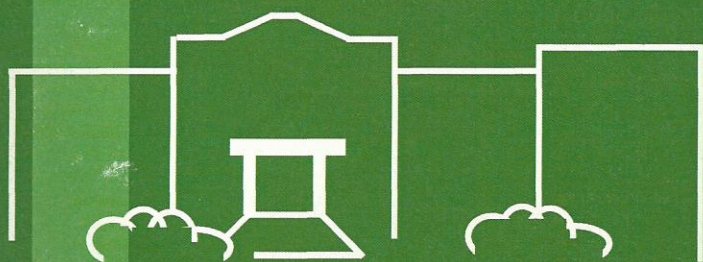


The MSU Undergraduate Historian



Volume 1

2005



The MSU Undergraduate Historian

Editor-in- Chief
Nate Cummings

Board of
Editors

Jeffrey Kersten
Dimitry Palazzola
Michael Ruben
Lesley Whiting
Doreen Yomoah

Peer Editors

Lauren Burniac
Emily Calabrese
Jennifer Carr
Jason Church
Alli Cummings
Lori Jankowski
Sarah Kostecki
Brad Riedy

Outreach

Emily Calabrese
Sarah Kostecki

Finance and
Technology

Jason Church

Layout Design
Lori Jankowski

The Undergraduate Historian is a branch of the History Association of Michigan State, which can be contacted at:

History Association of Michigan State

301 Morrill Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
hams@msu.edu

www.h-a-m-s.com
www.h-a-m-s.com/journal

Letter from the Editor and President

With this issue we begin a tradition of bringing the outstanding scholarship of Michigan State University students to print. Out of nearly forty-thousand students on the Michigan State University campus, this issue highlights the historical research of nine undergraduates. Contained within this issue one will find a diverse selection of topics that span various cultural areas and eras of the historical world. These essays include historical research on Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Americas and Asia.

This journal is the culminating product of six months of hard work and dedication. We would like to specifically thank several people who, without their contributions, this journal could not have been possible. First off, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Michigan State University department of history. Without the generous funding and confidence provided by Department chair Dr. Mark Kornbluh this journal never would have even left the creative minds of the journal staff. Furthermore, the expertise offered by the peer reviewers has left an indelible mark on the quality of scholarship.

We would also like to thank the journal staff that spent many long days and nights in creating this journal. The Board of Editors had the tough task of selecting the articles for publication and helped ensure the overall quality of the final product. Peer editors lent their input and assisted in the essay selection process. Layout editor Lori Jankowski was an indispensable part of the journal staff as she is responsible for the complete design and layout of this journal. This project would not have been nearly successful had it not been for the entire staff.

Finally, we wish to thank all of the Michigan State University Undergraduate students who submitted their scholarship for publication. We extend our congratulations to the nine authors whose work is featured in this journal.

Lastly, we extend our thanks to the History Association of Michigan State's advisor, Dr. Daniels, who kept our spirits high.

Thank you and enjoy!

Nate Cummings
Editor-in-Chief
MSU Undergraduate Historian

Jeffrey Kersten
President
History Association of MSU

Contents

LANCE PHILLIPS

J.E.K. Aggrey: The Booker T. Washington of
Africa

3

CHRISTIEN OLIVER

Convenient Amnesia: Governmental
Manipulation of War Memory in the United
States and Japan

19

EMILY SMITH

"...Its ill-fated road to self-destruct..."
Factors That Led to the Demise of
Students for a Democratic Society

27

SHANTI ZAID

Shades of Red Summer: Historical
Antecedents of the 1919 Chicago Race Riot

43

ERIK STEIN

States' Rights and Secession: Right or
Revolution?

59

LAURA KILLIPS

The Verdict Is In: A Study in "The Judge's"
Stance on the Labor Question in 1882

71

ANNE BRESLER

"The prejudices with which our sex has been
surrounded": Feminism in the French
Revolution

87

ROBERT GRETCH

Proto-Nationalism in the Time of Avignon

101

MATTHEW AHERN

The West-Syrian Chronicles: The Equalizer
of History

113

Submission Policy

121

J.E.K. Aggrey: The Booker T. Washington of Africa

LANCE PHILLIPS

WESTERN EDUCATION in West Africa owed much of its development in the early twentieth-century to J.E.K. Aggrey, a native of the Gold Coast (present day Ghana). Education in the Gold Coast prior to 1925 was strictly based on racial constructs, and the colonizing Europeans supported education that discouraged the progression of the Africans out of low social classes. Missionary run schools were the primary education institutions at this time, and they offered only basic education based on the principles of the three R's (reading, writing, and arithmetic) and agricultural education. Africans, discouraged by lack of educational opportunities afforded to them in their native land, mounted a push for higher education. Prompted by this pressure, colonial governments were forced to respond in a manner that pacified the Africans' demands, as well as served their interest of maintaining control over the African people. This essay examines the life of J.E.K. Aggrey and his role in advancing racial harmony in the Gold Coast by easing tensions caused by conflicting ideas toward the education of the Africans.

"In the whole wide world, my Africa comes first," said Aggrey, as he passionately sought racial equality in his homeland.¹ Racial equality in all levels of society was a common goal throughout the black race in the late 1800s and early 1900s in Africa. However, there were two ways of bringing about this wanted reform. There were those who supported radical changes to produce immediate equality in society, such as the black nationalists, and there were those who supported a more gradual progression towards racial equality through cooperation of the races, such as Booker T. Washington. Like Washington, Aggrey was a proponent of the latter. He devoted his life to the cooperation strategy, and using it he brought about significant changes to the educational sector of the Gold Coast.

To understand the importance of J.E.K. Aggrey, one must understand the diplomatic environment of the Gold Coast during the years surrounding his life. The Gold Coast was the center of the slave trade in the years when slavery thrived, but when it was

¹L.H. Ofosu-Appiah, *The Life of Dr. J.E.K. Aggrey* (Waterville Publishing House, 1975), 52.

abolished at the beginning of the nineteenth century, European interest in the Gold Coast fell until only the British and Dutch had influence in the area. The British considered the Gold Coast a protectorate but maintained little control or involvement in it. They established no territorial rights, and British officials held little power.² The Gold Coast was 92,000 square miles on the west coast of Africa. It was divided into sixty-one states, all under paramount chiefs, and all owing allegiance to the British Crown. The indigenous African population inhabiting the Gold Coast at this time separated themselves into several distinct tribes. The most important was the Fante, to which Aggrey and his family belonged. The British had very little involvement in the education system of the Gold Coast. The British Government was interested in profiting from ownership of the land, and they held little regard for the educational needs of the African people. Beyond the founding of a school at Cape Coast in 1815, the British authorities did nothing for the education of the African tribesmen. The lack of education provided by the British allowed for missionary societies to move in and begin their work. Thomas Birch Freeman was the first missionary to Anamabu, Aggrey's birthplace. He arrived in 1838 and established a Wesleyan Methodist church.³ The missionaries implemented their own education system that went hand in hand with the mission work. They set up schools based heavily on spreading Christianity, which compromised the effectiveness of the education they offered.

In the middle of the nineteenth-century, the economic spotlight once again focused on Africa. The expanding European population created a demand for raw materials and new markets. Focus for these commodities was on the Gold Coast. As Britain found new value in the neglected area, they began to increase their involvement in the affairs of the people, and in 1850 they colonized the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast colony was comprised of about 2,500,000 Africans and 2,000 Europeans.⁴ It was a society polluted with white domination and mistreatment of the natives, specifically in the educational sector. It was into this society that J. E. K. Aggrey was born.

James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey was born on October 18, 1875 in the village of Anamabu in the Gold Coast Colony of Africa. James' father, Kodwo Kwegyir was a prominent member of society. His official position was the gold taker.⁵ As the gold

² Edwin Smith, *Aggrey of Africa, A Study in Black and White* (New York: New World Book Manufacturing Co., Inc., First Published 1929, Reprinted 1971) 16.

³ Ibid, 30.

⁴ W.J.W. Roome, *Aggrey, The African Teacher* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott Ltd., 1962), 14.

⁵ Ofosu-Appiah, 11.

taker, he was responsible for certifying the quality of the gold collected in the colony. He was trusted and respected by the people and the government.⁶ Aggrey's father was a direct descendant of a royal line, and Aggrey rightfully took pride in this. However, Aggrey took more pride in his race. Aggrey once said, "I am proud of my colour; whoever is not proud of his colour is not fit to live."⁷ Before his eighth birthday he enrolled in the Wesleyan Methodists School at Cape Coast. Here he became a young Christian, and it was through him that his mother, father, and his two younger brothers found Christianity as well. Aggrey was a hard working student, and this was a quality he maintained throughout his life.

Around the first few years of Aggrey's education, Reverend Dennis Kemp, a Wesleyan missionary, came to Cape coast. In an effort to promote cleanliness through education, Kemp established workshops in carpentry, blacksmithing and other arts he saw necessary to transform the "unclean" conditions of the African homes into "clean," Christian ones. Aggrey took a liking to this virtuous, educated man and became one of his first students.⁸ Kemp saw potential in young Aggrey through his work habits and devotion to education and Christianity. Kemp also saw in Aggrey a tendency to conform the situation he was placed into.⁹ Although Aggrey excelled in his work, all his success was in the bounds of the missionary's ideas of the roles of a black man. This was important because by conforming to the missions systems, the white men did not perceive Aggrey as a threat to the racial hierarchy that was strong in Africa. This conformist character trait appealed to Kemp and many white men throughout Aggrey's life.¹⁰ When Aggrey was fourteen years old, Kemp offered him a teaching position at a village called Dunkwa, twenty miles from Cape Coast. Aggrey excitedly accepted the offer and went from student to teacher. Aggrey was put in charge of about thirty to forty boys, many of them older than him. However, no one questioned Aggrey's authority, and he proved himself to be worthy of such a responsibility. After one year at Dunkwa, he returned to Anamabu to teach at Centenary Memorial School, a Wesleyan Mission School built in 1891. Aggrey rose in prestige in Cape Coast.

In 1898 bishop John Bryan Small, a native of Barbados and educated at Codrington College, arrived in the Gold Coast to

⁶ Ofosu-Appiah, 20-24.

⁷ Roome, 93.

⁸ Smith, 37.

⁹ Ibid, 37-38.

¹⁰ Francis Agbodeka, *Achimota in the National Setting* (Ghana: Afram Publications Ltd., 1977), 29.

establish a mission there.¹¹ He was searching for young men to go to the US for training in education and in the mission field. He persuaded Aggrey to go with him. Aggrey, already a prominent and respected member of society at the young age of twenty three, decided to make the long trip to America. His decision to follow education rewarded him upon his return to the Gold Coast, as his peers saw him as an icon of African success.

In July of 1898, Aggrey left his home and sailed for the United States. That same year he enrolled in Livingstone College in Salisbury, North Carolina. Supported by the church, Livingstone College sought to create a well-rounded, Christian student using four principals: (1) developing the students' intellectual capacities, (2) teaching moral concepts and ethical discipline through academic and religious training, (3) promoting economic opportunity and industrial skill for all segments of the population, and (4) Proclaiming and applying Christianity for better human relations.¹² Aggrey's studies here focused more on academic and theological education, as opposed to the industrial training that was most common in Africa.¹³ At Livingstone, Aggrey challenged himself academically. In his first year he studied Greek, Latin, English, composition, rhetoric, Shakespeare, geometry, and physical geography. In his second year trigonometry was added. In his third year he studied astronomy, logic, modern history, navigation, German, and chemistry. In his final year he studied philosophy, sociology and geology.¹⁴ He impressed all with his study habits and intellect, and in 1902 he graduated with honors at the head of his class. After graduation, Aggrey continued to work within Livingstone College as the registrar and financial secretary.

Academics aside, in 1903 Aggrey was ordained as an elder in the Zion Methodist Church, and whenever possible he would preach in the black churches of North America. Aggrey did not discard the deeply rooted Christian values that were first introduced to him at the Wesleyan Methodist School in Cape Coast. The churches aided him financially and proved to be imperative in helping him afford his studies at Columbia. He was respected as an educator and a religious leader, and this respect gave him influence in the black and white communities alike.

In 1904 Aggrey began classes at Columbia University in New York, but his studies there were cut short due to financial problems. This was also the year that he met and married

¹¹ Smith, 57.

¹² Sylvia Jacobs, "James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey; An African intellectual in the United States" *Journal of Negro History* vol. 81, no. _ (Winter-Autumn, 1996), 47-61, 51.

¹³ Walter Williams, "Ethnic Relations of African Students in the United States, with Black Americans, 1870-1900" *Journal of Negro History* vol. 65, no. 3 (summer), 228-249.

¹⁴ Jacobs, 53.

Rosebud Douglass, who eventually bore him four children. It was not until 1914 that he was able to resume his studies at Columbia. From 1914 to 1917, Aggrey studied several subjects including sociology and Japanese at Columbia, and in 1918 he reentered Columbia as a matriculated student with every intention of gaining another degree. However, another opportunity presented itself that allowed him to return to his native land, which is where he was most needed and most wanted to be. "Africa calls, and the call appeals to me very strongly,"¹⁵ Aggrey wrote. In 1909 a wealthy philanthropist named Caroline Phelps-Stokes, had died and left her fortune (nearly a million dollars) to the education of Negroes. Dr. Jesse Jones was appointed chairman of the board responsible with deciding the distribution of the money. Jones was a respected educator at The Hampton Institute in Virginia, and a member of the US Bureau of Education. The Phelps Stokes fund was set up to regulate the distribution of grants for educational work in Africa and America. A commission was established to evaluate different educational systems in Africa.

In 1919 Aggrey was recruited by Jones to be a member of this commission. Some of the people interested in the welfare of the commission were skeptical about Aggrey, a black man, becoming part of the project. The presence of a black man, some thought, would hinder the relations between the commission and white decision makers with whom it had contact.¹⁶ It was arranged for Aggrey to meet with J.H. Oldham, the secretary of the International Missionary Council, who would ultimately decide the fate of Aggrey's participation in the commission. Oldham took a great liking to Aggrey, whom he viewed not as a Black man but as a gentleman and a scholar. If that was not enough to convince any skeptics, Aggrey's future public relations in Africa and positive influence on the project was. Mr. J.D. Rheinalt Jones, registrar of Johannesburg University, wrote after the first Phelps-Stokes commission, "Dr. Aggrey has been responsible for really remarkable work in the creation of a better spirit amongst the radical natives."¹⁷

With the stamp of approval from Oldham, Aggrey and the commission traveled through Africa evaluating the educational systems and taking statistics on schools, enrollment, and curriculum. One of his stops was his birthplace, the Gold Coast. The whole town waited on the shores anticipating Aggrey's return, and upon his arrival, Aggrey was given a large parade and held in high regard. As well as being well dressed and educated, he arrived in the company of educated white men, and he was not inferior to them. Aggrey's presence with the Phelps-Stokes

¹⁵ Roome, 51.

¹⁶ Smith, 144.

¹⁷ Ibid, 164.

Commission had an unexpected impact on the people of the Gold Coast. This impact was an increased demand for higher education - the education Aggrey had. Like Mr. J.D. Rheinalt Jones said, the natives took on a new spirit upon Aggrey's return to Africa. For the first time, his fellow Africans could see the successful man he had become. This man who had been raised at the same place as them and had been given the same missionary education was now a successful member of a prestigious effort to reform African education. Because they could relate to Aggrey, they could relate to a higher level of education. Aggrey and the commission met with the Governor of the Gold Coast, General Gordon Guggisberg, and with him they discussed the state of the colony and what could be done to improve it. Aggrey was struck by desire to return to his native land and bring educational reform. Aggrey asked the governor, "Do you think I ought to come and help my people?" The governor replied "In what way?" To which Aggrey responded, "In any way, sir, in any place where your Excellency is, I would come, for I am sure you would help me."¹⁸ In fact, when this teamwork is actually manifested in the establishment of the Gold Coast school, Achimota, it is Guggisberg who calls upon Aggrey.

In 1921 the commission separated to spread the distribution of their services. Aggrey and Dr. Hollenbeck, a former missionary from Angola, went inland and to Southern Africa, and the others stayed near the West coast. Aggrey took every opportunity to preach to Africans and Europeans alike. Everywhere he went he was held in high regard and constantly had to deny bids requesting his permanent residency. Before returning to America, Aggrey made a stop in England to speak at the Summer Conference of the Student Christian Movement at Swanwick. The students took to him very strongly, impressed by his candor and intellect.¹⁹ After about one year of travel, the first Phelps-Stokes Committee had completed its fieldwork, and Aggrey and the others returned to America.

Back in America, Aggrey immediately resumed his studies at Columbia University, where the Phelps-Stokes fund financed his studies. He had taken a leave of absence from Livingstone College, and had resigned from his pastoral duties on joining the commission. The Phelps-Stokes fund assisted him financially through 1923, and through all the curricular requirements for a PhD (he only needed to complete his dissertation to obtain the coveted PhD.). His success with the Phelps-Stokes Commission awarded Aggrey many opportunities he would not have otherwise had and made him elite company

¹⁸ Ofosu-Appiah, 49.

¹⁹ Ibid, 184.

among white and black men alike. Throughout this stay in America (1921 to 1923), Aggrey was invited to various events and chosen to speak at a variety of conventions. Most of his speeches regarded Christianity and racial equality, but not radicalism. More so, he supported the gradual advancement of the black race through cooperation of the races. He refused to pit one race against the other, and endorsed cooperation as the most effective means to a harmonious coexistence.²⁰

The flaws of education in Africa and America were exposed by the findings of the first Phelps-Stokes Commission - a movement developed to correct these flaws. It became widely believed that the colonial governments and the missionary societies needed to reform education in the African colonies to fit the actual needs of the Africans.²¹ With this new enlightenment on education, a demand for a second Phelps-Stokes fund was raised to do further research in different parts of Africa. The second Phelps-Stokes Commission would focus on East Africa, and be conducted in the same manner as the first, which had focused on South and West Africa. The commission, and Aggrey, arrived in Africa in January of 1924. Again, Aggrey met a warm welcome by his fellow Africans. Although many Europeans respected him, some were resentful of Aggrey and the efforts of the commission. Aggrey, being the only African member, was often the victim of discrimination.²² On many occasions he was denied proper food and proper shelter, and subjected to other forms of discrimination. The animosity toward Aggrey from these Europeans was overshadowed, however, by the large-scale acceptance of him by the missionaries, Africans, and many Europeans. Aggrey was invited to speak at dozens of churches and events, and was welcomed by large and eager crowds. In June of 1924 Aggrey completed his work on the Second Phelps-Stokes Commission and returned to America. Dr. Anson Phelps-Stokes wrote of Aggrey, "each officer and member of the commission made his important contribution to its conclusions - and none more so than Mr. Aggrey...whose humor, sanity, eloquence, knowledge of Native psychology, through training in education and sociology, and high Christian purpose, all proved assets of great importance, especially in dealing wisely and constructively with the complicated problems due to racial differences."²³ Aggrey's stay in America did not last long, however. He was immediately summoned back to the Gold Coast to be a part of the establishment of an institution that would change education in the Gold Coast forever. This

²⁰ Ibid, 165.

²¹ Ibid, 203.

²² Godfrey Brown, "British Educational policy in West and Central Africa." *The Journal of Modern Studies* vol. 2, no. 3 (Nov. 1964), 365-377.

²³ Smith, 221.

institution was Achimota, a school for Africans that provided the natives of the Gold Coast with an opportunity for higher education. Aggrey's involvement in the school was significant, and the influence of the school in the educational development of the Africans was great.

Achimota

Traditional education (before Achimota was founded) in Ghana was poorly organized and insufficient, hindered by its focus on the advancement of Christianity over education. There were many Wesleyan Missions schools and Church of England schools sporadically scattered throughout the Gold Coast. Traditional missionary education in the Gold Coast focused on the "Three R's" and agricultural and manual training. A benefit to this type of education was its usefulness in the production of crops such as cocoa, which was the primary cash crop in the Gold Coast and responsible for a large amount of the areas prosperity. Its production was fueled by the natives traditional system of land tenure. This system was refined by agricultural education. A major downfall of the education offered by the mission schools was that it failed to address any type of character training that was necessary for the development of leadership. If the natives decided to further pursue education, they enrolled in a Primary or Secondary schools. Primary and Secondary schools taught utilitarianism (promoting usefulness over anything else), which produced wage earners (clerks and typists) in a predominately agricultural society.²⁴ Like the mission schools, these schools did little to promote any type of social advancement or leadership for the natives.

It was obvious to both the Africans and the colonial governments that the education was inadequate and needed reform. Sir Gordon Guggisberg, the British Governor of the Gold Coast, recognized the problems in education as well as anyone. He knew he had to find an answer to the pressures for higher education by the Africans, and it would come with the founding of a school named Achimota. Guggisberg, although he was a governor in the colonial system, believed Africans were capable of self-government, and dedicated himself to advocacy of African progress.²⁵ It was his faith in African capabilities and his ability to overcome color prejudice that led him to appropriate such a large amount of government funds on the founding of Achimota. His dedication to this cause frightened other colonial governments who did not support African political autonomy and who saw agriculturally based education as a way to avoid this.²⁶ Although

²⁴ Agbodeka, 5.

²⁵ Ibid, 23.

²⁶ Ibid, 22.

Achimota was supposed to train the Africans for self-government, Guggisberg did not expect this to happen immediately. At this point in time, the Africans were firmly institutionalized in society as agricultural workers, and Guggisberg saw the first step in the movement toward African progress as the education of this class. For this reason, he opted to retain agricultural education in Achimota, but combine it with academic education as well as character training to satisfy the demands of the Africans for higher education. The school was to be modeled after the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes of education in America.

In 1923, architects broke ground on a site about two kilometers east of the city of Achimota in the Gold Coast. This site was to be the school Achimota. In all, Achimota cost about 600,000 pounds to build.²⁷ Annual government spending on education in the Gold Coast was only around 38,000 pounds before 1923.²⁸ Guggisberg's next job was to assemble a staff that would be best suited to run the school. Potential staff members would need to have good leadership skills, be well educated, and most importantly, share the ideals and goals that the school was to be based on. There were three main goals, set by the founders, which Achimota was to promote: (1) character building and sense of community for effective national leadership, (2) Agriculture through educational adaptation for national economic development, and (3) Scientific attitude for a fuller life in the modern world.²⁹ Guggisberg appointed Alexander Garden Fraser and J.E.K. Aggrey principal and vice-principal respectively. Fraser was a missionary to Uganda and one of the few Europeans of his time who did not believe in African inferiority. Guggisberg's decision to recruit Aggrey was partly due to influence from Fraser, who was a good friend of Aggrey, and also because of Aggrey's ability to pacify the attitudes of those opposed to black progress by his stance of cooperation and his recognition of the benefits of agricultural education.

Achimota is a *Ga* which means, "Do not mention the name."³⁰ The founders of Achimota may have chosen this name because of the history of its location. In the era of slavery, the city of Achimota was the last possible place of escape for would-be slaves before they were shipped out of Africa. The name Achimota, then, implies a taboo that should be put on something as significant as the final bit of hope for prospective slaves. Another interpretation of the name is developed to fit into the

²⁷ Jackson Davis, "Education in British West Africa." *Journal of Negro Education* vol. 15, no. 3 (summer 1946), 358-369, 362.

²⁸ Agbodeka, 11.

²⁹ Ibid, v.

³⁰ Ibid, 44.

cooperation theme that the school is based on. This interpretation is that "Do not mention the name" promoted cooperation by discouraging people from mentioning peoples' specific names, in order to prevent distinctions between people from arising. If students or faculty received different amounts of attention, a hierarchy would arise within the school, which would make cooperation much more difficult.³¹

One aim of Achimota was to produce a student that was "Western" (having a respect for science and tendency toward systematic thought) in his intellectual attitude toward life, but at the same time respecting and developing traditional African customs.³² The Western influence was already strong in Africa, due to the involvement of the European governments in the lives of the Africans and the work of the missions, but Achimota was to expand on the classical Western educational base by also giving attention to the development of traditional African customs. The development of the traditional African customs could be directly related toward the development of character and African self-government. Only Africans can develop African customs, and if Achimota was to truly develop African customs, it would have to train the Africans to be more self-dependant and expressive. Achimota based curriculum around the education of the three H's: the hand, the head, and the heart.³³ Education of the hand, head, and heart was a concept first introduced by Booker T. Washington relating to the Tuskegee Institute, but because of the overwhelming similarities between Tuskegee and Achimota, it applied to Achimota as well. Education of the hand was the agricultural education carried over from the mission schools to Achimota. The Europeans saw this as a way to institutionalize the Africans as a class of industrial workers, where they would not threaten European domination in government and politics. Guggisberg supported this type of education because he believed that a successful agricultural program would be a break through in the economic development of the Gold Coast.³⁴ Education of the head was the addition of academically oriented curriculum to an education system based mainly on non-academic curriculum. This satisfied the Africans' demands for higher education. Finally, education of the heart was, to the Europeans, education based around Christianity. An alternative meaning to education of the heart could be education that helped develop the Africans' character and culture. Achimota confirmed its position as the most educationally advanced institution available to Africans in

³¹ Agbodeka, 44.

³² Ibid, 32.

³³ Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery an Autobiography* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1963), 60.

³⁴ Agbodeka, 34.

the Gold Coast, because no other institution at this time was better equipped, more conducive to learning, or offered such a wide range of opportunities.³⁵ Achimota combined the Africans' need for higher education, the European insistence on agricultural education, and the traditional mission focus of education based around Christianity.

After his dream of a school for higher education in the Gold Coast had been fulfilled with the establishment of Achimota, Aggrey turned his attention to the writing of his dissertation and his acquirement of a PhD from Columbia University.³⁶ In 1926 Aggrey was granted a short leave of absence from his duties at Achimota to focus on the project. Aggrey aspired to write about his beliefs on cooperation between blacks and whites. He wanted to analyze the mistakes of the Europeans while not slandering them, and also expose the African mindset on European rule.³⁷ Aggrey split his time between working on the dissertation and preaching in Africa, Europe, and America. All the traveling and busywork made Aggrey very tired.³⁸

In June of 1927 Aggrey traveled to America from London to visit his family and friends in Salisbury, North Carolina. He visited with them for about one month before he was summoned to New York to speak at a meeting in Mother Zion Church and to an audience of teachers at Columbia. While in New York, tragedy struck. On July 30 Aggrey fell sick with pneumococcus meningitis, and he died soon afterwards.³⁹ His death was unexpected and came as a shock to all who knew of him. News of the tragedy dampened spirits all around the world, but no place was more affected than the Gold Coast. About 800 guests attended a memorial service held at Achimota, and many tributes were paid to the great man. "We cannot fill his place," was spoken by Mr. Casely Hayford and thought by all who knew him.⁴⁰ Upon Aggrey's death, Governor Guggisberg stated, "As regards Dr. Aggrey, you can trust him absolutely."⁴¹ This was such a relevant statement to Aggrey's life that it was suggested that it become the epitaph for Aggrey's tomb. Aggrey was never able to finish his dissertation.

Cooperation for True Harmony

The hidden goal behind the advancement of African education for the African people was their progression toward

³⁵ Agbodeka, 81-82.

³⁶ Ofosu-Appiah, 96.

³⁷ Smith, 271.

³⁸ Ofosu-Appiah, 97.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 98.

⁴¹ Ibid.

equality. Insufficient education was one form of oppression by the Europeans, and any advancement in African education was such a progression. The widely offered agriculturally based education prevented Africans from getting jobs outside of a low social class. Without further education, the Africans would be obligated to take only jobs that kept them inferior. When J.E.K. Aggrey had returned to the Gold Coast with the first Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1919, he was educated, charismatic, and in some senses, equal. Aggrey was well aware of the Africans' desire for higher education, and he was in a position to improve education for his fellow Africans. Aggrey was able to be in this position because he was greatly respected and trusted by many European people of power. He was respected because of his educational background and his alluring personality, and he was trusted because he believed that more development of race would be made through cooperation with white people than through confrontation with them.⁴² One of Aggrey's favorite quotes relates to the benefits of cooperation. "You can play a tune of sorts on the white keys (of a piano), and you can play a tune of sorts on the black keys, but for true harmony you must use both black and white."⁴³ While the colonizers were concerned with maintaining black subordination, the Africans were pushing for educational progression. In the midst of this conflict of interests Aggrey arose as a bridge between the two sides. He endorsed any type of education as a vessel toward progress. Aggrey preached to the Africans this passage from the Bible, "And the Lord said to him, what is that in thine hand? And he said, a rod. And the Lord said, cast it on the ground."⁴⁴ Aggrey's interpretation to the Africans was, "What have you in your hand? Your land. What are you making of it? Why does it not grow anymore? The land that grows things for a white man will also grow things for a black man."⁴⁵ Aggrey wanted his fellow Africans to know that if they used what the Lord had given them, they would prosper. It would benefit them more to make the most of what they had than to be unsatisfied and concentrate on what they wished to have. Through parables like this, Aggrey was able to open the natives' eyes to the value of their land. Their land was not merely land; it was the base component in the quest for African prosperity. Acceptance of the agricultural education offered by the whites attributed to the development of the land and therefore the increase of prosperity. This idea motivated Africans to work and be grateful for agricultural education.

⁴² Agbodeka, 29.

⁴³ Smith, 123.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 179.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Because of Aggrey's toleration for agricultural education, some people, such as W.E.B. DuBois, deemed Aggrey's support of this type of education as too passive or even submissive.⁴⁶ DuBois was considered a "radical" in his campaign for racial equality, and was opposed to Booker T. Washington and J.E.K. Aggrey's style of cooperation.⁴⁷ He wanted full educational and professional parity between races, and avidly argued against industrial and agricultural education.⁴⁸ He believed that the idea of education supported by Aggrey and Achimota suggested racial discrimination in the sense that blacks needed a separate education, and the stress on agricultural education suggested that Negroes would remain at a low social level. W.E.B. DuBois eventually became a key player in the founding of the NAACP, which directly challenged racism and segregation in America, partly through the courts. However, Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish author of *An American Delimma*, implied in his book that the tactics of the NAACP to combat racism suggested they also had a fear that too aggressive of an attack would have resulted in regress instead of progress, and that was the reason for the small-scale aim of their initial lawsuits that challenged segregation.⁴⁹ Even DuBois' NAACP was aware of the handicaps of direct and aggressive confrontation. And in fact, many of the African Americans involved or associated with the NAACP challenge on segregation were fired from their jobs, targeted as victims of violence, and victims of generally escalated discrimination, especially in the beginning stages of the attack on segregation. Aggrey's cooperation based strategy was aimed at generating the same results as DuBois', but without these derogatory side effects.

The Booker T. Washington of Africa

J.E.K. Aggrey is comparable on many levels to Booker T. Washington. Aggrey's attitude toward race relations was strongly influenced by Washington's, because Aggrey saw Washington as a black man who had succeeded in a white establishment.⁵⁰ Washington was an African American born into slavery who succeeded in bringing educational reform to his fellow African Americans. Washington once said, "I felt that I had reached the Promised Land (Hampton), and I resolved to let no obstacle prevent me from putting forth the highest effort to fit myself to

⁴⁶ Agbodeka, 30.

⁴⁷ Gerald C. Hynes, <http://www.duboislc.org/html/DuBoisBio.html> accessed 2/20/2005.

⁴⁸ Kenneth King, "Africa and the Southern States of the U.S.A.: Notes on J. H. Oldham and American Negro Education for Africans." *The Journal of African History* vol. 10, no. 4 (1969), 660.

⁴⁹ Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice: The History of Brown vs. the Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality* (Vintage Books, 2004), 255.

⁵⁰ Agbodeka, 31.

accomplish the most in the good world.”⁵¹ This statement mirrors Aggrey’s relentless pursuit of education. Washington was educated at the Hampton Institute in Virginia. The Hampton Institute was an industrial school of education for African Americans, established in 1868 by General Samuel C. Armstrong, who was the commander of the Ninth U.S. Colored Troops during the Civil War.⁵² It was Hampton that Achimota was constructed around, so the two schools were very similar, especially in the manner of education that they offered. After graduating from Hampton, Washington taught at a nearby colored school and eventually opened a night school at Hampton. In 1881 some white men in Tuskegee, Alabama began plans for a school of colored education. The men asked Samuel Armstrong to recommend a suitable person to take charge of the school. Armstrong recommended Booker T. Washington, partly because of his education and character. Another reason, however, was that similar to Aggrey, Washington had a tendency to seek progress by working with the whites and not directly challenging the racial hierarchy established by them in America. Washington took the job in Alabama and helped establish a school named Tuskegee. Tuskegee had, similar to Hampton and Achimota, an agriculturally based educational system. Washington believed in the education of the hand, as well as the head, and the heart. Aggrey also saw importance in the development of all three of these aspects. Aggrey once said, “By education, I do not simply mean learning. I mean the training in minds, morals, and in hand that helps make one socially efficient.”⁵³ Both Aggrey and Washington believed that Blacks should value their training as skilled workers, and through their diligence gain the respect of the whites, which would lead to harmonious co-existence between the races. Washington said, “The individual who can do something that the world wants done will, in the end, make his way regardless of race.”⁵⁴ Aggrey would strongly agree with this statement.

Like Booker T. Washington, J.E.K. Aggrey was not only a relentless pursuer of higher education himself, but also he felt that it was his personal responsibility to bring educational reform to his race. Though often throughout the long road of reform this responsibility was more of a burden than a blessing, Aggrey kept focus on the goal of educational reform and, subliminally, the advancement of the black race. Achimota was Aggrey’s greatest objective accomplishment. Even though some criticized it, it satisfied the hunger for higher education by the Africans, and

⁵¹ Washington, 36.

⁵² The Snuff Works Design, www.swcivilwar.com/russellresearchproject.html Accessed 11/15/2003.

⁵³ Jacobs, 47.

⁵⁴ Washington, 125.

opened the door for subsequent progression in the African education sector. Aggrey's impact was even greater subjectively, however as he was responsible for a new attitude among the Africans toward racial equality, and provided a precedent paving the way for African success. The attitude that Aggrey was such an advocate of was one driven by cooperation instead of handicapped by the faults of confrontation. Patterns developed and goals accomplished in Aggrey's life make him a liberator of the hearts and minds of the African people. He set the Africans free from the oppression of insufficient education and replaced the notion of African inferiority with hope for racial equality.

opened the door for subsequent...
 education system. Aggrey...
 however, as he was responsible...
 Africans toward racial equality...
 the way for African nations...
 advance of was one of the...
 by the failure of colonial...
 accomplished in Africa...
 and minds of the African people...
 expression of individual...
 African individuality with... the people of Africa.

Convenient Amnesia: Governmental Manipulation of War Memory in the United States and Japan

CHRISTIEN OLIVER

DURING TIMES OF WAR atrocities are unfortunately common. In the aftermath of war, victims of these atrocities can only hope for reparations and that the heinous acts committed against them will be neither forgotten nor repeated. Because acknowledging responsibility and issuing reparations have negative economic and political implications for the responsible party, the central governments of Japan and the United States have actively evaded responsibility for the atrocities committed by their respective militaries in the 1930s and 1940s. To this end, both governments have manipulated war memory by altering the portrayal of these acts in historical texts and museum exhibitions.

The 1930s and 1940s were hostile times for both the United States and Japan as the Sino-Japanese War began to merge into World War II. During this violent conflict, Japanese and Chinese forces vied for control over the Chinese mainland. In December of 1937 China's former capital, Nanking, fell to the Japanese Imperial Army. In this epic invasion, which is aptly referred to as the "Rape of Nanking", Japanese forces slaughtered and raped thousands of Chinese. In addition, the Japanese kidnapped and coerced thousands of women from East Asia into becoming prostitutes (known as comfort women) for their military brothels.

On August 6, 1945 the United States left an indelible mark on world history by becoming the first country to use a nuclear weapon. Hundreds of thousands of casualties resulted from the atomic bombs the United States military dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Although the atomic bomb caused the Japanese to surrender immediately, scholars have questioned whether atomic warfare was necessary to end the Pacific War, as other viable options are known to have been available to President Truman. Unfortunately, the explanations offered by United States officials regarding this matter fail to acknowledge that President Truman could have avoided using this weapon by pursuing feasible alternatives such as diplomacy or Soviet intervention. In even bolder fashion, the Japanese central government has accepted as

¹ Helen Durham and Bebe Loff, "Japan's Comfort Women," *The Lancet*, (2001), 302.

little responsibility for the Rape of Nanking and their military's comfort women as possible, despite a wealth of evidence indicating Japanese culpability for these acts. The most troubling aspect of manipulation of history by the American and Japanese governments is that this incomplete history is reproduced in textbooks and museums; thus, the public becomes misinformed.

As was hoped, Truman's decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki resulted in the prompt unconditional surrender of the Japanese on August 14, 1945. However, this victory came at a significant cost, as the death toll attributed to the use of atomic weaponry at Hiroshima and Nagasaki has been estimated to be as high as 300,000 individuals. In addition to killing a phenomenal number of people, the victims of Nagasaki and Hiroshima developed long-term health problems—including cancer, severe anemia, cataracts, sterility in both sexes, and mental retardation—resulting from exposure to the radiation released from the atomic bombs. President Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb to end the Pacific war becomes all the more controversial when its catastrophic effects are paired with the fact that Truman had viable alternatives to atomic warfare.

J. Samuel Walker writes that the alternatives to atomic warfare that were available to United States policymakers included “demonstrating the bomb in an isolated location, modifying the unconditional surrender demand, exploring the initiatives of Japanese peace feelers, waiting for Soviet entry into the Asian war, or continuing the naval blockade and intensifying conventional bombing.” Pursuit of these alternatives—as revisionists argue—could have possibly eliminated the hundreds of thousands of deaths caused by Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb.²

Unfortunately, important members of the Truman administration did not wish to face the censure that would have come with admitting the decision to drop the atomic bomb was made amidst other viable alternatives. In fact, Phillip Nobile has noted, “as the first of the group to propose a mixed military-civilian target [such as a city], James [Conant—former Harvard professor and previous member of the National Defense Research Committee—] may have been sensitive to the high negatives the bombings were getting among the university class.” In 1946, a year following the surrender of the Japanese, Norman Cousins wrote an editorial in *The Saturday Review*, a popular periodical at the time, “that called the bombing unnecessary and meant to intimidate the Soviets.” To combat the criticism the Truman administration was receiving and initiating the process of atomic

² Michael Hogan ed., *Hiroshima in History and Memory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 26.

bomb misinformation, Conant arranged for a favorable depiction of the reasoning behind the decision to use the atomic bomb to be published.³

"The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb" was published in the February 1947 edition of *Harper's*, an intellectual magazine, and it is representative of the tone the United States government would adopt on the decision to use the atomic bomb. Although the article was credited to President Truman's Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, the piece was heavily revised by James Conant and McGeorge Bundy (a former national security advisor and Stimson's assistant on the bomb). Phillip Nobile wrote that the article "was infiltrated with bright, shining untruths and gaping evasions" and asserted, that the obliteration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was "the least abhorrent choice" arrived at only after "a searching consideration of alternatives," in effort to combat criticism of Truman's decision.⁴ Furthermore, Stimson's article claimed that Truman's decision prevented "over a million U.S. casualties."⁵ Stimson's figure of one million casualties was utilized by President Truman to justify his claim that over 500,000 United States' soldier's lives were spared by his decision to use the atomic bomb. More importantly, Stimson and Truman's figures have "formed the basis for popular views of Truman's action and decisively influenced collective memory of the reasons for his decision."⁶ Unfortunately, these figures were gross exaggerations as many scholars have determined that American casualties would have been less than half the publicized number. This exaggeration only gives credence to the claims of revisionists who state that the Truman administration was attempting to cover up the fact that its decision to use the atomic bomb was questionable. In fact, McGeorge Bundy has written that, "whether broader and more extended deliberation would have yielded a less destructive result, we shall never know" and "one must regret that no such effort was made."⁷

Supporting Walker's assertion that false information in Stimson's article has formed the basis of popular views and influenced collective memory is the controversy that surrounded the Smithsonian's 50th Anniversary exhibit of the Enola Gay (the airplane that dropped the atomic bombs), which was to open in June of 1995. The Smithsonian's popular influence is unquestionable as it is often referred to as the "nation's attic" and

³ Phillip Nobile ed., *Judgment at the Smithsonian: The Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*, (New York: Marlowe and Company, 1995), xx.

⁴ Ibid, xxi.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Hogan, 189.

⁷ Ibid, 196.

is Washington's top tourist attraction.⁸ In addition to the Enola Gay, rare photographs and objects, which were to show the impact of the bombs on the people and buildings of ground zero, were to be exhibited. The most controversial aspect, however, was the exhibit's explanatory script. The museum's leadership knew that a script that posed "disturbing queries about Hiroshima and Nagasaki would reveal the vast carelessness of Truman and his men," and would put the Smithsonian in a compromising situation as the museum "depends on federal funding for more than 70 percent of its operating budget."⁹

As expected, the script elicited strong feelings as then-Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, commented that the exhibit represented "the enormous underlying pressure of the elite intelligentsia to be anti-American, to despise American culture and to espouse a set of values which are essentially destructive."¹⁰ Two of the most debated aspects of the script concerned the role of America as an aggressor in the Pacific War and the discrediting of Truman's figure of how many American soldiers would have been lost in an invasion. Soon after the first script was previewed in June of 1994, powerful groups such as the American Legion and Air Force Association, members of the House of Representatives, and a large portion of the reputable news media offered scathing reproach of the Smithsonian's attempt to depict United States involvement in the Pacific War in a questionable light. In the end, politics (and ignorance) prevailed as Michael Heyman, the Smithsonian's secretary, elected to display the Enola Gay without the complementary script, photos, artifacts, and videotapes. Heyman's justification was that "[America's veterans] were not looking for analysis and, frankly, we did not give enough thought to the intense feelings such analysis would evoke."¹¹ By attempting to appease the veterans, the Smithsonian lost a chance to enrich the consciousness of the American public. Supporting the fact that Stimson's sanitized account of the war was unhealthy for mass consumption, Heyman commented ironically, "that archival documents and artifacts have been removed from the exhibit under political pressure is an intellectual corruption," before he himself gave in to political pressure and changed the Enola Gay exhibit.¹²

American secondary school and college textbooks also work to perpetuate the popular misconceptions Stimson established about the United States involvement in the Pacific War. J. Samuel Walker has written that American textbooks

⁸ Nobile, xxiii.

⁹ Ibid, xxviii.

¹⁰ Ibid, xxix.

¹¹ Ibid, xliii.

¹² Ibid, xxxix.

provide information that “generally gives an impression that Truman and his advisers would hardly find objectionable,” and they would “probably have pleased [James] Conant, who urged Stimson to write his article as a way to preempt ‘sentimentalism’ that might show up among school teachers.” Most modern American textbooks give the false impression that Truman had to choose between a costly invasion and the atomic bomb. Disappointingly, textbook content does not get better at the collegiate level as “many college textbooks perpetuate the same myths and simplifications as leading secondary school texts.” Another common misrepresentation found in American textbooks is that Truman made his decision after long and careful consideration. McGeorge Bundy, Stimson’s assistant, has written that this was not the case.¹³ The inaccuracies present in American textbooks have been attributed to the federal government’s attempts to “foster patriotism and ensure loyalty” at the cost of “poorly informed” collective memory.¹⁴

Although nothing can compare to the responsibility the American government bears for being the first and only country to use a nuclear weapon against a population, the atrocities committed by the Japanese Imperial Army during the Sino-Japanese War and World War II are just as significant. During the Rape of Nanking Japanese forces engaged in killing contests, torture, and rape of Chinese civilians and unarmed soldiers. The death toll has been estimated at 200,000—a number that is extremely close to that of the casualties of Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined.¹⁵ To satisfy the sexual desires of Japanese soldiers after the mass rapes that took place during the invasion of Nanking the Japanese military instituted a system of military brothels. To staff these brothels Chinese, Korean, Dutch, Indonesian, and Filipino women of all ages were coerced and kidnapped. In the brothels, which were called “comfort stations,” these women were required to have sex with dozens of men daily. The psychological effects of this incident are abundant and tragic. Most prominent among them is the fact that many former comfort women have found themselves too ashamed to marry as the injuries they sustained while working as comfort women have rendered them unable to bear children. While the United States government has successfully manipulated American war memory, factions within their Japanese counterpart have attempted to eliminate Japanese responsibility for acts such as the Nanking Massacre and “comfort stations” by acknowledging them simply as an externality of war.

¹³ Hogan, 196.

¹⁴ Ibid, 187-99.

¹⁵ Joshua Fogel ed., *The Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography*, (Santa Barbara: University of California Press, 2000), 147.

The Japanese government's manipulation of history, in attempt to eliminate Japanese culpability in the Pacific War, is best explained in the "Resolution to Renew the Determination for Peace on the Basis of Lessons Learned from History," which was adopted by Japan's National Diet on June 9 of 1995. Ryuji Mukae writes that this resolution "was the first of its kind that explicitly expressed the Japanese's Parliament's view of Japan's actions before and during World War Two."¹⁶ An excerpt of the final resolution reads:

This house offers its sincere condolences to those who fell in action and victims of wars...Solemnly reflecting upon many instances of colonial rule and acts of aggression in the modern history of the world, and recognizing that Japan carried out those acts in the past, inflicting pain and suffering upon the peoples of other countries, especially in Asia, the Members of this house express a deep sense of remorse.¹⁷

In the article, Ryuji highlights the fact that while words like "colonial rule" and "acts of aggression" are used, the atrocities committed by the Japanese military are rationalized because they must be considered in the broader context of other atrocities committed in modern history. Also, the resolution "only expressed *hansei* (self-reflection or remorse) rather than *shazai* or *owabi* (apology)."¹⁸ Revealing the inadequacy of this resolution is the fact that not only did China and Korea (the main victims of Japanese war atrocities) criticize the resolution, but the Japanese public also expressed their discontent with the decree. The public was particularly unhappy with the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party who succeeded in "watering down" the content of the original resolution.¹⁹ The controversy over this resolution, paired with the fact that Japanese scholars, such as Higashinakano Osamichi, have attempted to "prove that the Nanking Massacre is a latter day fabrication," reveals the perilous state of war memory in Japan.²⁰

The museum of military history that has recently been added to Japan's Yasukuni shrine is a strong indicator of war memory in the country. *New York Times* journalist Howard French writes, in the cleverly titled "At a Military Museum, the

¹⁶ Mukae Ryuji, "Japan's Diet Resolution on World War Two: Keeping History at Bay" in *Asian Survey* 36, (1996), 1011.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 1012.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 1011.

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

²⁰ Fogel, 147.

Losers Write History," that "the infamous Rape of Nanjing...becomes the Nanjing Incident" despite the fact that "international historians say Japan massacred 100,000 to 300,000 Chinese in December 1937."²¹ The article also states that in addition to commemorating the country's 2.5 million war dead, 14 war criminals are also memorialized. Perhaps the statement in the article that is most indicative of the state of Japanese war memory can be attributed to Taro Nagae, a historian and editor of the museum's exhibits. He stated, "[t]he debate over what really happened is still under way" when asked about why there is no mention of comfort women or Japan's infamous biological warfare outfit—Unit 731—in any of the museum's displays.²² The fact that this museum fails to acknowledge any of Japan's war crimes reflects the Japanese government's continuing reticence to accept responsibility for the atrocities committed by its military. As discussed earlier with regard to the United States, governmental manipulation of war history is reflected in both Japanese museums and textbooks.

Textbooks in Japan have been a significant source of controversy because they have consistently failed to provide an accurate portrayal of history, specifically in regard to atrocities committed by Japan. The deficiencies of Japanese textbooks are explained to be the result of censorship as the Japanese Ministry of Education has utilized rules against "historical inaccuracies" to "limit coverage of embarrassing aspects of Japan's past and been the bane of the Japanese left." Also significant is the fact that Japanese textbook companies "have performed a degree of self-censorship in hope of minimizing revision costs." While Japanese textbooks do not contain blatant lies or outright factual errors, they utilize manipulation of font, wording, and page layout to emphasize and minimize certain aspects of the nation's history. For example, a conservative textbook titled *Yamakawa*, published in 1999, limits its coverage of the Rape of Nanjing to a footnote that reads "this time [after the occupation of Nanking], the Japanese military slaughtered many Chinese people including non-combatants, and, after the war it became a major problem at the Tokyo Trials (Nanjing Incident) (emphasis in original)." The pedagogical influence is clear as the phrasing, text placement (footnote), and character font (bold print of Nanjing Incident) all act to minimize Japanese culpability. The connection between Japanese textbooks and the Japanese government has been explained as "what the [Ministry of Education's authorization]

²¹ Howard French, "At a Military Museum, the Losers Write History," *New York Times*, 2002, A4.

²² Ibid.

committee has approved gives a partial picture of the changes in the sentiment of the Japanese bureaucracy over time.”²³

A nation's government can have enormous influence over a country's war memory. In the case of the United States, the ideas expressed in “The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb,” which was credited to Truman's Secretary of War, have shaped American war memory. This inaccurate portrayal of Truman's decision has been reproduced in the nation's museums and textbooks. The Japanese government is also at fault, as their bureaucracy has created a political environment in which the existence of Japanese war atrocities has become debatable. Just as in the United States, Japan's museum of military history and textbooks reflect the historical ambiguity of the nation's government. At the cost of intellectual corruption, the Japanese and American governments have attempted to foster patriotism and nationalist sentiment. This intellectual sacrifice is extremely problematic as Edward Sorel, a graphic artist noted for his political consciousness, has noted that “the inability of super-patriots to criticize the deplorable acts of their own country should be regarded...as a case of arrested development.”²⁴

²³ Robert Fish, *From The Manchurian Incident to Nagasaki in 20 Pages: The Pacific War as Seen in Postwar Japanese High School History Textbooks*, (2000), 1-37.

²⁴ Nobile, lxxxii.

“...Its ill-fated road to self-destruct...”
 Factors That Led to the Demise of Students for
 a Democratic Society

EMILY SMITH

THE 1960S WAS a time of great reform in the United States. The decade experienced numerous reform movements, through which citizens protested discrimination, war, inequality, and poverty. Oftentimes, the protests led to change. One way in which Americans participated in protest was by involving themselves with an organization or group that focused on reform. Such organizations helped further individual causes and involve large segments of society in the protests for change. As Paul Booth said in 1965, “I think real social change comes only when people get organized. Real change doesn’t come from bureaucratic, liberal institutions, or from legislatures. Laws always get passed, but the poor are still poor.”¹

College students quickly became one of the most vocal and prominent groups dedicated to reform, and their influence on society in the 1960s and 1970s cannot be denied. One of the most important student reform organizations of the 1960s was Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). However, despite their involvement in the reforms of the 1960s, the organization was afflicted with many internal and external problems that led to its eventual collapse into separate factions: the Weathermen and the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) in the summer of 1969. This essay will examine both the internal and external problems that plagued SDS throughout its existence and show how these problems led to the demise of the organization.

When considering the concept of reform in a democratic polity, there are certain questions and issues that must be raised. These issues and questions include: where ideas about reform originate; why society feels reform is necessary; how a society decides to go about reform, and how different groups in society develop different ideas about the nature of the problem and the correct reforms to undertake. These issues can be examined throughout the history of the SDS organization, and the evolution of SDS can be seen in the answers to these questions and issues. In addition, one can see through the examination of an individual

¹ Paul Booth, *The Oakland Project*, (1965), quoted in *Students for a Democratic Society, SDS Report*, (1968), 28.

SDS chapter how the problems that plagued a particular campus were the same problems plaguing the National Office. Michigan State University was home to one of the hundreds of SDS chapters, and its experiences provide a representative example of the problems SDS experienced nationally.

From the very beginning, Students for a Democratic Society was dedicated to a multi-issue campaign, because the early leaders of SDS felt that the issues in society that needed reform were interconnected by war, discrimination, and poverty.² SDS strongly opposed the war in Vietnam, struggled to end discrimination and segregation, worked to end poverty, and fought tirelessly to make America a "participatory democracy." At its peak, SDS had approximately 100,000 members in over 400 chapters on college campuses across the United States.³ Obviously, many American students embraced the vision and goals of SDS. However, despite the popularity among students and its status among Americans, SDS did not survive long enough to accomplish its many goals.

Students for a Democratic Society had its roots in SLID (The Student League for Industrial Democracy), whose parent organization was LID, the League for Industrial Democracy. LID was a radical organization dating back to 1905. Among its early founders were Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and Clarence Darrow.⁴ In the early 1960s, members of SLID felt the beginning of a new restlessness on college campuses. Leaders of SLID decided that it was time to change its name to reflect a more broad and aggressive reform agenda in the hopes of reaching more students. Eventually, the name "Students for a Democratic Society" was chosen; "it was dignified without being stuffy, explicit without being precise, and it had the ring of freshness."⁵

The 1962 SDS National Convention was seen as the beginning of the newly established organization where the important idea for a reform movement led by American college students originated. According to SDS records, fifty-nine people attended the convention in Port Huron, Michigan. Many of the students were representatives from SDS chapters on college campuses across the United States, but some were associated with similar reform groups, such as SNCC, CORE, and the NAACP.⁶ One important action taken by the members at the National

² *Rebels with a Cause: Voices of Students for a Democratic Society*, prod. and dir. Helen Garvy, 1 hr. 50 min. Zeitgeist Films, 2000. Videocassette.

³ Garvy.

⁴ David Burner, *Making Peace with the Sixties* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 151.

⁵ Kirkpatrick Sale. *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), 17.

⁶ Sale, 23.

Convention was the adoption of the SDS constitution. The preamble of the constitution reads:

Students for a Democratic Society is an association of young people on the left...it maintains a vision of a democratic society, where at all levels the people have control of the decisions which affect them and the resources on which they are dependant. It seeks a relevance through the continual focus on realities and on the programs necessary to effect change at the most basic levels of economic, political, and social organization.⁷

The preamble espoused the most basic function of SDS: to reform the nation at the most fundamental levels and to establish a society in which individuals had control over their own decisions (a concept that became known as "participatory democracy", an idea central to SDS). However, the June 1962 convention is better known for another document, the Port Huron Statement. The Port Huron Statement was a resounding manifesto designed to convince American college students of the need for political, social, and economic change. A large number of college students were unhappy with the state of the world, and they realized that they were soon going to inherit the problems of their parents' generation.

A question that must be addressed when considering the concept of reform within a society is where ideas for reform originate. The Port Huron Statement gave an excellent background to the kinds of issues SDS members were seeing, and the reasons they felt change was necessary. The Statement asserts that

As we grew...our comfort was penetrated by events too troubling to dismiss. First, the permeating and victimizing fact of human degradation, symbolized by the Southern struggle against racial bigotry...Second, the enclosing fact of the Cold War...brought awareness that we ourselves, and our friends...might die at any time.⁸

⁷ Students for a Democratic Society, *SDS constitution* (New York: Students for a Democratic Society, 1962), 1. Michigan State University Library Special Collections, ARVF: *Students for a Democratic Society*.

⁸ Students for a Democratic Society, *Port Huron Statement* (New York: Students for a Democratic Society, 1964), 3. Michigan State University Special Collections, ARVF: *SDS Pamphlets: Port Huron Statement: file of pamphlets, excerpts, clippings*.

In addition, the Port Huron Statement examined disturbing paradoxes students noticed in America.

The declaration "all men are created equal..." rang hollow before the facts of Negro life in the South and the big cities in the North. The proclaimed peaceful intentions of the United States contradicted its economic and military investments in the Cold War status quo.⁹

Learning how a society decides to reform its practices is an important step in understanding how reform works as a concept within a democratic polity. In the case of The Movement of the 1960s, many Americans chose to involve themselves in demonstrations and protests to declare their beliefs about what reforms should be undertaken. At its beginning, SDS was no exception. Largely a protest organization, SDS was involved in the first teach-in at the University of Michigan,¹⁰ and the march on Washington in the spring of 1965, in which approximately 25,000 people took part in the largest peace march in history (up to that time) to protest the Vietnam War.¹¹

However, as the 1960s progressed, SDS (and many other reform organizations) experienced an evolution in its practices. In 1964-1965, SDS underwent a leftward shift and became more of a resistance organization. The anti-draft stance SDS took in the mid-1960s is one example of the ways in which the organization encouraged resistance. SDS worked extremely hard to educate American college students on the draft and the Selective Service, and encouraged young men to make the difficult personal and political decision to resist the draft.¹² The last stage of SDS- the stage in place during the disbandment of the organization- was the revolution stage, present from approximately 1968 on.¹³ In the revolutionary phase, "teach-ins and silent vigils gave way to the seizure of campus buildings and disruptive street demonstrations."¹⁴ This phase of SDS included the Columbia uprising in March of 1968, which was possibly the most well known SDS act in its history. Five buildings on Columbia's campus were seized by radical students; after five days, the police intervened and arrested 712 individuals. One hundred forty-eight

⁹ Students for a Democratic Society, *Port Huron Statement*, 3.

¹⁰ Sale, 183-84.

¹¹ Sale, 185-86.

¹² Sale, 229.

¹³ Sale, 457.

¹⁴ Maurice Isserman, Michael Kazin, "The Failure and Success of New Radicalism", in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*, ed. Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 213.

people were injured, and Columbia was hit with a strike for the remainder of the semester.¹⁵ This evolution- from protest to resistance to revolution-can be held partly to blame for the disintegration of SDS in 1969 into two factions, the Weatherman and the Progressive Labor Party, along with many other factors. This development is also an example of the ways society changes its reform practices as time passes and events change.

The final issue one must address when examining reform as a concept within society is how different groups develop different ideas about the nature of the problems and the appropriate reforms to undertake. In the 1960s, American college students were the most vocal group about the needs for reform in American society. For the first time, students held a distinct and commanding place in society. In 1960, there were more people below the age of twenty-five than ever before (27.2 million between fourteen and twenty-four); by 1970, that number had grown to forty million. In addition, young people made up a large portion of the nation's population: fifteen percent in 1960, and twenty percent in 1970.¹⁶ Furthermore, students were gathered together in large numbers more than ever before- universities housed 3,789,000 students in the beginning of the sixties. By the end of the decade, the number had risen to 7,852,000.¹⁷ These numbers provided SDS with a large base from which it could garner support and attract new members. In the end, the concern over how different groups develop different ideas about reform led to the final breakdown of SDS. Students for a Democratic Society collapsed partly because different people within the organization developed different sets of beliefs on the direction in which reforms should head. It was these distinctions, along with the many other factors, that led to the final split at the Chicago national convention in the summer of 1969.

In hindsight, members of SDS knew that a split was inevitable. One member, Jim Hawley, commented in an article in *Socialist Review* in 1987 that despite SDS membership being between 70,000 and 100,000 in 1968, the organization was "well along its ill-fated road to a factionalized and ideological self-destruct..."¹⁸ Another former SDS member, Michael Harrington, claimed that the organization failed because of its trouble dealing with its own success.¹⁹

¹⁵ John George, Laird Wilcox, *Nazis, Communists, Klansmen, and others on the fringe* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1996), 150.

¹⁶ Sale, 20.

¹⁷ Sale, 21.

¹⁸ "Port Huron: Agenda for a Generation," *Socialist Review* 17, no. 3-4 (May-Aug. 1987): 151.

¹⁹ "Port Huron: Agenda for a Generation", 157.

Although many looked back and realized that SDS was doomed to split, others more quickly realized the troubles SDS faced unless changes were implemented. Many saw the 1968 National Convention, held on Michigan State's campus in East Lansing, as the "beginning of the end" for SDS.²⁰ According to an article in *New Left Notes* written by SDS member Mike Klonsky directly after the East Lansing convention, "The national convention at East Lansing should be seen as being symptomatic of many of the real ills which SDS and the Student Left in general must correct if we are to survive the coming year."²¹ Despite the acknowledgement by some that SDS must change its tactics if it wished to endure into the 1970s, the organization did not solve its problems in time to prevent the eventual split in the summer of 1969.

External problems also plagued Students for a Democratic Society throughout its existence. One of the largest issues was the Vietnam War. In 1968, Americans elected Richard Nixon to the presidency. Soon after his election, Nixon began "Vietnamization", the process in which he slowly began to withdraw the U.S. troops from the country. However, Nixon was inconsistent, and he confused the Left. Although he started gradually bringing troops home and reducing draft calls, he also increased the bombing overseas, and in the spring of 1970, Nixon began sending American troops into Cambodia.²² These inconsistencies created problems for SDS and other protesters of the war.

Another external problem that SDS faced was, interestingly, its own possible membership. Although often referred to as the "silent majority," those students in opposition to SDS were often neither silent nor apathetic. A number of campus SDS chapters experienced problems with students who disagreed with the policies of SDS. On some campuses, organizations such as the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) were formed. Conservative students began to voice their opposition to the policies of SDS, and membership within groups such as YAF grew throughout the late 1960s. An article printed in the *New York Times* in October of 1969 explored the growing trend of college students embracing the conservative ideology and opposing SDS practices. The conservative student movement included mostly athletes, fraternity members, and lower and middle-class students. Whereas SDS attracted middle and upper class students who were "searching for meaning," YAF attracted students who were intent on studying, learning, and earning a college education and degree.

²⁰ George and Wilcox, 150.

²¹ Mike Klonsky, "The State of SDS," *New Left Notes*, 24 June 1968, 3.

²² Irwin Unger. *The Movement: A History of the American New Left, 1959-1972* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1974): 150.

Many conservative movement members were the first generation of their families to attend college, and they did not want to risk the great opportunity. However, the article explained that some students were not pro-conservative, but anti-radical. Many students were against the violent tactics of the student left. In the article, Willard G. Wyman, a special assistant to Stanford's president, stated that:

The left has simply turned off a lot of students and faculty, partly because of the faddishness of the whole movement. It's sort of like a fraternity now- it has this kind of closed off fraternal spirit, you know, the uniform, the hair, the language.²³

At Michigan State, the majority of students disliked the SDS chapter on campus. A conservative group of students, led by athletes, obtained over 13,000 signatures on a petition condemning the actions of the MSU SDS chapter. This petition created a rift between the members; some felt that the petition gave reason to call for a policy of restraint, while the more extremist members were moved to revolutionary actions to prove a point against the moderates.²⁴ "The Committee of 39" was an anonymous group on the MSU campus that was in opposition to SDS. They never identified themselves, but they had obvious strength; they were able to inundate campus with thousands of flyers in one night, which would require considerable manpower.²⁵

A survey that appeared in *The State News* (the Michigan State University student-published newspaper) in late 1969 announced that a majority of Michigan State students did not subscribe to the radical ideologies of either the New Left or the far right. The survey, conducted by two graduate students at the university, found that MSU students could be best described as "a mixture of non-radical moderates and liberals." With regards to the Vietnam War, only 25% articulated an extreme view (16% supported an immediate withdrawal, while 9% felt that America should step up the war effort).²⁶

Another act by the "silent majority" at MSU that gives reason to believe that they, as an external factor, helped cause the demise of SDS was the censure of the organization by the East Wilson Hall Council. Wilson Hall, a dormitory on campus, formulated a censure to indicate their disapproval over an SDS

²³ Bernard Weinraub, "Unrest spurs growth of conservative student groups," *New York Times*, 12 October 1969, 70.

²⁴ David G. Epstein, "The Students for a Democratic Society at Michigan State University, 1968-1969: a case study" (M.S. diss., Michigan State University, 1970), 128.

²⁵ Epstein, 129.

²⁶ Epstein, 121-22.

demonstration at the Placement Bureau. "I think every residence hall, fraternity, sorority, and University group should oppose SDS to show the community that the campus is not in favor of SDS functions," said Edward Hall, spokesman for the Wilson Council.²⁷ Actions taken by the "silent majority" hurt the SDS cause on campuses nationwide, and can be held partly to blame for the eventual collapse of the organization.

The apathy that SDS chapters faced on college campuses across the nation also created problems for the organization. Michigan State SDS experienced student apathy a number of times over the course of its existence. A 1968 article in *The State News* entitled "Small SDS group protests war and apathy at Aud" explained that SDS members were getting increasingly frustrated by the lack of student involvement in protest efforts. The protest of the Vietnam War that took place outside the Auditorium on campus drew only fifteen people. Joe Ciumpa, a freshman from Lansing, stated, "We're trying to measure the sentiment against the war on this campus. Evidently there is none."²⁸ MSU SDS experienced problems on campus again in 1971. Over the course of two years, the organization had shrunk from a group of fifty-to-one of approximately fifteen. Gerald Nash, an MSU graduate student and member of SDS, claimed, "We've made a lot of contacts. But it's hard to get people committed."²⁹ SDS continually experienced problems with apathy throughout the course of its existence, and this external factor played a role in the fall of SDS in 1969.

Although external events such as Vietnam, strong opposition groups, and student apathy hurt the SDS cause, internal events are largely to blame for the split in the organization. One of the first problems to materialize was the continuity (or lack thereof) of members. Because SDS was based in universities, each year would bring an influx of new members, with new insights and perspectives.³⁰ Not only were new members added yearly, but also the original members- those who took part in the Port Huron convention- were reaching thirty years old. Turmoil existed within the ranks of SDS membership because its founders were oftentimes as much as ten years older than the newest members.³¹ Kirkpatrick Sale wrote that SDS seemed "designedly gerontocidal, changing its basic leadership with every convention and sending

²⁷ Donna Wilburn, "SDS pickets win censure," *State News*, 13 November 1969, 2.

²⁸ Dan Brandon, "Small SDS group protests war and apathy at Aud," *State News*, 8 February 1968, 1.

²⁹ Barbara Parness, "SDS members cite group's goals," *State News*, 19 February 1971, 1.

³⁰ Students for a Democratic Society, *SDS Report* (East Lansing, Mich.: s.n., 1968), 33. Michigan State University Library Special Collections, American Radicalism Collection: *SDS Report*.

³¹ Denise Fortier, "Generation clash in SDS splits New Left," *State News*, 26 June 1969, 1.

the older people, often with acutely developed skills and irreplaceable experience, out to fend for themselves in other pastures."³² Eventually, some of the original leaders (people like Tom Hayden and Rennie Davis) were attracted back to antiwar organizing in places like Newark and Chicago.³³ This constantly changing leadership and membership hindered the organization's stability, and eventually helped lead to its downfall.

Another internal problem SDS faced that was directly related to its membership was its lack of personal bonds. As the organization grew and membership increased, the important personal bonds that had held the organization together in the early 1960s were fading. Between 1965 and 1967, the membership of SDS grew to ten times its original size, and these new members were outside the formation of interpersonal relationships. These new members were recruited largely by media coverage of SDS events, but this did not mean that they were more committed to the causes of SDS.³⁴ After the Columbia uprising and the Chicago Democratic National Convention in 1968, the membership of SDS rose by the thousands.³⁵ At its peak, SDS had approximately 100,000 members in 400 chapters. The popularity of the organization and its ideals would seem to be a positive step towards reform; however, the huge membership led to a loss of personal bonds that SDS would find destructive to its organization.

Yet another internal problem that SDS faced was sexism and male chauvinism among its members. Without question, SDS was a heavily male dominated organization. Considering the fact that SDS was concerned with equality, women were, in theory, equal to men within the organization. However, with the exception of a few women- Jane Adams, national secretary in 1966, and Bettina Aptheker and Suzanne Goldberg, leading participants in the Berkeley Free Speech Movement- the majority of women in SDS held subordinate, supportive roles.³⁶ Only certain positions were open to women within the movement; women were often discouraged from taking on organizational leadership roles. An article written in early 1968 by Marilyn Salzman Webb made the important point that the lack of women leaders in SDS was degrading in the context of a political and social movement for all.³⁷ Barbara Haber, an early member of SDS, claimed that the organization was blatantly sexist. In an article entitled "Port

³² Sale, 355.

³³ Isserman and Kazin, 213.

³⁴ Wilson C. McWilliams, review of *SDS*, by Kirkpatrick Sale, *New York Times Book Review* (1973): 3.

³⁵ Unger, 152.

³⁶ Unger, 153.

³⁷ Marilyn Salzman Webb, "Towards a Radical Women's Movement." SDS Convention, February 1968. Michigan State University Library Special Collections: American Radicalism Collection.

Huron: Agenda for a Generation," Haber points out that all pronouns in the Port Huron Statement were of the male gender, and that there was no acknowledgement of the oppression of women.³⁸

Women members of SDS began to question their roles within the organization and within society as a whole. At an SDS conference in December of 1965, a discussion of women's issues produced hoots and whistles from the males in attendance. Many of the male members of SDS were chauvinists; they were raised in America with a set of male-defined standards. They viewed strong women within the organization as being aggressive and unfeminine. However, SDS feared a fragmentation in the reform movement and a reduction in its own membership if women began leaving the organization to join the newly established women's liberation group, NOW (National Organization for Women). To pacify the women and keep them as members, SDS made some concessions. *New Left Notes*, the official SDS newsletter, began printing articles written by radical feminists.³⁹

By 1968, the issue of women's liberation was a central concern of SDS. The SDS Report from the national convention held in East Lansing included a section on the organization of women. "Radicalizing women begins with the realization that they are still unfree within the near left structure as within society. They continue to relate to both through men."⁴⁰ Despite the apparent move towards equality, as evidenced in this report from 1968, women continued to feel oppressed within SDS in the following years. One SDS woman stated in 1969 that "The men make decisions and we make love or coffee."⁴¹

Although SDS split in 1969, some campuses (including Michigan State) held chapters together well into the 1970s. In the early 1970s, the Michigan State chapter of SDS focused much attention on racism and sexism. Students chose to focus their protests on a textbook used in classes at the university that they felt was both racist and sexist. Robert Ardrey's book *The Social Contract* was deemed sexist by SDS members because it left students with the "idea that...women don't have anything to offer society."⁴² Students at campuses across the country, including Michigan State, fought to end sexism within society as a part of the overall reform movement to bring equality to all Americans. Although SDS members may have worked to end sexism on

³⁸ "Port Huron: Agenda for a Generation," 162.

³⁹ Unger, 154.

⁴⁰ Students for a Democratic Society, *SDS Report*, 25.

⁴¹ Lynn Langway, "Women want out from the SDS Kitchen," *Detroit Free Press*, 22 June 1969, sec. 2-A.

⁴² Pat Nardi, "SDS attacks natural science book in fight against U.S. racism, sexism," *State News*, 21 May 1974, 1.

college campuses, the lack of equality for women within the organization certainly helped lead its demise.

Another internal problem SDS experienced that led to its eventual downfall was elitism among the leadership. Elitism was a national problem within the organization. Sale writes in SDS that:

Elitism is the tendency of a handful of top leaders...to dominate an organization by virtue of their elected positions, or manipulative skill, or oral felicity, or administrative brilliance. No matter how much an organization like SDS was aware of the problem- and its unwavering antipathy to leaders from the very start was evidence of that- it was unable to avoid the trap: good souls became active, activists became leaders, and leaders became elite.⁴³

Elitism within the leadership was experienced at many chapters nationwide, including that of Michigan State. MSU SDS was experiencing the problems associated with having two factions within the chapter. The *SDS Report* from 1968 contained an evaluation of the MSU SDS, and it proposed that the two factions work together to come up with an ideal policy for the organization. The report stated, however, that

the factions of the local chapter are so tied up in their personality struggles for power that a sophisticated elitism is resulting. The elitism has magnified to such an extent that if proposals are not discussed with leaders of these groups prior to a general meeting, it may be rejected solely on the grounds that their group wasn't in on it at the very beginning.⁴⁴

Another example of the elitism within the MSU SDS chapter can be seen in a letter written by Ed Lessin to Students for a Democratic Society.

I hereby resign the position of student contact or spokesman for the Michigan State University chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society. One of the basic principles of S.D.S. is participatory democracy- where all members actively participate in the direction of the group.

⁴³ Sale, 356.

⁴⁴ Students for a Democratic Society, *SDS Report*, 55.

Instead, I find that a small elite, or cadre, directs the chapter and the membership rubber-stamps their actions. I cannot conscientiously represent such a group to the public.⁴⁵

The elitism of the leadership did not impress the "rank and file" membership, as evidenced in the letter from Lessin to SDS. Lessin raised a very important issue, in addition to the elitism- the concept of participatory democracy within SDS.

The concept of participatory democracy was a central theme to SDS from the beginning, as the Port Huron Statement had declared. However, SDS failed to operate its own organization under the vision of participatory democracy, and therein lay a fundamental problem for the success of the organization. SDS had a vision for what it desired in society: a democracy that included all people; that allowed all citizens to participate at the most basic levels. SDS could not expect society to embrace its vision of a participatory democracy if the concept was not being practiced by those who were preaching it. This contradiction between belief and action would create a major problem for SDS, and was certainly one of the major causes for its collapse. In an essay entitled "Participatory Democracy, Collective Leadership, and Political Responsibility" by Greg Calvert that was printed in *New Left Notes* in December of 1967, the issue of the practice of participatory democracy was addressed.

The basic problem with participatory democracy lies not in its analysis or vision, but in its basic inadequacy as a style of work for a serious radical organization. The major organizational problem of SDS grows out of the fact that it recruits on the basis of that rhetoric and then attempts to do its political work as if the rhetoric were sufficient to create, here and now, the non-repressive society of equals.⁴⁶

Calvert continues the article by explaining that local chapters, in the name of "participatory democracy," often avoided an elected leadership, engaged in long, formless mass meetings, and failed to plan careful, strategic thinking. The results of these actions by local chapters included: elitist manipulation of the chapter because there were no elected officials; the disillusionment of new members because they found it impossible to participate in the

⁴⁵ Ed Lessin to MSU Students for a Democratic Society, 4 February 1968. Michigan State University Library Special Collections: American Radicalism Collection.

⁴⁶ Greg Calvert, "Participatory Democracy, Collective Leadership, and Political Responsibility," *New Left Notes*, 18 December 1967, 5.

large mass meetings; and the frustration of activists because of the lack of plans and programs.⁴⁷

The final internal issue that SDS confronted in its downfall was the incredibly ambitious goals of the organization. SDS had dedicated itself to being a multi-issue campaign from the beginning. Although this did play a part in it becoming the largest student reform group in the 1960s, it also meant that the group had numerous, multifaceted goals. These explicit goals were very lofty, and the organization was not fully prepared to attack all of the problems within American society that it wished to address. In the National Report created at the SDS national convention in 1968, SDS laid out twelve explicit goals that it hoped to accomplish in the future. These goals included: immediate withdrawal from Vietnam; support of all those struggling against imperialism; abolition of the Selective Service; the organization of men to resist the draft; organization within the Armed Forces to advocate desertion and resistance; the encouragement of black consciousness; the support of blacks by organizing exploited whites; the rejection of separation of college students from workers; and the support of a transformation of student alienation into a radical force uniting for change.⁴⁸ Despite the approximate membership of 100,000 at its peak, SDS simply did not have the power to introduce all of these reforms. Their goals, although obviously what they had been fighting for all along, were lofty, incredibly involved and time-consuming, and would require more manpower than SDS had available.

The 1969 National Convention in Chicago would be the last time SDS came together as one organization with a common cause; it was at the convention in June that the split within the SDS membership became permanent. Approximately 1500 delegates attended the convention, held at the Chicago Coliseum. The two opposing factions- PLP (Progressive Labor Party) and the National Office- spent the convention arguing over differing opinions on tactics and objectives. Although the national leaders of SDS were still badly split over the tactics that SDS should use to build a revolutionary youth movement, they decided to unite to prevent a PLP takeover at the convention, since the PLP delegates were a majority of those in attendance. Nevertheless, the National Office faction, led by SDS leaders, staged a walk out on the third day of the convention to show their opposition to PLP. The following day, they returned and announced that they were expelling all members of SDS who supported PLP policies. Then, the National Office delegates gathered in a separate location and elected officers and adopted a program of action for the coming

⁴⁷ Calvert, 5.

⁴⁸ Students for a Democratic Society. *SDS Report*, 20-21.

year that called for "mass struggle and militant action."⁴⁹ At the same time, the PLP delegates elected a slate of national officers and adopted its own set of goals, which included supporting "black rebellions" and establishing alliances with workers on campuses.⁵⁰

The National Office group kept control of the headquarters in Chicago, which gave them exclusive access to the treasury, membership lists, and the printing press. Meanwhile, PLP set up an office in Boston.⁵¹ Despite the split, both groups kept the title *New Left Notes* for their newspaper. The first issue published by the National Office after the 1969 convention included a press statement about the split in the organization and why the National Office expelled the PLP. The press statement explained that PLP was expelled because it was objectively racist and counter-revolutionary; because it attacked nationalism, calling it reactionary; and because it attacked the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, Cuba, and other leading forces in the fight against imperialism.⁵²

When the National Office leaders came together to defeat a takeover by the PLP during the 1969 convention, they were still badly split themselves. After the convention, the National Office group experienced a final split, this time between RYM I and RYM II. RYM I, which became known as the "Weatherman" (from a line in a Bob Dylan song that states "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows"), received the most notoriety because of its violent tendencies.⁵³ While the majority of National Office supporters joined the Weatherman, the minority backed different tactics for building a revolutionary youth movement. Eventually, RYM II also endured several splits and formed numerous radical groups, such as the Revolutionary Communist Party.⁵⁴

Of the many splinters of the former SDS organization, the Weatherman was the most widely known. An article published in December 1969 explained three key points that distinguished the Weatherman from all other student left groups. To begin with, the Weatherman viewed the process of confronting national chauvinism and racism among working class whites as a primary goal of its organization. Secondly, its urgency in preparing for a militant, armed struggle certainly distinguished the group from other student left organizations. The Weatherman hoped to

⁴⁹ G. Louis Heath, *Vandals in the Bomb Factory: The History and Literature of the Students for a Democratic Society*, (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1976), 156.

⁵⁰ Heath, 157.

⁵¹ Heath, 157.

⁵² Press Statement, *New Left Notes*, 25 June 1969.

⁵³ George and Wilcox, 153.

⁵⁴ George and Wilcox, 152.

organize people into a fighting movement that would inflict material damage to imperialistic and racist institutions. Lastly was the Weatherman's commitment to the necessity of demanding total, wholehearted commitment of the individual to the struggle.⁵⁵

From the convention in Port Huron in 1962 to the convention in Chicago in 1969, SDS underwent radical transformations from a protest group, to a resistance organization, to a revolutionary movement. SDS experienced a split in its membership in 1969 because of its failure to address problems that existed within the structure of the organization. The external and internal issues that Students for a Democratic Society persistently experienced over the decade attributed greatly to its demise. Although SDS was a national organization, the many chapters on college campuses across the country had the same types of problems that the National Office was experiencing, except on a smaller scale. The Michigan State University chapter of SDS was just one of hundreds of chapters, and the problems that the MSU SDS chapter was confronted with were reflective of the problems SDS was experiencing on a national level. Even though SDS did not accomplish its many goals laid out in the Port Huron Statement, it made an enormous impact on the reforms of the 1960s and on the lives of hundreds of thousands of college students across the country throughout the decade.

⁵⁵ Shin'ya Ono, "A Weatherman: You Do Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows," in *Weatherman*, ed. Harold Jacobs (Berkeley: Ramparts Press, 1971), 227-28.

Shades of Red Summer: Historical Antecedents of the 1919 Chicago Race Riot

SHANTI ZAID

Introduction

RACIALLY MOTIVATED RIOTS erupted in twenty-five towns and cities in the six-month period between April and October 1919, leading to hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries, and millions of dollars in property damage. African-American poet James Weldon Johnson dubbed the summer of 1919 the "Red Summer". Historians and scholars have explored the various causal factors leading to the "Red Summer". Though each of the riots was different and several distinct factors caused each one, certain historical contextual commonalities exist between them. This essay seeks to better understand the "Red Summer" by critically analyzing the Chicago race riot of 1919 and the historical ingredients that coalesced in its production.¹ Such research is valuable for understanding racial conditions of the United States over time and uncovering the distinct contributions of African-American women and men to the country's development, both of which have historical legacies of intentional or de facto neglect.

The following questions help frame the scope of my analysis. What causal factors lead to the racially motivated rioting in Chicago during the summer of 1919? In particular, what directly caused the race riot to transpire and how did it unfold? How did the socio-economic dynamics of World War I and the Great Migration of southern blacks to northern cities like Chicago influence this event? How was the massive influx of black people to Chicago received by whites in the area given racial tensions in the United States? What impact did the Migration have on housing and labor relations? How did African-Americans respond to the violence of the riot and what was the ideological climate of the black community at that time?

Dictionaries generally define riot as "public violence, tumult, or disorder," while a riot is legally defined as any group of twelve or more people attempting to assert their will immediately using force outside the normal bounds of law.² For the purpose of this essay, I conceptualize "riot" as an outbreak of temporary but violent mass disorder that may be directed against a particular

¹ This discussion is in no way a complete or exhaustive study of issues involved in contextualizing or initiating the riot. It is an attempt to investigate selected outstanding factors that influenced conditions in Chicago, which gave rise to the riot.

² Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting In America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996) 4-6.

individual, group, or public authority, but that involves no intention to overthrow the government itself—which distinguishes it from an insurrection or rebellion.³ I prefer to use this definition, drawn from a social science encyclopedia, because it is more inclusive and precise as an academic analytical tool.

However, a “race riot” also has a distinctive character. Sociologist Bernard F. Robinson describes race conflict as occurring only when “race is the line of division between groups in conflict.”⁴ He further distinguishes racial conflict from national or religious conflict, which are based on what people do, believe, or think, in that racial conflict is founded on human perception of an *unalterable* phenotypic characteristic.⁵ Race riots occur at moments of social and racial unrest and are also characterized by the powerful role of racially motivated rumors.⁶ Patricia Turner argues that “riots and rumors enjoy a nearly parasitic attachment,” by citing the acute public need for news during chaotic circumstances.⁷ Racial “Topsy/Eva Cycle” rumors, typical of race riots, occur when nearly identical rumors and contemporary legends travel separately through black and white communities, shaped to fit the worldview of each group.⁸ These rumors tend to signify racial tension and perpetuate racial violence in riotous situations.

The Spark to the Chicago Riot

On Sunday July 27, 1919, seventeen-year-old African-American youth Eugene Williams swam in Lake Michigan near Chicago’s “whites only” Twenty-ninth St. beach with four of his black friends. Based on assumptions of racial segregation, a convention of Chicago, and de facto segregation in Illinois, drew an invisible line through the lake. This invisible line designated appropriate areas for whites and blacks to swim. The four black adolescents were swimming in the water at the same time that a group of other African-American swimmers marched from the “blacks only” Twenty-fifth Street beach to the Twenty-ninth Street beach in protest of the racial segregation of the water. A barrage

³ K. Smellie, “Riot,” in *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*. ed. Edwin R.A. Seligman (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934) 503.

⁴ Bernard F. Robinson, “The Sociology of Race Riots,” *Phylon* (1940-1956), Vol. 2, No. 2. (2nd Qtr., 1941), 163.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Smellie, 502.

⁷ Patricia A. Turner, *I Heard It Through the Grapevine: Rumor in African-American Culture*, (Berkley: University of California Press, 1993) 31.

⁸ Turner based the rumor type “Topsy/Eva Cycle” on a doll popularized by Harriette Beecher Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which featured two young black and white girl characters. The doll represented both these characters in a single form. When the white doll is turned upside down, the black doll is revealed. Thus, black and white views share a similar form. See Turner, 31.

of rocks, curses, and threats by whites at the Twenty-ninth Street beach met the protesting group of blacks. The group fled and then returned later with more supporters to retaliate with rocks of their own. The group of whites followed their example, fleeing and returning with more angry whites. The violence escalated. As tensions increased, a white man began throwing rocks at Williams from the shore. According to Williams' friend swimming with him, one of the rocks struck Williams in the forehead and knocked him unconscious in the water. However, the official coroner's report found no bruises on Williams' body and ruled that he drowned because stone throwing kept him from shore.⁹ In any event, his friends, unable to rescue him, swam to shore to find help. Minutes later, Eugene Williams drowned.¹⁰

Police arrived and a white officer refused to arrest the white man identified as William's murderer. Instead, he arrested a black man for arguing with police. Rumors of the murder spread to black and white communities. Erroneous rumors of a black man killing a white swimmer circulated in white areas, while similarly incorrect rumors that white policemen refused to allow anyone to rescue Williams from the water spread through the black community.¹¹ Scores of angry blacks and whites arrived again at the beach and the irate crowd grew larger with each passing moment. A gunshot was fired from within the racially polarized crowd and the grossly outnumbered police returned fire. Everyone with guns began to fire.¹² A riot then ensued. The race riot would last for the next two weeks, bringing unquenchable violence and destruction to the city of Chicago.

The Riot Itself

The violent outbreak at the Twenty-ninth Street beach soon dispersed and the hours that immediately followed were suspiciously calm, like the quiet before a storm. Gangs of white teenagers, many of whom were of Irish decent, began mobilizing for attack. The gangs, especially the Irish-American members, had long terrorized the black community of Chicago.¹³ Many Irish people viewed blacks as their main economic and social competitors and used violence against blacks to affirm their status and position. In the years and months preceding the riot, the gangs instigated several racialized conflicts but their attempts fell

⁹. The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro In Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922) 4.

¹⁰. William M. Tuttle, Jr., *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (New York: Anthenum, 1970) 2-7.

¹¹. "'Exhibit A' Cause of the Riot," *The Messenger* 2, no. 9 (Sept. 1919): 12; Turner, 50.

¹². Tuttle, 7-8.

¹³. St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1933), 42-43.

short of riot or race war.¹⁴ Gang members exploited the racial stress following Eugene Williams' murder and roamed Chicago streets in large groups searching for victims. The gangs beat and injured at least twenty-seven African-Americans in the first night of the riot, and proceeded with increasing numbers of other white Chicagoans cloaked under mob action to instigate and commit hundreds of violent acts against blacks in the following weeks. Such acts included assaulting any black person in sight, stopping streetcars and stabbing black passengers to death, stoning and beating blacks unconscious going to and from work, and driving through black neighborhoods of Chicago "shooting indiscriminately."¹⁵ The gangs and particularly the members of Irish decent were decisive in propagating the riot and initiating massive white mobs that would assault and murder black people.¹⁶

Neither the violent agenda of the gangs nor the unjust response of the Chicago police force surprised the black community. One black Chicagoan described, "Prior to the riot there was a feeling that the white policemen were in sympathy with the lawless whites committing bomb outrages and other injustices against the colored."¹⁷ African-Americans viewed the police department as an armed representation of racism and white hostility, and police actions over the course of the riot proved their assumptions true. In one incident, police reportedly "wantonly injured or perhaps killed a half dozen or more colored persons by shooting promiscuously into a crowd at Thirty-fifth and Wabash" in response to a thrown brick.¹⁸ African-Americans received the bulk of the violence, yet they were arrested at twice the rate of whites. The police killed at least seven black people, but not a single white person.¹⁹ Even city officials became aggravated by the lack of police action to quell violence committed by white people.²⁰ Though overworked and overburdened due to the absence of relief from the state militia for the first four days of the riot, police consistently targeted and committed brutal acts against blacks, while avoiding violent whites. The racial disparity may have been due to the relative ease that the police could apprehend

¹⁴ James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 118, 178.

¹⁵ The Investigator, "Race Riots in Chicago," *Half-Century Magazine* 7, no. 3 (Sept. 1919): 18; "A Report on the Chicago Riot by an Eye-Witness," *The Messenger* 2, no. 9 (Sept. 1919): 11-12; Tuttle, 32-45. Also see Chicago Commission, 655-667 for a complete list of all officially recorded deaths occurring in the riot, including each victim's race, time of death, and circumstances of death.

¹⁶ Tuttle, 32.

¹⁷ "Eye Witness," *The Messenger*, 11.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Tuttle, 64.

²⁰ "Eye-Witness," *The Messenger*, 11; Tuttle, 43.

black people instead of large white mobs, though their racism was apparent as several police joined white mob violence against blacks.²¹

African-Americans did not accept the violence and hostility aimed at them quietly. On the contrary, the Chicago race riot is an excellent example of black people actively retaliating against violence and defending their community.²² They mobilized defense networks throughout the south side of Chicago, an area of town often termed the "black belt."²³ Black snipers combated invading mobs, police, and drive-by shooters.²⁴ In addition, angry black mobs offensively retaliated against white violence in and around the black belt, and sometimes expanded out into the rest of the city. In one incident, 1,500 black people clashed with nearly 100 police over apparent police misconduct in the black belt.²⁵ Though most news reports cited violent exchange between men, women also played an active role in the riot. A witness described an occurrence where two black women were identified for killing a white man, and another where a white woman murdered a black man.²⁶ Retaliation proved effective in ebbing violence and destruction in the black community.²⁷ Where other race riots of the era saw entire African-American areas devastated, only a third of the violence in the Chicago riot occurred in the black belt.²⁸ The rest of the destruction spread throughout the larger city.

A legal defense network for those arrested was also mobilized by Chicago African-American organizations. The Cook County Bar Association (a black lawyers organization), the Urban League, the Young Men's Christian Association, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Olivet Baptist Church, and other groups joined to dispatch lawyers to each police station and court every morning to provide free legal services for apprehended black people. Lawyers, stenographers, and investigators were stationed in local black churches to assist

²¹ Tuttle, 43. Also see Darlene Clark Hine, William C. Hine, and Stanley Harrold, *The African American Odyssey: Volume Two: Since 1863*. (Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall Inc., 2000) 381.

²² Tuttle, 65. For further discussions of African-American self-defense during racial rioting of the early twentieth century, see Scott Ellsworth, *Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa race Riot of 1921* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982) and Alfred L. Brophy, *Reconstructing the Dreamland: The Tulsa Riot of 1921, Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

²³ "Race Riots in Chicago," *Half-Century Magazine*, 18.

²⁴ "Eye-Witness," *The Messenger*, 11-12.

²⁵ Tuttle, 40-43.

²⁶ "Eye-Witness," *The Messenger*, 11.

²⁷ Ibid, 12.

²⁸ Tuttle, 65.

relatives and friends of men in jail or under arrest.²⁹ Activist Ida B. Wells and the Negro Fellowship League, one of many politically active women's clubs in the city, also provided legal support for Chicago African-Americans in the riot period.³⁰

Rumors played a major role in spreading and perpetuating the violence, as they had done in most, if not all other race riots.³¹ A series of "Topsy/Eva Cycle" rumors, which are rumors of similar form traveling inside black and white communities, influenced the riot. False rumors that black people had looted a National Guard armory, seized thousands of rifles, and were preparing to attack white communities spread fear and bred larger and more brutal white mobs.³² Similarly, rumors of thousands of whites coming to destroy the black belt produced large mobs of blacks and increased indiscriminate sniping of any whites entering their neighborhoods.³³

Compared with other riots, Chicago newspapers played a less significant role in agitating violence through biased rumors.³⁴ However, both black and white media sources skewed reports in favor of their respective constituents. White newspapers predominantly emphasized violence of black men against white men and women, displayed pictures of arrested black men, linked black violence to communism, but included both races in the daily lists of the injured and dead. African-American news sources tended to note events of white aggression before and during the riot, but emphasized and supported black self-defense and retaliation.³⁵ Rumors, whether from word of mouth or the media, aggravated both black and white communities and fed a cycle of revenge and counter-revenge of each side that spanned the breadth of the riot.³⁶

Illinois Governor Frank O. Lowden contributed to the large scale of the riot by refusing to call in the state militia to assist the Chicago police department in quelling the citywide violence.³⁷ Governor Lowden finally ordered the militia of white soldiers into

²⁹ "Race Riots," *The Crisis* 18, no. 5 (Sept. 1919): 244; J. Arthur Davis, "Chicago Rebellion Free Black Men Fight Free White Men," *The Messenger* 2, no. 9 (Sept. 1919): 32.

³⁰ Anne M. Kunpfer, *Toward a Gentler Humanity and a Nobler Womanhood: African American Woman's Clubs in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago*, (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 57.

³¹ Turner, 45-53.

³² Turner, 50; Tuttle, 47-48.

³³ Tuttle 47-48; "Race Riots in Chicago," *Half-Century Magazine*, 18; "Eye-Witness," *The Messenger*, 11-12.

³⁴ Ellsworth, 17-49.

³⁵ *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, 29-31 July 1919; *New York Times*, 28-30 July 1919; "Race Riots in Chicago," *Half-Century Magazine*, 18; "Eye-Witness," *The Messenger*, 11-13; "Race Riots," *The Crisis*, 240-46; Tuttle, 47-49.

³⁶ Tuner, 50.

³⁷ "Eye-Witness," *The Messenger*, 11-13.

Chicago four days into the riot.³⁸ The riot slowed as the militia barricaded communities and placed Chicago under near Marshall Law. Sporadic gang violence and resistance by white unionists to work alongside black laborers held into the second week of the riot, but tensions slowly calmed. By August 12, nearly 12,000 black stockyard workers returned to their jobs under the armed protection of over 2,000 police officers and militiamen.³⁹ Finally, a strong thunderstorm forced most Chicago residents to remain in their homes and the riot lost much of its momentum. Governor Lowden released the state militia on August 9, marking the official end of the riot. In its wake, the riot left twenty-three black people and fifteen white people dead, and over 500 injured, of which nearly 350 were African-American.⁴⁰

Historical Context: The Background to the Riot

All human actions occur within a historical context and so did the 1919 race riots in Chicago. Legalized racial oppression and violence had been normative in the United States for generations and riots between African-American and white citizens were also a patterned part of the country's history.⁴¹ Scholar William Tuttle contended that the large scale of reciprocal violence between black and white citizens during the Chicago riots was new.⁴² Indeed, James Weldon Johnson labeled the event, and those that followed that year, the "Red Summer" for the amount of blood that was shed. However, while Tuttle's claim may have numerical integrity, retaliatory violence had been one avenue of African-American resistance for centuries before the riot.⁴³

The sizable active response of Chicago African-Americans to the racist subjugation and violence directed toward them may have been exceptional but the situation of racism and violence to enforce inequality had been standard fare in the United States since the enslavement of the colonial period.⁴⁴

Cedric Robinson does an outstanding job of recounting how the oppression, inequality, and racism, in the context of British supremacy over the Irish, became a direct model of violent

³⁸. *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, 30-31 July 1919; *New York Times*, 30-31 July 1919.

³⁹. Tuttle, 63.

⁴⁰. Chicago Commission, 655-667.

⁴¹. Hine, 317.

⁴². Tuttle, 65.

⁴³. For examples of early African-American retaliatory violence, see Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996); Kenneth S. Greenberg, ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner and Related Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1996); and Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

⁴⁴. Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968).

racial subjugation in the colonies that became the United States.⁴⁵ Africans and their descendants became "the more enduring domestic enemy" as subordinating racial meanings of the Irish were transposed to the black community.⁴⁶ African-Americans had always resisted the racialized oppression and were instrumental in the collapse of legalized institutional enslavement, but the racism and inequality that fed that system led to a return of economic patterns that kept them disenfranchised and subjected to injustice. Jim Crow laws, share cropping economics, and Ku Klux Klan enforcement left an inordinate number of African-Americans knowing that enslavement, racism, and inequality persisted.⁴⁷

It was the continuation of these conditions that equaled a social context of racial tensions in the omnipresent atmosphere of black life in Atlanta, Houston, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and many more. Throughout the close of the nineteenth-century, the situation would lead to race riots, but it was the 1915 release of the film *Birth of a Nation*, in which African-Americans were depicted as bafoning fools and obsessed with raping white women, that catalyzed a fresh wave of racial hostility.⁴⁸ The film condoned and glorified violence against blacks and sparked a nation-wide resurgence of membership in Ku Klux Klan terrorist cells. The white supremacy beliefs of the Klan and most of white America instigated an increasing white acceptance of violence against blacks. Lynching, torching homes, public humiliation, and other acts of racist terror were normal occurrence in the lives of African-Americans, in both the North and the South.⁴⁹

In 1917, a major race riot broke out in East St. Louis, Illinois, about 250 miles south-west of Chicago. The riot, or "massacre" as W.E.B. Du Bois called it, began after the Aluminum Ore Company hired hundreds of black people to replace striking white union members. A group of angry white unionists responded by driving through a black neighborhood and

⁴⁵ Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000) 66-67, 80.

⁴⁶ Robinson, 81.

⁴⁷ Hine, 306-332. Also see Howard Winant, *The World is a Ghetto: Race and Democracy since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 2001) 305-308, for further discussion of how racial oppression persisted.

⁴⁸ Tuttle, 10; also see Hine, 378-382 for a discussion of race riots leading up to and including 1919, and see Everett Carter, "Cultural History Written with Lightning: The Significance of *Birth of a Nation*," in *American Society in the Twentieth Century: Selected Readings*, ed. Dwight W. Hoover and C. Warren Vander Hill (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1972) 140-148; and David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The First Century of the Ku Klux Klan 1865-1965*, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965) 22-39, for significance of *Birth of a Nation* to the racial atmosphere of the U.S.

⁴⁹ Lee E. Williams, *Post-War Riots in America 1919 and 1946: How the pressures of War Exacerbated American Urban Tensions to the Breaking Point* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991) 2-3.

firing their guns at will. Blacks in the area feared an immediate repeat of the violence and retaliated against the next white people driving through, who happened to be two undercover policemen. The police were shot dead and their murder ignited deep-seeded hatred in whites. Mobs of angry whites proceeded to massacre thirty-five blacks and burn many black homes. The racial tensions, economic competition, and the acceptance of violence against blacks that coalesced in the East St. Louis bloodshed would also impact several other race riots, particularly in 1919, which saw twenty-five race riots and at least eighty-three lynchings nationwide.⁵⁰ Similar causal factors would influence the Chicago riot.

World War I

World War I erupted in Europe in 1914 and ended in 1918, with the U.S. joining the Allies against Germany in 1917.⁵¹ The war set into motion several of the gears that drove Chicago into violence in the summer of 1919. The social, racial, and economic conditions that resulted from circumstances during and immediately after WWI combined with pre-existing racial and class tensions to produce a charged atmosphere for violence.

World War I affected the United States economy and labor conditions in several profound ways. The war accelerated corporate consolidation and companies increased their efficiency to match United States military contracts.⁵² The increased productivity from the military contracts boosted the United States economy. The economic boom in industrial manufacturing, led by northern industries, tremendously increased job opportunities. In addition, previously strong foreign immigrant labor ebbed due to political conflicts from the war and northern industries needed to fill a major labor void.⁵³ The labor shortage also intensified because the United States government contributed millions of military personnel to the war effort abroad, over 350,000 of whom were African-Americans.⁵⁴ The increased job opportunities and decreased labor supply combined to push Northern industries to actively pursue other sources of labor. The economically oppressed black communities of the South were prime candidates to fill the labor needs of the North.

⁵⁰ Hine, 380; "Demands Lynching Stop" *New York Times*, 28 July 1919, 4.

⁵¹ Mark Ellis, *Race, War, and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government during World War I* (Bloomington; Indiana University Press, 2001).

⁵² Paul S. Boyer, et al., *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002) 468.

⁵³ Tuttle, 84.

⁵⁴ Ellis, 74.

Great Migration

Between 1916 and 1930, one and a half-million African-Americans migrated out of the United States South.⁵⁵ The heaviest concentration of migrations occurred between 1916 and 1918 when over 450,000 blacks migrated north.⁵⁶ This massive exodus of black people out of the repressive conditions of the South has been termed the first Great Migration. African-Americans across the South packed their belongings and moved north in search of opportunities.

These families had several reasons to leave the South. Most southern United States African-Americans were involved in some form of agriculture, but were trapped in a vicious cycle of economic dependence and poverty. Their impoverished condition was largely due to their experiences as sharecroppers and tenant farmers, an experience which closely resembled slavery. In the 1910s, the Bow Weevil destroyed cotton crops across the South and forced blacks into further economically weak positions. Jim Crow laws, racial violence, rape and sexual exploitation of black women, disenfranchisement, and poor public education opportunities for black children additionally compounded the pressures of southern black life.⁵⁷

A booming wartime economy and labor shortage created thousands of industrial job opportunities in the North. Job opportunities, enfranchisement, better public schools, and other perceived benefits of the North enticed and motivated many within the southern black community to move. It was a chance to break from the cyclical and highly racialized poverty of the South and garner new freedoms in the North.

Chicago

Chicago was a popular destination for African-Americans, along with Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.⁵⁸ Black people seeking more stable economic opportunities and upward social mobility typically entered Chicago from southern states like Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky, Alabama, and Georgia.⁵⁹ In urban areas outside of southern states, slaughtering and meatpacking industries, iron and steel forging industries, electrical machinery, and other production

⁵⁵ The Schomburg Center For Research In Black Culture, "The Great Migration," in *In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience*, Feb. 2005, <<http://www.inmotionaame.org/home.cfm>> (last accessed Feb. 3, 2005). Also see "Great Migration," Microsoft Encarta Africana, CD ROM, 2000.

⁵⁶ Tuttle, 76.

⁵⁷ Hine, 382-383. Also see Grossman, 38-65; and Donald H. Henderson, "The Negro Migration of 1916-1918," *Journal of Negro History*, 7, no. 4 (Oct. 1921): 411.

⁵⁸ Darlene Clarke Hine and Kathleen Thompson, *A Shining Hope of Thread: The History of Black Women in America* (New York: Brooklyn Books, 1998) 214-15

⁵⁹ Grossman, 270-71.

areas offered a bounty of jobs and higher wages given the need to satisfy military demands of the war. The South and its predominantly agricultural industries, plus its low earning sharecropping system, were not competitive with industrial northern areas. Industries in Chicago targeted employee recruitment in southern black communities with widely publicized employment opportunities, particularly jobs in Chicago's stockyards.⁶⁰

To compliment the industrial pull north, railroad lines connected Chicago to nearly every southern city where lynchings transpired. There was a strong and immediate relationship between southern racial violence and black migration north to avoid these acts. African-Americans fled southern areas with extreme anti-black violence with such regularity and alacrity that officials of the Chicago Urban League would strategically plan hospitality events for southern migrants from counties where recent lynchings had taken place.⁶¹

The black population of Chicago consequently increased about 150 percent in the decade following 1910, bringing the total black population to around 110,000 by 1920.⁶² Chicago experienced a major shift in the racial population dynamics and such a dramatic change ripened conditions for urban unrest.

African-Americans that migrated north faced tremendous challenges as the reality of northern racial discrimination impeded their opportunities for a better life. For thousands of them, the migration north meant an abrupt transformation from a relative feudal peasantry class into a new class of urban proletariat.⁶³ Industrialized capitalist exploitation of their labor combined with cultural and institutional racism embedded in the North made life very difficult for black people. To make matters worse, the cost of living rose nearly seventy-five percent between 1914 and 1917.⁶⁴ Brash change in climate, class, and living conditions, along with the dramatic rise in the number of African-Americans who populated the city, set the stage for other pre-riot conditions in Chicago.

Housing

⁶⁰. Tuttle, 84. For a strong analysis of the pivotal role that the *Chicago Defender*, a popular African-American newspaper of Chicago, played in influencing Southern blacks to seek opportunities in the North, see Grossman 67-97. For personal letters of Southern blacks writing to northern companies requesting jobs and transportation, see Scott J. Emmett, "Letters of Negro Migrants of 1916-1918," *Journal of Negro History*, 4, no. 3 (July. 1919) and his "Additional Letters of Negro Migrants of 1916-1918," *Journal of Negro History*, 4 (Oct. 1919).

⁶¹. Tuttle, 86.

⁶². Ibid, 76.

⁶³. Ibid, 213.

⁶⁴. Ibid, 132.

The dramatic change in Chicago's racial composition from the Great Migration affected the racial character of several Chicago neighborhoods, which intensified pre-riot tensions. The residential landscape of Chicago was comprised of racially segregated neighborhoods with inferior living conditions for blacks. Centuries of conventional racial segregation, reinforced by the 1896 *Plessey v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision that legalized the "separate but equal" doctrine, had solidified the racially demarcated living areas. Consequently, neighborhoods maintained their segregated nature during WWI and recent black immigrants to Chicago were limited to living in black areas, usually in Chicago's south side.

However, segregated neighborhoods could not hold the massive influx of African-Americans to Chicago during the Great Migration. No new housing facilities were constructed to absorb the increased black population, if for no other reason than lack of materials due to the strain of WWI.⁶⁵ As a result, the black population overflowed out of the black belt, and families, especially those of the emerging black middle class began moving into white areas around the city. The increased black presence in formerly exclusive white communities challenged whites in ways in which many were unprepared to adapt. The rise in cross-cultural contact between blacks and whites without a legal or cultural standard of tolerance or equality produced increased pressure on the pre-existing racial tensions. The end of WWI and subsequent return home of thousands of soldiers further escalated the strain.

The perceived intrusion of African-Americans into white suburbs and residential areas spurred a white backlash against the blacks. Between 1917 and 1921, at least fifty-eight African-American homes in white Chicago neighborhoods were bombed, at least twenty-four of which occurred in the months preceding the riot.⁶⁶ A group of white Hyde Park residents threatened to hire a "voodoo witch doctor" to curse black homeowners before eventually resorting to bombs, illustrating both cultural ignorance and acceptance of the use of violence. One African-American banker's home was bombed seven times in a single year.⁶⁷ The terrorism even stretched to include white real estate agents who sold homes in white areas to black people.⁶⁸ Yet, pre-riot racial strife was not limited to the housing sector.

⁶⁵. Simon Stickgold, *Illinois Race Riots* (Memorandum for the Illinois Interracial Commission, 1943) 10.

⁶⁶. Kumpf, 33.

⁶⁷. Kumpf, 33.

⁶⁸. Stickgold, 11.

Labor

Racialized labor tensions were another significant factor that contributed to riotous conditions in Chicago. In the economic boom during WWI, industries prospered and needed labor, and attracted blacks to the North to fill the job vacancies. However, with the end of the war came a decline in wartime industrial economic prosperity. Chicago's unemployment rate grew, job competition stiffened, and unionizing efforts increased to secure jobs and benefits for members. African-Americans stood vulnerably in the crossfire of conflicts between working-class white union members and their industrial employers.

Unionizing efforts in Chicago swelled in the early twentieth-century and especially after the war, but the labor movement was seeded with racism and segregation if not exclusion toward black workers, much of which was supported by industry owners.⁶⁹ In Chicago's meatpacking industry, 6,000 of nearly 18,000 black meatpackers, who totaled 60,000, had joined the union by mid-1919. However, industry owners and elite businesspeople observed the threat posed by a multiracial union and exerted much effort to exacerbate racial tensions already present among workers, and to instigate riotous behavior.⁷⁰ White laborers in Chicago tended not to perceive blacks as their equal; a product of centuries of racial conditioning that dictated the racist but convenient assumption of black inferiority. Yet, during major strikes for better wages and working conditions, companies intentionally hired thousands of black 'scabs' to break strike, leading white laborers to blame blacks for deteriorating union strength, stealing their jobs, and cheapening labor.⁷¹ Such divide and conquer strategies used by companies proved successful to hurt unions, but as an additional consequence, stratified and intensified tensions between black and white workers.

Numerous outbreaks of labor-related violence occurred in the years leading up to the riot as a result.⁷² When the riot did unfold, racial animosities peaked and white workers in the stockyards of a Chicago meatpacking plant attacked black laborers and threatened them against returning to their jobs. Thus, the racialized labor conflicts proved to be another significant factor in shaping the nature of the riot.

⁶⁹. Tuttle, 144-145.

⁷⁰. Barbara Foley, *Specters of 1919: Class and Nation in the Making of the New Negro*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003) 14-15.

⁷¹. Tuttle, 117; Arvarh E. Strickland, *History of the Chicago Urban League* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966) 58.

⁷². Tuttle, 112-119.

New Negro

The massive migration north and large-scale growth of the urban black community coupled with blatant contradictions that black WWI veterans faced fighting for a country whose actions paralleled their overseas enemy, helped to inspire what some have dubbed the "New Negro" movement. The term gained literary notoriety following Alain Locke's 1925 publication of *The New Negro* and artistic and cultural innovations of the Harlem Renaissance.⁷³ However, the "New Negro" movement of 1919 reflected refreshed racial pride, leftist political orientations, and the determination of a new generation to achieve constitutional and human rights in the United States.⁷⁴

African-Americans had supported the war effort as soldiers, industrial workers, and buyers of liberty bonds. They also contributed to the growth of the country on several other levels necessary for the survival of the country, yet still faced near untamed racial discrimination and deadly violence. One black veteran noted during the Chicago riot, "I did all I could to help make this old country safe for just such men as these [his white attackers]. I call this a pretty poor welcome home."⁷⁵ The protracted struggle and growth through black economic integration and development that African-American intellectual Booker T. Washington advocated following the formal end of slavery became increasingly contested as inadequate to solve the black community's problems in the early twentieth century. The experience of racism at home and abroad during WWI coupled with the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in October of 1917 influenced and inspired increasingly radical tactics to achieve substantive freedom. As Barbara Foley articulated, "In 1919 and its aftermath, what New Negroes were expressing was more than a vague hope for a better world coming out of the war; in the domain of United States race relations, they were reflecting the leftward shift of contemporaneous political discourse and praxis."⁷⁶ Black intellectuals advocating armed self-defense against racial violence grew in prominence. Black thinkers like W.E.B. Du Bois also called for protracted struggle, but pushed for more direct assertiveness and urged the black community to claim their civil and political rights.⁷⁷ Others, like labor leader A. Philip

⁷³ See Alain Locke, *The New Negro: An Interpretation* (New York: Johnson Reprint Company, 1968), originally published in 1925; and Michael W. Peplow and Arthur P. Davis, *The New Negro Renaissance* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1975) for further articulation of "New Negro" attitudes with a collection of writings addressing socio-cultural expressions and conditions of African-Americans from a variety of fields.

⁷⁴ Foley, 6-7.

⁷⁵ *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, 30 July 1919, 1.

⁷⁶ Foley, 7.

⁷⁷ Tuttle, 210-211; also see Hine, 362-366.

Randolph and Chandler Owens, represented a further radical element of the movement, promoting socialist principles to advance the progress of the black community, advocating strategic alliances with radical whites, and asserting freedom of African-Americans.⁷⁸

The call for blacks to actively and uncompromisingly defend their constitutionally guaranteed "life, liberty, and property" from white assailants and take their freedom resonated within the community. *The Messenger*, a black radical magazine co-edited by Randolph, published a cartoon of the "New Crowd Negro Making America Safe for Himself," where blacks were depicted using guns to ward off an attacking white mob.⁷⁹ In several instances of the period, would-be lynchings became race riots as blacks retaliated and fought back.⁸⁰ The advocating of racial pride and determination to attain justice was internalized particularly well by people of African decent in Chicago. Those who protested the segregated beaches on the day that angry whites murdered Eugene Williams and the African-Americans who defended their communities from attacks by whites and retaliated during the Chicago riot, did so in the spirit of the "New Negro" movement. *The Half-Century Magazine*, made by and published for black women, demonstrated its stance by writing, "Not that we approve of rioting, but the blood which these colored men spilled was a holy libation poured on the altar for race liberty."⁸¹ The changing attitudes regarding race and means of struggle embodied in "New Negro" thinking played a significant role in shaping the actions that contributed to the riot's eruption as well as the black community's response to the violence. Poet Claude McKay reiterated many of these attitudes in his July 1919 poem "If We Must Die," dedicated to the African-Americans of the Chicago riot. McKay declared,

If we must die, O let us nobly die/ So that our
precious blood may not be shed/ In vein; then
even the monsters we defy/ Shall be constrained
to honor us though dead!...Like men we'll face
the murderous cowardly pack/ Pressed to the wall,
dying, but fighting back!⁸²

⁷⁸ A. Philip Randolph, "A New Crowd-A New Negro," *The Messenger* 2, no. 5-6 (May-June, 1919): 26-30.

⁷⁹ *The Messenger*, (Sept. 1919): 17.

⁸⁰ Tuttle, 210.

⁸¹ "Race Riots in Chicago," *Half-Century Magazine*, 18.

⁸² Claude McKay, *Claude McKay: Selected Poems*, (Minneapolis: Dover Publications, Inc., 1999) 43.

Conclusion

Race riots occur at intersections of social and racial unrest, and the 1919 Chicago race riot exemplified well this unrest in the United States.⁸³ Social, economic, ideological, and most of all racial elements compounded and escalated to push the people of Chicago into full-scale violent racial confrontation. The experiences of African-Americans with centuries of economic, social, and political oppression plus exploitation by all classes of Americans of European descent framed the pressures that strengthened their retaliatory participation in the Chicago violence. Northern economic opportunities brought on by WWI combined with the racial subjugation and violence in the South convinced thousands of African-Americans to move; Chicago was a popular destination. However, as migrants settled in Chicago, they found that racism had not vanished, but merely changed shape. The increased black population in the city unsettled many whites and they soon became scapegoats for larger societal problems.

The economic decline following the end of WWI created popular unrest across racial lines and blacks became a target of white aggravations. A crescendo of racial tension and violence in employment areas and residential districts in these years and months lead to the riot. The racial irritation buttressed the "New Negro" ideological movement in the black community, which advocated black pride, leftist politics, armed self-defense, and retaliation against racial violence. These factors simmered until the death of Eugene Williams ignited the anger of blacks and whites across the city. Local gangs instigated the spread of much of the violence, but racism compelled the violence to continue. Many African-Americans in Chicago, especially WWI veterans and those disillusioned by the racial contradictions of the U.S., accepted the call for defense and retaliation and significantly reciprocated violence on a remarkable scale. Unrest spread for two weeks, and death and destruction were left in the wake of the riot.

Yet, rioting was not unique to Chicago that summer. The United States in 1919 saw twenty-four additional riotous outbreaks of racial violence, influenced in part by the same socio-economic, racial, and ideological changes that affected Chicago. Race riots have since resurfaced several times in United States history, especially in the 1960s. It is necessary, indeed imperative, that rigorous and critical interrogations of the United States' racialized history continue in order to address and avert persistent conditions of injustice and patterns of violence.

⁸³ Smellie, 502.

States' Rights and Secession: Right or Revolution?

ERIK STEIN

HOW DID THE United States become so deeply divided that millions of Americans turned against their brethren on the battlefield? The Constitution of the United States embodies a perfect form of government. In some way, the Constitution failed the American people and allowed the country to immerse itself in civil war. The problematic aspect of the Constitution was the proper relationship between state and federal governments, explicitly the right of states to secede from the Union in order to preserve that state's interests. Is this right of secession, which southern states invoked in the winter and spring of 1861, a true right granted by the Constitution, or does it stand as a true revolutionary overthrow of the intended ideology behind the Constitution?

Before the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776, representatives of the Second Continental Congress met in June of 1776 to draw up a loose confederation of the American colonies. The Articles of Confederation were formally adopted in November of 1777. This plan for government lacked the necessary elements for a strong national government, instead relying upon a loose union of the new American states. Article II of the Articles of Confederation explicitly states that "Each [state] retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress Assembled."¹ The several states enjoyed a large degree of self-sufficiency, with a weak national government to perform general administrative duties and foreign affairs; this left the majority of domestic affairs to the several states that composed the confederation. In this matter, the people gave power to the states, which then in turn gave agency to the national government thus placing focus on the state governments to carry a larger portion of power. However, this government had many deficiencies, as it lacked true meaningful national authority, an adequate judicial system, and the ability to levy taxes. By the 1780's, after victory in the Revolutionary War had been won, it was a general consensus that a better form of government had to be established.

¹ "Articles of Confederation", in Erik Bruun & Jay Crosby, eds., *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents* (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 138-142.

In May of 1787, representatives from twelve states (Rhode Island did not participate) met in Philadelphia to begin work on what was to become the Constitution of the United States of America. The conflicting view points between delegates from the north and the south, and between large states and small states, created a document based on compromise. The Constitution significantly increased the scope of national authority by creating a stronger executive, a judiciary, and an enlarged legislature, while still preserving the federal nature of having two coordinate governments.

The document was ratified by eleven of the thirteen states in March of 1789, when the new government became effective. However, two states did not ratify the Constitution until several years later: North Carolina in November of 1789 and Rhode Island in 1791. During the period when the Constitution was still under debate in these states, the new government treated them both as sovereign nations.² The method of ratification of the new government was that the people of each state chose representatives to meet with the specific purpose of adopting the new Constitution. The new government required consensus from nine of these conventions to be enacted.³ Again, the people granted their agency to the states, which then vested their approval to the national government.

A concern of the Framers of the new Constitution was the power of faction in the new popular government. James Madison defined faction as "...a number of citizens whether mounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community."⁴ Madison commented further that among the causes of faction are passionate feelings toward religion, government, and individuals vying for power. These opinions would blind men from pursuing the common interest of the whole, only to pursue the interests of the individual.⁵ The Founders had concluded that factions were a necessary evil in popular government, but were thoroughly convinced that the Constitution organized a government that would successfully curb the effect of those factions, rather than letting them run rampant across the American political system. There are two primary types of factions; one in which the minority acts against the interests of the

² John C. Calhoun, "Discourse on Government" in *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, (Vol. 13), (University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 159.

³ "The Constitution of the United States of America" in *Constitutional Law* (14th ed.), ed. Kathleen M. Sullivan & Gerald Gunther, (New York: Foundation Press, 2001), A1-A15.

⁴ "Federalist #10" in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Clinton Rossiter ed., (New York: Penguin Publishing, 1999), 46.

⁵ Ibid, 47.

majority, and the other where the majority works against the interests of the minority. The republican principal controls the former, "...which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote."⁶ In the instance of the latter, popular government limitations upon representatives act as a safeguard against their number becoming too high. In addition to this, by extending the realm of government—that is making the jurisdiction of the government larger—it becomes harder for one faction to take control over another, thus resulting in plurality. This also allows the national government to control states and their interests from commandeering national affairs.⁷

Madison also takes into account the geographical condition of factions. States, when working to their own particular interests, become factions, and if many states in a specific geographical area work for their interests as a collection under the umbrella of the entire Union, they too are a faction. Madison quelled the fears of many who believed that the new national government would strip the states of their sovereignty and individuality; "Many considerations, besides those presented on a former occasion, seem to place it beyond doubt that the first and more natural attachment of the people will be to their respective states."⁸ In contrast to the federal government, citizens will be more loyal to their state, because it will represent their views closer than the national government will. Citizens are more apt to get political office, have their issues looked after, and will have closer person ties to state governments. Because the people will place more power into the hands of the state, Madison reasons that the states will also move beyond their constitutional powers more freely than the national government will intercede beyond its power into those of the state.⁹ This is because the national government will be subject to the people, who are aligned closer with the state. Therefore, the interests of the state will seep more into national government than those of the national government into the state.

Several years after the adoption of the new government, George Washington delivered what came to be known as his "Farewell Speech" to his cabinet in September 1792. The speech offered his observations on the new government, as well as advice on how to effectively administer it in the future. Even in 1792, Washington was very aware of the effects that factions would have on the government. Washington told his Cabinet:

⁶ Ibid, 48.

⁷ Ibid, 51.

⁸ James Madison, "Federalist #46" in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Clinton Rossiter, (New York: Penguin Publishing, 1999), 262.

⁹ Ibid, 263.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes and from different quarters much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth, as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it... and indignantly frown upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.¹⁰

In his remarks, Washington demonstrates the importance of maintaining a collective, national identity, rather than becoming divided upon loyalties that are subservient to the collective good. Washington also points that the power of faction could cause geographical sections of the country to alienate one another, thus eroding the significance and importance of the Union in protecting individual and common happiness.

After several years of operation, the powers of state and federal government were put to the test in the benchmark case of *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819). The conditions of the case were that the United States had created a national bank and placed branches nationally, with the branch in Baltimore being the busiest in the nation. In 1818, the Maryland legislature adopted "An Act to impose a Tax on all Banks or Branches thereof in the State of Maryland not chartered by the legislature."¹¹ On top of that measure, Maryland also called for stiff penalties on banks that violated the act. The Second Bank of the United States was not chartered by the State of Maryland, and thus fell subject to the

¹⁰ George Washington, "Farewell Address" in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. Erik Bruun & Jay Crosby, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 92.

¹¹ "McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)" in *Constitutional Law (14th ed.)*, ed. Kathleen M. Sullivan & Gerald Gunther, (New York: Foundation Press, 2001), 86.

penalties enumerated in the Act. Consequently, the United States sued Maryland on the constitutionality of its law. The case became the defining case law concerning the powers of the several states and the power of the federal government. Chief Justice John Marshall delivered the opinion of the court, which ruled that state governments are subject to the national government where conflicts of interest occur. Marshall wrote in his opinion, "It may with great reason be contended, that a government entrusted with such ample powers, on the due execution of which the happiness and prosperity of the nation so vitally depends, must also be entrusted with ample means for their execution."¹² Marshall bases his reasoning on the "Necessary and Proper" clause in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution which mandates that Congress has the power to "Make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution, the forgoing powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof."¹³ Since Congress does possess the power to establish banks, it is only "necessary and proper" that the Constitution allows Congress to preserve that bank with any laws that were deemed necessary for that effect. In rendering the court's decision, Marshall created the precedent that "The Constitution and the laws made in pursuance thereof are supreme, that they control the constitution and laws of the representative states, and cannot be controlled by them."¹⁴

The nation was divided geographically by tradition into two very distinct cultures. The southern states, whose primary industry was agriculture, depended in large part, upon slavery for economic and cultural significance.¹⁵ In contrast, "The generation that fought the Revolution abolished slavery in states north of the Mason Dixon line; the new states north of the Ohio River came into the Union without bondage."¹⁶ This significant aspect of the cultural divide between the northern and southern factions caused a constant battle for equal representation of interests in Congress. Southern states feared an emancipation of their slaves and consequent destruction of its economy and their right to hold property if the northern states gained the edge in Congress. On the other hand, northern states feared the destruction of their free labor economy if slavery was allowed in all territories, forcing wage earners to yield to slavery. Congress delayed addressing the issue of the cultural divide three times before it eventually forced the disintegration of the Union in 1861.

¹² Ibid, 218.

¹³ "Constitution of the United States", A4.

¹⁴ "McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)", 219.

¹⁵ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 8.

¹⁶ Ibid, 7.

Until 1820, new western territories of the United States that were admitted into the Union were subject to the eastern tradition of those states that had entered before concerning the issue of slavery. In other words, if the state directly to the east of the territory petitioning to enter into the Union were free, the new state would be free as well. However, this principle of admission was turned on its head with the petition to enter the Union from Missouri.

Missouri petitioned to enter the Union as a slave state, even though a majority of the proposed state was bordered to the east by free states. This issue put Congress up in arms because the north feared a loss of rightfully free territory. If precedent was continued, the south would now have a larger portion of territory east of prospective states that would in turn create more slave states and upset the balance of power in Congress. In 1820, Henry Clay, a senator for Kentucky, proposed the Missouri Compromise, which allowed Missouri to enter as a slave state and granted statehood to a free labor Maine, in order to balance the power in Congress. Furthermore, section 8 of the Missouri Compromise proposed that a line be drawn at 36° 30' in the western territories, for the purposes of determining which territories would be admitted as slave or free states.¹⁷ Congress adopted the legislation.

The execution of this legislation had a perverse effect on the nation. While Madison and other Founding Fathers believed that factions would be inevitable in the United States, they did not comprehend them to be as large geographically as the north and south. The founders expected more of a plurality where numerous, smaller, factions would vie for power, not two large factions. The Missouri Compromise cemented the faction of the north against the faction of the south, because it rooted each by law to a specific geographical area. Little room was left for compromise between the two, because neither could reach out to extend influence (as is the natural tendency of competing powers) due to restrictions in law. Thus, the rift between the two regions grew deeper, and the precautions outlined in George Washington's "Farewell Address" were ignored as America's national identity began to crumble from existence.

In 1832, Congress passed a law that was enacted by President Jackson, which imposed a tariff on foreign manufacturers to protect the industries primarily concentrated in the north. The ramifications of this act in the south were adverse. Prices on domestic goods rose considerably. The tariffs also stifled the cotton trade with foreign countries such as the United

¹⁷ "Missouri Compromise", in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. Erik Bruun & Jay, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 219-220.

Kingdom.¹⁸ In the eyes of Southerners, this act was clearly an imposition on their cultural and economic identity by the north. South Carolina, in November of 1832, passed a "Doctrine of Nullification" in which it declared the tariffs to be null and void in the state. John Calhoun, the Vice President from South Carolina, is given credit for creating the doctrine, which was a direct violation of the principles established in *McCulloch v. Maryland*. He argued that:

By no other device, could the separate governments of the several States, as the weaker of the two, prevent the government of the United States, as the stronger, from encroaching on that portion of the reserved powers allotted to them, and finally absorbing the whole; except, indeed, by so organizing the former, as to give each of the States, a concurrent voice in making and administering the laws; and of course, a veto in this action.¹⁹

Calhoun's belief was that the federal government and the governments of the several states were coordinate in nature, and that the two were granted powers by the Founding Fathers to maintain a balance of power. Calhoun feared the national government was becoming a consolidation of power outside of its Constitutional limits. Calhoun believed in 1832, despite the reasoning of Madison that the states were stronger, the federal government was becoming too strong for its own good and that each state had a fundamental right to protect its own interests by declaring certain federal laws null and void.

Andrew Jackson, a southerner himself, who was also an advocate of the rights of states, became quite alarmed with the apparent secession of South Carolina. He wrote to the people of the state:

The Constitution of the United States forms a government, not a league; and whether it be formed by compact between states or in any other matter, its character is the same. It is a government in which all of the people are represented, which operates upon the people

¹⁸ Andrew Jackson, "Proclamation to the People of South Carolina" in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. Erik Bruun & Jay Crosby, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 240.

¹⁹ John C. Calhoun, "Discourse on Government" in *The Papers of John C. Calhoun* (Vol. 13), (University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 159.

individually, not upon the states; they retain the powers they did not grant.²⁰

Jackson's words were a direct confrontation on the beliefs of Calhoun, who argued passionately that the Constitution rested on the authority of the several states and not upon the people as individuals. He based this on his definition of a federal government:

[The government] is federal because it is a government of states united in a political union, in contradistinction to a government of individuals socially united; that is by what is usually called a social compact. To express it more concisely, it is federal and not national, because it is the government of a community of states, and not the government of a single nation."²¹

Calhoun believed that the current Union of the United States, as established by the Constitution, was nothing other than a continuation of the spirit of the Articles of Confederation. He believed that the people vested their power in to the states, and that through their agency in the form of conventions, the states, not a national popular vote, had created the existing Union.²² Just like any other contract, the states had reserved for themselves the power to exit from that contract if it was violated by a vote of the state's convention, not the legislature.

After a legislative compromise in the spring of 1833, South Carolina decided to stay in the Union. The argument started by Jackson and Calhoun about where the sovereignty of the Union truly lies created the foundation for the basis of the Civil War.

The Compromise of 1850 ushered in a new policy to the petitions of new states from the western territories. Southerners were growing increasingly concerned when the Oregon Territory voted to ban slavery in 1848 and California petitioned to enter the Union as a free state in 1849. Once again, by 1850 southerners were calling for secession. Clay responded in a two-day speech he delivered to the Senate in February, saying the Union was like "a marriage that no human authority can dissolve or divorce the parties from."²³ He also continued by stating that "the dissolution of the Union and war are identical and inseparable; that they are convertible terms."²⁴ In contrast, John C. Calhoun stated shortly

²⁰ Jackson, "Proclamation to the People of South Carolina" 240.

²¹ Calhoun, 72.

²² Ibid, 87.

²³ Ibid, 302.

²⁴ Ibid.

before his death, "The [south] has already surrendered so much that she has little left to surrender."²⁵ Once again, Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky created a compromise; California would be a free state, the Union would enact a tougher fugitive slave law, slavery would be banned in the District of Columbia, and the Union would assume Texas' sizable debt.²⁶

In 1854, the doctrine of popular sovereignty was adopted to replace the Missouri Compromise as the major method of determining slavery in new states. Under this new method, citizens of the territory addressed the issue by a public referendum. Opponents of the method claimed that it was the responsibility of Congress to regulate slavery in the new territories, and the issue was beyond the scope of the people of the territory to decide. Stephen Douglas wrote in defense of popular sovereignty:

It is impossible to resist the conclusion that if the Constitution does establish slavery in the territories, beyond the power of the people to control it by law, it is the imperative duty of Congress to supply all the legislation necessary to its protection, and if this proposition is not true, it necessarily results that the Constitution neither establishes nor prohibits slavery any-where, but leaves the people of each state and territory entirely free to form and regulate their domestic affairs to suit themselves.²⁷

The first case where popular sovereignty was applied was to Kansas in 1854. As a direct response to the Kansas issue and popular sovereignty, the Republican Party was founded in Jackson, Michigan in 1854. This new party opposed popular sovereignty and slavery, which allowed it to gain an easy foothold in the northern states. In the election of 1856, John Fremont was the Republican's presidential nominee. Though he failed in his bid for the presidency, the support that he gathered in northern states was cause for alarm in the south because, "In only four slave states (all in upper South) did Fremont tickets appear, and the Republicans won considerably less than one percent of the vote in these states."²⁸ To southern states, the Republican's success in

²⁵ John C. Calhoun, "The South has Little Left to Surrender" in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. NaErik Bruun & Jay Crosby, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 304.

²⁶ Henry Clay, "The Compromise of 1850" in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. Erik Bruun & Jay Crosby, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 301.

²⁷ Stephen Douglas, "Popular Sovereignty in the Territories," *Harpers Magazine*, (Vol. XIII, September 1859), 519-537.

²⁸ McPherson, 158.

northern states indicated a general public backing to anti-slavery ideals. This increased further the gap between the two geographical factions.

With the emergence of the Republican Party, a lawyer from Illinois entered the party's leadership as a standard bearer of its cause. Abraham Lincoln rose to national prominence when he ran against incumbent Senator Stephen Douglas in 1858. Douglas was the author of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which introduced popular sovereignty in the two states. In one of several debates, Lincoln addressed the continual conflict between the north and the south. "I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved – I do not expect the house to fall – but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other."²⁹ Douglas on the other hand advocated a separation of morality and politics; "The Union was more important than the slavery question and that to involve politics with moral questions was to court the destruction of the nation."³⁰ To Douglas and his electorate, the issue was more complex than the moral right or wrong that Lincoln and the Republican Party had portrayed it to be, though more and more people began to listen to the Republicans. The public took up the issue as being beyond the scope of mere politics and embraced it as a moral issue of life and death in both the north and the south.

Was the issue of slavery in the Constitution? Or was it a moral issue, outside of the realm of politics and the Constitution, as Douglas preached? Southerners claimed that a Constitutional right in the form of Article IV, Section 2 protected slaves, as property. However, to Northerners, Article IV, Section 2 only makes mention of people that are "...held to Service or Labor..."³¹, it does not make any specific mention of the institution of slavery or slaves at all, thus indicating that perhaps the Founding Fathers had intended to rid the Union of the institution.

Despite the growing popularity of the Republican Party, Lincoln lost the 1858 Senate race, but shortly after won the 1860 presidential election. He did not receive any southern electoral votes, clearly demonstrating the south's abhorrence to Lincoln and the Republican's objectives. One Southerner wrote she heard someone on a train shout, "Now that the black radical Republicans

²⁹ Abraham Lincoln, "House Divided" Speech in *Abraham Lincoln the Orator: Penetrating the Lincoln Legend*, Lois J. Einhorn, (Westport, CT; Greenwood Press, 1992), 135.

³⁰ Robert W. Johannsen ed., *The Lincoln Douglas Debates of 1858*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1965), 7.

³¹ "Constitution of the United States", A7.

have the power, I suppose they'll brown us all."³² Shortly after the election of Lincoln, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union on December 24, 1864. Their "Declaration of the Causes of Secession" declared "that the frequent violations of the Constitution of the United States by the Federal Government, and its encroachments upon the reserved rights of the States, fully justified this State in their withdraw from the Federal Union."³³ The document continued by stating that the election of Lincoln, and his statement that the country cannot stand divided, indicates the northern states constitute that the majority of the national public "must rest in the belief that Slavery is in the course of ultimate extinction."³⁴

Surprisingly, the Doctrine of Nullification and states' rights were not held exclusively in the south. South Carolina cited one of the reasons for its secession were "Personal Liberty Acts" which not only defied legislation put contradicted Article IV of the Constitution which states, "No person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up, on claim of the party to whom such service or labor is due."³⁵ Most northern states had passed laws similar to the Massachusetts Personal Liberty Act of 1855, which made it illegal in the state to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.³⁶ This explicitly defied the Constitutional ruling of *McCulloch v. Maryland*, and had placed into jeopardy the rights of southerners to their personal property. In such a way, they perceived that the Constitution of the United States, as a contract, had already been breached by one party, and they were legitimate in acting on the belief that their responsibility to the Union had been abdicated.

Several southern states had seceded from the Union by the time that Lincoln took the Oath of Office in March of 1861. Yet, Lincoln held steadfast to the idea that secession from the Union on the part of any state, was not constitutionally legal. In his Inaugural Address, Lincoln told the southern states, "It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Confine to execute all the

³² Mary Chestnut, November 8, 1860, in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. Erik Bruun & Jay Crosby, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 340.

³³ "South Carolina Declaration of Causes of Secession", in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. Erik Bruun & Jay Crosby, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 340-342.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "Constitution of the United States", A7.

³⁶ "Massachusetts Personal Liberty Act", in *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents*, ed. Erik Bruun & Jay Crosby, (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), 314-315.

express provisions of our national Constitution, and the Union will endure forever, it being impossible to destroy, except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.”³⁷ The idea of the perpetual nature of the Union motivated Lincoln’s arguments against the idea of secession.

The situation that Abraham Lincoln found himself in seventy years after the adoption of the Constitution was unthinkable to the Founding Fathers. James Madison wrote of civil war:

that the governments and the people of the States should silently and patiently behold the gathering storm and continue to supply the material until it should be prepared to burst on their own heads must appear to everyone more like the incoherent dreams of a delirious jealousy, or the misjudged exaggerations of a counterfeit zeal, than like the sober apprehensions of a genuine patriotism.³⁸

The idea of a civil war between the states, or between the federal government and those of the states was out of the question to the framers of the Constitution. Therefore, it is sufficient to say that the government of the United States as a whole, and true to its founding intentions, does not allow the right of secession to any nationality or state. That the events leading up to the Civil War resulted in such an atrocity, rather than the compromise that the American people are renowned for, is due to the fact that law geographically contained Northern and Southern factions. In turn this led each faction to subjugate the Constitution of the United States to their individual state constitutions by declaring null certain federal acts of Congress. Therefore, secession is nothing short of a revolution not called for in the Constitution of the United States

³⁷ Abraham Lincoln, “First Inaugural Address” in *Abraham Lincoln the Orator: Penetrating the Lincoln Legend*, Lois J. Einhorn, (Westport, CT; Greenwood Press, 1992), 171.

³⁸ James Madison, 267.

The Verdict Is In: A Study in "The Judge's" Stance on the Labor Question in 1882

LAURA KILLIPS

THE 1880s WERE VOLATILE years in industrial America. The influx of foreigners from Europe, the rapid shift towards an industrial economy, and a need to rebuild after the depression of the seventies were all fodder for political and social upheaval. This upheaval, which came in the form of calls for labor reform or strikes, has been thoroughly documented and commented upon by newspapers and magazines of the time, as well as by historians today. One of these magazines was *The Judge*, a partisan weekly that gained credibility and prestige during the 1884 presidential election. *The Judge* was the only prominent political humor magazine at the time to be backed by a political party. A Republican magazine since its inception, *The Judge's* cartoonists and editorial staff worked to support the Republican cause through its cartoons and comments.¹

The cartoons and editorials of magazines such as *The Judge* provide the historian with an invaluable resource with which he or she can better understand this era. The purpose of this study is to use cartoons from *The Judge* in the early 1880s, specifically 1882, to show that, while the Republican Party supported worker's rights, even those of women, it opposed radical attempts, such as striking, to change the system.² The cartoons in this study illustrate three of *The Judge's* views. First, women laborers were in particular need of protection, as Republicans believed that morality and family values were often carried on by women. Second, improvements in the working and

¹ Richard E. Marschall, "A History of Puck, Judge and Life" in Maurice Horn (ed) *The World Encyclopedia of Cartoons*, (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1980), 723.

² Democrats also claimed to be "the friend of labor and the laboring man." The vast majority of laborers in the 1880's were first or second-generation immigrants, many of whom were loyal to the Democratic Party, especially in New York. In order to gain supporters of the political machine, Democrats often provided immigrants and laborers with necessities such as free coal in the winter. The difference between these two political parties can be seen in the Democratic platform of 1884. The Democratic Party favored "the repeal of all laws restricting the free action of labor." On one hand this gives the workers some rights by which to protect themselves. On the other it challenges the attempts by Republicans to protect the workers with legislation such as the 8-hour workday. Kirk H. Porter and Donald Bruce Johnson (eds), *National Party Platforms: 1840-1956*, (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1956), 57, 67.

living conditions for all laborers were necessary. No longer should the working class be forced to live under slave-like conditions. Finally, these improvements could not and should not be the result of laborers' strikes, as strikes were thought of as a movement brought on by radicals that served only to hurt others in the United States as well as the United States economy.

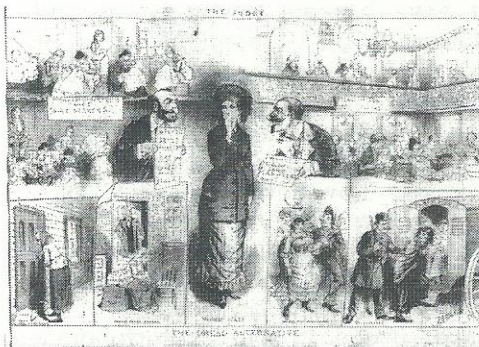
By the time the 1880s had rolled around, America had settled into the industrial routine. Those "self made men" continued to push for higher output and even higher profits from their companies, while the workers toiled day in and day out to meet their bosses' demands. Those of the "self made man" ilk believed that in a capitalist society such as the U.S., those who owned the factories had every right to determine how it was run, which meant they could pay their employees as much, or as little, as they liked. The average loom tender in the early 1880s, for example, earned about \$1.48 per day. What's more is that these workers could be docked as much as \$5 for various offenses such as breaking a part of the machinery or talking during the workday.³ If the average workweek was six days long, a factory girl made only about \$8.50 a week, which would make any fine a hardship. Often factory girls would go hungry or without adequate clothing or shelter because their earnings were not enough to buy the necessities.

All women who worked; however, did not work in the factory. Some were domestic servants; such as nannies, cooks and the like. One profession that garnered special attention was that of the "lady cashier." These were women who worked in a "concert house", which was essentially a saloon or a bar. For the most part these women served the men beer and food, and, in return for money, kept them company while they ate and drank. Most of these women were bar maids and stage performers who needed to earn a living. There were those; however, who accused these women of prostitution, which was true of many of the women, and was one of the things that gave these concert houses such a bad reputation.⁴

³ Susan Levine, *Labor's True Woman: Carpet Weavers, Industrialization and Labor Reform in the Gilded Age* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 57-59.

⁴ Brooks McNamara, *The New York Concert Saloon: The Devil's Own Nights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1.

The Judge explores the problems that these two occupations present in "The Dread Alternative" found in the February 11, 1882 issue. In this cartoon the artist argues that it is wrong to place women in a position in which they must choose between two evils: to either starve to death working in the factory or to become degraded and immoral working in a concert house. To argue his thesis, the artist contrasts the two occupations in a



series of frames that culminate in a common picture of degradation and sadness between the women. Only one factory woman is smiling in this cartoon, while nearly all of the lady cashiers are. Also, the factory workers are all working diligently to make new garments while dressed in rags

themselves. The lady cashiers, on the other hand, seem to enjoy themselves in the party-like atmosphere of the concert house, dressed in all the finery a woman could desire. By juxtaposing these two occupations, the artist attempts to show that to live the life of a lady cashier would be the preferred choice. What woman would rather work her fingers to the bone for little in return, than spend her time having fun and making enough to provide for herself?

The final frame of each occupation shows a woman dressed in rags and obviously unhappy. The factory worker, after working long, tiring hours, is left to live on a sidewalk, unable to make enough to even provide a roof over her head. The lady cashier, after all of her time spent dressed up in gowns and jewelry, is also degraded, clothed in rags and carted off to jail. This shows that both occupations led a woman towards unhappiness, even though a lady cashier had a much better time getting there. It is important for the artist to make this point because he is arguing that women need a better alternative. A choice between starving and immorality is not really a choice at all.

One cultural referent that is used in this cartoon is the large nose, beard and moustache drawn to depict a stereotypical Jewish man. This is used to stir emotions within the viewer, as Jews were often thought of as evil misers who only cared about making a profit. They were also known for their position within the garment trade. As Jews immigrated to the United States, they

found a place within the garment industry, both as laborers and manufacturers.⁵

It is not surprising that *The Judge* weekly would take this position on this issue. *The Judge* made no attempt to hide its partisanship. It was, and always would be, a Republican magazine. Republicans of this time were concerned with protecting womanhood and providing for the safety of the family unit.⁶ The editorial refers to those who fall victim to the concert house as "beautiful girls who might have become happy wives and mothers," which was in line with the Republican ideal of protecting womanhood and the family. Furthermore, this cartoon fulfilled the Republican goal to protect laborers in general. As ex-governor of Massachusetts John D. Long claimed "by the very law of its being, [the Republican Party was] the faithful protector of rights of American labor, wherever or howsoever employed."⁷ Not only was this cartoon meant to show the evils of the concert house, it was more importantly meant to show why factory girls needed higher wages. They were starving and forced to become immoral women rather than wives and mothers, as a woman should.

Both contemporary and secondary sources corroborate *Judge's* take on this issue. First, women did not think they were not paid enough, as evidenced in the fact that meetings of the Woman's Protective Unions were held in order to fight for shorter hours and better wages.⁸ If women were not being taken advantage of, there would be no use for such a union. There is no specific contemporary corroboration that shows that women were often left homeless due to poor wages however; there are articles that describe the homeless in New York and the various ways to help them, which shows that there must be some problem with wages. Furthermore, the claims that concert houses led to immorality and even jail are corroborated in the *New York Times*. One article describes a Chatham Street concert house that was closed in 1881 and the five women that were arrested there.⁹ Also, a more specific article referred to Mrs. Emma Dobson, whose husband compelled her to work in one of the concert houses. When her family heard of this they found her at work and admonished her for her immorality. Dobson and her husband were arrested and she tried to commit suicide because she was so embarrassed at her

⁵ Oscar Handlin, *Adventure in Freedom: Three Hundred Years of Jewish Life in America* (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1954), 92-93.

⁶ Melanie Gustafson, Kristie Miller, and Elisabeth Israels Perry *We Have Come to Stay: American Women and Political Parties, 1880-1960* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1999) 15.

⁷ John D. Long, *The Republican Party: it's History, Principles and Policies* (New York: The M.W. Hazen Co, 1888), 114.

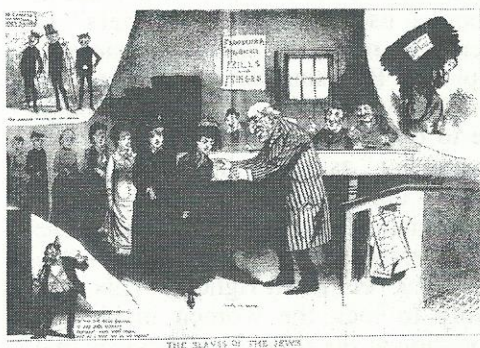
⁸ *New York Times*, article "Protection for Working Women". February 7, 1882.

⁹ *New York Times*, "A Chatham-Street Den Closed", article, July 25, 1881

indiscretion.¹⁰ This article not only again shows that women who worked in these saloons did end up in jail; it also shows that the occupation of lady cashier was thought by others to cause immorality, which was such an embarrassing fate that Dobson was willing to commit suicide rather than live with the shame.

A secondary source; however, argues the other side of this point. According to Brooks McNamara, author of *The New York Concert Saloon*, "concert saloons did not produce...nearly as much 'blue' material as reformers seemed to indicate."¹¹ "Blue" material was often the reason that concert houses got their bad reputations, as it was lewd and corrupted those who performed it as well as those who witnessed it. This disparity between the two sources suggests that both *Judge* and the *New York Times* had a bias. And as *Judge* was a Republican magazine and the *New York Times* was a Republican newspaper (at that point in history), this bias is understandable; "Republicans of the Gilded Age developed three themes repeatedly in their platforms, newspapers, speeches, and campaign appeals: patriotism, prosperity, and morality."¹² To those who held this view, any situation that led to women drinking and carousing with men should be held to scrutiny.

Another cartoon found in *The Judge* also deals with



women's roles within the working world. The cartoon, "The Slaves of the Jews," found in the December 9, 1882 issue, was precipitated by an incident between Jessie Maillard, an eighteen year old woman, and Joseph J. Levi, a lace importer. The two met in 1879, and a relationship began,

causing Maillard to run away from home to live with Mr. Levi. Levi left for Europe for some time, while Maillard gave birth to a son, whom she claimed belonged to Levi. As he was in Europe when Maillard gave birth, she turned to his brother for assistance. Emil S. Levi told Jessie that the child was sickly and expressed hope that he would die, and that he would pay the burial expenses. Maillard switched her son with a sickly child, who in fact died on September 18. On November 28, Maillard charged Levi with bastardry, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. After the trial he

¹⁰ *New York Times*, "Attempted Suicide in Prison," article, April 16, 1880.

¹¹ McNamara, *The New York Concert Saloon*, 17.

¹² Robert W. Cherny, *American Politics in the Gilded Age 1868-1900* (Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1997), 22.

in turn charged her with perjury, for her insistence that he was the baby's father, which he argued was not true. At the time of this cartoon the case had not been resolved.¹³

The artist of this cartoon used this situation as a chance to make generalizations about Jewish men in general, Jewish men as employers, and perhaps most important, the plight of women laborers. Here he argues that Jewish employers take advantage of their female workers, and calls on the good nature of other employers to provide these women with another choice so they do not feel compelled to go into the service of a Jewish man. As with another cartoon in this study, *The Judge* uses the phrase "slaves" to incite emotion among the viewers, who were still familiar with the institution of slavery. As this was a Republican magazine, *The Judge* (had it been around at the time) would have likely argued for an end to slavery, and, like the readers of this magazine, it likely thought ill of the institution. In this simple connection between these women and slaves, the cartoonist is able to paint a picture of inhumane and unfair treatment without actually drawing it.

What the cartoonist does draw is a cartoon with several different frames. In all of these frames Jewish men are caricatured with an extra large nose, a stereotype of Jews. Three men stand in the upper corner. The cartoonist uses the word "mashers" to describe them, which are men who make unwanted advances at women, especially in public places. By using the term "mashers" instead of their names, or even the fact that they're Jewish (though he uses the exaggerated nose to depict that), the artist is able to make the viewer see "masher" and "Jew" as one in the same.

Another man in the lower corner of the cartoon is shown with the same physical characteristics. He also speaks with the Yiddish tongue ("it vos not mien pizness if dey ged's burned---dey mus' earn dose vages, und so I lock 'em in all righd."). This man holds a large key, presumably to lock the women inside the factory, a practice that was common at the time. The idea was that if women could not leave the factory, they would work harder and produce more goods. This abuse eventually led to the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist fire of 1911, though it is unclear if there is a specific fire that this man is referring to, as building fires were very common at this time. His statement that he does not care if the women get burned, they must work, leads one to think of a fire and of the injuries or death it could cause if the women were locked inside the factory. Contemporary sources; however, do not specifically mention people dying in such a manner around this time.

¹³ *New York Times*, "Mr. Levi's Victim," article, September 9, 1882.

The center of this cartoon shows a Jewish man in a garment factory, choosing women from a line of good-looking women. According to the editorial, Jewish men only chose good-looking women for their factories so that they may flirt and possibly have relations with them. This is further supported by the papers hanging from the desk that say the women have to be beautiful and blond. *The Judge* places none of the blame on the women, citing that they must put up with the insults so that they can earn money. Also, to appeal to its largely middle class readers, *The Judge* makes these women look respectable and demure, even though by now these women applying for factory jobs are of the lower class. This is not to say that those of the lower class were not respectable, but the depictions of them were not always so kind. By drawing these women in such a way, the cartoonist is able to make the subjects more recognizable, somebody the reader can relate to. This is how a cartoonist is able to elicit a response; otherwise the reader might be detached and disinterested in the drawing. Furthermore, the cartoonist placed the cartoon in a garment factory, which, as already mentioned, was often owned by Jewish men. This helps to reinforce the Jewish stereotype to help the cartoonist make his point.

The editorial recalls the case of Mr. Levi and Jessie Maillard not because they had an employer/employee relationship, but because it was a prominent news item about a Jewish man who "ruined" a well-educated woman from a good family. It was less about the two people and more about the fact that he was Jewish and allegedly forced this woman to go through such a process. In reminding people of this event, the cartoonist is able to form a connection in their mind of all that is wrong with Jewish men. The readers are likely to side with the women and the cartoonist in this instance because they will remember the story of Jessie Malliard and how it was a Jewish man who "ruined" her.

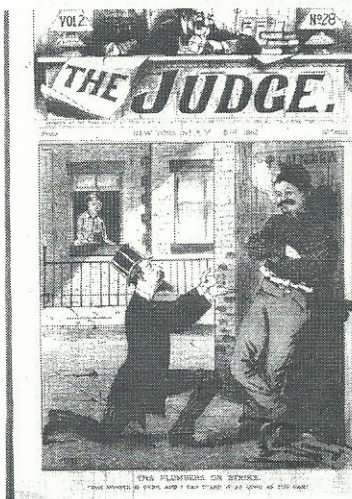
The idea that the Jewish man was bad, or evil, can be corroborated with contemporary sources. In one *New York Times* article, for example, a woman was upset because her husband had killed a man, and then went to jail for it. She was consoled by a bystander who told her that it was "only a Jew, gentle lady; only for killing a Jew."¹⁴ This shows that a Jewish man was not worth much in the eyes of those WASPS who lived in the 1880s. Furthermore, the titles of *New York Times* articles use the word "victim" when referring to the situation between Maillard and Levi. Before readers even get to the article, they have in mind that Maillard is the victim of Levi (a common Jewish name). Those who wrote the articles passed judgment on what they already knew about a Jewish man, and believed in the innocence of this woman.

¹⁴ *New York Times*, "Only a Jew," article, April 16, 1882.

Oscar Handlin's book, *Adventure in Freedom*, does not corroborate this idea of the negative Jewish stereotype of the Gilded Age. He agrees that, yes, Jews *were* stereotyped. Distinctive names, such as Cohen, and clothing, such as derby hats, both of which we see present in this cartoon, were used to stereotype a Jew. The accent, large hooked nose and miserly disposition were also used to depict the Jews, all things that are prevalent in this cartoon. Handlin argues, however, that these stereotypes were not used to create a negative image. Furthermore, Handlin argues that Jews were not seen as misers, rather as princes whom ruled the "great fortunes of the world."¹⁵ In *The Judge*, however, the editorial calls Jews "cheap and cunning" and uses the

stereotypes while conveying the message of a Jewish man's debauchery. Thus, one can see that a bias is present, either in Handlin's text or in the cartoon and contemporary sources. The stereotyping used to argue against Jews could be a result of *The Judge* and the *New York Times*'s Republican bias. This bias would lead one to believe that things foreign were inherently evil, as the Republicans were the "patriotic party" (or so they called themselves.)

Women were not the only laborers that *The Judge* sympathized with. The magazine spoke out against labor practices in general, and argued for change. In the cartoon "A Contrast," *The Judge* compares the life of a laborer in 1882 to the life of a slave in 1860. By comparing whites to blacks, and black slaves none the less, the cartoonist attempts to elicit an emotional response that would be somewhere along the lines of indignant or enraged among the readers of *The Judge*. Though it was the Republican Party that helped to free the slaves, it was still the ultimate insult to be compared to a black person, in that Republicans believed in freedom but not necessarily equality. Like many of the other cartoons, it is hard to argue that there was one specific precipitating event which instigated this one. Rather, the artist uses the presumably well-known conditions of the time to argue against the current system of labor, which is in effect, another form of slavery.



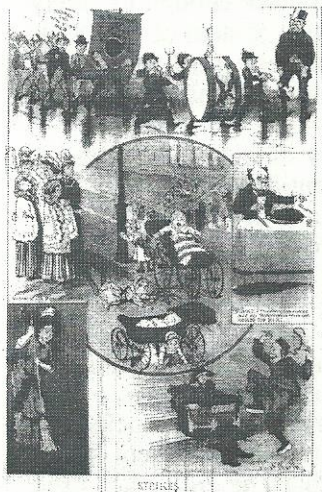
¹⁵ Oscar Handlin, *Adventure in Freedom: three hundred years of Jewish life in America*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), 181-182.

The editorial is short, and says that this cartoon speaks for itself about the horrors of the present labor system. And it does. All of the frames of the black slave portray a group of smiling, well fed, content people who don't have to worry about keeping a roof over their heads or how they will be taken care of when they die. The white slaves, however, look exhausted and ill cared for. They work 14 hours a day, after which they return to a home that is a dilapidated "death trap". By contrasting these two images, one of the black slave who has time to laugh and dance, and who has *reason* to laugh and dance, and the other of the white slave who works all day every day only to make enough to barely survive, the cartoonist is arguing that the labor system of the 1880s is faulty. It has created a new class of slaves who live under a system even more harsh than the one Republicans had just fought to end.

By using the institution of slavery as a cultural referent, the artist is able to get the viewers to identify with the laborers, and to make the connection in their minds and in their hearts. They will be angered not only because whites are being treated in such a manner, but also because all of their work and sacrifice to end the institution of slavery has been for nothing. The institution is back and affects those with whom they can identify because of their race. The editorial asks "who will step up and 'emancipate' the laborers". The use of the word "emancipate" is another part of this cultural referent in that the viewers will remember emancipating the slaves and will remember why they emancipated them. Since this is the second time during this study that *The Judge* has used the institution of slavery to argue against the plight of the laborers, one can assume that society was still sensitive towards this issue. The Civil War had ended seventeen years before this cartoon was drawn, so most of the readers of *The Judge* would have remembered the war and would have had at least some memory of slavery.

One of the most emotive aspects of this cartoon is that these laborers could not find sanctuary even in their own homes. Upon examination of Jacob Riis' study of tenement life in *How the Other Half Lives*, one can understand why *The Judge* called these buildings "death traps". In one part of his study, first published in 1890, Riis refers to research done by an English doctor, who determined that the soldiers who received little or no sunlight in their barracks were one hundred percent more likely to die than those who received ample amounts of the sun's rays. Apply this to the fact that many of those who lived in tenements lived in interior rooms where there were no windows and one can determine that lack of sunlight could have led to poor health and even death.

Lack of sunlight was not the only cause of death, and probably not even the most common cause. Fires also occurred with regularity, and often fire escapes were "so placed that they could not be reached. The firemen had to look twice before they could find the opening that passes for a thoroughfare."¹⁶ As a result one can find headlines from the time that read "Ten Lives Lost in a Fire,"¹⁷ Other headlines also corroborate the suffering that *The Judge* speaks of: "The Terrible Death Rate: The effect of the Hot Weather upon Children in the Squalid Tenement Districts,"¹⁸ and, "Death and Discomfort in the Tenement-Houses".¹⁹ These corroborate the lack of human compassion that



was offered the working class (comparable to the plight of the slaves) by using statistical evidence that these tenement houses caused death. The words that the paper chose to use also provide corroboration. The word "squalid" stands out as an obviously biased word. If the *New York Times* thought that tenement houses were all that the working class deserved, it would not have used such a word as "squalid." This word alone helps to corroborate *The Judge's* position on the plight of the working class.

Surprisingly, not all secondary sources corroborate the idea that the working class lived in squalor. Historian George H. Rodeo Jr. suggests in his article "Coming to Our Senses" that while living conditions were admittedly not the best, reformers of the time were often biased towards what they were unfamiliar with. Jacob Riis, Rodeo argues, had made himself in the image of an unbiased reformer, but because this was a label he had given himself. It should be taken at face value. Riis came from a middle class environment, so when he saw the conditions such as they were in the tenements and the slums of New York, his senses were more shocked or offended than, say, someone who was familiar with the area. This shock to his senses rather than intellect could have caused his bias to surface.

The same would hold true for the reformers in *The Judge*. If they were not familiar with a certain way of living, they could easily see only the bad in the situation, rather than the good. "Riis'

¹⁶ Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1957), 31.

¹⁷ *New York Times*, "Ten Lives Lost in a Fire," article, January 5, 1881.

¹⁸ *New York Times*, "The Terrible Death Rate," article, July 4, 1880.

¹⁹ *New York Times*, "The Sun's Pitiless Rays," article, July 6, 1880.

grim view of tenement life, which reflected his secure middle class position, stood in marked contrast to many immigrants' remembrances of the tenement districts vibrant street life, resonating with the melodies of organ grinders and the cries of peddlers, baked potato and hot corn vendors and soda dispensers."²⁰ This shows that, as a middle or upper class observer of the problem, rather than a working class participant, *The Judge* may have been biased because it was unfamiliar with the conditions at the same level as those who lived under them.

Although *The Judge* was often sympathetic towards the workers, and agreed that they were too often taken advantage of, it did not support striking as a solution to the problem. Because the Republican Party was the party of "patriotism" and "prosperity" it did not support strikers because often a striker was thought to be too radical. A striker was repeatedly seen as anything from a communist to an anarchist who did not believe in the American ideal of capitalism. Thus, a magazine that supported the Republican cause would not look favorably upon those who were thought to threaten it.

One of these strikes was the Plumbers' Strike which started in April of 1882. According to P.K. Edwards, author of *Strikes in the United States 1881-1974*, plumbers were considered part of the building trades, a booming industry at the time. Because there was not a ready labor supply to take their place when they struck, the plumbers had more leverage than those of other trades. Strikes were common among the building trades, as twenty five percent of the companies in the building trades had workers on strike in 1882. These strikes, including this one, were over wage increases.²¹ Members of the Association of Master Plumbers met to demand that those belonging to their association receive the uniform wage of \$4.00 per day. In the cartoon, "The Plumbers on Strike: the winter is over and I can stand it as long as you can," *The Judge's* cartoonist argues that the plumbers are merely greedy, and want to be paid more than what they are worth. *The Judge's* vehement reaction, as seen in this cartoon and in the editorial, is more than just a reaction against the plumbers; however, it is also a reaction against what it deemed "un-American".

The cartoon itself is a fairly simple one. It shows a plumber, obviously of the lower class, leaning against a building leisurely smoking a cigarette. A man of higher status, which is inferred from his coat and top hat, bends down on one knee in front of the plumber imploring him to go back to work. A woman

²⁰ George H. Rodeo Jr., "Coming to Our Senses," *The Journal of American History* Vol. 81 No. 3 *The Practice of American History: A Special Issue*, (December 1994), 1115-1116.

²¹ P.K. Edwards, *Strikes in the United States 1881-1974* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 98-99.

looks despondently out the window at the two. Because the readers of this magazine are likely to be of at least the same social class as the middle-class man and woman in the cartoon, its message is likely to resonate with them. Viewers will become emotionally involved with these characters because they can empathize with their plight. What's worse is that the plumber seems to enjoy the man's suffering, as he smiles while the man begs. These subtleties help the cartoonist argue that the plumbers are taking advantage of honest citizens by demanding higher wages for less work.

The dress of this plumber leads one to believe that he is Irish, as he has the typical dress: checkered shirt, vest and derby hat, of an Irishman. What is interesting is that it was often the sons of Irish immigrants who became plumbers.²² It is important that the artist chose to dress this man like an Irishman because often second-generation immigrants had assimilated more into the culture than this man has in this cartoon. By dressing the plumber like a stereotypical Irishman, the cartoonist is able to show that the plumbers are "un-American", which is what he wants the viewers to think. By linking the strike with something that is un-American, the artist is able to voice his opinion about strikes in general, and able to lead the viewers to see strikes as un-American, and detrimental to American ideals of capitalism.

The editorial also helps to create a negative image of the striking plumbers. It speaks of "the annihilation of plumbers unless they do the ordinary work...without insisting upon taking the houses in part payment of their bills." In this quote, the editor makes the claim that plumbers are not doing anything extraordinary to deserve extra pay, and that their patrons should not have to, in effect, sacrifice their homes in order to have the plumbing fixed in them. The editorial satirizes the situation by mentioning how the plumber must need a rest after the busy season, and as he doesn't actually need more money after the profits from the winter, he might as well strike. Those who need a plumber's services are "suffering people" who must go without plumbing because the plumber wants to remain undisturbed "in the quiet of his own castle." Phrases like "suffering people" and "his own castle" leave the reader with very distinct pictures in his mind; one of the plumber living the high life while the rest of the community suffers because of his greed.

The *New York Times* corroborates this idea that laborers are going too far in their demands. The article titled "Strikes as a Symptom," found in the April 18, 1882 issue, states that "by

²² *Who Built America? Working People and the Nation's Economy, Politics, Culture and Society: American Social History Project, 1992-1997.*

<http://192.211.16.13/curricular/labor01/whobuilt.html>

insisting upon carrying wages too high and keeping them up too long, [laborers] compel an abrupt check upon activity."²³ Another contemporary source that corroborates this idea is found in William E. Barnes' collection of essays titled *The Labor Problem*. In one essay, political economist Edwin R.A. Seligman argued that arbitration was a much better way to settle disputes, as strikes were merely a waste of time and money, and often led to unnecessary violence.²⁴

One secondary source that does not corroborate the idea that radical socialists or anarchists were behind the strikes is Foster Rhea Dulles' *Labor in America, a History*. According to Dulles' account; "in their outcries against communism and anarchism, the conservatives were greatly exaggerating the radicalism of American labor." He continues by saying that though labor had some left wing tendencies, those in the labor movement were generally more conservative than anything else.²⁵ This suggests, again, that the news sources of the time were biased, as has already been discussed. In this case the bias is against things un-American, such as radical movements against American ideals, something that Americans at this time feared.



The final cartoon of this study also deals with the general climate of strikes in the United States in the early 1880s. And, like the previous cartoon, *The Judge* does not look favorably upon those who choose to or threaten to strike. This political weekly mentions impending "boot-blackers" and "French nurses" strikes, though contemporary sources make no mention of the particular labor groups drawn in this cartoon. (This seems to be a common theme in *The Judge* cartoons, as many of them reflect larger issues in the United States rather than of specific incidents.) Sources do;

however, make endless mention of strikes that were occurring: millers, bricklayers, spinners, carpenters, cartmen, quarrymen and marble cutters just to name a few that occurred in April of 1882, when this cartoon, "Strikes," was published.

²³ *New York Times*, editorial "Strikes as a Symptom," April 18, 1882.

²⁴ William E. Barnes, ed. *The Labor Problem* (New York: Harper and Brothers, Franklin Square, 1886), 59.

²⁵ Foster Rhea Dulles, *Labor in America, a History*, (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1960), 115.

This cartoon uses images intended to shock the viewer in order to argue that the current climate of strikes has gotten out of hand. In the "Strike of the French nurses" frame, the cartoonist draws four children crying and unattended on the sidewalk and in the street. The use of children is an easy way to incite emotion, especially when they appear to be neglected. The fact that the nurses look on as the children remain helpless and unhappy makes the nurses appear selfish, which was often what those of the Republican Party thought of the strikers. In a frame just below this the cartoonist draws a woman obviously from the upper class, sweeping. This too will unsettle the readers in that it upsets the social order of the United States during this time. Genteel women of this class were not expected to worry themselves with domestic duties such as sweeping. *The Judge* argues that if the cook strikes, these genteel women would also have to cook, which means that their husbands would not get desirable meals. There is a phrase "cooked his duck" which in essence means "to make suffer." By using this phrase in the cartoon, the cartoonist is arguing that the strike of the cooks would lead to this gentleman's suffering. By continually showing how the middle/upper class is affected by the strikes the cartoonist is able to portray the strikers as a selfish group. This helps to affect sympathy for the middle and upper class rather than for the laborers.

This sympathy is also called for in the editorial. The editorialist mentions that "our fashionable wives should be called upon to do the culinary!" and that "if the servants should strike...our sisters, cousins, aunt, and daughters...probably would take their places." He continues to argue that even the gentlemen would be called upon to help the women maintain the home, which in this day, was altogether unheard of. Thus, not only do the strikers disrupt the women's lives, they go as far as to impede on the men's lives. This too helps to garner support for the cartoonists opinion, that striking is a selfish enterprise, and that there should be other ways to settle labor disputes.

Corroboration for this line of thinking can be seen in the contemporary sources cited for the previous cartoon. As mentioned, the *New York Times* did not believe that striking was the solution to solving the labor problem. However, its stance was more economically directed rather than personally directed. The demands for "unreal" wages, the *New York Times* argued, would force our economy to fluctuate in a way that is unnatural, and eventually cause a depression.²⁶ Thus, as a Republican newspaper, the *New York Times* agreed with *The Judge* in its stance against strikes, but for a different reason. This difference doesn't

²⁶ *The New York Times*, editorial (April 18, 1882).

necessarily mean that *The Judge* is biased in this instance, because both sources disagree with the idea of strikes. *The Judge* targets people's emotions, while the *New York Times*, as a news source, targets their logic. This cartoon argues against strikes by citing the selfishness of those who would dare strike and make life more difficult for the middle and upper class. In his book *America in the Gilded Age*, however, Sean Dennis Cashman portrays a different idea. He argues as to the plight of the working class, and that their rights to their guild were the same as the capitalists' rights. In his work, Cashman cites economist Henry George's findings that though the Gilded Age created a higher standard of living in America, the working class was largely excluded from it. Cashman also speaks of the plight of labor in that they worked long hours in unhealthy conditions for very low wages: "Millions were denied the basic amenities that their own labor made possible for others."²⁷

In describing the working class in such a way, Cashman refutes the idea that the working class was a selfish lot when they chose to strike. Rather, he argues, striking was a necessity for them to enjoy basic human rights. Furthermore, these rights included rights to their guilds. Many thinkers of the Gilded Age thought that only capitalists had the right to make decisions about their businesses, thus negative thoughts about those who challenged this idea, like strikers, were prevalent. Furthermore, laborers often made attempts to work with the system before striking. When these meetings failed, historian Joseph G. Rayback argues, these laborers saw striking as the last option and as their right.²⁸ Rayback's argument suggests that there was a bias in *The Judge* and in the *New York Times*. While their reasons for arguing against strikes were different, both of these sources argue that strikes were unnecessary and selfish. Cashman and Rayback, argue that it was not selfish. According to them, striking was the right of a worker to fight for a higher standard of living, exhibiting a bias of their own.

All of these cartoons share a common thread about labor in the United States during the 1880s, and all of them are from a magazine with a Republican agenda. However, the cartoons about the plight of laborers and the cartoons about the strikes seem to be two different sides to the coin. While Republicans believed that change needed to be made, and that all laborers should maintain their basic human rights, they did not believe in radical change, or in the groups associated with it. *The Judge's* response to the issue about labor reflects this disparity in its cartoons. The solution to the labor problem, then, lay not in the strength of the workers, but

²⁷ Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age*, 100-103.

²⁸ Joseph G. Rayback, *A History of American Labor* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), 104.

rather in the integrity of the employers. In its cartoons concerning labor problems, *The Judge* calls on employers to do something, to provide the laborers, especially the women, with real choices, not choices between two evils. The next generation witnessed sweeping social change that gave many of these laborers what they sought: fair and humane treatment. It is hard to say that *The Judge* had a direct impact on the Progressive Era, but it at least helped spur the discussion that prompted reform.

"The prejudices with which our sex has been surrounded": Feminism in the French Revolution

ANNE BRESLER

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION was founded on the principles of liberty and equality contained in the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*. Unfortunately, it was also founded on male-centric language that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, excluded females. One of the most contested debates during the French Revolution was whether the rights described in the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* applied to women as well. Some women (and a few men) insisted that the revolutionaries could not consider themselves true proponents of equality if they denied it to half the population. These women are seen as some of the earliest French feminists. However, they were not taken very seriously by the revolutionaries. This paper will examine the gains and losses that French feminists—those who believed in the political, social, and economic equality between men and women—faced in the Revolutionary period, from the initial uprising in July 1789 through the full implementation of the Napoleonic Code in 1804. Although women were eventually granted some legal agency, the reforms requested by feminists for full gender equality as a logical extension of the guiding principles of the French Revolution were generally met with indifference and sometimes outright scorn, despite the significant role women played in 1789.

Before July 1789, women had few legal rights in France—their status was similar to that of minors, children and slaves, with either their fathers or their husbands in complete legal control. Parents could imprison their children (both sons and daughters) until they reached majority at the age of twenty-five. Women were not allowed to testify for notarized documents, though their testimony was accepted in civil and criminal cases.¹ In 1731, an *ordonnance des donations* enacted by the Parlement of Paris effectively deprived women of equality in law, sentencing them to the tyranny of their male relatives.² Primogeniture was in

¹ Morris Slavin, *The Left and the French Revolution* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1995), 98.

² Madelyn Gutwirth, *The Twilight of the Goddesses* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 115.

widespread use, depriving daughters of any right to equal inheritance and making those who married subject to their husbands economically as well as legally.

However, women were not completely powerless in the Ancien Regime. Women of the court held quite a lot of power and influence, albeit unofficial. The king's mistress was often seen as the most powerful person in the court, male or female. It has been said that women only wanted to have sex with men of the court so that they could present them with petitions in the morning. Montesquieu wrote in his *Persian Letters* in 1721 that

These women all have relations amongst themselves and form a sort of republic whose ever-active members help and serve each other mutually; it's like a new State within a State; and whoever goes to Court, or to Paris or the provinces, and visits ministers, magistrates, and prelates in action, if he doesn't know the women who govern them, is like a man who sees a machine in movement, but has no idea of what makes it go.³

Of course, because they didn't have power in any official capacity, women of the court were forced to use their sexuality to gain power. Olympe de Gouges (1745-1793), a prolific political writer and feminist, wrote of the paradox that formed as the nobles lost their influence and a new society that liked to think of itself as much more moral developed without a real place for powerful women in it:

For centuries, the French government, especially, depended on the nocturnal administration of women... everything that characterizes the folly of men, profane and sacred, has been submitted to the cupidity and ambition of this sex formerly considered despicable and respected, and since the revolution, respectable and despised...⁴

Surprisingly, women in France were able to hold some power politically without using their sexuality during the Ancien Regime. When Louis XVI called the Estates-General to meet, many women took part in local primaries as voters—not, however, as candidates. Additionally, female members of religious orders

³ Qtd. in Gutwirth, 85.

⁴ Olympe de Gouges, "The Declaration of the Rights of Women," in *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 127 (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

and noblewomen were able to send proxies to represent them in the First and Second Estate electoral assemblies.⁵ On January 24, 1789, the king officially decreed that propertied widows, unmarried women, and female minors of the nobility were able to be represented by proxy to elect representatives to the Estates-General.⁶ Unfortunately, this resulted in the Third Estate associating female representation with nobility, and may be one reason that the idea of full political equality for women was never quite taken seriously.

Additionally, women's rights were already being discussed in France during the years leading up to the Revolution. The *Journal des Dames* began publication in 1774 and was edited by Mme de Montenclos, who wrote that "I am not out to draw attention to myself, but I swear I do want to shatter our conventions and guarantee women the justice that men refuse to them as if on a whim."⁷ Clearly the Enlightenment had spawned some early feminist thinkers in France.

In the 1780s, brochures addressing the problem of women's inequality began to be published. The most common demand was equal education, though the pamphlets covered everything from men taking traditional female jobs to divorce to inheritance. Most were anonymous, and some may have actually been mockeries written by men of the female demands at the time. However, the important thing is that a dialogue on women's rights had already begun before the storming of the Bastille in July 1789.

During the first few years of the Revolution, women played a key role, both symbolically and actively. Common revolutionary symbols included that of the mother-heroine in republican *fêtes*, who was celebrated for her readiness to sacrifice for the revolutionary cause, and the symbolic woman knitting for the war effort in front of the guillotine.⁸ Allegorical figures such as liberty, justice, and equality were almost always represented by female figures. The only exception to this was *le peuple*, which were usually represented by the masculine Hercules. In addition to this symbolic role, women were actively involved in the crowd demonstrations. Only one woman is recorded as being a part of the storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, but thirteen appeared during the Champs de Mars incident only a few weeks later, making up over a quarter of those assembled.⁹

⁵ Slavin, 98.

⁶ Gutwirth, 222.

⁷ Jane Abray, "Feminism and the French Revolution," *The American Historical Review* 80, no. 1 (1975): 45.

⁸ Olwen H. Hufton, *Women and the Limits of Citizenship in the French Revolution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 38.

⁹ George Rudé, *The Crowd in the French Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 249.

The culmination of women's militant efforts for the revolutionary cause, and arguably their most glorious moment, was the march to Versailles known as the October Days. On October 6, 1789, a group of women marched from Paris to Versailles with cannons, arms, and the National Guard trailing them, to demand bread from the king. Six women were given an audience with the king, and he reassured them that he would guard the shipments of flour to Paris. He also gave his (belated) assent to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* and the August decrees from the National Assembly when he realized that the National Guard was backing the women. The women then brought Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and their children back to Paris, essentially forcing them to be accountable to the will of the people of the capital.¹⁰

Because of the importance of female participation in these demonstrations and the emphasis on equality that the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* espoused, feminists from 1789 to 1791 became optimistic about their chances for full equality. The revolution gave women more opportunities for political involvement than ever before. They became members of revolutionary clubs and societies, presented petitions and proposed bills to the assemblies, swore loyalty oaths, and had central roles in festivals celebrating the revolution. Women were slowly moving into the public sphere at a very different level than they had occupied during the Ancien Regime, despite the cult of domesticity that pervaded the image of the "republican mother". Marie Dorbe, a member of a Bordeaux women's club said in 1792:

Before the Revolution we were forgotten, reduced to housework and the education of our children; deprived of the benefits of the law, we lived in abject obscurity, painfully enduring our degradation... the blindfold which hid the truth from us has been lifted; in turn, we too have become free citizens.¹¹

Unfortunately this optimism was premature, as the feminists of the French Revolution would come to find out.

One of the most significant ways that women—and all members of the Third Estate—began to participate in the political process in France was through clubs and societies. In November 1790, the first mixed-sex political club was formed, called the *Société fraternelle de Patriotes des deux sexes*. The original purpose of the society was to discuss the decrees of the National

¹⁰ Gutwirth, 241.

¹¹ Catherine R. Montfort (ed), *Literate Women and the French Revolution of 1789* (Birmingham, AL: Summa Publications, 1994), 20.

The culmination of women's militant efforts for the revolutionary cause, and arguably their most glorious moment, was the march to Versailles known as the October Days. On October 6, 1789, a group of women marched from Paris to Versailles with cannons, arms, and the National Guard trailing them, to demand bread from the king. Six women were given an audience with the king, and he reassured them that he would guard the shipments of flour to Paris. He also gave his (belated) assent to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* and the August decrees from the National Assembly when he realized that the National Guard was backing the women. The women then brought Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and their children back to Paris, essentially forcing them to be accountable to the will of the people of the capital.¹⁰

Because of the importance of female participation in these demonstrations and the emphasis on equality that the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* espoused, feminists from 1789 to 1791 became optimistic about their chances for full equality. The revolution gave women more opportunities for political involvement than ever before. They became members of revolutionary clubs and societies, presented petitions and proposed bills to the assemblies, swore loyalty oaths, and had central roles in festivals celebrating the revolution. Women were slowly moving into the public sphere at a very different level than they had occupied during the Ancien Regime, despite the cult of domesticity that pervaded the image of the "republican mother". Marie Dorbe, a member of a Bordeaux women's club said in 1792:

Before the Revolution we were forgotten, reduced to housework and the education of our children; deprived of the benefits of the law, we lived in abject obscurity, painfully enduring our degradation... the blindfold which hid the truth from us has been lifted; in turn, we too have become free citizens.¹¹

Unfortunately this optimism was premature, as the feminists of the French Revolution would come to find out.

One of the most significant ways that women—and all members of the Third Estate—began to participate in the political process in France was through clubs and societies. In November 1790, the first mixed-sex political club was formed, called the *Société fraternelle de Patriotes des deux sexes*. The original purpose of the society was to discuss the decrees of the National

¹⁰ Gutwirth, 241.

¹¹ Catherine R. Montfort (ed), *Literate Women and the French Revolution of 1789* (Birmingham, AL: Summa Publications, 1994), 20.

Assembly. At first, men just brought along their wives and children, but as the club's popularity grew, women began coming on their own. Other societies sprang up in Paris and the rest of France. Women seemed to have had an equal standing with men in these clubs. In the *Société Fraternelle des Deux Sexes*, a club which met on Rue Sainte-Honoré in Paris, women acted as secretaries, members of the committee that settled disputes amongst members, and as part of delegations and commissions of the organization. Women even ran for the presidency of the society, though none were elected. The participation of women was guaranteed in the regulations of the society—Article II stated that all members of both sexes were able to participate in discussions and deliberations.¹²

Soon women began founding their own societies. One of the first was the *Cercle social*, which began advocating women's rights in 1790. The *Cercle social* circulated pamphlets arguing for liberal divorce laws and reforms in inheritance laws. Another famous women's club was the *Citoyennes républicaines révolutionnaires*, or the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women, which was founded by *sans-coulottes* women in 1793 and focused on economic demands rather than a strictly feminist agenda.¹³ In May 1793, the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women began asking for all-female armed military groups. The club demanded good morals from its members, many of whom were mothers, literate, and middle class.¹⁴ At its peak, the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women had 170 members, 100 of whom were active.¹⁵ By the summer of 1791 women had established clubs in all of the major French cities, including Civrai-en-Poitou, Bordeaux, Alais, Brest, Lille, and Lyon (which alone had 31 clubs).¹⁶

The main objective of women's (and men's) clubs during the French Revolution was to raise the political awareness of all members. Each club had its own individual focus. Only the most advanced fought for suffrage and full equality for women. Many more women joined the fight for equal education, which was the single biggest feminist demand during the Revolution. Other societies advocated arming companies of female "Amazones" to defend their country. Occasionally, the women even formed their own militias without waiting for the approval of the assembly. Inheritance and divorce laws were also commonly advocated. Members of the societies often petitioned the assemblies on behalf

¹² Shirley Elson Roessler, *Out of the Shadows: Women and Politics in the French Revolution, 1789-95* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1996), 53.

¹³ Abray, 52.

¹⁴ Slavin, 107.

¹⁵ Gutwirth, 289.

¹⁶ Slavin, 99.

of their organizations. They also published journals and pamphlets advocating their causes. The *Cercle social's* journal *Bouche de fer* (literally "iron mouth," a colloquial phrase for a cannon) came out in support of feminism in 1791 and helped establish the female political club nationwide.¹⁷

The women's movement during the French Revolution produced some strong leaders who agitated for women's rights. Many of these women were an inspiration to those who advocated equality, though they were often mocked and sometimes punished for their radical ideas. Etta Palm d'Aelders was a Dutch woman by birth and one of the first French feminists. She moved to Paris in the 1770s, and was an active member of the *Cercle social* during the early years of the Revolution. She was an advocate of equal education for girls, claiming that it was only natural: "If devotion to study, if patriotic zeal, if virtue itself, which rests so often on love of glory, is as natural to us as to you, why do we not receive the same education and the same means to acquire them?"¹⁸ During this same address, Palm d'Aelders complained about the difficult position women were placed in as a result of laws that made them subject to their fathers and husbands:

The prejudices with which our sex has been surrounded—supported by unjust laws which only accord us a secondary existence in society and which often force us into the humiliating necessity of winning over the cantankerous and ferocious character of a man, who, by the greed of those close to us has become our master—those prejudices have changed what was for us the sweetest and the most saintly of duties, those of wife and mother, into a painful and terrible slavery...¹⁹

In March 1791, she began working to establish female societies in each section of Paris, though primarily for charity work. In April 1792, she headed a women's delegation to the Legislative Assembly to demand divorce, political freedom, majority at age 21, and equal rights. Unfortunately, she practiced the wrong politics—she had invited members of the royal family to be patrons to her clubs. D'Aelders was forced to flee France in 1795 to avoid arrest.²⁰

¹⁷ Abrey, 99.

¹⁸ Etta Palm d'Aelders. "Discourse on the Injustice of the Laws in Favor of Men, at the Expense of Women," in *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 123 (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Slavin, 101.

Olympe de Gouges, the pen name of Marie Gouze, was another colorful personality advocating women's rights during the Revolution. De Gouges was an aspiring playwright who concentrated on themes of social justice in the years before the Revolution, writing many of her works as a response to specific political events. After the Estates-General were called, she wrote *Le Cri du Sage*, which urged women to take action to make sure that virtue and patriotism made themselves known there.²¹ Her most famous work, *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizeness*, was written in September 1791. Modeled on the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*, de Gouges' declaration insisted that women should be included in the 'man' and should therefore receive full rights and equality under the law. The language was almost identical in parts: "1. Woman is born free and remains equal to man in rights. Social distinctions may be based only on common utility. 2. The purpose of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of woman and man."²² She went on to argue that property belonged to both sexes, national education was necessary for full equality, and that unmarried women should be free to name the father of their children. She wrote:

Every citizeness may therefore say freely, I am the mother of your child; a barbarous prejudice [against unmarried women having children] should not force her to hide the truth, so long as responsibility is accepted for any abuse of this liberty in cases determined by the law.²³

De Gouges believed that the Revolution would only succeed if women were freed from oppression to become truly equal. However, it was her other critiques of the Revolution that eventually led to her demise. She was suspicious of the Jacobins' motives, and openly expressed her dislike for Jacobin leaders, including Marat and Robespierre. A month before the execution of the king, De Gouges asked the Convention to spare his life. She believed that "the greatest crime of Louis Capet was to have been born in a time when philosophy was silently preparing for the foundations of the Republic."²⁴ She was arrested on July 20, 1793 and executed, after falsely claiming to be pregnant, on November 3.²⁵ Her death was a result of her criticism of the Jacobins, but it

²¹ Roessler, 65.

²² De Gouges, 125.

²³ Ibid, 126.

²⁴ De Gouges, qtd. in Roessler, 68.

²⁵ Roessler, 75.

gave *Le Moniteur* an opportunity to warn other women who may have wanted to involve themselves in politics:

Olympe de Gouges...took her deliriousness for an inspiration of nature. She began with being unreasonable and ended by adopting the goal of the evil people who wish to divide France; she wished to be a statesman and it appears that the law should punish this conspirator for having forgotten the virtues appropriate to her sex.²⁶

Of course, the execution of de Gouges and other women, including Marie-Antoinette, led to a gray area in the question of citizenship. At the same time that men were belittling women's worth, they were taking threats by women to the Revolution very seriously. This led to the reputed reply Sophie de Condorcet, wife of the philosopher and human rights advocate Marquis de Condorcet, made to a politician who expressed distaste for women's involvement in politics: in a country where women's heads could be cut off, it was only natural for them to want to know why.²⁷

Unlike De Gouges, Théroigne de Méricourt did not attack with the pen—instead, she was a street agitator and activist. De Méricourt believed that freedom of speech was essential for women as well as men, and that women's speech should be respected instead of mocked. Myths surround De Méricourt's activities during the Revolution. It has been said that she had a leading role in both the storming of the Bastille and the October Days. Her own testimony contradicts this, though she was present in the streets of Versailles during the October rising. In February 1790, she was falsely accused of plotting to kill Marie-Antoinette and imprisoned in Austria. Upon her return, she was hailed as a "martyr of the Constitution."²⁸

De Méricourt began advocating armed female battalions ("Amazones") in proposals to Jacobin clubs. She felt that the most important work that women could do was to defend the country, and said that "it is time for women to break out of the shameful incompetence in which men's ignorance, pride, and injustice have so long held us captive."²⁹ The right to bear arms would turn women into citizens. She was also one of the first women to see the importance of female political clubs. In March 1792, she tried to organize a political club in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, but it was shut down by the Society of the Defenders of the Rights of Man and the Jacobins. In August, De Méricourt was given a civic

²⁶ Qtd. in Roessler, 75.

²⁷ Gutwirth, 302.

²⁸ Roessler, 83.

²⁹ De Méricourt, qtd. in Abrey, 51.

crown for her role in the attack on the Tuileries palace on August 10. However, she aligned herself with the Girondins, and was attacked by a crowd sympathetic to the Jacobins on May 25, 1794. She was arrested on June 27. Her brother convinced a health officer that his sister was suffering from mental disturbance--possibly as a result of the attack--and managed to get her released into his care. The next year she was committed to an asylum.³⁰

Other women stood out from the crowd during the Revolution as well. Pauline Léon and Claire Lacombe were the founders and presidents of the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women. By founding this society, Lacombe and Léon helped give rise to new forms of political action for women. Lacombe was honored along with De Méricourt for her activities during the storming of the Tuileries. Both women had participated in the mass demonstrations of the Revolution. On March 6, 1791, Léon asked the National Assembly for the right to arm and drill three hundred women, declaring that women shared in the Rights of Man, and therefore had the right to defend themselves.³¹ Another woman who clearly subscribed to the same belief was Reine Chappuy, a female cavalry soldier. She had to petition the Convention to remain in the regiment she had joined, saying that she wanted "to prove that the arm of a woman was equal to that of a man when inspired by honor and thirst for glory."³²

Some revolutionaries listened to the pleas of women who asked to be included in the freedom that was the bounty of the Revolution. Marquis de Condorcet was not only a brilliant philosopher and mathematician; he was also a staunch feminist, claiming that if women were not allowed to vote they were being taxed without representation. He felt that authority should be shared, and that female suffrage should be equivalent to male. Condorcet saw inequality between the sexes as a new development and not the natural state of being.³³ His writings are among the founding texts of modern feminism. In July 1790, Condorcet wrote:

It would be difficult to prove that women are incapable of exercising the rights of citizenship. Why should beings exposed to pregnancies and to passing indispositions not be able to exercise rights that no one ever imagined taking away from people

³⁰ Slavin, 105.

³¹ Slavin, 107.

³² *Ibid.*, 100.

³³ Abney, 45.

who have gout every winter or who easily catch colds?³⁴

He goes on to dispute the argument that men are intellectually superior to women, saying that this assumption is "far from being proved and which ought to be if women are to be deprived of a natural right without injustice."³⁵

As a result of the agitation of women such as De Gouges, De Méricourt, D'Aelders, Léon and Lacombe, and men like Condorcet, women's rights made some gains during the Revolution. In 1790, primogeniture was abolished, and in 1791, it was decided that legacies must be divided equally among brothers and sisters. By 1794 this included all heirs, even illegitimate.³⁶ Divorce became legalized in 1792 on three grounds: mutual consent, incompatibility of temperament, and matrimonial fault. Later divorce became permitted when a spouse was absent for six months. Many women used this as an opportunity to escape abusive marriages.³⁷ Women (and men) were declared to be of full majority at age 21. It was also decided that women could be witnesses to legal documents and could contract debts. Women gained more control over their own lives, their children's lives, and their property as a result of the French Revolution. However, the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity still did not completely apply to them. Though women had gained more agency for themselves, they still did not have any say in the governing of the country.

Women agitating for equal rights encountered a strong antifeminist backlash, from men and women alike. The most common reaction was not to take the feminists seriously. A 'burlesque' version of the *Declaration of the Rights of Women* appeared, mocking De Gouge's demands. Women were said not to have the mental capacity for citizenship, and therefore their thoughts were seen as not important. Louis Mare Prudhomme, a newspaper publisher, wrote that:

women have never shown this sustained and strongly pronounced taste for civil and political independence...which inspires in men so many great deeds, so many heroic actions. This is because civil and political liberty is in a manner of speaking

³⁴ Condorcet, "On the Admission of Women to the Rights of Citizenship," in *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 120 (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

³⁵ Condorcet, 21.

³⁶ Suzanne Desan. "'War Between Brothers and Sisters': Inheritance Law and Gender Politics in Revolutionary France." *French Historical Studies* 20, no. 4 (1997): 598.

³⁷ James F. McMillan, *France and Women, 1789-1914* (London: Routledge, 2000), 34.

useless to women and in consequence must be foreign to them.³⁸

Women's petitions to the assemblies were often not taken seriously as well. The *Comité de législation* of the Legislative Assembly prepared a project on marriage equality, but it was rejected by the deputies because, as Merlin de Douai claimed, "the woman is generally incapable of administration, the man has a natural superiority over her." Other projects on women's rights were buried in committee and never heard from again.³⁹

Another common argument against agitating women was that the woman's place was in the home. Despite the fact that they were heroes of the Revolution when they marched to Versailles during October Days, the revolutionaries generally wanted women safely back in the home. It was argued that political clubs took valuable time from domestic activities. As Prudhomme wrote in the article referred to earlier, the mother's job was to "make order and cleanliness, ease and peace reign at home."⁴⁰ He also pointed out that public places weren't suitable for mothers and respectable women. Other politicians claimed that they didn't want women abandoning discretion or the 'natural cares of their sex' to agitate in the streets or assemblies.

One of the most biting criticisms of feminism during the French Revolution was that women who wanted equal rights weren't 'real' women. They were criticized for their dress, for their demeanor, and even for daring to appear in public in the first place. In this way, many of the attacks on women such as De Gouges, De Méricourt, and D'Aelders became personal as well as political. When asked to give a report on women's clubs, Jean-Baptiste Amar spoke for the Committee of Public Safety to argue that such clubs should be suppressed. Part of his argument was that "several women, so-called Jacobins, from a club that is supposedly revolutionary, walked about wearing trousers and red caps; they sought to force other citizenesses to adopt the same dress."⁴¹ In an almost violent speech against women's political activism, Pierre-Gaspard Chaumette called female activists "viragos" (noisy, domineering women or Amazons). He continued: "Since when is it permitted to renounce one's sex? Since when is it decent to see women abandon the pious cares of

³⁸ Louis Marie Prudhomme. "On the Influence of the Revolution on Women," in *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 130 (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

³⁹ Slavin, 98.

⁴⁰ Prudhomme, 130.

⁴¹ "Discussion of Women's Political Clubs and Their Suppression," in *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 135 (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

their household, the cradle of their children, to come into public places, to the galleries to hear speeches, to the bar of the senate?"⁴² Here Chaumette equates leaving the household and coming into public places to renouncing one's essential femininity.

Women who gained power and a voice were often believed to be dangerous. Ironically, at the same time that women were said to be "incapable," a prevailing fear of feminists eventually led to the closing down of female political clubs. The desire was strong to get the female crowd back into the household sphere and out of the public. Attempts were even made to curtail the demonstrations of war widows in the streets of Paris—lawmakers were afraid they would arouse too much sympathy for the plight of women and encourage criticism of the government.⁴³ Politicians had decided that keeping women silent was the key to controlling the unruly masses.

The strongest antifeminist measures that sought to control women during the Revolution were born as a result of all of these feelings—fear of women, the need to have them back in the private sphere, and the belief that real women didn't get involved in politics. Beginning in 1793, politicians began suppressing women's rights to assemble. In October 1793, women's political clubs were outlawed. This prohibition came mostly as a result of the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women, whose activities the revolutionaries found threatening. During the debates, Fabre D'Eglantine said that "these societies are not at all composed of mothers, daughters, and sisters of families occupied with their younger brothers and sisters, but rather of adventuresses, female knights-errant, emancipated girls, and amazons."⁴⁴ This was false—as stated earlier, the society demanded 'good morals' of its members, and most were middle class mothers and daughters. It was argued that women were spending too much time agitating, and that they were being taken away from their 'natural' duties. It was also noted that women who did want to be involved in politics were abandoning their sex. Finally, Jean-Baptiste Amar concluded that "In general, women are hardly capable of lofty conceptions and serious cogitations"⁴⁵—an odd claim, considering the serious discussions that were taking place in the clubs. It was decreed that all female political clubs were to be prohibited.

⁴² Pierre-Gaspard Chaumette. "Speech at the General Council of the City Government of Paris Denouncing Women's Political Activism," in *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 138 (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

⁴³ Hufton, 49.

⁴⁴ "Discussion of Women's Political Clubs and Their Suppression," in *The French Revolution and Human Rights*, ed. Lynn Hunt, 136 (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996).

⁴⁵ Ibid, 137.

The final measures to silence women were enacted after the rising of 1 Prairial. During the winter of 1795, bread rations were plummeting, sometimes getting as low as four ounces per day. As the food supply shrank, Paris braced itself for the final popular risings of the Revolution. On March 27, the beginning of Germinal, groups of women sometimes totaling several hundred began protesting against the Convention. The bread riots that followed, like most bread protests, were orchestrated by women, who had the chief responsibility of feeding hungry families. On 12 Germinal a crowd went into the Convention unarmed. They were promised bread, went outside, and began pillaging and fighting. The bread supply did not increase. The final rising occurred on 1 Prairial (May 20). This last rising was almost entirely women, who went into the Convention unarmed. The National Guard began driving them away with whips and bayonets, which caused the crowd outside to begin to defend the women, leading to three or four days of street fighting.⁴⁶ Because the crowd was overwhelmingly women, the Convention was able to retaliate against them. Within a week of the rising, women were prohibited from entering the tribunes and eventually from participating in any political assembly. Finally the Convention's decision that women should 'retire to their homes' was unanimous. Groups of more than five women gathered on the street became subject to arrest.

The Prairial rising points to one of the reasons that a feminist political agenda was all but abandoned after 1793. Bread became the most important thing to most women, and there wasn't time or energy left to worry about suffrage or other rights. Additionally, when the clubs were shut down women lost an important avenue for learning about politics and government.

The final blow to women's rights came with Napoleon. The Napoleonic Code, which Napoleon began working on in 1800 and was fully enacted by 1804, rolled back most of the gains made by women during the revolution. Women were once again defined by their relation to men (fathers or husbands), and a patriarchal model of family life was returned. Equal inheritance rights were retained, but women were no longer allowed to be witnesses to legal documents. Additionally, a deceased husband could limit his widow's property rights by passing his authority on to a *conseil de famille*.⁴⁷ Under the code, women needed their husbands' approval for employment, and their wages legally belonged to their husbands. Additionally, it was determined that husbands had the right to use violence where a 'legitimate end of marriage' would be served.⁴⁸ Paternity suits were again forbidden.

⁴⁶ Hufton, 44.

⁴⁷ McMillan, 37.

⁴⁸ McMillan, 38.

Napoleon recorded his adherence to these beliefs in women's inferiority in a letter to his brother:

Here alone of all the places on earth they [women] appear to hold the reins of government, and the men make fools of themselves over them, think only of them, and live only for them... they should not be regarded as the equals of men. They are in fact mere machines for making children.⁴⁹

Despite the gains made by feminists during the French Revolution, women in France were relegated back to worse than secondary status by 1805. The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* seems to have been meant for men only, despite Olympe de Gouges' interpretation. The fervor for equality and fraternity that led to the freeing of slaves in the end left out half of France's adult population. Of course, Napoleon also reinstituted slavery in the French colonies when he came to power. However, the gains that were made, especially in inheritance laws, were important to the women of France, and laid the groundwork for feminism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Though few actually asked for it, the early feminists in France were some of the first women worldwide to ask for suffrage. Articles and speeches written by women's rights advocates like Concordet and Etta Palm d'Aelders were used as the basis for modern women's rights movements. Though the Revolution did not deliver liberty and equality for women in the end, it helped lay the foundation for future equality.

⁴⁹ Qtd. in McMillan, 35.

Proto-Nationalism in the Time of Avignon

ROBERT GRETCH

Introduction

THE PAPACY'S MOVE to Avignon in the fourteenth century was unprecedented in the then 1200-year history of the Church. There is no doubt that this loss of the seat of the pope had an impact on the Italian states, especially Rome itself. Started in 1305 by Pope Clement V as a temporary measure, it began to look ever more permanent as the years went on, worrying Italians.¹ This essay will address the reaction of prominent Italians to this loss and the reasons why they reacted the way they did. I will make use of letters written by Italian intellectuals, specifically Francesco Petrararch, Dante Alighieri, and Catherine of Siena, to show these reactions. These people constitute a diverse crowd: Petrarch was a papal secretary, Dante was a poet, and Catherine of Siena was a third-order Dominican eccentric who would later be canonized. However, they all have at least one thing in common, in that they greeted the Avignon Papacy with intense hostility. They had their reasons, and these are reflected in their letters. Their main arguments can be placed into three categories. First, they truly believed that Rome was God's chosen place for the seat of his church. Second, they saw the move as having victimized and injured Rome. Last, they saw Rome's ancient glory contrasted with the lack thereof in Avignon and felt that Rome's importance in the past justified its importance in the fourteenth century. The reasons for their arguments and their motives are what I will concentrate upon. In this case, the primary motive was Italian nationalism. In order to fully demonstrate this, this essay will use church writings as well those of modern-day scholars in comparison with the writings of the Italian intellectuals to show that nationalism played a more important role than outward piety would indicate.

I. Dante Alighieri (1265-1321)

Dante Alighieri was a Florentine poet, and his Italy was a turbulent one. His life was dominated by a political struggle involving the papacy. He was, in fact, living in Rome in exile from his home in Florence because of his political beliefs. This ongoing struggle was between two main groups; the Guelphs,

¹ John Wright, "Introduction," in *The Life of Cola di Rienzo*, trans. John Wright (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1975), 14.

supporters of the papacy, and the Ghibellines, supporters of the Holy Roman Empire. Philip Jones explains that both of these groups were supporters of unification, the difference being who would head the unified body. Dante was a Ghibelline and therefore believed that unity under any secular emperor, even a German, would be better than unity under a pope.² I will show how Dante's vision of Rome conflicted with its abandonment by the papacy and how Dante related this to his existing political beliefs.

Robert Coogan, in the introduction to his book *Babylon on the Rhone*, explains Dante's view of the world and how he arrived at his antipapal feelings: Dante saw the world as having two "orders." The first order was a secular one, guided by reason and headed by the emperor. The second order was a spiritual one, guided by faith and headed by the pope. Both of these orders were sacred and important and part of God's plan. Dante became decidedly antipapal before the era of Avignon, when Boniface VIII proclaimed in a papal bull that both of these orders were under the control of the pope. Dante saw this as much more than meddling; it was a total disruption of the two sacred orders that God had planned. Later, when Clement V moved the papacy to Avignon, the violation of God's orders was even greater because the move left Rome in a terrible condition. Coogan also noted that contributing to Dante's antipapalism was Clement's poor treatment of Henry VII, which Dante saw as part of the intrusion of the papal sphere into the secular sphere.³

Both the conflict of spheres and Dante's support of the empire are important to the argument than Dante was an Italian nationalist. Dante anticipated Italian unification and thought that the best way for that to happen was a rebirth of the empire. He saw the Avignon popes as overly political, and their interference in Italy's affairs threatened that rebirth. The fact that the emperor was not Italian was irrelevant to Dante and does not represent a lack of nationalism. As I will show, Dante was in favor of an Italian empire. The unification of the Italians under a non-Italian emperor was merely a step in that direction.

Dante symbolized this disruption of God's divine order by referring to Avignon as the new Babylon, an allusion to the Babylonian Exile of the Hebrews under Nebuchadnezzar II. This was a particularly effective comparison because in both cases the city of God was unjustly vacated. It is important to note, however, that although this allusion creates a rather dire image, its use was actually quite optimistic, for Jerusalem was eventually restored as

² Philip Jones, *The Italian City State: From Commune to Signoria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 347.

³ Robert Coogan, *Babylon on the Rhone: A Translation of Letters by Dante, Petrarch, and Catherine of Siena on the Avignon Papacy* (Madrid: José Porrúa Turanzas, S.A., 1983), 2-4.

the seat of the Hebrew religion. In a letter to Emperor Henry VII dated April 17, 1311, Dante makes an obvious remark about Avignon being the new Babylon and then predicts the eventual restoration of Rome, completing the analogy:

Then our heritage which we lament without ceasing shall be restored to us in its integrity. As exiles in Babylon now, we lament thinking of the most holy Jerusalem; then as citizens breathing again in peace we will recall with joy the miseries of Babylon.⁴

In a 1314 letter to the Italian cardinals, Dante goes further in showing his imperialism and his vision of God's order: "After so many triumphs, Christ confirmed Rome by word and deed to be the ruler of the world."⁵ This gives important insight into Dante's vision of what the empire should be. According to Jones, Dante was, in fact, a "neo-imperialist;" he believed in the rebirth of a universal empire centered in Rome.⁶ His support of a non-Italian empire was simply part of his vision of how that would come about.

Dante's 1314 Letter to the Cardinals contains another rhetorical device. He personifies Rome as a widow: "Now Rome is a widow and deserted, and we are forced to lament like Jeremiah."⁷ According to Ronald Musto, the widow was a "well known Christianization of the Roman city goddess."⁸ The use of this portrayal of Rome as a deserted widow contributed to the theme of victimization continually present in Dante's letters. This theme was very important to Dante: he saw his home, the city that took him in after he was exiled, the city that he saw as the seat of a new universal empire, as being intentionally injured, deserted by the Church itself. The move to Avignon, which was a violation of God's preordained spheres, had deserted his beloved city. Later in the letter came the same type of personification:

If you, the authors of this wandering from the way, will fight together manfully for the Spouse of Christ, for the Seat of his Spouse which is Rome, for our Italy [...] And, finally, the shame of the Gascons [French], who burning with so dreadful a lust that they seek to usurp for

⁴ Ibid, 40.

⁵ Ibid, 41.

⁶ Jones, 342-43.

⁷ Coogan, 42.

⁸ Ronald G. Musto, *Apocalypse in Rome: Cola di Rienzo and the Politics of the New Age* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2003), 111.

themselves the glory of the Latins, will become an example to posterity for all the coming ages.⁹

There is another reference to Rome, repeating the claim that it should be the seat of the church, and then comes a more obvious nationalist statement. Dante accuses the new host of the church, France, of trying to take away the "glory of the Latins." This is not simply a reference to divinely ordained spheres or the accusation of the victimization of a city. It is also not an accusation against a multinational entity. The letter explicitly pits one group of people against another. This gives one insight into how Dante envisions the empire that he anticipates; one sees who in the universal empire is deserving of the "glory." The use of the word "Latins," rather than "Italians," is of particular significance. This word equates the people of the medieval Italian states with the people of the Roman Empire and has the effect of creating in the reader a sense of reminiscence, a longing for the days when Italy was united, stable, and glorious.

The use of images of the old empire was particularly useful to Dante, as an imperialist. There are many examples of this throughout his letters, and in another reference to Rome's ancient past Dante likens Henry VII's to a Caesar: "But will he not be merciful to any? Yes, he will pardon all who seek his mercy; for he is Caesar and his majesty flows from the fount of all piety."¹⁰ This is Dante's prediction of Henry VII coming to power and saving Italy. It can clearly be seen here that Dante is equating the coming empire with the old one, a universal empire centered in the city of Rome. The use of this image of a Caesar is important because it creates a nostalgic tone. Other imperialists who were reading Dante would have been particularly affected by this image. Central to Dante's seeing Henry VII as the "fount of all piety" is Henry VII's presumed restoration of the secular sphere, which is every bit as sacred as the spiritual sphere. Later in the letter evidence of nationalism becomes even more direct; Dante appeals to the Lombards to return to their Italian roots: "Place aside, people of Lombardy, your acquired barbarism. If any of the Trojan or Latin seed remains in you, yield to its force..."¹¹ This is evidence of nationalism for two reasons. Dante implies the

⁹ Coogan, 46.

The "Spouse of Christ" is the Church, which Dante refers to as "Mother Church" elsewhere in the letter.

¹⁰ Ibid, 26.

¹¹ Robert Coogan, Editor of *Babylon on the Rhone*, notes, "The Lombards were supposed to have descended through the Longobards from a Scandinavian tribe." At the time of Dante's writing, however, the Lombards had been in Italy for hundreds of years, and were very much assimilated. Ibid, 26.

superiority of Italian blood in asking the Lombards to make use of it; in doing so he again uses the appeal of Rome's past. Second, it is here where one gains insight into what "Italian" meant to Dante. Obviously, it did not mean every group living in Italy. To single out this group and criticize its "acquired barbarism" and impure blood shows the importance that Dante placed upon bloodlines. In addition to showing Dante's nationalist leanings, it gives one insight into what this ideology meant to him; the nationalism that Dante advocates is not based upon civic participation; it is based upon race and purity of blood.

Dante's imperialism is quite apparent in his writings, as he believed that this is what would unite Italy to become the center of a new universal empire. He was antipapal specifically because the Church betrayed God's preordained spheres by interfering with the rise of this empire. Dante saw the move to Avignon as horrendous for two main reasons: the move had the unpleasant effect of abandoning Rome, the rightful seat of the church and the new universal empire; second, it was a deliberate attempt by the French to take away the "glory" of the Italians.

II. Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374)

Dante and Petrarch had some very important similarities and differences. The most important similarity was that they both looked towards Ancien Rome for guidance, an important theme in their letters. The most striking contrast between the two was the manner in which they did so: while Dante looked to the empire, Petrarch looked to the republic; Cicero was his role model.¹² As Jones says: "Italian nationalism and pride of culture began with a sense of the past and, to its culmination in Dante and Petrarch, was expressed in terms of the past."¹³ But just as Dante looked back at the ancient empire for guidance, so did Petrarch look back at the ancient republic. As the years went on, however, Petrarch's political views became centered upon national unity rather than republicanism.¹⁴ I will show how Petrarch's writings criticizing the Avignon Papacy have strong nationalist tendencies. They are very much like those of Dante, using the themes of Rome's former glory, Italian unity, and what he saw as the church's betrayal of Rome.

Robert Coogan's introduction to *Babylon on the Rhone* explains quite well the evolution of Petrarch's political views and hints at the nationalist tendencies present in them: Petrarch saw Cola di Rienzo's revolution in Rome as what Coogan calls "the dawn of a Golden Age." This new age would feature Rome as the capital of the world, and Petrarch firmly believed that unity

¹² Musto, 53.

¹³ Jones, 52.

¹⁴ Coogan, 4-9.

between Rome and the rest of Italy would benefit the entire world. His republican tendencies would, however, change as time went on. He became very critical of the papacy, blaming it for the state in which Rome lay, especially after the demise of di Rienzo. Seeing this as an indication of the failures of republicanism, Petrarch began to have imperialist leanings. He now looked toward Caesar as a role model and thought it would take an emperor or monarch to unite Italy. It was then that Petrarch became quite antipapal, which is of particular importance because Petrarch was, in fact, a curial secretary. According to Coogan, however, Petrarch's criticism, unlike Dante's, was tolerated by the church because the church found Petrarch quite useful as an ambassador.¹⁵

Much like Dante, Petrarch characterizes the move to Avignon as analogous to the Babylonian exile. He writes, "Now I am living in France, in the Babylon of the West... Here reign the successors of the poor fisherman of Galilee; they have strangely forgotten their origin."¹⁶ The analogy has, as it had with Dante, a theme of abandonment and injustice. It must be noted, however, that the tone in Petrarch's use of the analogy is much more critical and completely lacks Dante's optimism, perhaps because Dante would have been old enough to remember the days before Avignon. Petrarch was in his infancy at that time and therefore knew nothing but Avignon. The statement about the church forgetting its origin is likely a double-entendre. There is the origin of Christianity at the Sea of Galilee, as indicated in the letter, but there is also the origin of the papacy, Rome. In another letter, this one from 1352 and addressed "To the Roman People," Petrarch articulated his stance clearly:

By many signs Almighty God has declared that He clearly wishes it [the seat of the church] to be none other than Rome which He has made worthy of glory both in peace and war and which He has established in so great a preeminence of admirable and incomparable virtue.¹⁷

This is related to the theme of the betrayal of Rome by the church.

Continuing with examples of this theme, Petrarch, much like Dante, uses the ideas of betrayal and victimization to help his argument for the return of the pope. Again, very much like Dante, he personifies the city as its former patron Goddess. In a 1347

¹⁵ Ibid, 4-9.

¹⁶ Francis Petrarch, *Letter Criticizing the Avignon Papacy*, [online] (New York: Fordham University, The Medieval Sourcebook, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/14cpetrarch-pope.html>, 1998), (cited 20 October 2004).

¹⁷ Coogan, 56.

letter to Cola di Rienzo he writes, "O, Avignon [...] Is this your respect for Rome, your mistress? ... Woe to you, unhappy city, the day she begins to wake from her sleep, yes, woe the day she lifts her head and sees the injuries and wounds inflicted on her as she slumbered."¹⁸ This particular letter goes further than claiming that injury to Rome was an unfortunate effect of the move to Avignon; rather, it says that Avignon purposely sought to victimize Rome. Petrarch then begins to suggest that Rome will take revenge on Avignon for this harm. After suggesting revenge, he went on to direct threats: "Only then, Avignon, will you know your proper place, when you realize how powerful Rome still is...."¹⁹ Much like Dante, Petrarch sees the French as trying to steal glory that the Italians rightfully deserve. Within that same letter, however, Petrarch's focus shifts: Avignon no longer insults Rome but rather all Italians:

As for the rest of Italy, who can doubt that it can again regain the power it once wielded? To accomplish this end I maintain that neither strength, nor resources, nor courage is missing. Harmony alone is missing. Give me this, and by the words of this very letter I predict the immediate ruin and destruction of those who deride the name of the Italians.²⁰

The state of political affairs is much the same as it was in Dante's day, an ongoing struggle between the pope and the empire. When Petrarch says that "harmony" was what Rome lacked, he hints at unification. According to him, everything else is in place for a great Italy. He then foresees "ruin" for those who insult the Italian people, and Petrarch clearly showed in the aforementioned letter to di Rienzo that he feels the French have insulted Italy.

Petrarch wrote about Italian unification even more explicitly in an untitled and undated letter: "Contemporary Italy sighs like a slave under the sword of this second form of oppression. She will see the end of her woes only when she begins to wish unity."²¹ This is an excellent example of nationalism; calling for the unity of Italy centuries before it ever happened shows how Petrarch, like Dante, saw unification as the way that Italy could end its problems, specifically the ongoing struggle between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines.

¹⁸ Francis Petrarch, *The Revolution of Cola di Rienzo*, ed. M.E. Cosenza, 3rd Edition, (New York: Italica Press, 1986), 74.

¹⁹ Petrarch, *The Revolution of Cola di Rienzo*, 74.

²⁰ Ibid, 75.

²¹ Ibid, 81.

Rome's glorious history had great significance for Petrarch; even though his republican ideals began to fade in favor of imperial ones, he still looked towards Rome's ancient past for the foundation of his vision for the future.²² Petrarch also makes use of the very same kind of nostalgic tone to the very same end that Dante does, namely, to equate the Italy of the 1300s with that of Ancient Rome. In a 1357 letter he scolds Constantine: "O unadvised and extravagant Constantine! Do you not know how much labor the empire costs which you scatter about so easily? Foolish children often waste those things acquired by their fathers."²³ The effect of these sentences is twofold. First, as Dante did with Caesar, Petrarch makes a reference to Constantine with a certain goal in mind: he wants to create a nostalgic desire for glorious days long past. Constantine makes an excellent choice. The reason that these sentences are effective is that it was Constantine who first vacated Rome; this is a much closer comparison to the Avignon Papacy than the Babylonian Exile. Constantine moved the political capital of the Roman Empire to Byzantium, or Constantinople, and left the religious capital in the city of Rome. Constantine's act was therefore the first half of a two-part desertion of the city of Rome.

Nationalist sentiment is evident throughout Petrarch's letters concerning the papacy. They read very much like the letters of Dante, stressing the themes of betrayal and victimization with images of Rome's goddess. Petrarch, very much like Dante, looked toward the past for guidance, and this is clearly reflected in his letters, as the theme of former glory runs throughout them. Finally and most important, the call for unification shows clear nationalist tendencies. Long after the fall of the Roman Empire, when Italy was being fought over in a long and arduous struggle between foreign powers, Petrarch saw that a united Italy would be possible.

III. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

Although there are unmistakable similarities between Dante and Petrarch, Catherine of Siena is very different from both of them. Although the three have intense piety in common, Coogan says that Catherine's mysticism is what makes her unique.²⁴ According to Suzanne Noffke, a translator of much of Catherine's writing, she was concerned mostly with peace and stability within Italy. Although some would say she was politically naïve, she did use her letter writing ability to push her views.²⁵ She called for peace under the papacy, which, according

²² Coogan, 4-9.

²³ Ibid, 83.

²⁴ Ibid, 9.

²⁵ Ibid.

to her, should be returned to Rome.²⁶ While Coogan says that Catherine was essentially indifferent to the Guelf-Ghibelline division, from Noffke's writings I will say that she was decidedly pro-papacy; and, although she did not officially affiliate herself with either group, she was more of a Guelf than anything.²⁷ According to Noffke, Catherine did take such political actions as trying to persuade Florence not to join the antipapal league. She felt that military resources could better be used for a crusade against the Turks and strongly encouraged the pope to declare one.²⁸ I will demonstrate how Catherine's letters show the same kinds of nationalist tendencies that Dante and Petrarch's do, however different the three authors may be from one another. She uses the same themes as the other authors, specifically, victimization, the former glory of Rome, and the idea that the move to Avignon was contrary to God's will.

In January 1376 Catherine wrote the first letter to Pope Gregory that we still have of hers. In it she ties together the themes of interpretations of God's will and Rome's glorious past. She begins by comparing the church to a tree uprooted from fertile soil:

I long to see you a productive tree planted in fertile soil and laden with sweet mellow fruit. For a tree uprooted from the soil (I mean the soil of true self-knowledge) would dry up and bear no fruit [...] We nourish within ourselves the sweet fruit of blazing charity, recognizing in ourselves God's boundless goodness.²⁹

This is a demonstration of her interpretation of God's will, specifically, that the church is not where he wants it. If the church is put back in its fertile soil, that is to say, Rome, then through God's "goodness" it will bear "nourishing" fruit. She then compares the people of her time, including the pope, with the saints of the past: "Do we want the glorious hunger the saints and true shepherds of the past had? Do we want to extinguish in ourselves this fire of self-love? ...If anyone should ask me how they reached this fire, this hunger, I can't imagine, since of

²⁶ Suzanne Noffke, "Introduction," in *The Dialogue*, by Catherine of Siena, (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 1-14.

²⁷ Coogan, 9.

²⁸ Suzanne Noffke, "Introduction," in *The Dialogue*, 1-14.

²⁹ Saint Catherine of Siena, *The Letters of Catherine of Siena*, trans. and ed. Suzanne Noffke, (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies State University of New York at Binghamton, 1988), v.1 166.

ourselves we are merely fruitless trees.”³⁰ She speaks of the saints as role models and implies that the pope should be looking to them. In the next letter, she shows what that means.

In a later letter written in 1376 to Pope Gregory XI, Catherine concedes that the move to Avignon may have been justified, but that is not what is important to her. Her concern was for the future; she asked the pope to put past differences aside: “[...] do not regard the ignorance and pride of your children. Draw them to you by the lure of your love and goodness while reprimanding them gently so that your Holiness can grant peace to us, your unhappy children, who have offended you.” Although she makes the concession that the pope’s “children” “offended” him, she continues;

Your languishing flock awaits your coming to take and to guard the place of your predecessor and your model, the apostle Peter. As Vicar of Christ, you are obliged to reside in your own place. Come, and delay no longer. Take courage and fear nothing that might happen to you because God will be with you.³¹

She says that the pope was not doing what he was “obliged” to do: that is, he was not guarding the place of Peter. This statement raises a very important question. Was the pope not fulfilling his obligation to God, or was the pope not fulfilling his obligation to Rome? To look at Catherine’s exact words suggests the latter. The evidence for this is in Catherine’s usage of the words “children” and “flock.” Who is in the flock? Who is one of the pope’s children? According to Catherine, Romans are the flock. Romans are the children simply because there is no one else who is “languishing” and “awaiting” the pope. Because of this, Catherine is not appealing to the pope but rather to the Bishop of Rome; and as the Bishop of Rome, Gregory XI had an obligation to his people. In this case, he had an obligation to his diocese rather than to all of Christendom. She goes on to say that if Gregory XI should return, God would be with him. She therefore puts God on the side of the Romans. Equally important, this letter ties in with the last one. She told the pope to look to the saints as guides, and now she is getting more specific. She says that the pope’s model should be Saint Peter, which is a reference to Rome’s glorious past.

³⁰ Saint Catherine of Siena, *The Letters of Catherine of Siena*, trans. and ed. Suzanne Noffke, (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000), v.1 244-251.

³¹ Coogan, 113-114.

In an earlier letter to Gregory XI, also written in 1376, Catherine of Siena also portrays Rome as a victim although she does so more subtly than Petrarch and Dante: she does not use personification the way that the others do. Rather than turn the city into someone, she brings the Roman people into the picture by mentioning the foes of Rome. This reminds one of the disorder and violence that many innocent Romans suffered during the fourteenth century. Her plea for the pope not to delay shows that this is a pressing matter.

Come, come, do not delay for a time, for time does not wait on you. If you come, you will do as the Lamb whom you replace; without weapons He slew our foes, coming in gentleness, employing only the weapons of love, caring only for spiritual things, and returning grace to a man who had lost it by sin.³²

The main theme of the letter is that Rome was the victim. In this case Rome was not a battered, sleeping woman. Rather, in Catherine's letter, after calling the pope Jesus' representative, she goes on to accuse him of dereliction of duty. He is ignoring the needs of the people of Rome. They are sinning; they have foes that need to be vanquished. Again, she does not appeal to Gregory in his role as the pope but to Gregory in the role of Bishop of Rome. The needs of Catherine of Siena's people are what are important.

Catherine lived to see the end of the Avignon Papacy, but it did not end so simply. Gregory died in Rome and an election for the new pope was held there. An Italian, Urban VI, won the election and decided to stay in Rome; but the outcome was contested, and another pope, a so-called "anti-pope," was also elected and decided to rule from Avignon. This was known as the Western Schism. Both popes had supporters, but Catherine was quite angry when three Italian cardinals chose to support the antipope. In a letter she wrote to them during the Schism she showed her disappointment in their lack of love for Italy: "...both you [cardinals] and the Christ on earth are Italian. I can see no reason why a love of the fatherland did not move you as it did the Ultramontanists, except your self-love."³³ This is a clear indication of nationalism. She is admonishing the cardinals because they did not use their Italian identity to determine where their loyalties lay.

³² Ibid, 110.

³³ In this sense, the word "Ultramontanist" refers to a non-Italian Pope, as "beyond the mountains [Alps]" is relative, and Catherine is from Italy. Coogan, 123.

Catherine was later canonized by Pope Pius II, an Italian. She was widely recognized as someone who wanted to reform the church, to make it better. Her demand for a crusade notwithstanding, she wanted peace within Italy, and she saw this peace as coming from a restoration and reform of the papacy. Her motives were primarily nationalist ones; and I have shown this through her interpretations of God's will, her use of Rome's history as a theme, and her portrayal of the Roman people as victims.

Conclusion

It was, without a doubt, important to the Romans that the church returned. As Robert Brentano notes, the flight of the pope did have a negative impact on the city; specifically, it led to economic decline.³⁴ The intellectuals of the Italian states resisted this move. The same themes run throughout their letters: the move was contrary to God's will, a betrayal of the city and its people, and a stain on the city's beautiful tapestry of a history. It was not a uniform group of people who were protesting this. Dante was an imperialist, Petrarch was a republican turned imperialist, and Catherine was a papist; but although they were politically very different from one another, they all had the same goal in mind: a stable and prosperous Italy and, in the case of Dante and Petrarch, a united Italy. Hundreds of years before Italy was united—hundreds of years before nationalism became a prominent ideology—these three people looked at a group of states with a common language and heritage, states that were in a constant power struggle with one another, and saw that something greater could be made of them.

³⁴ Robert Brentano, "Violence, Disorder, and Order in Thirteenth-Century Rome," in *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities, 1200-1500*, ed. Lauro Martines, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 328.

The West-Syrian Chronicles: The Equalizer of History

MATTHEW AHERN

IN *THE SEVENTH Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, Andrew Palmer drew together, translated, and annotated twelve individual chronicles from the Syrian region of Byzantium during the expansion of the Arab armies. The chronicles were written between 582 AD and 718 AD, from the ascension of the emperor Maurice in 582 to 718 when the Arabs abandoned the siege of Constantinople. The chronicles describe a time of drastic societal changes in antiquity; the transformation from an ancient to a medieval life was occurring. The Syrian chronicles have become a valuable resource for historians to interpret this period. The combination of Islamic and Byzantine historical sources looked at through the lens of the *West-Syrian Chronicles* provides a more comprehensive view of the seventh-century's history. Historians have used *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles* in two ways: first to check the accuracy of other historical documents, and second to fill in the gaps left by these sources.

Within the various chronicles, there are two distinct styles of writing: "factual reporting (usually brief) on the one hand and emotionally colored story-telling (often long) on the other."¹ Modern historians focus on the factual reporting for military accounts and governmental records, and they concentrate on the narrative aspect to understand the atmosphere prevalent in society when these works were formulated. The strategic geographical position of the Syrian province also raises the chronicles' historical stature. The Syrian province stood at the crossroads of the eastern and southern entrances into the Byzantine Empire. It was an area that accrued the knowledge from all the surrounding societies and thus presents a more complete interpretation of the period. In addition, all of the Syriac chronicles employed by Palmer "were compiled by Christians...to serve moral, religious, and political purposes."² Due to the Council of Chalcedon, the Syrian Christian tradition differed markedly from the Orthodox Christianity of Byzantium and, to an obviously greater degree,

¹ Andrew Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool, 1993), xxix.

² *Ibid.*, xxviii.

Islam. These factors allow the Syrian chronicles to establish an independent viewpoint.

Of the twelve chronicles compiled by Palmer only eight address Arab-Byzantine relations. The first two chronicles provide a historical background to the events in the seventh-century, while the third and fourth chronicles discuss the religious repercussions of the Council of Chalcedon in the Syrian province. The remaining chronicles illustrate the exchange of power from West to East. The first text in *The West-Syrian Chronicles* is a "memorial jotted down for posterity during the Arab invasions of Palestine in AD 637."³ The author of the first chronicle is unknown and the majority of the text is lost to history. The second chronicle is more complete and has a presumed author. It is an "assemblage of disjointed chronological oddments" and "is the work of a single man, Priest Thomas," aimed at providing a description of the Persian invasion and evacuation of the Syrian province in the middle seventh-century.⁴ The third Syriac chronicle, named the *Melkite Chronicle*, discusses the effect of the Council of Chalcedon on the Syriac speaking region. This particular account, for which no author is known, contrasts with the fourth chronicle because it favors Heraclius's "policy of imposing the decision of the Council of Chalcedon on all Byzantine subjects."⁵ The opposing text, the *Maronite Chronicle*, discusses the division of the Syriac church as a result of the Council of Chalcedon. It uses "both brief factual bulletins and longer episodes" to give an account of the schism.⁶ The fifth through the ninth chronicles (exempting the seventh) all have a common purpose in attempting "to establish the chronology of the Arab caliphs."⁷ These chronicles show the shift in power from the Byzantium to the Muslim empire because the local record keepers began working for the new dominant power in the region. The major advantage of these various chronicles is that they provide historians with the "Syrian attitude around 700," which in retrospect has proved to be a period of epic change in world history.⁸

The period during which the *West-Syrian Chronicles* was written was a time of momentous change in the ancient world. Power was shifting from West to East: "the opposition between Greece and Rome on the one hand and Persia on the other had characterized the way the history of the Near East" had been for centuries.⁹ However, this power struggle was ending in the

³ Ibid, xxix.

⁴ Idem.

⁵ Idem.

⁶ Ibid, xxx.

⁷ Idem.

⁸ Idem.

⁹ Ibid, xi.

seventh-century; Rome was weakening and the Persian Empire was falling to the Bedouin tribes from the south. After the Arabs' successful campaigns in Persia, they turned their attention to the Byzantine Empire. The entry into the Islamic world of such;

A diffuse mixture of people, from so many different races and of so many different religious and philosophical persuasions, lent a tremendous variety and vitality to the nascent Muslim world and meant that Byzantium was brought face-to-face with a new and vigorous civilization taking shape within her own provinces and in the heartlands of her old arch-enemy, Persia.¹⁰

The rising power of the Arabs affected Byzantine's power and influence and in "a series of lightning fast campaigns lasting but a decade (633-42), the Arabs established a foothold in the Byzantine provinces."¹¹ The Byzantine Empire lost much of its territory and could neither regain the land nor expel the invaders.

The upheavals of this era brought conceptual as well as physical changes. The continuous humbling of Rome to the Germanic tribes and the Byzantine concessions to the Arab invaders gave the people of Byzantium and the West a feeling that the world was shrinking around them. "This perception of shrinkage and decline given by contemporaries is shared by modern scholars, who frequently portray the seventh century as a dark age", and these struggles by Byzantium in this dark age defined the medieval European world and influenced the Muslim world.¹² The strain incurred by Byzantine civilization was "a crucial bridge in the transition from a definable Late Antiquity to a Medieval one."¹³ The transition from antiquity to a medieval world is illustrated in the "rapprochement between Church and State that began in the time of Constantine I, having now become an inextricable bond."¹⁴ The Christianity imbued in Byzantine society matched the religious fervor accompanying the Muslim conquerors and this religious devotion marked the end of the more secular aspect of antiquity and hence, antiquity itself. In this period, the role of religion began to dominate state-to-state interactions; it was no longer two great powers battling for territorial gains, but two ideologies battling for the favor of God. The world was no longer divided into areas of Persian and Roman

¹⁰ Ibid, xxiii.

¹¹ Ibid, xxi.

¹² Ibid, xv.

¹³ Ibid, xv.

¹⁴ Ibid, xvii.

influence, but Islamic and Christian. It is in this setting of change that the *West-Syrian Chronicles* were written.

Alongside the *West-Syrian Chronicles*, historians employ Islamic and Byzantine sources. The Islamic sources used are those "based on the great narrative sources compiled by authors of the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries."¹⁵ These narratives are meant to glorify those who participated in the events; detailed accounts about the heroics of a single person are highlighted at the expense of accurate historical reporting. This anthropomorphic style contrasts with the Byzantine style of recording history. The Greek sources included detailed literary sources, hagiography, and epigraphy, which give a more in-depth view on many of the topics. The Islamic sources used by historians come from two men, al-Tabari and al-Baladhuri. These two scribes collected the works of all the previous narrators into two comprehensive texts. The only man who can be accurately identified prior to the former was Abu Mikhnaf. Mikhnaf wrote "a large number of books and pamphlets" from which Tabari drew in his work.¹⁶ For the most part, historians rarely refer to any specific Arab or Islamic historians; rather they will only use generic terms like "Arab accounts" or "Muslim sources." Even though there is a larger collection of Arab histories, the Greek historians are cited much more frequently than their Arabic counterparts by modern historians.

Modern historians incorporate medieval Byzantine sources more frequently into their works than they do medieval Islamic civilization. This allows for increased accuracy when verifying the validity of various Byzantine sources. Several historians are mentioned by name, including Evagrius, Theophylact, Justinian, and John of Ephesus.¹⁷ Evagrius' "coverage of Maurice's reign is largely concerned with political and military matters" with an emphasis on invasions from the East.¹⁸ This focus permits his works to stand directly against the Syriac sources to confirm his historical accuracy. The foremost historian of this era, Theophylact, wrote "a narrative of the whole of Maurice's reign," filling in many of the holes in Evagrius' work.¹⁹ However, Theophylact's work was also imperfect, and John of Ephesus was the "important supplement to Theophylact,

¹⁵ Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State*, (New York, 2001), xi.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁷ Evagrius wrote the *Ecclesiastical History*. Theophylact or Theophilus was the Bishop of Nicomedia (845). John of Ephesus also known as John of Asia was the Monophysite Bishop of Ephesus

¹⁸ Michael Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare*, (Oxford, 1988), 109.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 92.

recording some events unknown to him.”²⁰ The most frequently cited author during this period was the Emperor Justinian. He wrote two books on this period, one on Arabia and the other on Palestine, which both verify the history of the period and supplement the other works.²¹ The contents of these works are used by historians, with the *West Syrian Chronicles*, to provide an enhanced background to the events of the seventh-century. In addition, hagiographic evidence by the monks of Palestine and epigraphic evidence provides a closer look at the societal history of Byzantium, of which there is little in the Islamic lands. Though historians prefer to use Byzantine sources, rather than Muslim sources, they must use both because unless the works of these two civilizations are evaluated together against the Syrian Chronicles, a historical document cannot be considered accurate.

Modern historians here used *The West-Syrian Chronicles* to confirm the accuracy of Byzantine and Arab sources. Byzantium’s relationship with Arabia prior to Islam has revealed that the large Arab tribal confederation known as Ma ‘add was part of a Byzantine plan to set the Arab tribes against the Persian Empire. Modern historians know this because “of serious attestations of Ma ‘add in the Syriac sources” and “reference to Ma ‘add in the Greek sources checks and complements those” in the Syriac.²² However, the Greek sources “view that Ma ‘add was Islamic and not pre-Islamic.”²³ This aberration caused authors such as T. Noldeke and I. Goldziher to use false information in their work, misleading many researchers.²⁴ Only by referring to the Syrian chronicles are misnomers such as this corrected.

Another example of the *West-Syrian Chronicles* correcting history is found in the Byzantine Evagrius’ account of the siege of Nisibis against the Persians. This account paints a starkly different picture than the Syriac sources. Evagrius writes General Marcian’s siege “was so ineffectual that the Persians did not even bother to close the gates.”²⁵ In contrast, “the Syriac chroniclers state that Marcian prosecuted the siege vigorously and came close to capturing the city.”²⁶ In regards to Arethas, the Archbishop of Caesarea, the Syriac and Byzantium sources agree with each other. The Byzantine historian Theophanes gives a detailed account of Arethas visiting Constantinople and his activities once there. “The Syriac sources complement what Theophanes says on Arethas’

²⁰ Ibid, 112.

²¹ Irfan Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century: Volume 1 Part 1*, (Washington, D.C., 1995), xxiii.

²² Ibid, 160-61.

²³ Ibid, 161.

²⁴ Noldeke wrote *Sketches from Eastern History* in 1892. Goldziher was one of the cofounders of the scientific study of Islam in Europe.

²⁵ Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian*, 256.

²⁶ Ibid, 256.

visit to Constantinople," recording "his contribution to the Monophysite *ecclesia* and the Chalcedonian *imperium*." ²⁷ Therefore, modern historians have been able to discover various flaws in history by comparing aspects of the *West-Syrian Chronicles* to other ancient texts.

When the *West-Syrian Chronicles* are used to determine the value of an Arab source, they either confirm the legitimacy of the Islamic sources or uncover a previously unknown section of seventh-century history. With the advent of the Arab invasions, the importance of comparing the Arab and Syriac sources becomes necessary to display an accurate picture of the events. The accounts of this era by the "Syriac sources are either very brief or confused or ill-formed or all three. In addition there are the works of Islamic historians, which purport to draw on contemporary and eyewitness accounts, and which provide a record of events in immense detail."²⁸ In general, this means the *West-Syrian Chronicles* are inferior to the Arab sources. This could be accounted for by the speed and intensity of the Arab invasions leaving little time for adequate historical records to be kept. However, this analysis cannot be universally applied, as the Arab sources are not always superior to the Syrian.

The Arabic sources are superior for general history, but in regards to specific events, the Syriac sources prove to be more accurate and void of the exaggerated heroics witnessed in many of the Islamic texts. The records of the Arab conquest of Shushtar in the Khuzistan province provide an example of how the extensive Arabic sources, which are full of contradictions, are less accurate than the Syrian chronicle. The Syriac source "composed soon after the events give a well-informed account which is completely independent of the Arabic tradition."²⁹ When compared to the much longer Arab version:

All the important features of the Syriac narrative can be found in one or more of the Arabic accounts. However, none of the Arabic accounts contain all of the material found in the Syriac and they all contain extraneous material. Without the Syriac, we would have no idea which of the various Arabic traditions was closest to being a factual account of what occurred at Shushtar.³⁰

The flaws in the Arab traditions are accounted for in Arab works' composition. Initially, these sources were passed down as part of

²⁷ Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, 287.

²⁸ Mark Whitton, *The Making of Byzantium: 600-1025*, (Los Angeles, 1996), 82.

²⁹ Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs*, 6.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 6.

an oral tradition and were "written down in the later eighth and ninth centuries – that is between one hundred fifty and two hundred years after the event," and "unlike the Islamic sources a number of seventh century Syriac chronicles and other texts have survived."³¹ The inaccuracy of many oral traditions requires the use of alternate sources such as the *West-Syrian Chronicles* to find the truth: "the way forward seems to be through a painstaking re-analysis of all these texts – Arabic, Syriac, and Greek – to discover what seventh century realities can be discovered behind them."³²

After historians have used the Syriac chronicles to verify an alternate source, they proceed to fill in the blanks that are present in the other documents. Although the "standard approach to writing the history of these years has been to create a narrative framework out of the Islamic tradition, and then fit in materials from Greek and Syriac sources where appropriate" the collection of the Syrian chronicles had not yet been considered.³³ The unreliable and often contradictory nature of the Islamic documents has increased the need to use the Syriac sources to supplement them. Unlike the Islamic sources, "the Syriac material does allow one to identify a meager but secure core of fact."³⁴ It is these facts which corrected the Muslim sources at the battle of Shushtar, where the Muslim sources describe an easy victory over the town, while the Syriac source "shows the difficulties that the Muslims had when faced with well-defended fortified sites."³⁵ The Arab histories provide a rich and colorful, though sometimes contradictory, analysis of the Arab-Byzantine conflict. On the other hand, the sources from Byzantium itself are not as abundant and thus the *West-Syrian Chronicles* is even more useful in filling in the voids left by the present historical records.

Even with the lack of information regarding the seventh-century from Byzantine sources there are still times when the Syriac sources are of little use when filling in gaps. Many Byzantine historians have covered the war between Byzantium and Persia making Syriac sources secondary. The majority of the Syriac sources "on the Roman-Persian war originated John of Ephesus and the supplementary information is neither detailed nor accurate."³⁶ Therefore, most of the Syriac material is not detailed enough to supplement the Byzantium-Persian history, but it still ensures the accuracy of the Byzantine sources. However, with respect to more local events the *West-Syrian Chronicles* illustrate

³¹ Whitrow, *The Making of Byzantium*, 83-6.

³² Ibid, 85.

³³ Ibid, 83.

³⁴ Ibid, 86.

³⁵ Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs*, 6.

³⁶ Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian*, 248.

a more detailed account, thus mending the holes of the Byzantine histories.

The Syriac chronicles uncover many otherwise unrecorded events in seventh-century history. The Lakhmid-Ghassanid war between Byzantium and a federation of Arab tribes was "hardly noticed by historians of Byzantine relations."³⁷ In spite of this, "Syriac sources give a fuller and more accurate picture of this war, supplementing the Greek source and giving the war more significance than the classicizing Byzantine historian does."³⁸ The Syrian chronicle gives precise data including "chronological, toponymic, and onomastic data, and relates events in a matter-of-fact way, leading one to infer it derives from a documentary source."³⁹ Without the Syrian account, modern historians would not have known about this conflict, which affected the balance of power between Persia and Byzantium. The Syriac sources are just as helpful in regards to works by ancient historians that have been lost. John of Ephesus lost much of his history on Justinian and Arethas, but the Syriac chronicles have "preserved some precious morsels on Arethas," including documents which "are fundamental for understanding the role of Arethas in the history of Monophysitism in the sixth century."⁴⁰ Therefore, an interdependent relationship exists between the Greek and Syriac sources to supplement each other.

The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles provides the missing link between early medieval and late antiquity histories. A source independent of the Greek and Arab sources, the Syriac chronicles, when combined with the histories of Byzantium and Islam provide a more accurate historical record of seventh-century history. By using the *West-Syrian Chronicles* to check and correct the histories of Islam and Byzantium, modern historians can be assured of their accuracy. The interconnectedness of the Greek, Arabic, and Syriac sources is apparent because without looking at all of them simultaneously, flaws will occur in the historical traditions. The *West-Syrian Chronicles* link the histories of East and West as they are beginning to diverge toward different paths. The *West-Syrian Chronicles*, in conjunction with Greek and Arab sources, allows historians to understand the transformation from ancient to medieval and thus the resulting implications for the present.

³⁷ Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, 236.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 237.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 241.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 302.

Submission Policy
for
MSU Undergraduate Historian

The MSU Undergraduate Historian gladly accepts submissions of essays, book reviews, and other written works by MSU undergraduate students. Submissions can be of interest in a wide range of areas, but all should relate to history or the study of history. Submissions that are accepted will be expected to be of professional standard and are expected to make a significant statement or contribution to interpretation of unpublished and primary sources as well as a broad range of supporting secondary sources. Submissions that have been published previously or that are being considered for publication elsewhere will not be considered by this organization.

Submissions can be of any length. A cover sheet must be included with your essay. The cover sheet should include the piece's title, student name, student number, email address, class standing, major field of study, topic of paper and geographic region in the top left-hand corner. There must be no identifying marks on your essay except for your student number. The student number on your paper will be matched to that on the cover sheet to ensure that each submission is reviewed and selected anonymously. Submissions must be in Times New Roman 12-point font and be double-spaced. Your student number must be on both your essay and your cover sheet in order to be accepted for review. In addition, a digital copy on either floppy disk or CD must be provided with your submission. Email submissions will not be accepted unless under special circumstances already arranged with the Editor-in-Chief. Submissions will be accepted until Friday, December 2, 2005 for the 2006 Edition of the *MSU Undergraduate Historian*.

Send manuscripts and correspondence to:

The MSU Undergraduate Historian
c/o History Association of Michigan State
301 Morrill Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824

Email: hams@msu.edu

www.h-a-m-s.com/journal

STUDENT INFORMATION NAME: _____

The MSU Student Information System (SIS) is a web-based system that provides information about students enrolled at Montana State University. The SIS is used by students, faculty, and staff to access information about students, including enrollment status, academic progress, and financial aid. The SIS is also used by the university to track student enrollment and academic performance. The SIS is a critical part of the university's operations and is used by thousands of students and staff members.

Information can be found on the SIS website at sis.msu.edu. The website provides information about the SIS, including how to access the system, how to use the system, and how to contact the SIS staff. The website also provides information about the university's policies and procedures regarding the SIS. The SIS is a web-based system that provides information about students enrolled at Montana State University. The SIS is used by students, faculty, and staff to access information about students, including enrollment status, academic progress, and financial aid. The SIS is also used by the university to track student enrollment and academic performance. The SIS is a critical part of the university's operations and is used by thousands of students and staff members.

The MSU Student Information System (SIS) is a web-based system that provides information about students enrolled at Montana State University. The SIS is used by students, faculty, and staff to access information about students, including enrollment status, academic progress, and financial aid. The SIS is also used by the university to track student enrollment and academic performance. The SIS is a critical part of the university's operations and is used by thousands of students and staff members.

For more information, please contact the SIS staff at sis@msu.edu.



A Publication of the History Association of Michigan State