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CONTENTS

A Note from the Editors	4
Acknowledgments	6
'INTO THE BATTLE FOR AN ABUNDANT HARVEST!: REPRESENTATIONS OF 'FRIENDS AND 'FOES' IN <i>PRAVDA</i> AND <i>IZVESTIYA</i> DURING TIMES OF FAMINE' By Saskia Brechenmacher	7
'CAUGHT IN LOVE'S GRIP: PASSION AND MORAL AGENCY IN FRENCH COURTLY ROMANCE' By Reuben Henriques	29
'LET US SAVE HAITI: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF HAITI, 1915-1934' By Zoe Hoffman	46
'ANTI-PURITAN PAMPHLETEERING AND POPULAR ROYALISM' By Benjamin Cohen	63
'WHITNEY'S GAMBLE: WHITNEY YOUNG AND AFRICAN AMERICAN SUPPORT OF THE MILITARY DURING THE VIETNAM WAR' By Oliver Rosenbloom	83
'PROMISED LAND: QUILOMBISMO, THE 'QUILOMBO CLAUSE' AND THE POLITICS OF RECOGNITION IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZIL' By Priya Parrotta	103
'THE HALIFAX CONTROVERSY AND QUESTIONING OF PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY' By Chelsea Barry	120
Interview with Steven Lubar	147

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS-IN-CHIEF



As the editions of the *Brown Journal of History* proliferate—and as the quality of the submissions flourishes—it is helpful to reflect on the successes it has achieved as well as the challenges that lay ahead for the *BjH* and academic journals of history, undergraduate or otherwise. Our mission is to create a publication dedicated to showcasing outstanding work done by Brown undergraduates, a mission which this year's edition fulfills with flying colors. Celebrating the research and critical analysis of historically minded students is crucial for intellectual development in the first four years of higher education, regardless of whether those authors go on to pursue degrees or careers in academic history. In addition, affirming the importance of undergraduate scholarship to the larger historical endeavor is an important feature of a discipline that more readily accepts knowledge produced outside the already-existing historical mouthpieces and genres. While this is not a denouncement of “gate keeping” in academic knowledge per se (this is, after all, a note from the editors-in-chief), if history is to enhance its relevance in the broader world it must multiply and diversify the venues from which it draws its insight.

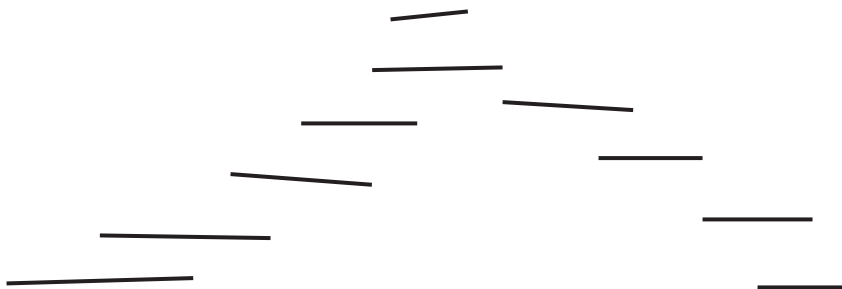
The centrality of the Internet and the wider digital world for the writing, reading, and research done by today's undergraduates is reflected in the *Journal's* decision to shift publication to emphasize digital distribution. With the creation of a new website, linked from the main page of the History Department site, we will make the scholarship collected in this volume available, free of charge, to any and all who want to read it. Although we will still produce a limited number of paper copies, the decision to create a website that houses this year's journal, previous editions, and hopefully future editions was in keeping with the *BjH's* commitment to greater environmental sustainability and the free and wide dissemination of academic knowledge.

The articles that follow are but a small foray into the diverse and fascinating historical work done by Brown undergraduates, as was clear from the large number of high-quality submissions that came in this year. In brief snapshots, the topics addressed by this year's authors are: social representations of famine in Soviet newspapers; smuggling and colonial Rhode Island identity in the subversion of Parliamentary authority; anti-Puritan pamphleteering in pre-Civil War England; twelfth-century courtly love poems from France and ecclesiastical notions of love, marriage, and free will; the re-articulation of slave communities called "quilombos" in late-twentieth century Brazilian political ideology; the story of Whitney Young and the politics of the Vietnam War among American blacks; and the journalistic and political responses of African Americans to the U.S. occupation of Haiti from 1915-1934. We are honored to be able to present these excellent pieces of scholarship to you, the reader, and proud to include the authors amongst our undergraduate colleagues at Brown. With the website in place and a student body that is engaged with worlds past and present, it is our hope that in years to come, the *Brown Journal of History* will continue to celebrate outstanding undergraduate scholarship and provide students a forum in which to publish work and make it freely accessible.

Anna Matejcek

Robbie Nelson

Editors-In-Chief



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“Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!”:

REPRESENTATIONS OF ‘FRIENDS’ AND
‘FOES’ IN *PRAVDA* AND *IZVESTIIA* DURING
TIMES OF FAMINE

Saskia Brechenmacher

«The Soviet peasantry is fulfilling its duty for the Motherland.» This statement headlined an editorial column discussing the harvesting season in Ukraine on the front page of the Soviet newspaper *Izvestiia* on 19 August 1947. It was published in the midst of a devastating famine that took the lives of over a million Soviet citizens and particularly ravaged the Ukrainian countryside.¹ The editorial declared that the Soviet peasantry «has at its disposal all the possibilities, all necessary means and reserves» to ensure a speedy completion of the harvest, suggesting the absence of objective reasons for failing to meet official grain procurement quotas. The front page of this newspaper issue is striking due to its apparent disconnect from the occurrences on the countryside at the time. It raises the urgent question of how the Soviet press, as a mouthpiece of the Stalinist regime, chose to portray agricultural developments during times of crisis. Did it simply choose to ignore the reports on widespread food shortages and suffering, as the aforementioned article seems to suggest, or did it provide justifications for obstacles and problems encountered? And did its representation of Soviet agriculture and its depictions of the peasantry change from the moment of collectivization, when the restructuring of agriculture represented one of the state's top priorities, to the post-war period, when the Stalinist system of governance had already been established?

Motivated by the desire to understand the lived experiences of the Soviet population in the midst of unprecedented socio-economic transformations, historians of the Soviet Union have focused extensively on the impact of collectivization on peasant lives and the manifestations of peasant resistance to the brutal collectivization and grain procurement policies of the state. The work of Sheila Fitzpatrick, Lynne Viola and Roberta Manning, among others, has transformed our understanding of the Soviet countryside by debunking the concept

¹ «Советское крестьянство выполняет свой долг» *Izvestiia*, August 19, 1947, 1.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

of a monolithic, totalitarian state suppressing the passive peasant masses that were only capable of compliance or spontaneous outbursts of violence.² Through their analyses of new archival evidence, diaries, oral histories and contemporary newspapers emerged a new conception of Soviet peasants as independent actors engaging in different forms of overt, secret and every-day resistance.

This focus on the lived experiences of Soviet rule and the reality of agricultural policy implementation is crucial to a more nuanced understanding of the Soviet state and society. However, these studies do not address the ways in which the state was able to uphold its legitimacy and the credibility of its ideology in the face of discontent and upheaval. In his analysis of Soviet public discourse in *Pravda*, "Thank You, Comrade Stalin," Jeffrey Brooks observes that the Soviet press played a crucial role in affixing officially sanctioned meanings to phenomena of daily life in what he refers to as a "huge linguistic operation" driven by the need for public explanation.³ He argues that the press imposed a structure on thinking that affected even the 'nonbelievers' in the Soviet system and represented "a normative standard for society as a whole and a practical guide to public behavior for all citizens".⁴ As valuable as his analysis of *Pravda* is, Brooks' focus rests on the pre-war period and his analysis only briefly explores the immediate post-war years. His general analysis of public discourse in *Pravda* also leaves the specific issue of the representation of the countryside during times of collectivization and famine relatively unexplored, even though the need for public explanation was arguably highest during these periods of massive upheaval and suffering.

The purpose of this paper is to examine changes in the official representation of Soviet agriculture during Stalin's rule. In order to do so I focus on the the two great famines that occurred in the USSR, one in 1932-3 and the other in 1946-7, following the cataclysmic event of the Second World War. Although the exact

2 For studies of peasant resistance against collectivization and the Soviet peasantry under Stalin, see: Viktor Petrovich Danilov, Roberta Thompson Manning, and Lynne Viola, *Tragediia Sovetskoi Derevni: Kollektivizatsiia i Raskulachivanie: Dokumenty i Materialy V 5 Tomakh, 1927-1939*. (Moskva: Rossiiskaia polit. entsiklopediia, 1999); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village After Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Lynne Viola et al., *The War against the Peasantry, 1927-1930* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

3 Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from the Revolution to the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 19.

4 Brooks, xviii.

number of victims continues to be a contested subject among historians, access to new archival resources since the fall of the Soviet Union has revealed the disastrous scale of these two famines that claimed millions of lives.⁵ The years 1932-3 and 1946-7 thus constituted acute moments of crisis in Soviet agricultural policy and the Soviet system overall. As the two famines occurred at distinct moments of the Stalinist period –the end of the first five-year plan and the immediate post-war years - the comparison of their respective representation in the press should allow us to gain further insights into the evolution of Soviet official discourse and developments in the state’s approach to the countryside and peasantry.

This paper is based on an in-depth analysis of all newspaper articles concerning domestic agriculture published in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* in April and August of 1933 and 1947, the years in which the famines reached their most dramatic proportions.⁶ I chose the months of April and August as they represent the height of the sowing and harvesting periods, when agriculture moved to the forefront of the Soviet economy. One can therefore expect that during these two months the countryside will feature more prominently in the press.

I am particularly concerned with the newspapers’ allocations of honor and responsibility as the representation of these issues shows how the state attempted to maintain its legitimacy and create exemplary models of thought and behavior for the population to emulate. After a brief section outlining the role of the press in the Soviet Union, the first part of the paper focuses on how in 1933 the press created a narrative of struggle and improvement that blamed existing shortcomings on internal saboteurs and incompetent cadres while using the example of shock workers and successful kolkhozes as role models to emulate. I then turn to depictions of agriculture in 1947, focusing on changes in notions of enmity, responsibility and heroism as well as the increasing standardization and

5 Examples of scholarly work on the famines include Mark B. Tauger, *Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933* (Pittsburgh, PA: Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 2001); Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror Famine* (New York: Oxford University press, 1986); R.W. Davies, *The years of hunger: Soviet agriculture, 1931-1933* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); V.F. Zima, *Golod v SSSR 1946-1947 godov: proiskhozhdenie i posledstviia* (Moscow: Institut Rossiiskoi Istorii RAN, 1996); Nicholas Ganson, *The Soviet Famine of 1946-47 in Global and Historical Perspective* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

6 All newspaper references are to East View’s online digital archives of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*, accessible at <http://dlib.eastview.com/search/simple>. All quotations are translated by the author.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

language and form.

In both years the Soviet press shifted the blame for the slow pace of agricultural production on internal enemies, backwardness and administrative problems, while celebrating the most productive workers as the Socialist ideal. Without ever acknowledging the full extent of the food shortages, *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* created a structure in which they could define the 'friends' and 'foes' of Soviet society in a manner that emphasized the Socialist ideology of the state and corresponded to the pragmatic aims of the regime. However, the comparison reveals a significant difference: in 1933 the press adopted a both educational and motivational stance, using criticism and role models to emphasize progress and improvement. By 1947, the newspapers' focus had shifted to the state and to Stalin's persona in particular, and problems as well as hero figures were only used to highlight the benevolence of the leader. This change became particularly evident in the increasingly formulaic nature of both form and content, which were characterized by relentless celebration of the existing Soviet state rather than the focus on a heroic future.

ECHOING THE STATE

Throughout the Soviet period, the newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* served as the dominant mouthpieces of the Bolshevik party and the Soviet government and represented the core of the Soviet information system. In the latter half of the 1920s, Stalin had begun to personally oversee the central press organs, and all issues of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* required clearing from the Central Committee.⁷ Due to their editors' unique access to and cooperation with political decision-makers, the two newspapers exerted significant influence over the content of countless regional and local newspapers throughout the country. They represented channels through which the state could influence public perception, legitimate the authority of the Soviet state and provoke actions from the side of the readership.

The coverage of agriculture in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* thus does not represent a window on life in the Soviet countryside during the Stalinist period or a reflection of peasant experiences of the famines. Instead, the occurrences on the countryside were filtered through the language of the state and the lens of official ideology. The resulting official discourse is neither a reflection nor antithesis of an objective "reality", but rather epitomizes how social and economic crises were re-framed to uphold the legitimacy of the Soviet state.

⁷ Brooks, 5.

1933: THE BATTLE FOR THE GRAIN

It is therefore not particularly surprising that the Soviet press never acknowledged the reality of the widespread famine that ravaged the Soviet countryside in 1932 and 1933 and particularly affected the territories of Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus and the Volga region. Following a brief historical background of the famine, this section will outline how *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* instead shifted the focus on creating a sense of urgency that emphasized the crucial need for increased agricultural production.

The famine had been developing since the on-set of full-scale collectivization in 1928 and was directly related to the state's grain requisitions terror, which represented the "final and decisive culmination of a campaign [...] to extract the maximum possible amount of grain from a hostile peasantry."⁸ In order to finance Soviet modernization and industrial expansion, the Soviet state imposed drastic rates of grain procurements on the peasantry while paying extremely low prices for their harvests. At the same time, forced collectivization and 'dekulakization' had already crippled agricultural production, and in 1932-3 both deportations and land seizures continued to mark the Soviet countryside.⁹ When procurements failed to meet state targets for 1932, Moscow imposed additional quotas, collected seed grain funds that were usually saved for the next spring and refused to provide aid for the starving peasantry.¹⁰

Discontent and suffering in the countryside were widespread and well known to the Soviet regime. The OGPU, the Soviet Union's secret police organization, regularly reported on peasant dissatisfaction with grain prices, procurement quotas and inadequate levels of food supply, as well as on organized 'anti-soviet' activities.¹¹ An OGPU order of May 1927 had already forbidden any reporting on difficulties in the grain procurement process in the press, a directive that was soon followed by similar prohibitions concerning grain prices or exports.¹² The word 'famine' itself was therefore never mentioned in the press, except in reference to the pre-Revolutionary period or living conditions abroad.¹³

However, by 1933, the famine in the countryside, particularly in the

8 Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-39* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 305.

9 Fitzpatrick, 77.

10 Fitzpatrick, 75-76.

11 Lynne Viola et al., *The War against the Peasantry, 1927-1930*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 19.

12 Viola et al., *The War against the Peasantry*, 19.

13 Fitzpatrick, 11; «Хлеб – сила и могущество Советского государства,» *Izvestiia*, Aug. 6, 1947, 1.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

Northern Caucasus, Ukraine and central regions along the Volga, had reached such proportions that it could no longer be entirely ignored by the Soviet press. The Soviet powers were faced with a paradox: on the one hand, the famine and food shortages could not be explained by the state's policies of draconian grain procurement quotas and continued exports of grain to finance domestic investment. On the one hand, Stalin himself had declared that dekulakization had largely been achieved and overt kulak resistance to collectivization overcome.¹⁴ It followed that the war against the kulaks could no longer represent the overarching obstacle to prosperity in the countryside.

The majority of agricultural news headlines of April and August 1933 therefore repeatedly and vigorously emphasizing the need for an abundant harvest while omitting a direct discussion of class warfare in the countryside or problems with state grain procurements. The majority of articles in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* predominantly focused on the ongoing sowing and harvesting campaigns. Importantly, these articles could largely be found on the newspapers' second and third pages, and did not regularly occupy *Pravda's* or *Izvestiia's* title pages. The placement of agricultural news within the newspapers suggests that in 1933, despite the proportions of the famine, the press considered agriculture as one aspect of the "Socialist building" process among many, and perhaps tried to deflect attention from occurrences in the countryside.

One can observe two central themes that indirectly highlight existing insufficiencies in agricultural production by creating a sense of urgency and need: the emphasis on competition and speed, and the much-repeated calls to use modern technology. In April 1933, typical agricultural news articles were titled «The Northern Caucasus absolutely has to increase the speed of the sowing campaigns», «Strong working discipline, competition and shock work determine the success of the spring sowing campaign» or «The increase of the harvest is at the center of attention!»¹⁵ As these titles indicate, the continuous appeals to increase the speed of the harvest, to make use of modern machinery and to implement stronger labor discipline in the fields suggest that the press is reacting to a food supply crisis and reflect the priority of the state to ensure the fulfilment of agricultural production quotas.

This sense of urgency is strongly reflected in the recurring linguistic

14 Viola et al., *The War against the Peasantry*, 264.

15 "Северному Кавказу необходимо решительно повысить темпы сева," *Pravda*, April 12, 1933, 3; "Повышение урожайности – в центр внимания!" *Pravda* April 3, 1933, 3; "Крепкая трудовая дисциплина, соревнование и ударничество режут успех весеннего сева," *Pravda*, April 4, 1933, 3.

theme comparing struggles for greater grain production to military endeavors. According to Brooks, the strict observance of verbal formulas was one of the characteristics of Stalinism.¹⁶ The use of such ‘verbal formulas’ that repeatedly put certain terms in association was already an integral part of the newspaper coverage of 1933, particularly to apply the language of war and the battlefield to developments in Soviet agriculture. *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* regularly repeated the phrases “battle for grain” and the “fight for an abundant harvest” and reported on the “extended offensive” on the fields. Slogans such as “a good harvest will be won”, the “battlefront for a good harvest”, “the surge of labor” and the concept of “labor discipline” all underline the centrality of agriculture to the Soviet system.¹⁷ They create the sense that the future of the entire country depends on progress in the agricultural domain, just as in times of war the entire country’s fate depends on military success. The use of military metaphors eerily reflected the war-like violence and suffering experienced by the peasantry, but turned the situation on its head by making the peasants the heroes rather than the victims of the battle. The papers thus conjured the image of a countryside caught up in movement and momentum for change. However, no war is complete without an enemy side. While creating a sense of pressure and urgency, the newspapers subtly construed new dangers and threats that prevented the building of a better future.

‘THE DARKNESS AMONG US’

The predominant threat as depicted during the famine of 1933 was not the danger of an overt ‘kulak’ rebellion, but subtle sabotage rooted within the centers of power – be it the kolkhoz leadership or the regional party organizations. Rather than openly resisting or hindering the collectivization process, the kulak’s continued and malevolent influence allegedly stemmed from claiming to support the Soviet cause while covertly disrupting state grain procurements and the functioning of collective farms.

The kulak took on the form of an ominous presence lurking beneath the surface of collectivized farm life. The press accused these remnants of the largely eliminated kulak class of implementing harmful policies or spreading misleading instructions. Numerous articles drew a direct link between the difficulties of the

¹⁶ Brooks, *Thank you*, 68.

¹⁷ For examples of the use of military metaphors, see: “На борьбу за высокие урожаи масличных культур,” *Izvestiia*, April 21, 1933, 1; “Все силы на повышение урожайности,” *Izvestiia*, April 20, 1933, 3; A Baev and V. Ovcharov, “Коммунисты совхозов! Все силы на поля, в бригады, добиться полного использования уборочных машин,” *Pravda*, August 26, 1933, 2.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

kolkhozes in fulfilling state quotas and the subversive, intractable influence of 'kulak elements' or 'remainders of the White Guards» in their midst. On the 12th of April 1933, *Pravda* reported that in Ukraine, «kulak elements direct all of the harmful work towards the lowering of the quality of the sowing” and “instigate the Kolkhoz workers to sow in stubble and weed»; a case which, according to the reporter, was not exceptional and could explain the inferior quality of the Ukrainian harvest.¹⁸ In another instance, a *Pravda* article claimed “the provocations of these enemies of the workers [...] pushed the working Cossacks onto the wrong track.”¹⁹ Kulaks were blamed for spreading lies about the nature of state grain procurements, for example by claiming that the state only collected grain from the actually cultivated areas rather than strictly according to plan, thereby discouraging the peasants from working harder.²⁰

Beyond sabotage, collective farmers cited in letters published in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* blamed hidden kulaks for withholding parts of the harvest for themselves. The press labeled attempts by kolkhozes to establish their own grain reserves before handing their surplus over to the state as “kulak infiltrations” of collective farm administrations. In a letter by the collective farm workers of the Ukrainian kolkhoz “Rising”, published on August 3, 1933, the workers juxtaposed the year’s successful harvest with previous difficulties, blaming their previous “kulak leadership” and “a band of kulaks [that] used the absence of vigilance on part of the party organizations [...] to take away grain from the shock-workers and honorable kolkhoz farmers.”²¹ Again, the article depicted the influence of the kulak as hidden, dangerous and unexpected: “In the winter, [...] when we began to ask the leadership for help, the enemy opened his cards. We then saw everything frightening, savage inside of the kulak, of the extortioner, whom we had not expected among ourselves.”²²

In the newspapers’ most direct discussions of the famine, journalists went as far as blaming “kulak enemies” for causing the suffering and food shortages in the countryside by obstructing the harvest or by artificially withholding food supplies. On August 28th 1933, the front-page of *Pravda* features several articles

18 “План ранних выполнен на 27,0 проц.” *Pravda*, April 12, 1933, 3.

19 “Была на Кубани станица Полтавская...” *Pravda*, August 28, 1933, 1.

20 “Какой же кубанский колхоз не может работать так, как мы?” *Pravda*, April 14, 1933, 3.

21 “Письмо членов передового колхоза «Восход», Н. -Троицкого района, Днепропетровской области, тов. Сталину,” *Pravda*, August 3, 1933, 1.

22 “Письмо членов передового колхоза «Восход», Н. -Троицкого района, Днепропетровской области, тов. Сталину,” *Pravda*, August 3, 1933, 1.

detailing the achievements of the most successful kolkhozes of the Northern Caucasus region while pointing out remaining shortcomings in other areas. A short piece on the Poltavskaya grain station in the Kuban region reports that “the White Guards” and kulaks had begun to “pollute and ravage the rich Kuban black-earth region, to organize hunger in the country and shatter the foundations of Soviet power.”²³ The press also blamed the alleged kulaks within the kolkhozes’ leadership for spreading the notion of food shortage and famine to destabilize the Soviet system.²⁴ The press thus promptly deflected criticism of government policy unto an undefined enemy that had infiltrated the system and was causing wreckage from behind the scenes.

By 1933, the category of ‘kulak’ as employed by the press seemed to have retained little of its original class definition and instead described anyone who was reluctant to operate within the collective farm system. The term ‘kulak’ was never accompanied with references to a person’s or group’s social background or level of prosperity, suggesting that the term and its negative connotations was already firmly engrained in Soviet public discourse. The press interchangeably spoke of “kulaks”, “White Guards” and “slackers”, accusing them of provocation, terror, “malicious” sabotage as well as laziness.²⁵ The class background implied in the terms ‘kulak’ and ‘White Guard’ thus became intertwined with general notions of work refusal or even incompetence. This blurring of the boundaries between the social category of ‘kulaks’ and any individual refusing or failing to carry out state directives reflects the fact that during times of famine, even acts of economic survival and subsistence became criminal acts of political resistance. Lynne Viola terms this process the disappearance of ‘neutrality’ in the countryside: one could only be for collectivization or an enemy of the people.²⁶

The actual individuals behind these categories remained almost entirely undefined and were never visually represented, reinforcing the idea of an undefined, ubiquitous danger lingering behind any manifestation of negligence or discontent. In the rare instances when the “kulak infiltrators” were named and directly described, the press reinforced the image of kulaks as lazy, unproductive and ungrateful workers. On April 14, 1933, *Izvestiia* printed a letter from the Artel Ivko, a collective farm in the Kuban region, which described the farm’s

23 “Была на Кубани станица Полтавская...” *Pravda*, August 28, 1933, 1.

24 Viola, *Peasant Rebels*, 225.

25 For examples, see: “Попыткам скрыть хлеб от государства – решительный отпор,” *Pravda*, August 13, 1933, 2; “Торжество новых методов партийного руководства,” *Pravda*, August 28, 1933, 1; “Совхозам нужны образцовые ОРС,” *Pravda*, August 30, 1933, 1.

26 Viola, *Peasant Rebels*, 209.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

'exemplary' struggle against kulak infiltration. The letter singled out an elderly kolkhoz member and his two sons, who "warmed their bellies in the sun last summer and only went to the fields to eat lunch in the spring" rather than working "the Bolshevik way."²⁷ In an atmosphere of urgency with regard to agricultural production, the press emphasized that refusals to work for the state represented an affront to the Soviet system and constructed an entire category of malicious and ungrateful workers that were characterized as dishonorable and unwanted.

The stigmatization of unwanted elements facilitated their social exclusion by underlining their inherent unworthiness and the shamefulness of their actions. The article about the Artel Ivko is particularly illustrative of this process due to its forceful language and imagery. In the published letter, the kolkhoz members described the kulaks as "darkness that had accumulated among us" and stated, "We don't feed this kind any more. [...]. We chased them away from the artel. We do not tolerate their kind and will not do so anymore."²⁸ The repeated use of the term "their kind" dehumanized the group and emphasized their alienation from the kolkhoz community or even society at large. The logical conclusion of this form of "othering" was expulsion and destruction: "We tirelessly cleanse ourselves of kulak elements, and chase all pretenders and careless workers away. [...] The class enemy will become an obstacle in your way, sweep him away, destroy the kulak - only herein lies the guarantee of victory. To victory, comrades!"²⁹ The use of the word 'cleanse', *otchishat*, reinforces the idea of contamination from within, while also hinting at an ideal of purity that the collective farms strive to achieve in order to attain the 'victory' that is proclaimed at the end of the article.

The example of Artel Ivko and the letter describing its members' treatment of the kulaks is important as it epitomizes the way in which the press in 1933 described the actual or fictional experiences of individual kolkhozes as 'best practices' for other farms to emulate. Although it is unclear to what extent the letter from the Artel and the surrounding reports on the Kuban region reflected the occurrences of the time, the press used the aggressive discourse of the letter and its anti-kulak agitation as symbolic and necessary for agricultural productivity and success.

27 "Какой же кубанский колхоз не может работать так, как мы?" *Izvestiia*, April 14, 1933, 3.

28 "Какой же кубанский колхоз не может работать так, как мы?" *Izvestiia*, April 14, 1933, 3.

29 *Ibid.*, 3.

BLAMING THE LOWER RANKS

Besides blaming kulaks and counterrevolutionaries, the press singled out lower-ranking rural communists and local party organizations as further scapegoats for the grain requisitions failure, reflecting Stalin's concerns about the quality of local cadres and their willingness to enforce official instructions.³⁰ Already in 1928 Stalin blamed the "complacency and sluggishness" of local party organizations for allowing kulaks and speculators to hinder the grain procurement process. This reprimand was repeatedly echoed in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*, which criticized local party organizations and collective farm leaders for their "incompetence and lassitude".³¹ For example, a *Pravda* article of the 10th of August 1933 urged the Sovkhozes to speed up the pace of the harvest. Beneath two photographs of beaming peasants, the paper featured an article criticizing the slow pace of Ukrainian grain production, noting that "the lagging behind can be explained in no small measure by an attitude of complacency, which is spreading in the different regions and collective farms of Ukraine" and suggesting that "these opportunistic attitudes, reinforced by class enemies, are not met with sufficient resistance from the side of many party organizations."³² In this context, it was not unusual for journalists to single out individual officials, who, according to the newspapers' judgment, had not done sufficiently to ensure the smooth organization of the sowing or harvesting processes.

These criticisms seemed to fulfill two important functions. On the one hand, the officials in question were described and cited as examples that could provide a valuable lesson for others by showing which kinds of behaviors and attitudes the state considered harmful and unwanted. The press used criticisms of local officials to highlight the state's core values. For example, local authorities were often accused of being out of touch with the reality of fieldwork or failing to comply with official directives, thereby emphasizing the importance the state placed on obedience and hard labor.

On the other hand, criticisms of local leadership also shifted the blame away from the central government. On 26 August 1933, *Pravda* published an article criticizing kolkhoz authorities in the Odessa oblast, where the director of a state farm "belongs to the people who sit in offices and think about how they lead the state farm production», not wanting to notice the clear deficiencies with which the

30 Martin, 300.

31 Viola et al., *The War against the Peasantry*, 21.

32 "На Украине скошено больше половины колосовых," *Pravda*, August 10, 1933, 3.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

farm approached the harvest.³³ This excerpt highlights the way the press was able to use criticism of local authority figures to distance the policies of the state from problems on the ground by blaming them on deficiencies in local governance. At the same time, the press was able to emphasize the party's and government's commitment to effective and egalitarian leadership.

SHOCK WORKERS AS SYMBOLS OF SOVIET SUCCESS

The "kolkhoz workers" themselves remained relatively untarnished by criticism. The press put great effort into depicting them as an idealized group of selfless, honorable and hard-working Soviet citizens that represented the ideal of purity the kulaks attempted to corrupt and obstruct. They were the ones described as driving forward the dekulakization process, whilst local state or party authorities continuously failed to live up to their mission. The discussion of successful kolkhoz workers seemed to follow a similar 'educational' aim as the expression of criticism toward local officials: it served as a forum to emphasize official ideals of productivity, selflessness and discipline and to set standards against which other citizens could measure themselves.

Nobody represented this ideal better than the *udarniki*, the shock workers, who were singled out by the state as heroes of the Soviet workforce for setting new records of labor productivity. In 1933, the Soviet press regularly included personal accounts from exemplary figures who were selflessly devoted to the Bolshevik party, or featured portraits of the most successful agricultural shock workers. Their success was linked directly to the success of collectivization and the Soviet project in general. On August 28, 1933, *Pravda* featured an entire page honoring the work of the shock workers, titled "Bolshevik greetings to the best shockworkers of the soviet people! Kolkhoz life is blooming."³⁴ The section included a selection of articles written by kolkhoz workers themselves, in which the authors went into great detail enumerating the amounts of produce and grain they had harvested per hectare.

However, the newspaper articles were always careful to point out that the work of the shock workers served the greater good of the kolkhoz and Soviet agriculture in general, rather than one's individual advancement. The kolkhoz worker P. A. Hudoley encapsulated this sentiment by pointing out that his co-workers now «understood that if the kolkhoz economy falls behind, no individual [farming] plots will help. Everyone already feels responsible for the state and work

33 "О том, как политотдел организовал победу," *Pravda*, August 26, 1933, 2.

34 "Лучшим ударникам социалистических полей – большевистский привет!" *Pravda*, August 28, 1933, 3.

of the kolkhoz as a whole.»³⁵ The expression of such feelings of devotion directly from the hand of the workers created both a sense of credibility and identification, as it connected personal stories and portraits with accounts of larger economic developments.

In times of widespread famine, this image of the successful and optimistic kolkhoznik could not have been more out of touch with the reality of hardship in the countryside. The image of the shock workers established an ideal that was most likely not intended for a rural audience, but rather served to legitimize the agricultural policies of the state in the eyes of those more removed from assurances beyond the country's urban centers. The shock workers confirmed the success of the Soviet state, which, despite the various shortcomings alluded to by the press, had already 'produced' a new class of responsible and committed workers that placed the well-being of the whole above their individual prosperity. According to the press, this new kind of workers recognized the failure to meet state targets as problems of individual and collective efforts and always aimed at further increasing the quality and speed of their works in the future.³⁶ Newspaper articles underlined this idea of success by contrasting the inadequacies and inefficiencies of the past with depictions of a new order and way of life. As evidence, the authors provided detailed accounts of increases in agricultural production vis-à-vis the previous years.³⁷

Problems in the countryside were thus presented as shortcomings on the side of local authorities as well as remnants of the kulak threat, and contrasted with examples of heroic shock workers and optimistic calls for improvement and accounts of achieved successes. The use of contrasts between the past and the present particularly created a sense of an agricultural system on the path towards improvement, with hints regarding the existence of a famine framed as vestiges of corruption, incompetence and ignorance. *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*, as the official voices of the state, used the description of difficulties and shortcomings on the side of the peasants and party workers to present themselves as careful educators. They singled out best practices in great detail and punished those that fail to comply, while Stalin and the state remained relatively in the background.

35 P. A. Hudoley, "Богатым трудонем обязаны МТС," *Pravda*, August 28, 1933, 3.

36 "Лучшим ударникам социалистических полей – большевистский привет!" *Pravda*, August 28, 1933, 3.

37 T. Savchenko, "Будем бороться за завоевание всесоюзного первенства," *Pravda*, April 7, 1933, 3; "Письмо членов передового колхоза «Восход», Н. -Троицкого района, Днепропетровской области, тов. Сталину," *Pravda*, August 3, 1933, 1.

1947: THE STATE MOVES TO THE CENTER

Fourteen years after the devastating famine of 1933, following the purges of the 1930s and the catastrophe of the Second World War, the Soviet state and Stalin as the leader no longer represented the backdrop in a countrywide movement towards a Socialist future. While obstacles to agricultural production continued to be acknowledged and blamed on the war, the drought of the 1946 and bureaucratic incompetence, these shortcomings as well as the depiction of 'heroes' were used to highlight the heroism of Stalin and the state. Although many of the themes addressed were thus remarkably similar as in 1933, the tone and emphasis of the Soviet press had changed significantly, a development that was most clearly expressed in the repeated publication of letters written by peasants and directed at Stalin. The following section will analyze these changes in more detail, beginning with a historical account of the famine, and moving on to a discussion of agricultural problems and the transformation of Stalin's role as depicted by the post-war press.

The famine of 1946/1947, less studied by historians of the Soviet countryside, occurred in the midst of the disorder and destruction of the post-war period. As in 1933, the famine particularly affected the grain-growing regions of Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus as well as Moldova. Drought and a bad harvest in 1946 significantly reduced food availability in the subsequent year, as production declined further from an already low post-war level.³⁸ Despite the reality of the drought, the surplus stocks of the state seem to have been sufficient to feed the most affected regions.³⁹ The government organized grain loans and reduced the procurement quotas for some of the most affected regions, but this aid was often misused or delayed, and the state continued to export grain throughout the period of the famine. Ellman estimates that the number of deaths in the 1947 famine amounts to 1-1.5 million, although the total demographic loss is likely to have been greater.⁴⁰

The press coverage of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* in 1947 euphemistically acknowledged "shortcomings in agricultural production" and "difficulties in the countryside", but consistently used these reports to emphasize the heroism of the workers, the state and Stalin in overcoming the obstacles they faced. The severe drought of the previous year was acknowledged in several articles as one of the reasons for the slow pace of the harvest. These statements, however, were always

38 Michael Ellman, "The Role of Leadership Perceptions and of Intent in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1934," *Europe-Asia Studies* 57 (2005), 605.

39 *Ibid.*, 603.

40 *Ibid.*, 603.

immediately weakened by optimistic declarations of the successes achieved due to the selfless work of the peasants. For example, on April 27, 1947, a field team leader from the Kolkhoz “Day of Harvest” in the Moscow oblast noted that “the past summer was dry in our region and not ideal, but we received a good harvest nonetheless due to the use of agronomical technology and our extremely good care.”⁴¹ This kind of press report minimized the scale of the drought and its devastating consequences, placing the heroism of the state and the workers at the forefront of agriculture. Furthermore, it subtly shifted the responsibility for the success of the harvest on the care and efforts of the collective farms. The acknowledgement of objective difficulties and the subsequent direct denial of their impact on living conditions and labor productivity in the countryside contrasts sharply with the agricultural news coverage of 1933. At that time, no objective difficulties were ever acknowledged and the less formulaic character of the text did not yet include habitual references to agricultural successes and achievements.

Kulaks and White guards had entirely vanished from the discussion of Soviet agriculture, as collectivization and the victory of the proletariat over exploitative class had been deemed as completed. Besides the previous year’s drought, the press thus emphasized the damage caused by the Nazi occupation. This was particularly true in relation to the Ukrainian territory, which disproportionately suffered from the German invasion. The papers repeatedly published letters written by Ukrainian farmers directly to Stalin, in which they emphasized their hardships as well as their renewed efforts to overcome these. In one of these letters published in *Izvestiia* in spring 1947, Ukrainian peasants described that their «cities and villages heavily suffered from the invasion of the German Fascist occupiers. After the thwarting of the enemy, agriculture was one third behind pre-war levels in terms of machinery and tractors, which the occupiers had destroyed as well as all of our livestock.»⁴² The corresponding editorial column admitted that «The war brought serious challenges – the German fascist barbarians brought great harm to the Ukrainian economy. These difficulties were exacerbated by the drought of 1946.» However, the press did not depict these experiences as justifications for bad harvests or for explanations of suffering in the countryside, as this might have put into question the ability of the Soviet state to respond to the crisis of the war and its aftermath. Instead, they provided the backdrop for moving Stalin as the victorious war-time leader to the forefront of the discussion of Soviet agriculture.

41 “Опыт мастеров – всем колхозникам,” *Pravda*, April 27, 1947, 2.

42 “Товарищу Сталину И. В.” *Izvestiia*, April 13, 1947, 1.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

«FOR STALIN, OUR DEAR FATHER»

The same letter by Ukrainian kolkhoz workers exemplified how in 1947, the press invariably used discussions of agricultural problems as an opportunity to highlight the heroism and generosity of the Soviet state with Stalin as its leader. It celebrated the fact that even though the grain production still did «not satisfy the needs of the country», Ukrainian farmers had managed to achieve an abundant harvest with the generous help of the Soviet state.⁴³ According to the letter, the support and care of the party and its leader, who supplied the peasants with seeds, supplies, forage and machinery, helped the Ukrainian peasantry overcome the difficulties of the war, «which in prerevolutionary times would have brought the peasantry extreme poverty, ravage, hunger and suffering.»⁴⁴

The post-war years represented a continuous flow of 'personal' and collective expressions of gratitude for Stalin's leadership during and after the war. In 1947, *Pravda* on average allotted 21 percent of its front page to letters addressed to Stalin by collective farm districts from across the Soviet Union as well as personal reports by shock workers and collective farm directors concerning the fulfillment of state plans. The same letter was often published on the front pages of both *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*, accompanied in both instances by a corresponding editorial response in which the letter was discussed, the resolutions of the peasants celebrated, and shortcomings pointed out. The editorial took on the form of a collective voice that provided a template for interpreting the letter, reiterating its core message and framing it in the context of Soviet ideology.

These published letters were characterized by their highly formulaic nature, which quasi-religiously observed the same structure and repeated, at times almost word by word, the same paragraphs and verbal expressions. They usually began with an introductory paragraph stating the peasants' gratitude for Stalin's great care and protection during the war. They then summarized the difficulties the region experienced due to foreign invasion and drought and the efforts that were being made to address current shortcomings. The bulk of the letters was dedicated to compiling entire lists of obligations that the peasants promised to take upon themselves as a sign of gratitude for the help they had received.

These letters represent a direct example of what Brooks termed the Stalinist

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid. For other examples, see: "Великому вождю и учителю товарищу СТАЛИНУ Иосифу Виссарионовичу," *Izvestiia*, August 6, 1947, 1, "Вождю и учителю товарищу СТАЛИНУ Иосифу Виссарионовичу," *Izvestiia*, August 27, 1947, 1; "Великому вождю и учителю товарищу СТАЛИНУ Иосифу Виссарионовичу," *Izvestiia*, August 14, 1947, 1.

‘gift economy’: the linguistic expression of a societal arrangement that turned economic relations on their head by positing the goods and services (allegedly) provided by the Soviet state or by Stalin personally as generous gifts to the working masses, who in turn remain eternally indebted to their leader.⁴⁵ In a time when most collective farms were struggling to meet state procurement quotas as well as their own needs for food, the press abounded with official statements of highly detailed production obligations and expressions of gratitude. A direct link was drawn between the «blessings» received and the obligations expected in return: «Because of this Stalinist care, the workers have to do everything they can to successfully achieve an abundant harvest and to give the government more products and foodstuffs!»⁴⁶ The phrase «for the Soviet powers» had been replaced by «Comrade Stalin wants».

In addition to the military appeals for greater productivity discussed earlier on, an entirely new vocabulary field was introduced that assimilated quasi-religious terms and ideals such as the «holy duty to the fatherland» to achieve an abundant harvest and images of «selfless work» as eternal expressions of gratitude to «our dear father.»⁴⁷ Letters, editorials and agricultural reports were saturated with emotional expressions of «unlimited love, devotion and gratitude» that epitomized the new cult of personality that had emerged around Stalin.⁴⁸ Stalin was no longer framed as the ideological and political leader of the Bolsheviks, as was the case in the articles from 1933 in which he was usually mentioned in combination with the Soviet state and the Party. Now he was a towering father figure to the Soviet peasantry.

THE HEROES OF SOCIALIST LABOR

In similar development, the shock workers and Soviet role models of the post-war years no longer seemed to be celebrated in order to epitomize the ideology of communism and the success of the proletariat, but were used instead to highlight the fact that the Soviet state and Stalin had reached this ideal already. On a basic level, the emphasis on the themes of success and failure and the singling out of particularly successful workers as heroes to emulate further represents a point of

45 Brooks, xviii.

46 “Пустить в ход все резервы повышения урожайности,” *Pravda*, April 2, 1947, 1.

47 “Товарищу Сталину И. В.” *Izvestiia* April 13, 1947, 1.

48 “Обязательства морщков черноморского бассейна,” *Pravda*, April 22, 1947, 1 and “Товарищ Сталин возвеличил колхозный труд,” *Pravda*, April 11, 1947, 1.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

continuity that bridges the newspaper articles of 1933 and 1947. However, the framing of these glorified individuals differs significantly both with regard to the language used to describe them and in terms of how the importance attributed to their work is conceptualized.

In 1947 the Soviet Union passed a decree awarding the status of «Hero of Socialist Labor» to the most productive collective farm workers, replacing the category of agricultural shock workers that existed before.⁴⁹ This new decree received an astounding amount of press coverage during the first half of 1947. It was repeatedly described as a «historic act of the Soviet government» that proved the particular honour bestowed on working peasants and their «honest service for the fatherland and selfless fight for the interests of the state».⁵⁰ The press regularly featured comprehensive lists enumerating all the peasants that had been awarded the honorary status “Hero of Socialist Labor”.⁵¹ The numerous articles citing these heroes as sources of particular credibility suggested that the award entailed the responsibility of making their knowledge and skills available to the masses and incite them or ensure that they too achieved similar levels of productivity.

However, rather than emphasizing the exploits of these workers as manifestations of the Soviet ideal of labor productivity, the press depicted the new decree and the elite group of agricultural workers it created as evidence for the benevolence of the Soviet state. Whereas in 1933 the shock workers had featured as parts of the larger struggle for greater agricultural productivity and served to reinforce the idea of competition, in the post-war years their existence only seemed to serve the legitimization of the state. Their work acquired its meaning not due to its contribution to the Soviet economy, but through the personal recognition of Stalin. For example, an article from April 1947 detailing the reaction of collective farmers to the new decree regarding the “Heroes of Socialist Labor” cited the field team leader Skorikova qualifying the decree as “another display of Stalin’s care for the working people.” She asked to have the word “at a collective farm meeting to declare that “Only in our country is the work of the grain growers valued so highly, valued just as much as wartime exploits. Stalin gives glory to the work of the collective farms. This is why our hearts burn with thirst for our work.”⁵²

The simple formula according to which this excerpt was constructed

49 “Указ Президиума Верховного Совета СССР,” *Izvestiia*, April 1, 1937, 1.

50 “Пустить в ход все резервы повышения урожайности,” *Pravda* April 2, 1947, 1.

51 For examples, see “Указ Президиума Верховного Совета СССР,” *Pravda*, April 14, 1947, 1 and “Указ Президиума Верховного Совета СССР,” *Pravda*, April 10, 1947, 1.

52 “Товарищ Сталин возвеличил колхозный труд,” *Pravda*, April 11, 1947, 1.

epitomized the character and tone of the agricultural news coverage in 1947. It included a “Socialist hero” as an exemplary figure of the Soviet peasant that others were meant to emulate, and further gave concrete details of personal achievements and targets Skorikova allegedly set herself, which were both unrepresentative and hardly realistic in a time of widespread famine. The worker quoted drew a direct personal link between herself and Stalin and used overflowing, emotional language to describe the close relationship between the leader and the peasantry that was suggested to constitute the core of all work. The article suggest that in the eyes of the press, the decree created a new social class of Soviet peasants, who were worthy of the state’s honor, while also epitomizing the indebtedness of all citizens in the face of the state’s benevolence and generosity.⁵³

The comparison between the figure of Stalin in 1933 and 1947 demonstrates how in the course of this period notions of individuality in the public discourse describing Soviet life were effaced even further. The new ideal of a Soviet patriot was no longer implicitly referenced in calls for better harvests and faster sowing campaigns. Instead, the homo sovieticus was now explicitly articulated as living “to fulfill day by day one’s civic obligation, defend the interests of one’s government in all of one’s actions», knowing that «the happiness of the Soviet individual is impossible to divide from the happiness of the Motherland, of the flowering of one’s own soviet government.»⁵⁴ The Soviet individual was not longer his own entity nor embedded in the larger entity of a social group, but had become one with the state. Whereas articles published during the famine of 1933 had reminded the peasants to place the interests of their kolkhoz above their individual concerns, over a decade later they were continuously reminded that their existence was inextricably linked to will of the Soviet government. Problems and shortcomings in agricultural production that alluded to the famine in the countryside were entirely overshadowed by the presence of this overbearing state.

THE CONTINUED FAILURES OF LOCAL BUREACRACY

However, not everything had changed: in a remarkable display of continuity with press reports of 1933, the press continued to blame local cadres for failing to implement state policy. Having established the generous support of Stalin and the state, which provided the countryside with all the technology and support needed to overcome the drought and the destruction of the war, *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* editorials of 1947 claimed that existing shortcomings and failures to fulfill

⁵³ Brooks, 127.

⁵⁴ “Патриотические дела колхозников и колхозниц,” *Pravda*, August 19, 1947, 1.

'Into the Battle for an Abundant Harvest!'

state requirements could not be explained by any «objective factors».⁵⁵ Instead, the newspapers again pointed to «bureaucratic, formalistic methods of leadership that had not yet been outet from the working practices» of regional organizations and to «neglect on the side of kolkhoz leadership».⁵⁶

Similarly as in 1933, collective farm directors were personally singled out and criticized for not following the occurrences and labor practices in the field and failing to recognize cases of missmanagement or inproductivity. This was the fate of one comrade Kasyanov, director of the Mineralovski MTS, who, «when in the fields, simply walks by the existing shortcomings» and thus carried «a great part of the responsibility for the lagging behind» of the Kolkhoz Path of the Grain-Growers.⁵⁷ A similar criticism awaited comrade T. Dolgov, a regional secretary who gave the head of the Kolkhozes orders concerning the general administration of the farms but failed to notice that one of them «had practically eliminated all brigades» and suffered from lack of organization and low working discipline.⁵⁸ Local party branches were equally targeted as kolkhoz officials: one indignant Pravda journalist described a kolkhoz in which only one of the eight communists deployed actually worked in the field. He cited this as a reason why the collective farms in the region were falling behind their neighbouring districts.⁵⁹ Again, the blame for difficulties with the harvest and grain procurement process was routinely shifted from the agricultural system and state policy to local management and organizational practices. Problems in the countryside could thus not be traced back to Stalin, but were rooted in local cadres' failure to understand Stalin's project.

CONCLUSION

The most significant change in the representation of the countryside in official press discourse during times of famine can thus be located in the transformation of the relationship between the Soviet state and its citizens. Two decades after the beginning of the collectivization project under Stalin the poverty and hunger in the countryside could no longer be blamed on vestiges of the past or necessary adjustments to a new order. Socialism had officially been

55 Ibid.

56 “Почему отстает в севе колхоз «Путь хлебороба.” *Izvestiia*, April 12, 1947, 1.

57 “Почему отстает в севе колхоз «Путь хлебороба.” *Izvestiia*, April 12, 1947, 1.

58 “Решающие дни уборки и хлебозаготовок в райноах поволжья,” *Pravda*, August 27, 1947, 1.

59 “Почемы отстает Северный Кавказ,” *Pravda*, April 14, 1947, 3.

achieved and its enemies vanquished, a triumph that according to the press was only affirmed by victory in the war. Furthermore, the personality cult surrounding Stalin had placed the leader at the center of society and culture and effaced all notions of ideological pluralism. Although the themes addressed by the press in relation to Soviet agriculture in 1947 echo the concerns and appeals voiced by *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* in 1933, the representation of agriculture has shifted towards highlighting the morality and goodwill of the leader, as well as the personal links of affection and care that bind him to all Soviet peasants and place them in his debt. Any allusion to the famine occurring in various parts of the country was weakened by formulaic affirmations of Stalin and the Soviet state. However, the overwhelming silence of the Soviet press in the face of famine and deprivation did not go unnoticed by the Soviet population.⁶⁰ The question of the efficacy of the regime's performance and shaping of public discourse through the press is beyond the scope of this paper, but merits closer investigation in the future.

60 Fitzpatrick, 75-6.

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Caught in Love's Grip:

PASSION AND MORAL AGENCY IN FRENCH COURTLY ROMANCE

Reuben Henriques

French royal courts in the late twelfth century were absolutely smitten with love. Troubadours traveled from place to place reciting stories of knights and the ladies they wooed. Courtiers engaged in playful debates over the nature of love, sexuality, and romance, discussing who was allowed to love whom and what the best way was to profess affection to the object of one's desires. The language of love made appearances in everything from the documents that land transactions to the loyalty oaths that cemented knights' bonds of vassalage to their lords.¹ This was, in short, a culture with a striking degree of interest in the deep affections underlying personal relationships—and nowhere was this interest more evident than in the genre of poems and stories modern scholars refer to as courtly romances. These tales of chivalrous knights and beautiful ladies gained immense popularity in high medieval France, spreading a vision of relationships founded not on law, oath, or politics but rather on something deeper and more emotional: love.

The genre's recognition of the potency of love as a central characteristic of heterosocial relationships contrasted with an aristocratic society in which men and women were united in marriage more often for pragmatic than romantic reasons. Marriage among members of the aristocratic nobility was largely a means of cementing alliances between two families or ensuring an heir to one's estate. Love and desire were generally no more than a convenient bonus in marital relationships. Some, in fact, believed love and marriage were mutually exclusive, with the Countess of Champagne writing that "we declare and firmly establish that love cannot unfold its powers between married people."² The courtly chaplain Andreas Capellanus likewise instructed his readers that "if the parties concerned marry, love is violently put to flight."³ In carving out a

1 Frederic Cheyette, "Love and Fidelity," in *Ermengarde of Narbonne and the World of the Troubadours* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 233.

2 Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 377.

3 Andreas Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love*, trans. John Jay Parry (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), 156. Since this paper involves significant quotation of primary texts, I will footnote only the first reference of each, using

Caught in Love's Grip

space for love to motivate people's actions and relationships, courtly romances challenged not just these aristocratic norms but also those of the other primary force structuring high medieval French society: Christianity. The challenge to religion was a fundamental one, striking to the very heart of the Christian worldview. Courtly love glorified individuals motivated by emotion and desire—often at the expense of the rational judgment of their will—in a way directly opposed to a Christian morality which was premised on the possibility of free will to triumph over and subdue the desires.

Through a close analysis of the way courtly romances depict individual agency in romantic relationships, this paper will suggest that the ideals of courtly love posed an implicit, intrinsic challenge to twelfth-century ecclesiastical morality. Although the majority of this work will be done through close reading of a collection of popular courtly love stories, the final section of the paper will more directly compare these sources to official Church positions on adultery and free will in general, and courtly culture in particular. Ultimately, I argue that by portraying love as having its own agency and power over human actions, courtly romances idealized a state of emotional vulnerability and helplessness that stood in stark opposition to the reason and control foundational to most high medieval conceptions of Christian morality.

TEXT AND CONTENT

Scholars disagree over to what extent the romantic, often adulterous relationships portrayed in courtly romances reflected actual practice. Some argue that the amorous liaisons depicted in these stories would be seen as manifestations of “idoltrous and treasonable passion”⁴ while others suggest that such illicit romances stories were, if not universal, at least not uncommon. Given, however, that most aristocratic marriages were driven as described above by political or social strategy—and that adultery could be punishable by death—one seems forced to conclude that the refined and idyllic world of courtly romances, in which the only concerns to occupy a man were his lady and his honor, was strongly and intentionally idealized. “This extremely unrealistic picture of society,” Bumke writes, “was conceived as the opposite of real life, and must be interpreted as such.”⁵ As Benton points out, the notion that “medieval

in-text parenthetical citations afterwards.

4 William W. Kibler, “Introduction,” in Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances* (London: Penguin, 1991), 13.

5 Joachim Bumke, *Courtly Culture: Literature and Society in the High Middle Ages*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 3.

troubadours roamed about the countryside advocating adultery and addressing suggestive songs, more or less thinly disguised, to the wives of the local lords” is not easily stomachable.⁶ Few would have lasted long enough to gain fame if their stories were not seen as sufficiently fictitious.

Nonetheless, as the popularity of courtly romances suggests, the virtues at the center of these stories did, to a large extent, resonate with existing ideals of chivalry. “Even if the invented stories are not true,” the medieval poet Thomasin von Zirklære wrote in *Der Wälsche Gast*, “they do show symbolically what every person who aspires to an exemplary life should do.”⁷ The moral and cultural norms promulgated by popular courtly storytellers can thus help modern historians understand what sort of life medieval audiences might have fantasized about and what sort of ethical code they admired in their heroes. When we see, for example, the poet Béroul lauding the extramarital love that existed between the knight Tristan and the queen Iseult, we can surmise that he was likely writing for an audience that would have been willing to look beyond society’s formal prohibition on adultery to find a relationship between the two lovers that was deserving of praise.

That relationship is what many modern commentators call courtly love, but this phrase is itself a much-contested term. It is not of medieval origin, but rather was first used in 1883 by the historian Gaston Paris, who defined courtly love as an illegitimate relationship that required the submission of a man to his lady, demanded that a man attain perfection to be worthy of a woman’s love, and carried its own set of rules and norms.⁸ In its archetypal incarnation, courtly love was embodied by a knight carrying on an adulterous affair with a queen, the wife of his lord. Importantly, these knights were singlemindedly devoted to their loves: in Chrétien de Troyes’s *The Knight of the Cart*, Lancelot is said to have “remembered nothing at all save one creature [his lover Guinevere], for whom he forgot all others” (216). Love becomes “an art and an all-subsuming passion”⁹ for these knights; they spend every spare moment engaged in reflective musings on the object of their affections. Yet for every popular courtly romance that fits this mold, there is another that does not. Marie de France, one popular writer associated with the genre, wrote as often about courtships between

6 John F. Benton, “Clio and Venus: A Historical View of Medieval Love,” in *Culture, Power, and Personality in Medieval France*, ed. Thomas N. Bisson (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), 109.

7 Quoted in Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 321.

8 Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 360.

9 Kibler, “Introduction,” 13.

Caught in Love's Grip

two unmarried individuals that ended in legitimate and socially acceptable marriage as she did about adulterous, illegitimate affairs. Benton goes so far as to argue that "'courtly love' has no useful meaning, and it is not worth saving by redefinition."¹⁰

We can still, however, take courtly love in its literal sense, devoid of any meaning but that which it carries on its face: "courtly love" is love as depicted by courtly authors for a courtly audience. Devoid of any of Paris's substantive constraints, the term is still a useful one with which to frame historical analysis. It is an indisputable fact that there exists a genre of texts that stems from the late twelfth century, French courtly milieu, dealing with questions of love and romance as they played out in fictional relationships between—frequently although not always—knights and upper-class women. This similarity in content and context is sufficient to make a study of these courtly romances worthwhile, and to invite a modern reader to search for common themes in the stories they present. Given the size and diversity of the courtly love canon, we may not find any universal model of "courtly love"—every hypothesis one might posit has a readily available counterexample. Nonetheless, these works certainly possess broader affinities: a common moral landscape, with shared ideas about right and wrong, men and women, and action and passivity, that is intriguing and fruitful to develop in some detail and compare with the social backdrop against which these stories gained popularity.

The texts this paper will examine are thus a variegated group—yet each is, if we accept the existence of a "courtly love" genre, an undisputed member of this category, beginning with the foundational story of *Tristan and Iseult*. *Tristan and Iseult* originated in the Celtic oral tradition before being written down in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; the oldest extant written version is that by the poet Béroul, dating from approximately 1190.¹¹ Although the particulars of the story vary depending on who is doing the telling, the basic contours do not: Tristan, a knight in service of King Marc, carries on an adulterous affair with Marc's wife Iseult, with the two going to great length to hide their affair from the king's jealous barons who seek to expose the relationship. The story of Tristan and Iseult was the most ubiquitous tale of courtly love, but if any courtly romantic hero rivaled Tristan in popularity, it was the brave Lancelot of Chrétien de Troyes's *Knight of the Cart*. Chrétien's Arthurian romances gained

10 Benton, "Clio and Venus," 120.

11 The information about *Tristan and Iseult* in this paragraph comes from Peggy McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery: Queenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 16–17.

him widespread fame, and Lancelot was his one of his most enduring creations. *The Knight of the Cart* was written at the behest of Marie, countess of Champagne, and dates from the late 1170s; since it is the only one of Chrétien's romances to approvingly depict an adulterous relationship—between the knight Lancelot and the queen Guinevere—many scholars argue that the plot was a suggestion from Marie which Chrétien himself disliked, and they read the story as imbued with “excessive irony and humor, which serve to undercut the courtly love material.”¹² More typical of Chrétien is his *Cligés*, written at approximately the same time, which might be described as an “anti-*Tristan*.” The story has certain parallels in theme and plot to *Tristan and Iseult* but differs in one crucially important manner: Fenice, the queen pursuing a relationship with the knight Cligés, uses a potion to enable her to avoid consummating her marriage, thus preventing her from ever technically committing the sin of adultery.

Two additional authors lend diversity to the corpus considered in this paper. Marie de France's *Lais*, written in the 1150s and 1160s, offer a female perspective on courtly love. The collection of twelve short stories¹³ is of a somewhat dubious authorship; Burgess and Busby aver that although we can say that “there was a lady by the name of Marie who wrote lays,” we know little else about her identity or background, lacking even definitive proof that she wrote all the lays attributed to her.¹⁴ It is certain that this Marie wrote at least *Guigemar*, which opens with a proclamation to “hear, lords, the words of Marie,”¹⁵—and some if not all of the others, which appear together in one thirteenth-century manuscript. All, regardless, were broadly circulated and deal with a wide variety of courtly relationships—some adulterous, some not; some ending happily, others less so. Taken together, the *Lais* provide a rich mine of diverse depictions of love and romance.

The final author this paper will examine, Andreas Capellanus, offers still another perspective. Andreas was a chaplain who, like Chrétien, wrote at the behest of Marie of Champagne. His most famous text, *The Art of Courtly Love*,

12 Kibler, “Introduction.”

13 The lays are—in the order found in the thirteenth-century “Harley manuscript,” that which provides the best evidence for linking them to a single author—*Guigemar*, *Equitan*, *Le Fresne*, *Bisclavret*, *Lanval*, *Les Deus Amanz*, *Yonec*, *Laiistic*, *Milun*, *Chaitivel*, *Chevrefoil*, and *Eliduc*.

14 Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby, “Introduction,” in Marie de France, *The Lais of Marie de France* (London: Penguin, 1986), 11.

15 Marie de France, *The Lais of Marie de France*, trans. Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby (London: Penguin, 1986), 9.

Caught in Love's Grip

dates to the 1180s and is addressed to a young man named Walter, offering detailed instructions for him and others who wish to serve in the “court of love.” The work includes several mock dialogues between male courtiers and their female love interests purporting to provide helpful suggestions for attaining a lady’s favor. However, in the third chapter of the book Andreas changes course, cautioning the reader that “we did not [offer this advice] because we consider it advisable for you or any other man to fall in love...Any man who devotes his efforts to love loses all his usefulness” (187). Historians struggle to understand Andreas’s intention in this last section of the book; while Parry argues that this about-face is halfhearted and intended only to mollify his ecclesiastical superiors,¹⁶ Benton calls the text “intentionally and humorously ambiguous”¹⁷ and says it cannot have been intended as a sincere “manual of seduction.”¹⁸ But if Andreas did not intend for the first two chapters of his book to be taken seriously, he seems to have been misinterpreted by some of his contemporaries. Bishop Stephen Tempier of Paris issued an official condemnation of the work in 1277, which both attests to its persistent popularity and suggests that at least some were reading it as an endorsement of the ideals of courtly love—the same ideals Béroul, Chrétien, and Marie were implicitly working to define in their own stories.

COURTLY LOVE AND HUMAN DESIRE

What were these ideals which animated courtly love? As Bumke emphasizes in his study of German courtly culture, foremost of all knightly virtues was that of *stæte*, or steadfastness, and no less in France than in Germany was loyalty a central part of chivalry. This constancy and unerring devotion was “the very foundation of the entire moral code”;¹⁹ without it, any other virtues were impossible to achieve. Although such loyalty was generally exemplified in the relationship between vassal and lord, the same ideals were appropriated by courtly writers to characterize the service of a knight to his lady. Cheyette writes that “the troubadour’s lady exercises power over her lover, often expressed... in the same language and gestures of fidelity that bound warriors to their

16 John Jay Parry, “Introduction,” in Andreas Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), 18.

17 Benton, “Clio and Venus,” 120.

18 Ibid., 113.

19 Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 303.

lords.”²⁰ Rather than fight in jousting tournaments on behalf of his lord, the knight in courtly romances fought for his lady. Bumke argues that “man and woman do not interact as equals” in relationships of courtly love but rather—in a transmutation of traditional gendered power dynamics—“the woman is a superior to whom the man looks up as a servant.”²¹

The trope of the devoutly subservient man appears across many courtly romances. In Marie’s *Lanval*, for example, Lanval promises his beloved almost instantly upon meeting her that he “shall do as you bid and abandon all others for you.” “I never want to leave you,” he assures her, “and this is what I most desire” (74). The bond between knight and lady, being absolute, was also exclusive: a knight could only pledge his heart to one woman. In *The Knight of the Cart*, Lancelot proves invulnerable to the temptations of a woman he meets on his quest who invites him to sleep with her. “His heart, which was focused on another, felt nothing for her... The knight had but one heart, and it no longer belonged to him; rather, it was promised to another, so he could not bestow it elsewhere.”²² And the archetypal plot of a courtly romance—a knight overcoming harrowing obstacles in order to unite with the object of his affections—is fundamentally a story of a man so devoted to a woman that he is willing to risk everything for her. Almost always this virtue is richly rewarded.

At times, the depiction of women’s power over their lovers plays off an existing medieval fear of the active power of female sexuality, casting the dominant female lover in a dangerous light. The third chapter of Andreas Capellanus’ treatise systematically lists women’s negative attributes, warning the male reader “not to be taken in by the empty beauty of women, because a woman is apt to be so clever and such a ready talker that...you will not find it easy to escape from loving her” (35). Women used this power, Andreas cautioned, to bleed their lovers dry, insisting that suitors shower them with gifts and attention, holding these besotted men helpless in their sway. McCracken similarly describes the archetypal “seductress queen” as being possessed with “one-sided, nonreciprocal, and purely sexual” desire.²³ But although this desire started out unreciprocated, these queens and other women were often able to appeal to men’s sexual proclivity—that force that men since Augustine

20 Cheyette, “Love and Fidelity,” 247.

21 Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 363.

22 Chrétien de Troyes, “The Knight of the Cart,” in *Arthurian Romances*, trans. and ed. William W. Kibler (London: Penguin, 1991), 222.

23 Peggy McCracken, *The Romance of Adultery: Queenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 147.

Caught in Love's Grip

had struggled to control and sublimate—and consummate their relationship. Sometimes women themselves lacked control over the power their sexuality had over men; Andreas describes an encounter with a beautiful nun, sworn to chastity, who nonetheless at first glance caused him to be “smitten with what we may call mental blindness,” in which “wholly forgetting what was seemly...we straightaway began to be violently attracted by her beauty and captured by her pleasant conversation.” “The charm of such women,” he avers, “forced us...to waver” (143–44).

This depiction of the dangerous potential of feminine power reaches its apex in the several courtly works in which women are depicted as being able to commune with magical forces. In *Tristan and Iseult*, it is Iseult's mother who brews the love potion that sparks the two's attraction. Her parallel character in Chrétien's *Cligés*, Thessala, is similarly powerful: she is “skilled in necromancy, having been born in Thessaly, where devilish charms are taught and wrought; for the women of that country perform many a charm and mystic rite.”²⁴ Chrétien is careful to note that it is specifically the women—not the men—of that country who can, for example, brew a potion so powerful it causes the king to believe for years that he is sleeping with his wife when in reality the two never become intimate. This portrait of female power was that of a potent, exciting, and to men, a not wholly comprehensible force. It was at once alluringly erotic and dangerously irresistible, leaving the male lover spellbound.

But men were not always the passive victims in these stories. Just as men could be beguiled by women, so too could a man's charms induce even the most chaste of ladies to falter. Andreas describes “one time when we had a chance to speak to a certain nun we spoke so well...that we forced her to assent to our desire” (143). Guilliadun in Marie de France's *Eliduc* similarly laments that “my heart has been taken unawares by a man from another country!” (116). These statements suggest that men could take on equally dominant roles as women did in courtly relationships. This was, after all, a patriarchal world in which husbands had tremendous power over their wives, and courtly poems did not generally aim to challenge the prevailing gender hierarchy. Bumke describes the “sheer limitless power of a husband over his wife,” and in the courtships that preceded marriage—and the adulterous liaisons that superseded it—as described in courtly romances, men often exercised similarly sweeping power over their smitten lovers. Women offered up wholesale professions of submission to their knights as frequently as these knights made the same type of statements

24 Chrétien de Troyes, “Cligés,” in *Arthurian Romances*, trans. and ed. William W. Kibler (London: Penguin, 1991), 159.

to women, as described above. “His [heart] is master and mine serf,” Fenice says of Cligés (177), later comparing Cligés not just to a feudal lord but to a divinity: when she falls sick, claiming that but one doctor can cure her malady, “everyone thought she was referring to God, but that was not at all her intent, for she was thinking only of Cligés: he was her god, who could restore her health or cause her death” (193). Perhaps no statement better encapsulates the power of a knight over his lover than this, in which his mere presence is enough to bring her back from the brink of death.

Bumke, examining gender dynamics in courtly romances, argues that their ultimate focus is on the “perfection of the knight,” that “a woman had her own place within this scheme only insofar as she fulfilled functions that furthered the perfection of a man.”²⁵ In contrast, we have seen Paris emphasize male submission in his depiction of courtly love. The evidence just discussed shows both men and women making seemingly sincere professions of servitude to their lovers. Courtly love in its ideal form, then, was neither solely a relationship of knightly service to a woman of higher status (contra Paris) nor a replication of gender hierarchies in which women depended on their lovers for their *raison d’être* (contra Bumke). Rather, these were relationships of truly mutual submission. Many stories reflect this quite directly. In Marie’s *Equitan* the king Equitan insists that despite his social superiority over his beloved—she is the wife of one of his seneschals—he will “surrender” himself to her, telling her that “you can be the mistress and I the servant; you the haughty one and I the suppliant.” In what follows, however, the power relationship reverses, with the woman submitting to Equitan: “So long did the king speak with her and so ardently did he beg for mercy that she promised him her love and gave him her body.” The reciprocal nature of their total obedience is made clear in the next sentence, when Marie tells the reader that “by an exchange of rings they *took possession of each other* and pledged their faith” (58, emphasis added). Similarly, we see Fenice tell Cligés that “you will be my master and my servant” (188) and Andreas instructing his young charge that “all lovers are bound...to be mutually obedient to each other’s desires” (167). In these authors’ depiction, a knight had power over his lady to exactly the same degree that she had power over him.

Both parties proved the sincerity and depth of their love through their obedience to the other, with the totality of this reciprocal submission evidence of the strength of the bonds of love. Andreas in fact uses this characteristic of love to contrast ideal love with the relation between husband and wife in

25 Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 359.

Caught in Love's Grip

marriage, arguing that the two are mutually exclusive. "Love cannot exert its powers between two people who are married to each other," he insists, quoting the Countess of Champagne: "lovers give each other everything freely...but married people are in duty bound to give in to each other's desires and deny themselves to each other in nothing" (106-7). Although both the lover and the married partner have obligations to serve their counterparts, in other words, the wholesale giving of oneself in a relationship of love is greater and more enveloping than the formalized duties which structure marriage. Indeed, the final stage of love as Andreas describes it is "yielding of the whole person," holding nothing back (42). And in his third-chapter rejection of love, one of his reasons for arguing that men ought not pursue women is that "the mutual love which you seek in women you cannot find, for no woman ever loved a man or could bind herself to a lover in the mutual bonds of love" (200). Marie's Guigemar is cursed with a wound that will not heal until he finds precisely that which Andreas sees as an impossibility: "a woman who will suffer for your love more pain and anguish than any other woman has ever known, and you will suffer likewise for her" (44). Guigemar's lover must prove the depth of her loyalty to him by enduring extreme suffering for his sake.

If both men and women were simultaneously lord and vassal in their relationship—proving their love through their total acceptance of the other party's control over them—there was one power to which they both submitted: love itself. The lord-vassal analogy reappears in this context in the framing conceit of Andreas' *Art of Courtly Love*, in which love is personified as a ruler to whom lovers pledge service. Andreas instructs potential lovers that "whoever devotes himself to Love makes Love his lord and master. Thus it is right that whoever wishes to be numbered among the court of Love should greatly revere and honor him" (140). Lovers, to be successful, needed to obey whatever Love commanded, doing whatever is necessary to pursue and secure their lover no matter the cost. When Lancelot sets out to rescue Guinevere, he does not hesitate to jump in a dwarf's cart to reach his destination, despite the social disgrace such an action entailed—"because Love ordered and wished it, he jumped in... Love ruled this action" (212). Women, too, served Love wholly and completely in their actions: in *Cligés*, Fenice insists that "never will a straw be broken in any disagreement between myself and Love." "Let Love do with me what he will," she pledges, "as he should do with his subject" (133). The real loyalty which animated courtly romances and gave rise to the most commendable acts of virtue, then, was not that of a knight to his lady, or vice versa, but rather that of both to Love.

This personification of Love was common to many courtly romances in which Love was transformed from a feeling that arose between two people to a force with its own agency and power over humankind. Marie de France in *Eliduc* depicts Love's actions over the unsuspecting when she writes that "Love dispatched its messenger who summoned [the maiden Guilliadun] to love [Eliduc]" (115). But in many cases Love sparked romantic sentiment less benignly. In *Cligés*, Chrétien tells the reader that "you'll hear me tell how Love attacked the two lovers against whom he was waging battle" (130). And here as in most other instances, Love emerged victorious. Once Love "shot his arrow into [Fenice's] heart..., in spite of herself, she had to love" (128). Lamenting her sudden infatuation, Fenice muses that "I thought there was only good in Love, but I've found him to be a great traitor" (131).

Love set traps into which unsuspecting humans unwittingly set foot. Courtly poets, for all they did to glorify love, often described the initial experience of falling in love as quite unpleasant and involuntary. As Andreas points out, "Love gets its name [*amor*] from the word for hook [*amus*] which means 'to capture' or 'to be captured,' for he who is in love is captured in the chains of desire and wishes to capture someone else with his hook" (31). Reflecting the two types of submission described above—that to one's lover and that to Love—the lover here is both captured by Love and spurred by Love's power to himself "capture" a female lover. And once captured, a lover has no choice but to accept Love as his lord: "it does not do the man who owes obedience to Venus' service any good to give careful thought to anything except how he may always be doing something that will entangle him more firmly in his chains," Andreas chides (27). It is a vicious cycle: a lover struck with Love's arrow cannot but pursue his or her love, which only serves to strengthen the infatuation.

The dominant theme in courtly descriptions of faithful lovers was, then, that of both parties' helplessness in the face of the indomitable power of Love. This is most obvious in *Tristan and Iseult*, in which the pair's affection is due entirely to the fact that they mistakenly drink a love potion. But no potion was needed for others to be similarly captivated. Chrétien mentions near the end of *Cligés* that the emperor in Constantinople "allows no male to be with [his wife] unless he is a eunuch from childhood, since there is no fear or question that Love's snares will trap such men" (205). This belief—that any sexually potent male could be taken without warning and subsequently led to the kind of singleminded pursuit of a woman that characterized courtly love—was not at all unorthodox. Even the most well-intentioned men could be driven to infidelity if struck by Love's arrow, leading Meleagant's father in *Cligés* to caution him that

Caught in Love's Grip

“that heart of yours...will yet bring you to great harm” (285). Similarly, Marie’s Eliduc “wanted to remain faithful [to his wife], but could not refrain from loving the maiden Guilliadun” and the two—“both caught in love’s grip”—end up together at the end of the story, albeit with the blessing of Eliduc’s wife (117).

In light of love’s overpowering sway over human affections, women were cautioned to not too harshly eschew the advances of their male pursuers, on the grounds that men could not entirely help themselves. Andreas describes a woman who was insistently wooed by a knight in whom she was uninterested; when she makes him promise to stop trying to gain her love, Andreas disapprovingly notes that “it seems unfair of the woman to lay upon him the command that he should trouble himself no more with love for her” (168). For an example of this ethic in practice, we need only look to Marie’s *Chaitivel* where we see a woman who, finding herself the object of four knights’ affections, pursues romantic relationships with all four on the grounds that as Marie recognizes, “it would be less dangerous for a man to court every lady in an entire land than for a lady to remove a single besotted lover from her skirts, for he will immediately attempt to strike back” (105). Humans were pawns in Love’s game, and they could not help but do as he commanded. Their only choice was to enjoy the ride.

COURTLY LOVE’S SUBVERSIVE MORALITY

As a result of this helplessness, there was a prevailing sense in many courtly love stories that lovers could not entirely be held responsible for anything they did under the influence of Love even if it would otherwise be socially or morally unacceptable. When Lancelot jumps into the cart in *The Knight of the Cart*, casting his pride to the wind, the narrator remarks that “since Love ruled this action, the disgrace did not matter” (212). A maiden he encounters later, distressed that Lancelot has no interest in sleeping with her, acknowledges his existing attraction to Guinevere and says that “I would not wish to find fault with him here for rejecting what Love forbids him to have and for setting his purpose by Love’s commands” (223). The adultery that so many courtly romances lauded could be, as the most extreme flourishing of truest love, a praiseworthy demonstration of the ability of one’s loyalty to a lover to trump all else. Although Tristan, for example, violates his sworn loyalty to King Marc by pursuing Iseult, the fact that he does so under love’s influence is sufficient to excuse—at least in his eyes—whatever he does. Tristan pledges Iseult that he will do anything she asks of him,

Whether it be foolish or wise, even if any
King forbids me, as long as it is

Reuben Henriques

Honorable for us.

I promise you this in the name of true love. (119)

Bérout clearly and repeatedly demonstrates his agreement with this morality. When the two lovers convene in a wood, carefully keeping at arm's length with the knowledge that Iseult's husband King Marc is spying from a tree, he has Iseult's handmaiden Brangain proclaim,

God, who never lies, has done us a great service

When he had you leave each other

.....

Without the King seeing anything

Which might be viewed in an unfavorable light. (22)

Furthermore, the barons who inform the king of the pair's affair are introduced with the remark, "Never have you seen any who were more wicked" (31) and the dwarf who later does the same "was very cunning / He did a most vile thing" (35). When Tristan is condemned to die for his part in the relationship, Bérout glosses over Tristan's guilt by focusing on his obvious merit for forgiveness—he laments that "there was not a baron strong enough, nor great enough / To dare say a word to the King / And ask for this crime to be pardoned" (42).

This contrasts sharply, it is needless to say, with both ecclesiastical and secular attitudes towards adultery. In secular law, adultery was an offense punishable by death, but one only women could commit. The Church "denounced this double standard,"²⁶ and although its penalties for adulterers were less harsh than those applied in secular courts, they applied equally to men and women. Duby notes that courtly love fundamentally challenged basic Christian sexual hierarchy, traceable to the Garden of Eden: when a wife committed adultery, it was seen as a subversion of divinely ordained social structures. "Satan [had] insinuated himself in order to break the rule [of the husband] and introduce parity between husband and wife...parity in this case being synonymous with disorder."²⁷ Not only the adulterous nature of the relationships of courtly romances, then, but their characteristic depiction of knights lowering themselves in service of a woman, challenged traditional

26 Benton, "Clio and Venus," 106.

27 Georges Duby, "Literature," in *The Knight, the Lady, and the Priest: The Making of Modern Marriage in Medieval France*, trans. Barbara Bray (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 214.

Caught in Love's Grip

Christian doctrine. It is not therefore surprising that various Church thinkers expressed concern about the courtly lifestyle. It focused too much, they felt, on worldly pleasures, leading to debauchery and moral decay. One of the most notable ecclesiastical responses to courtly romances was made by Stephen Tempier, the Bishop of Paris, who in March 1277 officially condemned 220 heretical propositions in his "Parisian Condemnations." Among the beliefs Tempier rejected was "that simple fornication, namely, that of an unmarried man with an unmarried women, is not a sin."²⁸ Tempier in fact singled out *The Art of Courtly Love* for special negative attention.²⁹

"It was," writes Bumke, "[the] claim to a separate [moral] law for courtly love that called forth the determined opposition of those who clung to the notion that Christian concepts of morality were binding on lay society."³⁰ We see further evidence for the tension between courtly and ecclesiastical morality when we examine not simply the actions of courtly lovers, but the motivations underlying those actions. Much of Love's power in courtly romances stems from its ability to cause humans to bypass their rational faculties in favor of their awakened desire—the very desire over which so much of Christian morality was concerned with maintaining control. In *The Knight of the Cart*, Guinevere struggles mightily to hide her affection for Lancelot, with Chrétien noting that "if Reason had not subdued these foolish thoughts and this love-madness" she would have been unable to avoid acting upon her love in front of her husband (291). Lancelot, too, in falling prey to Love loses command of his reason; he is so preoccupied by thoughts of Guinevere that he at one point walks into a ford without noticing and, later, fights backwards and ineffectively in a tournament, distracted by her presence. "Such is the nature of love," Marie de France agrees in *Equitan*, "that no one under its sway can retain command over reason" (56).

Although some modern commentators have distinguished between true courtly love and base, instinctual desire—arguing that the former involved a degree of "rationalization..., control over the emotions, and...sublimating of lust"³¹—the evidence offered above suggests that most courtly authors believed

28 Stephen Tempier, "Condemnation of 219 Propositions," in *Medieval Political Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, trans. Ernest L. Fortin and Peter D. O'Neill, ed. Ralph Lerner and Muhsin Mahdi (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), no. 205.

29 John Whippel, "The Parisian Condemnations of 1270 and 1277," in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge J. E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002).

30 Bumke, "Courtly Culture," 376.

31 Ibid., 371.

love's essence could never be fully understood using the tools of reason. This celebration of the emotional experience of love stood starkly against the ecclesiastical moral view that, since the Fall, humans' desires had turned against them and must be mastered. Pagels notes that in Augustinian philosophy, sexual desire was by necessity opposed to rationality. The spiritual virtue of ascetics consisted in their soul's ability to "subject every member of its 'lower servant,' the body, to the power of its will"³²—the will whose nature is, in Bishop Tempier's language, to pursue "what is firmly held by reason" (no. 163). Heroes of courtly romances, in contrast, were heroic because they did exactly the opposite: they followed the desires sparked by love, while suppressing reason's resistance to this pursuit, in order to attain great glory.

Courtly romances' depiction of human agency and freedom also stands in contrast to that of Christianity. Christian morality depends on a presumption that humans are possessed of sufficient free will to be ascribed blame or praise for their actions. Sin presupposes a sinner, for people cannot rightfully be held responsible for things they do involuntarily. As Andreas writes regarding rape, in one statement that more orthodox clergy would no doubt accept as well, "it is not right for anybody to blame a woman for what she did under compulsion" (164). Tempier in his Condemnations repeatedly emphasizes the Church's adherence to a doctrine of human freedom, rejecting such propositions as "that our will is subject to the power of the heavenly bodies" (no. 154). Courtly romances, with their depiction of people overpowered by Love's dictates having their emotions hopelessly overcome by desires completely beyond their control, offered a strikingly different view of moral agency. When Tempier condemns those who believe "that a man acting from passion acts by compulsion" (no. 168), he speaks in direct opposition to Andreas's claim that "after one has been smitten with a new love he is just as forcibly compelled to give way to his own impulses as though he were under the domination of some other person" (163). Agents "bound by the chain of love" (Andreas, 170) or who find their "heart... fully trapped" (*Eliduc*, 117) could not easily be ascribed blame for their otherwise sinful actions.

"Every lover serves," Ovid wrote in the *Amores* so often referenced by courtly poets,³³ and writers of courtly romances took that to heart in their stories and poems. Men served beautiful women as if they were their feudal lords and masters, and women in turn pledged themselves entirely to their men;

32 Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York: Random House, 1988), 110.

33 In Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 362.

Caught in Love's Grip

individuals of both genders renounced all control over themselves and their actions in submitting to their lover. But even more important than this reciprocal and all-encompassing loyalty to one another was the role of Love—passion personified—in structuring lovers' pursuits. Knights and their ladies entered the service of Love in their quest for the ideal courtly romance, unwillingly captured by or voluntarily pledging allegiance to the overwhelming power of desire and affection. Ecclesiastical morality urged Christians to conquer this desire through the exercise of the rational will—but courtly lovers followed its dictates eagerly, at the expense of reason and by extension at the expense of their will. Their actions were in crucial ways not their own, and even if they never transgressed into adultery, this aspect of their motivations is enough to reveal the way in which the moral landscape of courtly romances differed vastly from that promulgated by the Church. While ecclesiastical authorities clamored for greater influence over individuals' day-to-day practices, courtly romances popularized an alternative view of moral agency: one in which giving in to the desires that had haunted humankind since the Fall was not only understandable, but celebrated.

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“Let Us Save Haiti!”:

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE AMERICAN Occupation OF HAITI, 1915–1934

Zoe Hoffman

In July of 1915 U.S. marines landed at Port-au-Prince in Haiti, a small country in the Caribbean. The nation was in disarray. The Haitian President, Jean Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, had just been assassinated following his massacre of 167 of his political opponents due to his fear that they would revolt against him. U.S. intervention was, on the surface, an attempt by the U.S. to restore order and bring peace to the island nation. Underlying this purpose, however, was a desire of the Wilson administration to protect U.S. business interests in Haiti. In order to achieve this objective the U.S. chose to prop up a government unpopular with Haitians but friendly to U.S. interests.¹ The transition of U.S. intervention from short-term peacekeeping mission to a nearly twenty-year occupation went mostly without protest at first—America’s eyes were on the events of World War I in Europe.

U.S. intervention in Haiti is unsurprising when juxtaposed with the rhetoric employed during the Spanish-American War to talk about the peoples of Cuba and the Philippines, two other countries affected by U.S. “civilizing” missions. In fact, according to Millery Polyné “Washington decision-makers conflated Haitian turmoil with blackness and political ineptitude, thus rationalizing diplomatic isolation and military intervention in Haiti.”² Noticeably absent from the ranks of these Washington decision-makers was a significant presence of African Americans or other minorities. How did America’s nonwhite citizens, who were mostly shut out of Washington politics during this time period, view this conflict? African Americans in the U.S. had a profoundly different perspective on Haiti than the majority of the population. Throughout the nineteenth century they cited Haiti as proof that people of

1 Brenda Gayle Plummer, “The Afro-American Response to the Occupation of Haiti,” *Race and U.S. Foreign Policy from 1900 through World War II*, edited by Michael L. Krenn (New York: Garland Pub. 1998), 61.

2 Millery Polyné, *From Douglass to Duvalier* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2010), 13.

African descent could govern themselves.³ However, the situation in Haiti in the early twentieth century brought only disappointment. Outbreaks of violence and unrest in the country argued against “the notion that Haiti had an obligation to blacks everywhere to prove that people of African descent were politically mature.”⁴ While the predominantly white U.S. government made it clear they believed the U.S. could help the Haitians modernize and stabilize after these violent upheavals, the black response to the idea of bettering Haiti is much more complicated.

At the time of the Haitian intervention, African American organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) were fighting for increased rights in the U.S. They called for punishment against lynching, protected voting rights, and the abolition of Jim Crow laws. The Republicans who had fought for them during Reconstruction started to realize that they were almost guaranteed the African American vote and often went back on promises made to the black community during their campaigns. Instead, politicians chose to advocate for policies that better suited their white constituents. It seemed that any progress made during Reconstruction had been negated—having dark skin still made one a second-class citizen. It is in this context that the Haitian occupation—an intervention that seemed to support the supremacy of white, modern citizens in the U.S. over the native colored population of Haiti—took place. It was inevitable that U.S. African Americans would view the U.S. presence in Haiti in a different light than their white counterparts.

In this paper I will attempt to answer the following question: What was the U.S. African American response to the occupation of Haiti, and why did they react in that way? It appears that their response was negative in part because of the parallels they saw between the situation faced by the Haitian people and their own struggles at home in the United States. The racism still present in the White House made it difficult for African Americans to make any lasting change in U.S. policy towards Haiti; however, that does not mean they did not try to voice their opinions in the public sphere. Whether through newspapers, magazines, political cartoons, or fact-finding missions, African Americans communicated their position and tried to reform the Occupation in Haiti. Unfortunately, the response of the government throughout American intervention was usually inadequate, and African Americans were kept away from the bargaining table.

3 Plummer, 58.

4 Ibid, 59

THE CRISIS TAKES A STAND

The NAACP’s monthly publication, *The Crisis*, was concerned with the conflict in Haiti before the Occupation even began, and as the mission progressed the magazine came out more and more strongly against intervention. However, before troops were sent into Haiti, *The Crisis* called for a Haitian Commission of white and colored men to cooperate with Haiti’s existing leadership in establishing peace.⁵ This suggestion came under the headline “Let us save Hayti⁶,” reiterating the idea that America occupied a position above Haiti, a platform from which they could nurture and aid the country in its mission towards peace because the small nation could not achieve this on its own. In this way *The Crisis* borrowed some of the paternalistic rhetoric employed by white policymakers when justifying American intervention in the affairs of “little” countries like Haiti. After troops landed, though, *The Crisis* lashed out angrily against existing U.S. policy. Now that the intervention was steeped in violence the African American community protested against it. In an unsigned editorial they decried, “SHAME ON AMERICA!”⁷ *The Crisis* would publish the same anti-imperialist message until the U.S. officially withdrew from Haiti in August 1934.

Known as the only black republic in the western hemisphere, Haiti had long taken hold of the imagination of *The Crisis* and African Americans in the U.S. as a bastion of hope. In its coverage of the situation in Haiti, *The Crisis* presented an almost idealized version of the country. As expressed in the November 1915 issue Haiti was “the one country in the world where enlightened Negroes—real Negroes, not merely colored people—enjoy the fullest measure of liberty and fraternity with men of similar tastes and equal attainments.”⁸ The NAACP and its readers aspired to this degree of freedom for African Americans in the U.S. For this reason it was of the utmost importance that Haiti retain its sovereignty. In their minds, African American activists in the U.S. needed Haiti to survive in order for their own movement to thrive and continue. Their reasoning may have gone like this: If Haiti submitted to white U.S. policymakers, what would stop African Americans in the U.S. from losing their own fight for equality?

5 “Hayti,” *The Crisis*, September 1915, 232.

6 In its initial coverage *The Crisis* used this spelling of Haiti. Later, however, they switched to the more common spelling we are used to today.

7 “Hayti,” *The Crisis*, October 1915, 291.

8 “Haitian and Other Savages,” Editorial, *The Crisis*, November 1915, 31.

The picture of a civilized, docile Haiti contrasted drastically with the language employed by most mass media in the U.S., which presented Haitians as superstitious, barbaric practitioners of voodoo. Images of Haitian incivility provided the U.S. government with the excuse it needed to intervene. *The Crisis* placed U.S. civility under scrutiny in an attempt to delegitimize U.S. claims that intervention was necessary to restore order to the small island nation. By highlighting the violence perpetrated against African Americans in the South, the NAACP wished to give agency to the Haitians in guiding their own affairs instead of following the American South's barbaric example. *The Crisis* printed that, "Hayti can, and will, work out her destiny and is more civilized today than Texas."⁹

The NAACP drew parallels with conditions for African Americans in the U.S., bringing the Haitians' struggle closer to home and consolidating anti-Occupation sentiment among the African American community. The magazine implied a connection to African Americans fighting for similar rights in the U.S. In this way *The Crisis* convinced its readers that a victorious Haiti was analogous to African Americans gaining equality. African Americans saw that the U.S. government used Haiti's backwardness as an excuse for the occupation, but they pointed out that "if the 'civilization' is to be of the Georgia type may the good lord deliver Hayti from it!"¹⁰ In January of 1916, the magazine "sent" a Christmas greeting to Haiti as a sign of solidarity. The image is of what appear to be black soldiers lying dead on a cannon.¹¹ The NAACP wanted to show that they too had seen the type of hardships the Haitians were experiencing. In fact, they continued to encounter difficulties and violence perpetrated against them in the forms of lynching and Jim Crow laws.

One must recognize the similarity of the harassment of innocent Haitians and the harassment of innocent African Americans in the South, both perpetrated by the same southern white antagonist. Articles and editorials used the familiar character of the white southerner as the enemy to describe the Haitian conflict. Speaking of Josephus Daniels, Wilson's Secretary of the Navy, *The Crisis* told readers, "he is carrying on a reign of terror, brow-beating, and cruelty, at the hands of southern white naval officers and marines."¹² *The Crisis's* coverage of Haiti served to strengthen the anger felt by the African American

9 Oct. 1915, 291.

10 Oct. 1915, 291.

11 "Our Christmas Greeting to Haiti: 'Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men,'" *The Crisis*, January 1916, 134.

12 W.E.B. DuBois, "Haiti," *The Crisis*, April 1920, 297-298.

'Let Us Save Haiti!'

community towards the southern white men who had oppressed them for so long. By projecting the anger felt domestically by black citizens, *The Crisis* was able to heighten the concern felt for Haiti—a concern that perhaps would not have been felt as strongly had it not been elucidated by the magazine. At times, the connection forged between the situations in Haiti and the South seemed contrived, indicating that the magazine had a specific purpose in articulating this position.

The Crisis also incorporated the Occupation into a larger argument for increased rights for those of African descent around the world. In the magazine's 1916 annual report, *The Crisis* emphasizes that the unfreed must "himself strive, equip himself and advance." Any "dangerous and unfair obstacles"¹³ should be cleared out in order to create an equal society. In this report, the United States is seen as the epicenter of race relations around the world. According to *The Crisis*, "our treatment of colored races is an example to the world for the future treatment of the great mass of colored folk in Africa, Asia, and America."¹⁴ Betterment of African Americans' place in society could aid not only those in the U.S. but also those of African descent around the world. Therefore, the NAACP was undertaking a "noble cause for humanity"¹⁵ in their fight for rights in the U.S. The organization viewed their movement in the U.S. as a catalyst for better race relations around the world, including in Haiti.

The Fourth Pan-African Congress of 1927, covered by *The Crisis*, drafted a statement to address the needs of people of African descent everywhere but also placed responsibility with the U.S. In it the congress called for modern education, native rights to land, the re-organization of commerce to benefit the majority of the people rather than a select few, and "the treatment of civilized men as civilized despite differences of birth, race, or color."¹⁶ Most importantly for Haiti, the congress demanded that those of African descent have a voice in their own government. In its statement the congress specifically called on Americans to withdraw all troops from Haiti and to restore self-government to the Haitians themselves.

Criticism by *The Crisis* was not limited to events in Haiti; the magazine also focused on domestic decisions related to the exclusion of African Americans from discussions about what Haitian policy should be. African Americans viewed Republicans as their saviors during the Civil War and Reconstruction—

13 "Sixth Annual Report, 1915," *The Crisis*, March 1916, 246.

14 Ibid, 262.

15 Ibid, 262.

16 "The Pan-African Congresses," *The Crisis*, October 1927, 263.

the party shielded them from the Southern Democrats who threatened their livelihood. But times were changing, and the Republicans were no longer the best allies to the African American community. *The Crisis* noted during Warren G. Harding's 1920 presidential campaign that "as usual a few Negroes will be offered jobs to swing our vote in line,"¹⁷ but these appointments would not amount to much in the way of policy, as seen in the case of Haiti. Presidents were reluctant to appoint African Americans to commissions to Haiti, the main exception being Robert Russa Moton, who led an educational investigation that will be discussed later.

African Americans were constantly disappointed in presidential promises in regards to Haiti. Though Harding said he would look into conditions in Haiti there was little actual change during his time in office. Similarly, while Hoover sent a commission to Haiti, their report was unclear and the group did not include a single African American. *The Crisis* reported that "his commission made excellent recommendations, [but] Mr. Hoover followed them slowly and with long periods of hesitation."¹⁸ So not only were African Americans not involved in prescribing remedies for the intervention, the recommendations were not even fully considered. Haiti appeared to be low on the government's priority list, despite its importance to the African American community. It seems that all presidents involved with the Occupation used the conflict as a selling point in their campaign to gain African American voters only to turn back on their word and focus on policies that were desired by white Americans.

The Crisis came out against the Occupation almost immediately, and it was clear the magazine felt as though the Haitians were subjects of the same racist policies African Americans faced in the United States. DuBois and his team published a narrative that pointed out the Haitian struggle and called for action against the white men who essentially ruled the country, a narrative that sounded extremely similar to the one written about the domestic plights of African Americans. Haitians, they said, were civilized and highly capable of ruling, and they had been since the slave revolt that removed their French oppressors out of power in 1804. *The Crisis* insisted that the little black republic must stay intact if there was to be any hope for people of African descent around the world, an idea that fit into the NAACP's larger message of equal rights and opportunities for African Americans in the U.S. As we will see in the next section, however, this initiative was not limited to activist groups like the NAACP; African American newspapers also reported on the situation in Haiti and showed how

17 Ernest R. McKinney, "The Election Comes," *The Crisis*, October 1920, 275.

18 W.E.B. DuBois, "Herbert Hoover," *The Crisis*, November 1932, 362.

'Let Us Save Haiti!'

the policies enacted there could negatively affect progress in the U.S. and vice versa.

THE DEFENDER REPORTS ON HAITI

African American newspapers in the U.S. had a similar trajectory as the NAACP in its coverage of the occupation of Haiti; however, the purpose and tone of the articles and editorials were slightly different than that of *The Crisis*. Where *The Crisis* was able to infuse criticism in nearly all of its pieces, newspapers like the *Chicago Defender* were bound to report the news as they saw it.¹⁹ Through editorials, political cartoons, and even the choice of headlines demonstrate that the *Defender* was definitively opposed to the Occupation.

Like *The Crisis*, the *Defender* originally saw a United States protectorate over Haiti as beneficial to both the U.S. and Haitians to restore order to the country. In the article "Haiti Cutting Up," published in August 1915, the author portrays Haiti as a country in the midst of perpetual riots that caused embarrassment for the U.S. multiple times.²⁰ According to the editorial, the American government is "duty bound" to protect Haiti, though the author is quick to point out that it would not be "for the love of the black man" that the U.S. would intervene. Less than a month later, the *Defender* published another article in favor of U.S. intervention, this time employing the same charitable language as government officials and emphasizing the necessity of U.S. intervention to teach the Haitian people how to work.²¹ Most interesting, perhaps, is the portrayal of the African American perspective on the matter. The "race" wished to have order restored to Haiti for "obvious reasons," and they called on Uncle Sam to act. These obvious reasons point to the innate connection felt by those of African descent with the citizens of Haiti, as described by the NAACP. Like *The Crisis*, the initial reaction of the African American press to unrest in Haiti was to call on the United States to aid the nation in typical paternalistic fashion.

After the U.S. declared war on Haiti, reports on the Occupation took on a different tone, focusing instead on the behavior of Americans in Haiti and the effect on the Haitian population. In October 1915, the *Defender* reported

19 In this section I will use the *Defender* as a proxy for the African American press when looking at the media's opinion on the U.S. intervention in Haiti. I believe it is more beneficial to get a close reading of one newspaper's coverage rather than a cursory glance at many.

20 *The Chicago Defender*, "Haiti Cutting Up," 14 Aug. 1915, 8.

21 *Defender*, "Speaking of Haiti," 4 Sep. 1915, 8.

that the Haitian middle class feared the “race hatred” American rule could bring to Haiti.²² According to the article, Haitians saw that the invasion had already “brought with it the characteristic race prejudice so pronounced among the white people of the States.” Once again, we can see a comparison between the state of race relations in the United States and the state of affairs in Haiti. The *Defender* reported an explicit link between racism in the U.S. and racism in Haiti with the insinuation that if the United States had been a more equal society, perhaps the Americans involved with the Occupation would have brought that sense of egalitarianism with them to Haiti.

Editorial cartoons became an important way for the African American press to express their disagreement with U.S. policies in Haiti. These cartoons tended to depict the Occupation as brutish and hypocritical. In one cartoon published in April 1925, the *Defender* pointed out the disparity between the official government reports of U.S. action in Haiti and what was really going on.²³ In the top frame, the U.S. occupation is shown as a tender white mother bathing a cheerful black baby, labeled as Haiti. She is washing Haiti of its dirt and grime in the philanthropic spirit. The Occupation in the bottom frame is drastically different; dressed in military gear and outfitted with a large gun, the Occupation stands tall on the small island of Haiti while lynching, violence, rape, and murder rage in the background. The top frame is labeled as “What America says she does,” while the lower frame is titled “And what France thinks she does!” Through this depiction the *Defender* pointed out the hypocrisy in which the Occupation operated—the American government claimed it was gentle and motherly in its treatment of the Haitians, but the world knew that the reality was quite different.

Other cartoons portray Haiti as an abused woman failing to escape the grasp of the Occupation. “HAITI!” published in June 1922 shows Haiti caught in the firm grip of the Occupation, reaching towards the sky for help.²⁴ The hand of the Occupation is rough and faceless, showing that the U.S. chose to use force over more humane methods to try to bring order to Haiti. Two months later another cartoon was published in which Haiti is shown lying dead on the ground, a bayonet piercing her back.²⁵ The cartoon is entitled “‘Civilizing’ Haiti,” and it makes clear what the *Defender* thought of the “civilization”

22 *Defender*, “U.S. Declares War on Haiti,” 9 Oct. 1915, 5.

23 *Defender*, “Seeing Haiti Through French Eyes,” Illustration, 4 Apr. 1925, A12; see Figure 1.

24 *Defender*, “HAITI!” Illustration, 24 Jun. 1922, 12; see Figure 2.

25 *Defender*, “‘Civilizing’ Haiti,” Illustration, 19 Aug. 1922, 12; see Figure 3.

'Let Us Save Haiti!'

American troops brought to the Haitian people. Instead of focusing on U.S. efforts that promoted education as a path towards civility and modernity, the *Defender* chose to highlight the brutish nature of the Occupation and the marines that often killed civilians indiscriminately. This choice showed a definite opinion of the *Defender* that the U.S. purpose in Haiti was not to bring peace and order, but instead to protect U.S. interests at the expense of the Haitian population.

Further coverage by the *Defender* articulated the connection between the inequality felt by African Americans at home and the lack of representation Haitians felt in the administration of their own government. One of the most contentious subjects was the scarcity of African Americans appointed to committees sent to Haiti to investigate the Occupation and its operations. Hoover extended his "lily-white" domestic policy to his foreign diplomacy missions as well, making decisions regarding Haiti without African Americans input. Hoover's choices especially irritated the African American community because he initially presented himself as an ally to their cause. It became clear to the *Defender* that he had only done this in order to win the African American vote. An article published in February 1930 entitled "We Told You So," in response to Hoover's all-white appointments to his Haitian commission, said Hoover "allied himself with the very forces which have operated against dark Americans since they came into being, and which have stood as effective obstacles to the progress we sought to make."²⁶

Hoover's choice to exclude African Americans from the commission mirrored the perception of American officials in Haiti who did not want to hand over control to the Haitians. In a different editorial, the author expressed the hope that Hoover would appoint an African American to which "the Haitians claim kinship." This kinship described shows the deep connection African Americans in the U.S. felt with their brothers in Haiti and their desire to aid them in their plight during the Occupation. The *Defender* understood that white Americans carried their racism to Haiti. In P.L. Prattis's August 1930 piece, "America in Haiti: Big Bully or Big Brother—Which?" he states that the Occupation brought "the unsolicited prejudice of the white person when confronted with the proposition of Negro equality."²⁷ Much like policymakers in the U.S., administrators in the Occupation government were not able to accept the Haitians as capable leaders in Haiti, enabling them to put in place a government in line with their own goals, rather than those of the citizens of Haiti. Despite the obstacles they faced domestically, two African American men,

26 *Defender*, "We Told You So," 22 Feb. 1930, A2.

27 P. L. Prattis, "America in Haiti," *Defender*, 2 Aug. 1930, 10.

one sent by the NAACP and one sent by the U.S., traveled to Haiti during the Occupation to report back to the U.S. government and population the state of the country and the Occupation administration that governed it.

TWO INVESTIGATIONS: JAMES WELDON JOHNSON AND THE MOTON COMMISSION

The NAACP sent James Weldon Johnson to Haiti in 1920 to investigate the American Occupation and to counteract the absence of African American voices in the U.S. government and the mainstream media. Though the dominant rhetoric in the United States implied that the American mission was one of charity, Johnson sought to debunk this rumor and shed light on the true reasons for U.S. intervention. According to Johnson, “the Occupation convention demands everything of Haiti and gives nothing.”²⁸ In his opinion, intervention was predestined before the assassination of Guillaume and was fueled by financial interests rather than the desire to help the Haitian population.

Johnson published his findings as a feature in *The Crisis* and as a four-part series in *The Nation*, and in both he refuted the use of the backwardness and barbarism of the Haitian people as a legitimate reason for intervention. He took special care to describe the civilized nature of Haiti’s inhabitants—both the upper class and the peasants. Johnson also explained that the history of Haiti was just as bloody as that of any other nation. A visitor to the U.S. would find “strike violence, race riots, lynchings, and burning at the stake of human beings”—not exactly signs of an orderly and civilized culture.²⁹ This picture of America presented by Johnson was similar to how most Americans saw Haiti at the time of intervention—barbaric and violent.

Johnson especially drew attention to the similarities between Haitians and African Americans in the American South. The administration sent southern white men to oversee operations in Haiti, which allowed for the continuation of the racist policies they practiced at home. Haitians building a large new road leading into Port-au-Prince were “maltreated, beaten, and terrorized. In fact, they were in the same category with the convicts in the Negro chain gangs that are used to build roads in many of our southern states.”³⁰ Johnson cited the attitudes of Americans in Haiti as one of the most harmful effects of the Occupation because they saw themselves as inherently better than the people

28 James Weldon Johnson, “Self-Determining Haiti I,” *The Nation*, August 28, 1920, 236.

29 Johnson, “Self-Determining Haiti IV,” *The Nation*, September 25, 1920, 347.

30 Johnson, “The Truth About Haiti,” *The Crisis*, September 1920, 223.

'Let Us Save Haiti!'

they were supposed to help based solely on their race. This elitism undermined any chance of effective government administered by the Occupation as a result of the lack of respect the administrators felt for the people they governed.

Not surprisingly Johnson called for the end of the Occupation and the restoration of freedom and sovereignty to the Haitian people as soon as possible. Johnson saw the Haitian dilemma in the same way as *The Crisis*—that is, that Haiti's sovereignty was an integral part of the African American movement for civil rights in the U.S. He argued that "the colored people of the [U.S.] should be interested in seeing that this is done, for Haiti is the one best chance that the Negro has in the world to prove that he is capable of the highest self-government."³¹ We once again see Haiti used as an example of African American ability. Its decline would be detrimental to people of African descent everywhere, including in the U.S. Therefore the restoration of self-government in Haiti could support African American claims to legitimacy and enfranchisement in the U.S.

The next African American to lead an investigation of Haiti was R.R. Moton, president of the Tuskegee Institute. He was chosen in 1930 to lead an official commission to Haiti to report on the state of education in the country. Unlike Johnson's trip a decade earlier, Moton's was officially organized and backed by the U.S. government. Moton's appointment was a departure from the usual policy of choosing white men with little knowledge of the Haitian language or culture to survey the state of the Occupation.

Though Moton's appointment could have been seen as progress in the African American community, some leaders were critical of his acceptance of the post. W.E.B. DuBois, in his April 1930 editorial in *The Crisis*, bemoaned Moton's appointment to the separate education commission. Moton, he said, "should have been made a full member of the Commission, both because of the importance of education in Haiti, and the miserable failure of America to encourage it, and also because of his Negro descent."³² Adhering to the principles of segregation in the U.S., Hoover chose to exclude African Americans from the main commission to Haiti, once again relegating African Americans to a subordinate position to whites. Moton's appointment to a separate, rather peripheral, group undermined his role in fully evaluating and bringing about change in Haiti. It appeared to some that Hoover was simply trying to find a way to appease African Americans and win their support for his policies. DuBois saw through Hoover's actions and wished Moton had given a "firm refusal" to

31 Ibid, 224.

32 W.E.B. DuBois, "Haiti," *The Crisis*, April 1930, 137.

the president's offer. Moton, for his part, wished to show that his commission could operate as a "separate but equal" force to the all white Forbes Commission that was sent to Haiti at the same time. Using this segregationist attitude undeniably irked some prominent African American activists, like DuBois, who viewed separation as anything but equal.

Despite DuBois's criticism, the Moton Commission, as it came to be known, ventured to Haiti to assess the state of education; in particular they wished to look at the Service Technique, the branch of the education system organized by the United States during the Occupation in 1923. The commission found that education in Haiti was insufficient across the board and that funding for schools had actually decreased during the Occupation. The only exception was the Service Technique, which could maintain higher teacher salaries and build new schools while schools under the control of the Department of Public Instruction were left wanting for adequate teachers and supplies.

While Moton's criticism of the Occupation was not as unforgiving as Johnson's, it echoed many of the same concerns. In his report, he played up the civilized nature of the Haitians by comparing them to the French in their "social graces, courtesies, good manners, and formal politeness."³³ Moton also noticed the race conflict found between native Haitians and Americans, who tended to have "an air of superiority."³⁴ Most significantly, Moton preached harmony and equality in his recommendations, and he chastised the U.S. for treating Haiti "as a conquered territory" when it should have treated her as "a sister state in distress."³⁵ The report recommended a joint commission of Americans and Haitians, which would include an African American from the U.S., in addition to more equitable funding for education throughout Haiti rather than funding concentrated in the Service Technique. Moton stressed inclusion of local authorities, and the commission thought it important that Haitians be given more agency in their own affairs. In perhaps his strongest critique of the U.S., Moton stated, "it is not consistent with our national sense of justice and equity" that the Occupation spends money on a wholly separate system of education.³⁶ Though many African Americans would refute the "justice and equity" the U.S. stood for, Moton's point that there appeared to be two completely separate classes in Haiti—one consisting of white Americans and a small number of

33 United States, and Robert Russa Moton. 1931. *Report of the United States Commission on Education in Haiti. October 1, 1930*. Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off.

34 Ibid, 65

35 Ibid, 73

36 Ibid, 73

'Let Us Save Haiti!'

Haitian elites, the other comprised of the majority of the population—rang true.

Moton and Johnson's investigations to Haiti represented two different aspects of the African American effort towards Haitian liberation. Johnson went on his own accord with the backing of the NAACP to seek out and publicize the true situation in Haiti and to actively lobby for change in the United States' dealings with the small nation. Moton, on the other hand, was a tool of the U.S. government, and reported back to the President and Congress. The two men reflected the split in the larger African American fight for civil rights—a split personified by Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois.³⁷ DuBois often saw Washington as catering to white interests much like he saw Moton's acceptance of his posting as an unnecessary compromise with the men who were intent on keeping Haiti under their thumb. The two reports were similar in one way—both were largely ignored. While Johnson's report garnered support in the African American community, it did little to change minds in Washington. Moton's findings, though solicited by the U.S. government, were dismissed as biased due to the racial connections the commission had to the Haitians. Once again, the government denied access to African Americans in conversations surrounding the Occupation while operating under the guise of inclusion. Despite efforts made by African Americans in terms of investigating conditions in Haiti, there were minimal improvements made by the government in response to their recommendations.

CONCLUSION

In 1929 R.R. Moton, the same man who was about to set out for Haiti on his education commission, published *What the Negro Thinks*. A quote from this book seems to apply directly to Haiti: "The Negro himself is equipped and qualified as well as ready to do his share, and more if necessary, to make the adjustments that would bring harmony, good will, contentment, prosperity, and safety to all."³⁸ African Americans in the U.S. believed they had the

37 Moton was Washington's successor at the Tuskegee Institute and therefore shared his views on how African Americans should go about winning more rights. Both men believed that the key to advancement was education, and that it was important to compromise with whites in this process. DuBois, on the other hand, supported a much more active approach to the fight against inequality. One can see his strong views in *The Crisis*, the NAACP magazine discussed earlier in this paper.

38 R.R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1929), 68.

responsibility to show that the people of Haiti were able to govern themselves without U.S. intervention and without placing the white man in charge of the native population. Imposing racist policies on Haiti like those found in the U.S.—like Jim Crow laws—negated the nation’s status as the only black republic in the western hemisphere, which in turn challenged African Americans’ own fight for equality within their own borders. Haiti could no longer serve as a golden example of self-sufficiency for those of African descent; instead, the Occupation transformed Haiti’s hierarchy into one strikingly similar to the one found in the United States.

For this reason, African Americans in the U.S. could directly identify with Haitians who desired more than anything to govern themselves. African Americans had long experienced the same type of discrimination and disenfranchisement in the American South. Publications like *The Crisis* and *The Defender* established this link explicitly in editorials, opinion pieces, and cartoons. Johnson’s report especially pointed out the constant presence of the southern white man as common enemy to those of African descent, and even Moton reported that conditions in Haiti could be improved were the Haitian people treated as equals rather than subservient subjects. *The Crisis* called the Occupation “the Negro question in a new form.” The Haitian people had been entrusted to “assist in the rehabilitation of the Negro race” and instead now found themselves under the rule of white men who were able to arrest them, shatter their traditions, and halt their progress simply because they were stronger.³⁹ The same southern white men that continued to bring down African Americans in the U.S brought down the little black republic that served as a symbol of hope for people of African descent around the world. This link could be seen as overstated since, technically, African Americans in the U.S. were free to exercise their opinions and participate fully in government. In actuality, the “lily-white” policies of the government served to exclude black citizens, relegating them to a second-class sphere of political participation.

Despite their efforts, African Americans were not able to make real policy change in the Occupation. Ultimately the Occupation became too expensive and time consuming and the United States began the process of withdrawal under Hoover, with the final troops departing on August 15, 1934 after nineteen years of Occupation. The Occupation elicited an anti-U.S. antagonism on the part of the Haitian people, but it also established a certain amount of racial pride similar to that of African Americans in the U.S. The two groups were connected by more than just the color of their skin—they shared

39 Bishop John R. Hurst, “Haiti,” *The Crisis*, May 1920, 34.

'Let Us Save Haiti!'

similar experiences against a common enemy. And though African Americans in the U.S. weren't able to directly affect the changes necessary to bring the Haitians back to power, they showed solidarity with the native population and took on Haitian discontent as their own.

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Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering and Popular Royalism

Benjamin Cohen

The years 1641 and 1642 witnessed the emergence of increasingly contentious political and religious conflicts in England. Political tensions over Charles I's (r.1625-1649) perceived abuses of royal power and attempts to marginalize England's parliament and increasingly radical Puritan opposition to the power of bishops and religious policies of the state-supported Anglican Church had already emerged by the late 1630s. However, the collapse of the repressive government institutions of the Star Chamber and episcopal censorship of seditious and unacceptable works in 1640-1641 further brought this religious and political acrimony into the open.¹² In particular, the end of censorship led to an increase in open agitation against the policies of the Anglican Church from both Puritans who sought fundamental reform within the existing structure of the Church and sectarians/separatists who wished to divorce themselves from the established Anglican structure. This upheaval led to fears that unrest would weaken England's church government and destroy the nation's social order and religious rectitude.³ As a result of these fears, in 1641-

1 Episcopal courts, i.e. legal courts administered by English bishops, possessed both religious and secular authority. The courts particularly concerned themselves with protecting England's established Anglican religious order against perceived subversives. To prevent the spread of potentially seditious religious and social ideologies these courts oversaw the censorship of printed material. The breakdown of Episcopal censorship in 1640-41 led to a surge of unregulated printed materials and likely contributed to the breakdown of royal authority in the years preceding the English Civil War.

2 The Star Chamber was a secular court tasked with protecting the English monarchy and government from potential sedition. Contemporaries saw the Star Chamber as particularly prone to royal abuse as its proceedings were kept secret. Complaints that the king, Charles I, had abused the power of the Star Chamber to attack political opponents and religious dissenters represented a frequent grievance in the year preceding the outbreak of civil war in 1642.

3 David Cressy, *England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution 1640-1642* (Oxford, 2006),

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

1642 England experienced a dramatic upsurge in publications of anti-Puritan and anti-sectarian religious tracts and polemics. Tim Harris has convincingly argued that most anti-Puritan rhetoric derived from genre tropes that had emerged in the late sixteenth century during the reign of Elizabeth I. Despite this, the explosion of anti-Puritan and anti-sectarian literature in the early 1640s primarily reflected the more recent religious, political, and social tensions which ultimately pushed England to civil war.⁴ Early publications attacking Puritans and separatists often lacked explicit positions on the emerging conflict between the king and Parliament. However, by 1642 authors in this genre frequently associated dissenting religious beliefs with Parliamentary positions, while increasingly arguing that support for the king represented the best way to ensure that traditional church governance would be upheld. The dozens or hundreds of anti-Puritan works published during this period depict both contemporary politico-religious conflicts and the fusion of political and religious ideology by the beginning of the English Civil War in 1642.

Popular pamphlet publication represented a largely urban phenomenon centered on London and surrounding areas. Though illiteracy remained pervasive in 1640s England, the urban tradesmen and townspeople who made up the lower portion of the middling sort (a sort of English proto-middle class composed of merchants, craftsmen, small traders, etc.) appear to have possessed sufficient rates of literacy to represent an active and growing market for written materials. David Cressy has estimated illiteracy rates among men (the inability to sign one's own name) in London, the epicenter of pamphlet publishing, at approximately 22 percent, nearly three times greater than the estimated national average of 70 percent. Furthermore, while clear correlations between wealth and literacy existed, the still comparatively low illiteracy rate of 33 percent which he ascribed to the fairly poor London parish of Holy Trinity the Less nevertheless points to basic literacy as common even among those of humble background in London.⁵ Though having the ability to sign one's own name on official documents (Cressy's standard of illiteracy) does not imply that an individual possessed the level of literacy needed to read pamphlets or other written materials, this relatively low rate of illiteracy likely also points to a greater and more widespread level of substantive reading ability among the lower-middling

290-296.

4 Tim Harris, 'Moral Panics and Anti-Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century England', in David Lemmings and Claire Walker (eds.) *Moral Panics, the Media, and the Law in Early Modern England*, (New York, 2009), 97-112.

5 David Cressy, *Literacy and Social Order* (New York, 1980), 72-74.

sort in London. Furthermore, with somewhat widespread communal literacy it does not seem inconceivable that an illiterate individual might ask a literate friend or relative to read him a short pamphlet or that such works, often written in entertaining styles, might be read at a semi-public gathering. The frequency of illustrations in pamphlets may have also represented an attempt to appeal to the illiterate and semi-literate audiences who may have received more indirect exposure to anti-Puritan pamphlets.

The works published during this period can be stylistically divided into more literate and usually quite religious and reactionary 'elite' tracts, and shorter 'popular' polemics which relied primarily on a combination of humor and appeals to fear. Style and intended demographics, not necessarily actual consumer demographic, separated the popular and elite. However, these names are largely a matter of organization and any attempt to divide these two broad strands of anti-Puritan literature along socio-economic lines would constitute a gross oversimplification. Many long tracts containing numerous religious and historical references would have largely appealed to well-educated members of the upper-class and upper middling-sort. However, no black and white division existed that would have prevented less educated audiences from reading more learned tracts. In fact, longstanding stereotypes of Puritans as miserly, scornful of authority, ignorant, and morally lax shaped the rhetoric of anti-Puritanism at all levels of literacy and sophistication. Though certainly significant, elite anti-Puritanism's relatively small number of publications and often dry, academic nature, further compounded by its tendency to work almost exclusively within the fixed confines of biblical reference, make it far less reflective of English society. Nonetheless, as the line between the popular and elite styles often blurred, elite literature must also be addressed.

Historians with a more general focus on the years preceding the English Civil War (1642-1651), particularly Cressy, have quite persuasively anatomized the religious, social, and political developments that generated the growth in popular anti-Puritan literature.⁶ However, scholars of pamphlet literature itself, such as Bernard Capp, have been insufficiently critical in explaining the apparent popularity of anti-Puritan works, and especially those of John Taylor, among the masses and whether this actually reflected conservative religious or political sentiments among the lower classes of Civil War-era England.⁷

The secular and legal power of the church structure which they defended

6 Cressy, *England on Edge*, ch. 9-11

7 Bernard Capp, *The World of John Taylor the Water-Poet* (Oxford, 1994), ch. 8, 191-196.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

made anti-Puritan publications by nature both political and religious. The fusion of secular and spiritual critiques became far more intertwined beginning in 1642 as Puritanism and separatism became increasingly associated with opposition to Charles I. While, the institutions and doctrines which anti-Puritan pamphleteers defended, especially episcopacy, had long-held associations with the conservative social order and royal power, only as England approached civil war did protecting the “true religion” and the primacy of the Anglican Church become explicitly tied to protecting the monarchy. While Charles I and his official propagandists did occasionally attack Puritans and other nonconformists and separatists as seditious and divisive, official royalist propaganda tended to be too broad in scope and too focused on lofty political ideas to dedicate significant portions of tracts to anti-Puritan attacks. In fact, popular anti-Puritan and anti-sectarian literature emerged independently of royalism in late 1640 and early 1641.⁸ The perceived danger of mounting religious radicalism transformed from an attack on the Church and society in 1641 to a threat to both the Church and the state in the personification of the King in 1642.

Anti-Puritan propaganda published in 1641-42 at all levels of sophistication and literacy fundamentally based its attacks on prevalent stereotypes of Puritans and sectarians. The terms ‘Puritan’, ‘schismatic’, and especially in 1641 ‘Brownist’ and beginning in the summer of 1642 ‘Roundhead’ all received more or less interchange use. While ‘Brownist’ had once referred to a specific sect of sixteenth century separatists, by the 1640s, it had come to refer to any separatist or breakaway Puritan group.⁹ Furthermore, the apparent cooption of the Puritan stereotypes into depictions of the Roundhead (a label applied to supporters of Parliament during the Civil War) represented a major politicization of anti-Puritan rhetoric and a further evolution in terminologies. Polemicists portrayed religious radicals as the antithesis of the morality espoused in the doctrines of institutional English Protestantism (Anglicanism). Tracts frequently attacked Puritans and sectarians as foolhardy and lacking in understanding of the doctrines of the true Church, describing them as ‘full of blindnesse, darknes, simplicitie and grosse ignorance.’¹⁰ Pamphlets further warned against the lack of formal education of ‘unlearned’ and ‘meanly qualified’ radical preachers who were ‘false and dangerous teachers.’¹¹ In addition to ignorance and lack of education, negative portrayals often decried Puritans and sectarians alleged

8 Ibid., 212-214.

9 Cressy, *England on Edge*, 214.

10 *The Soundheads Description of the Roundhead*. (1642), 5.

11 John Berwick, *An antidote against Lay-preaching* (1642), 7, 14-15.

immorality. Puritans and any other group that scorned the Church of England or considered themselves God's elect were accused of disingenuous piety and being 'inwardly Jewes, though outwardly saints.'¹² Although the zealous brand of Protestantism commonly recognized by historians as Puritanism existed and may have indeed been prevalent in the early 1640s, the anti-Puritan rhetoric of the period largely depended on long-established and well known stereotypes. Tim Harris has convincingly suggested that the anti-Puritan stereotypes prevalent during the reign of Charles I largely emerged during the late reign of Elizabeth I and the reign of James I (~1580-1625) and would have been widely encountered in both media and spoken-word culture. Moreover, Harris has also emphasized the fluidity of Puritan stereotypes that resulted from the origins of many stereotypes in skewed attacks on the actual deeds of individuals considered to be Puritans and the Puritanism's lack of consistent definition in seventeenth century English society.¹³ In effect, no societal consensus existed as to what constituted a Puritan, described as an 'epithite of reproach...cast upon many persons who do strive to live in Gods fear, and desire to dye in his favour...', and what separated him from other zealous practitioners of Protestantism.¹⁴

The ideological diversity within the religious views branded as 'Puritan,' 'schismatic,' 'Brownist,' or 'separatist' meant that by necessity polemical attacks could only be mounted through the use of stereotypes and fantastical descriptions of improprieties. Puritanism and sectarianism were not a coherent or monolithic movement, in league with the devil and the Catholics as expressed in the pamphlet *The Hellish Parliament* depiction of 'a strong and perfect league of friendship betwixt his infernal maiesties servants the Papists and Brownists.'¹⁵¹⁶ Instead, generalizations derived from a half century of accumulated negative views of separatists and other opponents of established Church policy defined

12 John Harris, *Puritaine's Impuritie* (1641), 5.

13 Harris, 'Moral Panics and Anti-Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century England', 101-102.

14 John Taylor, *A Cluster of Coxcombes*. (1642), sig. A3.

15 John Taylor, *The Hellish Parliament* (1641), 5.

16 Although the post-Reformation threat of Catholicism to the Protestant order which both Anglicans and dissenters espoused had largely faded by the early seventeenth century, both dissenters and supporters of orthodox Anglican attempted to identify their opponents with the phantom threat of the widely despised Roman Catholics (often called Papists, Romists, or other pejoratives) to galvanize the support of the rabidly anti-Catholic English public.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

these stereotypes.¹⁷ Thus, since it would have been impossible to broadly attack any specific theological tenets of this amorphous collection of separatists, semi-separatists, reformers, and other Church opponents, anti-Puritan polemicists employed stereotypes to collectively attack various real and fictitious religious groups. In 1641 Anti-Puritan pamphlets largely attacked the threatening religious trends of ‘rebellion, schism, and faction’, be it under the name ‘Brownist’, ‘Puritan’, or ‘separatist’, rather than specific groups.¹⁸ Nevertheless, early 1640s anti-Puritan literature’s reliance on stereotyping and generalization does not imply that religious views that most modern historians would consider to be Puritanism did not exist during this period. Rather than being an attack on a non-existent straw man, the prevalence of Puritan stereotypes reflected anti-Puritan writers’ willful ignorance or inability to comprehend the diversity of dissident religious positions.

Yet, despite its long history, it would be mistaken to simply see the anti-Puritan tract as a timeless and static genre piece divorced from the personal experiences and fears of their authors and unaffected by the shifting religious and political environment of England on the eve of the Civil War. The precipitous increase in anti-Puritan publications in 1641-42 demonstrated a high level of engagement with current events. Anti-Puritan pieces published in this period also made frequent allusions to recent events and trends, further reflecting their engagement with the present. Similarly, a significant, albeit somewhat smaller, increase in anti-Puritan publications occurred earlier in the reign of Charles I, in the late 1620s and 1630s, in reaction to growing Puritan opposition to the church policies of Archbishop William Laud. This opposition largely stemmed from Laud’s emphasis on ceremony and ritual (perceived Catholicizing influences) and repressive policies toward religious dissenters, enforced through the Anglican Church’s bishops and episcopal courts.¹⁹ These policies widened the religious divides within English Protestantism and further radicalized Puritan opposition to episcopacy and the prominent position of bishops within English Protestantism.

While anti-Puritan polemics intended to convince the public that religious radicalism threatened the fabric of English society, this does not preclude some of the events and actions depicted in this propaganda, even if presented in

17 Harris, ‘Moral Panics and Anti-Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century England’, 101-103.

18 Richard Carter, *The Schismatick Stigmatized* (1641), sig. A3.

19 Harris, ‘Moral Panics and Anti-Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century England,’ 101.

an extremely biased and distorted manner, from having some real-life basis in the perceptions of their authors. This claim of groundings in reality must, nonetheless, be applied with caution as many of the more fantastic pamphlets describing lists of non-existent religious sects constituted quite blatant fabrications. Pamphleteers often wrote works describing sectarian or Puritan meetings and preachers in the first person, implying the authors' attendance or intimate knowledge of the described events.²⁰ These fears of growing sectarianism and nonconformity may have had some basis in reality as they corresponded with reports from 1640 and 1641 citing increasingly widespread or visible religious radicalism, especially in London and East Anglia. It remains unclear whether uses of the first person reflected actual in-person attendance at events or merely functioned as a rhetorical device meant to establish a tract's credibility. However, neither rhetorical strategy would have been particularly successful had similar the tracts' readers not experienced similar encounters with religious radicalism and the collapse of Church enforced religious conformity in early 1640s southeastern England.²¹ Although conceptions of the Puritan, Brownist, and other individuals perceived as threatening to the Church primarily reflected a societal construct, this did not preclude anti-Puritan authors from interacting with and experiencing the perniciousness of social and religious elements that they considered to be Puritan.

Elite anti-Puritan writings from 1641-1642 generally ranged from twenty to sixty pages and provided historically and theologically-based defenses of episcopacy and the true Church. Often holding distinctly Laudian bents and lapsing into long religious justifications of deeply conservative political positions, these works attacked Puritans through unfavorably comparing aspects of the Puritan stereotype to the doctrines of the Bible. Unsurprisingly, clergymen authored many of these works, which frequently possessed sermon-like tones. The deeply conservative positions advanced in these pieces tended to be more reactionary than official royal propaganda, which had already begun to retreat from Laudianism and divine-right absolutism in late 1641 and 1642. A long-form work published in 1643, equating Puritan sedition with the perceived threat of the Jesuits, advanced that 'God hath inseparably annexed to the crown of earthly Majesty, a supreme ecclesiasticall sovereignty for the protection of pietie, and an absolute immunitie from the judicall sentence, and Martiall violence.'²² This unequivocal support for the theory that kings

20 John Taylor, *Swarme of Seperatists* (1641).

21 David Cressy, *England on Edge*, 214-215.

22 David Owen, *Puritano-Iesuitismus*. (1643). Sig. A4.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

should possess unlimited and unquestionable earthly power reflected the frequent conflicts between independently published unofficial royalist tracts and official royalist propaganda. By 1643 official propaganda had long-since shifted to painting Charles as a defender of the traditional mixed government 'by a King, by a House of Peers, and by a House of Commons ...' against an overreaching Parliament. Official propaganda had in fact by June of 1642 radically shifted from the absolutist ideology of total submission to a populist constitutional royalist position that described the people as, 'all having free votes and particular priviledges.'²³ As unofficial propagandists did not receive payment from royalist figures or any other form of contact from the court, the idiosyncrasies of their arguments often rose from a lack of up-to-date knowledge of the official line. It seems likely that strong personal convictions drove the authors of elite anti-Puritan works' strong connections between proper authority in the Church and proper temporal authority. The tracts' length, along with their proliferation of references and Latinate words, would have made them much less comprehensible to persons of limited literacy than shorter more manageable works. Nevertheless, a diverse array of citations and references did not necessarily imply that an educated person had written a work or that the author had written the work for elite consumption. For an educated person to assist an uneducated popular propagandist in assembling the justifications and references needed to support a tract was not unknown; Bernard Capp posited that this type of collaboration occurred during the composition of John Taylor's 1640 uncharacteristically erudite anti-Presbyterian and anti-separatist defense of Church policy, *Differing Worships*.²⁴ In addition, less educated readers could have easily been familiar with some, albeit probably not all, of the references in a pamphlet and even without any familiarity could have still potentially appreciated the appeal to authority which biblical and historical references embodied. While the particularly libelous nature and often scandalous content of many popular works made them quite inappropriate for elite culture, it was not uncommon for popular pamphlets, aimed at the lower and middling sorts, to contain the elite tactic of using learned references. An anonymously authored multi-part 1642 pamphlet followed a condemnation of Puritans as 'the very pests (or plagues) in the Church and Commonwealth; who no deserts can oblige; neither oathes, nor promises binde; breathing nothing but sedition and calumnies...' extracted from James I's philosophical defense of royal absolutism, *Basilikon Doron*, with two extremely crude verse pieces chastising the ignorance

23 Charles I, *His Maiestes Answer to the xix Propositions*, (1642). Sig. B2.

24 Capp, *The World of John Taylor*, 164.

of the Roundhead and the sexual impropriety of the holy sister.²⁵²⁶ This mixture of references to authority with comedic and alarmist rhetorical appeals nevertheless remained a largely one-directional phenomenon, which would have been considered too vulgar for more refined audiences.²⁷ Hence, stylistic content such as verse, caricature, and hysterical descriptions of the proliferation of Brownists and other sectarians represented the single greatest division between popular tracts and tracts largely directed at the elite and upper echelons of the middling sort. While more educated individuals would have often read popular tracts for entertainment, more literate tracts would have eschewed the tenants of popular writing. Although they almost certainly lacked these popular elements, more religiously oriented long-form elite tracts may nevertheless have received somewhat extensive readership among the tradesmen and the emerging middle classes in urban areas.²⁸

In spite of the potential for admixture in popular pamphlets, only slight differences of position and ideology existed between notably elite and notably popular works. Moreover, these divergences vary from work to work and variations between the popular and elite styles are no greater than the discrepancies within the categories resulting from pamphlets' different authors and nuances of subject matter. Despite stylistic and content differences, almost all anti-Puritan tracts published in 1641-42 possessed the same basis in established Puritan stereotypes, even if they used different rhetoric to oppose the growing forces of socio-religious upheaval. Instead of ideology, distinct popular and elite rhetorical techniques and formats constituted the most significant difference between those tracts that can clearly be labeled as oriented toward the educated or the broader masses.

However, short digestible pamphlets containing characteristics of elite anti-Puritan literature, including learned references, but lacking the stylistic tropes of popular anti-Puritanism also appeared during this period. While some

25 Anonymous/James I, *A Puritane Set Forth in His Lively Colours* (1642), 2.

26 The Roundhead was a nickname for the supporters of Parliament during this period. During 1642 this ostensibly political term became increasingly identified with established anti-Puritan characteristics due to the pervasiveness of religious dissenters among those who backed the Parliamentarians. Holy sister was a nickname for female members of Puritan or separatist congregations and a stock character that emerged in this period.

27 Capp, *The World of John Taylor*, 193.

28 Nigel Wheale, *Writing and Society: Literacy, Print, and Politics in Britain 1590-1660* (Routledge, 1999) 87-91.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

space for generalization exists, it would be foolish to formulate any universal division between elite and popular works. These ambiguous short tracts tended to lack both some of the erudition of long-form elite works and many of the cartoonish qualities of popular works. They nevertheless shared a similar focus with nearly all anti-Puritan propaganda from the period: exposing the hypocrisy and destructiveness of the Roundheads and Puritan religion. A prime example of the ambiguous pamphlet, John Harris's six-page work, *The Puritanes Impuritie*, combined the libelous aspects of popular propaganda with the biblical basis of elite propaganda in a short tract format that would have been fairly accessible even to those with little education. Its description of Puritans as 'Mechanick persons, for the most part unlectured grooms, *coachmen, feltmakers, coblers, weavers*, hauling *ironmoingers*' and claim that they 'prefer a dunce that will flatter and wrest his texts according to the fancies of his Auditors, before a learned divine, that teaches Orthodox Doctrine' echoes similar attacks on Puritans' scriptural ignorance and egalitarianism in popular anti-Puritanism.²⁹ The work's deeply paternalistic fear that the perceived leveling potential of Puritanism and particularly its influence over the poor threatened the established social hierarchy did not represent a particularly elite position. This fear of Puritanism's perceived encouragement of social upheaval and the breakdown of Protestant morality permeated both popular and elite anti-Puritanism. However, the work's use of the direct biblical quotations, 'As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without good works is dead' and 'he who sayeth he is in light and hateth his brother is in darkness' to attack the alleged miserly, exclusive, and self-righteous character of Puritan Calvinism would not have been out of place in a longer tract aimed at a higher social stratum.³⁰

Popular propaganda commonly employed satirical humor and sensational reports of sectarian radicalism. The appeal of these more entertaining forms, especially humor, would have found greater currency with those less committed to anti-Puritanism or royalism. While the use of parody to ridicule Puritans and Roundheads was pervasive among popular anti-Puritan pamphlets, humorous depictions rarely attacked the Puritan character on purely religious grounds, instead focusing on social perceptions of Puritans and sectaries as arrogant, self-righteous, and hypocritical. Many of these popular parodies and lampoons contained acidic, sometimes bawdy, humor that would have been frowned upon in the polite culture which had by this time developed among elites and

²⁹ Harris, *The Puritanes Impuritie*, 4.

³⁰ Ibid. 3,5

likely also members of the emerging commercial middle class.³¹ *Cornu-copia*, a work depicting a dialogue argument of a wife and her husband, typified the genre of popular anti-Puritan satire. The cover artwork comically depicts the husband, who describes himself as a 'ram-head,' wearing a pair of horns on his head. The tract possesses few religious references, and in fact derives much of its humor from secular and non-controversial puns about common items such as 'inkhornes' and 'hornebooks'. The work's anti-Puritan bent largely revolves around the ram-head's past when he wore a Roundhead and others described him as 'a troublesome fellow,' 'a despiser of government,' and 'an enemy of bishops and the discipline of our church.' However, like many pieces of humorous anti-Puritanism it possesses a distinct sense of vulgarity arising from the common association of the horned husband with cuckolds, a contention supported by the wife's statement that 'there are very few who weare hornes without their wives consent.'³²

Though certainly reflecting both traditional condemnations of Puritans' ignorance and emerging tropes of Roundhead sedition and intransigence in the face of secular and spiritual authority, these social parodies also contained many other types of humor which could amuse readers of popular pamphlets regardless of the degree of their own anti-Puritan conviction. Similarly, John Taylor deployed his wit to attack the hypocrisy of sectarianism, noting how the founder of the Brownists 'said that the Church of England was not a Church,' before reconciling and receiving a benefice and a parsonage from the Church of England at which point, 'then the Church of England was a Church with him.'³³ Not only did this statement discredit the modern 'Brownists' by drolly painting the founder of the historical Brownists as a fickle extortionist, but did so in an amusing and clever manner that even readers lacking the Taylor's own vitriolic hatred of sectarians could appreciate. Unlike panic-based anti-Puritan literature, satirical pamphlets could have been well-received even among those without strong feelings of religious conservatism. These anti-Puritan lampoons, possessing less of the potentially unpalatable hysteria of sensationalist anti-Puritanism, constituted a significant number of the popular anti-Puritan pamphlets published in 1641-42 and may have had a much broader appeal than other forms of printed popular anti-Puritanism.

31 Capp, *The World of John Taylor*, 193

32 John Taylor*, *Cornu-copia, or, Roome for a Ram-head* (1642), A1v, A2v, A3. Wing classifies the anonymous pamphlet as a work of Taylor, though Capp claims it is in fact not by Taylor.

33 Taylor, *A Cluster of Coxcombes*, A3v.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

Alarmist propaganda, the other major style in popular anti-Puritan polemics, largely manifested itself in the form of tracts detailing the pervasiveness and perniciousness of religious radicalism. Pamphlets routinely referred to Separatist and Brownist congregations employing words like 'swarme' and 'nest,' the language of infestation.³⁴ Fear-based anti-Brownist pamphlets often listed the names and professions of 'bold propheciars and sect-leaders', such as 'Richard Farnham the weaver,' 'James Hunt the farmer,' and 'M. Greene the feltmaker.'³⁵ Though readers may not have recognized these specific names, they would have given the work's intended audience of tradesmen, who made up much of the literate lower middling sort, the impression that there might be dangerous separatists all around them. Another pamphlet named specific and most likely familiar London areas as the meeting places of sectarian congregations and preachers in 'St. Martins', 'Cheapside', 'Aldersgate', and 'Whitecrosse Street in the suburbs of London.' This use of geographical associations would have further engendered feelings of envelopment among readers.³⁶ Similarly anti-separatist pamphlets' tendency to list litanies of mostly fictitious separatist groups, expressed most egregiously in *Discovery of 29 Sects Here in London*, also sought to present readers with a sense of encirclement.³⁷ A 1642 pamphlet highlighting how Roundheads had 'with their whimsies and devices turned the head of many a good Protestant as round as their own' epitomized authors' frequent emphasis on the contagious and rapidly-spreading nature of religious radicalism. Two 1641 pamphlets focused on separatism, John Taylor's *The Diseases of the Times* and Thomas Jordan's *A Medicine for the Times*, directly employed the metaphor of disease to endow religious radicalism with contagion-like qualities.³⁸ Alarmist messages sought to convince the masses that religious nonconformity did not simply comprise a longstanding problem in England, but had pernicious and rapidly began to spread in a manner that threatened to bring down the basic institutions of English society. Ultimately, the intention of these pamphlets would have been to convince readers to rally around the Church

34 John Taylor, *A Swarme of Sectaries* (1641), title page and sig. A2v.

35 Anonymous*, *A Curb for Sectaries and Bold Propheciers* (1641), title page. Capp asserts that this work may have been written by John Taylor.

36 John Taylor, *The Brownists Synagogue* (1641), 2-3.

37 *Discovery of 29 Sects Here in London* (1641). This cataloging of separatists is also seen in a somewhat more limited and plausibly factual instance in the six historical separatist groups noted in John Taylor's *A Cluster of Coxcombes*.

38 *The Round-Head Uncovered* (1642), 8; John Taylor, *The Diseases of the Times* (1641); Thomas Jordan, *A Medicine for the Times* (1641).

and later in 1642 around the monarchy following the emergence of the threat of the 'Roundhead.' These institutions had traditionally projected themselves as bastions of stability and defenders of the societal order.³⁹ Nonetheless, this alarmist rhetoric would probably not have exerted significant influence on those who did already not possess some fear of religious and social upheaval to build upon. Furthermore, it would not have served its political purpose if the individuals whom it sought to influence did not already view the monarchy and Church as the foremost defenders of English society. While sensationalist pamphlets' sense of danger might have added to their market appeal, to function effectively as propaganda their readership would have likely required some pre-existing feeling of conservative panic.

The stock characters of the ignorant and seditious Roundhead and the licentious holy sister, often referenced in verse, were also common tropes of popular anti-Puritan and anti-sectarian literature. While both to some extent served as convenient figures to serve as targets for pithy critiques, the holy sister represented a far more scandalous and socially subversive figure. The Roundhead caricature essentially represented a summation of the most popular anti-Puritan stereotypes transposed into the new politics of civil war, as summed up in the verse couplets:

... Who hates a papist, yet approves this notion,
that ignorance is mother of devotion...
Who's never well employ'd yet still in action,
Loves outward peace, but inward's lin'd with faction...⁴⁰

Nonetheless, the stock Roundhead proved useful as means of succinctly attacking religious radicalism, which had by 1642 become strongly associated with the Parliamentary movement. The Roundhead character, similar to the Jesuit in anti-Catholic propaganda, could easily be presented as a familiar object of rebuke and easily put in anti-Christian and anti-Protestant positions, as in the dialogue *The Devils Last Legacy*, in which the devil (Pluto) referred to the Roundhead character as 'my deare adopted sonne, thou art alone he that is my onely hope and joy.'⁴¹ The emergence of the Roundhead character in 1642 represented a significant development as it heralded the explicit connection of popular anti-Puritan propaganda.

The holy sister, a similar target of ridicule associated with separatism

39 Cressy, *England on Edge*, 246-247.

40 *A Puritane Set Forth in His Lively Colours*, 4-5

41 W.K., *The Devils Last Legacy* (1642), sig. A2v.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

and later also the Roundheads, reflected the deeply patriarchic nature of seventeenth-century English society and especially the unease rising from perceptions that sectarian immorality led to unrestrained sexuality. In many ways the holy sister can be seen as an extreme evolution of alarmist literature's utilization of popular concern regarding the social and religious role of women, who one pamphlet alleged 'catechize and preach, making the back side of her groaning chaire the pulpit.'⁴² The shock of supposed female participation as congregation members and preachers, combined with the secrecy of nonconformist religious communities, fostered the trope of painting sectarian meetings as places of brazen sexual impropriety. One pamphlet concluded that Roundheads' tendency to meet in 'woods, saw pits, and dark places' functioned to permit 'great love and community betwixt holy brothers and sisters.'⁴³ Nonetheless, these descriptions of the holy sister character pale in comparison to the more flagrantly sexual caption of an illustration of a holy sister being kissed by a man, who declares, 'a little in zeal good sister Ruth'⁴⁴ or the shockingly unsubtle and quasi-pornographic verse describing the holy sister as:

... Shee that loves sermons as shee does the rest,
Still standing stiffe, that longest are the best;
Shee that will lie, yet sweares shee hates a lyer,
Except it be it that man that will ly by her⁴⁵

Nonetheless, attacks on women who transgressed social boundaries and the style in which pamphlets presented this stock character did not radically diverge from previous norms in culture and printing. The holy sister emerged from existing traditions of ribald alehouse verses and the popular genre of anti-female literature. The 1630s saw an upsurge in pamphlets decrying female usurpations of traditionally male roles and warning that all control over women would be lost if English men failed to suppress female sexuality.⁴⁶ Tapping into prevalent misogyny and societal fear of the uncontrolled women and a breakdown of sexual morality made the holy sister an effective vehicle for anti-Puritan propagandists to express the danger of religious radicalism in terms that would resonate with English society.

42 John Taylor, *The Brownists Conventicle* (1641), 3 (incorrectly numbered as 5).

43 John Taylor, *The Resolution of the Round-Heads* (1641), sigs. A2-A2v.

44 Taylor, *The Brownists Conventicle*, title page.

45 *A Puritane Set Forth in His Lively Colours*, 6.

46 Amanda Capern, *The Historical Study of Women: England, 1500-1700* (New York, 2008), 50-53.

Nonetheless, anti-Puritan polemics' penchant for entertainment may have given them indirect appeal beyond their primary function as religious propaganda. As short and cheaply printed pamphlets comprised most popular anti-Puritan works, consumers could often acquire tracts for the fairly paltry sum of one or two pennies. Even the urban lower middling sort could have affordably acquired a tract solely to enjoy a specific stylistic aspect.⁴⁷ As paper made up three-quarters of seventeenth-century printing prices, poorer readers could purchase pamphlets without the same financial commitment needed to acquire longer works.⁴⁸ Accordingly, a reader could purchase a piece of popular religious propaganda as easily for its openly sexual description of a holy sister or biting verses as he could out of a genuine fear for England's moral and religious future. Although the lapse of episcopal licensing, beginning in late 1640, made print a relatively unregulated market, simply gauging the prevalence of anti-Puritan and royalist views based on the apparent commercial success of these pamphlets would be a mistake.⁴⁹ While many of the period's tracts exist in various archives, no information exists detailing the size of tracts' print runs or revealing how works proliferated among groups of individuals after purchase. To say that the number of anti-Puritan and anti-sectarian pamphlets itself represented the popularity of these views among the literate tradesmen and artisans of London would be deeply fallacious. The cheapness of popular pamphlets makes it possible that a core group of receptive individuals could repeatedly account for much of the consumption within a genre. Even if London printers published many anti-Brownist or anti-separatist pamphlets, this did not dispel the possibility that the same particularly concerned collection of individuals could have accounted for a considerable portion of the audience for these works. Additionally, while in hindsight one can easily see that the various terms for religious radicalism all represented more or less the same phenomenon; it is far less clear to what extent the pamphlet-reading public regarded these names as interchangeable in 1641-1642. Furthermore, printing was a fairly low cost enterprise with limited financial risk to printers, meaning that works likely did not need to be guaranteed successes to be put into production. This in conjunction with a lack of existing indications of how well various pamphlets sold make it difficult to definitively gauge the popularity of individual anti-Puritan works or the genre as a whole.

The astonishing prevalence of the works of John Taylor in both the

47 Cressy, *England on Edge*, 299-300.

48 Wheale, *Writing and Society*, 86.

49 Cressy, *England on Edge*, 295, 298-299.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

sensationalist and satirical styles further problematizes attempts to gauge the popularity of anti-Puritan writings. Taylor accounted for 11 of the 43 pamphlets referring to the Brownists produced in 1641-42, the remainder of which primarily consisted of anonymous publications. Consequentially, it remains distinctly possible that Taylor played an outsized role in defining the style of pamphlets and may have popularized the use of 'Brownist' as a term for sectarians.⁵⁰ Taylor's output and relative ease of recognition also leads to the unfortunate tendency of generalizing the entire body of popular anti-Puritanism around Taylor's works. This predominance resulted from his unparalleled output and the much less frequent use of anonymity in comparison to fellow writers of popular literature attacking religious radicals.

Nonetheless, Capp and Wheale's claims that Taylor's works reflected the emerging culture and values of the middling sort must be examined critically in the realm of his religious and political tracts.⁵¹ Despite his origins as a humble waterman, Taylor expressed social views toward the 'imdudent [sic] rabble of ignorant Mechanicks, who have dared to presume to preach...' greatly resembled the paternalism and rabid class fears prevalent more elite circles. The similarity of Taylor's criticism to those expressed by the elite or faux-elite 'gentleman' John Harris, that Puritans were 'Mechanick persons, for the most part unlectured grooms, coachmen, feltmakers, coblers, weavers, hauking ironmoingers' further leads to questions regarding whether Taylor accurately represented viewpoints common among the lower middling sort.⁵² While Capp regards Taylor's work as representative of a growing divide between literate craftsmen and the urban poor, this cannot fully explain Taylor's screeds against tradesmen of social status essentially equal to his own, such as 'Greene the feltmaker', 'Marler, the buttonmaker', 'Spencer, the coachman', and 'Rogers, the glover.'⁵³ Although similar anti-tradesmen sentiments may be found in other works of popular anti-Puritanism, the anonymity or lack of renown of the authors make their social backgrounds difficult to discern.⁵⁴

50 Numbers from analysis of ETSC online title search of the words 'Brownist' and 'Brownists,' derived from similar non-author based, 1640-1642 search by Cressy; May 2011; Cressy, *England on Edge*, 214.

51 Capp, *The World of John Taylor*, 191-195; Wheale, *Writing and Society*, 87, 101.

52 Taylor, *A Cluster of Coxcombes*, 6; John Harris, *The Puritanes Impuritie*, 4.

53 Capp, *The World of John Taylor*, 195-196; John Taylor, *The Brownists Synagogue*, title page, 5.

54 A prominent example of these sentiments may be found in stigma 17 of Richard Carter's *The Schismatick Stigmatized*. Although Carter references to

Additionally, unlike other relatively unknown anti-Puritan propagandists and polemicists, Taylor's pre-1640s career had already garnered him popularity as a tirelessly self-promoting public persona and writer of popular verse and travelogues.⁵⁵ This name recognition may have greatly biased public consumption of his anti-sectarian and anti-Puritan works. Unlike an anonymous pamphlet or pamphlet of obscure authorship, contemporaries could have read these works not because they detailed impending societal collapse, but simply because John Taylor, a man known for comedic and entertaining style, had written them.

Moreover, Taylor's biography lends doubt as to whether his brand of literature and politics corresponded with the positions which other people of similar social backgrounds held. His often gratuitously broad attacks on a segment of society that would have included his own profession seem to possess a fundamental ignorance of both their own potential to offend their intended audience and the irony that an author of limited education and lower social-status wrote them. In fact, Taylor's frequent interaction with court figures in his primary occupation as a Thames boatman and in his other work at various points in his life as a liveried royal waterman might have shaped his royalist sympathies. At the very least, these intimate interactions with the court would have been extremely atypical for someone of his socio-economic background and would have given him an unusually personal attachment to the royalist cause.⁵⁶ Taylor's background also brings into doubt whether his views represented an authentic expression of a brand of popular royalism and lower-class conservatism endogenous to the poor and middling sort or one greatly influenced by conservative views adopted from his extensive contact with court figures and other established political elites.

Furthermore, John Taylor, as a rabidly bigoted, pro-Scottish, anti-Laudian royalist who had extensively travelled both England and continental Europe was undoubtedly an idiosyncratic figure.⁵⁷ This further reinforces the need for skepticism in addressing whether his prodigious output actually represented the prevalence and shape of popular royalism or popular anti-Puritanism among

Church policies, historical events, and ability to write "*Basilikon Doron*" in Greek characters indicates that he have been somewhat more educated than Taylor.

55 Bernard Capp, 'Taylor, John (1578–1653)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27044>, accessed 14 May 2011]

56 Capp, 'Taylor, John' in ODNB

57 Capp, *The World of John Taylor*, 167–168.

Anti-Puritan Pamphleteering

London's literate laboring classes. Though Taylor stands out among the almost universally anonymous or obscure authors of popular anti-Puritanism, his visibility does not necessarily make Taylor an appropriate point of generalization for the views of an entire socio-economic class.

One also cannot readily dichotomize or generalize the intentions of producers and the consumer demographics of the groundswell of anti-Puritan literature which emerged in the early 1640s. While many propagandists wrote in styles associated with educated culture, it would not be uncommon for poorer persons to read longer and more challenging works, especially religious tracts, as many of 1641-1642's long-form anti-Puritan works could be classified.⁵⁸ Although one may identify rhetorical strategies and common tropes in anti-Puritan and anti-sectarian writing, concretely ascribing intentions to these works, especially to short sensational works written mostly by anonymous or obscure writers, constitutes a difficult and perhaps even futile task. Undoubtedly, some propagandists believed themselves to be accurately relaying a dire threat to the true religion, while others wrote pamphlets with the conscious knowledge that the alarms events and practices that they described were entirely fictitious. Similarly, the pamphlets themselves rarely strongly indicate whether they were written with the intention of drawing attention to a perceived growth in sectarian activities, generating support for the embattled Church and subsequently the monarchy, or simply making a profit. However, rhetorical techniques of popular pamphlets hint at the power of misogyny, religious bigotry, and possibly class anxieties as forces capable of mobilizing popular opinion in seventeenth-century England.

Most importantly, subtle changes in the language and focus of anti-Puritan literature between 1641 and 1642 reflected shifting religious and political conditions in England. Though ultimately absorbing most of its criticisms from more established stereotypes, the advent of the Roundhead as the subject of polemics indicated a transition in the purpose of anti-Puritanism attack. The sheer prevalence of material from 1641 decrying the dangers of the 'Brownist,' 'separatist,' 'Puritan,' and 'schismatic' demonstrated a real or perceived increase in the prevalence or brazenness of religious nonconformity, rather than being a moral panic manufactured for the express purpose of rallying support for the royalist cause. However, the widespread replacement of these terms with the more politically-charged 'Roundhead' in 1642 indicated a growing identification of popular anti-Puritan literature with the royalist cause. This was in contrast to more elite anti-Puritanism, whose inclinations toward support for divine

58 Wheale, *Writing and Society*, 85-87.

right theory had always given it a rather royalist stance. Royalism co-opted and politicized popular anti-Puritanism's opposition to any disorder within Church or society to promote support for the royalists' law and order-based appeal. While the Brownist may have been seen as religiously subversive, the Roundhead was not only a threat to Church discipline, but also a 'despiser of government' and 'against their king and country.'⁵⁹ This functionalization of anti-Puritan polemics from a social danger into a tool of unofficial royalist propaganda and a danger to the state parallel the hardening of England's religious and political divisions into battle lines in the run up to and immediately following the outbreak of armed conflict in August 1642.

59 *Cornu-copia*, sig. A3; *The Soundheads Description of a Roundhead*, 11

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Whitney's Gamble:

WHITNEY YOUNG AND AFRICAN AMERICAN SUPPORT OF THE MILITARY DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

Oliver Rosenbloom

Throughout his career, Martin Luther King had controlled his temper in the face of many dangerous situations and personal insults. Yet the refusal of another prominent black leader to connect the Vietnam War to the Civil Rights Movement was more than King could take. At a Long Island fundraiser in 1967, Whitney Young, the head of the National Urban League, argued with King about the Vietnam War's effect on domestic race relations. The argument got so out of hand that King's lawyer had to step in and halt the debate. He would later say that he had never seen King express such remorse for his own behavior.¹ Of the many provocations he had endured in his life, Whitney Young's support of the Vietnam War had a unique ability to bring out the worst in King.

The Anti-War Movement drew inspiration from the Civil Rights Movement, yet this should not be taken to mean that civil rights leaders had one united stance on Vietnam. In fact, the question of how to respond to America's foreign policy created many rifts within the Civil Rights Movement. As one example, King criticized Young for his refusal to denounce the Vietnam War. At the Long Island fundraiser, King said "Whitney, what you're saying may get you a foundation grant, but it won't get you into the kingdom of truth."² As I will explain in this paper, this quote perfectly captures both the flaws and the strengths of the tactics employed by Whitney Young in his attempt to navigate the controversial issue of the Vietnam War in the context of the American Civil Rights Movement. In a historical era in which more radical forms of civil rights protest were gaining prominence, Young represented an older approach that sought to work within the traditional political system and use national service to uplift blacks. Young's approach to civil rights focused on enlisting the help of elite white Americans and institutions and prevented him from denouncing

1 Weiss, Nancy J. Whitney M. Young, Jr., and the Struggle for Civil Rights. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey. 1989. Pages 158-159.

2 Dickerson, Dennis. Militant Mediator. The University Press of Kentucky, 1998. Page 274

the Vietnam War. As King pointed out, this made Young an effective fundraiser for the Urban League, an agency committed to providing social services and increased employment opportunities for blacks. Yet King also understood that this conciliatory, pragmatic approach alienated a more radical generation of blacks who were disillusioned with America in general and the Vietnam War in particular. In this paper, I will analyze Young's approach to Vietnam and civil rights, an approach that fits into a long tradition of African Americans using military service as a means of social advancement. While later developments in the war and in domestic politics exposed the flaws of this approach, this paper will place a greater emphasis on how this approach resonated with many African Americans at the beginning of the Vietnam War.

King's viewpoint about the moral bankruptcy of a black leader supporting the Vietnam War fits into the prevailing historical view about Vietnam and race relations. This narrative holds that the Vietnam War held no positive potential for racial reconciliation. Echoing this view, Cecil Moore, president of the Philadelphia branch of the NAACP, said that by supporting the Vietnam War, Young was "being used as an instrument to whitewash discriminatory treatment in Vietnam."³ With the gift of hindsight, many jump to the conclusion that the Vietnam War was inevitably destined to be a negative force for race relations. This paper will serve as a counter-narrative. I will argue that the Vietnam War, especially in its early stages, had the potential to help America with the process of racial reconciliation, even if the actual developments of war did not herald this progress. Full combat integration was a unique aspect of the Vietnam War, when compared to previous American wars, and this was one reason for African American optimism about the war's potential to improve race relations. As evidence of the claim that African Americans saw the Vietnam War as a means of racial improvement, I will examine the way in which Young tried to leverage military service during this period into positive gains in domestic race issues. I will also analyze the early hope expressed by many African American soldiers about the war's potential to ameliorate American race relations.

African American support of the Vietnam War rarely came in the form of principled adherence to America's cold war strategy in Southeast Asia. Rather, many African Americans saw the institution of the military and military service as the means of improving race relations. Some believed that heroic service in the war would lead to greater respect from white America, which would translate into greater economic and political opportunities in America. Others emphasized improvements in interpersonal relationships between the

3 Dickerson, 273

racism due to the Army's recent integration. Many Civil Rights leaders did not actively support the war, yet refused to denounce it for fear of alienating Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ), a great ally of the Civil Rights Movement. For these leaders, passively accepting Johnson's Vietnam policy was the best way to keep his friendship, earn concessions from him, and convince America of the black community's patriotism. I will compare Young's publicly stated beliefs about race and the Vietnam War to the beliefs held by African American soldiers who served in combat. I will also examine Young's general tactical approach to civil rights, using his handling of the Vietnam War as a representative example.

More African Americans shared Whitney Young's faith in the Vietnam War's potential for racial healing than the historical consensus would suggest. While Young's views are more optimistic than the preponderance of soldiers', he nonetheless captures many of their basic beliefs. These soldiers share Young's view that service in an integrated army will improve racial relationships on an interpersonal level, and they also believe that military service is the best way for African Americans to achieve upward social and economic mobility. Very few primary source accounts are quite as optimistic as Young, yet many accounts corroborate his basic points. Therefore, it is most accurate to say that Young exaggerated the level of black support for the military's potential for racial reconciliation, rather than saying that he completely fabricated these points.

Before 1967, Young believed that it was a tactical mistake for civil rights groups to oppose the Vietnam War. He believed that neutrality and silence on the merits of the war would ensure continued support from LBJ for civil rights legislation. While he did not take a moral stand for or against the war, he felt optimistic about the potential effects the war could have for the black community. He believed that African American heroism and valor could be leveraged into concrete gains in the civil rights agenda. Furthermore, he believed that white racial attitudes would evolve and become more egalitarian after they had served in an integrated army. After observing the Army in Vietnam, Young wrote, "Inevitably, the mainland myths of the god-given superiority of the white man and of the negro's natural inadequacy are beginning to crumble."⁴ Young came to actively support the war after being chosen by LBJ to serve as an election monitor in 1967. While this caused some in the African American community to portray Young as a sell-out, he also reaped tangible benefits from LBJ for his support of the war. Most notably, he received funding and

4 Young, Whitney. "When the Negroes in Vietnam Come Home." *Harper's*, June 1967. Pages 173-182. Accessed via http://www.aavw.org/protest/civilrights_nul_abstract06.html

Whitney's Gamble

coordination efforts from the federal government in his attempt to help black veterans in America, and continued to secure large private donations for the Urban League.

Young's personal experiences with the Army informed his later beliefs about the Vietnam War and the general role the Army could play in improving African American life. Young served in the Army in World War II and gained his first experience in racial reconciliation. In Young's unit, black soldiers frequently ignored or disobeyed the orders given by white officers because they were given less freedom than their white counterparts. Due to Young's effective lobbying, African American soldiers received lighter punishments for petty offenses, greater access to alcohol, and more freedom to date European women.⁵ Young served as a bridge between these two groups, earning better treatment for African Americans and more obedient soldiers for white officers. In addition, Young helped white officers to better understand the injustices faced by black soldiers.⁶

At a young age, Young learned that the conditions of combat were conducive to racial progress. African Americans had greater leverage over whites in war because disobedient soldiers posed a threat to the survival of white soldiers and the broad foreign policy goals of America. Young did not believe that Army officers entered the service with more racially egalitarian mindsets than other whites. However, he believed that the context of war placed whites in a position where they would be forced to change their racial beliefs in order to maximize their chances of survival. Young therefore believed that the Vietnam War provided an opportunity for more racial reconciliation by once again placing whites and blacks together in a combat zone. The Vietnam War provided an opportunity for even greater racial progress than World War II because the Army in Vietnam was fully integrated.

ARMY SERVICES AND INTERPERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

Young's most optimistic interpretation of the potential for the Vietnam War to improve race relations came in a Harper's magazine article.⁷ He believed that serving in an integrated army would lead to significant changes in the racial attitudes among Southern whites. He believed that the crucible of combat led to feelings of fraternity that overcame previously held notions of racism. After quoting black soldiers who expressed similar sentiments, Young recalls his own

5 Dickerson, 32.

6 Ibid, 32

7 Young, Harper's Magazine

experience with reformed southern men. He writes, “A number of white soldiers from the South told me they would never again be the victims of the stupefying myths on which they were brought up.” Young continues:

This shared experience [of combat] is producing a vital effect on Negro-white relations. The effect is particularly significant among whites from the Deep South... I quickly learned that many of the white soldiers were as eager as the Negroes to hear the latest news on the racial situation at home, and many responded to the information about the slow pace of progress with a sense of disgust and disappointment.

Young observed that army integration led to significant personal transformation. Individual whites who entered the war informed by racist dogma came to change their beliefs after serving in combat with blacks. Young believed that these interpersonal developments would also have broader political impacts. Writing of these reformed whites, he indicates that “These men will represent a strong and positive force for the kind of legislative and local action that will be needed when they return to their own communities.” Young predicted that these reformed Southerners would be inspired to actively seek racial justice upon returning home by reforming institutions or advocating for racial equality. The existence of an integrated army had the potential to do more than just change the racial attitudes of individual soldiers. According to Young, it even had the potential to change Southern communities by motivating their young white men to fight for civil rights.

The majority of Southern whites did not actively seek racial change upon returning home, but one very prominent Southerner did. William Westmoreland, the top commander in Vietnam, praised blacks in his local community. In a speech given in South Carolina in 1967, Westmoreland said, “the performance of the Negro servicemen has been particularly inspirational to me. They have served with distinction. He has been courageous on the battlefield, proficient, and a possessor of technical skills.”⁸ Young was guilty of exaggerating the affect of integrated service on Southern whites, but the fact that the top US commander in Vietnam praised black soldiers in the Deep South proves that there was a strong element of truth in Young’s optimism.

While other primary source accounts are not as hopeful about Vietnam’s potential to alter race relations, they do largely substantiate

8 Westheimer, James. *Fighting on Two Fronts: African Americans and the Vietnam War*. New York University Press, New York and London. 1997. Page 10.

Whitney's Gamble

Young's views. These accounts do not make sweeping claims about Vietnam transforming the entire southern mindset, yet they do point to changed personal convictions among white southerners. In *Bloods: Black Veterans of the Vietnam War: An Oral History*,⁹ Wallace Terry features 20 primary source accounts from black soldiers who served in Vietnam. Some soldiers only mention racial tension and do not mention racial progress, but a more common theme in the anthology is the ability of brotherhood and combat to overcome underlying racist notions. Five of these 20 soldiers tell stories of reformed white Southerners, while another three of these soldiers emphasize the personal friendships they shared with white Southerners. Many of these black soldiers joined black power or black separatist movements upon returning home. Therefore, Terry cannot be accused of selecting integrationist blacks. The soldiers Terry includes in his anthology certainly are not happy with the state of race relations in America. However, in the beginning of the war, they express the belief that the Vietnam War led to improved race relations among combat veterans. Young's predictions about the transformative potential of the Vietnam War for domestic race relations did not come true, yet his real-time observations about racial progress among soldiers and within the Army are validated by these primary source accounts.

Many of the soldiers in Terry's anthology claim that white racial attitudes changed because of combat. Hospital Corpsman Luther Benton recalled the reaction to his act of heroism. He said, "Everybody said they couldn't believe what I did. I guess because I was black. When you're white and you think that no good can come out of black people, when you think that black men are cowards who run scared, yellin' 'Massa save me,' then I guess they would be amazed."¹⁰ This story speaks to the depth of racial prejudice felt by white soldiers upon entering the service. More importantly, it points to the potential that combat duty had to change these perceptions. Through their own actions on the battlefield, African American soldiers forced racist whites to reconsider their racial beliefs. First Lieutenant Archie Bigger's account illustrates the extent to which white Southerners' racial attitudes evolved in Vietnam. He said, "Southerners at the first sign of a black officer being in charge of them were somewhat reluctant. But then, when they found out that you know what's going on and you're trying to keep them alive, then they tried to be the best

9 Terry, Wallace. *Bloods: Blacks Veterans of the Vietnam War: An Oral History*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1984.

10 Wallace. Page 175.

damn soldiers you've got."¹¹ The combat experience led white Southerners to accept black soldiers as peers, and it even caused them to accept black commanders as their superiors. The capacity to take orders from a black man contrasts sharply with race relations in the American South, where blacks would never find themselves in any positions of authority over whites. Acceptance of black leadership on the part of whites is not the only striking change to race relations in Vietnam.

Even members of the Ku Klux Klan developed more egalitarian racial attitudes after serving in Vietnam, highlighting the drastic reordering of race relations brought upon by the Vietnam War, at least in combat zones. Specialist Richard Ford complained of off-duty racism but believed that racial tension disappeared in the midst of combat. He said, "In the field, we had the utmost respect for each other, because when a fire fight is going on and everybody is facing north, you don't want to see nobody looking around south. If you was a member of the Ku Klux Klan, you didn't tell nobody."¹² Other soldiers witnessed more fundamental changes in Klan member's racial beliefs. Specialist Harold Bryant told the story of a Klansman in his unit. In the beginning of his tour of duty, this soldier bragged about his Klan membership. A battlefield incident led to a lasting change in personal convictions. Bryant recalls,

Well, we got into a fire fight, and Mr. Ku Klux Klan got his little ass trapped... So we laid down a base of fire to cover him. But he was just immobile. He froze. And a brother went out there and got him and dragged him back. Later on, he said that action had changed his perception of what black people were about.¹³

The brotherhood forged in combat proved to be stronger than even the most racist of ideologies. First-hand observations of reformed Klansmen show that black soldiers were aware of the potential the Vietnam War had to change race relations. In fact, the war led to such a drastic change in the minds of former Klansmen that they even became capable of befriending black soldiers. Black Specialist Arthur Woodley ended up becoming "best friends" with a former Klansman from Arkansas.¹⁴ Woodley and this Klan Member only developed this friendship because of their service in an integrated army, a

11 Wallace, Page 111.

12 Wallace, Pages 38-39

13 Wallace, Page 23

14 Wallace, Page 239

Whitney's Gamble

circumstance that was at that point unique to the Vietnam War. This amazing tale of friendship between a Klan members and a black soldier proves that the Vietnam War brought white and black soldiers together in a constructive way, as Whitney Young pointed out in his Harper's Magazine Article.

These primary source accounts show that Whitney Young spoke for many black soldiers when he made hopeful predictions about the potential of the Vietnam War to improve race relations on the level of personal relationships. Black soldiers witnessed significant changes in white racial attitudes. However, the existence of positive developments in race relations should not be construed as the only historical trend. There were also many documented instances of racial violence in Vietnam. While racial tension increased as the war progressed, there are reported instances of racial violence from earlier in the war as well. A fair appraisal of the available evidence shows that the Vietnam War had the potential to improve race relations in some contexts and exacerbate racial tension in other contexts. It is these positive developments in race relations that get overlooked in favor of a one-sided, overly simplistic picture of Vietnam as a purely negative force for race relations.

The integrated army clearly led to racial change on a personal level, but it is worth noting that the fight for black equality was not only about changes on the interpersonal level. Progress on this front did not necessarily herald progress in more tangible arenas, such as protective legislation or expanded economic opportunity. These instances of interpersonal transformation are most relevant as antidotes to the simplistic narrative of Vietnam having a purely detrimental effect on race relations, but it is worth remembering that blacks were looking for more than just a change in white attitudes. A common theme in Terry's anthology is black disillusionment with a lack of economic opportunity on the home front. Therefore, if Young had only focused on reforming racist white mindsets, he would not have been accurately representing the wishes of his constituents. However, Young did not limit his fight to reforming racist white mindsets. He also focused on the economic opportunities unique to military service, used his prominence to warn white America of the dire consequences of inaction on domestic issues of racial justice, and lobbied for funds for the Urban League.

MILITARY SERVICE AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

Young believed that in the short-term, military service provided the best opportunity for black social and economic advancement. This mindset was informed by both his personal experiences and a more general appraisal of

race relations in America. After serving in the Army, Young gained admission to a social work program, due in part to a recommendation from an army officer he served under. He paid for this graduate study through the GI Bill. On a broader level, his time in the Army helped him to discover that his true calling was in race relations, not medicine, as he had previously believed. These positive associations with the Army probably contributed to Young's decision to wear his sergeant's uniform on the first day of school.¹⁵ Young also looked beyond his own personal experience in believing that the Army served as the most powerful institution for African American social uplift. He said, "For the majority of these capable young men, the Army is their university."¹⁶ Young correctly believed that the most talented African Americans in the country were denied equal opportunity in the education and employment sectors. The military was therefore the most meritocratic institution for blacks. Early in the war, Young believed that the most intelligent and dedicated African Americans were the ones who enrolled. Young said:

The 30 percent [of African Americans] who are accepted [into the armed forces] are not society's rejects, not the functional illiterates, the addicts or the chronically unemployed – but the 'cream of the crop' of the negro community. These are the men who represent the potential forces of leadership in the war in Vietnam and the battle cry for freedom at home.¹⁷

In Young's mind, the military served as a training ground for the most capable African American leaders. These accomplished citizens would return home from military service better able to uplift their communities. For individual African Americans, the Army provided the most accessible path to social mobility. For the African American community as a whole, military service equipped the best and brightest black men to be effective agents for change upon returning home.

An examination of primary source accounts from black soldiers shows that many also believed that the Army provided them opportunities for social advancement that were not available in civilian life. A study of African American veterans from Pittsburgh indicates that many soldiers joined the Army because it provided the best economic opportunity available to them.¹⁸ The case of Daryl

15 Dickerson, 37

16 Young, Harper's Magazine.

17 Ibid

18 Black, Samuel W. "As I Recall" From the Hill and Homewood to the War in

Carpenter is representative of these soldiers. He enlisted in 1967 and said, "I didn't have any support as to what I should do after high school. I thought it would be a good idea to go into the Marine Corps service, because... there wasn't any jobs I could get."¹⁹ Carpenter may not have viewed the Army in as favorable a light as Young did, yet he still believed that military service was the best option for African American males. Private James Williams echoed this sentiment. He said, "I know a lot of brothers who will stay in the Army because they're afraid to get out and face what's out there."²⁰ In a racist and economically disadvantageous society, the Army was seen as a source of stability and steady income.

An examination of the soldiers in Terry's *Bloods* anthology also proves that many African Americans saw the Army as their best opportunity for social advancement. Seven of the soldiers in this anthology clearly state that they enlisted because the Army provided greater potential for advancement than did any civilian sector pursuit. Captain Joseph B Anderson said, "There weren't many opportunities for blacks in private industry then. And as a graduate of West Point, I was an officer and a gentleman by act of Congress. Where else could a black go and get that label just like that?"²¹ Anderson argued that service allowed blacks to reach positions of executive leadership that they could not attain back in America. Yet he also believed that the Army benefited those blacks who did not reach high levels of leadership. He said, "For many black men, the service, even during a war, was the best of a number of alternatives to staying home and working in the fields or bumming around the streets of Chicago or New York."²² Even if the Army was far from a full meritocracy, it was an institution that was more open to black accomplishment than any civilian institutions. Specialist Arthur Woodley said, "The only way I could possibly make it out of the ghetto, was to be the best soldier I possibly could."²³ The historical community tends to focus on later black disillusionment with the Vietnam War and, by connection, the military. However, placing too strong an emphasis on this development can obscure the fact that at the beginning of the war, many African Americans believed that the Army was their best resource for social advancement.

Vietnam." *Soul Soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam Era*. Ed. Samuel W. Black. Page 136

19 Black, 136.

20 Westheider, 14.

21 Terry, Page 221

22 Terry, Page 221

23 Terry, Page 239

YOUNG'S WARNINGS TO WHITE AMERICA

Young's optimism concerning the potential of the Vietnam War to improve race relations and improve the lives of black men should not be confused with passive acceptance of racial inequality. In fact, Young frequently made public statements condemning racism, both in the Army and in the domestic sphere. At a press conference he held after visiting troops in Vietnam in July 1966, Young criticized the Army for allowing "de-facto" segregation in off-duty activities.²⁴ He called for commanders to take an active role in policing the behavior of their soldiers during free time to combat off-duty racism.²⁵ Young also condemned the Navy for its low number of black pilots and officers.²⁶ His most forceful criticism of the Army concerned its reluctance to promote black soldiers to positions of leadership. Young voiced this criticism publicly and took concrete steps to remedy the shortage of black officers. LBJ agreed with Young's criticism and lobbied the Joint Chiefs of Staff to promote more blacks to positions of leadership.²⁷

Young's dealing with the issue of black officers is representative of the general tactics that he believed would best advance the cause of African American civil rights. He worked within the traditional American political process and forged a close relationship with LBJ. He emphasized black patriotism and service to America and praised many components of the military before making his specific criticisms about the shortage of black generals. Young's stance and tone allowed him to effect real change within the military, as shown above. These methods contrasted sharply with the new, more radical methods of black nationalists and Martin Luther King Jr. In acknowledging this contrast of tactics, it is important not to assume that Young merely appeased white America.

Although the general tone of Young's 1966 report on blacks in the military was optimistic, he also made clear threats about what would befall America if it did not make civil rights gains. In that same July press conference, Young said "We're going to be in for a rough time" if blacks return to an

24 "Negro GI Morale High, Urban League Director Reports." *The Washington Post*, 24 July 1966.

25 Pace, Eric. "'Black Progress' Is Called Aim of Soldiers in Vietnam." *New York Times*, 24 July 1966.

26 Finney, John. "President Backs Negro Promotion: Agrees to Bid by Young for More Officers in Vietnam." *New York Times*, 27 July 1966.

27 Finney.

Whitney's Gamble

America that is still dominated by racism.²⁸ He continued, "The negro who has given his all expects that problem back home to be solved." These statements carried implied threats of racial tension and hostility, but Young issues a more direct warning to America in his Harper's Magazine piece. Young wrote, "This time the Negro veteran will return to his native land shorn of his old sense of stunted purpose. This fact poses some deep questions." These questions concern the manner in which newly empowered African American veterans will deal with racial injustice.

Young used the alternative option of violence to make his own vision of peaceful civil rights improvements gained through the political process more palatable to white America. After making obvious implications about the threat of violence from disillusioned black veterans, Young then makes explicit reference to it. Young writes that, if veterans return to unfavorable conditions, "it would be realistic to expect such experts of mines and booby traps and all other forms of destruction to find good reason why they should use these skills and risk their lives against the enemy of personal injustice as they did against the enemy of communist aggression." Young characterizes prejudice and segregation as threats to domestic security, analogous to the better-publicized threat of communism. He goes on to set up a dichotomy between the violent consequences of inaction and the beneficial consequences of adherence to his vision. He writes

If they return to find the conditions they left unchanged, these Negro veterans might become an interested audience for the preachers of violence – and one capable of being organized into a major national threat. In contrast to this threat, the effects of the Vietnam War on the American Negro offer a great opportunity to this country if they are understood and accepted in time. The veterans are also capable of becoming responsible and productive citizens, if given the opportunity in the industrial and civic community

Young makes his own agenda more appealing by arguing that the only alternative is mass violence. Young certainly worked to win the approval of white America, in contrast to some of the more radical African American groups of this time period. Yet this desire to work with white America in a constructive way should not be confused with cowardly accommodation to white wishes. In this passage, Young boldly evokes the threat of racial violence. Furthermore, Young

28 Pace

took concrete steps to improve the conditions of African Americans. Within the military, he pushed for greater black representation in positions of leadership. On the domestic front, he successfully agitated for greater opportunities for black veterans upon returning home, in addition to his regular work with the Urban League.

The juxtaposition of Young's approach to race relations with that of the more radical civil rights groups did in fact lead to concrete gains for black America. White corporations and philanthropists donated more to the Urban League after seeing the alternative vision put forth by the Black Panthers and urban rioters.²⁹ After Detroit was set ablaze by black rioters, the city's car companies increased their donations to the Urban League. One militant said, "They thought they were buying cheap insurance for their factories."³⁰ The emergence of black urban violence also caused the federal government to lend greater support to the Urban League. In response to riots, the League earned contracts from the federal government for apprenticeship and job training projects.³¹ When contrasted with the more radical and violent forms of agitation, Young's approach won over the hearts of many white Americans, as well as the checkbooks of corporate America and the federal government.

YOUNG'S TACTICS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Young believed that protesting the Vietnam War was a tactical mistake for the Civil Rights movement. As established above, he was confident that the Vietnam War and military service in general could lead to racial progress, yet independent of these feelings was a belief that war protest would undermine the fight for black equality. Young was convinced that grouping the Civil Rights Movement with the Anti-War Movement would alienate white America and LBJ. Young told King, "Johnson needs a consensus... if we are not with him on Vietnam, then he is not going to be with us on civil rights."³² Young did not believe that he could make statements on the Vietnam War in a vacuum.

29 Buckley, Tom. "Whitney Young: Black Leader or 'Oreo Cookie'?" New York Times. 20 September 1920

30 Ibid

31 Ibid

32 Hall, Simon. "The Response of the Moderate Wing of the Civil Rights Movement to the War in Vietnam." *The Historical Journal*, 46, 3 (2003), pp. 669-701. 2003 Cambridge University Press. Accessed Via <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3133567>

Whitney's Gamble

He believed that any moral condemnations of the Vietnam War would have consequences for the Civil Rights Movement. One such consequence was losing the support of LBJ, a great past ally for civil rights and a possible future ally. Young also feared alienating broader segments of American society. In response to the claim that spending in Vietnam was taking away spending from Civil Rights legislation, Young responded

Our nation can advance civil rights in some areas without spending money. Open housing legislation would not cost money. Whatever our personal feelings about the war in Vietnam, we have to recognize reality. It does no good to say to the nation: civil rights or international security- choose.³³

Young clearly differentiates between personal moral convictions and political expediency. He believed that taking a principled moral stand against Vietnam would make mainstream America doubt the patriotism of the Civil Rights Movement.

Young's decision to not criticize foreign policy fit in a long tradition of African American civil rights agitation. Young, like many civil rights leaders before him, believed that hostility to US foreign policy would diminish black patriotism in the eyes of white America. On a more pragmatic level, he believed that it would be too difficult to both agitate for civil rights and against US foreign policy. Prominent civil rights leaders of this era shared Young's belief about the folly of taking an anti-war stance. A. Phillip Randolph said, "You cannot fight on two fronts without sacrificing one."³⁴ He further explained that it would be "tactically unsound" for a "civil rights leader or a leader of the peace movement to attempt to assume a position of leadership in both... at the same time."³⁵ Bayard Rustin was a pacifist by personal conviction, but he did not denounce the Vietnam War. He thought that becoming actively and outspokenly anti-war would be "distinctly unprofitable and perhaps even suicidal."³⁶ Outspoken black critics of the war receive more historical attention, but they were by no means the only voice of black America during this era.

Martin Luther King and Young approached the Vietnam War in fundamentally different manners precisely because the two men had separate roles and purposes within the broader civil rights movement. King, a fierce critic of the Vietnam War, denounced what he saw as Young's moral compromise

³³ Dickerson, 274

³⁴ Hall, 680

³⁵ Ibid, 680

³⁶ Ibid, 673

in regards to the Vietnam War. King was preacher concerned with all issues of morality and he looked at the entire world as his constituency. Given his role as a symbolic figurehead and inspirational figure, the ‘kingdom of truth’ was indeed his highest priority, as he made clear to Young in their argument at the Long Island fundraiser. Yet Young had a narrower role as the leader of the Urban League. He was concerned solely with serving his constituency and strengthening the impact of the Urban League, especially in the realm of black employment. In Young’s mind, a “foundation grant” did more to accomplish the goals of increasing black employment and helping black veterans than entrance into the “kingdom of truth” would have done.

While King viewed Young’s diplomacy as a means of selling-out the cause, Young’s tact with corporate donors led to concrete gains for certain segments of the black population. Young used this grant to improve the lives of black veterans. King was most likely referencing a \$150,000 grant the Urban League received from the Rockefeller brothers.³⁷ The purpose of this grant was to help black veterans to re-adjust to life after Vietnam. Young also secured donations from other private corporations, including General Foods, Johnson and Johnson, New York Community Trust, and PPG Industries, to create the Office of Veterans Affairs in the Urban League.³⁸ By organizing a Veterans Affairs Office, funded by these private donations, Young dramatically improved the chances of success for thousands of black veterans. The Urban League’s Office of Veteran Affairs had 83 affiliates that provided many services for black veterans, including employment, job training, education, legal advice, and housing. In the period from September 1967 to September 1968, 9,143 black veterans got assistance at one of these offices.³⁹ If Young had been more outspoken against the Vietnam War, he would not have been able to achieve such widespread financial support for the League, financial support he would use to directly improve the lives of many black veterans. King believed that he was helping blacks in the long run by speaking out against the war. Young was attending to the more immediate task of helping black veterans who had already been harmed by the war.

Young’s handling of the grant for veterans is representative of broader patterns in his approach to civil rights. Young sought to enlist influential whites in the Civil Rights Movement and radical rhetoric would have alienated this group of donors and advocates. While other civil rights leaders convinced some whites of the merits of their cause, Young was unique in his ability to extract

37 Ibid, 274.

38 Ibid, 276

39 Ibid, 276

Whitney's Gamble

large financial donations from powerful whites. More specifically, he successfully lobbied corporations to donate money, and not just charitable foundations.⁴⁰ After Young conversed with Henry Ford II on a plane ride, the Ford CEO donated \$100,000 to the Urban League the very next day.⁴¹ Young said, "I can't afford the luxury of a completely dogmatic position that says, 'I won't make any compromises.' Somebody's got to deal in a very practical way with the issues and there's nobody else who's got the entree with the decision makers."⁴² As shown above, Young gained support and concessions from decision makers in both the political and business realms. The controversy of the Vietnam War threatened to undermine this style of tact and diplomacy. Young overcame this potential stumbling block by refusing to criticize US foreign policy and by focusing on the apolitical issue of veterans affairs. Young spoke of the general approach the Urban League had to take in order to remain a viable organization. "I'm denied the luxury of rhetoric and one-night stands. We *stay* in town. It calls for a different kind of skill. If there's no expectation of an ongoing program, then all you need to rely on is charisma and sensational rhetoric."⁴³ To continue to receive financial support, Young had to stay in the good graces of donors.

Young's tactical approach opened opportunities to him that were closed to more radical leaders. Martin Luther King's approach did not allow him to secure large corporate donations. King's moral denunciation of the Vietnam War also prevented him from effectively lobbying for better treatment of black veterans, something that Young did with great success. Young also used his close relationship with LBJ to improve black representation among the higher ranks of Army leadership. In the short-term, Young's approach earned jobs for blacks and funding for League programs on a level that King could not match. Yet Young's approach also had significant drawbacks.

The inherent limitations of Young's strategy became more obvious as the Vietnam War progressed and disillusionment with the conflict grew. By focusing on building elite white support and not criticizing foreign policy, Young's popularity among blacks was dependent on black perceptions of US politicians and policy. At the beginning of the war, when many Americans of all races expressed viewed the war in a positive light, Young's decision to stay in the good graces of elite white politicians and businesses did not appear to be a moral compromise. Yet as the black community began to turn against the war, Young's

40 Ibid, 6.

41 Buckley

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid

tactics that at one point seemed pragmatic were now viewed as inauthentic and morally corrupt. In 1967, LBJ persuaded Young to serve as a monitor of the South Vietnam elections. By certifying the legitimacy of these elections, Young moved beyond neutrality and became an active supporter of the war. As the war progressed and black opinions of the conflict became less favorable, Young would pay the consequences for this support. By 1970, many African Americans viewed Young as an inauthentic leader. He was derisively referred to as “Whitey Young” and “Uncle Whitney” by a more radical generation of African Americans. He was even referred to as “the Oreo cookie” by those who believed that he was representing the interests of white America.⁴⁴ These criticisms show that Young’s approach led many to question the authenticity of a leader who had sided with official government policy and power structures.

YOUNG CHANGES POSITION

During the Nixon administration, Young changed his view of the Vietnam War. Much of Young’s support of the war stemmed from his relationship with LBJ and his belief that LBJ may halt Civil Rights legislation if the black community became too critical of Vietnam policy. After Nixon took office, Young tempered his support of the Vietnam War before eventually condemning it publicly. On October 13, 1969, Young wrote, “I am totally convinced that Vietnam is tragically diverting America’s attention from its primary problem – the urban and racial crisis – at the very time that crisis is at flash point.”⁴⁵ Young’s change of heart was motivated by two factors. The Civil Rights Movement no longer had a strong ally in the White House, so abstaining from moral judgment no longer brought any reward. In addition, the War’s effect on domestic programs became more obvious, especially as inflation increased.⁴⁶ Young’s change of heart in regards to Vietnam posed fundamental quests regarding his tactical approach.

Nixon’s deception on the matter of civil rights showed Young the downside of relying on white political support. In reference to the Nixon administration’s effect on the Civil Rights Movement, Young said, “There has been a clear decision made to go backwards. They’re going to follow the political route and [do] whatever is expedient. They’re going to reflect the fears, the panic, the prejudice... they aren’t going to provide leadership.”⁴⁷ In this quote, Young

44 Ibid

45 Weiss, 195.

46 Weiss, 159.

47 Weiss, 159.

Whitney's Gamble

observes the risks inherent in working within the establishment. When the ruling administration did not make civil rights a priority, then Young's position forced him to be associated with these enemies of progress. Young's approach therefore lost credibility in the black community when an unpopular president was in office, such as Nixon. When LBJ, a great friend of civil rights, was the president, Young's approach seemed more authentic. Similarly, Young's decision to support the Vietnam War was more credible when the war was more popular, but Young's reputation suffered as the war became more polarizing. While Young was certainly aware of the risk of allying with white politicians, it is relevant that he did not criticize the Nixon administration publicly. In fact, he would later be accused of being too supportive of Nixon.⁴⁸ Young continued to believe in the tactical necessity of gaining the support of establishment politicians, even when these politicians proved themselves to be weak allies in the fight for civil rights.

As the war progressed, more blacks came to see that King was correct in criticizing the Vietnam War. Young himself came to accept as much, saying King's position had been "more right."⁴⁹ Young had taken a gamble on the Vietnam War leading to improvements in race relations, and in hindsight he admitted that this gamble did not work out. This gamble was not completely unreasonable, as evidenced by the high level of optimism within the African American community about the potential that military service held for racial reconciliation. The fact that Vietnam was the first conflict fought by a fully integrated army also contributed to Young's decision to make this gamble. Furthermore, it is worth remembering that Young's gamble was not a complete loss, as it did lead to specific gains for black veterans and led to record contributions to the Urban League.

If the Vietnam War had been remembered as the noble moral struggle that other American conflicts have been, then perhaps Young's gamble would have shown greater dividends. This counterfactual is relevant because it sheds light on Young's actual decision-making process. When he made the decision to support the war, he did not know the eventual course of the war, either in Vietnam itself or in American historical memory. His entire strategy was predicated on the assumption that the Vietnam War would unite Americans of all races against a common enemy, as previous wars had. If this belief, commonly held by many blacks at the beginning of the war, not just Young, had come to fruition, then perhaps Young's gamble would have paid off. Instead, Young lost his wager because the Vietnam War polarized all segments of

48 Ibid, 197

49 Weiss, 194

American society and has been remembered as an imperial folly, not a noble moral struggle.

Young's emphasis on national service and working within traditional white power structures was at odds with the more radical forms of civil rights protests that were on the ascent during this period. In acknowledging the emergence of these new tactics, one must not dismiss Young as an out of touch agitator or ineffective leader. Young's success in raising funds for the Urban League, and using these funds to help black veterans, proves that he was an effective advocate for many black constituents. An examination of black soldiers' accounts of the Vietnam War shows that Young was not alone in having an optimistic mindset concerning the Vietnam War's potential for racial healing. In the end, Vietnam was such an unpopular war that it didn't lead to lasting positive racial change. Understanding this early support for the war is important because it disproves the notion that the Vietnam War was destined to lead to racial tension. Vietnam's failure to ameliorate race relations was by no means inevitable. It is the task of the historian to explain what factors undermined the positive potential the Vietnam War had to improve race relations, rather than just assume that later racial tension was inevitable.

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*Promised Land:

QUILOMBISMO, THE “QUILOMBO CLAUSE,” AND THE POLITICS OF RECOGNITION IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZIL

Priya Parrotta

“I believe that the Black and mulatto – the Brazilian of color – must have a racial counter-ideology and a counter position in socioeconomic terms. The Brazilian of color must strive simultaneously for a double change: socioeconomic change in the country, and change in race and color relations.” In 1968, through these words, Afro-Brazilian scholar, artist, and politician Abdias Nascimento called attention to the potentially divergent but essentially related nature of the two main objectives of Afro-Brazilian activism: first, to effect concrete change in the distribution of social and economic power in Brazil, and second, to promote a profound shift in cultural attitudes towards Afro-Brazilians, both among the Brazilian population as a whole and the Afro-Brazilian community in particular. As the above statement makes clear, political, cultural, social, economic, and spiritual empowerment were (and are) overlapping dimensions of comprehensive, necessary transformation in Brazilian race relations.

Among many other contributions to the Afro-Brazilian movement of the late twentieth century, Abdias Nascimento is well remembered for his conceptualization of Quilombismo, a political philosophy rooted in African political, social, economic, and cultural forms, and inspired by the quilombos of seventeenth century Brazil. Though defined differently by different people, quilombos can be best thought of as places where Afro-Brazilians lived, worked, and re-imagined their social relations, removed from the oppressive structures of Brazil’s plantation system. For Nascimento, the quilombos were genuine points of physical and cultural resistance. First articulated in 1980, his philosophy explores the possibility of developing similarly empowering

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relationships, within or outside the confines of the contemporary Brazilian state.

When Brazil's new republican Constitution was enacted in 1988, it contained a passage (Article 68) that read, "Survivors of quilombo communities occupying their lands are recognized as definitive owners, and the State shall issue them relevant title deeds." Starting several years after, existing rural black communities began to be identified as surviving quilombo communities and were issued land titles that, presumably, gave them greater control over their land as well as improved access to government resources. However, the implementation of the "quilombo clause" (written from now on without quotation marks) has not been without controversy. Even after the initial decade or so, when authorities were reluctant to issue land titles, debate has raged over the multiple ways in which the clause has been interpreted.

The most conservative interpretations place heavy emphasis on the need for Afro-Brazilians to corroborate claims to quilombo status with tangible historical evidence that their ancestors were refugees, and that the community in question was indeed a resistance community with its own governance structures that were, politically and culturally, distinct from those in colonial Brazil. Yet there are others, on the opposite end of the spectrum, who define "quilombo" the same way that Nascimento did: as a space of independent social relations which was a historical reality and continues to be an important symbol in Afro-Brazilian politics today. "Quilombo," in other words, does not only describe remote refugee communities, but also the broader Afro-Brazilian struggle for recognition and reparation.

The purpose of this paper is to examine land disputes of recent decades – related to the 1988 quilombo clause – from the perspective of Quilombismo. In other words, it will evaluate the effectiveness of the quilombo clause by interpreting it through the lens of a political ideology which took quilombos as a central component of its vision, both for its importance as a historical phenomenon and for its use as a viable symbol in the contemporary movement. It will also look at the ways in which various dimensions of recognition – historical, cultural, physical, social – feature in debates over land rights, and identify the challenges that these interactions reveal that the philosophy of Quilombismo may not.

The first section briefly explores the importance of quilombos as an Afro-Brazilian political and cultural symbol before 1988, focusing on the legacies of Quilombo dos Palmares. The second section provides an overview of Nascimento's Quilombismo, highlighting its most salient features. The third section discusses the events of 1988 – particularly the drafting of the

Promised Land

Constitution and, more significantly, the Afro-Brazilian mobilization that coincided with the centennial of the abolition of slavery. It also briefly describes the quilombo clause and the extent to which it has been implemented. The fourth section describes the guidelines established by Article 68 (the quilombo clause) for the conferring of land titles. It examines some of the interpretations of the clause, and identifies some of the major debates that have been provoked as a result of these conflicting interpretations. It also discusses a few of the ways in which the quilombo clause is reshaping rural Brazilians' conceptions of themselves and their communities. Finally, the concluding section reflects upon the role of the quilombo in the politics of recognition in Brazil more broadly. Drawing from the case of quilombos in particular, it offers observations on the complex relationship between the symbolic and the tangible, the obstacles to historical reparation when the discussion can be framed in multiple ways, and the challenges and contradictions that emerge when struggling for recognition in a nation where other groups – namely, indigenous communities – are trying to do the same thing.

IMMORTAL INFLUENCE: GANGA ZUMBA AND QUILOMBO DOS PALMARES

The influence of the quilombo on political and cultural life in Brazil is by no means restricted to Nasimento's Quilombismo. Quilombos hold tremendous weight, symbolically at least, as models of resistance and enlightened social organization. Quilombo dos Palmares is the most widely remembered quilombo, and its leader continues to be an important source of inspiration for Afro-Brazilian activists. Quilombo dos Palmares was a community of escaped slaves and others in colonial Brazil that was located in the present-day state of Alagoas and existed for most of the seventeenth century (1605-1694) as a politically, socially, economically, and culturally autonomous republic. Research by the Palmares Archaeological Project has shown that Palmares was home not only to people of African descent (who comprised the majority of the community), but also to Indians, mestiços, renegade whites, Jews, Muslims, and "heretics". The Palmarinos spoke a syncretic language that fused Portuguese with African and indigenous Brazilian languages, and their religion combined both Christian and African influences¹. They conducted trade with other settlements, and engaged in diplomacy. For instance, in 1678, Ganga Zumba (Palmares' best remembered leader) went to Recife with an entourage to sign a peace treaty

1 Stam, Robert (1997). *Tropical multiculturalism: a comparative history of race in Brazilian cinema and culture*. London: Duke University Press, 43.

with the Portuguese and was received “with great solemnity” by the Portuguese governor².

Nascimento describes Palmares as a “Black Troy”, which, from 1630 to 1697, resisted twenty-seven attacks launched by the Portuguese and the Dutch, who for some time ruled over much of the state of Pernambuco³. It is remembered by many Afro-Brazilian activists as the “first New World prototype of what might be called a utopian republic”, and it has been the “subject of at least two major feature-fiction films, *Ganga Zumba* (1963), and *Quilombo* (1984); of many documentaries, notably Linduarte Noronha’s *Aruada* (1960), Vladimir Carvalho’s *Quilombo* (1975), and Samin Cherques and Moisés Weltman’s *Zumbi dos Palmares* (1963); and most recently of a TV miniseries, *Zumbi, O Rei dos Palmares*”⁴.

Zumbi (Ganga Zumba), in particular, has received a great deal of attention. More than a secular hero, Zumbi is viewed by some as a divine and immortal spirit, worthy of respect from those who consider themselves to be his descendants. Zumbi was in fact captured and beheaded in 1695 (the quilombo remained for about a century afterwards), but nevertheless he remains an extremely important embodiment of the strength of Brazil’s African population. Popular discourse treats Zumbi not only as “the premier Afro-Brazilian hero but also as the exemplar of antiracist and anti-colonial dogma and praxis... [and the] strongest resistance to the slave-based colonial regime and, consequently, the struggle for economic and political justice”⁵. On November 20, 1995, Brazilians celebrated the 300th anniversary of Zumbi’s death, described as a day of black consciousness, and of Zumbi’s *immortality*, and that same year, Zumbi was chosen as the theme for Salvador do Bahia’s carnival⁶. Thus, *Quilombo dos Palmares* has been a notable presence in Brazilian cultural and political discourses, but even here, the representations of the community and its significance vary, and tensions between cultural appeal and political legitimacy are apparent.

2 Ibid., 43.

3 Nascimento, Abdias (1978). African culture in Brazilian art. *Journal of Black Studies*, 8, 4, 394.

4 Stam, Robert (1997). *Tropical multiculturalism: a comparative history of race in Brazilian cinema and culture*. London: Duke University Press, 41.

5 Anderson, Robert Nelson (1996). The Quilombo of Palmares: A new overview of a Maroon State in seventeenth-century Brazil. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 28, (3), 545.

6 Ibid., 545.

QUILOMBISMO: AN AFRO-BRAZILIAN POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE

In 1980, Abdias Nascimento published an article in the *Journal of Black Studies* entitled “Quilombismo: An Afro-Brazilian Political Alternative.” The ideas it outlined were predicated on the understanding that, first, Brazilians of African descent constitute the body and soul of Brazil, and that, second, Afro-Brazilians must “win back their memory, which has been systematically assaulted by Brazilian Western-inspired structures of domination for almost 500 years”⁷. The goal of Quilombismo, as described by Elisa Larkin Nascimento, is the “establishment of a Brazilian National Quilombist state, based on the model of the quilombos, which constitute Brazil’s most authentic tradition of liberation”⁸. It is a program of liberation and social organization that draws upon the strengths of African culture, rather than upon European forms of governance. Nascimento’s “Quilombismo” departs from socialist conceptualizations of progress by emphasizing the importance of culture in a way that Marxism did not. It describes quilombos as the “only Brazilian attempts to create a democratic society, free, in which all people, Blacks, Indians, and whites, achieved a great political, economic and social advance”⁹.

In “Quilombismo”, Nascimento advocates for the “erection of a society founded on justice, equality and respect for all human beings; on freedom; a society whose intrinsic nature makes economic or racial exploitation impossible”¹⁰. He writes about nationalism, but makes clear that by nationalism he does not mean xenophobia. He writes that Quilombismo, like black nationalism more broadly, is “universalist and internationalist in itself, in that it sees the national liberation of peoples respecting their unique cultural and political integrity, as an imperative for world liberation”¹¹.

He further asserts the deep bonds between Afro-Brazilian and indigenous Brazilian liberation movements, observing that, in both, the quilombo settlements and indigenous societies, respect for nature, the cosmos, and the ecosystem were central components of daily life. He insists that the black struggle “cannot be separated from the mutual liberation of the indigenous

7 Nascimento, Abdias (1980). Quilombismo: an Afro-Brazilian political alternative. *Journal of Black Studies*, 11, 2, 141.

8 Larkin Nascimento, Elisa (1980). Aspects of Afro-Brazilian experience. *Journal of Black Studies*, 11, 2, 214.

9 Nascimento, Abdias (1980). Quilombismo: an Afro-Brazilian political alternative. *Journal of Black Studies*, 11, 2, 150.

10 Ibid., 160.

11 Ibid., 155.

peoples of these lands, who are also victims of the racism and wanton destructiveness introduced and enforced by the European colonialists and their heirs”¹². Nascimento’s philosophy further establishes that every Afro-Brazilian who accepts the notion of “racial democracy” is a “traitor to himself” and considers himself inferior”¹³.

The phrase “racial democracy” refers to the commonly held view in Brazil that racism is not a dimension of life in Brazil. Scholars who endorse this term maintain that Brazilians do not regard each other through the lens of race, and that therefore race is not a relevant consideration in the study of social inequality. Abdias Nascimento’s ideas stand in direct opposition to this dominant discourse of racial democracy. His writings affirm the continuing importance of race in analyses of political inequality. He also draws attention to the important differences in cultural practice and worldview that emerge from the African ancestry of Brazil’s Afro-Brazilian population in ways that dominant political discourses, in Brazil and elsewhere, are not likely to. Examining “Quilombismo” in relation to the quilombo clause and resulting land disputes highlights the extent to which the philosophy – particularly its cultural dimensions – reflects the situation of rural Afro-Brazilians. This examination also reflects the implications of Nascimento’s interpretation of the quilombos for race relations and the politics of recognition in Brazil more broadly.

Nascimento ends “Quilombismo” with a proposal for an annual Afro-Brazilian Memory Week, along with other tangible policy changes, such as voting rights for the illiterate and amnesty for black political prisoners. Afro-Brazilian Memory Week would combine celebrations, continuous research, critique, and reflection on the past and present living conditions of the masses of African origin in Brazil, and support for existing Afro-Brazilian organizations. Though such a week has yet to be established, many of its elements have figured into political conversations and have effected policy changes at various levels of Brazilian political organization. This was particularly the case in 1988 when the centennial of the abolition of slavery sparked critiques that, to a certain extent, influenced the drafting of Brazil’s new, non-authoritarian constitution that same year and led to the enactment of such pieces of legislation as the quilombo clause – with questionable results.

1998: COMMEMORATION, CRITICISM, AND QUILOMBOS

May 13, 1988 marked the one hundred year anniversary of the abolition of

12 Ibid., 148

13 Ibid., 167.

slavery in Brazil. However, as many pointed out on the eve of that anniversary, the formal abolition of slavery hardly meant the end of racial discrimination in Brazil. The quilombo clause was the product of discussions aimed at bringing to light the continued inequalities in Brazilian society and bridging the gap between rhetorical and tangible reparation. Brazil was the last country in the Americas to end slave traffic and abolish colonial slavery¹⁴. And in the century that followed, while the formal structures of plantation slavery eroded and Brazil was shaped by multiple political regimes and new models of socioeconomic organization, racial discrimination remained, even if perpetuated through different modalities.

The Unified Black Movement Against Racism and Racial Discrimination (MNU) voiced widely-held concerns when it declared, “On [Abolition Day] was signed a law that only remained on paper, covering up a situation of domination in which to this day, Black people find themselves thrown into the *favelas*, *cortiços*, and *invasões*; marginalization, prostitution, beggary, prison, unemployment; still victims of inhuman police violence and repression”¹⁵. In a similar vein, historian Emilia Viotti da Costa pointed out that “abolition was only the first step toward the emancipation of the Brazilian people. The arbitrariness, ignorance, violence, poverty, and prejudice that slave society created still weigh upon us. While it is fair to commemorate the Thirteenth of May, it is nevertheless imperative not to allow the celebration to blur our vision to the point of turning the freedom it symbolizes into a myth at the service of oppression and exploitation of labor”¹⁶.

As the military regime in Brazil began to cede ground to a civilian government in the 1980s, the country entered a period of democratic transition¹⁷. This transition was accompanied by a variety of social movements, mobilizing around a variety of positions, from feminism to gay pride to Afro-Brazilian consciousness. José Sarney, the country’s new president, took office in 1985, and a constituent assembly began to meet regularly to draft a new, republican Constitution. During this time, the Afro-Brazilian Movement fought for legislation that would improve the political and socioeconomic status of

14 Pitanga, Antonio (1999). Where are the blacks? In Larry Crook & Randal Johnson (Eds.), *Black Brazil: culture, identity and social mobilization* (pp 31). Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center, 32.

15 Larkin Nascimento, Elisa (1980). Aspects of Afro-Brazilian experience. *Journal of Black Studies*, 11, 2, 211.

16 Do Rosário Linhares, Luiz Fernando (2004). Kilombos of Brazil: identity and land entitlement. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 818.

17 Hoffman French, Jan (2006). Buried Alive: Imagining Africa in the Brazilian Northeast. *American Ethnologist*, 33, 3, 343.

Afro-Brazilians in tangible ways. However, compared to the lobbying and demonstrations of indigenous activists, representation of black consciousness movement activists was limited in these deliberations. The legislation that the assembly drafted, therefore, was the result of significant compromise on the part of Afro-Brazilian activists¹⁸.

The 1988 constitution included provisions that: 1) established racism as a crime without bail or statute of limitations (Art. 5, sec. XLII); 2) mandated the demarcation of the lands of contemporary quilombo communities (Art. 68, Transitional Provisions); 3) proclaimed the pluri-cultural and multiethnic nature of the country, providing that the state would protect manifestations of Afro-Brazilian culture among others (Art. 215, par. 1); 4) preserved as national patrimony the sites of former quilombos and their documents (Art. 216, sec. 5); and 5) mandated inclusion of ‘the contributions of different cultures and ethnicities to the formation of the Brazilian people’ in history courses (Art. 242, sec. 1). Additionally, the Federal Ministry of Culture (at the instigation of the Zumbi Memorial) created an Abolition Centennial Commission out of which was born the Palmares Cultural Foundation¹⁹. This foundation would later spearhead efforts to identify quilombos throughout Brazil.

In their introduction to *Black Brazil*, Larry Crook and Randal Johnson write that the events of 1988 “dramatically illustrate the emergence of a new racial dynamics based less on the apparent quiescence that has long characterized official versions of race relations in the country than by denunciations of deeply engrained racial discrimination and contested interpretations of racial identities and stereotypes”²⁰. The politics behind the implementation of the quilombo clause testify to the truth of this observation. Following the passage of Article 68, the Zumbi Memorial succeeded in appropriating the lands of Palmares at Sierra da Barriga, in the state of Alagoas²¹. However, it was not until a few years later that the Brazilian government began recognizing some rural black communities as quilombos.

18 Do Rosário Linhares, Luiz Fernando (2004). Kilombos of Brazil: identity and land entitlement. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 822-823.

19 Da Silva Marins, Sérgio, Carlos Alberto Medeiros & Elisa Larkin Nascimento (2004). Paving paradise: the road from ‘Racial Democracy’ to affirmative action in Brazil. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 794-795.

20 Crook, Larry & Randal Johnson (1999). Introduction. In Larry Crook & Randal Johnson (Eds.), *Black Brazil: culture, identity and social mobilization* (pp 1-13). Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center, 2-3.

21 Do Rosário Linhares, Luiz Fernando (2004). Kilombos of Brazil: identity and land entitlement. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 827.

Promised Land

The year 1995 was “a watershed in terms of the evolution of race policy”²², when some of the 1988 legislation that was enacted formally, but not in practice, received increased attention. That year, Dr. Maurice Glege Ahanhanzo of Benin, the Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights, visited Brazil. His report on the condition of human rights in the country was a direct blow to Brazil’s international self-identification as a racial democracy. It concluded that the legislation defining race discrimination as a crime failed to diminish persistent racial inequalities. It also concluded that research and policy measures are necessary to close the cycle of discrimination and general denial of the racial dimensions of socioeconomic inequality²³.

In subsequent years, the Palmares Foundation, the National Institute of Colonization and Land Reform (INCRA), and state governments began to grant title deeds with increasing frequency. And in 2003, President Lula’s Special Secretariat for Policies Promoting Racial Equality published the National Policy for the Promotion of Racial Equality, which emphasized the need for affirmative action and quilombo community entitlement, among other measures²⁴. Stam argues that the 1988 Constitution established a precedent for more than five hundred territories inhabited by the remnants of the maroon communities. Indeed, as of 2006, between 723 and 1,296 communities have been identified in twenty-two states²⁵.

‘ENTITLED TO YOUR OWN OPINION’: THE ‘FINE PRINT’ AND DIVERGENT INTERPRETATIONS OF THE QUILOMBO CLAUSE

Debates over land entitlement and quilombo status since 1988 reveal the extent to which socio-cultural attitudes and the interpretation of the law are interrelated. The uneven implementation of the quilombo clause, and the effects of the clause on the social dynamics within rural Brazilian communities, reflects not only the failure of Brazilian political administrations to acknowledge the full extent of the recognition demanded by the Afro-Brazilian movement. It also provokes discussion about the relationship between claims to recognition by the Afro-Brazilian movement (as expressed through Quilombismo) and the actual

22 Ibid., 799.

23 Da Silva Marins, Sérgio, Carlos Alberto Medeiros & Elisa Larkin Nascimento (2004). Paving paradise: the road from ‘Racial Democracy’ to affirmative action in Brazil. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 800.

24 Ibid., 806.

25 Hoffman French, Jan (2006). Buried Alive: Imagining Africa in the Brazilian Northeast. *American Ethnologist*, 33, 3, 341.

demands and socio-cultural realities of rural Afro-Brazilians.

The social groups (potentially) classified today as surviving quilombo communities formed their territories in different ways: through escape before the abolition of slavery, through land donations made when plantations were divided up after the abolition of slavery; from the breaking up of estates belonging to religious orders (so-called saints' or holy lands); through purchase; in return for providing religious services; or in return for military services rendered to authorities in times of severe social crisis or war²⁶. However, despite the fact that these communities were formed in different ways, judicial interpretation of the constitutional provision granting them land titles has generally restricted the right to those deemed to be descended from groups that escaped or rebelled violently against enslavement. As Do Rosário Linhares argues, this interpretation "violates the original intention of the provision and raises the issue of how to define the collective identity of Afro-Brazilian kilombo communities." Furthermore, "bureaucratic procedures designed to ensure proof of rebellion or escape, as well as the interagency conflicts in land tenure administration, further complicate the implementation of the constitutional right"²⁷.

Requirements of proof of quilombo status have expanded and contracted over the years, and almost every quilombo has been identified by slightly different criteria. But generally, land entitlement procedures proceed as follows: 1) submission of a simple statement of their existence by communities petitioning for quilombo status; 2) mapping of the claimed territory; 3) an official investigation or (if this is deemed unnecessary) recognition; and 4) issuing of an officially recognized title deed. Technical reports by experts, researchers, and social scientists are of crucial importance to the process of official identification and recognition for the purposes of land entitlement. A survey of the community's history and cultural, economic, and social relations is also required²⁸. The land must be used communally, the community must include elderly residents who can recount memories or talk about a slave past, physical markers of long-term occupation of the land must be present, and cultural practices that could be construed as ethnic markers must be clearly identifiable²⁹. In other words, to secure quilombo status, the community must

26 Do Rosário Linhares, Luiz Fernando (2004). Kilombos of Brazil: identity and land entitlement. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 820.

27 Ibid., 817.

28 Ibid., 821.

29 Hoffman French, Jan (2006). Buried Alive: Imagining Africa in the Brazilian Northeast. *American Ethnologist*, 33, 3, 342.

Promised Land

provide evidence not only of the fact that they have been long-term occupants of the land in question, but that their community actively resisted the structures and relationships of slavery since its inception, and drew upon African traditions in the process of doing so. At the end of the procedure, a final report is issued and published in the federal legal compendium, and for successful applicants, this completes the process of land entitlement.

The primary and enunciated objectives of both the government and Afro-Brazilian activists in establishing these procedures was to “guarantee that impoverished rural black communities are inserted into the nation with full citizenship rights while their way of life and cultural practices are protected – a goal of the newly conceived multicultural, pluralistic Brazilian society”³⁰. The 1988 constitutional provision, however, was the result of significant compromise on the part of Afro-Brazilian activists. The movement’s core political objectives (expressed in large measure by Nascimento) included socioeconomic change – including land entitlement – in black communities in general. The phrase “quilombo communities” was the result of creative maneuvers on the part of Afro-Brazilian activists. Reparation for extant resistance communities was, of course, an important priority for Nascimento and his colleagues. But the significance of those advances was dwarfed by the broader hope that all Afro-Brazilians would, eventually, acquire the socioeconomic and political independence necessary to redefine themselves and their communities, as did the residents of the seventeenth-century quilombos. For members of the Afro-Brazilian movement, the word “quilombo” designated a “process of independent work, free from submission to landowners”³¹.

That definition, however, was not politically convenient. Many legislators believed that taking “quilombo” to mean “rural black community” would result in the extension of property rights to so many rural Afro-Brazilian communities that the process of providing the access thus entitled to them would be fiscally burdensome³². Thus, in practice, the criteria for quilombo status and land titles were extremely restrictive and problematic in both a political and a socio-cultural sense.

In the majority of communities petitioning for quilombo status, land is used collectively. The rural areas in question range from forested areas to natural

30 Ibid., 343.

31 Do Rosário Linhares, Luiz Fernando (2004). Kilombos of Brazil: identity and land entitlement. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 834.

32 Ibid., 823.

pastures. In most cases, regardless of the ecosystem type, strong connections exist between these natural areas and the lifestyles of the community members. Nascimento observed that the members of the seventeenth century quilombos had a deep respect for nature, and an appreciation of the interconnectedness of humans and the ecosystems surrounding and supporting them. Thus it is not surprising that this appreciation of nature is a stated element of Nascimento's Quilombismo. However, in the process of evaluating the present-day quilombos, representatives from land reform agencies visit the communities and offer largely unnecessary recommendations for modifications to their internal spatial organization. Some of these interventions have been disastrous, and, thus, a clearer understanding of the use of natural resources by these populations is necessary³³. Afro-Brazilian activists emphasize the importance of better understanding the importance of these lands for these groups, as well as the importance of respecting the local culture in these territories.

Yet cultural respect and sensitivity is rarely a feature of the investigative work done prior to the granting of land titles to extant quilombo communities. The fact that material evidence is often required, and that the members of the quilombo are assessed and granted rights as an ethnic group, rather than as individuals, has resulted in the *de facto* establishment of cultural requirements for quilombo status that were not directly expressed in Article 68. The process of petitioning for, and acquiring, quilombo status is thus culturally insensitive and prescriptive, as communities feel the pressure to adopt cultural forms that may or may not have been a part of their daily lives.

Culture is a central element of Nascimento's Quilombismo. Nascimento asserts the importance of culture in social and political relations, saying that socioeconomic empowerment cannot be separated from cultural independence. He describes the seventeenth-century quilombos as models of inclusive sociopolitical arrangements, sensitive to all of the cultures represented in the community but also deeply informed by Bantu cultural practices and governance structures in particular. African culture is a central component of Nascimento's Quilombismo, and it is thus not unsurprising that there are cultural requirements for obtaining quilombo status under Article 68. In practice, though, these requirements serve less to empower the communities involved than they do to restrict the definition of "quilombo" and place upon rural Afro-Brazilians the burden of providing acceptably "colorful" evidence to prove their histories as members of resistance communities which somehow managed to remain completely distinct from colonial Brazil at large.

33 Ibid., 821.

Promised Land

Drawing from her investigations of changing conceptualizations of community in Mocambo after receiving quilombo status, Jan Hoffman French observes that, with the advent of the quilombo cause, rural black communities started to link themselves to an “imagined African past”³⁴. But this past is by no means a new feature of political discourse and cultural life. According to anthropologist Rita Segato, traditions in Brazil “have inscribed a monumental African codex containing the accumulated ethnic experience and strategies of African descendants as part of the nation”³⁵. In other words, African influences in Brazilian society more broadly are widespread and take many different forms.

Furthermore, “this codex operates as a stable reservoir of meaning from which flows a capillary, informal, and fragmentary impregnation of the whole society”³⁶. African culture is a deeply entrenched element of Brazilian nationalist discourse. The idea that all of Brazilian society is infused with African influence is a supporting pillar of the ideology of racial democracy, and it speaks to the “transformation of black culture into a product of cultural history”³⁷. Given the continued centrality of the assumptions of racial democracy in Brazil’s conception of itself, the recognition of certain individuals as descendants of members of largely African resistance communities *within* Brazil presented distinct problems for the Brazilian government. It is safe to say that this paradoxical trade-off between the empowerment of different communities and Brazil’s projected identity as a racially and culturally harmonious country is a persistent feature of Brazilian politics of recognition.

The only way to enact quilombo legislation without undermining the myth of racial democracy, then, is through what Hoffman French calls a “folklorization of blackness”³⁸. Folklorization reinforces a definition of quilombos that does not pose a threat to the existing social order, because it exists in a historical vacuum. It is a testament to a historical phenomenon with a legacy that is visible in Brazilian society more broadly. Through present-day quilombos, there is “evidence” to prove that Brazil’s history is indeed marked by an

34 Hoffman French, Jan (2006). Buried Alive: Imagining Africa in the Brazilian Northeast. *American Ethnologist*, 33, 3, 341.

35 Ibid., 342.

36 Ibid., 342.

37 Bacelar, Jeferson (1999). Blacks in Salvador: racial paths. In Larry Crook & Randal Johnson (Eds.), *Black Brazil: culture, identity and social mobilization* (pp 85-102). Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center, 100.

38 Hoffman French, Jan (2006). Buried Alive: Imagining Africa in the Brazilian Northeast. *American Ethnologist*, 33, 3, 342.

appreciation of Afro-Brazilian culture and resistance to the exploitative practices of plantation slavery.

Furthermore, the pressure to produce material evidence of an African past has contributed to a reframing of the concept of “community,” such that some rural areas, like Macombo, are marked by increasingly polarized relationships between Afro-Brazilians, white Brazilians, and indigenous Brazilians³⁹. Assuming a black identity in rural Brazil does not preclude multiple identifications drawing on local, national, and international discourses⁴⁰, but the requirements for land titles have, arguably, restricted Afro-Brazilians’ potential for cultural autonomy more than they have expanded it. Additionally, post-1988 land disputes have sometimes brought Afro-Brazilians into conflict with indigenous Brazilians. The two groups are struggling for autonomy through distinct sets of legislation, and they have sometimes found each other in competition for the same land⁴¹.

To make the situation even more complex and problematic, for many rural black communities petitioning for quilombo status, government recognition brings the “promise of modernization—electricity, running water, better roads, technical assistance for agricultural production, and health care—all of which are part of the implicit promises that come with recognition and land.” The implementation of these practices “does not necessarily comport with the expectations associated with folkloric aspects of the requirements of recognition and can create a gap that is often filled with feuding, disgruntlement, and the exacerbation of factional fighting within the quilombos”⁴². Although Nascimento emphasized the importance of a “constant process of revitalization and remodernization, attending to the needs of the various historical times and geographical moments”⁴³, the quilombo clause was, ironically, interpreted with cultural conservatism that required that quilombos be “anti-modern” in order to qualify for the sorts of access that is part and parcel of inclusion in a “modern” state.

“What are the scientifically correct parameters that can lead a social scientist or jurist to say that one rural black community should be considered by cultural or ethnic criteria, whereas another can be addressed only in the legal

39 Ibid., 350.

40 Ibid., 341.

41 Ibid., 350.

42 Ibid., 343.

43 Nascimento, Abdias (1980). *Quilombismo: an Afro-Brazilian political alternative*. *Journal of Black Studies*, 11, 2, 153.

Promised Land

terms of strictly administrative land tenure procedure?”⁴⁴. Clearly, the criteria for eligibility to receive land titles, though articulated differently in different contexts, are largely inadequate from the perspective of broad Afro-Brazilian recognition and reparation for historical injustice. To conclude, Article 68 is usually interpreted such that entitlement is extended only to the “far away fugitive” and does not acknowledge the other ways in which black communities are formed, including the purchase of land by emancipated slaves. The clause thus only provides “partial and incidental reparation for a historic injustice”⁴⁵. And rather than being seen as mere beneficiaries of government services, Afro-Brazilians should be seen in “the way their ancestors, in fact, are represented: as actors who maintain a principle of autonomy, establishing exchange relations with surrounding society... [and] unless these relations of ethnic assertion are observed as a while, the coherence of the overall process of building identity is lost”⁴⁶.

CONCLUSION: REFLECTION ON THE POLITICS OF AFRO-BRAZILIAN RECOGNITION

The discussion of the role of the quilombo in Afro-Brazilian politics, from Nascimento’s political philosophy to the highly imperfect process of granting land titles to rural Afro-Brazilian communities under the guidelines established by the 1988 Constitution’s quilombo clause, provokes reflection on the challenges faced by Afro-Brazilian movements in their struggle for recognition and change in the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres. First, the case of the quilombo reveals the deep interconnectedness of the symbolic and tangible dimensions of discussions surrounding the continued legacy of historical events, and the policies that those discussions (sometimes) engender. Nascimento’s Quilombismo established that cultural autonomy is inseparable from socioeconomic empowerment, and symbolic value is only valuable in as much as it is able to inspire real change in the various dimensions of race relations. The link between the symbolic and the material is equally strong on the side of those implementing quilombo-related policy, but in a less productive way. The material requirements for quilombo status are shaped deeply by concerns about the symbolic value of granting land titles. Culture, of course, is an extremely important dimension of that symbolism.

44 Do Rosário Linhares, Luiz Fernando (2004). Kilombos of Brazil: identity and land entitlement. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34, 6, 822.

45 Ibid., 832.

46 Ibid., 833.

The quilombo issue also highlights the challenges that are inherent in politics of recognition where the discussion can be framed in different ways. Some define “quilombo” very conservatively, while others use the term “quilombo” to describe Afro-Brazilian autonomy in an extremely broad sense. Each perspective is accompanied by a different attitude towards race relations, and the extent to which race relations can, and should, be altered through concrete political changes involving social and economic restructuring and investment.

Finally, reflective processes such as those outlined above shed light on the ways in which politics of recognition are particularly complicated in hybrid nations, where more than one racial/cultural group seeks recognition from a state that is generally recalcitrant when it comes to disrupting the status quo. The Afro-Brazilian movement seeks concrete reparation from the Brazilian government in the form of land titles. However, the complicated and conflicted implementation of these policies has, in some cases, disrupted Afro-Brazilians’ conceptions of themselves and their communities in ways that are not always positive. Furthermore, it has at times pitted Afro-Brazilians against indigenous Brazilians in land disputes, even though Nascimento’s philosophy of Quilombismo heavily emphasized the solidarity between these two groups, and the inclusive nature of the quilombo settlements in general.

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The Halifax Controversy and Questioning of Parliamentary Authority

Chelsea Barry

“We believe no good reason can be given, why the colonies should not modestly and soberly enquire, what right the parliament of *Great-Britain* have to tax them...can it possibly be shewn [sic], that the people in *Britain* have a sovereign authority over their fellow-subjects in *America*?”

- *Stephen Hopkins on the Stamp Act*¹

Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, violating British trade laws was common business practice in colonial Rhode Island. The colonists needed inexpensive molasses to distill into rum as their main export in the famous triangle trade that would bring slaves to the Caribbean and highly demanded British clothes and manufactured goods into the colony. Working under the economic model of mercantilism, the laws enacted by Britain were aimed to support British molasses production in the Caribbean through imposing duties on cheaper French or Dutch molasses. However, as these laws were rarely if ever enforced, for decades Rhode Islanders were accustomed to smuggling foreign molasses. Following the Seven Years War, often referred to by the name for its North American theater as the French and Indian War, Parliament passed legislation designed to apply actual enforcement to existing trade laws and created new duties to generate revenue to pay for the expensive war. As a renewal of the Molasses Act of 1733, the Sugar Act of 1764 actually lowered the tax on foreign molasses but promised real enforcement, effectively threatening to severely damage Rhode Island trade as the colony so completely depended on its cheap importation and had not been paying the tax at all for decades. In response to the Sugar Act, Rhode Island merchants and statesmen wrote several petitions and remonstrances to Parliament, arguing the necessity

1 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” Providence: Published by Authority, 1765, 18-19.

The Halifax Controversy

of cheap molasses to purchasing British manufactured goods, defining a new and convoluted form of loyalty through smuggling as a violation of the law. When this had no effect on Parliament's decision, public discourse in Rhode Island became increasingly radical.²

The Sugar Act was only the first in a string of taxes and trade restrictions that would result in public outcry in the colony. Almost immediately after the Sugar Act went into effect in November, the printed world began to buzz with news of the Stamp Act that would likely be passed by Parliament in the spring of 1765. Edmund S. Morgan describes the colonial reaction as an institutional identity crisis questioning the power of Parliament: "The colonists were thus presented with two measures which threatened their prosperity and which consequently obliged them to think about the relation which they bore to the body which threatened them."³ While the Rhode Island Assembly quickly persuaded Stephen Hopkins to write an essay on the rights of the colonies, conclusions extended from the arguments he produced rejecting Parliament's authority to tax the colonies resulted in the emergence of a vocal counter-argument from tory Martin Howard. What was unusual was not so much in that there was opposition, but in how resoundingly the Rhode Island intellectual and political community rejected Howard's defense of Parliament, labeling him as a traitor to the cause and interests of his countrymen. Following the passage of the Stamp Act, the Rhode Island Assembly took this defiance to a new level with resolutions openly calling for public disobedience of the act and attending a radical Stamp Act Congress with delegates from nine of the thirteen colonies to further reject the new taxes.⁴ All of this served to drive a wedge further between Parliament and the colonies as public discourse took on a confrontational tone and public bodies asserted their own rights and met independently to counter what they perceived to be an overextension of Parliamentary power. Public dissatisfaction with the new trade restrictions spilled over from pamphlets and meeting in the Assembly into incidents actual mob violence, a precursor

2 As this chapter originally came from the end of an honors thesis, this paragraph briefly summarizes the line of my argument over the course of my first three chapters.

3 Morgan, "Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (July 1948)313.

4 Morgan, "Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power, 1764-1766." As there is not much recent scholarship on the subject, this article provided much of the intellectual framework for discussion on the resolutions of the Rhode Island Assembly and the Stamp Act Congress.

to public expressions of anger commonly associated with the run up to the American Revolution. In the pamphlet wars and government resolutions that emerged around trade regulations, ultimately challenging the authority of British Parliament over the colonies, Rhode Islanders engaged in a major shift of public perception of colonial identity as separate from and in opposition to Great Britain.

THE PAMPHLET WAR OF 1764-1765

One of the most public forums of debate on the authority of Parliament was the pamphlet. Ranging from a few pages to nearly book length, these works allowed Rhode Island's intellectuals nearly unlimited space to articulate their theories and aggressively counter the arguments of others. In the winter of 1764-1765, a flurry of pamphlets emerged in quick succession over the implementation of the Sugar Act in November and in anticipation of the Stamp Act expected to pass in the spring. In their struggle to define the boundaries on rights to taxation, the authors of the pamphlet war had to address the meanings of English and colonial identities through the ever present lens of smuggling.

Stephen Hopkins' "Rights of the Colonies Examined"

The first major work to touch off the firestorm on Parliamentary authority in Rhode Island was Stephen Hopkins' pamphlet "The Rights of the Colonies Examined." Still Governor of Rhode Island, Hopkins was delegated to write this statement of rights by the General Assembly along with a petition to the King.⁵ Published on November 20, 1764, this piece drew from earlier remittance arguments on the Sugar Act to define the relationship between the colony and mother country, taped into a public sense of betrayal and fear at a perceived change in this relationship, and opened the door to public debate questioning the right of Parliament to tax the colonies at all.

Hopkins begins by framing a rather idyllic relationship between the colonies and mother country, setting up the Sugar Act and further Parliamentary taxes as a sharp break from past treatment. He describes the connection between the colonies and Britain as "dependant [sic], though free," in which the crown has always protected them and they have displayed a "constant and ready obedience too all commands of his present Majesty, and his royal predecessors."⁶ The nature of this bond was made possible, according to Hopkins, on the premise that the American colonists had the same rights and privileges as

5 Morgan, "Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power," 316.

6 Stephen Hopkins, "The Rights of Colonies Examined," 9.

The Halifax Controversy

Englishmen anywhere in the British Empire, and furthermore that these rights were not given (and could therefore be taken away), but the colonists “possess them as an inherent indefeasible; as they, and their ancestors, were free-born subjects, justly and naturally intituled [sic] to all the rights and advantages of the *British* constitution.”⁷ Hopkins reinforces this with the content of colonial charters, in which their rights as Englishmen were affirmed without any loss of freedom.⁸ Indeed, the first half of *Rights of the Colonies Examined* was devoted to proving beyond a doubt the equality of rights of Englishmen in North America and form a narrative in which they had always been treated as such by the King and Parliament.

Having established this, Hopkins then moves on to claim how “here the scene seems to be unhappily changing,”⁹ where the attitudes expressed by Parliament through the passage of the Sugar Act reflected a shift in the status of American colonists. There is a sense of bewildered foreboding as he speculates on how an act so clearly detrimental to the Northern colonies could have been passed by a Parliament, concluding that the members must have not heard their petitions and remittances or been honestly unaware of them, “HAD the colonies been fully heard, before the late act had been passed, no reasonable man can suppose it ever would have passed at all...for what good reason can possibly be given for making a law to cramp the trade and ruin the interests of may of the colonies...”¹⁰

There is a sense of defensiveness that Hopkins taps into here that pervades the entire essay, a need to affirm the equal rights of American colonists and their valuable position within the empire. As much to make a legal argument and support Rhode Island’s foreign molasses dependent economic interests, Hopkins’ rhetoric on the Englishness of Americans seems to have captured a public sentiment of unease and even betrayal as many Rhode Islanders began to feel treated as inferiors by fellow British subjects.¹¹ This insecurity was not unjustified: in his work examining American identity from a British perspective in the years leading to the revolution, Stephen Conway argues “Britons, perhaps only subconsciously, started to perceive them less as distant parts of the same

7 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 9.

8 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 5-6.

9 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 9.

10 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 12.

11 Breen, “Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution: Revisions Once More in Need of Revising,” *The Journal of American History* 84, no. 1 (June 1997), 31.

nation and more as another set of people to be ruled.”¹² T. H. Breen also weighs in on the subject, arguing that, following the passage of such acts that seemed to confirm this attitude, “men and women responded to what they perceived as English arrogance with a truculent cry: we are as good as any English person.”¹³ Hopkins highlights this anxiety throughout the essay, “Are not the people in the colonies as loyal and dutiful subjects as any age or nation ever produced,—and are they not as useful to the kingdom, in this remote quarter of the world, as their fellow-subjects are who dwell in *Britain*?”¹⁴ He even concludes with a long paragraph stressing the loyalty and value of the King’s American subjects, scrabbling to affirm the worth of their colonial identity as an important part of the British Empire.

Hopkins was able to channel this unease into a legal argument questioning the authority of Parliament, as representatives of their fellow subjects, to tax the colonies at all, introducing a conception of separateness even as he stressed the English rights of North Americans. He began this by referring back to these rights, claiming that “*British* subjects are to be governed only agreeable to laws which themselves have some way consented,” while “those who are governed at the will of another, or of others, and whose property may be taken from them by taxes, or otherwise, without their own consent, and against their will, are in the miserable condition of slaves.”¹⁵ The powerful rhetoric of slavery juxtaposes subjects under a social compact in full ownership of their equal rights as Englishmen with inherently unequal possessions under absolute control of their masters. Hopkins argues that the general magnanimity of Parliament is irrelevant, “for one who is bound to obey the will of another, is really a slave, though he may have a good master, as if he had a bad one.”¹⁶ As Parliament was made up of representatives from only Great Britain, and as the North American colonists could not give formal consent to their decisions as they had no representative, then Parliament taxing the colonies was tantamount to British subjects taxing fellow British subjects,

And indeed, if the people in *America*, are to be taxed by the

representatives of the people in *Britain*, their malady is an increasing

12 Conway, “From Fellow-Nationals to Foreigners: British Perceptions of the Americans, Circa 1739-1783.” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (2002), 82.

13 Breen, “Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution,” 38.

14 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 21.

15 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 4.

16 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 16.

The Halifax Controversy

evil...Whatever burdens are laid upon the *Americans*, will be so much taken off the *Britons*; and the doing this will soon be extremely popular, and those who put up to be members of the house of commons, must obtain the votes of the people by promising to take more and more taxes off them, by putting it on the *Americans*...in truth, the subjects in the colonies will be taxed at the will and pleasure of their fellow-subjects in *Britain*.¹⁷

Under the tax subjugation of fellow subjects with whom the American colonists share, as Hopkins established earlier, common rights and privileges, the very nature of their identity as Englishmen was threatened. While Hopkins qualified his statements by affirming the legislative authority of Parliament and their unquestioned right to regulate commerce in a general sense,¹⁸ the imposition of taxes from one subject to another was presented as unconstitutional and contrary to every conception of their English identity. This open questioning of the authority of Parliament to tax the colonies would spark a fierce debate in Rhode Island on the political relationship between the colony and mother country and the nature of their identity vis-a-vis the British Empire.

The Halifax Controversy

Over the winter of 1765, a series of pamphlets were published in Rhode Island and Boston addressing the questions colonial rights and Parliamentary power directly begun by Stephen Hopkins and the Rhode Island General Assembly. These pamphlets were published as reactions and counter-reactions, feeding off of each other and fanning emotions surrounding the debate through spinoff articles and letters to the editor in the local newspapers. It will be helpful to keep the chronology of these works in mind, so I will outline them here before getting into the arguments they presented. The first piece to delve into the controversy was *A Letter from a Gentleman in Halifax, to His Friend in Rhode Island* by Martin Howard of Newport. Although Howard claimed only to be the editor of the letter, presenting ideas from an outsider's perspective was a common rhetorical technique of the time and the pamphlets that follow all address Howard as the author. To this, James Otis of Boston¹⁹ responded with *A*

17 Hopkins, "The Rights of Colonies Examined," 16-17.

18 Hopkins, "The Rights of Colonies Examined," 10.

19 I debated for a long time about whether to include the works of James Otis here, as this thesis focuses on Rhode Island and he practiced in Boston. However, given his direct engagement with Martin Howard over the Halifax letter, and the

Vindication of the British Colonies, prompting Howard to publish *A Defense of the Letter from the Gentleman at Halifax*. The last two works on the subject directly attacking this defense were Otis' *Brief Remarks on the Defense of the Halifax Libel* and *A Letter to the Author of the Halifax Letter*, published by "A Freeman" but possibly Stephen Hopkins himself.²⁰ The heated arguments that arose from these five pamphlets practically flared into accusations of treason on all sides and in so doing opened new avenues of conception for a colonial identity.

Smuggling and Rhode Island identity were deeply connected throughout this debate. Howard immediately put those opposed to the Sugar Act on the defensive, turning Hopkins' rhetoric from *Rights of the Colonies Examined* into an opening zing, "I would fain hope that his honour's motto is not a true portrait of the general temper and conduct of the *Americans*; I would rather think '*the low murmurs of submissive fear, and mingled rage,*' delineate only a few disappointed traders."²¹ This set the stage for Howard's further arguments that Rhode Islanders had brought this legislation upon themselves and were now basing their arguments on petty self-interest. Howard pointed to smuggling in *all* forms as the root cause of the colony's current difficulties and justifying the harsh response of Parliament with the new courts of Admiralty: "When every mild expedient, to stop the atrocious and infamous practice of smuggling, has been try'd in vain, the government is justifiable in making laws against it, even like those of *Draco*, which were written in blood," noting that "no harm can accrue the honest and fair trader."²² Illicit trade is described in Howard's second pamphlet in terms, while not as intense as the rhetoric of fratricide employed during the Seven Years War, of greed and petty self-interest,

Can any one be so ignorant of the world, as not to know, that
money is almost become the supreme good; and that the obligations of

Rhode Island publications that referenced Otis' pamphlets during this debate, I determined that not including his work would leave an important piece out of the controversy and be detrimental to a greater understanding of Rhode Island identity.

20 While published anonymously by the Providence printer, clues in the pamphlet refer to the author as the "Providence Writer" referenced in Howard's *Defense*, which was probably used as a euphemism for Stephen Hopkins, given how Howard addressed him as "your honor." While Samuel Ward was taking up position as governor at the time, it is unlikely he was the Providence writer as he was based in Newport and would likely have used Newport's press.

21 Martin Howard, "A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax, to his Friend in Rhode-Island," Newport: Samuel Hall, 1765, 5.

22 Howard, "A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 18.

The Halifax Controversy

conscience and duty, are but feeble restraints, when prospects of great gain present themselves? ...And the editor is not yet persuaded, 'that the people of New-England are such philosophers and divines, compared with those of Great-Britain,' that their virtue is proof against the allurements of *mammon*. He thinks it no breach of charity to say, that if the fear of confiscation and forfeiture was removed, the king's revenue would be as little regarded by these New-England philosophers and divines, as by any other people, though the law of both tables should look them full in the face.²³

Howard portrays a Rhode Island in which greed reigns all powerful, far outstripping questions of loyalty to king and country, and can therefore only be stopped by a strong application of imperial authority. The colonists are shown to be unruly and unable to see beyond the short term of their own profits. He makes this clear in a paragraph calling on men like Hopkins to withdraw from matters they do not understand:

To comprehend the general trade of the *British* nation, much exceeds the capacity of any one man in *America*, how great soever he be. Trade is a vast, complicated system, and requires such a depth of genius, and extent of knowledge, to understand it, that little minds, attached to their own sordid interest, and long used to the great licentiousness in trade, are, and must be, very incompetent judges of it.²⁴

Besides being a thinly veiled accusation regarding the conduct of Hopkins and others in the Rhode Island Assembly fighting the Sugar Act, this paragraph struck at the colonial conception of Americans as Englishmen as it is implied that only Parliament, made up of representatives from Britain herself, was wise enough to rule over the trade of short-sighted, self-interested, childish colonies. Indeed, in his second pamphlet, Howard described the discontent in the Rhode Island Assembly towards restrictions and revenue taxes as "the petulance of children, who, by long indulgence, become impatient of the smallest restraints."²⁵ This dismissive attitude was further cemented by Howard's rejection of arguments for colonial representation in Parliament, "Why should the beauty

23 Howard, "A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," Newport: Samuel Hall, 1765, 22-23.

24 Howard, "A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 20.

25 Howard, "A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 4.

and symmetry of this body be destroyed, and its purity defiled, by the unnatural mixture of representatives from every part of the *British* dominions[?]"²⁶

As if this was not enough of a blow, Howard challenged the motives of pamphlet writers like Hopkins opposing the act as not only deriving from self-interest, but a more sinister agenda: "What purpose then can be served by these pamphlets, but to embitter the minds of a simple, credulous, and hitherto loyal people, and to alienate their affections from *Great-Britain*, their best friend, their protector, and *alma mater*."²⁷ Howard essentially accused men like Hopkins of borderline treason, using the press to turn *hitherto loyal* public opinion against the mother country for the sake of their own vested interests in the status quo of Rhode Island smuggling. He struck this home even harder in his *Defense*: "Must not he [Hopkins], and his whole tribe, stand condemned, in the judgment of all sober and moderate men, for wickedly misleading the people, under the deceitful guile of liberty?"²⁸ When not offering thinly veiled accusations of treason, Howard did not seem to make an effort to endear himself to his critics, saying this of Otis' *Vindication of the British Colonies*:

The editor hath, with great travail and perseverance, waded through this dreary waste of 32 pages. In attempting to explore it, Chaos seemed to be come again. The patience he exercised, on that dark and gloomy occasion, has fitted him for any misfortune or disappointment in life. Pain, he will no more consider as an evil. Nay, should he be forced to pass the Stygian river, and drink its poisonous vapours [sic], it would be more than Elysian, compared with the misery of reading through this pamphlet.²⁹

Howard portrayed men like Otis and Hopkins as petty insignificant children, driven by greed and meddling in matters they didn't understand, or worse, malcontents bent on brewing public unrest. Howard claimed to be the only "filial pen"³⁰ lifted in defense of Great Britain, to whom the colonists as subjects owe their loyalty and obedience, and indeed concluded that "To apologize for Great-Britain, it seems, is the only unpardonable sin in this

26 Howard, "A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 13.

27 Howard, "A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 16-17.

28 Howard, "A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 20.

29 Howard, Martin, "A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,"

24. These pamphlets were all filled with fantastic insults but, sadly, not all of them were relevant to the themes of this chapter and had to be left out.

30 Howard, "A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 22.

The Halifax Controversy

meridian.”³¹

How did Howard’s fellow colonists respond to such accusations? While no official legal action was taken, according to Howard the deputy Governor took the issue beyond the confines of paper by physically bringing a copy of the pamphlet to a meeting of the Rhode Island Assembly, demanding Samuel Hall, the Newport printer, to explain why he published such libel, and, along with several other hotheads, threatening to burn any copies they could find.³² If this was any indication, the Assembly did not approve. Two major reactions defined the rebuttal pamphlets written by Otis and the anonymous Providence writer: a hurt defensiveness on the character of American colonists and a sense that Howard was himself a traitor betraying his true countrymen.

There is an echo of Hopkins’ *Rights of the Colonies* in the writers’ protestations on the character of the American colonists. Responding to Howard’s assertion that Parliament would be tainted by colonial representatives, Otis stood indignant,

...was ever an insolence equal to this? Are the inhabitants of British America all a parcel of transported thieves, robbers and rebels, or descended from such? Are the colonists blasted lepers, whose company would infect the whole house of commons? There are some in the colonies who value themselves on their descent. We have the names of *Tudor* and of *Stuart*, of *Howard*, *Seymour* and of *Russell*; who boast an unsullied descent, from our ancient princes and nobles.³³

In this there is a strong sense of not only wounded pride, but alarm at being confronted with an interpretation of the place of the American colonists in the British Empire not at all fitting with colonial conceptions of their rights and heritage as Englishmen. Otis then accused Howard of slander, as “The gentleman has been at great pains in order to represent the merchants of America as a parcel of infamous smugglers...”Tis a very unjust aspersion.” On the contrary, Otis continued, smuggling was so rare as to be non-existent, except, of course, for molasses, which was so necessary and universally tolerated that it barely counted as smuggling at all.³⁴ The Providence writer, again probably Stephen Hopkins himself, shrugged off Howard’s accusations towards Hopkins’

31 Howard, “A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,” 12.

32 Howard, “A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,” 28.

33 James Otis, “A Vindication of the British Colonies,” Boston: Edes & Gill, 1765, 20.

34 Otis, “A Vindication of the British Colonies,” 24.

conduct while governor, “you would...slander if you could, and in your manner whisper something base: but you have so often repeated these attempts and miscarried in them, that I can in truth congratulate you as one of the most harmless slanderers in *New-England*.”³⁵ As for the more serious insinuations of treason, Otis protested defensively with the claim that “the northern colonies on the continent have ever exerted their most strenuous efforts in the common cause of the whole empire,”³⁶ and that “nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand of the colonists, will never once entertain a thought but of the most profound dutiful and loyal submission.”³⁷

In addition to outrage at perceived slander to the American character, Howard’s pamphlets triggered an interesting response where his fellow colonists began accusing him of betrayal and a sort of treason against his countrymen for defending the latest acts of Parliament. Apparently disgusted with Howard’s smugness in his *Defense*, published just after news of the passage of the Stamp Act had arrived, the Providence writer asserted that “he that will insult his country upon such an occasion, would do the same if a plague, a famine, or an earthquake had happened in it.”³⁸ Otis called him “an ungrateful parricide”³⁹ and in his second pamphlet was even more direct, “his behavior to his country proved that he hath the conscience of a highwayman, the heart of an assassin and the impudence of a bilingsgate.”⁴⁰ The use of the phrase “his country” in these two phrases is interesting as it is implied that the country and countrymen he had apparently betrayed so maliciously was not the mother country or even a conception of the British Empire as a whole, but the American colonies. Furthermore, this treasonous behavior was defined by Howard’s opponents through his complete support of the Sugar and Stamp Acts, from a Rhode Island perspective designed “to cramp the trade and ruin [their] interests,”⁴¹ and his glee at their passage.

In addition to strong themes connecting smuggling and colonial identity, Howard’s pamphlets challenged Hopkins’ conclusions on the nature of

35 “A Letter to the Author of the Halifax Letter,” Providence: Publisher Unknown, 1765, 5.

36 James Otis, “Brief Remarks on the Defense of the Halifax Libel,” Boston: Edes & Gill, 1765, 4.

37 Otis, “Brief Remarks on the Defense of the Halifax Libel,” 10.

38 “A Letter to the Author of the Halifax Letter,” 6.

39 Otis, “A Vindication of the British Colonies,” 21.

40 Otis, “Brief Remarks on the Defense of the Halifax Libel,” 18.

41 Hopkins, “The Rights of Colonies Examined,” 12.

The Halifax Controversy

representation and questioning of the authority of Parliament. While Hopkins claimed that, as Englishmen, Rhode Islanders could only be taxed by a body in which they have representation, Howard drew a distinction between their rights as individuals and the political rights of the colony, “As individuals, the colonists participate of every blessing the *English* constitution can give them: As corporations created by the crown, they are confined within the primitive views of their institution.”⁴² With this interpretation, although the colonists possessed “the rights of free-born *Englishmen*,”⁴³ at the colony level they could not claim their legislature as superior to Parliament through representation because they were not given this political right in their charter. Furthermore, the same common law that proclaimed the rights of Englishmen also bound them to the authority of Parliament following the Glorious Revolution. As Howard rhetorically posed, “Can we claim the common law as an inheritance, and at the same time be at liberty to adopt one part of it, and reject the other?”⁴⁴ Like Hopkins and the other writers in this controversy, for Howard the Englishness of colonial identity was a given but interpreted here in an alternate way, focusing on the obedience owed to authority also present in the common law over individual rights. Stephen Conway makes note of a similar flexibility in the meaning of an English identity when studying British perceptions on the American colonies, where many were frustrated that men like Hopkins could heartily express their Englishness when it came to rights but not to duties.⁴⁵ Howard ridiculed the efforts of Hopkins and others to persuade Parliament to stop the acts, “Can his honour be so vain as to imagine, that ten thousand such pamphlets as his, will influence the parliament, or that they will be persuaded, by the force of his elocution, to give up their supremacy, and right of taxing the colonies....?”⁴⁶ The political challenge Howard presented to his opponents was therefore two-fold: on the supremacy of institutions and the dual consequences of basing an argument on the rights of Englishmen.

However, his opponents did not produce a single cohesive response to these arguments, fragmenting instead into several different directions. Even within each camp conclusions were muddled and sometimes seemed inconsistent. For example, as the likely Providence writer, Hopkins replied to Howard’s more vituperative remarks from his *Defense* with indignation, “I

42 Howard, “A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,” 9.

43 Howard, “A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,” 8.

44 Howard, “A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,” 10-11.

45 Conway, “From Fellow-Nationals to Foreigners,” 85.

46 Howard, “A Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,” 16.

COUNSEL you also not to pick broken and disjointed sentences out of mens [sic] writings, and by torturing them to a sense that was never intended, charge upon the authors principles that they abhor...you thought fit to charge us with denying the power of parliament, which is a crime bordering upon treason.”⁴⁷ While Hopkins complained vigorously at being charged with denying the supremacy of Parliament, he had little qualm with publishing this eloquent denial of the authority of Parliament to tax the colonies in a letter to the editor *The Providence Gazette* from November 10, 1764: “He that acknowledges that I am an Englishman, and tells me, at the same time, that I am to live under laws, which I have had no hand in making, and am to be taxed where I have no representative, does but mock me.”⁴⁸ Other letters published anonymously in *The Providence Gazette* responding to Howard’s first pamphlet focused on the contradiction of his distinction between personal and political rights, with one letter published on February 16, 1765 pointing out that although property was a personal right under common law, “(by this personal and political distinction) our estates may be taken away from us against our consent, without any violation of our personal right; and all this for want of a *political* right.”⁴⁹ Another from February 23, 1765 asked “how is it possible that the parliamentary power which controuls [sic], alters and amends the common law at will, can derive its support from the common law?”⁵⁰ In yet another camp, Otis argued that Parliament’s right to make and enforce laws, including those on taxes, was unquestionable, however there was nothing treasonous in questioning the sense of them.⁵¹

Anger directed towards men like Howard and the laws he supported were not restricted to the intellectual sparring over pamphlets. *The Newport Mercury* and *The Providence Gazette* joined a movement in solidarity with other colonial publishers in publishing mock obituaries for newspapers in the weeks leading up to November 1, 1765, when the Stamp Act would come into effect.⁵² Like many printers, William Goddard and his sister Mary Katherine decided

47 “A Letter to the Author of the Halifax Letter,” 8.

48 Howard, “A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax,” 8. At the beginning of this pamphlet Howard had pasted clippings from other publications challenging his work and as well as pieces written before, like this letter from Hopkins.

49 Otis, “A Vindication of the British Colonies,” 31. Likewise, in his pamphlet Otis ended with clippings from *The Providence Gazette* arguing against Howard.

50 Otis, “A Vindication of the British Colonies,” 31.

51 Otis, “Brief Remarks on the Defense of the Halifax Libel,” 26.

52 Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764-1776*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), 77.

The Halifax Controversy

to temporarily cease production of *The Providence Gazette* rather than pay the tax until the Stamp Act was repealed in August of 1766,⁵³ while James Franklin Jr. at *The Newport Mercury* chose to continue printing issues in direct defiance of the act.⁵⁴ Dissatisfaction with the Sugar and Stamp Acts also began to spill over into physical expression. Beginning in 1764, Newport increasingly experienced incidents of violence and intimidation directed at the crews of navy ships assigned to arresting local smugglers, like crew of the ship *St. John*, who were mobbed on the docks when they landed and fired upon from the city as they tried to retreat.⁵⁵ Public resentment boiled below the surface of urban Rhode Island, erupting into the riots in Newport in August of 1765. While the colony's intellectuals chose to vilify men like Martin Howard through their pens, angry mobs hanged him and the local tax collector in effigy while destroying their houses.⁵⁶ According to Arthur M. Schlesinger, these acts of public violence "high-lighted grievances as mere language could never have done...[and] struck terror into the hearts of British adherents."⁵⁷ Indeed, out of fear of the mob the tax collector resigned as soon as the Stamp Act went into effect, and so, as no one stepped up to take on the job, the stamped paper was never unloaded from the ship from England in the harbor.⁵⁸

What observations can be made from such a diverse range of opinions concerning Englishness, taxation, and political authority? Most striking was the public backlash, intellectual and physical, against Howard's rejection of Hopkins' *The Rights of the Colonies Examined*, commissioned and supported by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Even as Howard accused his opponents of manufacturing discontent, he was decried and treated as a traitor betraying his own countrymen in their efforts to stand up for their rights. Beyond what was

53 Arthur M. Schlesinger, "Colonial Newspapers and the Stamp Act," *The New England Quarterly*, 8, no. 1 (Mar., 1935), 82.

54 I drew this conclusion from reading Schlesinger's "Colonial Newspapers and the Stamp Act," in which he describes how the *New London Gazette*, *Boston Gazette* and others chose to defy the law, and then checking the regularity of *The Newport Mercury*'s publication through the Early American Newspaper Readex database, which remained a weekly constant throughout the Stamp Act controversy. I specified James Franklin Jr. as the publisher here because, until her death in 1763, his mother Ann Franklin had been his partner in printing and decision making.

55 William G. McLoughlin, *Rhode Island; a Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1978), 87.

56 McLoughlin, *Rhode Island*, 87-88.

57 Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence*, 21.

58 McLoughlin, *Rhode Island*, 89.

published against him, Howard spent most of his second pamphlet complaining of daily abuse from every quarter: "A man might have committed blasphemy and treason, and met with more humane treatment than has been shewn [sic] the author."⁵⁹ While Rhode Islanders defined their rights as those owed to Englishmen and publicly identified as such, public anger towards Howard as a supporter of laws and a Parliament they believed violated these rights reveals the development of an "us vs. them" conception of the world where the "us" was defined as the colonies in opposition to a body unconstitutionally imposing oppressive taxes. True, public opinion was varied as to where exactly the colonial legislatures and Parliament stood in relation to each other, but in spite of, or in a way as a result of this, the authority of Parliament was up for debate, allowing for new conceptions of colonial power.

GOVERNMENTAL CHALLENGES TO PARLIAMENTARY POWER

Like the other remonstrances, petitions, and appeals to the King that crossed the Atlantic objecting to the Sugar and Stamp Acts, Hopkins' *Rights of the Colonies Examined*, not to mention the flurry of pamphlets that followed, was never read or discussed in Parliament.⁶⁰ With the passage of the Stamp Act in the spring of 1765, colonial governments began a different approach, passing resolutions of defiance that rejected the authority of Parliament to tax them on the grounds of representation.

Resolutions of the Rhode Island Assembly

The resolutions of the Rhode Island General Assembly emerged as some of the most radical denials of Parliamentary power, influenced by concurrent developments in other colonial governments. Most notably, the Resolves by Patrick Henry in the Virginia House of Burgesses did much to lay a framework for the language used.⁶¹ However, the ideological leap from humble appeals to Parliament to outright denial of their authority on taxation was not simply imported into the colony, but a logical extension of the conclusions that were put forward in *Rights of the Colonies Examined* and grappled with throughout the Halifax controversy.

The Rhode Island resolutions are worth examining in full, as a close analysis highlights the central arguments developed from 1764-1765 in the responses of Rhode Islanders to the Sugar and Stamp Acts, carried to their

59 Howard, "A Defense of the Letter from a Gentleman at Halifax," 12.

60 Morgan, "Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power," 331.

61 Morgan, "Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power," 322.

The Halifax Controversy

logical conclusions. The General Assembly, presided over by newly elected Governor Samuel Ward, met on September 23, 1765 in East Greenwich to discuss the Stamp Act, later publishing their resolutions as a pamphlet along with the rest of the meeting minutes.⁶² The first three resolutions were conceptually similar to the Virginia Resolves from four months earlier:

1. That the first Adventurers, Settlers of this his Majesty's Colony and Dominion of *Rhode-Island* and *Providence* Plantations, brought with them and transmitted to their Posterity, and all other his Majesty's Subjects since inhabiting this his Majesty's Colony, all the Privileges and Immunities that have at any Time been held, enjoyed and possessed by the People of *Great-Britain*.
2. That by a Charter granted by King CHARLES the Second, in the 15th Year of his Reign, the Colony aforesaid is declared and entitled to all the Privileges and Immunities of natural born Subjects, to all Intents and Purposes, as if they had been abiding and born within the Realm of *England*.
3. That his Majesty's liege People of this Colony have enjoyed the Right of being governed by their own Assembly, in the Article of Taxes and internal Police; and that the same hath never been forfeited, or any other Way yielded up, but hat been constantly recogniz'd by the King and People of *Great-Britain*"⁶³

The Assembly opened its resolutions by emphasizing the equality of status between the Rhode Island colonists and those subjects born in England, defined through privileges as the rights of Englishmen, present from the first days of colonization, and reaffirmed by the charter granted by King Charles II in 1663. The notion that the colonists maintained the same rights as Englishmen had been circulating colonial political thought long before the Seven Years War and ensuing trade restriction crises: writing in 1690 Increase Mather indignantly pointed out that "No Englishmen in their Wits...will ever Venture their Lives and Estates to Enlarge the Kings Dominions abroad, and Enrich the Whole

62 The publication of these minutes was not unique, but a routine practice for meetings of the General Assembly.

63 "September, 1765. At the General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the English Colony of Rhode-Island, and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America." edited by The Rhode Island General Assembly. Newport, Rhode Island: Samuel Hall, 1765.

English Nation, if their Reward after all must be to be deprived of their *English Liberties*.”⁶⁴ Just as the colonists never renounced their rights as Englishmen by crossing the Atlantic, Rhode Islanders never gave up their rights to autonomous governance outlined in the third resolution deriving from their charter and reinforced through practice.

While pointing to their specific charter as evidence, Rhode Islanders were also drawing upon a general body of thought on the concept of contractual consent firmly grounded in English history.⁶⁵ As John Philip Reid points out in a paper on constitutional theory and the Stamp Act, the concepts of English constitutionalism defined in contractual terms between the ruler and the ruled reached back to promises made by William the Conqueror and the Magna Carta. Closer to home, governance based on the consent of the people or their representatives was used by John Winthrop as the blueprint for civil government in Massachusetts Bay colony.⁶⁶ The precedent for arguments based on chartered rights of Englishmen was not suddenly conjured up or drawn from a distant past, rather “It was as relevant and viable to colonial Whigs engaged in the pre-revolutionary debate as it had been to the generations of Sir Edward Coke and John Winthrop,”⁶⁷ and the enduring conceptions of contract and consent “was on the minds of non-lawyers as well as of lawyers. The voters of a small New England town might refer to it almost unconsciously, assuming its existence when framing statements defending their rights on grounds other than that their ancestors had once made a contract with a king long since dead.”⁶⁸

In addition to the affirmation of the foundational and lasting power of contractual rights beyond the physical charter, it is important to note is that the contract in the Rhode Island charter itself was expressed as being between the people of Rhode Island and the king, not Parliament, despite the political realities of Britain’s constitutional monarchy that relegated the king to a mainly

64 John Phillip Reid, “‘In Our Contracted Sphere’: The Constitutional Contract, the Stamp Act Crisis, and the Coming of the American Revolution,” *Columbia Law Review*, 76, no. 1 (Jan., 1976), 29.

65 John Reid makes the case that historian’s emphasis on the paramount influence of Locke’s social contract theory on pre-revolutionary thought has been overdone as American colonists reached back in their arguments to much older traditions of English constitutionalism in addition to more recent Enlightenment political thought. For more, see Reid, John Phillip, “In Our Contracted Sphere,” 22.

66 Reid, “In Our Contracted Sphere,” 24.

67 Reid, “In Our Contracted Sphere,” 24-25.

68 Reid, “In Our Contracted Sphere,” 47.

The Halifax Controversy

symbolic position. This detail was significant in that it allowed the Rhode Island Assembly to draw upon their charter to support their arguments on taxation authority while simultaneously distancing the derivative of their rights from Parliamentary authority. This made it easier to deny the power of Parliament to tax the colonies in the statements that follow.

While the first three resolutions treaded on established ground, resolutions four and five extend to conclusions too radical to pass in Virginia when similarly presented by Patrick Henry:

4. That, therefore, the General Assembly of this Colony, have, in their Representative Capacity, the only exclusive Right to lay Taxes and Imposts upon the Inhabitants of this Colony: And that every Attempt to vest such Power in any Person or Persons whatever, other than the Generally Assembly aforesaid, is unconstitutional, and hath a manifest Tendency to destroy the Liberties of the People of this Colony.

5. That his Majesty's liege People, the Inhabitants of this Colony, are not bound to yield Obedience to any Law or Ordinance, designed to impose any internal Taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the Laws or Ordinances of the General Assembly aforesaid.⁶⁹

These resolutions claimed that authority for taxation rested exclusively with the Rhode Island General Assembly where the people of the colony had representation, and denied both the authority of and the necessity of obedience to taxation laws passed by any other body, implying Parliament, where the colonists did not have representation. This was a shocking assertion, given the undisputed power of Parliament dating from the Glorious Revolution. As John Philip Reid points out, "After all, if there was any doctrine in current British constitutional law that was clear, unambiguous, and accepted by legal experts, it was that parliament was supreme and that parliament was sovereign."⁷⁰ These were no doubt bold statements for the time, but could also be seen as the logical extension and sharpening of arguments from the earlier pamphlet wars: that the colonists should only be taxed by a body in which they have representation. In "Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power, 1764-1766," Edmund S. Morgan

⁶⁹ "September, 1765. At the General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the English Colony of Rhode-Island, and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America."

⁷⁰ Reid, "In Our Contracted Sphere," 42-43.

argues that the American colonists saw taxes as “the ‘free gift’ of the people who paid them, and as such could be levied only by a body which represented the people,” and therefore, “The only body with a constitutional right to tax them was a colonial assembly, in which the people upon whom the tax would fall would be represented.”⁷¹ Any attempt by Parliament to levy taxes on the colonies was seen as a violation of the rights and liberties of the colonists as Englishmen, who did not have to submit to such laws as they could only legitimately derive from a body in which they have representation and could give consent. These rights were those of all Englishmen from precedents in developments in their constitutional history and affirmed by their charter, granted under the sovereignty of the king. Parliament could not impose taxes on the colonies as it was a body made up of representatives of fellow Englishmen: to have British subjects in England be able to tax British subjects in America would be to render the latter as inferior and violate their equal rights as Englishmen. Therefore, Rhode Island colonists could only be taxed by the Rhode Island government, and not by the authority of Parliament.

The final resolution was original to Rhode Island and arguably was the most radical denial of Parliamentary authority yet:

6. That all the Officers in this Colony, appointed by the Authority thereof, be, and they are hereby directed, to proceed in the Execution of their respective Offices, in the same Manner as usual: And that this Assembly will indemnify and save harmless all the said Officers, on Account of their Conduct agreeable to this Resolution.⁷²

The Rhode Island government, having denied the legitimacy of the Stamp Act due to representation, here ordered its officers to ignore its passage and openly defy Parliament by carrying on as though it never existed. As Morgan notes, “Rhode Island in fact went farther than the Virginia Burgesses had been willing to go and farther than any other colony went in the next eight or nine years, by calling for direct disobedience to Parliament.”⁷³ This overt defiance was not merely an empty threat: Samuel Ward was the only colonial governor to publicly refuse to enforce the Stamp Act, resulting the loss of his office.⁷⁴

71 Morgan, “Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power,” 326.

72 “September, 1765. At the General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the English Colony of Rhode-Island, and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America.”

73 Morgan, “Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power,” 322.

74 Thomas Williams Bicknell, *The History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence*

The Halifax Controversy

Such bold actions from a colonial government were radically different from the arguments of the same body hardly a year earlier in their humble appeal to a sagacious Parliament in the Rhode Island Remonstrance. The inefficacy of such appeals as evidenced by the easy passage of the Sugar and Stamp Acts prompted a hardening of lines in a progression of arguments ultimately denying the authority of Parliament to tax the colonies and calling for disobedience of any such laws at the highest level of colonial government.

The arguments of the Rhode Island General Assembly with their Resolutions would have significant, if subtle, effects on colonial identity. If Englishmen in Rhode Island and Englishmen in England or the Caribbean were equal subjects, and their trade interests carried equal weight (justifying, in the eyes of Rhode Islanders, their illegal importation of cheaper foreign molasses to make a profit), then those with representation supporting the economic interests of the British Caribbean over those of Rhode Island were treating fellow subjects as inferiors and ruling over them with taxes, which was unconstitutional as the colonists did not have Parliamentary representation. With the passage of these acts, this line of argument extended to conclude that only the colonial assembly, where Rhode Islanders did have representation, had the authority to tax them, and that they were not beholden to any taxes passed by Parliament. While they still claimed to derive their political rights from their identity as Englishmen, in denying part of the authority of Parliament in favor of their own American legislature, the Rhode Island Assembly took an important ideological step towards conceptualizing political independence as equals to the government of the mother country.

The Stamp Act Congress

The Rhode Island General Assembly was not the only colonial legislative body to question their relationship with Parliament following the passage of the Sugar and Stamp Acts. In fact, there was an unprecedented degree of coordination among a good number of the colonies determined to protest the new laws and assert their legislative supremacy in taxation by right of representation. At the same meeting in which the six resolutions were passed in September of 1765, the Rhode Island Assembly discussed a letter that had arrived from the Massachusetts House of Representatives, proposing a meeting of the colonial governing bodies, “to consult together on the present Circumstances of the Colonies, and the Difficulties to which they are and must be reduced by the Operation of the Act of Parliament for levying Duties and

Plantation, New York: The American Historical Society, 1920, 1076.

Taxes on the Colonies.”⁷⁵ This meeting was to be a congress of sorts, with representatives from as many colonies as wished to participate. Rhode Island duly appointed two commissioners, Metcalf Bowler and Henry Ward, and instructed them on how to proceed before sending them off.

The Stamp Act Congress met in New York from October 7-25, 1765, with delegates from Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Maryland, and South Carolina.⁷⁶ Their discussions resulted in a thirteen point Declaration of Rights and Grievances, copies of which were sent to the King and Parliament. The points of the declaration itself derived from the various resolutions and arguments that had been circulating around the colonies through newspapers and pamphlets for the last year and a half, many of which were articulated and debated in Rhode Island. In breaking down the resolutions, there are several clear categories that mark different strains of colonial thought on restrictions on trade and the legal relationship between the colonies and mother country.

Resolutions two through five were very similar to the statements presented by the Virginia House of Burgesses and extended by the Rhode Island Assembly:

2. That His Majesty's liege subjects in these colonies, are entitled to all the inherent rights and liberties of his natural born subjects within the kingdom of Great-Britain.
3. That it is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Englishmen, that no taxes be imposed on them, but with their own consent, given personally, or by their representatives.
4. That the people of these colonies are not, and from their local circumstances cannot be, represented in the House of Commons in Great-Britain.
5. That the only representatives of the people of these colonies, are persons chosen therein by themselves, and that no taxes ever have been, or can be constitutionally imposed on them, but by their respective legislatures.⁷⁷

75 “September, 1765. At the General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the English Colony of Rhode-Island, and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America.”

76 Morgan, “Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power,” 334.

77 “Stamp Act Congress of 1765; in Congress in New York,” Independence Hal Association, accessed 12 January 2012, <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/related/sac65.htm>

The Halifax Controversy

These restated the assertion that, with the rights of Englishmen, American colonists could only be taxed by a body in which they have representation. In a similar vein, the next block of resolutions fleshed out an argument asserting that “trial by jury is the inherent and invaluable right of every British subject in these colonies,”⁷⁸ and that trials by the new Admiralty Courts, established to enforce regulations on illicit trade, violated this right. Again, the representatives of the congress asserted their rights defined as those possessed by Englishmen.

Resolutions nine through eleven developed an adaptation of the well used remittance argument, first conceptualized in Rhode Island defending the illegal importation of cheap French molasses during discussion of the Sugar Act:

9. That the duties imposed by several late Acts of Parliament, from the peculiar circumstances of these colonies, will be extremely burthensome and grievous; and from the scarcity of specie, the payment of them absolutely impracticable.

10. That as the profits of the trade of these colonies ultimately center in Great-Britain, to pay for the manufactures which they are obliged to take from thence, they eventually contribute very largely to all supplies granted there to the Crown.

11. That the restrictions imposed by several late Acts of Parliament, on the trade of these colonies, will render them unable to purchase the manufactures of Great-Britain.⁷⁹

As the Stamp Act would have a more broadly distributed effect on the colonies, as opposed to the Sugar Act which targeted the industry Rhode Island relied on, accordingly the negative effects of the act were described more generally as adding to the hardship of all the colonists. These resolutions vaguely argued that the reduction in cash resulting from the stamp duties would make it difficult to purchase manufactured goods, which contributed greatly to the prosperity of the Empire as a whole. While less convincing than the original iteration, the contribution of the remittance argument is interesting in that it highlights the entwined connections between smuggling and articulations of colonial power.

The most interesting and perplexing resolution of the declaration stands alone:

1. That His Majesty's subjects in these colonies, owe the same

78 “Stamp Act Congress of 1765; in Congress in New York”

79 “Stamp Act Congress of 1765; in Congress in New York”

allegiance to the Crown of Great-Britain, that is owing from his subjects born within the realm, and all due subordination to that august body the Parliament of Great Britain.⁸⁰

The apparent contradiction is puzzling: how can a colonial representative body defy the authority of Parliament to tax them on the grounds of representation and the rights of Englishmen, and in the same document proclaim their obligation to “all due subordination to that august body?” One potential answer to this riddle lies in the fine distinction American colonists drew between Parliament’s legislative power over the empire as a whole, for example with the regulation of trade and commerce, and the power to impose taxes, which resided only in a representative body of the subjects being taxed.⁸¹ Following this line of argument, the Acts of Trade and Navigation, which were generally ignored and routinely violated with smuggling practices, were perfectly within the jurisdiction of Parliament to pass, while taxes meant to enforce these regulations and raise revenue (the Sugar and Stamp Acts) were unconstitutional without the consent of the colonists or their representatives.⁸² This distinction was also evident in the instructions given to Bowler and Ward by the Rhode Island Assembly upon their appointment as commissioners for the congress,

This Assembly have Hearts filled with the sincerest Affection and Loyalty to His Majesty; and have the highest Sense of their Subordination to that august Assembly the *British* Parliament: Nevertheless, they would assert their Rights and Privileges with becoming Freedom and Spirit: And therefore you are directed to use your Endeavours that the said Representation and Address express these Sentiments in the strongest Manner.⁸³

The “Rights and Privileges” asserted by the Rhode Island Assembly included the right to be taxed only by bodies in which Rhode Islanders have representation, i.e. the Assembly itself. As they argued that Parliament did not have the right to tax them, there is no contradiction in pledging subordination to those powers which the Assembly believes Parliament *did* have over the empire as a whole. It is unsurprising that all but the most radical claims and distinctions

80 “Stamp Act Congress of 1765; in Congress in New York”

81 Morgan, “Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power,” 325-326.

82 Morgan, “Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power,” 326.

83 “September, 1765. At the General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the English Colony of Rhode-Island, and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America.”

The Halifax Controversy

made by the Rhode Island Assembly (namely, the sixth resolution calling for overt defiance of the law) were reiterated and defended by the Declaration of Rights and Grievances. Morgan summarizes this nicely, “The Stamp Act Congress...was no less ‘radical’ than the colonial assemblies which sent delegates to it. Though it acknowledged due subordination to Parliament, it denied without qualification the right of Parliament to tax the colonies.”⁸⁴

It would be inaccurate to describe the Stamp Act Congress or the defiance of the Rhode Island Legislature as tantamount to declarations of independence. Indeed, most of their arguments were based on their claim as Englishmen to their established rights. However, the assertions made by the Stamp Act Congress and its organization in the first place pointed towards the beginnings of an independent political body capable of challenging and setting itself in direct opposition to Parliamentary authority. The congress itself, with representatives from many of the Thirteen Colonies, was significant as the first official inter-colonial coordination protesting Parliamentary power. A precedent was set by the Albany Congress, convened in a state of crisis during the Seven Years War, but the context was significantly different in that this time the “enemy” threatening the colonies was Parliament itself. The familiarity of such a congress was not lost on the colonial newspapers: one paper in New York began reprinting the famous “Join or Die” snake cartoon but with the new context of opposition to Stamp Act.⁸⁵ This congress foreshadowed the later Continental Congresses as the questioning and outright denial of the authority of Parliament in matters of taxation was followed by questioning the sovereignty of Parliament at all over the colonies, a significant ideological shift that would define an American identity in opposition to the British Empire.

CONCLUSIONS

In just under a year, public discourse sanctioned by the Rhode Island Assembly on Parliamentary restrictions on trade had gone from this, “let their [merchants] whole Expectations of Relief, depend altogether on a proper Application to the British Legislature,”⁸⁶ in political appeals to Parliament to vote down the new trade restrictions to this in response to the passage of these acts, “we believe no good reason can be given, why the colonies should not modestly and soberly enquire, what right the parliament of *Great-Britain* have to tax them...

84 Morgan, “Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power,” 324-325.

85 Schlesinger, “Colonial Newspapers and the Stamp Act,” 69.

86 Hopkins, “The Remainder of the Essay on the Trade of the Northern Colonies.”

can it possibly be shewn [sic], that the people in *Britain* have a sovereign authority over their fellow-subjects in *America*?"⁸⁷ How did this happen? The rejection of Parliamentary authority in matters of taxation developed intellectually in Rhode Island following the passage and implementation of the Sugar Act and picked up speed with printed outrage directed towards the pending Stamp Act. The above conclusions drawn by Hopkins in his pamphlet written at the behest of the Assembly became fuel for the pamphlet war that ensued. Rhode Island intellectuals were deeply unsettled by what they perceived as inferior treatment from fellow subjects given their assumed rights as Englishmen. Their value and identity within the British empire were called into question, prompting defensive statements on American character and intense criticism of men like Martin Howard, who seemed to be betraying the interests of his fellow colonists who had arrayed themselves in opposition to Parliament and its new laws. The positioning of the colonists with an "us vs. them" mentality became only more forceful following the passage of the Stamp Act, creating an atmosphere in which the Rhode Island Assembly could pass resolutions calling for public disobedience of any taxation from Parliament. Rhode Islanders argued for their rights as Englishmen, but the way in which they openly denied part of Parliament's authority over them in favor of an empowered colonial legislature enabled future denial of any relation at all, allowing them to envision themselves as a separate entity and setting the foundations for political separation in the lead up to the Revolution.

87 Hopkins, "The Rights of Colonies Examined," 18-19.

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An Interview with Professor Steven Lubar

Director of the John Nicholas Brown Center for
Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage

Steven Lubar is a Professor of American Civilization and Director of the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage at Brown University. Previous to beginning his time at Brown, in 2004, Professor Lubar was Chair of the Division of the History of Technology at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, where he curated exhibits such as "America on the Move" and "Engines of Change." Professor Lubar is also the author of included Author of "Legacies: Collecting America's History at the Smithsonian"; "InfoCulture"; and "History from Things." His interests include the history of museums and memorials, material culture studies, cultural theory in the study of history of technology, and digital humanities. In his role as Director of the John Nicholas Brown Center he builds on his interests in issues of culture, community, and public history. Present research projects include work in the history of museums, material culture, 19th-century invention and technology, and digital humanities. He is working on a book on history curatorship.

BJH: What is public history?

Steven Lubar: There are two definitions for public history. One definition is that it's history *for* the public. It's the sort of thing that historians do as public intellectuals writing op-ed pieces, or as historians working in history museums or the Park Service. There are a lot of people with degrees in history who do history *with* the public audience in mind. The other definition is history with the public. So, a historian might say: we're not the only people who know about history. A lot of people have lived through it, are interested in it in an avocational way, collect antiques, and so on; and we should work with them and learn from them rather than simply lecture at them. In some ways, it's the distinction you might make between a lecture course and a seminar. In a seminar, everyone contributes. I believe that the best kind of public history includes audience participation, that it's a conversation. This inclusion makes it more difficult, because you're no longer the expert, but it also makes it much more interesting, and

more effective. You realize that you have a particular kind of expertise, but other people have other kinds of expertise.

BJH: So, as a public historian, how do you shape conversations you have with people about their experiences of history into some kind of product?

Lubar: That brings us to the products of history. If your product is a book, a traditional, single-author journal article, or an article for the *Brown Journal of History*, it's difficult to treat history as a conversation with the audience. Part of the difficulty is voice. Is everything written in your own voice, or are there moments where you step out of that voice and let others speak? If you're working, say, in an exhibition, it becomes much easier to say, "Here, this is your space. Have your say." Or to say, "What do you think?"

BJH: What other kinds of public history are there?

Lubar: A lot of public history is history for hire. Real estate developers, for example, hire historians to carry out the research necessary to understand the history of a building, both to comply with laws on historic preservation and to shape the design in a way that lets them use historic preservation tax advantages. Large-scale construction projects hire environmental historians to understand what went on at a site. Especially in the West, governments, corporations, and individuals working in development, water, or energy projects need historians with expertise in Native American treaty history. There are many places where the skills of the historian are useful, other than teaching other people about history.

Students who are interested in history but don't want to teach should consider the range of opportunities available in public history. At least at the graduate level, history departments have traditionally been set up to train history professors. But there simply aren't that many history professorships available these days, and there are fewer all the time. Public history has become a way to open up possibilities for history students to develop practical skills.

BJH: So what is the history of public history? During what decade did historians really begin to see a need for expanding our more traditional, unidirectional understanding of the field?

Lubar: Until roughly 1930, history was much more open than it currently is. If you look at the early history of the American Historical Association, many if not

most of the people involved were amateur historians. There is a famous 1931 address by the then-President of the American Historical Association Carl Becker titled “Everyman His Own Historian.” The title suggests an expansive view of who’s a historian. In the essay, Becker argued that “the history that lies inert in unread books does no work in the world.” So he had a much more expansive view of what historians were, and what they did.

At some point in the middle third of the twentieth century, the field of history became professionalized and everyone who wasn’t a professor or a PhD was kicked out. In the 1970s and early 1980s, though, in part because there was a job crisis just like there is today, public history was reinvented. The National Council for Public History was created in 1979. At first, public history lived as a kind of parallel structure to university history, with some limited overlap. In the last decade, these two fields have started to converge again.

Just this past year, Anthony Grafton, current president of the American Historical Association, has come out very strongly in favor of public history. He believes that public history is just as important as academic history, and urges university history departments to start taking the field more seriously. “No More Plan B,” an article he co-authored with James Grossman, executive director of the AHA, argues that public history and other “alternative” history careers should not be viewed as a backup plan, but as an equally important field, and that history departments should change their graduate programs so that PhD students have more options.

BJH: Are people who publish articles in journals like *The Public Historian* usually professors or PhDs who have become interested in public history?

Lubar: Most of them are. Some of them work in history departments, some work for museums or the National Park Service, some are independent consultants. Public historians are a diverse group. The Society for History in the Federal Government, for example, represents historians working for federal agencies. The State Department hires lots of people who know history. They’re publishing, very slowly, the many volumes of *Foreign Relations of the United States*. That’s a kind of public history. For example, for many years the Department of Agriculture had a whole staff of historians that kept track of what the department had done, but also studied agricultural history more broadly. The Department of Defense has hundreds of historians on staff. The military believes in learning from history. They don’t always do a good job of it, but at least they believe in

it. The Army has a center with the wonderful name of Center for Army Lessons Learned, which asks the question “What can we learn from what happened?” Military historians also write operational histories. I’m sure the department has historians in Afghanistan right now, documenting and writing history. There are also army museum curators who are on the front lines, collecting documents and objects, and sending them back to the United States, to the military museums.

Corporate history is another interesting topic. Companies interested in learning from their past hire historians to write books about it. There are also historians who work in legal cases. For example, the paint industry was interested in the history of the use of lead in paint, and in the changing laws and contractual requirements that determined its use. Historians were hired to work on asbestos history, and on the history of tobacco and cigarettes. It’s interesting work, at the intersection of legal history, medical history, and the history of technology.

BJH: Let’s talk about digital history.

Lately, public history increasingly overlaps with digital history, which may or may not be public. A lot of digital history seeks to use new digital tools to answer old questions. Here’s an example. Google has scanned millions of books, which you can now search through digitally to answer questions such as, “What was the change in use of the word ‘democracy’ versus ‘republic’ during the twentieth century?” You just type that in and instantly Google will produce nice graphs demonstrating that in American English, ‘republic’ is more popular than ‘democracy’ until about 1910, and then, as World War II hit during the 1940s, use of the word ‘democracy’ takes off. With these kinds of tools – of course, many of them are much more sophisticated – you start to get a sense of this kind of change very quickly.

There are also a lot of interesting work at the intersection of digital history and spatial history. For example, now that it’s very easy to make maps of census data, historians can begin to ask different questions. Some of these changes started back in the 1980s, with econometrics and the new availability of censuses online. With these tools we can begin to ask questions about mobility, or social mobility. With all of this census information online, you can track people from one census to another, and find very interesting things.

Things also become public much more quickly through digital means. I’m most interested in digital public history, which examines how we can best share and

gather evidence using digital media, with the public as a partner. One of the most interesting ways of doing this is crowd sourcing. For example, the early papers of the War Department were available in manuscript form but were not easily readable or widely accessible. Through crowd sourcing, anyone can transcribe these manuscripts, and then make them available through an online database. The New York Public Library is engaged in a similar project with thousands of historic menus. Anyone can transcribe the menus, and suddenly you have this amazing resource online. Digital history has made a real effort to connect everybody and say, “You’re part of an ongoing conversation.” Because, in the end, that’s what history is about.

BJH: So how do you think this will change the study of history in the next ten to twenty years?

Lubar: I think that in ten years every historian will be doing digital history. They won’t even think of it as a separate field. It wasn’t that long ago that people resisted looking at books or articles online, but now you can’t imagine not doing this. If you’re working before 1926, all the books, and a great many archives and material culture collections, will be available to you online. There will be good tools to use them. At first we’ll use digital tools to ask traditional questions, but before long we’ll be asking new questions.

BJH: I’m sometimes surprised by how many of the books and articles I search for still aren’t available in digital form. Is digitization part of digital history?

Lubar: It’s a first step. It’s very, very challenging job to be a university librarian right now because everything is changing. No one looks at the books anymore. Nobody is coming to look at the journals. But, on the other hand, there are more people than ever in the library. They’re all there to talk to each other and do work.

BJH: So what is the relationship like between librarians and scholars interested in digital history?

Lubar: It’s a very close relationship. The Brown University Library has just hired a new digital humanities librarian who is a recent PhD in American history. Her job is to help historians and others use digital resources. The role of the library is changing from buying and shelving the books to helping you find the resources you need, wherever they may be. The challenge now is not just how

to find the resources you need, but to develop the skills to put those resources together, analyze them, and to publish them. More and more, that will be a cooperative venture between historians and experts in the digital realm.

Publication is changing, too. If your end result is only viewable in a digital format, for example, if you're creating an interactive map, you can't publish it in a printed journal. History journals have been very slow figuring out what to do about this problem. How do you save these projects and make them accessible fifty years from now?

BJH: Do you see any obstacles to increasing the popularity of digital history, or is this process more or less inevitable?

Lubar: At some point editors will say, "Your paper is very good, but you left out the digitized 1940 manuscript census, which is available online. If you're writing about the 1940s and you don't know how to mine that huge database out there, you've left out an essential source. Go back and think about it." Standards will change. Publishing standards will change, too. In the sciences now, part of publication is publishing your data. The humanities model here is the Stanford Spatial History Lab. The lab is publishing work that can only be published in digital form. They are setting a new model for what the journal looks like, and for being transparent about the use of evidence so that others can look at the same data and see if they come to the same conclusions.

On the pedagogy side: if students publish their papers in digital form, their work becomes public in a more interesting way. Traditional paper-writing in history was like this: write twenty pages at the end of the semester, give the paper to your professor, who reads it, corrects it, and gives it back to you. You never look at it again. But now, if in your class, instead of writing paper just for the professor you post it on the class blog, where everybody reads it. You're more responsible for it; everyone else gets to benefit from your work, and from the reaction to it. That interaction becomes an interesting change.

Once you get out of school, almost all of your work will be team work, done using cooperative digital tools; but in school, or at least in the traditional way of teaching, your work is individual, printed out and submitted. That's crazy. If your website is jointly done with other people, you have a greater level both of responsibility, and a new set of skills. The potential is there to make student work more public, and to give students a much larger audience. I think we're at the

beginning of real change. Historians tend to be rather conservative. They don't move quickly, but I think that in the next few years you'll see a lot more digital work and probably a lot more public work, just as part of what historians do.

BJH: Tell me about the John Nicholas Brown Center.

Lubar: The John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage is Brown's center for work that connects the arts and humanities to the community. One of our strengths is work in museums, oral history, and public history. We use public humanities to encourage community – and community to encourage public humanities. In the Masters in Public Humanities program, we do a lot of outreach to the community through workshops for people who work in cultural organizations. We try to be a link between Brown and the community, and between these different cultural organizations.

BJH: So how did you end up in this particular field?

Lubar: I was an undergraduate at MIT, studying history of science, and then I went to University of Chicago for a PhD in history. There, I moved away from Renaissance science towards the field of history of technology and then American history. I went to work at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History for twenty-two years as a curator, mostly collecting, exhibiting and studying the history of technology. I did a range of projects while I was there, mostly exhibits, but also some written work, and then, eight years ago Brown asked, "We want to set up a new Public Humanities Center. How would you like to run it?" I had been at the Smithsonian for a long time and it seemed like it was time to move on, and this was an amazing opportunity, and so I said, "Sure." And then, seven years ago, we set up the M.A. program, and it's been booming ever since.

BJH: So what kind of current and future projects are you working on these days?

Lubar: Well, in the last two years I've been director of the Haffenreffer Museum. There, one of our main concerns is how to get more faculty to take advantage of using the collections to teach. I do a good bit of consulting: I just finished consulting on a big history exhibit project at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and that's been really interesting.

The digital project that I'm working on is about the changing nature of inter-

faces to history, in the classroom, the museum, and the web. It's easy to take a chronological approach and make a timeline from earlier to later. That's the basic narrative of history. But, there's another way of thinking about how to visualize the past. For example, you might think about a genealogical style. On the web, you get the possibility of a search being your interface – instead of things being laid out chronologically, you can search in all kinds of ways. I'm interested in how this changes the way that people think about history.

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