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People are trapped in history, and history is trapped in them.

-James Baldwin, *Notes on a Native Son*

Editor's Note

"When I was younger," Mark Twain once wrote, "I could remember anything, whether it happened or not, but I am getting old, and soon I shall remember only the latter." Is to get old to forget? As our faces wizen with age, do our memories likewise contract? Or, is to get old an opportunity to reflect? If we cannot remember the details with meticulous accuracy, can we at least mull them over, discuss them, debate them, and argue them?

When I was younger, I couldn't remember anything. In my youthful haste I would gloss over facts. I was almost disdainful of details. They were insignificant, I was petulant, we had an understanding. It became quite clear as I grew older that this understanding was not a fortuitous one. I struggled to recall highlights of the previous night's Blue Jays game. I had trouble remembering names of characters in films and novels. Perhaps that's one of the great benefits of old age: as we slow down physically, our attention spans expand and we pay greater attention to the smaller things.

I write this while in transit to New York to visit what could be my home in the immediate future. There is no better time to reflect than sitting in a quiet airport terminal on flight delay. Time is slow and patience must be adopted by creed. It seems fitting that as I get ready to embark on the next part of my life, indeed as I get older, I am forced to stop, and thus compelled to reflect. But I am choosing not to grow wistful as ten undergraduate essays sit before me, reminding me of the last four years of my life. Not only are these essays tools for refection of my own undergraduate experience, they *are* reflections, reflections of what university is all about. They exude intellectual vibrancy, investment and sustained belief in an idea, and staunch dedication to a craft. They reflect a love for history. They are reminders of the beauties of the experience, the good and the bad (if there ever were any): the stale-coffee breath at 2 a.m.; the parched, de-hydrated lips; the hopeless, depressed pacing; the camaraderie with fellow students; the sudden burst of creativity; the self-fulfilling triumph of completing something to be proud of. Regardless of how old I am, these things I'll always remember.

I hope the following essays will help you remember them too.

Joshua Tapper, Editor-in-Chief

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Economic Liberalism and the Creation of Post-War Public Housing in Halifax, Nova Scotia

Chris Parsons

In the mid-1950s Halifax underwent a great deal of economic and spatial change. Attempts to reinvigorate the city's ailing economy changed the physical landscape of the Halifax as new buildings and roadways were erected. These changes were part of continent wide building boom as Canadian officials and businessmen set out to create new urban infrastructure to draw residents and shoppers back to Canada's downtowns. The zeitgeist of this new age of Canadian planning in the mid-twentieth century is embodied in the introduction to Robert W. Collier's 1974 book, *Contemporary Cathedrals*:

> The most exciting area of the city has become the central business district where redevelopment is replacing aging commercial sections with the new-style, single project, multi-million-dollar, large scare, multi-level, multi-purpose complex. Such developments have been called "vertical subdivisions". Enthusiastic builders call them "cities within cities". They have presented the city with a score of new problems and risks, but they have also tended to reverse the centrifugal movement that was carrying the more attractive elements of the city to its outer rim. While urban planners worried about the decay of the city's core, and downtown merchants gloomily watched trade shift to the suburban shopping centres, enterprising buccaneers suddenly appeared on the scene to reconstruct the city on bold new lines.[1]

These "enterprising buccaneers" required vacant spaces on which to build and in Halifax this required the destruction of a number of working class neighbourhoods. The most famous of these areas was Africville, an African Canadian community on the city's northern edge which was demolished over a

[1] Robert W. Collier, *Contemporary Cathedrals* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1974), 1.

two year period between 1964 and 1966.[2] While Africville remains the most famous slum clearance in post-war Halifax, it was neither the only nor the first. Prior to 1962, the area just north of City Hall was overcrowded and filled with wooden tenement buildings. The area, known as the Jacob Street neighbourhood, was home to several hundred people, mostly working class families renting rooms from landlords. By 1962, virtually all of the area had been demolished to make way for new apartment buildings and commercial space; the families were relocated. Many of these families moved to a new public housing project in Halifax's north end: Mulgrave Park. First proposed in 1956 and officially opened in 1963, it was explicitly built to house families displaced from the downtown as a consequence of urban renewal. The case of Mulgrave Park demonstrates the ways in which governments do not always merely respond to need, but often create new needs, whether intentionaly or not, through the implementation of other policies and projects. The construction of the housing project was not primarily a government attempt to deal with an existing shortage in affordable housing, but was instead a part of a wider redevelopment program designed to create an environment in which private enterprise could provide the residential and commercial development needed for the health of the city as a whole.

Mulgrave Park was not Halifax's first encounter with public housing: the first public housing development in Canada was built in the City's north end in the wake of the Halifax Explosion in 1919. The development, the Hydrostones or Richmond, was a middle income neighbourhood built to replace homes destroyed by the disaster in Halifax's harbour.[3] However, the Hydrostone development was an exception to Canadian pre-1930 housing policy, not the rule. The neighborhood was built as an emergency solution to a disaster which destroyed a part of the city and was aimed at middle class and respectable working class families; it was not a policy response to long term structural poverty. According to Bacher, after 1920, housing was almost a non-issue

[2] Jennifer Nelson, *Razing Africville* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

[3] John Bacher "From Study to Reality: The Establishment of Public Housing in Halifax, 1930 - 1953," *Acadienis,*120; Albert Rose, *Canadian Housing Policies, 1935 - 1980* (Toronto: Butterworth, 1980), 27.

amongst government officials at the federal level until the 1930s, and without federal money projects could not be built. During this period of neglect housing issues were perceived as self solving through the free market - indeed housing crises often appeared to solve themselves due to the cyclical nature of housing problems; post-war housing shortages slowly leveled themselves off as landlords built new buildings or subdivided existing ones and cities expanded. These temporary alleviations of problems were combined with a liberal ideology in which "experts placed the blame for the most serious interludes of crisis on the very persons who suffered from the worst housing conditions."[4] As a result, most federal officials placed housing policy on the back burner believing that it was best left to the free market.

The first steps toward a coherent social housing policy in Nova Scotia occurred in April 1932 when the legislature passed the Nova Scotia Housing Act. The act was essentially a subsidy for landlords and builders and provided financial support to private investors. It did not include any provisions for public housing or rent subsidy, but did allow for the creation of the Nova Scotia Housing Commission (NSHC). The act demonstrated the government's hands off approach to housing, and the belief that subsidies would be both too costly and too damaging to the free market.[5] Despite its limitations the legislation did show that the provincial government recognized that a lack of affordable housing was an issue in the province, particularly in Halifax, and what was in dispute was how the situation should be remedied. It was not until 1934 that anyone was actually appointed to sit on the NSHC and its membership was primarily "moderate supporters of social housing, representing churches and social clubs."[6] The Commission was set up to make recommendations to Premier MacDonald about how to solve the housing crunch, but was stifled by its own liberalism and the unwillingness of government to directly involve itself in the construction of affordable housing. The NSHC was unwilling to suggest direct government intervention but its own proposals of low interest loans and tax breaks for private investors were not enough to entice businessmen to build

[4] Bacher, *Keeping to the Market Place*, 65.
[5] Bacher, "From Study to Reality", 122-23.
[6] Ibid., 123.

and maintain low rent housing of a reasonable quality.[7] While the government of Nova Scotia recognized in 1933 that there was a lack of affordable housing and struggled for years to find a solution that did not lead to direct government intervention, it would be two more years before the federal government even acknowledged a problem. It was not until the federal government noted the lack of affordable housing in Canada and contributed money to programs for both housing and urban renewal that Halifax began to see major changes in housing policy.

In 1935 R.B. Bennett's government passed the Dominion Housing Act, which "transferred the initiative for social housing from the provincial government to the federal level."[8] Unfortunately, despite the federal government's assumption of this new responsibility, it did not act on it in a meaningful way until 1941. In 1938 the National Housing Act (NHA) was passed but Canada's involvement in the war prevented any real action from being taken. While the war prevented action in the 1938 statute, in 1941 the NHA served as a catalyst for the creation of Wartime Housing Limited, a crown corporation which helped fund almost 46 000 units of public housing. The NHA, most notably, opened up communication between municipalities and the federal government on housing issues. In 1944 a new National Housing Act was passed which increased federal government involvement in housing as part of an attempt to prevent the post-war depression that followed the First World War. In 1945 the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) was created by the passing of the Central Mortgage and Housing Act. The CMHC was a crown corporation created to assist municipalities and provincial governments in expanding and modernizing housing in Canada. By the early 1950s it had absorbed all the smaller federal organizations and became the sole federal agency responsible for carrying out the goals of the National Housing Act.[9] During the years immediately after the war the CMHC essentially continued the war time housing strategy, creating temporary rentals for veterans and their families. In 1949 the National Housing Act was amended once again to create a program whereby the federal government would pay 75% of the capital costs of

[7] Bacher, "From Study to Reality", 122-23.
[8] Ibid., 125.
[9] Rose, *Housing Policy in Canada*, 27-9.

subsidized rental housing, with the provinces paying the remaining portion.[10]

Halifax had benefitted from the creation of Wartime Housing Limited, with 961 units of new housing constructed or under construction in 1942. However, these new units only helped to relieve the added pressure of war time residents in Halifax, most of whom were soldiers and military families. Overcrowding remained a problem despite the increased housing: a 199 unit complex completed in 1942 received 1,000 applications.[11] The city had grown quickly, with its population jumping from approximately 65,000 in the prewar years to 84,195 in 1944. The end of the war did not bring an end to the housing crunch as veterans returning from overseas searched for homes. After the war CMHC assisted in the construction of two buildings that, combined, created 287 new units; they filled up quickly, though, and in 1948 there was a 900-person waiting list for temporary shelters designated for veterans. In 1950 however, most of the housing was sold off to private buyers at a cost of $1,700 to $2,300 per unit, well outside of the reach of many veterans.[12] While much of the early veterans housing was sold to private owners, Halifax would become one of the first cities to take advantage of the 1949 amendment to the NHA with the construction of the Bayers Road housing project. Bayers Road accommodated 161 families, and received roughly 1,000 applications. Only families making between $1,500 and $3,200 were admitted and rising above, or falling out of, that bracket could lead to eviction.[13] This was Halifax's first post-war publicly operated low income housing project, but, in having to initially turn away 839 families, it was quite clear that the project was unable to meet the needs of the city. Much like the Hydrostones in the wake of the First World War, Bayers Lake was considered an emergency response to a crisis, not part of a sustained response to Halifax's long term housing shortage. Officials in Halifax continued to reject large scale, long term public housing as a solution to the crisis, and instead hoped that private companies would be willing to invest in housing. It was not until 1956 that an attempt to overhaul the city's housing

[10] Bacher, *From Study to Reality,* 132.
[11] Ibid., 128.
[12] Ibid., 130-2.
[13] Ibid., 133.

would begin in earnest, but public housing would be a side effect of this effort, not the main goal.

Amendments to National Housing Act in 1956 provided municipalities with funding to be used for urban renewal in order "to assist in the clearance, replanning, rehabilitation and modernization of blighted or sub-standard areas,"[14] and Halifax used this newly available funding to commission a report on Halifax's downtown core. A redevelopment plan for Halifax was authored by University of Toronto planning-professor Gordon Stephenson and was submitted to council in 1957. The Stephenson report became the blueprint for slum clearances, rezoning and construction projects that would alter Halifax's physical and social geography over a two-decade period. In July 1956 Stephenson was hired to identify problems facing Halifax's downtown and to make suggestions on how to solve these problems. Stephenson commuted between Toronto and Halifax several times over an eleven-month period and his report was submitted to council on August 28, 1957. The *Mail-Star* reported that council enthusiastically accepted the report and immediately created a three-person committee to investigate the implementation of Stephenson's recommendations.[15] The plan was taken up with great zeal by councillors and at a later meeting one alderman referred to the report as "the Civic Bible for future development."[16] In the years following 1957, the city council and staff would treat it like holy scripture: refusing to challenge its assumptions, taking it as literal truth and attempting to live their lives, at least when it came to city planning, based on its words. Almost every single recommendation made in the report was implemented by the mid-1970s, so a brief discussion of the report's content is useful for understanding the actions of city officials in the following years.

The first thing that becomes obvious when reading the Stephenson Report is that its author spent far more time describing Halifax than he did making explicit suggestions for redevelopment. His descriptions of Halifax are at times laudatory, particularly when he wrote about government buildings such as Province House and City Hall. At other times he is far less charitable. His

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[14] City of Halifax, *A Redevelopment Plan of Halifax: Supplementary Volume,* 1957 (Halifax, NS: 1957), 21.

[15] "Stephenson Report Submitted to Council", *The Mail-Star*, August 29, 1957.

[16] City Council Minutes, City of Halifax, December 3, 1958, 666.

descriptions of the slums of Halifax are vivid depictions of squalid living conditions, and are critical of landlords and inhabitants. In both his observations and his recommendations, Stephenson made use of a major recurring metaphor: he consistently discussed the city as if it were the body of a living organism. Stephenson used the metaphor of a sick body in need of curing and suggested that by "curing" one section one could prevent the slums from spreading throughout the city. He wrote that "the ill-health of any one part will in time affect the others."[17] In light of his extensive use of biological metaphors, Stephenson's use of the term "the heart of the city" at various points in the report takes on added significance. Just as the human heart pumps blood needed to keep the body alive, the city's heart controlled the economy of the entire region surrounding it and a healthier heart would lead to an economically healthier city, and region, as a whole: "Clearance and redevelopment in the city will undoubtedly increase the efficiency of the hub for the metropolitan region, and remove some of the worst slums in the older parts."[18] While Stephenson believed that various parts of the city had become unhealthy, he still believed that that illness could be stopped. He likened redevelopment to preventative medicine and argued that by investing in slum clearances and redevelopment "now" the city could prevent the blight from spreading and in doing so increase the overall health of the city.[19]

Stephenson was insistent that the clearance of the tenement buildings located between city hall and Cogswell Street was a necessity for the health of the city. He believed that the worst section of this area was the row of low apartment buildings on Jacob Street. Jacob Street no longer exists in Halifax, but it was a short street which ran East/West, perpendicular to Barrington Street in the space which is now occupied by Scotia Square. Stephenson's description of the Jacob Street area, which included Jacob Street, Argyle Street and Market Street, was far from flattering:

> in almost every sense, the worst part of the Central area lies between the City Hall and Jacob Street. With the exception of the

[17] City of Halifax, *A Redevelopment Plan of Halifax*, 1957 (Halifax, NS, 1957), 23.
[18] Ibid., 22.
[19] Ibid.

> blocks between Barrington and Argyle Streets, it is in a generally deplorable condition. Here are some of the worst tenements, and dirty cinder sidewalks merge with patches of cleared land littered with rubbish. It is suggested that the clearing of this area should have high priority. It will provide well placed and needed sites of commercial premises. In its present state of decay and stagnation it is repelling to good commercial development.[20]

Between 1959 and 1967 residents of the privately owned tenement buildings on Jacob Street and its surrounding regions were evicted, and the buildings were purchased or expropriated from their landlords. The process was slow and done in piecemeal over the course of almost a decade.[21] Stephenson made no mention of the small businesses that were found in the area, nor does he offer any positive descriptions of the social lives of the residents. For Stephenson everything about the Jacob Street area was a blight which had to be removed before it spread to the rest of the city.

> The report's major recomendation called for the sweeping away the worst housing in the City, which is in the vicinity of Jacob and Market Streets. This would provide excellently placed commercial sites, and a much needed road improvement by connecting Cogswell Street to Water Street on a new alignment.[22]

In late 1958 and early 1959, Halifax City Council debated how to go about clearing the Central Redevelopment Area. During late 1958 a handful of buildings in the downtown were purchased from their owners for assessed value plus 5%. The majority of the building owners were land lords who lived elsewhere in the city and rented out the properties to low income families and single men. On May 14, 1959 council resolved to hold a public meeting as the first step in the expropriation of more privately owned properties in the

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[20] *City of Halifax, A Redevelopment Plan of Halifax,* 22.

[21] The Cogswell Interchange was not completed until 1974, and slum clearances continued well into the 1970s.

See Doehler, *Scotia Square*, Collier *Contemporary Cathedrals,* and Gertrude Knight, "Letter to Council of September 14, 1972" (MG 100 Vol. 153 #25 Nova Scotia Public Archives).

[22] *City of Halifax, A Redevelopment Plan of Halifax,* 53.

downtown core.[23] The public meeting on expropriation took place on June 25, 1959 and was held in the Council Chamber of City Hall, just a few hundred metres from Jacob Street. Notice of the meeting was served two weeks prior through advertising in the local newspapers.[24] The meeting was ostensibly an opportunity for members of the public to provide input on whether or not the proposed expropriations of the privately owned buildings in the Central Redevelopment Area should go forward. However, once the public was given the opportunity to express opinions on the expropriations, city council members ultimately decided the fate of buildings and their residents.[25] While technically expropriation could be challenged in court, only wealthy landowners could afford a lawyer to challenge the city. In addition, only property owners, not the renters who actually lived in the Jacob Street area, had legal standing to challenge expropriation in the courts. Even if a property owner chose to take the city to court, city council believed that the legal system would merely serve as a rubber stamp for council's decision. One Alderman remarked that the city, "wouldn't have to defend an action as it [a legal appeal] would be purely a formality."[26]

Despite council's view that the meeting was nothing more than a procedural hoop through which they had to jump, the public hearing was held and a handful of Haligonians expressed concerns over the city's plan. However, no residents of the area appeared before council to express opinions on the plan; instead only landlords and their representatives spoke. Frank Medjuck, a lawyer representing the owner of 12 buildings in the area and himself a holder of property which was up for expropriation, summed up the concerns of many of the representatives of property owners when he expressed in the meeting that he and his client

> object to the terms of compensation. We feel this Redevelopment program is a very good thing. But there first should be individual negotiations for these properties. There are other instances where properties are more valuable and should be discussed on an individual basis."[27]

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[23] City of Halifax, Council Minutes, May 14, 1959, 330.
[24] Ibid., 326.
[25] Ibid., 329.
[26] Ibid., 330.
[27] City Council Minutes, June 25, 1959, 457.

The majority of those who spoke at the meeting supported redevelopment and either wanted the time frame changed or wanted more compensation for property that they, or their employer, owned. The Mayor captured the sentiment of the room when he rhetorically asked as land owner: "You are not objecting to the City taking your property for Redevelopment; you are objecting to the question of compensation?"[28] The discussion that took place that night was a discussion about who would get paid how much and what time lines for sales and relocating businesses would look like. No one expressed concern for the families that were to be evicted from their homes.

Discussions about what to do with the residents displaced by redevelopment took place during the same time period as expropriation discussions but occurred mainly within the confines of the three-person redevelopment committee of the Halifax city council. Stephenson's report called for the building of a new housing project to accommodate the people who would be displaced by the slum clearances. In November, 1957 a plan was formulated to contact CMHC to officially request funding to build a 300 unit public housing project with the city paying part of the province's 25% share. City staff had previously contacted CMHC staff at an informal level and as a result a favourable response was received within a month; the committee then agreed to raise the needed funds through the issuing of 15 and 25 year bonds. The Halifax Housing Authority, a provincially run organization which operated the Bayers Road project, would operate Mulgrave Park after it was completed. The city, the housing authority and CMHC would jointly oversee the construction of the project.[29] This joint oversight of construction would quickly prove problematic.

Early in the process the council's Housing Committee, renamed the Redevelopment Committee in December of 1957, began attempting to micromanage the project, throwing it wildly off schedule. Initially it was projected that the majority of units would be completed on June 1st, 1959, but due to delays it would not see its first family move in until December 21, 1960.[30]

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[28] City Council Minutes, June 25, 1959, 459.

[29] City of Halifax, Redevelopment Committee Minutes. December 9, 1957, 4-5.

[30] City of Halifax, Redevelopment Committee Minutes. May 16, 1958, 3; "First Family Move In," *Mail-Star*, December 22 1960, 1.

The first delay was caused by the Mayor Charles Vaughn's insistence that local architects be hired to design the project despite CHMC already having begun negotiations with a Toronto based firm.[31] Additional delays included a dispute over who would pay for the installation of sprinklers which some councillors felt were a necessity in modern buildings. CMHC stated that since they were not in the original budget, the city would have to pay for them if they wanted them included; this insistence on the city footing the bill quickly caused the Redevelopment Committee to back off of its previous commitment to modernity and safety.[32] The committee's willingness to disregard recommendations by both CHMC and city staff created confusion and cost overruns, as demonstrated in the committee's decision to insist on the use of coal heating for the building, rather than oil. City staff, the architects and representatives from CHMC agreed that the best heating system would be one that ran on oil, but due to previous conflicts with the Redevelopment Committee, it was decided that they would make the final decision. A city staff member presented the joint recommendation of the three groups explaining that an oil system would be cheaper to install, require less maintenance and therefore be cheaper in the long run, be easier to operate, generate less smoke and be less prone to breakdowns. The committee still voted unanimously to have a coal fired system installed.

Mulgrave Park officially opened, with a coal fired heating system and no sprinklers, on June 1, 1961; but the first family actually took up residence in December 1960 and other families slowly moved in after that as units were completed.[33] The final project housed 344 families but was unable to accommodate the number of families who required low rent housing in the city. The tenants of the slums which were cleared to make way for Scotia Square left with little resistance and were promised priority when it came to assigning space in the new Mulgrave Park housing project, which was being built as the razing of tenement buildings began. However, the project was supposed to accommodate low income families from all over the city, not just those displaced by the redevelopment of the downtown core, and there simply were not enough units

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[31] City of Halifax, Redevelopment Committee Minutes. April 9, 1958, 2.
[32] City of Halifax, Redevelopment Committee Minutes. February 13 1959, 3-4.
[33] "Mulgrave Park Opens" *Mail-Star*, June 2, 1961, 1.

to house all those who needed affordable housing. In addition, due to delays in finishing the project, the destruction of tenement buildings on Jacob Street occurred years before the first families to inhabit the apartments in Mulgrave Park moved in. As a result many families simply moved from one overcrowded, dilapidated building on Jacob Street to another even more overcrowded, dilapidated building just down the road or the next street over. Many slum landlords quickly recognized that there were fewer buildings available for low income families and as a result not only put more families into existing buildings without making proper renovations, but actually increased rent. In the winter of 1960 the average rent on Jacob Street was $7.50 a week for a two bedroom apartment, when the evictions of residents hit their high point the following summer rent skyrocketed and by January, 1961 rent for two bedroom apartments in the area rose to $15 a week.[34] Even after completion, the housing project managed to provide housing for only a fraction of the Halifax families who needed it.

While Mulgrave Park was touted as a way to solve Halifax's ongoing housing shortage, it was in fact part of a wider urban renewal project. The decision in the late 1950s to build a large housing project with government money should be seen not as a radical break from earlier liberal resistance to direct government intervention in housing, but rather an interesting policy solution to an ideological bind. City officials in the late 1950s continued to prefer private investment in commercial and residential construction over direct government intervention both for ideological reasons - a belief that housing was a commodity like any other and that a shortage in commodities is best solved by the open market - and limited fiscal resources. The redevelopment was not primarily a direct intervention in affordable housing by the government, but instead private investors, given land at a premium and aided by city spending on roads and other infrastructure, would spend private capital to build commercial buildings and high end residential space. In order to make it politically palatable the municipality would pay less than 25% of the cost of creating an inadequate number of affordable housing units. The government would, in the long run, recoup its expenditure on public housing through money saved on medical and

[34] "Rentals in Slums Show Sharp Rise in the last 12 Months", *Mail-Star,* January 25, 1961.

policing costs, and the increased property tax revenue. Policy makers saw the plan not as an interference with private investment in affordable housing so much as an attempt to provide an environment in which private investors would be given every opportunity to solve the city's long term economic problems and turn a profit at the same time.

Visions of State Formation: the Colombian Constitution of 1991

Alexander Neuman

How can a set of ideas about what makes a "state," and a series of governmental documents intersect to tell us something valuable about Colombian history? There is no simple way to understand the nexus of factors that influence the ongoing conflict in Colombia. However, by applying a close reading of a variety of theories about state-formation to a case such as the Colombian constitution of 1991, one can see how major ideas and assumptions about "states" found in the theory are reflected in government policy. This allows one to understand some of the fundamental assumptions that may underlie certain political projects (such as the 1991 constitution). This is not to say that projects such as the 1991 constitution are informed by such theories, but rather that there may be certain fundamental assumptions at work that, when recognized, allow one to further understand the nature of the conflict. The task of this paper will be to demonstrate that certain political projects undertaken by the Colombian government reflect a "traditional" vision of the state. Once this is demonstrated it will be possible to show the way in which political projects that reflect this traditional vision of the state (such as the 1991 constitution) have, in some cases, come into conflict with political projects that reflect a more "contemporary" vision of the state (such as Peace Communities). By bringing out the points of intersection between the theory and the history one is able to better understand the complex set of factors which combine to fuel the ongoing conflict.

This paper will draw on a variety of works that deal specifically with the Colombian state in order to draw the distinction between the "traditional" and the "contemporary" vision. The literature about Colombia reveals two particular strands of discourse about the Colombian state (and about the idea of the state more generally). First, there is the "traditional" depiction of state-formation that

categorizes a state as a *thing* that can be either *strong* or *weak*. Second, there is the more contemporary depiction that considers the state as an *idea* rather than a thing and demands that one considers a broader set of elements that affect the formation of such an *idea*. This second depiction (or "vision" of the state, as I will refer to it from now on) defies the weak/strong dichotomy. It considers state-formation as an activity that takes place locally and constantly and thus defies monolithic definition. By tracing the shape of each vision in relation to Colombian history, it becomes clear that the efforts of the Colombian government to address the ongoing conflict have largely reflected traditional assumptions of what makes a state, and have clashed with projects that take up the more contemporary vision.

The first part of this paper will deal with the theoretical framework of state-formation, outlining central ideas about how states come to be and clearly distinguishing between the traditional and the contemporary visions of the state. This section will also explore how these ideologies appear in a variety of works related to Colombia. The second part of this paper will examine the 1991 *Constitution of Colombia* and its context to make the argument that it represents a project in state-formation based on the traditional vision of the state. A brief examination of the more recent Democratic Security and Defence Policy of 2003 will demonstrate that the government's efforts in state-formation have continued to be based on a traditional vision in more recent years. Finally, the paper will explore the case of Peace Communities in Colombia as an example of state-formation that can be understood in relation to the contemporary vision. These communities attempt to re-cast the parameters of "centre" and "periphery" and define what "the state" is in new terms. Unfortunately, these projects have not had great success and in some cases have even come into conflict with the (traditional) state-formation efforts of the government.

Theoretical Framework of State Formation: Competing Ideologies

It is important to begin by establishing a theoretical framework for state-formation. The crux of the task here is to demonstrate two contrasting ideologies toward state formation: one which considers the state as a *thing* which can be centrally controlled and developed, and a second which considers the state as an *idea* which is constituted by many actors in a multitude of locations.

It is useful to begin with Max Weber's oft-cited definition of the state. For Weber, the state is an entity that successfully "claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."[1] Much of the discourse on state-formation flows from this definition and deals with, in particular, the three concepts of legitimacy, force and territory. Stacey Hunt extends the core of Weber's definition. She writes that the Weberian state is "seen as a modern and rational individual, displaying omnipotence, justness, decision, strength and control."[2] Weber's definition is the foundation for the first vision of the state which I will call the "traditional" vision of state-formation.

The traditional vision of state-formation rests on the notion of the state as a centrally controlled *thing* (or set of things) which exert force over a given territory. For instance, Miguel Antonio Centeno's study of war and the nation-state in Latin America takes state organization to be "principally military in nature." [3] Centeno argues that the nation-state is principally a set of institutions and its legitimacy is best measured by how well it is able to "enforce centralized rule on a territory and its population."[4] This is a clear re-articulation of Weber. Similarly, in an article about the role of the state in the peace process in Colombia, Lawrence Boudon argues that in order to achieve an end to the conflict, the Colombian state must consolidate its authority. It is the recurring lack of public services, legal structures, security and public administration, he argues, that make the state weak and incapable of mounting effective solutions to the conflict.[5] What comes through in both Centeno and Boudon is a commitment to the idea of the state as a type of central authority that legitimizes itself through the exertion of force. For Centeno, the military apparatus is the body that exercises this force. Boudon, on the other hand, points to force as it is

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[1] Max Weber, *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 78.

[2] Stacey Hunt, "Languages of Stateness: A Study of Space and El Pueblo in the Colombian State," *Latin American Research Review* 41, no. 3 (Oct. 2006), 89.

[3] Miguel Antonio Centeno, *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America* (Pennsylvania: U. Penn State Press, 2002), 103.

[4] Ibid. It is interesting to note that Centeno argues that the most effective way to measure political authority is by looking at the ability of the state to tax its population. This clearly points to his notion of the state at *central* authority and as based on the use of *force*.

[5] Lawrence Boudon, "Guerillas and the State: The Role of the State in the Colombian Peace Process," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28, no. 2 (May 1996), 288.

exercised through institutions; public services and administration are included in the set of tools that the central state uses to establish legitimacy and control the population.[6] It is in the context of Weber's definition of the state that the idea of a state as being "weak" or "strong" emerges. Following the Weberian definition, a "strong" state is one that is effectively able to achieve a monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force. Meanwhile a "weak" state would be one which finds itself competing among many actors for the legitimate use of force. Boudon follows this notion, almost echoing Weber's own words. He writes: "Colombia historically has suffered the consequences of having a weak state, one that has been unable…to establish its legal authority and legitimacy throughout the national territory."[7] This example captures both the classic Weberian notion of *state-as-thing* and simultaneously represents the recurring idea of Colombia as a weak state.

But what are the limitations of this type of analysis of the state? While Weber's definition shows up in much of the writing about state formation, it is almost always criticized as limited and in need of elaboration. As Hunt points out, the Weberian model is, at best, an ideal; in practice, states are not rational, coherent actors. Instead, she argues, states are "decentralized, disaggregated, and multilayered amalgams of social structures deeply embedded in and produced by power relations in a multinational society."[8] This notion of the state as a "multilayered amalgam" is at the core of the second ideology I wish to trace. Whereas the formation of the classic Weberian state involves a centralized monopoly of power, the formation of the post-Weberian (or post-modern) state involves mutually constitutive power relationships that occur at many different levels. I will call this the contemporary ideology of state formation.

In her excellent essay "Contesting Displacement in Colombia: Citizenship and State Sovereignty at the Margins" Victoria Sanford draws on

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[6] Boudon, "Guerillas and the State," 288. It is important to point out that this definition of the state does not necessarily take the state to be authoritarian—that is to say, Boudon and Centeno recognize that the state, to some degree, needs to *earn* the allegiance of the population. That being said, what is important is that both authors follow Weber's notion of the state as monopolizer of violence and cast the state as a central body of authority.

[7] Ibid. Suspiciously, Boudon neglects to cite Weber. He cited O'Donnell instead.

[8] Hunt, "Languages of Stateness," 90.

contemporary theory about state formation to extend this post-Weberian idea of how states are constituted.[9] The location of power is not limited to the central institutions, she argues. Instead, power manifests itself in many locations. Sanford draws on Michel Foucault who argues that: "rather than look for a 'central form' of power, one must seek to recognize power in its 'multiplicity' of forms and study these forms as 'relations of force that intersect, interrelate, converge, or on the contrary, oppose one another or tend to cancel each other out."[10] What is important here is the idea that there can never be a monopoly over power (as Weber's definition suggested); power manifests itself in too many ways. This vision of the state demands that we recognize both the institutions and the citizens as agents of state formation. It recognizes the variety of ways these actors mutually influence and, in fact, constitute each other. Hunt explains that in studying the Colombian state it is useful to consider "local and historically embedded ideas of normality, order, intelligible authority, and other languages of stateness."[11] One can think of these "languages of stateness" as expressions of power relationships that in some way constitute the state in local settings.

While the Weberian idea of the state as the monopoly of legitimate violence may remain an ideal put forward by the central institutions in a bid for legitimacy, Hunt argues that this ideal is subverted and undermined by local power relationships.[12] In attempting to study the state, one must consider these local, mutually constitutive relationships rather than simply the central institutions.

Exercises in Weberian State Formation: The 1991 Constitution and the DSDP

Having established these ideologies of state formation, the next section of this paper will look at the Colombian state itself. By exploring several specific examples, it will become clear that the Colombian government's efforts to "strengthen" the Colombian state reflect a traditional (Weberian) vision of the

[9] Victoria Sanford, "Contesting Displacement in Colombia: Citizenship and State Sovereignty at the Margins," *Anthropology and the Margins of the State*, ed. V. Das and D. Poole (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2004), 257.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Hunt, "Languages of Stateness," 92.

[12] Ibid.

state. By examining the Colombian Constitution of 1991, followed by a consideration of the Democratic Security and Defense Policy of 2003, we will be able to expose the underlying vision pursued by the Colombian government. Later on, a consideration of Colombia's so-called "Peace Communities" will serve to demonstrate the way in which the two visions outlined have come into conflict with in recent Colombian history.

Frank Safford and Marco Palacios trace the roots of Colombia's 1991 constitution to the 1970s, a period in which they describe growing alienation of the population from the ruling system as a result of financial and political corruption.[13] Following the unsuccessful effort by President Alfonso López to initiate constitutional reform, his successors Julio Cesar Turbay, Virgillo Barco and Belisario Betancur also tried, without success, to initiate the process.[14] Ultimately, it was only following the initiation of a "ruthless terrorist war" and the assassination of three presidential candidates leading up to the 1990 election that the process of constitutional renewal was successfully initiated.[15] Safford and Palacios argue that it was the death of the candidate Luis Carlos Galán, in particular, that "seemed to signal the ultimate decomposition of Colombia as a functioning, civilized polity."[16] The political elite, they argue, concluded that "the only solution was to refound the state."[17] Ana Maria Bejarano echoes this argument. She describes the 1990 Constituent National Assembly (which led to the constitution) as a "'coup of public sentiment' against the enemies of constitutional reform in Colombia, in particular the members of the traditional political class."[18] Murillo-Castaño and Gómez-Segura make a similar point.[19] What resonates from these authors is a sense that the constitution of 1991 came as a reaction to the erosion of the central state's authority. One can sense the

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[13] Frank Safford and Marco Palacios, *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 336.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ana Maria Bejarano "The Constitution of 1991: An Institutional Evaluation Seven Years Later" in *Violence in Colombia 1990-2000: Waging War and Negotiating Peace,* ed. Charles Bergquist et al. (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Books, 2001), 56

[19] Gabriel Murillo-Castaño and Victoria Gómez-Segura "Institutions in Colombia: The Changing Nature of a Difficult Relationship," *Social Forces* 84, no. 1 (Sept 2005), 2.

Weberian vision of the state at play here. That is to say, following this vision, it makes sense that during a time of crisis the government would initiate a process of constitutional reform designed to re-assert its legitimacy and authority.

Safford and Palacios place the constitution in the geopolitical context of the post-Cold War era, citing human rights, ecological concerns, participative civil society, decentralization, and demilitarization as some of the most relevant "themes."[20] They note that the document favoured economic liberalization but also affirmed fiscal decentralization and strengthened the judiciary. Murillo-Castaño and Gomez-Segura point out that there may be a contradiction within the constitution between a commitment to a social democratic philosophy and a conflicting adherence to neo-liberalism. They argue that the document is fundamentally founded on a philosophy of interventionist social democracy (clear in the preambles guarantee of "life, peaceful coexistence, work, justice, equality, knowledge, freedom and peace"[21] to all members of its nation), but that it also affirms principles associated with neo-liberalism, such as the autonomy of a central bank.[22] Bejarano points out some of the most important elements of the constitution. The constitution does a great deal to strengthen the judiciary, including creating institutions such as the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Superior Council of the Judiciary.[23] It mandates the popular election of mayors and governors and separates the presidential elections from other elections with the aim of curbing corruption and clientelism.[24] The constitution includes provisions that dismantle restrictions that formerly allowed the two main parties to dominate and recognizes the right of all citizens to form political parties.[25] Importantly, the constitution has several mechanisms designed to increase the participation of citizens in the "creation, exercise, and control of political power."[26] These mechanisms include the plebiscite, the referendum, popular

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[20] Safford and Palacios, *Colombia*, 337.

[21] "Text of the Constitution of Colombia (1991)," <http://www.parliament.go.th/parcy/sapa_db/cons_doc/constitutions/data/Columbia/Columbia.htm> (accessed March 22, 2008).

[22] Murillo-Castaño and Gomez-Segura, "Institutions and Citizens," 4.

[23] Bejarano, "The Constitution," 61.

[24] Ibid. 65.

[25] Ibid.

[26] "Text of the Constitution," article 40.

consultation, the town meeting and the legislative initiative.[27] Finally, it is important to note Article 22 (which I will return to): "Peace is a right and a duty which must be complied with."[28]

The 1991 document ultimately represents a vision of a democratic, participatory society in which citizens are treated equally and their rights are upheld by the institutions of the state. However, it is immensely clear that the ideals of the constitution do not fit with the realities of Colombian society. Safford and Palacios point this out frankly: "…not a few Colombians in 1991 hoped that the new constitution would somehow work miracles…But a constitution alone could not work such wonders." Such "miracles," they go on to say, require fundamental shifts in political culture along with social and economic structures.[29] Bejarano agrees. She writes that while the creation of constitutional mechanisms is a necessary step toward democratization, it takes "the strengthening and autonomy of civil society" as well.[30] Colombian Enrique Santos Caldedrón, echoes this sense of a gulf between the ideal and the reality in a 1991 article in *El Tiempo*:

> Colombia has, at last, a new constitution. More ample, more participatory, and more democratic. How it is converted into the motor for a more solid and modern country, instead of a source of new crises and frustrations, is the great challenge that we all have before us.[31]

This passage exposes a certain pessimism toward the constitution's ability to live up to the ideals contained within it. The passage also implies the fear that lofty ideals can actually lead to "new crises and frustrations." It is indeed the case that in its idealism, the 1991 constitution sets an impossible standard. This again reflects the stance of the Colombian government toward state-formation; there is

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[27] "Text of the Constitution," article 103.

[28] "Text of the Constitution," article 22.

[29] Safford and Palacios, *Colombia*, 337-338.

[30] Bejarano, "The Constitution," 68.

[31] Enrique Santos Calderón, "La nueva carta: Un reto," *El Tiempo*, July 4, 1991, quoted in Harvey F. Kline, *State Building and Conflict Resolution in Colombia* 1986-1994 (London: University of Alabama Press 1999), 176.

an underlying assumption that by strengthening the central institutions the state will become "stronger."

Having outlined the theoretical framework of state-formation and the context of the 1991 constitution it is now possible to demonstrate how the 1991 document reflects the traditional vision. Weber, one recalls, views the state as successful insofar as it can claim a monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory. By looking closely at the constitution and the context in which it was born, one can see that it represents a strongly Weberian ideology of the state. This is clear in two ways. First, the 1991 Constitutional Assembly was called in direct response to the central state's declining control over physical force. As we have seen, the historical period during which the Constituent National Assembly was called was an especially turbulent one. In addition to the assassinations of the three political candidates in 1991, this period is witnessed several groups competing for control of the state. Murillio-Castaño and Gómez-Segura describe this period as one in which "[n]umerous armed groups, such as guerilla movements, paramilitary groups, and drug dealers turned 'narco-terrorists' attempted to destabilize, and possibly overthrow, the regime."[32] This reinforces the idea that this was a period during which the central state's "monopoly" over the use of physical force waned. As Bejarano and Safford and Palacios reiterate, the creation of the National Constituent Assembly was hardly a haphazard event; it came at a moment of great political and social tension in which the central state needed a way to reassert its authority and legitimacy. Second, one can consider the constitution reflective of a Weberian vision by considering the content of the document itself. The constitution is focused centrally on the consolidation of state institutions and mechanisms that are intended to increase the *legitimacy* of those institutions. As we have seen, a major element of the constitution involves the strengthening of judicial institutions and even creates new ones. This is clear in the constitution's emphasis on the institutionalization of citizen control over the state.[33] This section of the constitution refines and formalizes several offices including that of Solicitor General and the Comptroller.[34] Perhaps the epitome of this effort to

[32] Murillo-Castaño and Gómez-Segura, "Institutions and Citizens," 2.
[33] Bejarano, "The Constitution," 67.
[34] Ibid.

increase citizen participation is the creation of the office of the "Defender of the People." The new mechanisms for civic participation afforded in Article 103 (the plebiscite, the referendum, and so on) also represent an effort to increase the legitimacy of the central state through institutionalized participation. What makes these elements Weberian is their effort to promote the "legitimacy" of the central state via *institutions* of democratic participation. Weber's definition of the state relies on not only the monopoly over physical force, but also the *legitimacy* of that monopoly. In order to earn legitimacy, the Colombian constitution includes strong institutionalized democratic mechanisms such as citizen participation and offices that oversee the defence of the people. It is thus clear that because the 1991 constitution emerged during a moment when the state was losing its "monopoly" and because the document focused on reasserting its "legitimacy," we must consider the constitution as reflective of a Weberian vision of state.

A more contemporary example of the Colombian government's underlying Weberian vision is the 2003 Democratic Security and Defense Policy.[35] Hunt explains that this policy emerged in response to growing power of "shadow states," or "para-statal" communities which subvert the authority of the central state by establishing authority locally through violent and illegal means.[36] The policy's goal, she explains, is "to (re)assert the state's authority in its 'sovereign' territory through the restoration of the 'rule of law.'" [37] The policy includes aims of restoring police presence in all municipalities; reducing impunity, human rights violations, kidnappings, forced displacement, homicide, and extortion; regaining control of national roads; and fighting the drug trade.[38] One need not go into further detail of the DSDP in order for the point to be clear: this is another example of the Weberian reflected in Colombian policy. In an even starker way than in the constitution, the DSDP represents an effort by the Colombian central state to assert its "monopoly" over the legitimate exercise of force. It exposes an underlying assumption of the state as a *thing* that can be controlled and maintained by strengthening the institutions that make it up. As

[35] The English literature on this is scarce so this section will be briefer than it might otherwise have been.

[36] Hunt, "Languages of Stateness," 98.

[37] Ibid. 103.

[38] Ibid.

an anecdotal example, one might look to the recent military operation by the Colombian military which bombed a guerilla camp inside Ecuador as another example of the Colombian state's effort to assert its "monopoly." However, because this example is so recent there is little written about it and therefore we can only suggest its relevance.

State Formation in the Margin: the Case of Peace Communities

One can look to certain examples to see that the Colombian government's state-formation efforts have been subverted by projects that reflect a more contemporary vision of the state. By considering the Colombian Peace Communities and their interaction with the central state, it will become clear both that projects such the constitution and the DSDP are limited because they neglect an important facet of state formation. For this reason, these projects of central state strengthening are inherently limited in their ability to form a state.

Victoria Sanford describes the way in which displaced Colombians have acted to reconstitute state sovereignty "from below" by reclaiming their lands in the face of violence and conflict.[39] The Peace Communities, Sanford describes are mostly rural villages that have organized to assert a collective non-violent stance in the face of violence and intimidation by state, paramilitary, and guerilla actors.[40] Hunt explains that these communities "pledge not to participate, either directly or indirectly, in the war by carrying firearms, offering tactical, logistical, or strategic assistance…or producing information for any actor in the armed conflict."[41] What do these communities represent in relation to state formation? One might be tempted to think that this stance would protect these communities from the conflict. However, the opposite seems to be the case. Katharina Rohl points out that these communities tend to become trapped in the middle of the conflict, accused by the government's military, the paramilitary groups, and the guerilla groups of supporting the enemies of each.[42] Sanford recounts a story in which the population of a peace community called Cacarica was forcibly

[39] Sanford, "Contesting Displacement," 273.

[40] Ibid. 259.

[41] Hunt, "Languages of Stateness," 113.

[42] Katharina Rohl, "Colombia's Peace Communities," *University for Peace and Conflict Monitor*, <http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=157 > (accessed March 22, 2008).

displaced in 1999 by paramilitary forces. The justification for the displacement was the "alleged strength (or civilian support) of the guerillas."[43] Furthermore, Sanford notes that according to accounts of those who have been displaced, paramilitary forces often carry out the displacement in collaboration with the government military.[44] In this context it is not difficult to understand how quickly and severely members of a community will lose comprehension of the conflict that surrounds them. Hunt argues that these experiences forces members of a community to begin to reconstitute themselves as citizens in new ways. She writes:

> Forced into a space and time in which no memory of a national story can help them understand the violence that experiencing, survivors of institutionalized violence must reinvent narratives that connect the past with the present in order to make sense of their experiences.[45]

What Hunt gets at here is the idea that violence has the effect of alienating the individual and the community from the central state. Forced into a space in which the central state has become devoid of legitimacy, the victim is forced to reconstitute the state in a new way. Hunt argues that these victims effectively "re-imagine the nation" by organizing their communities and asserting their collective identities in ways that are independent of the central state.[46] Sanford recognizes this same process. She argues that victims of displacement who have been effectively rendered rightless are able to reconstitute their citizenship by refusing to participate in the conflict, reasserting their human rights and reclaiming their lands, thereby "reconstituting state sovereignty from below."[47] As Rohl explains, the idea behind the Peace Community project is to "send a political message from Colombians who take peace-building into their own hands."[48] Rohl uses the term "political message," however, it seems clear that Sanford and Hunt see more than a political message in the Peace Communities.

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[43] Sanford, "Contesting Displacement," 261.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Hunt, "Languages of Stateness," 112.
[46] Ibid. 47
[47] Sanford, "Contesting Displacement," 273.
[48] Rohl, "Colombia's Peace Communities."

They see a constitutive political *act*. In recognizing the limitations of the central state, the Peace Communities represent an effort to reconstitute the state itself in a local context. The constitution declares a fundamental right and duty of peace (recall Article 22). However, for the community destroyed and displaced by violence such guarantees seem meaningless, especially if one has been displaced by the very same actor which made the guarantee in the first place. A salient example here is the refusal of men from Peace Communities to fulfill mandatory military service. Rohl points out that they are often persecuted by the state for this refusal—often by the denial of other guaranteed rights. In this case, the 1991 constitution seems to contradict itself: article 22 makes peace both a right and a duty and yet the government persecutes its own citizens for demanding that right.

The point here is to recognize the broader definition of the state embedded in the Peace Community project. In this context, it is not sufficient to consider the state in Weberian terms. To attempt to consider the state only insofar as it emanates from the institutions in the centre neglects the possibility for the reconstitution of the state locally, through, for example, Peace Communities. These communities represent a form of local power by which state formation takes place via negotiation and encounter between the "centre" and the "periphery" rather than via imposition of the "monopoly" of the "centre." Rohl points out that, to date, the peace communities have not been largely successful in preventing violence, however her conclusion is hopeful:

> If more communities in Colombia followed this path of protesting peacefully against the brutal and aggravating conflict, the Comunidades de Paz could well constitute a bottom-up way to peace in a political setting where top-down approaches such as leadership declarations and negotiations have continuously failed.[49]

Rohl concludes that the Peace Communities open up a type of "political space" within which state formation can take place in a more mutually constitutive way.

Thus, it is possible to see how the Peace Communities represent an vision that is opposed to that of the 1991 constitution. Whereas the constitution reflects a Weberian ideology of the strengthening of the state by way of

[49] Rohl, "Colombia's Peace Communities."

legitimizing institutions and the use of violence, the peace communities seek to reconstitute the state by declaring the autonomy of the people within the it. The vision of the Peace Communities reflect Foucault's argument that there can never by a monopoly over power because power manifests itself everywhere. By asserting their autonomy in the face of violence, the members of the peace community assert themselves *as citizens*, outside of (and in some sense against) the central institution that seeks to define their citizenship. In so doing, they re-form the state in a non-institutional, non-central way.

There can be no simple definition of what a state is. Meanwhile, there is no straightforward way to diagnose the ongoing conflict in Colombia. However, there is something to be gained from examining certain ideas of "state" in relation to certain integral moments in recent Colombian history. By considering the limitations of the traditional Weberian vision of state formation and by demonstrating that this ideology is present in Colombian institutions, it becomes possible to understand why these same institutions come into conflict with projects such as Peace Communities. That is to say, one would not immediately assume that a project such as a Peace Community would have any reason to clash with the state government. However, by exposing the opposing visions or assumptions (at times, one might even be tempted to say ideologies) that underlie these respective projects it becomes clear why they clash; one is committed to asserting the authority of the institutions while the other is concerned with asserting the autonomy of the individual and the community.

As this paper has shown, there are competing visions of what constitutes the state. The traditional vision of the state focuses on the authority and legitimacy of central institutions, while the contemporary vision of the state sees power as omnipotent and thus impossible to consolidate in any centre. Furthermore, it is clear that conflict can emerge between political projects that have different underlying visions of the state. The example of the Peace Communities sharply brings out this point. By presenting several theories of state-formation and using them as the basis to analyze specific political projects it has become clear that there are limitations to seeing the state through a traditional lens. By challenging the traditional vision of the state, we have shown how a richer consideration of state formation can lead to a richer understanding of conflict and violence. While there may not be one *correct* way to envision the

state, it is useful to engage with these diverse visions as tools for the interpretation of political projects.

Grace Under Fire: The Rise of the Mapuche Movement in Chile under the Pinochet Regime, 1978-1983

Caitlin Meek

The period 1973 to 1990, when Chile was governed by a military dictatorship led by General Augusto Pinochet, has been described as a time 'when the hearths went out' for many people in the country and for the Mapuche people in particular.[84] Indigenous communities that had been struggling for centuries to retain enough land for subsistence in the face of colonization and political and economic marginalization now faced brutal repression by the military government and renewed attempts to divest them of their lands. The parcelling of indigenous community lands was decreed in Pinochet's Land Law 2568 of March 1979, which provided for the subdivision and privatization of community lands and was based on occupant's rights, without regard for equal distribution of land or those community members who had migrated to urban areas.[85] The experience of military repression, gruelling poverty and the privatization of community lands "created a climate of aggression toward the Mapuche to which people could not easily adapt."[86] The repression carried out against the Mapuche in the wake of the *golpe de estado* was especially brutal because its 'justifications' were so deeply rooted in Chilean elites' racist views of the Mapuche.[87] In spite of this aggressive climate, and in

[84] Florencia Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State 1906 - 2001* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 140.

[85] Rosa Isolde Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn: The Life and Times of a Mapuche Feminist* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002), 194-95.

[86] Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood*, 140.

[87] Roberto Morales Urra, "Cultura mapuche y represión en dictadura" *Revista austral de ciencias sociales*,
<http://redalyc.uaemex.mx/redalyc/src/inicio/ArtPdfRed.jsp?iCve=45900306>, 2005.

part because of the restrictions placed on political organizations imposed by the military government, the Mapuche organized a 'cultural resurgence' beginning in 1978 with the foundation of the Centros Culturales Mapuches.

The rumours of new legislation concerning land tenure in indigenous communities in the late 1970s galvanized Mapuche activists and motivated the cultural resurgence that, at its peak, involved over 1500 indigenous communities in Chile. The Mapuche Cultural Centres (which later became Ad-Mapu) were successful in reviving Mapuche cultural identity in the rural and urban spheres through the organization of events such as the *gillatun* and in organizing a network of activists and communities that enabled the Mapuche to make "tangible demands" of the state and to assert their rights as an indigenous group.[88] Ironically, this success was facilitated by restrictions implemented by the Pinochet regime on political organization, and by 1983 when political parties and other actors in the counter-official movement were gaining strength, the Mapuche movement began to fracture as non-indigenous political activists attempted to co-opt and control the indigenous movement. This paper will examine the motivations behind the foundation of the Mapuche Cultural Centres and the change from a class-based to an ethnicity-based approach to political mobilization. Through an analysis of the success of the Mapuche cultural revival in the period 1978 to 1983 and its legacy, this paper will ultimately argue that what Stern refers to as the "'renewal' of counter-official Chile" in the early 1980s exacerbated divisions within and contributed to the fracturing of the Mapuche movement.[89]

The Mapuche have been a marginalized group within Chilean society since they made 'peace' with the Chilean government in the late nineteenth century. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, indigenous communities employed a variety of strategies in their attempts to recover land that had been taken from them, but they were never able to exercise any significant influence on a national level.[90] Some Mapuche leaders began to consider working with Chile's left-wing political parties as a more efficient and

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[88] Steve J. Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds: Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973 – 1988* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 216.

[89] Ibid., 217.

[90] Jim Guy, "The Case of the Mapuche and Chile's 'Bad' Law 2568," *International Perspectives* (1981): 15.

effective way to achieve their goals of land restitution and community survival. Leaders in communities such as Nicolás Ailío began to understand that "neither the legal division of Mapuche communities nor the revindication of Mapuche territory within the limits established by the Chilean state during the process of resettlement … represented a viable solution to the increasing rural poverty the Mapuche people faced in the twentieth century."[91] From the 1920s through the Allende years, indigenous communities increasingly identified themselves in terms of class as rural peasant communities, and became associated with left-wing activist groups such as the *Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR) and its rural branch the *Movimiento de Campesinos Revolucionarios* (MCR). Although this class alliance prevented the Mapuche from seeking restitution of their lands on the basis of ethnicity and indigenous rights, the agrarian reforms carried out by the Popular Unity government in the early 1970s represented the first real opportunity when poor Mapuche peasants could envision the possibility of gaining access to land.[92]

The *golpe de estado* on 11 September 1973 and the subsequent repression of Allendistas and other left-wing supporters meant that this class-based mobilization was no longer viable by the mid-1970s. The brutal repression of dissidents inside Chile by the military government included the use of torture, execution, exile and permanent disappearance, and was practiced against Mapuche and non-indigenous Chileans in both the urban and rural spheres. This repression created a climate of fear within Chilean society. Rosa Isolde Reuque remembered how this fear made community organizing in the South of Chile extremely difficult in 1978:

> Yes, people were scared, very scared. The fear was alive, you could almost touch it. "My dear," they'd say, "don't talk to that one, because look, that one was a Communist, he had a red identification card." Or they'd say, "Look, that one's a snitch for the cops, this policeman always visits and he tells him everything…." Those who'd been leftists were especially scared.[93]

[91] Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood*, 4.
[92] Ibid., 5.
[93] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 109.

Florencia Mallon notes that in this period people's fear was such that "even something as simple as an attempt to revive agriculture by cultivating vegetables and lentils required that one go house to house, drinking *mate* and explaining the project carefully."[94] By 1977 and 1978, the Pinochet regime had become institutionalized and Chilean civil society had been effectively silenced as a result of brutal repression and fear. The military government had managed to dismantle a once vibrant and diverse civil society and replace it with dictatorial hegemony.

In addition to the silencing of civil society and the prevention of political mobilization on the basis of class struggle, the Pinochet regime also attacked the potential for ethnically based political mobilization through the promulgation of Law 2658 in 1979. Rumours that legislation regarding indigenous land issues would be enacted in 1979 spurred Mapuche activists, with the encouragement of the Church, to organize against the coming land divisions beginning in 1978. The law was written without consulting the Mapuche people and, in addition to providing for the privatization of indigenous community lands, essentially stripped the Mapuche of their indigenous status by legally abolishing indigenous communities. Thirty Mapuche leaders and the Bishop of Temuco publicly protested the decree and the lack of information about it in indigenous communities.[95] Essentially, Law 2658 represented "the official incorporation and assimilation of the Mapuche into the Chilean state."[96] Church and Mapuche leaders labelled the law "institutionalized ethnocide."[97] Under this law, community members who were opposed to the division and privatization of community lands had no legal recourse available to them to prevent the privatization of their lands from going forward.

In spite of the regime's institutionalization and its attempt to undermine political and cultural mobilization, the years 1977 and 1978 marked a turning point in the 'reactivation' of Chilean civil society, a period "*cuando las primeras*

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[94] Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood*, 175.

[95] Ibid., 174.

[96] Guy, "The Case of the Mapuche," 15.

[97] Anne Marie Mergier, "Expide Pinochet, como ley, la pena de muerte de la raza mapuche" (1980), <http://archivochile.com/Dictadura_militar/pinochet/sobre/DMsobrepino80028.pdf> .

tímidas voces empezaron recién a levantarse, asediadas por la violencia y el silencio."[98] It was in this socio-political climate that the Mapuche Cultural Centres of Chile were founded on 12 September 1978. While the promulgation of Pinochet's land law acted as a catalyst for the resurgence of Mapuche organization on a cultural basis, this ethnic-based resurgence can, to a certain extent, also be attributed to the lack of opportunities for class-based mobilization resulting from a fear of military repression.

From the beginning, the Mapuche Cultural Centres sought to inspire a cultural revival that could transcend political or religious affiliation, with the notion that "ideological divisions do more harm than good …, especially to the Mapuche people" at the heart of the organization.[99] The Cultural Centres in the words of Isolde Reuque, one of the founders of the organization, created a discourse that "from the beginning … was about struggle, rediscovering our roots, and making up for lost time. We had a vision toward the future based on our continual, historic struggle for the land."[100] The purpose of the Cultural Centres was therefore neither to resist attempts to undermine indigenous communities by parcelling and privatizing their land, nor to create a civil society organization that could effectively work for the restitution of democracy. Rather, the Centres were founded with the express purpose of reviving Mapuche cultural identity and a commitment to indigenous rights in Chile. The probability that a person will self-identify as Mapuche was 4.8 times higher if he or she lived in a rural area or spoke Mapunzungun, the Mapuche language.[101] The Mapuche Cultural Centres sought to protect indigenous land rights and to promote the preservation of the Mapuche language, and studies such as the one carried out by the Chilean Centro de Estudios Públicos in 2006 have shown these to be the two most important factors in determining whether or not a person will self-identify as Mapuche.[102]

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[98] Ascanio Cavallo, Manuel Salazar, y Oscar Sepúlveda, *La historia oculta del régimen militar: Memoria de una época, 1973 – 1988* (Santiago de Chile: Random House Mondadori S.A., 2004), 228.

[99] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 106.

[100] Ibid., 112.

[101] Eduardo Valenzuela, "Tierra, comunidad e identidad mapuche," *Estudios Públicos* 105 (2007): 26.

[102] Ignacio Irrarázaval y María de los Angeles Morandé, "Cultura mapuche: Entre la pertenencia étnica y la integración nacional," *Estudios Públicos* 105 (2007), 40.

From 1978 to 1982, this cultural revival was extremely successful. By 1982 there were centres linking fifteen hundred communities in the VIII, IX, and X regions and people were beginning to feel some relief.[103] Each participating community had its own steering committee and funded its own local projects, using its own specific cultural practices and rites to "rebuild solidarity and pride."[104]

The Cultural Centres helped to revive cultural events and encouraged NGO participation in various development projects in indigenous communities in the region. For example, between 1979 and 1981 community organizers from the Mapuche Cultural Centres began to work on a celebration of Temuco's centennial, and each community was asked to help organize "a chain of local ceremonies that would culminate on Conun Hueno hill in December 1981" with a *gillatun*, a Mapuche ritual of intercommunity prayer and a celebration of reciprocity.[105] These events, which included *gillatun*, *palin* (a sport reminiscent of hockey, but without skates), and traditional storytelling sessions, as well as many small-scale agricultural development projects, were extremely successful. The *gillatun* at Conun Hueno was significant because it was an example of using Mapuche culture, and the *gillatun* specifically "as a medium for political action."[106] This ceremony at the celebration of Temuco's centennial was "a strong show of Mapuche solidarity at the precise moment when the city was remembering the destruction of the border between the Mapuche people and Chilean national society."[107]

Ironically, the Pinochet regime itself facilitated this success by taking a "folkloric, tourist-oriented approach when dealing with the Mapuche."[108] The dictatorship, by not considering the Mapuche as a politically effective group and therefore not an adversary, was at first ignorant of the reach and influence of the Cultural Centres. *Palin* tournaments, which could involve more than forty

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[103] Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood*, 174.

[104] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 115.

[105] Ibid., 110.

[106] Sara McFall and Roberto Morales, "The Ins and Outs of Mapuche Culture in Chile," in *Cultural Politics in Latin America*, ed. A. Brooksbank Jones and R. Munck (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 2000), 134.

[107] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 115.

[108] Ibid., 112.

Mapuche communities, provided platforms for Mapuche leaders and organizers to speak about issues related to indigenous rights, land tenure, and culture. Because many of these leaders gave their speeches in the Mapuche language, Mapunzungun, their subversive content went unnoticed by the police assigned to watch over such public gatherings. Isolde Reuque recalled *palin* matches where Mapuche women hosted police officers at their wagons and fed them so as to prevent them from interfering in community organizing. Mapuche who taught Mapunzungun to the police were ostracized because, in the words of one Mapuche leader, "it was like working against your own people."[109]

The dictatorship created a space in which organizations like the Mapuche Cultural Centres or the Vicariate of Solidarity could grow and be protected from repression because they fell outside the usual manifestations of political action. Isolde Reuque has said that "If the dictatorship had any positive effect, it was to reawaken our culture …. When the repression was greatest, the Mapuche movement was strongest: with militant revivals of our language, our traditions, [and] our traditional organizations."[110] Eventually however, like the Vicariate of Solidarity, the Mapuche Cultural Centres were seen as a political adversary of the state.

Nevertheless, the organization had grown so much by March 1980 that the military government was forced to recognize it formally under the name Asociación Ad-Mapu, meaning Association of People 'of the Land', even though it considered the organization a threat.[111] The only legal category that would allow the organization to stay as large as it was in 1980 was that of trade association (*gremio*), so the name Cultural Centres was dropped. In addition to the local activities and events it organized, after it received legal recognition Ad-Mapu became more involved in the international indigenous rights movement and began to look for international sources of funding to finance its scholarship and vocational training programs. It also directly challenged the Pinochet regime in a way that the Cultural Centres had never done; Ad-Mapu issued a statement

[109] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 113.
[110] Ibid., 115.
[111] Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 216.

in *El Diario Austral* opposing the plebiscite that the military government had called to approve a new constitution.[112]

In 1980, the military regime began to see Ad-Mapu as a threat, and launched a campaign to discredit the organization by characterizing its own official indigenous organization, the Regional Indigenous Council, as more effective and more attentive to the needs of indigenous peoples in Chile. The Regional Indigenous Council praised Pinochet's land law, and newspapers wrote about new subsidies, scholarships, and health programs the regime was providing in indigenous communities.[113] Ad-Mapu's success and increased profile on the national and international level from 1980 to 1983 made it more susceptible to attacks from the military government and to infiltration and cooption by opposition political parties.

The late 1970s and early 1980s presented an opportunity for the growth not only of a grassroots indigenous rights movement and cultural revival, but also of a more general reawakening and rebuilding of Chilean civil society, including opposition political parties, trade unions, and student federations.[114] Chilean civil society was becoming stronger and more assertive, as evidenced by Ad-Mapu's direct challenge of the military regime in *El Diario Austral*, and as civil society began to rebuild itself, the Mapuche movement began to fracture.

The shift in the mid-1970s from a class-based political mobilization to one that was ethnically-based was a necessity for the Mapuche. Given the political situation after the fall of Allende, an alliance with the Left was no longer a viable option, and since the military regime sought to undermine the basis of indigenous communities (namely, their lands) it was necessary to resist these attacks as an indigenous group in order to highlight the need to preserve and promote indigenous lands and identity. By the early 1980s, however, civil society had begun to renew itself and diversify again, and the Mapuche movement started "to talk about broader participation, about making alliances with universities or labour unions, making common cause with other organizations that were struggling and suffering, [and] began to search for a common

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[112] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 119-20.
[113] Ibid., 123.
[114] Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 205.

denominator, which turned out to be the return to democracy."[115] By broadening its focus and seeking alliances with other actors in civil society, Ad-Mapu began to fracture. Internal political divisions that had existed for years became more pronounced as revitalized political parties attempted to co-opt the movement.[116]

Some Mapuche leaders such as Isolde Reuque, who was instrumental in founding the original Mapuche Cultural Centres in the late 1970s, believed that it would be possible for Ad-Mapu to remain independent of any one particular political party. This would allow the movement "to respect differences and to maintain a more diverse membership" and to demand that Mapuche issues be considered by all political parties.[117] Manuel Antonio Garretón M. evoked this sentiment in his discussion of the development of ethnic identities:

> [En] los últimos tiempos se ha expandido la identidad de tipo étnico, que … parece ser portadora de un proyecto general que supera ámbitos parciales de la vida social …. Frente a la transformación de las identidades, se trata de desarrollarlas y protegerlas, pero, al mismo tiempo, de reforzar los elementos comunes …. Esto supone determinados intercambios, movilidades, y experiencias orientados al desarrollo de vínculos entre los diversos grupos.[118]

The Mapuche movement was never a homogenous social movement. Religious, political, and cultural differences existed and continue to exist within it, but prior to the early 1980s the movement was able to overcome these differences by organizing on the basis of ethnic unity and a commitment to Mapuche rights, in part because grassroots organization on an ideological basis was not a safe or viable option. However, by the 1983 Indigenous Congress, as civil society and Chile's political parties had began to recover from the repression of the early years of the Pinochet regime, it was clear that the non-party stance had lost

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[115] Reuque, P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 127.

[116] Mallon, *Courage Tastes of Blood*, 174.

[117] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 127.

[118] Manuel Antonio Garretón M., *Del Post-Pinochetismo a la sociedad democrática: Globalización y política en el Bicentenario* (Santiago de Chile: Random House Mondadori S.A., 2007), 36-37.

support within Ad-Mapu and that the Communist party in particular had begun to influence and co-opt the Mapuche movement.

At the time, every opposition political party in Chile was looking to expand its base of support. The Mapuche movement in the early 1980s was a large, dynamic, and successful social movement that, if integrated into a party's agenda and social base, would substantially raise that party's profile and increase support for its agenda. The Christian Democrat and Socialist parties, in addition to the Communist party, were also involved in recruiting Mapuche leaders and attempts to co-opt the Mapuche movement.[119]

Isolde Reuque experienced this change in Ad-Mapu's priorities and orientation as a change in discourse:

> [By] the end of 1981, after the *gillatun* at Conun Hueno hill, the movement began to falter … and a different kind of politics began to emerge.… The language of the left, people calling each other *compañero*, which had been hidden for a long time, came out into the open. It was a political opening, and groups that had been afraid to be seen began to come out in public.[120]

In her book *When a Flower is Reborn*, Reuque describes the election of a new steering committee for Ad-Mapu at the 1983 Indigenous Congress and a 'new style' of leadership that shifted the focus of the organization from the demands of the Mapuche as an oppressed nation to a focus on class struggle. Even forms of address between members of the Ad-Mapu leadership became de-indianized: "Before, people addressed each other using the Mapuche terms for brother and sister, *peñi* or *lamñen*" but at the 1983 Indigenous Congress these terms were replaced by "compañero."[121]

The Communist party's influence over Ad-Mapu and the pressure put upon it by other political parties caused the organization to "splinter into distinct indigenous organizations along distinct party lines" after 1983.[122] Ad-Mapu's new policies and projects, which emphasized street demonstrations and marches and a focus on confrontation and class struggle over cultural strategies for promoting

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[119] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 144.
[120] Ibid., 124.
[121] Ibid., 144.
[122] Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 217.

autonomy within Mapuche communities, alienated much of the former leadership of Ad-Mapu and several of its member communities.[123] From 1983 to 1986, the Mapuche movement suffered a great deal of fragmentation with more and more communities joining new Mapuche groups, such as Nehuen-Mapu or the Consejo de Todas las Tierras, organized around specific ideological positions.[124]

While the reawakening and reactivation of Chilean civil society was instrumental in bringing about a return to democracy, the revitalization of opposition political parties contributed to the fracturing of the Mapuche movement, as each party in its own way attempted to penetrate and co-opt Ad-Mapu in order to further its own agenda. The Communist party's influence on Ad-Mapu from 1983 onwards exacerbated pre-existing political and ideological differences within the organization and alienated much of its former leadership, many of whom left Ad-Mapu and went on to found splinter Mapuche activist groups. In addition, many of Ad-Mapu's member communities were uncomfortable with the organization's new strategy after the 1983 Indigenous Congress and with their communities' new roles as "support players in a political and class struggle whose terms were set elsewhere."[125] As a result, many member communities who resented the subordination of the indigenous movement's agenda to a national political party's agenda left Ad-Mapu between 1983 and 1986, greatly weakening the unity and effectiveness of the Mapuche movement.

This is not to say that had the reawakening of Chilean civil society and the revitalization of the country's opposition political parties not occurred, the Mapuche movement would have continued to be as unified as it was in the early 1980s or that it would have been more successful in achieving land restitution for indigenous communities or renewing and revitalizing the Mapuche culture, language, or religion. Certainly other factors, such as the military government's identification of Ad-Mapu beginning in 1980 as a threat to its social hegemony and the fact that under an authoritarian regime very little could have been accomplished to improve the legal status of the Mapuche people, contributed to a weakening of the movement and limited its potential. Rather, it was the

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[123] Reuque P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 148.
[124] Ibid., 173.
[125] Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*, 217.

manipulation of Ad-Mapu by Chile's revitalized opposition parties when the leadership of Ad-Mapu opened the door for the possibility of collaboration with other counter-official actors within civil society that weakened the effectiveness of the organization and contributed to its fragmentation.

In spite of this fragmentation, during the transition to democracy, several Mapuche rights groups including Ad-Mapu and Nehuen-Mapu worked together with the Human Rights Commission to create a document that was to serve as the basis for a new indigenous law if Patricio Aylwin were to win the presidential election. The document contained four major objectives: first, the President would create and submit to Congress a law that was favourable to indigenous peoples; second, create an institution that would listen to and respect the rights and values of indigenous peoples; third, constitutionally recognize indigenous peoples; and fourth, submit the ILO's Convention 169 on indigenous rights to Congress for approval.[126] Isolde Reuque describes the document as "the first commitment to the indigenous peoples of Chile, made with a presidential candidate who later became President, that was actually fulfilled."[127] When the law was submitted to Congress parts of it were cut, but the fact that Mapuche rights groups were involved in drafting the initial legislation is an important step towards improving the legal status and rights of the Mapuche.

Today, the Mapuche movement continues to be somewhat fragmented, but the Mapuche continue to struggle for the right to control ancestral lands and natural resources, and to preserve their culture in the face of urbanization and assimilation through the advocacy of, among other things, bilingual schools and official recognition of the Mapuche language. A study conducted by the Centro de Estudios Públicos (CEP) in Chile in 2006 of the degree to which indigenous Chileans feel connected to the Mapuche culture and the Chilean culture found that the majority of Mapuches, 63 percent, reside in urban areas.[128] The study also noted that connection to the land and the Mapuche language are seen as the fundamental basis of Mapuche culture. More than three quarters of Mapuches surveyed viewed urbanization as a primary threat to the Mapuches' capacity to maintain their culture because of the impact rural to urban migration has had on

[126] Reuque, P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 183.
[127] Ibid., 182.
[128] Morandé, "Cultura mapuche," 39.

the deterioration of Mapunzungun and the loss of contact with indigenous land and traditional cultural practices.[129] Less than 30 percent of Mapuche in rural areas and only 6 percent of Mapuche in urban areas report that they speak Mapunzungun as well or better than Spanish, with even lower rates when youth between eighteen to thirty-four are surveyed.[130] Increasingly in urban areas, Mapunzungun is not learned in the home as a native tongue, but in group classes in urban centres.[131]

One of the greatest strengths of the Mapuche Cultural Centres and Ad-Mapu was their capacity to inspire cultural revival and renewal, especially among the younger generation. Youth in indigenous communities in the South of Chile became involved in practicing the *gillatun*, playing *palin*, and in promoting respect for the institution of the *machi*, the traditional healer of a Mapuche community, among other activities.[132] This success of the Mapuche Cultural Centres and Ad-Mapu has not continued at the same level in the past two decades. Although approximately 60 percent of Mapuche in urban and rural areas know of the *gillatun* and *machitun*, a healing ceremony, the CEP study found that participation in these rituals was declining.[133]

The Mapuche movement that began in the late 1970s with the founding of the first Mapuche Cultural Centres as a response to the promulgation of Pinochet's Land Law 2568 and a lack of opportunities to mobilize politically on a non-ethnic basis was extremely successful from 1978 to 1983. As part of a more general reactivation and renewal of civil society in Chile it inspired a true revival and renewal of Mapuche culture, through ceremonies like the *gillatun* and community events like *palin* tournaments, and produced a network of approximately one thousand five hundred indigenous communities in the South of Chile that worked to improve quality of life for indigenous people and increase solidarity through small community development projects and scholarships. The Centres also fought for indigenous rights to land and, as Ad-Mapu, directly challenged the dictatorship.

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[129] Valenzuela, "Tierra, comunidad, e identidad mapuche," 32.

[130] Ibid., 27-28.

[131] Jorge Martinez Ulloa, "La música indígena y la identidad: los espacios musicales de las comunidades mapuches urbanos," *Revista musical chilena* 198 (2002), 23.

[132] Reuque, P., *When a Flower is Reborn*, 114-15.

[133] Valenzuela, "Tierra, comunidad, e identidad mapuche," 28-29.

Ironically, this success was facilitated by the Pinochet regime's initial racist disregard of the influence of the growing Mapuche movement, but by the early 1980s neither the military government nor a renewed Chilean civil society could ignore the reach of the organization. The Mapuche Cultural Centres/Ad-Mapu unexpectedly thrived under the repressive early years of the Pinochet regime because its work fell outside of the usual category of politics. However, by 1983 Ad-Mapu weakened and succumbed to internal divisions exacerbated by the attempts of revitalized opposition parties like the Communist Party and the Christian Democrats to co-opt the Mapuche movement and subordinate it to a party agenda. Although the group splintered, it is still influential, with approximately 55 percent of Mapuches stating that they still have confidence in Ad-Mapu.[134]

[134] Irrarázaval y de los Angeles Morandé, "Cultura mapuche," 53.

"What else do I get … it?": Widowhood, Inheritance and Remarriage in Post-Conquest England

Zabrina Prescott

In the later part of the Anglo-Saxon period, laws regarding widows and remarriage were strict and simple. Widows received a certain degree of autonomy following the deaths of their husband in the form of their inheritance, often gaining lands, chattels and other forms of wealth. They were protected from violence in their wergild and, for the space of a year, were to remain free of a husband or other authority.[1] Following these twelve months of mourning, they might choose to accept a husband or to enter into a religious house.[2] They could not be forced into marriage with a man, nor could they be married in exchange for wealth or property.[3] Even given these numerous privileges, however, a widow could not remain entirely autonomous; she was eventually expected to either remarry or to become a nun, and upon choosing either option, she lost "her morning-gift and all the property which she had from her first husband."[4]

The Norman Conquest of England brought many grooms eager to marry the inheriting widows and daughters of the past regime. Also, it yielded a comparable yet very different understanding and treatment of women. Women, most particularly widows, could now truly be heiresses; they had actual power over the properties and wealth left to them.[5] The power, wealth, and responsibilities they inherited from their husbands made widows the most

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[1] J. Murray, ed., "Legal Foundations of Anglo-Saxon Laws," in *Love marriage and family in the Middle Ages: A Reader* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2001), 41-43.

[2] Ibid., 43.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Henrietta Leyser, *Medieval Women: A Social History of Women in England, 450-1500* (New York: St. Martin's Press), 69-90.

influential of any class of women in Post-Conquest England, but they were still not free. Widows held power in the political arena and in the business world, were often wealthy, and were capable of increasing their wealth and status by way of their own remarriage or the marriages of any children of their previous union. However, even with this being the case, they remained in many ways tied by the customs and attitudes faced by their sex.

This essay seeks to examine both the power of and the pressures placed on widows together with the attitudes members of law and society had towards them. This will be done by way of introducing the concept of the property rights of widows, before continuing into an analysis of the inheritance and dower they received upon their husbands' deaths. This inheritance, in the form of property as well as of household, legal, and court-related responsibilities, will be examined using period documents and records; a consideration of the rights these women now enjoyed under the common law of England will also take place. Finally, this essay will analyze the issue of the remarriage of widows and the reasons and power struggles involved in such a choice.

To begin this analysis of widowhood, it is best to consider the relationship that existed between husband and wife. In terms of societal and legal differences, this association dictated the power and influence a woman enjoyed before her husband's death. There were contradictions in the attitudes society held toward spouses, as well as the opportunities husbands and wives had in that same society. Upon marriage, husbands were freed from the domestic authority of their parents, whereas wives came under that of their husbands.[6] While men, looking back on adolescent years, traced a frustratingly slow growth in independence, women instead remember some modest independence they could no longer enjoy.[7] Although the creation of their own household brought independence to men, it brought only dependence to women.[8] Women were placed under the authority of their husbands, and virtually all of their property or possessions belonged to him. Women were considered to be under the yoke of

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[6] Judith M. Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside: Gender and Household in Brigstock Before the Plague* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 100.

[7] Ibid., 100.

[8] P.J.P. Golberg, *Women, Work, and Life Cycle in a Medieval Economy: Women in York and Yorkshire c. 1300-1520*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 203-279; Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 100.

their husband's rule to such an extent that marriage was seen as "a hierarchy headed by a husband who … controlled his wife's financial assets and public behavior."[9]

These societal norms were further compounded by legal differences. Men gained access to local office by being both landholders or economically privileged and by being married householders.[10] In fact, only married men were permitted to participate in civic office, though not all did, and married women were entirely excluded. [11] Upon marriage, women no longer held their goods or holdings independently; rather, a husband took over management and control of any properties he or his wife held.[12] Furthermore, women ceased to be treated by courts as legally competent adults when they married.[13] Before marriage, both sons and daughters were held responsible for their own criminal actions.[14] Afterwards, the duties and responsibilities of men expanded, but women were 'covered' by their husbands.[15] In this sense, women enjoyed the legal shelter that came from being indirectly responsible for their actions. If a woman committed a crime, both she *and* her husband attended court, allowing the woman access to her husband's (presumably) more extensive legal experience.[16] This being the case, Miriam Müller suggests that even after marriage, women remained responsible for their actions both as criminals and as witnesses in the capacity of raisers of the hue and cry.[17] These two separate views demonstrate that there is some debate among historians over the legal responsibilities of married women, yet nonetheless, the fact remains that women were viewed as inferior to their husbands.

As is stated above, the property rights of a woman changed with her status as a wife, with her husband taking over management of estates and wealth.

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[9] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 103.

[10] Ibid., 104.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 110; Helen Jewell, *Women in Medieval England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 120-154.

[13] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 105.

[14] Ibid, 104-105.

[15] Ibid, 105.

[16] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 105.

[17] Miriam Müller, "Social control and the hue and cry in two fourteenth century villagesm," in *Journal of Medieval History* 31, no. 1 (2005): 29-53.

[18] A wife did not hold authority over the lands endowed upon her until after her husband's death.[19] As long as he did not undermine or deny her right to claim the dower lands which would sustain her during her widowhood, a husband could do what he wanted with any properties of which he had sole authority or which his wife brought to the marriage household.[20] This being true, any decision he made concerning her properties were null and void after the marriage was over.[21] Among these household properties were those held jointly. These jointly held properties included holdings that were expected to support the conjugal family, which eventually became the widow's maintenance, that were brought by the wife to the marriage, or that were to pass untouched to any heirs.[22] The phrase 'jointly held' estates did not imply any sense of equal control, and any lands a husband wished to sell, or otherwise dispose of, were considered in court as lying under his domain.[23]

Upon that same husband's death, a widow was given a certain degree of freedom, but was not entirely free to do what she wished. Even after the end of a marriage, a widow had little claim to the movable conjugal property.[24] Legal records indicate that a widow could sell household goods, but only if absolutely necessary,[25] otherwise she was to leave them to the "proper heir of her husband."[26] Though there were some towns or regions that were more flexible in such matters, allowing women full possession of some fraction (usually one-third) of their conjugal goods, it was generally understood that "[e]ven in death,

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[18] Michael M. Sheenan, "The Influence of Canon Law on the Property Rights of Married Women in England," in *Marriage, Family and Law in Medieval Europe: Collected Studies*, ed. James K. Farge (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 16-30.

[19] *Glanvill's Treatise on the Laws and Customs of the Kingdom of England*, in *Medieval England 100-1500: A Reader*, 143.

[20] Sue Sheridan Walker, "Litigation as Personal Quest: Suing for Dower in the Royal Courts, circa 1272-1350," in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993); Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 110.

[21] Ibid; Sheridan Walker, "Litigation as Personal Quest," 81-84.

[22] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 111-12.

[23] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 112

[24] Ibid., 111.

[25] Examples of such cases can be found in: *Select Cases in Manorial Courts 1250-1550: Property and Family Law*, ed. L.R. Poos and Lloyd Bonfield (London: Sheldon Society, 1998), 2-114.

[26] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 111.

the bulk of moveable properties pertained to the husband rather than to the joint ownership of husband and wife."[27]

Having laid out the rights of widows over conjugal properties during this period, it can now be better understood exactly what it meant for a widow to inherit lands and wealth from her deceased spouse. In order to consider the process of inheritance, many things must be taken into account. Primarily, the customs that formed the basis of inheritance (including that of dower) and of dower rights, as well as the formulae and intent of wills must be viewed. Also, beyond the actual process of inheritance and physical wealth a woman gained, the duties and responsibilities that belonged to a widow following her husband's death must also be discussed. These duties included household, legal, and court responsibilities.

Built upon the foundations of custom and law, inheritance is well documented by records such as manorial courts and court rolls[28] as well as in treatises and legal accounts of the period.[29] The regulations that governed inheritance and dower gave widows the power over their husband's heirs to sue for their lands. This 'endowing' was a practical as well as a legal idea, giving the widow authority over own lands as well as access to sufficient resources to sustain her after her spouse died.[30] According to a treatise on the laws and customs attributed to Ranulf Glanville, justiciar of the royal courts during the time of Henry II's reforms, a widow's dower:

> … means that which any free man, at the time of his being affianced, gives to his bride at the church door. For every man is bound as well by the ecclesiastical laws, as by the secular, to endow his bride, at the time of his being affianced to her. When a man endows his bride, he either names the dower, or not. In the latter case, the third part of all the husband's freehold land is understood

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[27] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 111.

[28] Examples of these accounts can be found in *Select Cases in Manorial Courts*, 2-44 as well as in "Bracton's Notebook," *Medieval England 100-1500: A Reader*, 226-231; and "Hundred Rolls," in *Medieval England 100-1500: A Reader*, 274-276.

[29] *Glanvill's Treatise*, 143.

[30] In this consideration of the idea of inheritance, one must keep in the mind the idea that not all conjugal households were wealthy or well prepared for the death of the patriarch of the house. This study is one which focuses on those households wealthy enough to see the passing on of inheritance and other benefits to surviving relatives of the deceased.

> to be the wife's dower; and the third part of all such freehold lands as her husband held, at the time of affiancing, and of which he was seised as his demesne, is termed a woman's reasonable dower. If, however, the man names dower, and mentions more than a third part, such designation shall not avail, as far as it applies to the quantity. It shall be reduced by apportionment to the third part; because a man may endow a woman of less, but cannot of more than a third part of his land.[31]

Even if the husband's wealth increased after the couple's marriage, it was the husband's decision whether or not to proportionately increase his wife's dower.[32] A woman was not able to claim land, money, or moveable goods with which she had not been endowed at the time of her marriage unless her husband so chose. It was generally understood that "if [the wife] is satisfied to the extent of her endowment at the door of the church, she can never afterwards claim as dower any thing beyond it,"[33] though there is some evidence that even here, the law could be flexible.[34]

As strict as this description of dower rights is, some women nonetheless benefited upon the death of their husbands, and women of the period knew their rights when it came to their inheritance. For example, in looking at the work of Henry de Bracton, a renowned thirteenth-century legal writer, one can find many summaries of cases which made their way to royal courts. Among these summaries are those of widows suing for dower such as Christiana, the widow of Walter Malesoures.[35] In Bracton's account, we are told that Christiana, through her attorney, sought to recover the lands she was endowed with upon her

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[31] *Glanvill's Treatise*, 143.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 143.

[34] For evidence of this, see Judith Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside: Gender and Household in Brigstock Before the Plague* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Barbara A. Hanawalt, "The Widow's Mite: Provisions for Medieval London Widows," in *Upon My Husband's Death: Widows in the Literature and Histories of Medieval Europe*, ed. Louise Mirrer (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992); Janet Senderowitz Loengard, "'Of the Gift of her Husband': English Dower and its Consequences in the Year 1200," in *Women of the Medieval World: Essays in Honor of John H. Mundy*, ed. Julius Kirshner and Suzanne F. Wemple (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1985), 215-55.

[35] *Bracton's Notebook*, 226-27.

marriage which were to sustain her through her widowhood.[36] Having produced sufficient witnesses to prove her case, Christiana recovered her seisin, and was given one third of her late husband's lands, as was promised during the contracting of her marriage.[37]

Other accounts similar to Christiana's appear not only in Bracton's work, where one can find records of Muriel, widow of William de Ros, who also sued (albeit somewhat less successfully than did Christiana) for her dower property, [38] but also in the hundred rolls of the period. One set of such rolls, taken from the manor of Alwalton in Huntingdonshire, attests widows, having inherited properties and goods from their husbands, acting as landowners in their own right, a practice of authority that will be discussed below. [39] Furthermore, women appeared regularly in court to defend their rights as widows, an action simply not taken by their still-married counterparts.[40] The surprising degree of knowledge they exhibited in these appearances suggests that "[w]idows…could not have been strangers to general common law process."[41] Such a woman who knew her rights was Isabel, widow of Robert de Salden.[42] In an account 8 June 1329, this strong-willed woman, through her attorney, sued a complaint against Stephen le Carter, demanding she be given the property which, by right of her dower, was owed to her.[43]

In order to completely understand this 'suing for dower,' a widow also needed to have an understanding of the provisions made for her in the will written by her husband. Unlike many other aspects of legal and social custom which drastically changed at the time of the Norman Conquest, the Anglo-Saxon style of the will remained little changed until the period of reform of Roman law

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[36] *Bracton's Notebook*, 226-27.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] *Hundred Rolls*, 275. Such cases are also discussed in Janet Senderowtiz Loengard, "Rationabilis Dos: Magna Carta and the Widow's 'Fair Share' in the Earlier Thirteenth Century," in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England*, ed. Sue Sheridan Walker (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993), 59-80.

[40] This is an idea discussed extensively in Sue Sheridan Walker, "Litigation as Personal Quest" and Janet Senderowitz Loengard, "'Of the Gift of her Husband.'"

[41] Sheridan Walker, "Litigation as Personal Quest," 84.

[42] *Select Cases in Manorial Courts*, 4-5

[43] Ibid.

which took place in the twelfth century.[44] Until this time, the will hailed from a merging of the Christian desire to give alms at the time of one's death and a legal notion derived from Germanic-modified Roman law.[45] The will was intended as a tool for the bequeathing of property and wealth to dependents, religious establishments, and to those in need of alms.[46] Most importantly to this study, the will functioned to ensure that additional arrangements could be made for widows. As was mentioned above, in the case of an increase in the wealth of household property, the husband had the prerogative to endow more lands upon his wife than was agreed upon, based on the family's wealth at the time of their marriage. It was generally in his will that this increased endowment took place.[47] Of course, while the wealth of the family might increase, ensuring the widow's increase in dower, so too might it decrease, in which case the widow received less property than was initially agreed upon.[48] The wills also often acted to designate a man's widow as chief executor, indicating that "the partnership that established the marriage with a contract for dower and dowry carried on through the end of the husband's life."[49]

Upon the death of their husband, beyond any property and goods inherited by way of her dower or through her husband's will, widows became responsible for the duties to the household, law, and court previously held by or held jointly with their husband. [50] Household duties gave widows responsibilities as householders, as administrators of holdings, and as active participants in their society.[51] As was mentioned above, evidence of women taking over ownership of land left them by their husbands can be found in the hundred rolls. In one such census from the manor of Alwalton, we can find such notations as: "Sara, widow of Matthew Miller, holds a cottage and a croft which contains half a rood,

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[44] Sheenan, "The Influence of Canon Law on the Property Rights of Married Women in England," 5.

[45] Ibid., 3.

[46] Ibid., 5.

[47] Barbara A. Hanawalt. "The Widow's Mite: Provisions for Medieval London Widows," in *Upon My Husband's Death*, 25.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid., 26.

[50] Scott L. Waugh. *The Lordship of England: Royal Wardships and Marriages in English Society and Politics, 1217-1327* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988); Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 142.

[51] *Hundred Rolls*, 274-276; Bennet, 143.

paying to [the abbot of Peterborough] 4d…"[52] and "Beatrice of Hampton holds a cottage and a croft which contains 1 rood, paying to the abbot 12d…."[53] In each case, the women were readily recognized as landowners, and it is immediately clear that they held ownership over their estates, and paid rents as would any other holder of property. It is also evident from court records that widows were responsible for the husbandry of estates, most particularly in the role of administrators, likely following the golden rule of Walter de Henley, a contemporary writer of a treatise on husbandry: "[v]os choses visitet souent e fetes reuisit car ceus ke treuent par tant escheuuerunt le plus de mal fere e se penerunt de meux fere."[54]

This idea of husbandry and administration of estates extends itself into the newly found legal authority of widows. Upon their husband's death, even beyond mere ownership of property, widows were given the power of lordship over their dower lands, and often guardianship over minor heirs and other surviving children. Maria de Valoinis was one such widow-lord who is well documented in period literature. According to Bracton's Notebook, Maria sought an advowson "by reason of the tenement which she holds in a certain [w]ill as dower."[55] That she felt it was her right to appoint the clergyman who was to take up his position on her dower lands was indicative of her confidence in her power as lord. By no means is it accurate to say, however, that women completely and easily took over the position vacated by their husbands' when they died. Widows often experienced inconsistencies in their status as landowners and the privileges and advantages that position brought them.[56] For example, though Maria de Valoinis felt she had authority enough to sue for the right to appoint a clergyman on her estate, it was the cleric already holding that position who won when the case went to royal court.[57]

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[52] *Hundred Rolls*, 275.

[53] Ibid., 276.

[54] Walter de Henley, *Walter of Henley's Husbandry, together with an anonymous Husbandry, Seneschaucie, and Robert Grosseteste's Rules* (London and New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1890), 34.

[55] *Bracton's Notebook*, 227.

[56] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 172.

[57] *Bracton's Notebook*, 227.

Much like their lordship over physical property, widows often also exercised lordship over their children. If sons were too young to claim their inheritance, widows frequently took over their custody, and that of any conjugal estates, until the heir reached his majority.[58] It was most regularly the case that, as stated by Henry I in his Coronation Charter, "…the guardian of the land and children [was] either the wife or another one of the relatives as shall seem to be most just."[59] However, the taking over of guardianship did not always fall to the mother of the surviving children and heirs of the deceased. Queen Isabella of Angoulême, for example, took over custody of her young daughter, Joanna, but did not take on that same role with her son, Henry III.[60] Such was also the case with Beatrice, widow of Robert Mantel. Although she kept two of her sons and her daughter in her care, her eldest son was taken under wardship by a Robert de Soucei by order of the king.[61]

The guardianship of minor children by widows is well documented in numerous contemporary records. Among these documents, however, is evidence that women were often required to pay fines unto the king in order to be given their children as wards. Examples of this can be found in the *Rotuli de Dominabus et Pueris et Puellis*, part of a survey taken of women and children following the Norman Conquest. Among accounts held in this census are those of the widow of Simon de Crevequer and her firstborn son, heir to his father's holdings[62] and of Matilda, widow of Angot fitz Anketill, both of whom held their sons in wardship through the king (i.e.: by way of a fine paid unto him).[63] Coupled with the retaining of unofficial control of the child at the discretion of the child's true guardian, the purchase of rights to guardianship from the feudal

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[58] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 144; *Glanvill'sTreatise*, 145-49.

[59] *Henry I's Coronation Charter*, in *Medieval England 100-1500: A Reader*, 95-97.

[60] *Letters of Queen Isabella of Angoulême*, in *Medieval England 100-1500: A Reader*, 223-26.

[61] John Walmsley, trans. and ed., *Widows, Hiers, and Hieresses in the Late Twelfth Century: The Rotuli de Dominabus et Pueris et Puellis* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006), 41.

[62] Walmsley, *Widows, Hiers, and Hieresses*, 13.

[63] Ibid., 55.

overlord who had the custody of the heir in question meant that women not only could, but did secure custody over their children. [64]

A widow also had responsibilities in court. In her capacity as a widow, a woman was given certain rights and privileges withheld from her as a mere wife. Among these privileges were those brought on by the role of widows as house and landholders: they were permitted to attend court independently and could even act as a surety or pledge for another under special circumstances.[65] These widows enjoyed virtually autonomous self-rule in their capacity of replacements to their husbands. One such widow was Alice Avice, widow of Peter Avice. As Peter's wife, Alice was recorded as having appeared in manorial court, but it was only after his death that she was both most active and most independent.[66] As a widow, Alice appeared in court to pay rent on her holding, purchase and sell property, answer for offenses linked with her status as a landowner, bring charges of complaint against others of her village, and to act as a legal surety for others.[67] Where before in court she had acted most frequently with her husband, as a widow she behaved as an independent, self-ruled member of her community. This is not to say that all women took advantage of the autonomous position their widowhood offered. Rather, there were those widows who reacted to their husband's death not with assertion and confidence but instead by withdrawing from courts and society.[68] One such woman, the foil of Alice Avice, was Alice Penifader. This Alice, rather than being known for her shrewdness in the courtroom, is recorded only as having often been excused from meetings of the court, pleading 'exception', and avoiding contact with society.[69] In all fairness, however, it is apparent from records of both women that the husband of Alice Avice had a more prominent position in the politics of

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[64] Sue Sheridan Walker, "Widow and Ward: The Feudal Law of Child Custody in Medieval England," in *Women in Medieval Society*, ed. Susan Mosher Stuard (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc., 1976), 162-64; *Glanvill's Treatise*, 145-149.

[65] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 154.

[66] Ibid., 142-43.

[67] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 142-43.

[68] Joel T. Rosenthal, "Fifteenth Century Widows and Widowhood: Bereavement, Reintegration, and Life Choices," in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England*; Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 145-46, 149-50.

[69] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 146.

the community than did that of Alice Penifader, and widows of wealthier, more politically active men, are found to have been more publicly active themselves.[70]

Having now an understanding of the rights widows had of conjugal and dower properties, as well as of their legal and societal authority, we must now turn to a consideration of *where* and of *how* those rights and privileges emerged. The answer to this question of origin is a simple one and it arises from the concept and development of the common law of England. According to Bennet:

> [A] widow's dower extended over only one third of her husband's property, but customary law often granted to widows as their 'free bench' from one-half to all of their husbands' lands. As a rule, rural custom gave widows only the use of free bench lands, dictating that they were not to alienate such properties without the consent of their husbands' heirs; this right of use, however, often endured throughout the widow's life, regardless of either remarriage or the maturation of heirs.[71]

This resulted in the significant control of many tracts of land by widows, with ten to fifteen percent of all holdings in the medieval countryside in their control.[72] The great amount of wealth held in the hands of these women certainly explains, in part at the very least, the large degree of power they held over other aspects of society. As we can see from accounts of such widows as Alice Avice, there existed widows who responded to their husband's death by taking part in both societal and legal goings on within their communities.

The fact that these widows had so much power over the countryside in the form of property ownership meant that they also had economic and social independence from men.[73] They were capable of entering into contracts alone, suing for debt, and of being entrepreneurs, albeit for the most part exclusively in the urban setting.[74] This independence did, however, lead to the 'dilemma' of a

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[70] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 146-47.

[71] Ibid., 144. Also discussed in Senderowtiz Loengard, "*Rationabilis Dos.*"

[72] Ibid; Richard H. Hemholz, "Married Women's Wills in Later Medieval England," in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England*

[73] Sheridan Walker. "Litigation as Personal Quest," 81.

[74] Barbara A. Hanawalt, "The Dilemma of the Widow of Property for Late Medieval London," in *The Medieval Marriage Scene: Prudence, Passion, Policy*, ed. Sherry Roush and

woman of means not attached to a man.[75] These women, having been given the benefits of tracts of land and other properties after the death of their husband posed a legal, ethical, and moral quandary: would women without the guidance of a man become morally lax?[76] Such questions are especially relevant to the remarriage of widows, a fine solution for the re-covering of independent women and for the redistribution of land under their control.[77] Marriages during the medieval period were frequently cut short by premature death, but even though marriage was an often fragile and temporary institution, most adults spent a good portion of their lives married to another.[78] Thus, remarriage was common, and was brought on by a number of social, economic, and other such practical factors.[79] When considering the concept of remarriage, one must also look to the mindset of the women who underwent it, as is discussed by historian Joel T. Rosenthal:

> When a woman married, and even more when they remarried, they altered their identities: surname, the mantle of coverture, kinship webs, place of residence, and then burial place, were they the survivor of the long dance. These transformations and adaptations represent, in toto, a challenge to a woman's basic ego identity. Some met the challenge with aplomb; others, among the universe of quickly remarried widows, may have been overwhelmed by an endless string of decisions and were perhaps puzzled and frustrated by their failure to find a safe port in a world of shifting identities.[80]

Beyond being dependent merely on the sex of the individual, with the time before remarriage being shorter for men than for women, the frequency of remarriage was also dependent on the personality, locale, and socioeconomic

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Cristelle L. Baskins (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 135.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid., 135-141.

[78] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 101.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Rosenthal, "Fifteenth Century Widows and Widowhood," 39-40.

status and age of the widow in question.[81] Remarriage was more frequent in villages with less available land, and land with more economic opportunity saw second and third marriages less frequently.[82] This was likely due, in large part, to the fact that, where there was a great deal of property available (and thus many economic opportunities) the need for redistribution of land was not as urgent. Also, young widows who had the care of small children and had the economic duties of the household were pressured into remarriage far more often than were their older counterparts.[83] This was not only out of a desire for the emotional and economic comfort another husband would bring, but also out of social expectation; a young women, in control of a family and of a household, was expected to place her family under the more traditional control of a man.[84] Older widows neither had children to raise, nor did they have large estates over which they held authority, and so did not feel this same pressure to be united with a man.

An attractive concept to men who wanted to make their way in the world but had neither the name nor the means, "[m]arriage to a widow of property…was an avenue upward for prospective husbands."[85] This being the case, women often lost the dower given them by their first husband in the event of a second marriage.[86] As can be seen in Henry I's coronation charter, it is obvious that remarriage did not always mean the forfeiture of dowry, where, a widow with or without children might have both her dowry and her right to marriage.[87] However, for the most part, heiresses, in order to remarry, had to ask the permission of their lord, as is stated in Glanville's treatise: "if…female heirs are once lawfully married, and afterwards become widows, they shall not again be under the custody of their lords; although they are…bound to ask his

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[81] Barbara A. Hanawalt. "Remarriage as an option for Urban and Rural Widows in Late Medieval England." In *Wife and Widow in Medieval England.* Ed. Sue Sheridan Walker, 141-164. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993), 141-144 and Ed. Sue Sheridan Walker, 141-164. 145-46.

[82]Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 146.

[83] Ibid., 147.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Rosenthal, "Fifteenth Century Widows and Widowhood: Bereavement, Reintegration, and Life Choices," 36.

[86] Hanawalt, "The Widow's Mite," 23.

[87] *Henry I's Coronation Charter*, 95-96.

consent to their marriage."[88] It was in not seeking consent that they risked their dowry. This was the case with noble widows such as Queen Isabella of Angoulême. Although he was a minor, as his father's rightful heir Henry III had control over not only the crown passed down to him, but also his father's chattels, land, and dependents. Among these dependents was his mother, Isabella of Angoulême. Excluded from her young son's regency government, Isabella returned to her native France with her daughter Joanna.[89] In the year 1220, in a missive she sent to her son and lord, Isabella spoke of young Joanna's betrothal to the son of Hugh de Lusignan, the man to whom Isabella herself was betrothed to before wedding King John.[90] This betrothal did not come to fruition, and Hugh was left without an heir following the death of Joanna's betrothed, Hugh the younger. Isabella explained to her son:

> We hereby signify to you that when the counts of March and Eu departed this life, the lord Hugh de Lusignan remained alone and without heirs in Poitou, and his friends would not permit that our daughter should be united to him in marriage, because her age is so tender, but counseled him to take a wife from whom he might speedily hope for an heir; and it was proposed that he should take a wife in France, which if he had done, all your land in Poitou and Gascony would be lost. We, therefore, seeing the great peril that might accrue if that marriage should take place, when our counselors could give us no advice, ourselves married the said Hugh, count of March; and God knows that we did this rather for your benefit than our own. Wherefore we entreat you, as our dear son, that this thing may be pleasing to you, seeing it conduces greatly to the profit of you and yours.[91]

Isabella, having married without the approval of her son and lord, went on to entreat of Henry the dower lands and chattel taken from her following her

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[88] *Glanvill's Treatise*, 148; Linda E. Mitchell, "Noble Widowhood in the Thirteenth Century: Three Generations of Mortimer Widows, 1246-1334," in *Upon My Husband's Death,* 169-192.

[90] *Letters of Queen Isabella of Angoulême*, 223-24.

[91] Ibid., 225-226.

unsanctioned marriage, arguing that, by way of her marriage, she secured for Henry's court a powerful ally.[92]

With this risk of this loss of their economic and social independence, one must ask why women of this period remarried at all. Certain political factors came into play for women of higher class, and while lower class women also had to address elements of lesser politics, one must ask what other factors existed. Among other matters of relevance here were the concept of coerced marriage, the requirements of any surviving children, the need for administration assistance, desire, and the social stigmas associated with being a woman of means independent of a male figure. In addressing coercion into marriage, "from gentle persuasion to threats and abuse, coercion was part of the courtship process."[93] Although Henry I stated that he would force no widow of any of his men into marriage "except according to her will,"[94] widows nonetheless could be given in marriage by their lord.[95] Facing this prospect or even that of being abducted and raped until agreeing to marry their abductor, widows were forced into many unpleasant and undesirable marriages.

Alice Townley was one such widow who was not only threatened with death, abused, and abducted, but was also forced into marriage with a man she found highly unattractive and unsuitable: Roger Talbot. Moreover, he was related to her, and this made any union between the two of them both immoral and illegal.[96] Due to the fact that they were indeed closely enough related for their marriage to be incestuous, Alice was able to plead for an annulment at court, thereby escaping the beatings, incarcerations, and forced isolation which she enjoyed as Talbot's wife.[97] Alice and all other widows during this period were vulnerable as propertied women, independent of the strictures or defense offered by a husband or other male relative.[98] There is no doubt that, faced with the possibility of such rape, abuse, and torture as Alice suffered through, rather

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[92] *Letters of Queen Isabella of Angoulême*, 226.

[93] Sara M. Butler, "'I will never consent to be wedded with you!': Coerced Marriage in the Courts of Medieval England," in *Canadian Journal of History/Annales canadiennes d'histoire* 39.2, (2004), 247.

[94] *Henry I's Coronation Charter*, 96.

[95] Walmsley, *Widows, Hiers, and Hieresses*, 121.

[96] Butler, "'I will never consent to be wedded with you!'" 261-62.

[97] Ibid., 262.

[98] Ibid., 248.

than be forced into a marriage not of their choosing, women selected for themselves new husbands that might offer some defense.

Also to be considered were the needs of any children surviving from the widow's first marriage. As mentioned above, widows responsible for young children were expected to remarry more quickly and more often than were older widows or those who had no dependents.[99] Moreover, the practice of remarrying created an intricate network of relationships across the countryside. With high mortality rates due to accidents in the field or on the road, or the rigors of childbirth, the surviving parent and children of one family often united through marriage with the surviving parent and children of another.[100] In this way, many people in the same community belonged to the same family through blood ties or marriage.[101] This meant that there were always others to turn to for support in raising the family.[102]

Beyond a means of helping to care for and support children, remarriage was also used in the practical world of business and economics. If left a business by a previous husband, a widow might remarry out of sheer convenience; it would have been a relief to have someone else with a vested interest in the enterprise to help run it.[103] This was particularly the case in London and other such cities, where guilds were strong. Not only were most marriages between members of the same guild, but remarriages of widows was greatly encouraged, and the recirculation of both the women themselves and of their fortunes was kept tightly within the guild brotherhood.[104] This worked to ensure that the hard earned wealth of guild members as well as business and trade secrets remained within the guild's folds.[105]

Of all the reasons for a widow to remarry (even beyond fear of coercion or coercion itself, the needs of children, and the pressures of the business world), it was perhaps the pressures of society and of social stigma that were the most

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[99] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 147.

[100] Ibid., 63.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid., 147; Hanawalt, "The Dilemma of the Widow of Property," in *The Medieval Marriage Scene: Prudence, Passion, Policy*, ed. Sherry Roush and Cristelle L. Baskins, 143.

[104] Hanawalt, "The Dilemma of the Widow of Property," 143.

[105] Ibid.

profound. Remarriage was as much dictated by society as it was derived from high mortality rates. Both the church and society were concerned with the economic and sexual freedom of widows (such as those as have been discussed in this work) and therefore strongly urged women to remarry as soon as they were able.[106] While, as we have seen, widows did enjoy great economic independence, was society's concern for their sexual independence valid? This may have in fact been the case, as is suggested, albeit with some bias, from extracts taken from the reports of a Venetian who travelled to England in the fifteenth century:

> I saw, one day, when I was with your magnificence at court, a very handsome young man of about 18 years of age, the brother of the Duke of Suffolk, who, as I understood, had been left very poor, the whole of the paternal inheritance among the nobility descending to the eldest son; this youth, I say, was boarded out to a widow of fifty, with a fortune, as I was informed, of 50,000 crowns; and this old woman knew how to play her cards so well, that he was content to become her husband, and patiently to waste the flower of his beauty with her, hoping soon to enjoy her great wealth with some handsome young lady….[107]

Here was a wealthy woman, with enough political influence to appear at court, married to an attractive young man who had nothing to offer her in terms of land or wealth. Although there is a great deal in this account that hints to the prejudices of the writer, there is some shred of a story here that highlights the concerns of both society and the church. However, it is perhaps not fair to say that the desires of the woman and the greed of the young man were the only factors at work. The young man, at 18, was likely still very much under the influence of his parents or foster-parents, being younger than the age of majority. Also, although he was a second son, his was an illustrious family, one with whom it would be of great advantage to be united with, which may have

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[106] Hanawalt. "The Dilemma of the Widow of Property," 135; James A Brundage, "Widows and Remarriage: Moral Conflicts and Their Resolution in Classical Canon Law," in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England*, 17; *Henry I's Coronation Charter*, 96.

[107] *An Italian Relation of England*, in *Medieval England 100-1500: A Reader*, 492.

been, rather than his beauty and youth, what the widow (and her family) lusted after.

There is further evidence of this concern as to the incontinence of widows found in Henry I's coronation charter. There, the king promised that a widow with children would have her dowry and right of remarriage "so long as she kept her body legitimately."[108] In light of the fact that, in Glanville's treatise, concern is spent on the sexual freedoms of female heirs as well, perhaps it is most accurate to say that the concern was valid, at least to some extent, with any independent women wanting to enjoy their independence as much as possible.[109] Also, it is perhaps fair to assume that male officials in a male dominated world were threatened by women who enjoyed some shred of independence, whether or not there was any reason for the concern they so willingly expressed.

Widows were an important and influential piece of the patchwork that made up medieval society. As Judith Bennet has written:

> As a result of the forces exerted by locale, socioeconomic status, and age, each new widow faced a unique situation. As long as she remained unmarried…she shared with all other widows the status of a female endowed with extensive public authority; thus widows fit awkwardly into the social hierarchy of the medieval world. In a society of male householders, they were female heads of household. In a legal system that so often distinguished clearly between the public rights of males and females, they took on some of the public attributes of men. In an economy that most valued landholding, their particular land claims threatened the proper devolution of assets from father to son.[110]

Medieval Englishwomen, peasants and noblewomen alike, shared a similar burden: a common lack of freedom. Both as married women then as widows, they faced responsibilities and burdens of a social and legal mien. What limited freedom they had was not free, but came with a price. Married women were responsible for staying within the boundaries of their marriage contract. At the same time, they gave up their economic and social independence in the form of

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[108] *Henry I's Coronation Charter*, 95.
[109] *Glanvill's Treatis*, 148.
[110] Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*, 149.

the goods and properties they brought to the marriage. These properties were placed in the control of their husband and would remain so for the duration of their marriage and even beyond. Widowed women, although they were freer, to a degree, upon their husband's death, had even more social and legal restrictions and obligations placed upon them: their obligations certainly outweighed their privileges. Responsible for the terms of inheritance of their husband's will, they also had to see to the care of any children of that union. Widowed women were required to attend court meetings, and other such legal commitments, and ensure the prosperity of any business they inherited. All the while, they faced the social stigma associated with being women of means without the guidance of a man.

Threatening Political and Economic Sovereignty: Britain and Russia in Iran in the Nineteenth Century

Mira Goldberg-Poch

The nineteenth century was an era of unprecedented colonial and imperial expansion, and the prime example of empire-building was Great Britain. Scattered over the globe, British colonial possessions were the pride of the nation, and an economic boon. To keep these colonies and the revenues they provided safe was of the utmost importance. The 'jewel' of the British Empire was undoubtedly the Indian subcontinent. To keep this gem safe, the British had to ensure that other empire-minded powers did not encroach on Indian borders, and thus made an effort to establish buffer states as protection. The lands of Iran (or Persia as it was then known) and Afghanistan,[1] on the western border of India, were of particular importance. But just as the British eyed Persia, so too did expansionist Imperial Russia. The Russians had pushed their borders down through the Caucasus to Iran's frontiers, and also sought to establish a buffer zone to keep the British from clawing their way in. Both Britain and Russia constituted serious threats to Iranian political and economic sovereignty in the nineteenth century, but for most of the century neither power decisively gained the upper hand in influence; rather, the balance of power vacillated between the two imperialist states. However, it can be argued that over the course of the century, Russia was a greater threat than Britain to Iranian political and economic sovereignty.

The intruding powers came into Iran to protect their imperial interests, and while they did not formally colonize Iran, the country was eventually divided into three 'spheres of influence' – Russia in the north, Britain in the south, and in the centre, an area where neither power officially proclaimed influence – without

[1] [*Editors' Note: "Iran" is often used in this paper to refer to Persia, as this was how Goldberg-Poch's professor commonly referred to the region.*]

consulting Iran itself. As Shahbaz Shahnavaz notes, "the latter part of Naser-ud-Din Shah's reign showed evidence of increasing Russian influence and pressure in northern Persia, though it was rather commercial than military in its character. Britain too strove to increase its influence in the south. Therefore, in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, Iran was under the thumb of Russia in the north, while Britain held sway in the south."[2] The oscillation of power can be, in part, attributed to the geographical disparity of the spheres of influence.

Iran was not a cohesive country in the nineteenth century. The land was divided along many lines, and tribal elements still ruled in their own areas. The tribes had long managed their own affairs, and during periods of centralization had given allegiance in the form of financial tribute rather than political loyalty. The tribes were traditionally difficult for a central government to control, particularly with Iran's mountainous and arid terrain. Most of the tribes were pastoral nomads, and many of them were not ethnically Persian.[3] The Qajar tribe, which rose to power in 1796, came to dominate the political scene of Iran for the next hundred or so years, and formed a government. Governmental rule was theoretically centralized, but in reality, provincial towns were at the heart of the administration of the country. As religious and administrative centres, they were the focus of culture, learning, and commercial relations, and, as such, were largely autonomous units that presented the central government with problems of order.[4] The state lacked a strong military force, and without roads and railroads with which to reach the provinces, the Qajars were often forced to turn to less scrupulous means of ruling. Bribes, hostage-taking, encouraging factional fighting, and dividing oppositional forces were some of the strategies they used. The Qajars needed the support of these dispersed, unruly tribal groups; in order to keep the system sustainable, they needed supplies from Europe. They got more than they bargained for, however, and, because of the in-fighting in Iran, the outlying provinces were ripe for the plucking, and Britain and Russia came out for the harvest.

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[2] Shahbaz Shanavaz, *Britain and the Opening up of South-West Persia 1880-1914: A Study in Imperialism and Economc Dependence* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 9.

[3] Nikki R. Keddie*, Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 24.

[4] Vanessa Martin, *The Qajar Pact: Bargaining, Protest, and the State in Nineteenth-Century Persia* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2005), 15.

Europeans had long been involved in Persia, but it was under the Qajars that their role increased greatly. While multiple European power players had interests in Persia, it was primarily Great Britain and Russia that came to dominate the scene, and threatened the political and economic sovereignty of Iran. In the late 1700s and early 1800s Persia had been relatively prosperous and secure, but the ambitions of Imperial Russia began to change that. Russia had already expanded into the Caucasus, and was looking to push down to the Persian Gulf for access to warm-water ports.[5] Britain, meanwhile, was establishing a presence in the south of Iran, which bordered on the jewel of her empire: the British raj in India. In the 1760s the British had been granted the right to establish a consulate in Bushire, along the coast of the Gulf, and this British Residency came to have great impacts on the sovereignty of Iran. Sandwiched diplomatically between the empires of Britain and Russia, Iran became a buffer state, and would probably have become colonized had Iranian leaders not so wisely played the two superpowers off each other in what came to be known as "The Great Game."

Early in the 1800s, Russia began to have significant political and economic influence in Iran. Russia's expansionist tendencies brought the empire into contact with Iran's northern borders. After years of pressuring the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea region, Russia established a satellite zone in Georgia, and annexed the territory in 1801.[6] The Russians were eager to provoke an expansionist war, and invaded the Persian vassal state of Ganjeh in 1803.[7] Persia, refusing to accept the loss of the land it had ruled for centuries, accordingly waged war against the Russian Empire in 1804, encouraged by the British. As the Napoleonic wars dragged on in Europe, the Russo-Persian war was similarly prolonged. Russia, although it had superior forces and weaponry, was operating in unfamiliar, hostile terrain; while the Iranians – who had the advantage of mobility – were short of funds. Iranian and Russian alliances with France and Britain shifted numerous times throughout the course of the war, in response to many of Napoleon's actions. In the end, the British stepped in to

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[5] Martin, *Qajar Pact*, 22.

[6] Firuz Kazemzadeh, *Britain and Russia in Persia: A Study in Imperialism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), 5.

[7] Laurence Kelly, *Diplomacy and Murder in Tehran: Alexander Griboyedov and Imperial Russia's Mission to the Shah of Persia* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2002), 48.

negotiate the terms of peace, after becoming Russia's ally in 1812 in light of Napoleon's invasion of Russia.[8] The resulting Treaty of Gulistan redrew the borders of the countries, and Persia recognized Russian sovereignty over the Caucasus and the disputed region of Georgia. The treaty was "humiliating" to Persia, and the vagueness of the new borders would later cause problems between the two countries.[9] Gulistan also established Russia's exclusive rights to have warships on the Caspian Sea, and guaranteed the Russian Czar's support for the crown prince in Iran. This gave Russia a new power in determining the future ruler of Iran since a new crown prince was always readily available for substitution if it was deemed necessary.[10]

While hostilities remained between Iran and Russia, the war had accomplished a number of things relating to Russia's power in Iran. It had interrupted British trade routes from India, taking away many commercial advantages the British had formerly enjoyed. It had also, with the annexation of Georgia and the establishment of a direct route to Iran, opened up new trade opportunities. The balance of profit from this new trade was heavily on the Russian side.[11] Ever-increasing trade between the two nations characterized the entirety of the nineteenth century, and the profit remained firmly, inexorably, on the Russian side. Russia's powerful hold on trade in northern Iran compromised Iran's economic autonomy in that area.

The occidental powers, Russia included, were used to breaking treaties on a whim, switching allies and utterly confusing Iranian politicians. As tensions over the unclear borders continued for years, the most vocal *'ulema* (Islamic Quranic scholars) pressured the government to embark on a *jihad* against Russia. In 1826, Fath Ali Shah did just this. However, the Iranian forces were soundly defeated by the Russians, and the Treaty of Turkomanchai was signed. If the Treaty of Gulistan had seemed humiliating to Persia, it was nothing compared to Turkomanchai. The new treaty ceded even more territory to Russia, demanded a cash indemnity to pay for the war, cemented favourable tariff concessions and extraterritoriality for Russian citizens, and granted to Russia the exclusive rights

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[8] Kelly, *Diplomacy and Murder*, 48.

[9] Ibid., 49.

[10] Abbas Amanat, *Pivot of the Universe: Nasir al-Din Shah and the Iranian Monarchy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 21.

[11] Kelly, *Diplomacy and Murder*, 75.

to trade and navigation on the Caspian.[12] Effectively, this treaty put Russia in a position to exercise considerable political and economic sway over Persia.

In 1834, Muhammad Shah came to the Qajar throne. He was determined to compensate for the losses to Russia under his predecessor, and set out to take control of Herat from Afghanistan. However, the Shah's ambitions collided with those of Britain, which sought to ensure that Russia did not acquire influence over Afghanistan. A Russian presence in Afghanistan – which could result from an Iranian presence there – would allow the empire to threaten British India; under the Treaty of Turkomanchai the Russians would be entitled to place agents in Herat if it were transferred permanently to Persia.[13] The Iranian forces, ostensibly fighting against the Afghans (but really combating the British), lost the war, which lasted from 1838 until 1841.[14] Both Britain and Russia by this time had concluded that Persia as a 'sovereign' state must be maintained for the good of both empires. Neither side was willing to grant an inch to the other, and therefore felt the need to maintain Iran as a buffer. However, it was felt in Britain that should Russia deem it prudent, it would have no qualms about breaking its treaties and would respect only military force as a limiting factor on its ambitions. This indicated, then, at least from a British point of view, that Russia was a potential threat to the autonomy of Iran.[15]

Traditional western historiography paints Britain as the chief imperial aggressor of the nineteenth century, and indeed much more scholarly attention has been given to Britain than to any other country, but that claim can be contested in the case of Iran. In most places, specifically Africa and the Indian subcontinent, the characterization of Britain as the premier imperialist is undeniably true, but the situation in Iran was exceptional. While Britain undoubtedly posed a serious threat to Iranian political and economic sovereignty, it was Russia that constituted the greater threat in the long run.
As Abbas Amanat notes so eloquently,

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[12] Kelly, *Diplomacy and Murder*, 75.
[13] Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain*, 69.
[14] Martin, *Qajar Pact*, 22.
[15] David McLean, *Britain and her Buffer State: The Collapse of the Persian Empire, 1890-1914* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1979), 15.

> There have been few events in the history of nineteenth-century Iran which could match the two rounds of Russo-Persian wars of 1805-1813 and 1826-1828 in their immediate impact and long-term socio-political consequences. Iran's first serious encounter with a powerful Christian neighbor not only resulted in the loss of all prosperous Caucasian provinces but also in economic bankruptcy, precipitated by military spending and war reparations. But still greater losses were in the political realm. Defeat in war cast an unhealthy shadow over the legitimacy of the Qajar monarchy and its claim to be the true defender of the Guarded Domain of Iran, a shadow from under which the ruling house never fully escaped.[16]

Because Russia was becoming so powerful in Iran, the Persian government developed a policy whereby appeasement was the principle objective. However, this 'appeasement' is not to be mistaken for complacency; rather, Iran knew itself to be in a militarily weak position and strove to keep the peace by provoking neither Russia nor Britain.[17] This policy was entirely in line with British and Russian interests. The desire of each state to forestall the other from making advances in Iran depended upon Iran's formal independence. However, this independence was purely formal, and "Iran did not dare take a step that might seriously displease Britain or Russia unless it had very strong support from the other country."[18] There are many records in diplomatic files from the nineteenth century showing that Britain and Russia meddled in affairs that should have been dealt with by Iran, free of external interference.[19]

Politically, Russia held more sway over the government than did Britain due simply to the geographical placement of the capital, Tehran. Although Iran was not officially divided into "Spheres of Influence" until the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, Tehran lay in the unofficial (northern) sphere of the Russians prior to formal division. David McLean emphasizes this geographical control as but one of Russia's modes of influence, noting that

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[16] Abbas Amanat, "Russian Intrusion into the Guarded Domain: Reflections of a Qajar Satesman on European Expansion," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113, no. 1 (1993): 35.

[17] Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, "The Diminishing Domains of Qajar Iran," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29, no. 2 (1997): 212.

[18] Keddie, *Modern Iran*, 34.

[19] Ibid.

> Russian diplomacy was all the stronger for the threat which could be substantiated. By comparison the British could threaten to seize a few ports or islands in the Gulf but, unlike his Russian counterpart, the British Minister at Tehran was never in a position to intimate the possibility of action inland. Yet Russian diplomacy did not rest solely on the menace of military intervention. The Russian legation exercised considerable pressure on officials in the Persian government by bribery and by support, and Russian consuls and political agents in the provinces often managed the local governors by similar methods… Russia's influence in court circles at Tehran led the British Chargé d'affaires to accuse the Persian government of being the paid servants of Russia and of caring for nothing but taking the bribes which were so lavishly offered.[20]

Even Britain had to reckon with Russia's dominance over Tehran. "When British officials debated policy, or when they took such steps as they thought necessary to protect British interest in the south of Persia, they did so with the knowledge that Russia, not Britain, was the dominant force at Tehran."[21] Russia's fortuitous geographical proximity to the capital city indeed offered many political advantages; less so for the luckless Iranians caught between two giants. McLean goes on to reiterate the rationale behind Russia's stranglehold on the Persian government: "Russian tactics were to keep the existing regime in power but to reduce the reigning sovereign to a state of complete dependence on Russian troops and Russian money for his throne."[22]

Bribery was a common tactic of the Russian Empire in achieving political aims, but legitimate financial transactions were also a means by which Russia confirmed its hold over the Persian government. Severe political conditions were attached to loans, and furthermore, Persian officials managed to get large cuts from these legitimate loans, thereby creating a link between the benefitting official and Russia. "Financing the central government was part of Russia's policy to establish a 'veiled protectorate' in Persia." Russia could

[20] McLean, *Britain and her Buffer State*, 16-17.
[21] Ibid*,* 18.
[22] Ibid., 16.

subjugate Persia both commercially and financially, and attempted to establish a monopoly in financial aid. [23]

Russia dominated the political and economic scene in Iran for the first part of the nineteenth century, but Britain soon began to become competitive, particularly in the economic sphere. As Iran opened up to European markets, foreign firms flocked to the country, especially into the rapidly expanding capital of Tehran. The growth in foreign firms caused socio-economic disturbances on more than one level. Iranian merchants found their shares in the market falling as the cash-hungry government started handing out monopolies to foreign investors.[24] At this game, the British were far more accomplished than the Russians, and therefore began to represent a threat to Iran's autonomy almost on par with Russia.

The granting of economic concessions was one of the major components of Iran's foreign economic policy in the nineteenth century. Beginning under the reign of Nasir al-Din Shah (r. 1848-1896), and continuing under his son Muzaffar al-Din Shah (r. 1896-1907), the policy of granting concessions proved to be hugely damaging to Iran's political and economic sovereignty.[25] While the policy was detrimental to sovereignty, it was beneficial in two ways: it gave the government much-needed cash and spurred the modernizing of Persia. The first major concession was granted to Great Britain in 1863, namely, the concession for the establishment of a cross-land telegraph line. The success of this concession encouraged the Shah to continue looking for rich private investors, and he decided to place "into the hands of a single man the entire responsibility for Iran's economic and industrial development."[26] This man was an Englishman, Baron Julius de Reuter, who was given, for a period of seventy years, the exclusive rights to construct all railways, dams, and canals in Iran, to regulate rivers, and to exploit all mines, except gold and silver mines. He was also promised priority for future concessions. Of course, this enormous concession to a British baron infuriated the Russians, who protested adamantly against the concession. It was a mark of Russian hegemony over the

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[23] Ibid., 17-18.

[24] Martin, *Qajar Pact*, 24.

[25] Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *The Foreign Policy of Iran, 1500-1941* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1966), 66.

[26] Ramazani, *Foreign Policy*, 66.

political and economic scene in Iran when the concession was cancelled in 1873, although other factors such as public opposition were also very influential in the decision. [27] A series of minor concessions were granted to both countries over the subsequent years, and the next important one came in 1888, when Britain was granted the right to establish a regular commercial route on the Karun River. The British also inquired into the possibility of building a railroad to accompany the river route, but this set the Russians on their guard. Russia began an obstructive railway policy, which continued successfully until the First World War. In 1889, Nasir al-Din Shah promised Russia that Iran would not grant a railway concession to any other state.[28]

Russia was in the midst of regaining prestige from the British when de Reuter reappeared on the scene. In 1889, de Reuter was granted the concession for the establishment of the Imperial Bank of Persia. This proved to be a hugely successful financial venture. The Imperial Bank "had the exclusive right of note issue in Iran, and offered loans at a lower rate of interest. Since it was linked to a long-term capital market, it could offer greater security for deposits."[29] While this was a sweeping victory for Britain on the economic front, yet another of their potential concessions would come to ruin in the face of popular opposition. The Tobacco Protests of 1891-1892 reversed the granting of all tobacco sale rights to one Major G. Talbot.[30] The popular revolt demonstrated that the people still held sway over Britain's political position, affirming Britain's imperfect hold over Iranian economic and political sovereignty.

Russia, never far behind the British, and in some ways miles ahead of them, established the Banque d'Escompte de Perse in 1891, a branch of the Russian Ministry of Finance and a part of the Central Bank of Russia. This bank was linked to Russia in a way that de Reuter's bank was not tied to British state control, and the bank was consciously used as a powerful instrument of Russian policy in Iran.[31]

Thus, at the turn of the century, Russia seemed to be back on the ascent, with Britain merely in a holding pattern. Both presented a significant threat to

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[27] Ramazani, *Foreign Policy*, 66.
[28] Ibid., 68.
[29] Martin, *Qajar Pact*, 24-25.
[30] Ramazani, *Foreign Policy*, 69.
[31] Ibid., 70.

Iranian political and economic sovereignty, and would continue to do so well into the twentieth century. However, Russia's position as the greater threat to Iran's autonomy would soon be usurped by the British with the D'Arcy Oil Concession in 1901. In May 1908, prospectors discovered oil, and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (still alive today under the name of British Petroleum) was founded.[32]

By this time, Russia was no longer the greatest threat to the economic and political sovereignty of Iran. The prestige of Russia had been severely weakened with its defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. When czarist Russia fell to Japan, it was the first time an Asian power had defeated a western power. Russia, the only Western power without a constitution, had fallen to the only constitutional Asian power. This, in the eyes of the Iranians, indicated a sort of power in the existence of a constitution. So, it was Russia that indirectly spurred the constitutional revolution in Iran in 1905/06. The public began to push for the creation of a constitution, and eventually it got what it wanted. The document resulting from the 1905/1906 constitutional revolution was based on a western-type government constitution: specifically, that of Belgium.

Russia realized its weakened position, and, instead of continuing to compete with Britain for dominance in Iran, the two countries decided to formally divide Iran into disparate spheres of influence. On 31 August 1907, the Anglo-Russian Entente was signed, dividing Iran into three spheres. Russia got northern and central Iran, including Tehran and Isfahan; Great Britain took the southeast; and the central area between the two was left as a neutral zone. Iran was neither consulted on the agreement nor formally notified of its terms when it signed.[33]

"Unkind fate placed Persia between the Russian hammer and the British anvil. The struggle of the two giant empires, whether for Constantinople, Central Asia, or the Far East, were instantly reflected and echoed at Tehran. Through the two decades of Russia's uninterrupted advance in Turkestan and Transcaspia, Persia felt the pressure from both St Petersburg and London."[34] Both Britain and Russia constituted serious threats to Iranian political and

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[32] Vanessa Martin, *Anglo-Iranian Relations since 1800* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 128.

[33] Keddie, *Modern Iran*, 70.

[34] Kazemzadeh, *Britain and Russia*, 148.

economic sovereignty in the nineteenth century. As Abbas Amanat observes, Iran's political vulnerability from the instability after the Safavid period was a factor in the country's political and economic subjugation to the European powers. Britain and Russia were "highly influential in the political, economic, and sociocultural making of modern Iran, [because they] came into wider contact with Iran when it was about to recover from the political malaise and isolation of earlier decades."[35] Russia began the century as the more influential of the two powers, but Britain made inroads in the mid to late century. The balance of power vacillated over the course of the century between the two imperialists, and while Britain ultimately dominated in later times, over the course of the 1800s, Russia was a greater threat than Britain to Iranian political and economic sovereignty. Russia ruled in the earlier days, and, after overcoming a period of challenge from the British, began to come out on top at the close of the 1800s. Everything changed in the early twentieth century with the discovery of oil, the Russo-Japanese War, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, and the First World War. In Iran, Britain came to be dominant; Russia, although it still held sway, would become less and less important in the power politics of Iran.

[35] Amanat, *Pivot of the Universe*, 15.

Portugal and Counterinsurgency: Tactics, Strategy, and their Limits in the Angolan War, 1961-1974

Gregory Morris

From the beginning of European involvement in Africa in the early sixteenth century, Portugal established itself as a major presence on the southern end of the continent. Despite its relative economic decline and small industrial base, it had established itself as the third largest colonial power behind Britain and France during the partition of Africa. After World War Two, however, as the colonial powers gradually withdrew from Africa, the Portuguese government, under the dictator Antonio Salazar, was determined to retain what it regarded as overseas provinces of Portugal at any cost. Consequently, when insurgencies were fomented within its colonies, the government undertook an extensive counterinsurgency campaign in order to quell them. Perhaps the most notable of these insurgencies, both because of its scope the Portuguese tactics employed there, was that of Angola. From 1961 to 1974, Portugal undertook a counterinsurgency campaign that, despite its ultimate failure, produced noteworthy successes, given the relative size and economic strength of Portugal.

For the most part, European powers were unwilling to abandon their colonial holdings in the face of indigenous African independence movements; Portugal was an exception. For Portugal, its African possessions were key to its status as a European power as well as its economic survival. Compared to the heavily industrialized colonial powers, Portugal had remained comparatively underdeveloped during the nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth centuries.[1] It had a very small industrial base, and was somewhat infertile. Although Portugal's colonies had remained relatively underdeveloped, there had always been a possibility for overseas wealth and exploitation as had occurred in Brazil before

[1] John P. Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa in Africa: The Portuguese Way of War, 1961-1974* (Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1997), 14.

its loss in the early nineteenth century.[2] After World War Two, as foreign investment in Portugal's colonies began to increase, so did the profits reaped by Portugal proper. Indeed, while Portugal's income in 1962 accounted for some 2.5 billion (USD) Angola provided some additional 800 million dollars which increased to about 1.8 billion dollars by 1970.[3]

Although Portugal's intended mission in Africa was ostensibly to civilize the Africans in areas which they controlled, it was no secret that the Portuguese were one of the most oppressive of the European colonizers. Like the French, the aim of the Portuguese by the twentieth century was to transform the Africans within their colonies into fully naturalized Portuguese citizens.[4] This plan was revitalized by Salazar and his so-called *Estado Novo,* or New State, which was determined to make the colonies productive, and consequently to transform the Africans in them as fully possible into Portuguese citizens.

The reality was a regime of gross inequality between ethnic Portuguese and African subjects. In order to receive full legal benefits, Africans and *mestiços*, who were people of mixed ancestry, had to be deemed civilized by Portuguese authorities.[5] However, requirements for this legal recognition were stringent; indeed 97 percent of indigenous Africans in Angola over the age of fifteen were illiterate in 1950.[6] Despite the technical possibility that an indigenous African or *mestiço* could be deemed "civilized," the reality was that racial discrimination pervaded all aspects of Angolan society, which further increased tensions between ethnic Portuguese and indigenous Africans. The result of these tensions was the formation of several indigenous independence movements which would be the main opposition groups the Portuguese fought during the ensuing conflict.

The most powerful of these groups was the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). It was founded in 1956 by the merger of the Communist Party of Angola as well as other anti-Portuguese independence movements. From about 1966, its strength numbered about 4,700 insurgents,

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[2] Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa*, 15-16.

[3] Ibid., 9.

[4] Gerald J. Bender, *Angola under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality* (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1978) 149.

[5] Ibid., 150.

[6] Ibid., 151.

mostly operating out of Zambia.[7] This movement received substantial support from Communist forces abroad, including the Soviet Union and Cuba. Another was the UPA, which changed its name to the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) in 1963, which employed about 6,200 insurgents who operated from the Belgian Congo.[8] The last was the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), which was a breakaway organization of the FNLA, which formed in 1966. Initially, these movements operated independently, and the insurgency was marked by internal and external struggles between the three organizations, which hindered its effectiveness.

In order to understand the scope of the task that Portugal was determined to undertake, it is useful to examine the number of troops it had available to fight, the number or insurgents it was facing, the tactical challenges the topography of Angola presented, and insurgencies that were being countered by colonial powers around the world.

Angola itself was about 1.2 million square kilometres, and had a population of about five million in 1960.[9] It was predominantly tropical and had an inland plateau which covered approximately 60 percent of the country.[10] In the North, it had a vast, which included dense woodland, swamps, rivers, and grasslands. There was also the Congo River and surrounding islands, which provided excellent cover for guerrillas who sought to transverse the border. Portugal's troop commitment to its insurgencies at the height of the conflict was about 150,000, compared to an insurgency numbering around 27,000, or about six to one.[11] While this difference may seem substantial, similar counterinsurgencies of the time such as the Malayan Emergency, the French War in Algeria, and the Vietnam War had troop to insurgent ratios of thirty-seven, fifty and eight to one respectively.[12] On top of that, Angola was the largest territory that experienced a counterinsurgency in this period with the exception

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[7] Cann, Counterinsurgency in Africa, 7.

[8] Ibid., 6.

[9] Arslan Humbaraci and Nicole Muchnik, *Portugal's African Wars* (Great Britain: The Third Press, 1974), 15.

[10] Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa*, 3.

[11] Ibid., 8.

[12] Ibid.

of Algeria.[13] In short, the task of the Portuguese was daunting, and few would have expected it possible to prevail against such odds.

During the late 1950s, as it became apparent that Portugal would have to fight for its African possessions, it began to modify its army and strategy for counterinsurgency campaigns. The Portuguese army was geared toward conventional nation-state versus nation-state European-style warfare, and had no experience fighting a counterinsurgency. Indeed, the army itself had not fired a shot of aggression since the limited engagements it had with German colonial forces in Southern Angola and Northern Mozambique during the First World War. It did, however, have the advantage of hindsight in that several other counterinsurgencies that involved conventional European forces had already begun and ended by 1961, notably the Malayan Emergency, the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya and the Algerian War.

Central to the formation of Portugal's military strategy for its colonies was the *Instituto de Altos Estudos Milatares* (IAEM),[14] which served as the primary policy maker for the Portuguese military. Throughout the 1950s it began to favour staff training at the regimental and battalion level for subversive warfare, and sent several officers to England to take courses in military intelligence, which were heavily influenced by British counterinsurgency campaigns. These officers then translated several British books on counterinsurgency doctrine which were circulated widely through the Portuguese officer corps.[15] Officers were also sent to Algeria in 1959 in order to assess handling of the French counterinsurgency, and completed an extensive report regarding the nature of counterinsurgency the Portuguese should be prepared to fight.

These findings and experiences were central to the development of the *O Exército na Guerra Subersiva* (EGS),[16] the strategic doctrine for military operations in its overseas colonies, which had been completed and fully established by 1960. The central tenets of this doctrine established by the British and then incorporated into Portuguese doctrine are summed up well by Cann:

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[13] Despite Algeria's size, most of the country was desert. The population, along with the fighting, was limited to coastal regions and mountains in the north of the country.

[14] This translates to: Institute of Higher Military Studies.

[15] Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa*, 40.

[16] This translates to: The Army in Subversive War.

1. Disorders were suppressed with a minimum of force.
2. Successful counterinsurgency had depended on a close cooperation between all branches of the civil government and the military, and this coordination had been the responsibility of a single individual.
3. Successful counterinsurgency had depended on good intelligence, and its gathering and collation had be coordinated under a single authority.
4. Successful counterinsurgency had called for the adoption of highly decentralized, small-unit tactics to defeat irregulars.[17]

The Portuguese knew that the insurgency would last for a long time, and were thus concerned with keeping costs low, and using the least amount of force possible to achieve strategic objectives. Rather than destroying the militants in large engagements, it resolved to engage them in small scale but strategically relevant encounters which would eventually lead to their loss of manpower, finances, and inevitable disintegration. The EGS also recognized that the indiscriminate use of force and firepower upon the population would have ultimately negative consequences, and was to be avoided if possible. Indeed, soldiers were encouraged "to influence the population through [their] presence, calming the population and acting as a preventive measure against the growth of subversion."[18] This strategy was used not only to avoid alienating the local population to the Portuguese military presence, but also to keep the conflict reduced in size to minimize costs.[19]

Rather than the large troop formations employed by the Americans in Vietnam and the French in Algeria, Portugal used small, mobile infantry forces in order to combat enemy insurgents. The majority of the Portuguese army was organized into light infantry, usually in a company of 120 men which would comprise three platoons.[20] Their purpose was simply to "seek out and destroy the enemy on [their] terrain, using initiative, stealth and surprise."[21] The Portuguese also utilized helicopters efficiently in the conflict, which would be used to provide mobile cover fire for light infantry on the ground, while

[17] Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa*, 43.
[18] Ibid., 49.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., 71.
[21] Ibid.

simultaneously transporting small groups of soldiers behind the engaged insurgents to cut off their retreat.[22] This strategy proved effective in remote theatres of the war.

The uprising began in earnest in the early months of 1961. On February 4, a group of armed MPLA militiamen stormed into the Luanda prison and attempted to free political prisoners, who were being held there. A number of police officers were killed, but the operation was ultimately unsuccessful. Despite this, the action had a polarizing effect on the ethic Portuguese in Luanda and the indigenous Africans. During the funeral for the police officers, the MPLA provoked an attack on mourners, which motivated a violent response from the authorities. The Portuguese issued reprisals against Africans, and several hundred Blacks were massacred in Luanda.

Shortly after on March 15, the UPA launched a major offensive in Northern Angola in an attempt to capitalize on the confusion. Portuguese forces were unprepared for the attack in the North, and were quickly overwhelmed by the advancing militants. The militants proceeded to massacre hundreds of Europeans that they came in contact with, as well as several thousand blacks, and laid waste to the most of the infrastructure north of Luanda. Portugal responded by sending reinforcements from Luanda to quell the uprising, and engaged in an indiscriminate bombing campaign that killed around 20,000 Africans and displaced many more.[23] This action further polarized native sentiment toward Portugal, which until that time had not been violently opposed to its rule.

It was, however, a successful operation in military terms. After the initial attack by UPA/FNLA insurgents, and the subsequent napalm campaign and attacks by local vigilante Portuguese settlers, the insurgents were driven into Zaire by summertime. From that point through the mid-Sixties, insurgents were able to hold on to virtually no territory within Angola, and were limited to sporadic raids from Zaire. These typically ended when supplies ran out or they were attacked by Portuguese forces and were either destroyed or pursued back across the border. [24] Despite this success, the Portuguese had driven some

[22] Ibid., 131-2.
[23] Ibid., 28.
[24] Bender, *Angola*, 158.

500,000 civilians into Zaire after their campaign to reclaim their northern provinces. The loss of the North dealt a blow to the local economy and limited the amount of manpower available for guerrilla activity.[25]

Since the insurgents were, for the most part, operating from outside of Angola, the Portuguese devoted a considerable effort in waging a so-called "hearts and minds" campaign in order to dissuade indigenous Africans from supporting the insurgents.

These included decrees which were intended to abolish forced labour, illegal land expropriation, and other practices that contributed to the degradation of Africans and the deterioration of the rural African economy.[26] These reforms, however, were essentially token in nature, and were part of an extensive propaganda campaign waged by the Portuguese in order to win popular support among indigenous Africans. Population resettlement was also conducted: dispersed populations were condensed into settlements protected by barbed wire in order to prevent insurgent infiltration and help organize local defence.[27]

While the character of the war in the North essentially remained the same for its duration, in 1966 things began to change in the East. Both the MPLA and UNITA believed that it would be necessary to actively involve the locals in the insurgency if it had any chance of success. Consequently, in late 1966 they opened a front from inside Zambia and began to infiltrate heavily into the Moxico province. Unlike the North, the Portuguese bombing attempts were not successful in driving out the insurgents, and the insurgents established themselves in the Eastern areas of the country. As soon as the Portuguese realized that the insurgents could not be removed, they involved themselves in a frantic resettlement program in which large sections of the widely-dispersed Angolan population were collected into villages and were not permitted to leave. This further alienated the population, who, unlike the villagers to the North, were more hostile toward the Portuguese and were more inclined to support the insurgents. Additionally, many of the services promised by the Portuguese within the settlements such as education and health services were not provided in any

[25] Bender, *Angola*, 165.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 160.

meaningful way.[28] In the face of poor Portuguese treatment of the resettled Africans, guerrilla attacks in the East increased in intensity in the late 1960s and early 1970s; they drew from an increased number of resettled Africans.[29]

In the end, the longevity of the war proved to be Portugal's undoing. Despite the fact that the war never escalated substantially after the extension of the fighting into Eastern Angola in the late 1960s, there were a number of factors that prevented Portugal from securing final victory. Firstly, Portugal was unable to completely destroy the insurgents because they could retreat to neighbouring nations sympathetic to their cause. The result of this reality was a prolonged stalemate that prevented the insurgency from gaining much ground aside from its remote holdings in the East. Portugal, on the other hand, was not able to significantly de-escalate the war to an extent that was financially and militarily tenable. By 1974, Portugal was spending nearly half of its national budget on its overseas wars.[30] It had completely exhausted its manpower pool within Portugal, and was unable to commit an adequate number of troops to Angola in order to drive out insurgents. In the late 1960s, the terms for conscripted soldiers were extended from two to four years, and desertion rates began to increase rapidly as the war dragged on.[31] Wars in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique were not going well either, which contributed to disillusionment at home. All of these factors contributed to discontent within Portugal that finally manifested itself in the coup of 1974, and Portugal's subsequent transformation to democracy.

Despite Portugal's ultimate failure in quelling the insurgencies in its colonial holdings, its style of counterinsurgency was notable in that it was effective in keeping the scale of the war low, and prevented insurgents from penetrating into areas beyond the border regions. It also proved relatively cost effective, given the size and economic performance of Portugal in comparison to other European nations that were embroiled in their own counterinsurgencies. Notwithstanding the ultimate withdrawal of Portuguese forces from Angola and its other colonies because of economic strain and domestic political change, the

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[28] Bender, *Angola*, 172.

[29] Ibid., 178.

[30] Gerald J. Bender, "The Limits of Counterinsurgency in Africa: an African Case," *Comparative Politics* 4 (1972): 331.

[31] Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa*, 89-90.

strategic policies and tactics employed by the Portuguese within their colonies represent a notable achievement in subversive military struggles.

Clash of the Titans: the Trudeau-Lévesque Debates and their Legacy in Contemporary Canada

Catherine Fullarton

After almost one hundred years since Confederation, during the 1960s and the Quiet Revolution—along with the wave of industrialization, economic reform and bureaucratic reorganization that came with them—there was a surge of nationalism among French Canadians in Quebec which culminated in a sovereigntist movement that is still active today. While it could be argued that the desire for French-Canadian independence pre-dates Confederation, this movement undoubtedly increased in popularity and became more politically significant during the decades following the Quiet Revolution, resulting in two referendums on the subject. The issue of sovereignty was also central in the relationship between Pierre Elliott Trudeau and René Lévesque during their time in office as prime minister and premier of Quebec, respectively. Their opposite views and subsequent encounters and debates on the subject, and the ways in which those debates affected the nature of the relationship between the populations they were elected to represent (and the political choices they made on their behalf), have left a lasting impact on the state of Canadian unity, even years after the deaths of these central players. As a result of Trudeau's inability to counter the strong divisive forces which gained a voice with Lévesque's election to office in 1976, the "two solitudes"[1] remain fundamentally divided—even among themselves—despite their increased contact and confrontation in recent years.

In order fully to understand how Trudeau and Lévesque arrived at such different positions despite their relatively similar pasts, and in order to provide sufficient context for the emergence of their opposition, it is important to begin

[1] Hugh MacLennan, *The Two Solitudes* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2003).

with the years before their arrival on the political scene. During Maurice Duplessis's time as premier of Quebec in the 1950s, "a vigorous debate about Quebec's past and future developed"[2] as a result of a growing sense of frustration with the seemingly unbeatable Union Nationale and its conservative policy based on patronism and an increasingly old-fashioned view of Quebec. Many believed that Quebec needed to embark on a path of industrialization and industrial nationalization if it was to keep up with the rest of Canada.

Among the new political views that began to gain prominence in the 1950s were those of the "*Cité libristes*,"[3] a group of intellectuals led by Trudeau and Gerard Pelletier who saw nationalism as an obstacle to social change, and who placed central importance on reforming the role of the state to "accept a positive role in social and industrial development."[4] In an attempt to counter the Union Nationale, the "*Cité libristes*" formed a group called *Le Rassemblement* in September 1956,[5] the goal of which was the "[defense and promotion of] democracy in Quebec against the threats posed by corruption and authoritarianism."[6] Despite the fact that their group never managed to gain enough support to become a force of opposition—its readership "never more than a few thousand"[7]—and eventually ceased to exist,[8] the 1950s were formative years for Trudeau; it was during this time that he "thought through and elaborated his political philosophy … [and] learned [about] the mechanics of politics." These lessons would eventually prove to be essential in his future role as prime minister.

It was not until the death of Duplessis on 7 September 1959[9] that Quebec saw a different political party in provincial power. On 22 September

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[2] Ramsay Cook, *Canada, Quebec, and the Uses of Nationalism* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1986), 74.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., 75.

[5] Ibid., 64.

[6] Pierre E. Trudeau, *Memoirs* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993), 70.

[7] Richard Gwyn, *The Northern Magus: Pierre Trudeau and Canadians* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980), 42.

[8] Cook, *Uses of Nationalism* , 67.

[9] Richard Jones, "Duplessis and the Union Nationale Administration," in *Quebec Since 1945*, ed. M. Behiels (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1987), 20.

1960,[10] Jean Lesage's Liberals, on the basis of a policy of "reform and modernization,"[11] narrowly defeated the Union Nationale, ending the latter's dominance of provincial politics and initiating a period of rapid industrialization and social reform.[12] Over the course of its time in office, the Lesage administration would go on to bring "Quebec's public institutions more fully into conformity with social and political reality,"[13] and thereby improve the province's economic and political position in Canada. Its administrative strategy also switched the province's relationship with Ottawa from Duplessis' minimalism and isolationism in dealing with federal support, to undertake "a large number of public programs that required increased activism in federal-provincial relations"[14] in order to move Quebec toward a position of equality with the other Canadian provinces. It began with a "call for equality (though not necessarily uniformity) and ended with a call for special status for Quebec."[15] The latter inspired much criticism, the strongest of which came from Lévesque.[16]

It was this political and economic maturation, as well as a renewed relationship with Ottawa,[17] that enabled Quebec to become an increasingly significant force within Canada, and afforded it a position of being able to make requests (and even demands) of the federal government; after years in a politically subordinate position, the only province in which French was the dominant language had acquired the power to have its voice heard and to demand a response. The only remaining questions were: Where did Quebec was to be, and which direction did it need to take to get to it?

Among those who felt they had an answer was Trudeau, the Montreal-born French-Canadian "playboy/dilettante"[18] who rode into federal politics on a wave of popularity termed "Trudeaumania." From a wealthy family, Trudeau

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[10] Jones, *Quebec Since 1945*, 20.
[11] Cook, *Uses of Nationalism*, 77.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Alain-G. Gagnon and Mary Beth Montcalm, *Quebec Beyond the Quiet Revolution* (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1990), 152.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., 153.
[17] Gagnon, *Quebec Beyond*, 152.
[18] Stephen Clarkson and Christina McCall, *Trudeau and Our Times, Vol. 1: The Magnificent Obsession* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1990), 20.

earned a law degree at the University of Montreal in 1943[19] before going on to study economics and political science at Harvard University. It was during this time abroad that he realized "that the Quebec of the time was away from the action, that it was living outside modern times."[20] He returned to Canada after earning his Master's degree from Harvard, but left again in 1946 to embark on what would become world-wide travels.[21] Returning home to Montreal, Trudeau was disappointed to find that Quebec had hardly evolved under Duplessis: it "had stayed provincial in every sense of the word… marginal, isolated, out of step with the evolution of the world."[22] Upon his return he joined his friend Gérard Pelletier on a trip to cover the Asbestos Strike for *Le Devoir* – a prominent Montreal-based daily newspaper. Witnessing this event – and involving himself on the side of the miners – proved to be immensely significant for Trudeau and his conception of Quebec. He later went on to describe it as "'a turning point in the history of the province."[23]

Over the course of the next few decades, Trudeau added experience to ambition. He became a professor of law at the University of Montreal in 1962,[24] joined the federal Liberal Party, was elected to Parliament in 1963,[25] was appointed as a Parliamentary secretary by Lester B. Pearson,[26] and was named Minister of Justice in April 1967.[27] All these positions helped him establish a name for himself in Ottawa and English Canada, despite only having two years of political experience.[28] He announced his intention to campaign for leadership of the Liberal Party on 16 February 1968[29] and took up residence at 24 Sussex Drive on 22 April 1968.[30] He would reside here until his loss to Joe Clark's

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[19] Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 37.
[20] Ibid., 38.
[21] Ibid., 37-61.
[22] Ibid., 61.
[23] Ibid., 63.
[24] Gwyn, *The Northern* Magus, 45.
[25] Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 76.
[26] Ibid., 78.
[27] Ibid., 80.
[28] Ramsay Cook, *Watching Quebec* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 207.
[29] Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 85.
[30] Ibid., 92.

Progressive Conservatives in the 1979 election,[31] and then again for a second time beginning in 1980.[32] His time in office, together with the events witnessed in response to the Asbestos Strike, reaffirmed the opinions he had formed earlier on: the faulty democratic structure of Quebec's provincial government needed to be reformed,[33] and that nationalism was inherently threatening to equality with other Canadian provinces. He wanted to "rid [Quebec] of the reactionary, paternalistic… regime of Maurice Duplessis."[34]

Around the same time, Lévesque, who had been growing "increasingly… critical of the federal system,"[35] "more openly nationalist,"[36] and increasingly dissatisfied with the Quebec provincial Liberal Party over their refusal to discuss the issue of sovereignty,[37] was beginning to expound his own views about how the province should proceed. After studying at Laval University, Lévesque gained widespread recognition in Quebec through his work with Radio-Canada in the 1950s[38] and by serving as a correspondent during World War Two.[39] He entered politics in 1960 when he was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Quebec as a member of Lesage's Liberals,[40] during which time he "played a leading role in launching the Quiet Revolution."[41] Such a position was gained through his dominant role in the nationalization of Hydro-Quebec, as well as through the prominent posts he held as Minister of Public Works, Minister of Natural Resources, and Minister of Welfare.[42]

On 14 October 1967, Lévesque was forced to resign from the Liberal Party after unsuccessfully attempting to "convert [the Party] to his point of

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[31] Clarkson, *Trudeau and Our Times*, 143.
[32] Ibid., 186.
[33] Cook, *Uses of Nationalism*, 63.
[34] Cook, *Watching Quebec*, 213.
[35] Ibid., 208.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Gérard Bergeron, *Notre miroir a deux faces* (Montreal: Québec/Amerique, 1985), 56.
[38] Ibid., 40.
[39] Ibid.
[40] William Johnson, *A Canadian Myth: Quebec, Between Canada and the Illusion of Utopia* (Montreal: Robert Davies Publishing, 1994), 23.
[41] Cook, *Watching Quebec*, 208.
[42] James William Hagy, "René Lévesque and the Quebec Separatists," *The Western Political Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (March 1971), 55.

view" with regard to sovereignty association with Canada.[43] He resolved to form his own political party, and announced the creation of the *Movement souveraineté-association* on 18 November 1967.[44] This would eventually merge with the *Ralliement national*, another political group advocating Quebec independence from Canada,[45] to form the Parti Quebecois on 14 October, 1968.[46] This occurred just shy of six months after Trudeau was elected Prime Minister of Canada. His ideas were also expounded in a book called *Option Quebec* which became a best-selling novel in the 1960s, and which helped pressure other similarly-minded nationalist groups to join them.[47]

These were to be Quebec's titans in the coming years: two individuals with relatively similar backgrounds who had been optimistic that the Quiet Revolution would bring much needed change, but who had reached diametrically opposed conclusions about the path the province needed to take in order to modernize without losing its distinctive cultural and linguistic heritage.[48] Trudeau believed that the emphasis should be placed on making Quebec more democratic, and on reforming federalism rather than doing away with it entirely, that there was a fault within the system, rather than that the system itself was faulty.[49] Lévesque, on the other hand, believed that federalism was inherently threatening to Quebec's unique identity, and that sovereignty association and a relationship of "*[d]'égal a égal*"[50] (between two equal nations) was the only way to preserve that uniqueness without crippling the province's future.

Thus, when Lévesque and the Parti Québécois were elected to provincial parliament on their third try on 15 November 1976,[51] an adolescent Quebec found itself at a crossroad between two opposite and, to a large extent, rival ideologies: Prime Minister Trudeau's "Actonian pluralism… in which ethnic

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[43] Hagy, "René Lévesque," 55.

[44] André Bernard, *What Does Quebec Want?* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1978),17.

[45] Bernard, *What Does Quebec Want?*, 17.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Cook, *Watching Quebec*, 215.

[49] Ibid., 213.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

distinctions balanced each other,"[52] and Premier Lévesque's sovereignty association, which advocated political independence with "a continuing economic association"[53] with Canada. To further complicate the choice, Quebec was left with little alternative. "Special status, Trudeau and Lévesque agreed, was neither fish nor fowl;"[54] there would be no compromise between the two extreme positions, no discussion of 'special status.'

For Lévesque, this unwillingness to compromise was perfectly consistent with his radical political and ideological position, and perhaps even strengthened it. However, for Trudeau, a man seeking to unite two populations held to be as distinct as he and Lévesque, this resoluteness would seem to go against, or at least undermine, the intended project; if the goal was to make all Quebecers feel at home in Canada, presenting one's self as antagonistic to a political position held by an increasingly prominent proportion of the population was a bold strategy, at best. Nevertheless, the Liberals continued to garner support from Quebec voters (except for a brief loss of support resulting in a minority government in 1972)[55] until their loss to Joe Clark's Progressive Conservatives in 1979.[56]

Yet election results often prove problematic if they are used as the basis of arguments about the opinions of the Canadian population. This is especially the case when one compares the success of the federal Liberals in Quebec with the simultaneous success of Lévesque's Parti Québécois in the provincial arena.[57] While each leader's opinion on Quebec's position in Canada was undoubtedly not the only factor influencing votes, it is certainly puzzling that Quebec elected to simultaneous power two men with opposing views on the subject. This is especially the case given Lévesque's assurance that a win for the Parti Québécois

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[52] Cook, *Watching Quebec*, 215.

[53] Ibid., 213.

[54] Ibid., 210.

[55] *History of Federal Ridings Since 1867*, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/process/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres&genElection=29&ridProvince=0&submit1=Search>, 21 March 2008.

[56] *History of Federal Ridings Since 1987*, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/process/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=Gres&genElection=31&ridProvince=0&submit1=Search>, 21 March 2008.

[57] André Bernard, *La vie politique au Québec et au Canada* (Quebec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1996), 210; William Johnson, *A Canadian Myth: Quebec, Between Canada and the Illusion of Utopia* (Montreal: Robert Davies Publishing, 1994), 161.

would result in a call for a referendum on the subject of sovereignty.[58] The Quebec population, it seems, was far from being unanimous in support of one position or the other.

Undoubtedly with a heightened sense of urgency, Trudeau traveled to Quebec City shortly after the province's new leader gave his first major speech in New York City on 25 January 1977.[59] His speech focused on the need for Quebec to come to a decision about its national identity "after twenty years of soul-searching," and challenged Lévesque to prove that an independent Quebec would be better off than it could be guaranteed to be in the federal system.[60] He also affirmed his willingness to "negotiate some constitutional changes that would give the provinces additional power," but rejected Joe Clark's suggestion of decentralization. He maintained that the response to separatism should be to "make French-Canadians feel at home everywhere in Canada."[61] He further argued that French-Canadians' culture and rights would be better safeguarded through the extension of "their dynamism to all of Canada [rather] than by falling back on Quebec."[62]

To his appeal for "commitment to a broader, inclusive political community"[63] was juxtaposed the "atavistic sense of *nous*"[64] emphasized by Lévesque. Lévesque tried to get around Trudeau and to demonstrate Quebec's self-sufficiency by engineering an agreement with the other provincial premiers to ensure French-school rights that would make federal intervention unnecessary.[65] While all of the other premiers rejected Lévesque's proposal for reciprocal agreement, he was successful in persuading all ten to "sign a statement that accepted the principle of schooling in the minority language, but left is application to the discretion of each province." In so doing he acquired and

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[58] Richard Jones, "French Canada and English Canada: Conflict and Coexistence," in *Readings in Canadian History: Post Confederation*, eds. R. D. Francis and D. B. Smith (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1982), 621.

[59] Johnson, *A Canadian Myth*, 157.

[60] Ibid., 158.

[61] Ibid., 147.

[62] Ibid., 159.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

ensured the provincial French-education rights that Trudeau had never been able to secure.[66]

Trudeau's position suffered another blow when his third attempt to patriate the Constitution was as unsuccessful as the previous two.[67] He proposed a revision of the Constitution, with a "statement of rights, including language rights, at [its] heart,"[68] and a call for more power for the provinces in electing representatives to the Senate (which would also be transformed into a "House of Federation").[69] At the same time, Trudeau was also committed to the idea that changes should be reciprocal.[70] The premiers, however, were not as interested in Trudeau's proposed patriation and language rights as they were in "the idea of Canada as a confederacy of sovereign provinces" and increased provincial power, which Trudeau refused. Thus, they were unable to come to any agreement.[71] His proposal was unanimously opposed by the provincial premiers who "chose to align themselves with [Lévesque] rather than with the federalist prime minister," just as they had before.[72] Shortly thereafter, the Liberals lost to Joe Clark's Progressive Conservatives, and Trudeau resigned from politics.[73] It is ironic that the man who set out with the explicit goal of uniting the provinces in a renewed constitution managed rather to further alienate them from the idea of federalism, pushing them closer to the man who's position has always been Quebec sovereignty.

Lévesque kept his campaign promise by raising the issue of Quebec sovereignty in a referendum called for 20 May 1980.[74] He had hesitated in setting a date, sensing that the time was still not yet right—that the "*population n'est pas mûre* [population is not ripe]"[75]—despite results from polls conducted by

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[66] Johnson, *A Canadian Myth*, 159.

[67] Ibid., 161. Trudeau had failed previously because of Robert Bourassa's veto the first time, and a coup, organized by Bourassa, the second.

[68] Ibid., 160.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 161.

[72] Ibid., 160.

[73] Ibid., 161.

[74] Bernard, *La vie politique*, 213.

[75] Pierre Godin, *René Lévesque: l'espoir et le chagrin* (Quebec City: Les Éditions du Boréal, 2001), 417.

Radio-Canada which indicated the opposite.[76] Furthermore, many party members insisted that the Parti Québécois had a better chance of victory with Clark and his minority government in federal power.[77] Once the date was set, however, both sides hastened to prepare for the eventual face-off.

Lévesque's position was and had always been clear: sovereignty association. What was less clear was what that meant for the Quebec-Canada relationship. One of his first goals as uncontested leader of the "yes-campaign,"[78] therefore, was to expound upon and popularize this position by emphasizing that it meant neither separation, nor a turning-into-itself. Rather it meant renewing and opening up a relationship between two equal partners, between self-governing associates.[79] His position was supported by long-held ideas of Quebec's unique identity within Canada (which, it is argued, makes federalism ill-suited to the province's interests), the argument that federalism was costly and inefficient, and that sovereignty was the only way to assure "the survival of a French-speaking population in North America."[80] The latter had been used to support nationalist agendas since the 1830s.[81] Lévesque's main focus, however, was to downplay the parts of the party's platform that were understood to be more radical. This meant emphasizing that a vote of yes to the referendum would be a vote in favour of *opening up* discussions between Quebec and the federal government,[82] and that no separation would occur unless the population wanted it. Moreover, separation could only be decided in *another* referendum.[83] Thus, the referendum was portrayed less as wedge to separate the two sides but

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[76] Godin, *René Lévesque*, 420. According to Godin's text, Radio-Canada had conducted public-opinion poles which concluded that 66 percent of the Quebec population would vote "yes" to initiating discussions on the subject of sovereignty, 25 percent would vote "no," and 6 percent remained undecided, and that in over two years of surveying the results had remained consistent.

[77] Marguerite Paulin, *René Lévesque: Charismatic Leader* (Montreal: XYZ Publishing, 2003), 102.

[78] For the sake of this paper, "yes" side, "yes" campaign, and so forth refer to the side in favour of sovereignty, while "no" side, "no" campaign, and so forth refer to the federalist side.

[79] Godin, *René Lévesque*, 421.

[80] Bernard, *What Does Quebec Want?*, 127.

[81] Ibid., 16.

[82] Godin, *René Lévesque*, 421.

[83] Johnson, *A Canadian* Myth, 165.

rather as bargaining tool which the provincial government would be able to use to apply more pressure on the federal government in considering its demands.[84]

After a difficult start, the no-campaign was eventually taken up and led by Claude Ryan, the leader of the provincial Liberals and a strong federalist who was committed to the idea of renewed federalism. He focused most of his efforts on playing to Quebecers' fears. Drawing attention to the wording of the question to appear on the ballot, he claimed that the Parti Québécois was trying to "[mislead] the population with a trick question" that would in fact lead to sovereignty.[85] His arguments, however, lacked the emotional appeal so central in Lévesque's platform, and it soon became evident that more support would be needed to ensure a victory for the "no."[86]

For the sake of brevity, the nature of the guidelines and rules which applied to the campaigns for either side will not be explored in full. It should be noted, however, that there exist varied and often conflicting accounts of the nature of the debates. Some claim that the "yes" side was given every possible advantage (after the start of the campaign a charge of intentional bias to make campaigning as difficult as possible for the "no" side is often made),[87] while others account the "yes" side's strong support at the beginning of the campaign to the Parti Québécois's skilled orators. The "no"side's early struggle it is often suggested, can be attributed to Claude Ryan's narrow-minded focus on the wording of the question to appear on the ballot.[88]

Either way, Trudeau soon entered the fray in support of Ryan, stating his refusal to negotiate with Lévesque on the subject even if the referendum ended in victory for the "yes" side.[89] The premier responded by challenging Trudeau to a debate, but the latter refused on the grounds that accepting would amount to circumventing the referendum and "[short-circuiting] the No Committee and its leader, Claude Ryan."[90] Trudeau nevertheless addressed the

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[84] Johnson, *A Canadian* Myth, 165.
[85] Ibid., 168.
[86] Hubert Guindon, *Quebec Society: Tradition, Modernity, and Nationhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 114.
[87] Johnson, *A Canadian Myth*, 164.
[88] Guindon, *Quebec Society*, 113-4.
[89] Johnson, *A Canadian Myth*, 172.
[90] Ibid.

issue in a speech at Paul Sauvé Arena on 14 May 1980 in which he reassured Quebecers that a "no"vote would not be understood as "an indication that everything is fine and can remain as it was before," but rather that change would be on the horizon. At the same time, however, Trudeau reiterated his fixed position regarding discussions on the subject of sovereignty.[91] Trudeau challenged Lévesque's claims that the other provinces would support an independent Quebec, arguing that they had "already turned down any suggestion of association to go with Quebec's sovereignty." Perhaps most important, he drew attention to a comment the premier had made on several occasions to contrast Lévesque's implicit intolerance and limited conception of what it meant to be *Québécois* (namely, to be a Quebecer *and* to vote *oui*) with Trudeau's own pluralistic, inclusive vision of and for Canada.[92] Six days later, 59 percent of Quebecers voted against sovereignty association.[93]

Yet it would be foolish to discount the efficacy of the referendum, despite its seeming failure from the sovereigntist perspective. In the case of the 1980 referendum—as would later be the case with the next referendum in 1995—strong support for the sovereigntist side early on in the campaign resulted in the Prime Minister promising constitutional reforms and renewed discussions if the final outcome was a "no" to sovereignty.[94] This adds weight to the claim that the debate was more about re-negotiating Quebec's position and lobbying for additional provincial powers or autonomy, than a concerted effort at full political autonomy. Even for those for whom sovereignty *was* the goal, however, the 1980 referendum was not a complete failure: it showed the lengths to which the population was ready to go if the current government was not improved to their satisfaction. Moreover, it put the power back in the hands of the population.

It is also important to note that in declaring his refusal to negotiate, even if the referendum returned a "yes" vote, Trudeau effectively transformed the issue from a choice between sovereignty and renewed federalism, to a choice between political expression of discontent and renewed federalism; in

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[91] Johnson, *A Canadian Myth*, 172.
[92] Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 282; Johnson, *A Canadian Myth*, 172.
[93] Jones, *Readings in Canadian History*, 622.
[94] Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 282.

acknowledging Quebec's support of Lévesque as an expression of discontent with federalism, promising change regardless of the outcome and assurance that a vote for the provincial premier was impotent, Trudeau effectively removed all reason to vote "yes" (or, in effect, to vote at all). As a result, while the federalist side may have gained an edge, the sovereignty side, while not sufficiently discredited, never lost ground.

Furthermore, while Trudeau's side emerged victorious, the excitement was short-lived when the Liberals encountered opposition from provincial leaders once again in their next attempt to patriate the Canadian Constitution in 1982.[95] This time, however, Lévesque's "efforts to form and maintain a united provincial front among the 'gang of eight'—all provinces except Ontario and New Brunswick—against the federal government's constitutional package proved futile." After Lévesque had gone home for the night, the other premiers worked out a deal that was approved and accepted by Trudeau. In this new deal, struck "without Quebec's consent,"[96] and which to date no Quebec premier has acknowledged as legitimate, Quebec lost "the right to veto as well as the right to opt out with compensation."[97] Lévesque did little to conceal his anger, telling his wife Corinne, "'[t]hey stabbed us in the back!'"[98] a feeling shared by many in the province, including those who had been unsure about Quebec's position in this "renewed federalism."

In his memoirs, Trudeau admits having been forewarned by Premier Sterling Lyon of Manitoba that going ahead with the planned patriation without full consent would "tear the country apart."[99] Never one to mince words, Trudeau replied that "if the country was going to be torn apart because we bring back… our own constitution after 115 years … then the country deserves to be torn up."[100] Indeed it would have come as little shock to anyone that the decision to proceed without Lévesque's agreement would be unpopular in Quebec. After decades of failed attempts, however, Trudeau had lost his patience with the anti-federalist premier.

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[95] Clarkson, *Trudeau and Our Times*, 285, 290.
[96] Guindon, *Quebec Society*, 145.
[97] Paulin, *René Lévesque*, 112.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 306.
[100] Ibid.

Thus, after managing to convince the majority of Quebecers to vote 'no' to Lévesque on 20 May 1980, Trudeau did not waste time before making it perfectly clear that he was intent on patriating the constitution, with or without provincial support.[101] This was a bold move so soon after the Quebec population had been divided almost in half over the issue of sovereignty, and it undoubtedly did little to make Quebecers feel at home in a country ruled by a government that had effectively ignored their provincial representative.[102]

Their displeasure would be felt in the next few years when, after the defeat of both the Meech Lake Accord in 1987 and the Charlottetown Accord in 1992, the province faced another referendum on the subject of sovereignty in 1995.[103] This time, the question on the ballot was much less ambiguous than had been the question used in 1980. When the results were announced, the sovereigntists, despite having lost again, had nevertheless lost by a much narrower margin: 50.56 percent voted "no" and 48.44 percent voted "yes."[104] If Trudeau had made any gains for federalism over sovereignty in the 1980s, either those gains had been lost, or sovereignty had since made larger gains; any unity achieved now faced an uncertain future.

Trudeau's time in office was a time of great change and, in many cases, great advancement. He was a gifted orator and had the strength of conviction and determination that Canada needed in a leader. More than this, Canada also needed a pacifier. As Trudeau proved on several occasions, however, perhaps most notably in his dealings with Lévesque, who goaded him (and Quebec) to come to a decision regarding the province's identity and relationship with Canada, a pacifier he was not. For a brief period under his leadership he managed to unite the provinces. However that fragile unity was dependent upon his power and presence to maintain it. Quebec-Canada unity began to erode once was Trudeau was out of office and no longer present to safeguard that delicate relationship.

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[101] Clarkson, *Trudeau and Our Times*, 312.

[102] Paulin, *René Lévesque*, 109.

[103] Gerald L. Gall, "Quebec Referendum (1995)," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0010730>, 2008.

[104] Ibid.

A Historiography of Allied Action during the Holocaust

Jacob Posen

The role of Winston Churchill and the Allies in the Holocaust has proved to be problematic, and a clear consensus eludes contemporary scholars. Could Churchill and the Allies have done more for European Jews during the Holocaust? Would they have had to divert significant military resources in order to help the European Jews? Would this have potentially lengthened the war? If the Allies had done more for the European Jewry, how would the war effort have gone differently? These questions have been raised repeatedly by different historians, of different backgrounds and with different perspectives; they have all arrived at very different answers. While the literature abounds in studies which examine specific aspects of the Allied role in the Holocaust, there has been no overarching review of all the arguments, or an analysis of how they are complementary or opposed. In this paper I lay the foundation for such a review and for further historiography by establishing a schematic grouping of the scholarly work, and presenting some of the key arguments of seminal works in this ever-expanding field. I hope to shed some light on the issues that have plagued contemporary understandings of the Allied and Churchillian roles in the Holocaust.

In the years immediately following World War Two there was limited discussion of the Holocaust. After few decades, however, it became a serious topic of discussion. Survivors found ways to address their trauma, which enabled them to talk and write about their experiences. Holocaust survivor Eli Wiesel wrote his memoir, *Night*, in 1958; Imre Kertécz penned his Holocaust memoir, *Fatelessness*, in 1975. Jewish thinkers, in particular, began to examine some of the theological issues that arose in Judaism as a direct response to the Jewish

experience in the Holocaust. In an article entitled "Theological Reflections on the Holocaust," Michael Rosenak posits that in the post-Holocaust world there have developed five distinct theological interpretations and responses.[1] Simply put, they are: Nothing is wrong with Jewish theology and the Holocaust was God's way of the punishing the Jews; something seems to be wrong, there was a problem, but God has not deserted the Jewish people forever; something is wrong and there is a serious problem with the Jewish relationship with God; something is radically wrong and God's failure to intervene in the Holocaust threatens the entire structure of Jewish faith; and finally, Jewish theology is wrong, and "God is not only silent, but dead."[2] Embedded in Rosenak's study and in the writings of some contemporary Jewish figures is the idea that Jews as a group required time to process the trauma of the Holocaust and to start addressing its implications for the Jewish people as a whole. This processing began with Jewish theology.

While the post-Holocaust theological questions may not seem to relate directly to the study of the Allies' role in the Holocaust, there is a parallel between them. The first negative analysis of the Allied role in the Holocaust took more than thirty years to appear. It was put forward by the Jewish historian David Wyman in his 1978 article, "Why Auschwitz Was Never Bombed." Wyman's study was followed by an explosion of analyses over the following three decades. Did it take thirty years for Jewish historians to digest the Holocaust before they could view the Allies, not as saviours, but as somewhat lacking in will to help the Jews? Did Wyman forfeit objectivity, analyzing events to support a pre-conceived notion that the Allies could have done more? Perhaps his negative view of the Allies' role illuminates the fact that even historians needed time to recover from the enormity of the Holocaust and once they did begin the processing the trauma of this extraordinary event, it made possible the explosion in works on the Allied role in the Holocaust.

David Wyman's "Why Auschwitz Was Never Bombed" opened up the discussions about Allied inaction. Published in the May 1978 issue of *Commentary*,

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[1] Michael Rosenak. "Theological Reflections on the Holocaust: Between Unity and Controversy" in *The Impact of the Holocaust on Jewish Theology* ed. Stephen Katz. (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 163.

[2] Ibid., 163-166.

the article made some bold claims, all of which have been subsequently challenged by various historians. Wyman's most challenged claim centered on the feasibility of bombing Auschwitz and the reasons bombing never occurred. Wyman asserted that the bombing of Auschwitz was feasible from July 1944 to October 1944 when weather began to worsen, which made bombing more difficult.[3] Furthermore, Wyman claimed that the War Department never bothered to look into the feasibility of the bombing. If they had, he argued, they would have discovered that the 15th Air Force, located in Foggia, Italy, was in the midst "of a major bombing campaign in the region around Auschwitz" already and thus could have carried out a bombing campaign.[4] Wyman felt that the failure to bomb Auschwitz lay with the War Department's Operations Division, which, according to Wyman, never investigated such possibilities.[5]

What Wyman failed to do, and what has been contested consistently since his ground-breaking article was published, was analyze the true feasibility of bombing Auschwitz's gas chambers and crematoria. The resulting literature can be categorized into three groups: The first and largest group is the Holocaust historians, whose works have answered the questions without delving into detailed military logistics, and generally see the Allied actions in the context of the war, not by military feasibility. The second group is the military historians. Their analyses have focused more specifically on the actual feasibility of the hypothetical bombing of Auschwitz, but paid less attention to the political issues at stake in the decision to not bomb Auschwitz. The third group is the historians of British policy and leadership. This group includes those who have chosen to look at the Allied actions during the Holocaust from a public policy perspective. They have generally avoided getting into the specifics of the feasibility of the various solutions they have proposed, but instead focus on the political issues that affected the decisions made.

Attempting to find some middle ground, some historians do not fit into any of these groups. Stuart Erdheim's "Could the Allies have Bombed

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[3] David S. Wyman. "Why Auschwitz was never Bombed" *Commentary*, 65:5 (May 1978), 43-44.

[4] Ibid, 46.

[5] Ibid.

Auschwitz-Birkenau?" is a clear example of such a position, and will be discussed in detail later.

The three basic groups that I have identified have approached the questions raised by David Wyman in a radically different manner, and arrived at very different responses to the same basic questions. It is notable that within each group opinions vary on whether the Allies should have, and could have, done more for the Jews. One might expect a uniform opinion within each group, but that is not the case. By comparing the different groups, I will demonstrate that the different approaches are not ultimately irredeemably at odds, but can be used together to develop a more complete and coherent understanding of the Allied actions during the Holocaust.

Holocaust historians are by far the largest group, with many weighing in on Wyman's work and the questions he raised. Some of the more notable contributors include Deborah Lipstadt,[6] William Rubinstein and Wyman himself. Wyman's 1984 book, *The Abandonment of the Jews*, expanded his 1978 article. The title of this book does not leave much to the imagination: Wyman takes a firm stance on Allied actions during the war.

William Rubinstein's book, *The Myth of Rescue*, takes serious issue with many of Wyman's claims. In his introduction, Rubinstein states:

> *All* of the many studies which criticize the Allies (and the Jewish communities of the democracies) for having failed to rescue Jews during the Holocaust are inaccurate and misleading, their arguments illogical and ahistorical.[7]

Rubinstein analyzes the "myth of rescue"[8] in great detail throughout the book. He dedicates an entire chapter to battling what he terms the "myth of bombing Auschwitz."[9] In addressing the issue Rubinstein acknowledges that the historians who have claimed that Allied policy was dominated by underlying anti-Semitism,

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[6] This is the same Deborah Lipstadt who successfully defended herself in a law suit for libel initiated by the noted Holocaust denier David Irving.

[7] William D. Rubinstein, *The Myth of Rescue: Why the democracies could not have saved more Jews from the Nazis* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), x.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., 157.

and complacency towards the plight of the Jews, have repeatedly presented the "failure" to bomb Auschwitz as an opportunity lost.[10]

Rubinstein points to reticence and hesitance, of both Jewish and non-Jewish parties, in his argument over why bombing was never seriously considered. He argues:

> Virtually no one in the United States proposed bombing it [Auschwitz], or any other extermination camp, while significant numbers of Jews were imprisoned there, or were being sent there; in particular the War Refugee Board failed to suggest it.[11]

Furthermore Rubinstein suggests that aside from the fact that no one put forward a detailed proposal to bomb any extermination camp,[12] the bombing itself was logistically impossible prior to 1944.[13] In explaining the War Refugee Board's (WFB) failure to propose the bombing of Auschwitz, he emphasizes two important facts. First, all the requests sent to the WFB proposed bombing rail lines that lead to Auschwitz,[14] even Wyman accepted that such plans were not particularly feasible within the time constraints, and would have had limited effect in any case.[15] Second, Rubenstein links the WFB's refusal to propose bombing Auschwitz (until November 1944, when it was too late) to resistance to the idea within Jewish groups themselves.[16] Rubinstein supports his discussion of the bombing of Auschwitz with an analysis of the available intelligence needed to bomb it. He stresses that the Allies had no reliable maps or photographs of the camp.[17]

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[10] Rubinstein, *The Myth of Rescue*, 157.

[11] Ibid*,* 158.

[12] Although no one, including the War Refugee Board put forward a detailed plan for any bombing the extermination camps, the idea was proposed by various people including Dr. Chaim Weizmann when he spoke to Anthony Eden, the Head of the British Foreign Office, on July 6th 1944.

[13] Rubinstein, *The Myth of Rescue.* 158.

[14] Ibid, 160.

[15] For an expanded explanation of the possibility of bombing the train tracks see David S. Wyman. "Why Auschwitz was never Bombed" *Commentary,* 65:5 (May 1978), 39-41.

[16] Ibid., 163.

[17] It is interesting to note that in this section Rubinstein cites Dino A. Brugioni, an expert on Photo Analysis during World War II. Brugioni's work has been cited by

Rubinstein continues his debunking of "the myth of bombing Auschwitz" by analyzing the actual military feasibility of bombing the target without killing a large proportion of the prisoner population at the camp. In particular, he cites the military historian, James H. Kitchens III, who famously took issue with all the various non-military historians who did a superficial analysis of the possibilities of bombing Auschwitz.[18] He caps his argument with a discussion of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, which included David Ben-Gurion, the future first prime minister of the State of Israel. Ben-Gurion and the rest of the Executive, save for one, felt that bombing Auschwitz was not a good idea. Their reservations centered on two issues: the possibility of killing Jews with the bombings; and the fear that if they were successful, but did kill Jews in the process, the Germans would then try and pin their atrocities on the Allied bombers, thereby escaping blame.[19]

Rubinstein concludes that bombing Auschwitz was not possible for a plethora of reasons. It is interesting to see how Rubinstein fits into the groupings I have set forth. He is certainly not a military historian, but he does look to include the actual logistical feasibility of the bombing mission in his argument. He cites Kitchens, a military historian, and uses military logistics to bolster his argument. However, they do not play a central role in his thesis that those who struggle with the Allied failure to bomb Auschwitz do so with hindsight; at the time the lack of bombing was not viewed as a lost opportunity. This trend, using military logistics to bolster arguments, has been used by proponents of both sides of the argument,[20] but for the scholars in this group, military logistics do not play a central role in their arguments.

The military historians present a different perspective. This group includes James H. Kitchens III, Rondall Rice and, to some extent, Richard

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proponents of both sides of the argument over whether bombing Auschwitz was feasible, further adding to the confusion.

[18] Rubinstein, *The Myth of Recue*. 176.

[19] Ibid, 179-181.

[20] Although it has been used by both sides it has been more successfully employed by the 'not possible' side than the 'possible' side, with the notable exception of Stuart Erdheim's article "Could the Allies have bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau" which does fit into any of the groups, despite it being published in the journal, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies.*

Foregger.[21] I have included in this group those whose work was published in an academic journal that dealt with military history, and who provided a military analysis of the feasibility of bombing Auschwitz or helping Jews in general. As in the Holocaust studies group, the military historians are not all in agreement over whether bombing Auschwitz was feasible. Kitchens and Foregger generally argue that it was not feasible, while Rice argues that from a purely logistical standpoint bombing Auschwitz was in fact feasible.

Kitchens's "The Bombing of Auschwitz Re-examined" is the seminal work in this group. Kitchens published his article in the April 1994 edition of *The Journal of Military History*. In his article, Kitchens observes that "On one hand, most reviewers of *Abandonment* [Wyman's *The Abandonment of the Jews*] were schooled in refugee or religious history, or Holocaust studies and apparently knew little about air power."[22] In systematically and critically analyzing Wyman's sources and research, Kitchens paints a picture of a social and political historian who is well out of his element in trying to write military history. Kitchens is ruthless, and the separation he creates between his own research and that of Wyman is vicious. At one point, he writes that "[p]rimary sources are even weaker [in Wyman's *Abandonment*]. The bibliography, for example, simply lists the USAF Historical Research Center as an institution, and nothing indicates which of the facility's files were actually examined."[23] Kitchens goes so far to posit whether or not Wyman actually visited the USAF Historical Research Center.[24]

Kitchens begins his article by examining the Allied intelligence around the time of the proposed bombing. He looks to Dino Brugioni to explain the lack of photo intelligence.[25] Kitchens explains that the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex only appeared in intelligence photos accidentally and no one was tasked

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[21] Foregger is actually a retired physician, and his original contribution to this group came in his 1987 article "The Bombing of Auschwitz" which was published in the non-academic magazine Aerospace Historian, but his "Two Sketch Maps of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Camps" was published in *The Journal of Military History*.

[22] James H. Kitchens III. "The Bombing of Auschwitz Re-examined," *The Journal of Military History* (Vol. 58, 2: 1994), 240.

[23] Ibid, 243.

[24] Kitchens, "The Bombing of Auschwitz Re-examined," 243.

[25] This is the same Dino Brugioni that was used by William Rubinstein, and would later be used by Stuart Erdheim.

with locating them, so their appearance was not noted until long after the war.[26] Kitchens continues attacking the Allied intelligence argument by taking issue with the Vrba-Wetzler report[27]. In particular he points to the escapees' description of the crematoria and gas chambers. Kitchens states flatly:

> Neither escapee was a trained observer, and their page-and-a-half description of Birkenau's crematoria was almost exclusively concerned with the ghastly details of the operation rather than militarily useful targeting data such as building structural design, materials, foundations, and the like necessary for the selection and placement of ordnance.[28]

The failure to mention structural design and materials is a telling blow, and even in the responses to Kitchens' article no one is able to rebut this point successfully.[29]

After his discussion of Allied intelligence, Kitchens talks about what would have happened had the Allies overcome the intelligence problem and proceeded with the bombing of Birkenau. This is where Kitchens, and other military historians, really differentiate themselves from the Holocaust historians. Kitchens provides detailed facts on bomb types, plane types, accuracy statistics, and the like, something that none of his predecessors (with the exception of Foregger) had done successfully.

Kitchens concludes by suggesting that

> [w]hatever was said or not said, felt or not felt, about camp bombing among Allied politicians and bureaucratic organs in 1944 was, and is, largely irrelevant to what happened, or could have

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[26] Kitchens, "The Bombing of Auschwitz Re-examined,"246.

[27] The Vrba-Wetzler report is a written account of the atrocities that took place in Auschwitz by two Slovakian Jews who managed to escape from the camp.

[28] Ibid, 248.

[29] For Example, In Stuart Erdheim's "Could the Allies have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau" he takes issue with Kitchens point on structural design. Erdheim says that "Structural information was generally obtained by target intelligence personnel using whatever sources they had at their disposal" He goes on to list a host of sources that would not have likely been available when trying to determine this information about the crematoria and gas chambers at Auschwitz. Basically, he does not have a good response to this one specific point.

> happened. In the instance of Auschwitz, military policy was driven by availability of intelligence, operational possibilities; by assert allocation, by the rules of war, and by conventional morality.[30]

It is clear that military possibilities, not a prioritizing of demands (helping Jews was at the bottom of the priority list), is a key difference between the military historians' approach and the approach of the Holocaust studies historians.

An article which seems to bypass the boundaries that I have created is Stuart Erdheim's "Could the Allies Have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau?" Erdheim's article was published in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, which is not a military journal, yet the language in Erdheim's article closely resembles the language used by Kitchens and Rice in their military analyses of the logistics of bombing Auschwitz.

Erdheim dedicates much of his article to a review of the various claims made by Kitchens and Richard Levy[31] and systematically challenges them. Erdheim leaves no stone unturned, challenging Kitchens's arguments, logic, footnotes, and his sources. At one point in the article, Erdheim takes issue with Kitchens's claim regarding a lack of Allied intelligence. Erdheim implies that Kitchens misrepresented a portion of F.H. Hinsley's *British Intelligence in the Second World War*. Erdheim writes:

> As for Kitchens' use of Hinsley to support his position on the minimal amount of Allied intelligence available on the death camps, he states that in the British decrypts of German wireless telegraphic messages known as ULTRA, there were 'scarcely any references to concentration camps.'[32]

Erdheim continues by presenting Kitchens's paraphrasing of one of Hinsley's footnotes. To counter this Erdheim presents the actual footnote in its entirety. It

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[30] Kitchens, "The Bombing of Auschwitz Re-examined", 266.

[31] Richard H. Levy wrote an article entitled "The Bombing of Auschwitz Revisited: A Critical Analysis". In his article, published in the winter 1996 issue of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Levy took issue with many of Wyman's original claims, focusing specifically on the Jewish Communities own hesitance to bomb Auschwitz.

[32] Stuart Erdheim. "Could the Allies have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau" *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 2, no. 2 (Fall 1997), 139.

immediately becomes apparent that Kitchens has distorted the meaning of Hinsley's work to prove his own point.[33]

Beyond an incredibly thorough challenging of the main arguments presented by Kitchens and Levy, Erdheim gets into the military specifics of the plan. He focuses on the planning process that would have been necessary had the Allies decided that bombing Auschwitz was worth considering. He structures his argument differently than his predecessors did. He asks:

> From a strictly operational point of view, could the four extermination facilities have been destroyed from the air? If the answer is no, then the discussion is at an end. But if the answer is yes, or even maybe, then we can begin to ask the more compelling question of should such a raid have been carried out.[34]

Erdheim argues that those, like Kitchens and Levy, who have looked at it in the reverse order, do not follow the basic military procedure the Allies would have followed. Furthermore, he sides with Wyman in rehashing the various reasons that have been put forward in the hope of understanding the basic structure of Allied military priorities. He then concludes that "[a]ll of these point to reasons that had more to do with the Allied mindset than its military capabilities."[35]

Upon my initial reading of Erdheim, I found myself quickly swayed by his arguments. They are logical, well-researched, and conclusive. Yet the more I thought about Erdheim the less sure I was of his work. Three aspects disturbed me most. First, despite conducting a thorough analysis of Kitchens's work, he presents an extremely weak argument regarding the potential to gather building structure information. This, in turn, significantly undermines his original position.[36] Second, the strength of Erdheim's work can be largely attributed to his impressive and persuasive military language, rather than his research or argument. Finally, for such a landmark article on military history to appear in a non-military journal casts serious doubts on its credibility. Unfortunately, the full intricacies of these critcisms are beyond the scope of this essay. However, with a

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[33] For a comparison of the two quotes see: Stuart Erdheim. "Could the Allies have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau" *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (Fall 1997), 139.

[34] Erdheim, "Could the Allies have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau","154.

[35] Ibid, 157.

[36] See footnote 28.

proper understanding of how Erdheim's article fits into the schematic that I have proposed, a much deeper understanding of the historiography can hopefully be achieved.

The last group of scholars in the debates about the efficacy of the bombing of Auschwitz is the British policy and leadership historians. Some very important scholars in the field of British history have weighed in on this subject. Of particular note are Martin Gilbert, the eminent Churchill biographer, and Michael J. Cohen, who has taken issue with Gilbert on several issues concerning Churchill's relationship with the Jews.

These two take an interesting stance on the Allied actions towards Jews in the Holocaust. Martin Gilbert, in *Auschwitz and the Allies*, agrees with Wyman that the Allies could and should have done more to help the Jews. He speaks at length about the process in which the Vrba-Wetzler report reached the Western Allies, and how they failed to act on the information they had. In his analysis, Gilbert carefully exonerates Churchill of all wrongdoing in the matter. Gilbert uses an oft-quoted minute from 7 July 1944 in which Churchill tells Anthony Eden, the head of the Foreign Office, to "Get anything out of the air force you can, invoke me if necessary."[37] Gilbert later asserts that in sending this minute to Eden, Churchill had "given Eden the authority to follow up two of the Jewish Agency's requests, the bombing of Auschwitz, and the Stalin declaration."[38] Gilbert would later imply that the fault in Britain's failure to bomb Auschwitz lay with Sir Archibald Sinclair, Secretary of State for Air, and a bureaucracy, which never really took Churchill's request all that seriously.[39] As one continues through Gilbert's work, it becomes clear that he sides most closely with Wyman's arguments.[40]

Michael J. Cohen takes a similar stance to that of Wyman and Gilbert. Unlike his predecessors Cohen takes the argument a step further. He does this originally in his article "Churchill and the Jews: The Holocaust," as well as his

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[37] Minute from Winston Churchill to Anthony Eden, taken from Martin Gilbert. Auschwitz and the Allies. (London and New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), 270.

[38] Gilbert, Auschwitz and the Allies, 271.

[39] Ibid, 304.

[40] Gilbert makes a serious point of exonerating Churchill, but this should come as no surprise since he is the official biographer of Churchill.

1985 book, *Churchill and the Jews*. In both he places the blame directly on Winston Churchill. Cohen disagrees with Gilbert's argument that Churchill was plagued by the bureaucracy. To counter this claim, he cites Churchill's involvement in the airlifting of supplies to the Polish Home Army in August and September of 1944.[41] Cohen points out that "Churchill's government, at all levels, had learned only too well that the Prime Minister was not a man whose determination could be thwarted with impunity." On the contrary, "Churchill was a man with a penchant for delving into the most petty of administrative details, even at the height of the greatest crisis."[42]

Cohen raises an important point: when Churchill wanted something done, he made sure it happened. Cohen explains that in dropping supplies to the Polish Home Army, Churchill demonstrated his ability to make his decisions realized, whether or not they were reasonable.

In pointing to the Polish Home Army debacle, Cohen is takes a new approach to the bombing of Auschwitz. First, he avoids getting into military specifics; he focuses on Churchill's actions as opposed to whether bombing Auschwitz was actually feasible. Cohen's approach can be summed up as follows: Churchill was not particularly interested in helping the Jews, at Auschwitz, or at any other point during the war; his actions were dominated by pre-established priorities, which did no generally include Jewish concerns.[43] By presenting his thesis as such, Cohen avoids analyzing the military logistics, which play an important role in any discussion about the possible bombing of Auschwitz. As a result, his all-encompassing thesis does not do justice to the bigger questions of why the Allies did not do more to help the Jews. It is too easy to simply argue that Churchill did not care enough to seriously entertain the idea of doing so.

In this essay I have attempted to bring some coherence to a chaotic picture presented by historians with regard to the issue of the Allied role Jewish aid during the war. A group schematic makes it easier to understand why there are so many different answers to the same basic question: to what extent did the Allies seriously attempt to help Jews in the Holocaust, and why? In reviewing an

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[41] Michael J. Cohen. "Churchill and the Jews: The Holocaust," *Modern Judaism* 6, no. 1 (February 1986), 43.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid., 45.

admittedly small sampling of the seminal works in each of the groupings, I have illustrated some of the common arguments. Moreover, through my analysis of how differences can be seen in the works within each group, I have underscored the different perspectives of individual scholars. Consequently, I have promoted a deeper understanding of the historiography of the Allied response to the Holocaust. It is crucial to recognize that this essay only touches the surface by examining a select few of the many works in this field. It is my intention that it will therefore serve as a starting point for further, more in-depth research and analysis of the historiography.

Annotated Appendix 1:

An expanded list of the major scholars, their works, and where they might fit into my schematic.

Group 1: The Holocaust Historians: Those who looked at Allied actions in context of the war, as opposed to military feasibility.

1. David S. Wyman
    a. "Why Auschwitz was Never Bombed": This article published in the May 1978 issue of *Commentary* is what started the controversy.
    b. *The Abandonment of the Jews*. This book expanded on his earlier article
2. William D. Rubinstein
    a. *The Myth of Rescue: Why the democracies could not have saved more Jews from the Nazis*: Probably the most comprehensive answer to the ideas put forward by Wyman.
3. Deborah E. Lipstadt
    a. "Witness to the Persecution: The Allies and the Holocaust: A Review Essay": Published in the October 1983 issue of *Modern Judaism*, Lipstadt focuses more on the Allied immigration policy than the bombing of Auschwitz
4. Richard H. Levy
    a. "The Bombing of Auschwitz Revisited: A Critical Analysis:" In this article published in the winter 1996 issue of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Levy takes issue with many of Wyman's original

statements and focuses in particular on the Jewish community's own hesitance to bomb Auschwitz.

5. Joseph Robert White
    a. "Target Auschwitz: Historical and Hypothetical German Response to Allied Attack": This article appeared in the spring 2002 issue of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. White, after reading much of the literature surrounding the possibility of bombing Auschwitz, proposes various hypothetical responses had the Allies bombed Auschwitz.
6. Stuart Erdheim
    a. "Could the Allies Have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau?" This article appeared in the fall 1997 issue of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. Erdheim does a thorough examination of the claim by James H. Kitchens III and Richard H. Levy regarding the logistics of bombing Auschwitz. As mentioned earlier I struggled in properly placing Erdheim's article as he does not really fit into any category.

Group 2: Military Historians: Those who used a Military Approach

1. James H. Kitchens III
    a. "The Bombing of Auschwitz Re-examined": In this article in the April 1994 issue of *The Journal for Military History*, Kitchens argues that bombing Auschwitz was not militarily feasibly for a variety of reasons, and this, not prioritization, is what stopped the Allies from seriously considering bombing Auschwitz.
2. Richard Forreger
    a. "The Bombing of Auschwitz": This article appeared in the summer 1987 edition of *Aerospace Historian*, which is not an academic journal. Nevertheless, Forreger's work has been cited by many of the key scholars, including Kitchens.
    b. "Two Sketch Maps of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Camps": This article appeared in the October 1995 issue of *The Journal for Military History*. Foregger argues that the maps that the

Allies had of Auschwitz-Birkenau would not have been sufficient to bomb Auschwitz.

3. Rondall Rice
    a. "Bombing Auschwitz: US 15th Air Force and the Military Aspects of a Possible Attack": In this article, which appeared in the 1999 issue of *War in History*, Rice argues that from a strictly logistical standpoint, bombing the crematoria and gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau was feasible with minimal prisoner casualties.

Group 3: Allied Policy and Leader Historians: The scholars whose approach has focused on Allied policy and Allied leadership in the decision not to bomb Auschwitz

1. Martin Gilbert
    a. *Auschwitz and the Allies*: Gilbert's extraordinary book deals in detail with the failure to bomb Auschwitz, and he shifts the blame from the Allied leadership, specifically Churchill, to the bureaucracy, all the while agreeing with Wyman that bombing Auschwitz was feasible.
2. Michael J. Cohen
    a. *Churchill and the Jews*: This book presents the Allied failure to bomb Auschwitz as a part of a recurring pattern which showed Churchill's low placement of the Jews on his priority list.
    b. "Churchill and the Jews: The Holocaust": This article appeared in the February 1986 issue of *Modern Judaism* and expanded on some of the ideas put forward in his book, written in 1985.
    c. "Churchill and Auschwitz: End of Debate?" This article appeared in the 2006 issue of *Modern Judaism*. In it Cohen addresses some of the heavy criticism he has faced over his previous articles and his book.
3. Bernard Wasserstein
    a. *Britain and the Jews of Europe: 1939-1945*: This 1979 book goes into some depth in addressing the proposals to bomb

Auschwitz, and puts forward the idea that saving the Jews was just generally not a priority for the British policy makers. Wasserstein does not view this as positive or negative, but simply as a statement of fact.

Dislodging Israeli Orientalism: Said and the New Historians

Jesse Mintz

History is an intellectual production; a historiographical deconstruction of the production of history reveals the organic and seemingly intuitive connection that exists between any history produced and the ideological environment and political context in which it is created. "Conquerors, my son, consider as true history only what they themselves have fabricated."[1] These words, spoken by an Arab headmaster instructing his pupil in Emile Habiby's tragic novel about an Israeli-Arab, speak to the platitude that history is written by the victors. The writing of history actualizes the discourse between knowledge and power. Edward Said's formative work, *Orientalism* (1978), has been a driving force behind the academic trend to investigate the nature, perspective and bias of the discourse pertaining to the "Other." The essentializing dynamic of mainstream Western-created and Western-oriented history has given way in recent years to the dissemination of a multitude of heterogeneous historical narratives.[2] The development of indigenous histories has dislodged the previously dominant colonialist or Western historical perspective; likewise, subaltern and feminist studies have sought to relate the history of those otherwise marginalized by a normative historical narrative.

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[1] Emile Habiby, *Al-Wa'qa al-Ghariba fi Ikhtifa Sa'id Abi'al-Nahs al-Mutasha il* (The Secret Life of Sa'id the Il-Fated Pessoptimist) (Beruit: Dar Ibn Khaldun, 1974), 37.

[2] See Gyan Prakash, "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32 (April 1990), for a discussion of the emergence of foundational, subaltern and post-Orientalist historiographies.

In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Said's work has led to a reversal of authority in terms of historiography. In both Israel and much of the West, Israeli historians have generally been accepted as nearly unchallenged authorities, while Palestinian scholars have been relegated as mere propagandists in the realm of Middle East history.[3] Following the publication of Said's *Orientalism*, and to a lesser extent *The Question of Palestine* (1979), the prism of Orientalism and post-colonial thought delineated in his work has been applied to the hegemonic relationship between state power and the creation of knowledge. In conjunction with the advent of postmodernism, Israeli academic and historical narratives have been rethought with the implicit recognition of the effect of the Zionist project on the canonical historiography.[4] What has ensued from this endeavor is the creation of post-Zionist scholarship championed by the New Historians. Holding nothing sacrosanct, post-Zionism reassesses the accepted narrative of the conflict.[5] The effect of post-Zionism has been the narrowing of the gap between the two national, and contradictory, narratives with the aim of producing an equitable, joint historical account. The Israeli New Historians have held the typical Zionist representations of Palestinian history up for comparison with the historical reality, and, by doing so, have elucidated the hegemonic power dynamic evident in the Israeli discourse which is reminiscent of Western Orientalism.

To understand the present, sociologist Gershon Shafir asserts, it is first necessary to contextualize the past. In this vein, New Historians, or revisionist historians, have reanalyzed Israeli history both in terms of the events and their social antecedents, to more equitably explicate the present conflict.[6] Before their historical reading can be appreciated, however, the traditional Israeli historiography must be understood.

Insofar as it is tenable to discuss any *general-public* reaction to the events of 1948 in the Israeli and Palestinian communities, the linguistic patterns used to describe the events provide a window into the mindsets of the disparate social

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[3] Efraim Karsh, "Rewriting Israel's History," *Middle East Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (June 1996).

[4] Haim Gerber, "Zionism, Orientalism, and the Palestinians," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 33 (Autumn 2003): 2-3.

[5] "Post Zionism Only Rings Once," *Haaretz*, 21 September 2001.

[6] Uri Ram, "The Colonization Perspective in Israeli Sociology," *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader*, ed. Ilan Pappe, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 57.

perspectives. The United Nations decision to partition the British Mandate territory, creating a sovereign Israeli State, is referred to as *al-Nakba* in Arabic, meaning literally: "the catastrophe." This terminology, with its insinuation of a watershed moment of national disaster and tragedy, stands in sharp contrast with the Israeli notions of *azma'ut* and *shihrur*, independence from the British and liberation from the Diaspora respectively.[7] There existed an inconsistency in the seemingly disparate ideological perspectives of the creation of the State: the Palestinian *al-Nakba,* a tragedy equivalent to colonial subjugation and the Israeli *azma'ut*, which embodied a third-world liberation struggle coming to fruition. This inconsistency, with its genesis in the very birth of the State of Israel, served to entrench much of the divide between the two peoples.

The idea of a revisionist history presupposes the existence of a generally accepted mainstream account. At the risk of essentializing, such an account is recognized by the New Historians to exist in mainstream Israeli, and Western, academia. According to Ilan Pappe, one of the founders and most prominent members of the class of New Historians, mainstream Israeli history is not monolithic; that being said, it generally employs a positivist approach to history which works in conjunction with an ideological platform to maintain the validity of the Zionist discourse.[8] Within this depiction, there are certain tropes that pervade even disparate historical narratives. There exist two recognized phases of Israeli history: the first was the pre-1948 era, beginning with the nineteenth century migrations of French Jews to Palestine; the second was the post-1948 era, dealing with the U.N.G.A. Resolution 181, the creation of Israel and the subsequent conflicts that ensued. It is not sufficient, though, in an attempt to understand contemporary Israeli society and the divide that defines Israeli-Palestinian relations and their contradictory historical narratives, to study merely the events that followed the creation of the state. The founding of the State of Israel was largely understood in mainstream Israeli academia as the teleological conclusion to a national and religious struggle; as such, the context of the founding plays a large role in the psyche of the nation. As Avi Shlaim, notable member of the New Historians, notes: "several of Israel's foundational myths

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[7] Ilan Pappe, "Post Zionist Critique on Israel and the Palestinians: Part I: The Academic Debate," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 2 (Winter, 1997): 4.

[8] Ibid., 3.

and hence their relevance to present contemplation of past and future in the Jewish state have been irrevocably undermined," by the New Historians revisionism.[9] What has resulted is a radically different image of the founding of Israel as compared to the mainstream account.

Understanding pre-1948 Zionist history, according to Palestinian historian Beshara Doumani, provides a window into the "underlying assumptions determining the historiographical agendas" of the Zionist narrative.[10] According to the New Historians, the conventional Zionist account of the founding of the Israeli State by the U.N. can be understood as follows: Jews began migrating near the end of the nineteenth century, first from France, and, subsequently, from all over Europe, to a then empty and barren Palestine. They came as Western 'redeemers' of a backwards society and began purchasing land from absentee Turkish landowners. They succeeded in turning the desert into productive, arable land.[11] Simha Flapan, former director of Arab Affairs for the left-wing Mapam party, has identified seven myths which are, more or less, accepted by the New Historians as dominant in general Zionist historical accounts: the Zionists planned for peace following the U.N. partition; the Arabs rejected the partition and launched the war; the Palestinians fled on their own accord; the Arab states united to expel the Jews; the Arab invasion made war inevitable; a proverbial Israeli David defeated an Arab Goliath; and finally, Israel has subsequently sought peace but no Arab leader has responded.[13] The traditional Zionist version, understood thus, is, in the words of Avi Shlaim, "propaganda of the victors."[14]

The overwhelming majority of historical accounts produced by Israeli scholars deal primarily with the Israeli perspective of the events. The task of

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[9] Avi Shlaim, "The Debate About 1948," *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader*, ed. Ilan Pappe, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 139.

[10] Bershara B. Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine: Writing Palestinians into History," *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader*, ed. Ilan Pappe, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007),11.

[11] For a general overview of the traditional Zionist history according to the New Historians, please see: Avi Shlaim, "The Debate About 1948."

[13] Eugene Rogan and Avi Shlaim, "Introduction," *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*, ed. E. Rogan and A. Shlaim (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001), 3.

[14] Avi Shlaim, "The Debate About 1948."

analyzing the Palestinian and Arab perspectives was entrusted to the Israeli Orientalist establishment. Of those who did write about the creation of Israel and the war from an Arab perspective, notably Yehoshua Porath, few dealt with the cultural or human tragedy. The events were analyzed more so from the perspective of foreign Arab nations as opposed to the perspective of the Palestinians themselves; that houses were destroyed was ignored in lieu of an invasion by foreign nations and that villages were wiped off the map was overlooked in the wake of tremendous solidarity by the *yishuv*. The defining cataclysmic event for a generation of Palestinians and their descendents, *al Nakba*, was never dealt with from a Palestinian perspective within Israeli academia. That many within the class of New Historians goal is to "write the Palestinians into their own history,"[15] speaks to the lacuna of Palestinian agency within Israeli academia and narratives. It is this stifling and suppressing aspect of Israeli academia, one that has denied Palestinian's even a voice in their narrative, that serves as the quintessential Orientalizing aspect of Israeli historiography. According to Pappe:

> The absence of the Palestinian tragedy from the Israeli historical account was indicative of a more general Israeli Orientalist view. The historiographical view of the Palestinians up to the 1980s was monolithic and based on stereotyping… From 1948 until 1967, the Palestinians mostly were ignored as an academic subject matter… Since 1967, they have been depicted as terrorists and a threat, though not an existential one. [16]

Even in this new role, as subversive and dissident elements, Palestinians are not granted agency as they are depicted as pawns of a larger pan-Arab or pan-Islamic conspiracy against the Jewish state.

The New Historians have held the general Zionist historical account up to Said's prism and have found it wanting. Israeli historians have systematically denied the existence of a united Palestinian people before 1948; they denied that existence of Palestinian nationalism or any semblance of social or economic modernity; likewise, they have diminished any active role played by the

[15] Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine," 6.
[16] Pappe, "Post-Zionist Critique on Israel: Part 1," 5.

Palestinian peoples in their own history.[17] This act, of reducing the agency of an entire people, is indicative and indeed characteristic of Israeli Orientalism as a whole. To admit the people-hood – or even existence – of a unified Palestinian people would be to discredit the entirety of the Zionist project. The few against the many myth of 1948 held the Zionists on a heroic pedestal; to take them off of it, to show that the Palestinians were the underdogs and that tragedy and suffering has indeed befallen them, would be to besmirch the Zionist self image. The best way to deal with this contradiction, Pappe notes, "was simply not to deal with the Palestinian side of the story and, if possible, not to deal with *1948* at all."[18]

Once it is understood that the Zionist project required, for its own existential self-definition, that the Palestinians remain relegated to a prescribed static role, essentializing tendencies within Israeli Orientalism become evident. These motifs of history not only grew to define the Palestinian "Other," they also worked in conjunction with the Israeli self-image to create foundational myths. Generally, New Historians recognize a threefold Orientalist myth in Israeli historiography. The Israeli Orientalist discourse asserts that Palestinian nationalism arose in response to Zionism (and consequently that Palestinian nationalism has little historical or cultural underpinning); Palestinian society was stagnant and owes its growth and modernization to Zionist impetus following the first and second wave migrations; and lastly, that the Palestinian social collapse following the war of 1948 was in large part due to an inherent flaw within Palestinian society.[19]

In their revisionist pursuit of an accurate and equitable historical narrative, the New Historians have discredited these myths. Modernist historical readings, which posit that nationalism is a modern invention, join forces in the Israeli context with Orientalist ones as Arab and Palestinian society is castigated for not having created a European-type society. Likewise, it is envisioned that the Palestinians, having been left to themselves, would never have dreamed of a Palestinian identity. Proof of this is often purported in the Palestinian alliance with King Faisal of Syria and the embrace of pan-Syrianism from 1918 to 1920.

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[17] Gerber, "Zionism, Orientalism, and the Palestinians," 1.
[18] Pappe, "Post-Zionist Critique on Israel: Part 1," 5.
[19] Gerber, "Zionism, Orientalism and the Palestinians," 4.

Yet, as Porath notes, "it was a union of convenience, not a deep-seated union of hearts;"[20] Syria under Faisal was seen as a likely force to overpower Zionism and thus the Palestinian's embraced the movement. With the ousting of Faisal, though, pan-Syrianism was quickly abandoned among the Palestinian people and Ben Gurion himself, often taken as the exemplar figure of the Zionist movement, recognized – if only tacitly in his memoirs – the existence of a Palestinian-Arab national movement.[21] Perhaps the greatest proof of a unified Palestinian people under the British mandate came in the Great Palestinian Revolt of 1936 to 1939, the largest in the British Empire in the twentieth century and, according to Gerber, "proof enough that [a] national feeling existed and was quite intense,"[22] among the Palestinian people.

The stagnancy and backwardness of the Palestinian economy are other reoccurring motifs of the traditionalist Israeli historical accounts. This myth though, of the unconnected and failing rural economies and prevalence of itinerant financial systems in lieu of urban ones, stands in contrast with the historical realities of both the Palestinian and Jewish agricultural economies under the Ottoman's. The first agricultural colonies established by immigrant French Jews in 1882 collapsed within their first year and were only saved by massive monetary support from Baron Rothschild. A traditionalist historical reading contrasts the primitive Palestinian agriculture with the modern and successful Jewish colonies; and yet, in 1891 Ahad Ha'am commented on the *yishuv* agriculture as follows:

> There are now about ten [Jewish] colonies standing for some years, and not one of them is able to support itself … wherever I strived to look, I did not manage to see even one man living solely from the fruit of his land … The Arabs are working and eating … Grief has engulfed us [Jews] alone.[23]

The idea, then, that modern Jewish agricultural practices succeeded where traditional – or backwards – Palestinian ones failed, is clearly unfounded.

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[20] Yehoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement, 1918-1929* (London: Frank Cass, 1974), 84.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Gerber, "Zionism, Orientalism and the Palestinians," 8.

[23] Ibid., 12.

Beyond mere psychological effects, the Orientalist tradition has played a major role in both the rhetoric of statehood and the policies of the government. D.H.K. Amiran, an Israeli government official, wrote several influential papers on the topic of settlement patterns of the indigenous people of Palestine. Taking into account that the coastal regions of Palestine were more arable, he asked why the indigenous Palestinian population tended to settle in the hill regions of central Palestine. His conclusion is noteworthy for both its postulated answer and its methodology. He ignores historical development and social structure in his analyses and concludes that their settlement patterns serve as a testament to a lack of security and inherent backwardness of society – specifically, the dangerous nature of nomadic peoples and the inability of the Ottomans or Palestinians to utilize modern agricultural methods. His papers surmised that, "it was not the land that was bad, but the fact that it was occupied by people or administered by government who did not make proper use of it."[24] Amiran's conclusion fits perfectly into the Zionist foundational myth of a modernizing force saving an otherwise neglected land.

In conjunction with the Zionist modernizing myth exists the generally held notion of Ottoman misrule and political instability in Palestine before the British Mandate period. The image of chaos and anarchy in Palestine, while unfounded, plays nicely into the modern defense of Israel as the only democracy in the Middle East, and specifically one which is representative of the Palestinian people. The general trajectory of the histories dealing with internal Palestinian politics reaffirms the diminished agency afforded to the Palestinian people by Israeli history. Moshe Ma`oz's formative work, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine, 1840-1861* (1968), outlined many of the tropes utilized and established the parameters for much of the subsequent political history of Palestine. In it he describes Palestinians as passive victims of Ottoman decline wherein the impetus for modernization lay wholly in foreign influence. Themes of lack of security, an absence of centralized leadership and general anarchy permeate his description while he affords the European inspired innovations of the late-Ottoman, British and Zionist periods credit with modernization. The obstacles to this modernization are located within the indigenous society; he describes tendencies towards '"Bedouin pillage', 'rapacious Pashas' [local governors], 'bloody

[24] Doumani, "Ottoman Palestine," 26.

factionalism,' and the incompatibility of Islam with Western forms of government and administration,"[25] as indigenous issues which need to be overcome before modernity can be established. These accounts, while repeatedly asserted to in Israeli historical accounts, fail to stand up to the criticisms of the New Historians. In lieu of the purported misrule and decentralized power of the Ottoman's, the New Historians hold that following the Crimean War Ottoman authority was definitively established, safeguarding trade and economic growth. Local economies flourished and entrepreneurship abounded, attested to by the tremendous growth of the town of Acre from roughly 2 000 inhabitants to around 35 000 propelled mostly by the success of the cotton trade and the rise in the production and export of Jaffa oranges to European markets.[26]

In terms of politics and rule, the New Historians have shown that Ottoman Palestine was governed by parliaments which, however imperfect by modern standards, were chosen by elections. This amount of representative government, absent in the British Mandate period, is often attested to as the beginnings of Palestinian state building and national sentiment. In contrast with the diminished agency afforded to the Palestinians in Zionist writings:

Ottoman reform in the provinces created a true sense of national building for the Palestinians: from the bottom up, scores of administrative, educational, judicial, and welfare institutions were established, all staffed by local Palestinians, all based on modern education and on rules of conduct anchored in new rules and regulations.[27]

That these myths have been roundly critiqued and discredited, and yet remain integrated in the general Israeli historical account, is testament to the strength of the Orientalist discourse in Israel and the contingency of the social fabric on the foundational accounts. Walid Khalidi writes:

> What is most striking about the Zionist version of the background, nature, circumstances, and aftermath of the 1947 partition resolution is the extent to which it has become the paradigm or lens through which the entire history of the Palestine problem and

[25] Doumani, "Ottoman Palestine," 26.
[26] Gerber, "Zionism, Orientalism and the Palestinians," 12.
[27] Ibid., 13.

> the Zionist-Arab conflict prior and subsequent to the resolution itself is viewed and judged.[28]

According to Said, there is a clear and identifiable relationship between the discourse of Orientalism and the imposition of colonialism. They are not mutually exclusive movements, but are interconnected with each other. Essentialisms in general, and Orientalism's static and defamatory definition of the "Other," more specifically, both impel and justify the colonialist project.[29] This relationship is not lost on the New Historians. In their application of Said's prism to the Orientalist discourse in Israeli history, they have not stopped short in the logical conclusion: the colonization theory of Palestine in the 20th century and the current colonization of the Occupied Territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip are predictable, even obvious, outcomes of the Zionist created, Orientalist narrative.

While the notion of an apartheid Israel is a heavily contentious, and, for a good reason, debated issue, such accusations are beyond the scope of this paper. What remains important, though, is the methodology of the New Historians in justifying their claims of racism and colonialism. Shafir, a prominent member of the New Historians, writes of the differences which emerge when pre-1948 Zionist settlements are contrasted with post-1977 Israeli colonization. He continues on to write of the apparent incompatibility of the two epochs: "the colonial Athena seemed to have sprung full-grown from the head of her non-colonial father, Zeus."[30] While Shafir concedes that according to the rationale of Zionism as it is often understood – essentially, a nationalist movement interested in attaining self-determination for a beleaguered people – Israel's actions following the 1967 war and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza strip appear as corruptions of Zionism. Yet, in the same manner that Said deconstructed Western writings and found within them thematic justifications

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[28] Walid Khalidi, "Revisiting the UNGA Partition Resolution," in *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader*, ed. Ilan Pappe, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 98.

[29] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 204.

[30] Gerhson Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism," *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader*, ed. Ilan Pappe, 2nd ed. (Routledge: New York, 2007), 80.

for colonialism, so to do New Historians deconstruct Israeli writings and trace a historical ancestry between the two settlement drives.

That the New Historians have extended Said's deconstruction of the Orientalist discourse and applied it to the historiographical tendencies in Israeli academia is undeniable. But while they have succeeded in producing a more equitable portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian narrative, a joint history remains a distant goal. Proof of the divide which yet remains between even members of the New Historians is evident in the works of Benny Morris and Walid Khalidi, two leaders of the revisionist movement. Despite their similar goals of dislodging mainstream historical narratives and endorsing neither the reductive Israeli or Palestinian histories, they remain at distant ends of the historical spectrum on many important issues. Concerning the Palestinian refugees Morris maintains that, "war, and not design, Jewish or Arab, gave birth to the Palestinian refugee problem;"[31] Khalidi, on the other hand, sees even within the research of Morris himself, undeniable proof that *Tochniyat Dalet* (Plan D) called for the government endorsed systematic expulsion of Palestinians.[32]

Such a division is emblematic of the larger schisms within Israeli-Palestinian society. Gayan Prakash writes of the need to establish "mythographies," in post-colonial India; history, he contends, can only empower people to unity and people-hood through the provision of a historical voice. The goal, then, of historians must be to create an historical narrative that, unlike mainstream histories, relates the accounts of subaltern and dispossessed segments of society within a cultural and historical framework. Only through the writing of mythographies, Prakesh continues, is it possible to empower a people so many generations removed from national agency.[33] Perhaps in the Israeli-Palestinian context as well, mythographies can be utilized as a means of providing the self-reflexivity necessary to relate the subaltern stories of the Palestinians while incorporating them into an equitable Israeli account as well.

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[31] Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 588.

[32] Nur Masalha, "A Critique of Benny Morris," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 21, no.1 (Autumn 1991): 4.

[33] Gayan Prakash, "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories in the Third World: Perspectives From Indian Historiography," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32 (April 1990): 24.

The New Historians have begun the project by dislodging Israeli Orientalism; the work, however, is far from over.

Bloomsbury Grouping: Classification, Colonialism, and Curiosity at the British Museum

Madeleine Cohen

Museums are sites of both the organization and creation of knowledge. As such, they involve the deployment of new knowledge as much as the culling of old, and call into question the authority from which both arrive. Although the expressed purpose of the museum is neither control over a wide social body, nor the government of one class by another, it has at its core an elitist project of the deployment of knowledge from a central, authoritative position: "As with political imperialism, the center of gravity of the imperium of natural history was not in the colonies but in the metropolis."[1] To go one step further, the museum, as symbol of the metropolis in its beautiful heterogeneity, pursuit of curiosity, and commitment to modernity, can be seen as an important part of the Enlightenment narrative. Although the museum was by no means the central driving force in the British imperialist-Enlightenment project, it certainly contributed substantially to it. This is most pertinent in the case of the British Museum, whose history is inextricably linked with both colonial exploits and imperial attitudes. This is a history, therefore, bound up in elitism. What remains crucial, however, is the way in which bodies of knowledge – particularly those concerning scientific practice - to which everyone, including the elite, was made subject, were developed and deployed.

Originating in a spirit of curiosity which saw its manifestation in early modern curiosity cabinets, the museum as an institution is dedicated to the display and presentation of the wonders of the world, from the fantastic to the straightforward, the grotesque to the common. This project would be incomplete without systems of order through which to render it comprehensive

[1] Harriet Ritvo, "Zoological Nomenclature and the Empire of Victorian Science," in *Victorian Science in Context*, ed. Bernard Lightman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 350.

and comprehensible. The history of the museum is thus intertwined with that of systems of classification which work to express the knowledge or *episteme* of their time. Classification plays a crucial role in the development of the British Museum, and the modern project of knowledge-seeking and knowledge-forming it espoused. This role is one which finds its place couched within scientific and imperialist strains, as "… classification represented European possession of exotic territories, as well as intellectual mastery of their natural history."[2] Classification in the British Museum was therefore as much about expanding knowledge as it was about refining it. This two-fold process of knowledge gathering and sorting was largely controlled by individuals who felt an inherent right to make claims on nature as well as set parameters around it. This is most clearly seen in the controversial history of the division of departments within the British Museum and the profound effects it had on the metaphysical and scientific meaning ascribed to the objects contained therein. There was an increasing sense that by sub-dividing departments, objects within different disciplines would be ascribed newer, perhaps deeper, meanings.

The classification of materials within the museum in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries points to the existence of new space in which knowledge was constructed, interpreted, and proliferated, not only by those in charge of classification, but those made witness to it. One of the reasons why the museum is such a fertile site of examination for the history of ideas – be they scientific, cultural, or some other type – is that they encapsulate the minds and imaginations of both the elite and the public at large. The history of the museum, from its murky origins in the cabinet of curiosities to the bastions of public, stable, and profitable knowledge they are today, provides a fascinating glimpse into the unfolding of the world as it has been seen.

The history of the ordering of knowledge is inextricably linked with the questioning, subverting, and reinvention of boundaries. In the *Order of Things*, Michel Foucault asks us to examine ways in which these boundaries are constructed and the reasons why, as well as the knowledge and meaning created in the spaces they open up. Moving from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment, Foucault argues that the depth and vigour of these knowledges expanded. He writes, "Histories of ideas or of the sciences… credit

[2] Ritvo, "Zoological Nomenclature," 336.

the seventeenth century, and especially the eighteenth, with a new curiosity: the curiosity that caused them if not to discover the sciences of life, at least to give them a hitherto unsuspected scope and precision."[3] Under the auspices of providing both new discovery and new passion to the exploration of the world, the cabinet of curiosities came to play an important role in the intellectual and scientific life of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Curiosity cabinets have a long history which sees the intersection of collection, power, architecture, science, wonder, and, naturally, curiosity.[4] All of these were of great pertinence to both collectors and viewers of often sprawling collections, who attempted to make sense of the world by examining the huge and diverse array of objects it contained: "the copious, various, and costly *Wunderkammern* contained precious materials, exotica and antiquities, specimens of exquisite workmanship, and natural and artificial oddities – all crammed together in order to dazzle the onlooker."[5] The desire to dazzle, while tied to the project of collecting, was also a desire to impress. The collection of strange, beautiful, and wondrous objects had largely aristocratic and political beginnings. Monarchs and men of high social and political standing saw collecting as a way of exerting, or at least appearing to exert, power over a wide and varied world by containing its treasures within their grasp: "…most of these grand cabinets were set up by princes for whom the known world might be thought of as something that could, just about be controlled by a single source of power."[6] Curiosity cabinets were not only used to express domination over an existing world, but the power to create a new one. Subscribing to a "magical correspondence between man and the world about him… 'the prince could symbolically reclaim dominion over the entire natural and artificial world.'"[7] This desire for worldly control, however, developed congruously with a desire for worldly wonder. This is reflected by a wide range of cultural practices such as 'raree shows,' which

[3] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. (New York: Routledge, 1994), 136.

[4] J. Mordaunt Crook, *The British Museum*. (London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1972), 24. "The Italian gabinetto, the French cabinet, the English closet, the German Kammer or Kabinett, were all varieties of the same thing."

[5] Ibid., 260

[6] Ken Arnold, *Cabinets for the Curious: Looking Back at Early English Museums*. (Cornwall: Ashgate, 2006), 14-15.

[7] Guiseppe Olmi, quoted in Ibid., 18.

form a great part of the history of collections. "Wonders," writes Lorraine Daston, "tended to cluster at the margins rather than at the center of the known world and… constituted a distinct ontological category, the preternatural, suspended between the mundane and the miraculous."[8] Medieval and early modern collections therefore represented a straddling of science and religion and appealed to curiosity as such. The Enlightenment, however, created a demand for greater demarcation of these realms. A more rigorous search for scientific certainty arose, complemented by a denigration of wonder as both trivial and vulgar: "Just as diligent curiosity replaced delighted curiosity during this period, discipline replaced pleasure in natural inquiry."[9] While curiosity was by no means banished from a new approach to collecting, its emphasis shifted from marvel, wonder, and spectacle to order, taxonomy, and knowledge.

The *Wunderkammer* is a collection with "encyclopaedic ambitions, intended as a miniature version of the universe, containing specimens of every category of things and helping to render visible the totality of the universe, which otherwise would remain hidden from human eyes."[10] Implicit in these ambitions to display the world in microcosm is the importance of the object as a carriage of meaning; scientific, cultural, and metaphysical. In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, objects ceased to be 'curious things,' important or attractive because of the sense of mystery or awe they invoked or the illusion of other worlds to which they pointed. Rather, they became important vehicles for deciphering the world at hand, thus making it comprehensible.[11] Significant to this pursuit of knowledge were those who took on the task of deciphering.

The meaning of objects is entwined with the way in which they are described. In the Early Modern period, the description of objects was narrative-driven. In the catalogue for Sir Hans Sloane's impressive and expansive collection, he wrote of a bone spoon acquired in New England:

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[8] Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park. *Wonders and the Order of Nature.* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 14.

[9] Ibid., 355.

[10] Krzysztof Pomian, quoted in Carla Yanni, *Nature's Museums: Victorian Science and the Architecture of Display,* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 16.

[11] Yanni, *Nature's Museums*, 14-17.

> An Indian spoon made of the breast bone of a pinguin made anno 1702… by Papenau an Indian whose squaw had both her leggs gangrened and rotted of to her knees and was cured by bathing in balsam water made by Winthrop Esp., of New England.[12]

This type of anecdotal description was common in both collections and natural histories. Plot, for example, in writing on "a piece of a Kind of jaspar stone" from an Obelisk in Rome also included information about "…the Egyptian markings on it… how the stone could have been brought from Egypt; the type of sea-going craft used by the Egyptians; and finally, the poor man that an antiquarian had introduced him to, in whose cellar he saw another bit of a pyramid."[13] This kind of narrative-driven description of objects is demonstrative of Foucault's model of history and its telling. He writes: "[u]ntil the mid-seventeenth century, the historian's task was to establish the great compilation of documents and signs… His existence was defined not so much by what he saw as by what he retold."[14] With the coming of what Foucault calls the 'The Classical Age,' however, we see a decisive shift toward a history based more on rationalized information than on the somewhat nebulous collection of empirical facts and anecdotal observances.

As the shift in ways of describing things was occurring, so too was the way in which those descriptions interacted. The eighteenth century saw the rise of taxonomy and distinct systems of classification. Like the description of individual objects before it, taxonomies of objects, both natural and man-made, evinced their own peculiarities. Under the heading "Some Kindes of Birds, their Egges, Beaks, Feathers, Clawes and Spurres" the entry in the *Musaeum Tradescantianum*, compiled in 1656 reads: "Divers sorts of Egges from Turkie, one given for a Dragon's Egge… Easter Eggs of the Patriarch of Jerusalem… the Claw of the bird Rock, who, as Authors report, is able to trusse an Elephant."[15] Although we see here a greater attempt to make connections between objects, the connections remain marked by a decidedly personal bent. Thus, while the

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[12] Arnold, *Cabinets*, 88.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Foucault, *Order of Things*, 142.
[15] Crook, *British Museum*, 37.

seventeenth century saw the beginning of a turn towards order, it would not become substantially realized until the eighteenth.

A marked turn towards objective empiricism in classifying knowledge during the eighteenth century saw the recession of the more nebulous and untenable notion of curiosity. As Daston suggests, "[c]entral to the new, secular meaning of enlightenment as a state of mind and as a way of life was the rejection of the marvellous."[16] Accordingly, curiosity cabinets took a distinct turn away from curiosity altogether, moving towards a more pragmatic pursuit of detailed knowledge. This was partly manifest in the rise of natural history as a scientific discipline, which was seen as a new attempt to understand the world in a straightforward, objective, and identifiable way. Eighteenth century collectors therefore abandoned much 'curiosity' in the name of scientific certainty. Certainty, however, was not attainable, even in this new project which had its quest at heart. The scientific naming and classification of objects was made subject to as many fluctuations and obscurities as their wondrous predecessors.

Enlightenment thinkers and collectors believed that the pursuit of scientific certainty not only relied on the correct naming of things, but on the ordering and systematization of those names. As such, the process of grouping and organizing within collections became of paramount concern. By grouping together objects "it became possible in theory to co-ordinate absolutely all the disparate elements of the material world."[17] For Foucault, this co-ordination, is central to the creation of knowledge as it facilitates the intersections between classified objects. The co-ordinated items "form a table on which knowledge is displayed in a system contemporary with itself."[18] By examining objects in conjunction with one another, it was believed that one was able to bring greater understanding to them. Like the classification of isolated objects, however, their schematic mapping remained part of a general process of historical knowledge-formation. As Ken Arnold suggests, "[o]rder was, in and of itself, becoming one of the principle 'items' on display."[19]

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[16] Daston and Park, *Wonder*, 331.
[17] Arnold, *Cabinets*, 214.
[18] Foucault, *Order of Things*, 82.
[19] Ibid., 226.

This change in the approach towards collections had a great impact on the way in which they were actually exhibited. In the Early Modern period, taxonomy was not a consideration of the curiosity cabinet. Although classification systems were not entirely absent from early collections, they did little in the way of imposing meaning on, or finding it within, the relationships between objects. Affinities between objects were tenuous, based mostly on the material from which they were made. Daston points out that collection catalogues "…provide no clue as to why the objects were coveted, and moreover, coveted in common."[20] The main thrust of the display of these collections was that the objects themselves were sufficient decoration; no efforts were made to put them into a greater decorative scheme.[21] The physical display of objects in such a way, as to draw connections between them, was an Enlightenment phenomenon. It is no surprise, then, that this period saw the birth of the museum; its express purpose being to make collections publicly available, understandable, and useful.

Considered one of the most, if not the most, important museums of natural history in the world, the British Museum began its life under the umbrella of imperialism and as a collection of wonders. Although many argue that modern museums share little in the way of history with early modern collections and cabinets of curiosity, their stories intersect at the birth of the British Museum. After an expedition to Jamaica in September in 1687, the collection which eventually became the foundation for the British Museum was begun by Sir Hans Sloane.[22] As recorded in John Evelyn's Diary of 1691, the collection included "plants, fruits, corails, minerals, stones, Earth, shells, animals, Insects &c collected by him with greate Judgement."[23] The collection eventually expanded to include 'artificial curiosities' which would, after the formation of a separate institution for natural history, become its focus. Sloane's collection was housed in a "Handsome saloon, furnished with a curious selection of

[20] Daston and Park, *Wonders*, 266.

[21] Crook, *British Museum*, 24.

[22] Edward Miller. *That Noble Cabinet: A History of the British Museum*. (London: Andre Deutsch Limited, 1973), 36. Sir Hans Sloane, famous physician as well as collector, is described as being "largely responsible for the development… of the practice of inoculation against smallpox and the popularisation of milk chocolate."

[23] John Evelyn *Diary*, in *Noble Cabinet*, 37.

miscellaneous objects… including the first of the Museum's famous collection of mummies, various specimens of coral, a vulture's head in spirits, and the stuffed flamingo."[24] With the establishment of the British Museum as a national institution came the culling of the collection of its more fantastic elements; those whose origin was curiosity rather than discovery. This was done in the name of science, education, and progress. All three came to underlie the new era in collection, most clearly articulated by the mandate, scope, and organization of the British Museum.

As Horace Walpole wrote, "[t]he establishment of the British Museum seems a charter for incorporating the arts, a new era of *vertu*." In contributing one's collection to the museum, Walpole believed one would feel he was no longer collecting for his own individual pleasure, but that "he was collecting for his country."[25] As such, the significance of colonialism for the British museum as an important collector and repository of important collections is undeniable. 'Collecting for his country' is a thinly veiled account of collecting for an empire, as the British Museum was often used as both an instrument of colonial dominance and might and a site of its display.

Like the princely project of early modern cabinets, museum collections became a way of displaying national might, colonial power, and intellectual superiority. As Tony Bennett suggests, "the museum can only be understood in terms of a nineteenth-century tendency to see culture as useful for governance."[26] While there is some truth in Bennett's claim, especially given the conflation of the culture of the museum with that of scientific authority, to construe the museum purely as the site of an attempt to control the public would be to discredit all the more dynamic shades of its educational mandate. To view even the educational function of museums in this way is to view those at the heart of its project not only above, but entirely outside of, the greater systems of power which affect its unfolding. Because of this, Foucault's "influence was valuable in museum studies, for it caused museum scholars to consider the high political stakes of exhibitions," not only because one could no longer assume that power and knowledge were being decreed from above, but because any

[24] Miller. *Noble Cabinet*, 65.
[25] Ibid., 73.
[26] Yanni, *Nature's Museums*, 8.

"claim [to] an internal logic based on supposed neutrality"[27] within museum display could no longer be traced to a single all-powerful source. The museum as a cultural site within a broader grid, as Foucault terms it, produced knowledge, as much as it produced individuals, by whom it was run.

Affecting both the ordering and display of knowledge was the organization and division of the museum's departments. In the case of the British Museum, this issue pivots around the place of Natural History in a broader catalogue of man-made goods and the epistemological importance brought to each. Until the acquisition of the Towneley collection in 1805, which saw the arrival of an invaluable collection of antiquities from one of the country's top collectors, antiquities was a division of the department of Natural and Artificial Products. Partly as a matter of space and partly as a matter of precedence the arrival of such a large and impressive collection caused the splitting of the old department into Natural History and Modern Curiosities and the Department of Antiquities and Coins.[28] The arrival of the new collection caused more than the creation of new departments, however. It raised many fundamental questions about what kinds of matter were considered to have a place at the leading museum in the world, and what were not. Consequently, the meaning and significance of objects, their grouping, and the manner in which they were displayed were greatly altered. The major controversy arose out of the collections included in the sub-divisions of the Natural History and Antiquities departments.

In 1806, the department of Natural History included botanical, zoological, geological, and mineral collections, as well as Ethnography.[29] After its split from Artificial Products, significantly more attention was paid to the organization of the museum's natural history collection, and a fundamental restructuring occurred of department affairs, both behind the scenes and in the politics of display. It was determined that all the cases which housed objects should be properly inscribed to make clear their contents, and the following year a properly classed catalogue of all books on natural history was to be prepared and the botanical collections were to be completely rearranged in their 'proper

[27] Yanni, *Nature's Museums*, 8.
[28] Miller, *Noble Cabinet*, 99-106.
[29] Ibid., 112.

sequence.'[30] Furthermore, the department culled its basement stores, relegating all materials deemed "unfit to be preserved in the Museum" to the Hunterian Museum (the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons). These included monsters in spirits, anatomical preparations, and stuffed quadrupeds; horns, however, which had been kept among these items, were considered too valuable and kept on the premises.[31] These items, when considered by professionals increasingly interested in a dogmatic scientific approach, were seen to have no place in an institution built on serious study. As the committee minutes from a June 1808 meeting put it, as quoted by Miller: "Thus with the last traces of the 'old curiosity shop' appearance of the past carefully removed, 'all the refuse which ought to be either sold or destroyed' cleared away, the Natural History departments faced the future, eager…to take full advantage of the growing scientific spirit of the new century."[32] This 'growing scientific spirit' was more fully realized when, in 1881, the entire Natural History collection was excised from the British Museum's Bloomsbury site and moved into its own newly formed institution, The British Natural History Museum, at South Kensington.

Space, a constant issue for the British Museum (as is no doubt the case for collections of all kinds), spurred a similar re-classification and organization within the Antiquities department. Upsetting national beliefs and international boundaries, the restructuring of the department brought to the forefront many commonly held imperialist and nationalist attitudes.

Much of the controversy came as a result of Antonio Panizzi, the pre-eminent administrative librarian of his day and one of the most important figures in the history of the British Museum. Despite being described as "becoming more English than the English,"[33] (or perhaps because of it), Panizzi, an Italian immigrant, strongly objected to the inclusion of British and Irish antiquities and ethnological objects within the museum, specifically at the cost of Greek and Roman collections. The department underwent restructuring efforts in 1857 and it was suggested that items from the aforementioned collections be moved in order to make way for those from the ethnographic. In response Panizzi wrote

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[30] Miller, *Noble Cabinet*, 114.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., 115.
[33] Ibid., 134.

that "[i]t does not seem right that such valuable space should be taken up by Esquimaux dresses, canoes and hideous feather idols, broken flints and so on."[34] He showed even greater disdain for other ethnographical collections in saying: "You have, also, I imagine Byzantine, Oriental, Mexican and Peruvian Antiquities stowed away in the basement? … I do not think it is any great loss that they are not better placed than they are…."[35] His attitudes were not uncommon and increasingly became the grounds on which many criticized the museum. Accounts of British priggishness can be found throughout the museum's history, with instances of their refusal to purchase important foreign collections[36] and the entwinement of the many of the museum's collections with colonial expeditions ranking high.

Popular attitude became a significant factor in many of the changes the departments underwent during the Museum's rockier phase in the early to mid-nineteenth century. With a rise in popularity for the theory of evolution came the desire "to observe specimens which were instructive about general principles in natural history – not nature's quirks, God's inexplicable moments of bad taste."[37] This was a far cry from the seventeenth and eighteenth century pursuit of natural history, which found its organizing principle specifically in God's work: "it was His scheme of creation that came to provide the dominant organising principle about which museum investigations were marshalled." Of his own collection of curiosities, Sir Hans Sloane wrote: "these things tend many ways to the manifestation of the glory of God, the confutation of atheism and its consequences."[38] The principles of organization around which museums operate therefore demonstrate the dramatic change of belief and attitude from one era to another and the degree to which those beliefs and attitudes come to shape much more than the simple placement of objects in a room.

The organization and classification within the British Museum arose from an Enlightenment view that a new authoritative way of looking at the

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[34] Miller, *Noble Cabinet*, 191-92.

[35] Ibid., 224.

[36] Ibid., 210. In December 1835, for example, a sedan chair of Grand Master of the Knights of Malta was refused by the museum, while George III's coronation anointing cap and gloves were accepted.

[37] Yanni, *Nature's Museums*, 18.

[38] Arnold, *Cabinets*, 225.

world had emerged from, and triumphed over, a backward vision of the world. Curiosity and wonder as predominant aspects of this vision were largely abandoned by the arrival of a system of thought which promised greater certainty. What it offered, however, was more pondering. Awe had not been discounted, merely displaced by authority. For Foucault, this new way of looking at the world emerged spontaneously. Rising from neither a ruling party nor from the reality so classified, the Enlightenment as set out in the *Order of Things*, comes to appear as chimerical as the objects of wonder so enthusiastically collected during the Early Modern period. As the case of the classification and organization of objects in the British Museum in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries demonstrates, the knowledges of an era – the common approaches society takes to looking at the world - affect how those knowledges are displayed, debated, and proffered. Consequently, the knowledge of one time cannot be grafted onto another; they exist as separate entities, often described as incommensurable. As Arnold suggests, "[w]e will… be doomed to be at a loss if we simply try to translate the meaning they [the Early Moderns] to objects into something that makes complete sense today."[39] Although significant shifts occur in the way in which we view - and therefore make sense of - the world, to deem them incommensurable, let alone entirely spontaneously generated, is to ignore the more subtle, internal workings of power. In the case of the British Museum, the workings of power within an Enlightenment model are highlighted. What they expose, however, are not subtleties.

Dominated by patronage, nepotism, and a persistent unfaltering imperial spirit, the knowledge created and subsequently publicly displayed by the British Museum was neither spontaneously generated nor an inadequate reflection of reality. The British Museum established itself as an authority, scientific, cultural, and political, and as such a reasonable site at which knowledge could be produced. While a great deal of important scientific work occurred within the museum throughout its history, particularly that of the classification of natural history and its aid to its establishment as a separate and viable discipline, much of it came at the behest of narrow, sometimes racist social and political attitudes which denigrated others. As with any institution which has a dual mandate of authoritative research and educational outreach, there were great "… tensions

[39] Arnold, *Cabinets*, 147.

involved in a collection meant for public viewing versus a collection meant as a scientific instrument,"[40] complications which would come to challenge the knowledge being created and the vision of the world it was reflecting.

[40] Gordon McOuat, "Cataloguing Power: Delineating 'Competent Naturalists' and the Meaning of Species in the British Museum." *British Journal of the History of Science* 34 (2001): 26.

Notes on Contributors

MADELEINE COHEN is a fourth-year student pursuing a Combined Honours degree in History and Contemporary Studies. Her paper**,** "Bloomsburgy Grouping: Classification, Colonialism, and Curiosity at the British Museum," was written for Gordon McOuat's Contemporary Studies class, *Science and Culture in the 20th Century***."**

MIRA GOLDBERG-POCH is a fourth-year History student. Her essay, "Threatening Political and Economic Sovereignty: Britain and Russia in Iran in the Nineteenth Century," was written for Colin Mitchell's *Modern History of Iran* in spring 2008. Next year, Mira will head overseas to take a double masters degree in Global Studies with Erasmus Mundus.

CATHERINE FULLARTON is in her fourth year of a Combined Honours degree in History and Contemporary Studies. She wrote "Clash of the Titans: the Trudeau-Lévesque Debates and their Legacy in Contemporary Canada" for Jeffer Lennox's winter 2008 class, *French Canada*. Catherine hopes to go on to graduate studies in an interdisciplinary field and then teach in some capacity.

CAITLIN MEEK, a fourth-year Combined Honours student in International Development Studies and Spanish, wrote "Grace Under Fire: The Rise of the Mapuche Movement in Chile under the Pinochet Regime, 1978-1983" for Jaymie Heilman's winter 2008 class, *Indigenous Movements in Latin America*. Caitlin will be moving on to Trent University to pursue an M.A. in History. Eventually, she would like to become an academic librarian.

JESSE MINTZ is a fourth-year Honours student in History. His paper, "Dislodging Israeli Orientalism: Said and the New Historians," was written for Colin Mitchell's *Orientalism and Occidentalism* in fall 2008.

GREGORY MORRIS is a third-year History student. He wrote "Portugal and Counterinsurgency: Tactics, Strategy, and their Limits in the Angolan War, 1961-1974" for Christopher Bell's winter 2008 class, *War*

and Society since 1945. In fall 2009 Gregory will enter the History Honours program. He maintains an interest in Early Modern Europe and hopes to work on Italy or Iberia at the graduate level.

ALEXANDER NEUMAN often mentally composes his academic writing while riding his bike, and has a compulsive habit of underlining with a ruler. He is deeply interested in stories and the ways they are told. Alex is a fourth-year Honours student in History and Contemporary Studies. He wrote "Visions of State Formation: the Colombian Constitution of 1991" for a winter 2008 Directed Readings seminar with Jaymie Heilman. As he nears the end of this academic episode, Alex plans to continue to discover new ways to learn about the things he wants to learn about.

CHRIS PARSONS is a fifth-year Combined Honours student in History and History of Science and Technology. He wrote "Economic Liberalism and the Creation of Post-War Public Housing in Halifax, Nova Scotia" for Shirley Tillotson fall 2008 class, *The Caring Society?: Welfare in Canada since 1900*. His interests include twentieth-century North American urban history and working class history, the history of Halifax, and the making and eating of pizza. Chris will begin graduate studies in the Department of History at Trent University in September 2009.

JACOB POSEN is a fourth-year History student. His paper, "A Historiography of Allied Action during the Holocaust," was written for Christopher Bell's fall 2008 seminar, *Winston Churchill*. For the past year, Jacob has served as president of the Dalhousie Undergraduate History Society. In the future Jacob hopes to complete a Masters degree in International Relations.

ZABRINA PRESCOTT is in her third year of a Combined Honours degree in History and Biology. She wrote "'What else do I get … ith?': Widowhood, Inheritance and Remarriage in Post-Conquest England" for Cynthia Neville's fall 2008 seminar, *Crime and Society in Post-Conquest England*. After her B.A. Zabrina hopes to go to the U.K. to pursue an M.A., then a Ph.D., in paleo-archaeology. Her goal in life is to be cited in a lecture of a first-year university class.