactics of communication through which women were allowed a voice.

Askew presented herself through her writings as a strong and learned woman, capable of tactfully and ingeniously negotiating the systems of early modern England to maintain her religious stance and preach her religion to her readers. Her *Examinations* showed her cunning as she fielded accusations of heresy from some of the most powerful men in the country by quoting scripture, using irony, and even questioning her own inquisitors. She answered one of the first questions posed to her with another question, which stumped her inquisitor, Christopher Dare: "Then I demanded this question of him, wherefore St Stephen was stoned to death? And he said he could not tell. Then I answered that no more would I assoil his vain question."[2] Although she did not directly humiliate her inquisitors, or reverse established hierarchies of gender and power, she maintained strength and control throughout her trials. E.V. Beilin, an Askew historian, believes that "The linguistic games Askew plays… conveys her as confident and self-possessed in the face of danger, certainly part of the character she wishes to create for her readers."[3] In order to convey her strength and steadfast nature, Askew used demonstration rather than articulation, by employing a powerful rhetorical device: understatement. Such a device lent her the credibility of a narrator who did not indulge in exaggeration or melodrama. She allowed the shocking drama of her situation to speak for itself by explaining her illegal torture in a terse manner:

> Then they did put me on the rack, because I confessed no ladies or gentlewomen to be of my opinion, and thereon they kept me a long time; and because I lay still and did not cry, my lord chancellor and Master Rich

[2] John Bale, *Select Works of John Bale*, ed. H. Christmas (Cambridge: The University Press, 1849),148.

[3] Elaine Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), 40.

> toke pains to rack me their own hands, till I was nigh dead.[4]

This stark and emotionally removed account presented to her readers a woman "tough in mind and body, learned and tenacious."[5]

In addition to presenting her audience with a strong figure, her proficient use of Scripture and her identification with a male saint implied a vision of femininity which is active in the world and capable to contribute and teach. Askew chose "[Saint] Stephen as her model, insisting in the first comment… that she models herself on this martyr-preacher."[6] Like many early Protestants she identified with earlier Christian figures, and she claimed "as hers the anger and vengeance of those who wrote or speak in the Bible."[7] Askew's writing took on an active voice, which taught her readers by informing them in an authoritative manner.[8] Such a strong voice was unexpected for a woman of her society, and, "her dominant tones [were] fervent and ironic – not modes usually associated with gentlewomen in public."[9] Overall, her *Examinations* revealed that Askew thought herself to be an example of a strong and steadfast believer whose ability to follow and profess her faith was not impeded by her sex.

Her strong personality, voice and tactics revealed "that she saw herself as a defender of the faith, a teacher, a visionary, and a fighter, the spiritual equal of any man."[10] Although she did see herself as spiritually equal to men, she knew well enough to work within the gender structures of her time, and even use them to her advantage. When discussing Scripture which addressed the segregation of preaching rights for women and men, she appeased her inquisitor using phrases such as "poor women"[11]; yet preceding this phrase, she asked the

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[4] John Fox, *The Acts and Monuments of the Church*, ed. J. Cumming (London: Chatto and Windus, 1875), 656.
[5] Beilin, *Redeeming Eve*, 37.
[6] Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature*, 40.
[7] Gwynne Kennedy, *Just Anger: Representing Women's Anger in Early Modern England* (Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 145.
[8] Beilin, *Redeeming Eve*, 41.
[9] Kennedy, *Just Anger*, 145.
[10] Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720* (London: Routledge, 1993), 30.
[11] Bale, *Selected Works*, 155.

bishop, "how many women he had seen go into the pulpit and preach."[12] Her questions implied that Askew was in fact the person who was in control of the discussion and was guiding it where she desired. The discerning reader can perceive that Askew's conscious manipulation of stereotypes undermine her mien of womanly weakness that she presented to her inquisitors. Askew used existing gender stereotypes to negotiate her dangerous situation, yet her education, wit and wisdom demonstrated that she herself was not the standard meek and placid woman thought to be common to sixteenth-century England.

The character and legacy of Askew became co-opted and transformed in John Bale's publication of Askew's *Examinations*. He emphasized her feminine weakness in order to diminish the radicalism that could potentially be interpreted from such a forceful female figure. The purpose of Bale's appropriation of Askew into his Protestant polemic was primarily to illustrate God's power to strengthen the weak through faith. In incorporating her into his martyrology, Bale's task was to tame the radical aspects of Askew's character and fit her into his Protestant model of femininity that has a voice to challenge religious unbelievers, but not to challenge the male hierarchy in which they operated. He saw his project not as an entire reversal of the Great Chain of Being, but as a conception of the Great Chain where each person, no matter how low his or her station, had direct access to Christ. Askew's writings were useful for Bale's compilation of Protestant believers because she presented to his readers a female Protestant who employed cautious tactics and unflinching resolve when encountering her Catholic enemies.

The image Bale painted of Askew was far from her own self-fashioned, empowered and capable self-conceptualization**.** In his writings "Askew's comparative radicalism [was] suppressed in favor of her status as a proto-martyr for mainline English Protestantism."[13] He attributed all her strength to God, and constantly referred to her body as weak and feeble. She was portrayed as "an innocent lamb, a good but defenseless creature,"[14] thus making her a passive vessel for the masculine divine power. In contrast to Askew's identification with Saint Stephen, the public preacher, Bale described her similarities with Saint

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[12] Bale, *Selected Works*, 155.
[13] Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature*, 40.
[14] Kennedy, *Just Anger*, 154.

Blandina, a weak slave.[15] Bale argued: "Blandina was young and tender; so was Anne Askew also: but that which was frail of nature in them both, Christ made strong by his grace."[16] By emasculating Askew's body, Bale transformed her into a Godly vessel whose victimization incriminated her persecutors. Because of her sex and alleged physical frailty, her Catholic inquisitors were demonized[17] as "cruel bishops and priests, whom Christ calleth ravening wolves, devourers and thieves."[18] By including Askew in his protestant martyrology as a physically weak woman who operated within the acceptable boundaries of femininity, he at once furthered his argument for God's divine ability to infuse his true believers with strength, and successfully demonized his Catholic enemies who viciously tortured a delicate woman.

The difference between Bale's portrayal of Askew and Askew's own writings illustrates the different projects both writers had in mind. Askew wrote to give a personal and honest account of the unjust treatments she underwent, whereas Bale wrote about her to exemplify God's strength within the greater canon of Protestant martyrology. Bale's purpose was "to reconcile the nation and its goals with the relatively simple martyrological framework of conflicts between devilish persecutors and holy martyrs."[19] Beyond the divergent objectives of each writer, these two descriptions of Askew are a lens through which ideals and boundaries for gender in early modern England can be viewed. Because she was a female, Askew showed what language was available to her as a woman, what behaviour was acceptable, and under what guise transgressive activities could take to induce legitimacy. As a man writing about a woman, Bale's account of Askew showed the existing fear of female transgression that threatened patriarchal authority, and the importance of female role models in religion. Both portrayals of Askew must be understood in relation to contemporary ideologies because they "participated in the broader cultural production of sexualized identities and gender discourse."[20]

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15 Kennedy, *Just Anger*, 153.
16 Bale, *Selected Works*, 142.
17 Krista Kesselring, "Representations of Women in Tudor Historiography: John Bale and the Rhetoric of Exemplarity," *Renaissance and Reformation* 22 (1998): 48.
18 Bale, *Selected Works*, 142.
19 Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature*, 225
20 Kesselring, "Representations of Women," 43.

Bale had the insight to see that the English people, having practiced Roman Christianity, relied upon the canon of saints as role-models.[21] The Catholic saints provided encouragement for the English people by example in difficult times and Bale's martyrology sought to do the same.[22] The cult of the Virgin Mary and the female saints provided a special comfort and model for English women, and so, with them gone, Bale attempted to fill the space they left with the example of a good Protestant woman. He garnered Askew's writings of her victimization because they "allowed him to present a moving story of the beliefs, sufferings and death of one of the elect… [and] also permitted him explicitly to include women in the history he had crafted for the Church."[23] Askew was the perfect candidate for his project because she pushed the Protestant agenda and criticized the Catholic Church without directly challenging the existing patriarchal hierarchy. Bale's belief in her martyrological validity emerged in the title he gave to his writings: "The First Examination of the Worthy Servant of God, Mistress Anne Askewe, the younger daughter of Sir William Askewe, Knight of Lincolnshire, lately martyred in Smithfield, by the Romish Pope's Upholders."[24] This title demonized her Catholic persecutors and reiterated her legitimacy and nobility which came from her father's honourable position. Bale thus argued that Askew's enemies were the papists, not the patriarchal authority of England in general. In Bale's publication, her story presented to new believers a vision of femininity that was strong in the new faith, one that fought religious battles without engaging with deeper questions of social hierarchy and patriarchy.

Askew's strong Protestant resolve worked to secure Bale's arguments, but her biography brought up questions of her righteousness and virtue, which Bale worked hard to secure and validate. At the age of fifteen, this strongly Protestant believer was married to Thomas Kyme, a Catholic, and eventually produced children. Askew's quest to be granted a divorce brought her to London, and resulted in her becoming closely involved in circles of the new Protestant faith. Her search for a divorce and her vocalized religious convictions

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[21] Crawford, *Women and Religion*, 24.
[22] Kesselring, "Representations of Women," 47.
[23] Ibid., 45.
[24] Bale, *Selected Works*, 147.

caught the attention of powerful men who sought to bring her, and those like her, down. As the case of Henry VIII demonstrated, divorce was a very serious matter, and Askew's audacity, as a woman seeking divorce, was virtually unprecedented: "Askew's actions leading up to her first arrest set her apart from most early modern Englishwomen."[25] Bale's writings dealt with his concern "that her leaving her husband would (as it indeed did) prompt criticism"[26] of Askew after her death. He was quick to defend Askew's remarkable and radical demands both by highlighting the aspects of her life that made her conventional, and supporting her pursuit of divorce based on scriptural evidence. Bale focused on the fact that Askew performed her wifely duties by bearing children, and he portrayed her departure from her husband's home as unwilling and necessary. He asserted that such a marriage was wrong in the eyes of God and by seeking a divorce, Askew was living up to her duties to God: "She coulde not thynke hym worthye of her marriage which so spyghtfullyes hated God the chefe autor of marriage."[27] Bale's interpretation of Askew's biography attempted to justify the radical aspects of her life through Scripture and the values of the new faith.

Askew's life presented a problem to Tudor England that was representative of the turmoil religious reformation brought to the kingdom: multi-faith marriage. Inter-faith marriage (if this term can be used in such an early stage of Protestantism) was a growing reality in early modern England, and was an issue that emerged again and again in subsequent English history.[28] Writings about Askew's situation brought this unprecedented predicament into English discussion and awareness: "If the husband were an unbeliever, or of a different faith, whom was a wife to obey? Initially, theologians stressed the equality of all believers before God. Individuals were responsible for their own salvation."[29] The idea that each person was responsible to God came out in Bale's defense of Askew, whose writing implicitly argued for an active role and responsibility for both men *and* women in their religious lives.

Because she was a woman, criticisms from Catholic writers were especially targeted at her transgressive nature; this was associated with sexual

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[25] Kennedy, *Just Anger*, 145.
[26] Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature*, 207.
[27] Beilin, *Redeeming Eve*, 92-3.
[28] Crawford, *Women and Religion*, 68.
[29] *Ibid.,* 51.

liberalism and misconduct, a taboo in early modern England which was considered immoral and unchristian. Bale defended Askew from Catholic writers who portrayed her as an evil woman, such as Robert Persons who described her as "ghospelling & ghossipinge where she might, & ought not."[30] These accusations implied that a woman ought not to use her voice in matters of public concern or where she was uneducated. A woman who publicly articulated a distain for existing order was looked upon as a threat, and in the religious realm "female martyrs' outspokenness could… be read as transgressive, disruptive, and distinctly unsaintly."[31] Therefore, in his martyrology, Bale painted a vision of Askew that highlighted her virtue, prudence and sensibility and downplayed any of her radical features. Bale clarified Askew's nature as characterized by constant devotion and unwavering faith, saying: "The gospel of Christ bare she in her heart, as did the holy maid Cecilia, and never after ceased from the study thereof, nor from godly communication and prayer."[32] For Bale, devotion to God through prayer and scriptural reading defended a woman from charges of promiscuity.

The very fact that Bale took these Catholic criticisms of Askew's honour seriously and made efforts to counter them meant that these criticisms did indeed express a fear present in Tudor society: the fear that a female voice, outside of male authority, was dangerous and a threat to the order which many English so vehemently protected. As the historian S.B. Monta suggested, strong feminine liberality in speech and action was often associated in this society with liberality in sexual conduct, which would only add to Bale's interest in downplaying Askew's strong voice in order to protect her legacy. Monta asserted that the phenomenon of martyrologists (often male) standing up for a female martyr was not uncommon: "Defending against such easily anticipated charges [of "wantonnesse"], martyrologists sever[ed] the connection between outspokenness and sexual misconduct, sometimes by softening a woman's words but more often by defending her purity of conscience *and* body, her virginity of spirit."[33] The reality in early modern England was that a woman's honour and

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[30] Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature*, 203.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] Bale, *Selected Works*, 141.
[33] Monta, *Literature and Martyrdom*, 203-204.

value was tied up not just in her mind, but in her body. Bale's defense of Askew's purity and honour in order to instill her into his canon of martyrs, showed the fears surrounding female empowerment and speech in early modern England. Unless securely under the guise of religion, a woman's speech and actions could be construed as potentially threatening to the power and honour of the system from where she came.

Bale's efforts to secure a place for Askew among Protestant martyrs shed light on English fears and changes surrounding femininity in a time when new religion caused a rethinking of most aspects of life. Although Bale's editorial notes worked to smooth over any radical aspects of Askew's story, both Bale and Askew presented a vision of woman which was slightly different for sixteenth-century England. Both writers implicitly argued for a more responsible role for women as believers and defenders of faith. Askew "presented herself independently of current definitions, and in the process, implied an alternate role for the religious woman."[34] In Askew's model, women, as Protestant Christians, had access to scripture and could develop a relationship with the gospel to apply it to their everyday lives. Askew did exactly this when she cited passages from the Bible in her defense, and expressed her voice in and through the established authority of Scripture. In his writings, Bale also "suggests that women must be learned in the Scriptures and unafraid to share by example and word of the light of the gospel."[35] Bale's writings emerged from the Protestant belief that each person had the ability to develop a relationship with God and worship through Scripture, and he extended this ability to female believers who, "as spouses of Christ, can attain a nobility of spirit that makes them worthy of participation in the affairs of the commonwealth."[36] However, the power to act out this ability, and the autonomy needed to engage in meaningful scriptural was not granted to the early modern woman. Askew's demise was an example of what happened to a woman who took on an active voice and role which challenged the religious power in sixteenth century England.

Although she suffered a grizzly fate, Askew did not die in vain; she left a legacy of female strength and steadfast belief. By being radical in both her

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[34] Beilin, *Redeeming Eve*, 30.
[35] Kesselring, "Representations of Women," 49.
[36] Ibid., 54.

pursuit for a divorce and her mastery of scripture, she projected an image of a Christian woman who was strong, independent and learned. Her *Examinations* left the memory of a woman who embodied these characteristics, yet was cunning enough to work within a system of oppression by appealing to certain gender biases and remaining within certain traditional gender expectations, such as motherhood. The ease with which Bale chose her words spoke to her validity as an intelligent Christian and her subtle approach in transmitting her experience. Askew is known to us today because of writers such as Bale, who saw in her a means to further their Protestant projects. Her patience and flexibility were not only what allowed her to engage with the powers of her era and ensured her place as a woman worth studying for her tactics and story, but were also emblematic of a successful and characteristically English approach to bringing about change.

Amazons in America: Wonder and Feminism, 1941-1973

Tim Hanley

By the late 1960s, Wonder Woman had entirely lost her powers. DC Comics decided to update Wonder Woman comics, retooling her so that she would appear more hip, and in doing so completely abandon her roots. Created in the early 1940s as an Amazon princess, Wonder Woman was, to quote an early issue, imbued with "the beauty of Aphrodite, the wisdom of Athena, the strength of Hercules and the speed of Mercury."[1] DC felt it was necessary to change Wonder Woman and had her break from her Greek mythological origins in the 1960s. Exchanging her star-spangled costume for trendier clothes, Wonder Woman went mod, leaving behind her Amazonian sisters and her divinely imparted powers. She moved permanently into the world of men not as Wonder Woman but as her alter ego, Diana Prince, continuing to fight crime, now with martial arts techniques learned from her Chinese mystic mentor, I Ching. This abandonment of Wonder Woman's heritage was tied to a continuing process of weakening the underlying feminist themes that had been present since her creation. Although she was part of the dominant patriarchal culture, Wonder Woman comics reflect recent work arguing that there was a considerable feminist presence in post-World War Two America. Her feminist themes of female unity and power, and advocacy of strong, independent women, made Wonder Woman a symbolic female hero, and an inspiration for the so-called "second wave" feminist movement.

This recent work challenges traditional interpretations of post-war America that views the 1950s and 1960s in a stereotypical binary in terms of

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[1] Charles Moulton, "Introducing Wonder Woman," *Sensation Comics 3*, in William Moulton Marston, *Wonder Woman Archives Volume I* (New York: DC Comics, 1998), 46.

women and feminism, where the 1950s are seen as conservative and the 1960s are seen as radical. Women of the 1950s are regularly thought of as submissive housewives, stay at home mothers whose lives were joyfully dedicated to keeping a neat and ordered home for their husbands. This image was particularly embodied in the television programs of the time, such as *The Donna Reed Show* and *Leave It To Beaver*. These women are typically seen as the opposites of the radical "women's libbers" of the late 1960s, who vocally opposed the homemaker ideal of the 1950s. This image of the happy housewife was challenged before the women's liberation movement began, in works like Betty Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique*. Released in 1963, Friedan showed that not all women were pleased with their role in post-war America and that many felt it was repressive.[2] Second wave feminists, emerging in the late 1960s, carried on this theme, advocating economic and political equality as they re-examined their homemaker roles and entered the workforce.[3] Historians in the 1970s and early 1980s looked back at the 1950s and their "studies of postwar culture found that government propaganda, popular magazines, and films reinforced traditional concepts of femininity and instructed women to subordinate their interests to those of returning male veterans."[4] Until the 1980s, scholarship generally maintained the stereotypes of the 1950s as a conservative, albeit repressive, time for women. The 1960s was viewed as radical and emerging out of the tumultuous atmosphere of that decade. However, the mid-1980s saw a re-examination of the 1950s, epitomized in a phrase from Eugenia Kaledin's *Mothers and More*, a book that argued against "the dominant myth of [women's] victimization."[5] Over the past twenty years, this revisionist scholarship argues that many women in the 1950s participated in movements and were involved in lifestyles contrary to the ideals of the dominant culture, and that "second-wave" feminism was not simply a result of a turbulent decade but grew from these early feminist women.

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[2] Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton, 1963)
[3] Estelle B. Freedman, *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002), 5.
[4] Joanne Meyerowitz, Ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 3.
[5] Eugenia Kaledin, *Mothers and More: American Women in the 1950s* (Boston: Twayne, 1984), xiii.

This re-examination of the 1950s can be divided into two categories: social movements and counter-cultural lifestyles. Women of the 1950s participated in activities such as union activism, the civil rights movement, and the fight for sexual freedom and birth control. Susan Rimby Leighow demonstrates how married women who worked as nurses in the 1950s fought for better working conditions, winning "not only part-time scheduling and higher pay rates but also concessions such as maternity leave and on-site child-care."[6] Working-class women in industry were actively involved in unions, carrying on advances made during the Second World War into the post-war era and gaining key concessions and benefits from employers that helped women continually move ahead over this decade.[7] Feminist historians like Ruth Feldstein, Dee Garrison and Margaret Rose have examined the role of women in the civil rights movement, where women of all races were actively involved in public protests from New York to California, fighting for equal rights and civil liberties for African-Americans, but also in California, for Mexican-Americans.[8] Also, the struggle for sexual freedom was fought throughout the 1950s, with women such as Margaret Sanger and Katherine Dexter McCormick continuing to work tirelessly to market a birth control pill that would be available for all women.[9] These are just some of the many ways revisionist historians have discovered women were involved in social movements of the 1950s, and it shows a rich heritage for the broader feminist movement that would emerge in the 1960s.

Women's involvement in counter-cultural activities is also a significant feature of this scholarship, and demonstrates that the dominant culture of the 1950s was not monolithic in its power. Some women reacted against the repressive ideals of the dominant culture, not finding fulfillment within the domestic sphere. Others ignored the domestic sphere entirely and engaged in

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[6] Susan Rimby Leighow, "An 'Obligation to Participate'," in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver*, 51.

[7] Dorothy Sue Cobble, "Recapturing Working-Class Feminism," in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver*, 74.

[8] Ruth Feldstein, "I Wanted The Whole World To See"; Dee Garrison, "Our Skirts Gave Them Courage"; Margaret Rose, "Gender and Civic Activism in Mexican Barrios in California"; in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver*.

[9] David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Random House, 1993), 282-288.

other lifestyles. Donna Penn explores the participation of women in the lesbian subculture and the reaction of authorities to this lifestyle, who saw lesbians as deviant and attempted to associated them with prostitutes in the minds of the American public.[10] Despite the attempts by authorities to curtail these activities, the lesbian subculture was a strong one in post-war America. Brett Harvey's oral history of women in the 1950s shows that many women had lesbian inclinations they acted on, despite harsh repression.[11] Women differed from cultural norms in other ways as well, performing illegal abortions before Roe v. Wade, and raising children as single parents.[12] Outside of sexuality, Wini Breines writes about the involvement of women in Beat culture, arguing that these young women "latched on to signs of otherness in music and subcultures, in effect rehearsing lives they hoped would be different from their mothers" and stating that "their explorations were the opening salvos in what came to be known as the women's movement."[13] This revisionist feminism shows that the 1950s was not simply an era of repressed housewives, but of women acting outside of cultural ideals in various forms. "Second wave" feminism was thus not a spontaneous movement stemming from the events of the 1960s as the actions of these women in the 1950s inspired and laid the groundwork for their feminist successors.

Arguably the most significant aspect of post-war America was the Cold War and its ramifications are personified by Joseph McCarthy, whose HUAC Senate Committee actively sought out communists during the years 1950-1954. McCarthyism became associated with the culture of fear that pervaded America as McCarthy's search for communists affected society by encouraging cultural homogeneity.[14] Because of this threat of communism, many things seen as abnormal were viewed with fear and anxiety, labeled deviant, and suppressed. Thus were American citizens compelled to be proper and upright citizens and to not engage in any activity that could be interpreted in any way as problematic.

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[10] Donna Penn, "The Sexualized Woman", in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver*, 376.
[11] Brett Harvey, *The Fifties: A Women's Oral History* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 175-199.
[12] Rickie Solinger, "Extreme Danger", in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver,* 335-336.
[13] Wini Breines, "The 'Other' Fifties", in Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver*, 402.
[14] David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1978), 21.

This anxiety was reflected in the culture, print, film and radio, which largely espoused the dominant beliefs of the time, often not because of any patriotic desire but out of fear that putting out anything questionable would result in accusations of communism, much like those that plagued the film industry.[15] McCarthy and HUAC were shut down in 1954, but the fear he created pervaded America for years afterwards, in part through cultural reinforcement. This repressive atmosphere makes the actions of 1950s women in terms of social movements and subcultures even more significant, and provides a key reason for the continual lessening of the underlying feminist themes in Wonder Woman comics.

Post-war America also saw the rise of mass culture, as the mass-produced, wide circulation of various media created the opportunity for standardization across these fields. The wartime economic boom carried on into the 1950s, creating disposable income for many Americans who could buy books and magazines, radios and eventually televisions, and go to movies. For decades, the same films, books and magazines had been available across the nation. National broadcasting organizations, such as NBC, ABC and CBS had aired programs nationwide for years and they made the transition into television as the 1950s began, transmitting uniform programming across the map.[16] These national forms of culture reached millions of Americans throughout the nation with the same messages. Many historians have examined mass culture, and this work gives considerable insight into the mindset of Americans.[17] For the post-war period, these examinations are especially apt in terms of youth culture. James Gilbert argues that "parents could no longer impress their value systems on children who were influenced as much by a new peer culture spread by comic books, radio, movies, and television, as by their elders."[18] Mass culture had significant influence on the citizenry, particularly the youth, and the mass

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15 Michael Barson and Steven Heller, *Red Scared!* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001), 90-107.

16 Halberstam, *The Fifties*, 188-194.

17 William Boddy, *Fifties Television: The Industry and its Critics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), Charlie Gillett, *The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll* (New York: Dell, 1972).

18 James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 3.

dissemination of comic books makes them a good source with which to analyze the post-war era.

The Cold War culture of fear and the influence of mass culture converged in the juvenile delinquency crisis of the mid-1950s. McCarthyist anxiety was arguably strongest in terms of its effects upon the impressionable youth of America, who had to be protected from any deviant influence to ensure they became patriotic and democratic Americans. In 1954, Dr. Fredric Wertham, a psychiatrist who worked at youth mental hygiene clinics in New York, published *Seduction of the Innocent*, in which he claimed that the violent stories and images in crime and horror comic books were a contributing factor in juvenile delinquency.[19] Soon after its publication, Democratic Senator Estes Kefauver held senate hearings to investigate juvenile delinquency in America, calling Dr. Wertham as an expert witness to discuss the fiendish influence of comic books.[20] To avoid a replay of McCarthy's detrimental investigation of the film industry, the comic industry acted quickly, voluntarily introducing a stringent code to be enforced by the Comic Code Authority.[21] The comic industry was unlike other entertainment industries of the period, as the power was held entirely at the top and writers and artists were merely wageworkers, allowing for substantial and sudden changes in creative direction. The Comic Code dramatically changed comic books as a whole. The majority of crime and horror books were cancelled, superhero books lost any gritty, *noirish* elements they had and began the descent into camp. Many companies went bankrupt as public outcry and severe rules forced the cancellation of significant portions of their lines.[22] The industry's immediate self-censorship dramatically demonstrates the levels at which anything seen as deviant, and thus potentially harmful, was suppressed in post-war America. The inherent opposition to the Cold War focus on social and cultural order exemplified by the juvenile delinquency crisis

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[19] Fredric Wertham, *Seduction of the Innocent* (New York: Rhinehart & Company, 1954).
[20] U.S. Senate, *Committee to Study Juvenile Delinquency* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1955).
[21] Amy Kiste Nyberg, *Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), 110-111.
[22] Bradford W. Wright, *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 181-182.

and proto-feminist activism is personified, albeit fictionally, in Wonder Woman and her comic books.

Wonder Woman first appeared in *All Star Comics #8*, released in December 1941, in a backup story written by Charles Moulton, the pen name of psychologist William Moulton Marston, and illustrated by Harry G. Peter. Wonder Woman was Diana, an Amazonian princess who lived on Paradise Island, an all-female utopia ruled by Queen Hippolyte and divinely hidden from the rest of the world by the Greek gods. The story began with an American warplane crashing on the island. Diana and her fellow Amazons rescued and cared for the unconscious pilot, Captain Steve Trevor, but by Amazonian law the man could not stay on the island. The goddesses Aphrodite and Athena informed Hippolyte that war was brewing in man's world and that Trevor must be returned there to fight, sent with an Amazon who would use her powers to fight evil. Diana, who was in love with Trevor, won the tournament to decide which Amazon would leave Paradise Island and took Trevor back to America.[23] She created the alter ego of Diana Prince, an army nurse, and protected Trevor and America as Wonder Woman. The character was a huge success and soon appeared in three monthly books, each of which sold well over a million copies every month, often outselling *Superman* and *Batman*.[24]

Appearing just as the United States entered the Second World War, Wonder Woman became part of the war effort within and through her comics. Athena tells Hippolyte an Amazon must be sent back to America: "American liberty and freedom must be preserved, […] for America, the last citadel of democracy, and of equal rights for women, needs your help!"[25] Wonder Woman fought Nazi operatives acting within America such as Dr. Poison, a Nazi super villain who tried to poison American troops,[26] and Baroness Paula von Gunther, a Gestapo agent who captured and hypnotized American women to make them support the Nazi cause.[27] As Diana Prince, Wonder Woman worked first as an Army nurse and then as an Air Force secretary, helping the armed forces with

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[23] *All Star Comics 8*, in Marston, *Wonder Woman Archives,* 8-16.
[24] Gerard Jones, *Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters and the Birth of the Comic Book* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 211.
[25] *All Star Comics 8*, in Martson, *Archives*, 15.
[26] *Sensation Comics 2*, in Marston, *Archives*, 31-44.
[27] *Sensation Comics 4*, in Marston, *Archives*, 59-72.

her day job as well as participating in local espionage missions for her boss.[28] Furthermore, starting with *Sensation Comics #2*, nearly every issue of Wonder Woman's adventures ended with a graphic that stated: "For Victory: Buy United States War Bonds and Stamps."[29] Wonder Woman served as an example of proper wartime behavior during a period when the government actively encouraged women to participate in the war effort through propaganda. She was a sort of super-powered Rosie the Riveter, with her comics demonstrating to girls and women the importance of contributing to the war effort. Wonder Woman comics were part of the dominant culture, and from her very creation she reflected the government propaganda of the time, exemplifying an ideal of patriotism for women.

However, beyond the propaganda there were underlying feminist themes instilled in the character by her creator. William Moulton Marston had feminist leanings, and these beliefs were reflected within his comic books. Marston thought that men, with their proclivity towards power and violence, were destroying society and that the patriarchy should be replaced by the rule of strong and independent women. In an interview with *Family Circle*, he stated: "The one outstanding benefit to humanity from the First World War was the great increase in the strength of women - physical, economic, mental. […] They discovered that they were potentially as strong as men – in some ways stronger".[30] In a letter to a colleague, Marston wrote that he saw Wonder Woman as "psychological propaganda for the new type of woman who should, I believe, rule the world."[31] He saw this rule as one of permanent peace, saying: "When women rule, there won't be any more [war] because the girls won't want to waste time killing men."[32] To Marston, women were strong, rational and powerful, and he had many theories about how men should submit to the "loving authority" of women. His own beliefs are very similar to what would

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[28] *Wonder Woman 1*, in Marston, *Archives*, 172.
[29] *Sensation Comics 10*, in Marston, *Archives*, 198-211.
[30] Olive Richard, "Our Women are our Future," *Family Circle* (14 August 1942) <http://www.wonderwoman-online.com/articles/fc-marston.html>.
[31] Charles Lyons, "Suffering Sappho! A Look at the Creator and Creation of Wonder Woman," *Comic Book Resources* (23 August 2006) <http://www.comicbookresources.com/news/newsitem.cgi?id=8197>.
[32] Richard, "Our Women," <http://www.wonderwoman-online.com/articles/fc-marston.html>.

become known as maternal feminism, or simply maternalism, which emphasizes the differences between the sexes and "embrace[s] and essentialist view that women are naturally more peaceful and less militarist than men."[33] Marston saw women as far better suited to lead, based both on their ability to be as strong and capable as men and their inherent maternal qualities that would allow them to lead with his "loving authority." He believed in equality and difference, and both were central to his theories. These progressive attitudes about women underlie his comics, and it is clear that Wonder Woman was the embodiment of his feminist leanings and his belief in the power of strong and independent women.

Marston's feminist values manifested themselves in the comics in several different ways. First, the character herself was inherently progressive, created as an equal to the male superheroes of the time. While there were other female superheroes who came before Wonder Woman, they were vastly out-numbered by the male superheroes of the time. Wonder Woman's powers rivaled those of the original superhero, Superman, and she was the opposite of the stereotypical damsel in distress, regularly rescuing Steve Trevor from nefarious villains. The stories also reflected Marston's feminist beliefs, as well as the early feminist activism described in revisionist feminism historiography. Wonder Woman rarely looked to men for help when fighting villains, instead relying on her Amazon sisters or her American friends for assistance. When she needed a distraction so she could save Trevor, rather than getting the army to help, Wonder Woman went straight to Holliday College for Women, enlisting the marching band to help her.[34] These girls, led by Etta Candy, became a permanent feature of Wonder Woman comics, helping her in nearly every issue. Although she fought regular villains, Wonder Woman fought for social issues as well, confronting a businessman who was marking up milk prices drastically[35] and a store manager who underpaid and overworked his employees.[36] In both these situations, Wonder Woman was motivated by talking to working-class women who told her of their plight. These examples of social activism, female

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[33] Freedman, *No Turning Back*, 330-331.
[34] *Sensation Comics 2*, in Marston, *Archives*, 40.
[35] *Sensation Comics 7*, in Marston, *Archives,* 101-114.
[36] *Sensation Comics 8*, in Marston, *Archives,* 115-128.

unity and support, and both equality and difference with males show that Marston's feminist ideas were echoed in his comics.

There is, however, a major problem with Marston's supposedly feminist comic book. Marston was extremely fond of placing his female characters in bondage situations, whereby a character would not only be bound in a variety of ways but dominated by whoever had her ensnared. An infamous story, "Villainy, Incorporated", "published in 1948, and apparently completed just before Marston's death, contained no fewer than seventy-five bondage panels."[37] For Wonder Woman, this bondage took two key forms. First, it placed her in a submissive role towards the villain, usually male, who had her bound. However, this was not just in terms of being tied up and unable to escape, as chaining Wonder Woman's bracelets together made her lose all her powers. The bracelets were a reminder of Hercules' imprisonment of the Amazons during his mythical twelve labours, and the first time Wonder Woman's bracelets and chained together a vision of her mother appears saying: "Daughter, if any man welds chains on your bracelets, you will become weak as we Amazons were when we surrendered to Hercules."[38] By depriving her of her strength, bondage gave men power over Wonder Woman and allowed them to control her. Secondly, bondage was also depicted in a positive light. Visiting her home in *Sensation Comics #6*, Wonder Woman engaged in games with her Amazon sisters involving lassoing and trying up each other,[39] and in a later issue stated: "On Paradise Island […] we play many binding games", demonstrating "the safest method of tying a girl's arms."[40] In *Sensation Comics #40*, Wonder Woman gleefully allowed some of her female friends to tie her to a post, telling them to "bind me as tight as you can, girls, with the biggest ropes and chains you can find!"[41] Being bound was clearly enjoyable for Wonder Woman, and her Amazon sisters, and took on an erotic quality in their depiction. The prevalence of bondage is very problematic, as it both objectifies and sexualizes Wonder Woman in a

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[37] Les Daniels, *DC Comics: Sixty Years of the World's Favorite Comic Book Heroes* (New York: Bulfinch Press, 1995), 61.
[38] *Sensation Comics 4*, in Marston, *Archives*, 69.
[39] *Sensation Comics 6*, in Marston, *Archives*, 87-100.
[40] SuperDickery*, Suffering Sappho!*, 2006.
<http://www.superdickery.com/bondage/3.html>.
[41] William Moulton Marston, *Sensation Comics 40* (New York: DC Comics, April 1945).

submissive role, where the men who bound her are in power. This becomes even more of an obstacle to the feminist argument when Marston's own comments are considered.

William Moulton Marston, though arguably progressive in terms of his theories of female rule, had a very unorthodox approach to bondage and submission. He explicitly confirmed the erotic element many older readers saw in his Wonder Woman comics, stating: "Giving to others, being controlled by them, submitting to other people cannot possibly be enjoyable without a strong erotic element."[42] He further says: "I have developed elaborate ways of having Wonder Woman and other characters confined... confinement to [Wonder Woman] and the Amazons is just a sporting game, an actual enjoyment of being subdued."[43] To Marston, bondage and submission was tied to his ideas of female rule, as "only when the control of self by others is more pleasant than the unbound assertion of self in human relationships can we hope for a stable, peaceful human society."[44] He believed that submitting to others, demonstrated in his Wonder Woman comics through bondage, was the only way to achieve peace. Marston's own theories suggest that men should be submitting as much as women, especially in terms of his ideas of female rule, but in his comics, women are bound disproportionately more so than men. It is primarily his thoughts on the erotic elements of submission and women's enjoyment thereof that are clearly demonstrated in his comics; the other element of the argument, of males submitting to females, is largely neglected. While Marston's own theories have some early feminist leanings, the execution of them in the comics calls into questions the underlying feminist themes of Wonder Woman. By focusing on the sexual aspects, and weakening Wonder Woman through bondage, Marston undermines his own point, objectifying and sexualizing his creation instead of showing the supposed larger benefits of submission to others. What comes across is fetishism as the pervasive bondage only serves to weaken Wonder Woman and place her under the power of men. Nonetheless, the implications of this constant bondage were likely lost on his target audience of children, who bought the adventures of the strong, female character in droves.

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[42] Jones, *Men of Tomorrow*, 210.
[43] CastleKeys, *Wonder Woman,* <http://www.castlekeys.com/Pages/wonder.html>.
[44] *Ibid.*

Though Marston died in 1947, subsequent writers stayed relatively faithful to his vision and style and Wonder Woman continued her duality of being part of the dominant culture and its beliefs and espousing underlying feminism. When the juvenile delinquency crisis hit Wonder Woman was not spared from the changes. While Wertham focused primarily on crime and horror comics, he levied a brief and fierce attack against Wonder Woman, saying, "for girls she is a morbid ideal."[45] He found fault with many of the characteristics of Wonder Woman discussed above, such as her strength and independence, and her association with the Holliday girls. Quoting *Psychiatric Quarterly*, Wertham wrote that Wonder Woman "portrays [an] extremely sadistic hatred of all males in a framework which is plainly Lesbian."[46] To Wertham, Wonder Woman was the exact opposite of what a woman should be. He labeled her strength as morbid, her independence from men as sadistic, and her association with women as lesbianism.[47] Wertham's associations were strong ones in Cold War America, and the collective, self-censoring response of the comic community to *Seduction of the Innocent* and the Kefauver hearings affected Wonder Woman significantly.

Since her creation, Wonder Woman comics had maintained a binary of being part of the dominant, patriarchal culture while simultaneously containing feminist themes. This binary ended as the comic industry responded to Wertham, and Wonder Woman became entirely subsumed by the dominant culture, losing her feminist leanings over the next decade. The initial changes were small but influential. All of DC Comics superhero books became more fantastic, moving from normal crimes and super villains to time travel and alien encounters as science fiction merged with superheroics and the books descended into campy adventure stories.[48] Beyond the stories, Wonder Woman's character changed and she became less of an Amazon warrior and more of a stereotypical 1950s woman, in fact putting a great deal of energy into trying to get Steve Trevor to marry her. Her origins were changed so that her powers were no longer the product of her highly trained Amazon body and mind but rather

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[45] Wertham, *Seduction*, 193.
[46] Wertham, *Seduction*, 193.
[47] *Ibid.*
[48] T.L. Canote, "Wonder Woman," *JSA Member Profiles*, 1999.

simply a gift from the Greek gods, a gift that could be taken away and which was not innate to her character.[49] She became increasingly separated from her origins until, in *Wonder Woman #178*, released in October 1968, Wonder Woman completely abandoned her Amazon roots and went mod.[50] She opened a fashion boutique, started training under a male Chinese martial arts master, and fought crime as a regular, powerless human being. Over the past decade, Wonder Woman's feminist roots had been weakened but she nonetheless had maintained a key link to Marston's vision of female rule: the utopian Paradise Island and her Amazon sisters. Without this, Wonder Woman lost the last thread of the underlying feminism instilled in her by her creator and became entirely fused with the dominant culture.

It was at this point that Wonder Woman's connection to feminism became clear. The proto-feminist social movements identified by revisionist historians had evolved into the women's liberation movement of the late 1960s. One of the most prominent women in this movement was Gloria Steinem, who, along with many other feminists, was not pleased by this drastic shift in Wonder Woman.[51] These women actively campaigned for Wonder Woman to return to her Amazon roots, arguing that by changing Wonder Woman's character DC Comics had stripped Wonder Woman of her strength. Their campaign succeeded, and as Wonder Woman was about to be restored, Gloria Steinem launched *Ms. Magazine*, a publication dedicated to women and feminist issues. The cover of the first issue was emblazoned with a picture of Wonder Woman in her full Amazon regalia and the headline: "Wonder Woman for President." Inside the magazine was an article celebrating her restoration, including a reprint of Marston's original origin story from *All Star Comics #8*. Joanne Edgar, a *Ms. Magazine* co-editor, succinctly captured Wonder Woman's plight: "Wonder Woman had feminist beginnings, but like many of us, she went into a decline in the 'fifties."[52] The vocal response of the women's liberation movement clearly shows that Wonder Woman comics had influenced the generation that followed her creation. Despite being part of the dominant patriarchal culture, Wonder

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[49] *Wonder Woman 105* (New York: DC Comics, April 1959).
[50] *Wonder Woman 178* (New York: DC Comics, October 1968).
[51] Daniels, *DC Comics: Sixty Years,* 156.
[52] Joanne Edgar, "Wonder Woman Revisited," *Ms. Magazine* 1:1 (1972), 52.

Woman had become a heroic symbol for these women, representing female strength and independence in the midst of a male dominated industry.

Wonder Woman's connection to revisionist feminism is not a direct parallel, but they share certain themes and ultimately their influence results in the same outcome. These early feminist movements had been largely ignored by the dominant culture of post-war America, operating quietly, almost secretly, while women were portrayed as subservient, happy homemakers. Wonder Woman's underlying feminist beliefs had been largely ignored as well because Wonder Woman, as part of the culture, helped to reinforce these dominant beliefs from the Second World War until the late 1960s. Her feminist inclinations could also be said to be subtle, existing as a concealed theme within her comics, often overshadowed by the other aspects of the book. Where social activism slowly grew from World War Two onward, Wonder Woman diminished from this period on. By the time these movements had evolved into the broader women's liberation movement, Wonder Woman had lost all her feminist elements. Nonetheless, both forms of feminism had existed outside of the social order of post-war America with these early movements being quiet, hidden and suppressed if found out. Also, Wonder Woman's underlying feminist themes were called out and suppressed by the juvenile delinquency crisis. While written by William Moulton Marston, Wonder Woman comics reflected his early maternal feminist beliefs and espoused his support of strong, independent women, female unity, and women's equality with, and difference from, men. Though there were problems in terms of Marston's regular use of bondage in a fetishist manner, what emerged from his comics is a powerful female superhero, the equal of any male superhero, who, because of the benefits of being raised in a female utopia, was able to defend America and help create world peace. Ultimately, the most significant connection between Wonder Woman comics and early feminism emerges from the women's liberation movement. This movement, which modern scholars argue 1950s feminism laid the groundwork for, identified itself with Wonder Woman, rallying to her defense when DC stripped her of her heritage and strength, thus connecting the two. Much like the women's liberation movement looked back at Wonder Woman as a female hero, it owed its existence to the real female heroes who had come before it and paved the way for its broader, public movement.

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