

# Quaestio

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# QUAESTIO

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Inaugurated in 2002 under the leadership of then Editor-in-Chief Frank Miranda, *Quaestio*, the UCLA undergraduate history journal, returns after a one year hiatus for its second volume. It is with extreme pride that I submit this volume to the History Department here at UCLA (my home away from during the past four years).

In this issue of *Quaestio* (Latin for “inquiry”), perhaps as a reflection of the intense interest in the Middle East, we have several papers that deal with Jewish and Israeli history. Adam Greenwald opens our discussion with a paper on Messianism during the late-second temple period. Shahab Elliot Hakakzadeh takes us to the darkest period of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Holocaust. He reflects on Hollywood’s portrayal of the event through television miniseries and motion pictures. Noah Gellman looks at the 1967 Arab-Israeli War from the perspective of the United States as it failed to halt both sides. During this same period, Buddhist monks participated in acts of self-immolation as a means to protest—a topic of discussion for Aaron Slosberg. Lonnie Robbins travels back in time to examine the English *Jest-Book* for its witticisms. Jean Schindler examines reasons why modern Britain has not integrated with the rest of Europe. Read together, these two papers offer an informative and entertaining overview of British self-perception. V. Shain Alexander moves to the continent by discussing the role of János Kádár in Hungarian economic reforms from 1956 to 1988. Allison Starr and Diana Trembly examine the plight of women in the U.S. during slavery and in Afghanistan during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, respectively. While they do not offer an optimistic outlook, David Rodriguez fills the void with his analysis of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s fireside chats. Last, but most certainly not least, Alex Janoyan reviews Richard Hovannisian’s (Professor Emeritus of Modern Armenian History at UCLA) latest volume *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide*; while Vincent Lim reviews Anne Moody’s *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, a text widely used in late 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. History courses.

This journal is the product of a year long dedication from the staff that’s worked on it. Each and every one of the board members worked tirelessly to make this possible: Brandy Barrancotto, Brad Ng, Claire Morales (who is responsible for the beautiful cover of this volume), and Charles Patterson, I appreciate all the work and truly love you guys. From the History Department, it is my pleasure to thank our courageous and quite inspiring Chair Teofilo F. Ruiz, who provides a living caricature of the words passion, kindness, brilliance, and hope (especially in the current economic climate of the State of California). Our advisors, Sue Jensen and Paul Padilla, have put up with more than their fair share of disappointments from us. Without their caring support, however, Phi Alpha Theta would not be what it is today. Lastly, I would like to thank the Undergraduate Student Association Council for providing Phi Alpha Theta with a base budget for the very first time. Without their support for our ad in the *Daily Bruin* we would not have had the response that we did from all the great writers of history at UCLA.

I will look back on this year with fondness filled with joy...the joy of having met all of you! But I hope all of you will look forward to the great articles ahead.

Armen Adzhemyan  
*Editor-in-Chief*

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# Hark, the End is Nigh: Two Visions of Eschatological Messianism in Judaism in the Late Second Temple Period

Adam Greenwald

The late Second Temple period (200 BCE- 70 CE) was a time of internal transformation and external crisis for the Jewish community of Palestine. The assimilation of Hellenistic cultural norms into Jewish life increased dramatically in this period. This led to great internal strife between those who advocated integrating Hellenistic elements into their culture and those who were bitterly opposed to assimilation. At the same time as the Jews were experiencing this civil conflict, imperial control of Judea became more repressive than at any previous time in Jewish historical memory. The ascendance of Antiochus Epiphanes IV marked the first time that Judaism ceased to be a *religio licita* in its native land. This shift would be followed, after the brief and often corrupt period of Hasmonean rule, by the repressive Herodian and Roman regimes. Significant elements of the Jewish community came to the conclusion that the upheaval they faced signaled the destruction of the old order, and the dawn of a new age.

This conclusion resulted in an unprecedented surge in messianic and eschatological concerns among the Jews of Palestine in the late Second Temple period. While such beliefs always had a place in Jewish theology, the fervent eschatology of this period represented a new innovation. Theologians produced a variety of speculations about the end of times, including one canonical apocalypse as well as significant apocryphal and pseudo-epigraphic texts. Political dissidents committed acts of violence in hopes of hastening the final eschatological battle. Religious extremists formed separatist groups who isolated themselves to await the coming of the Messiah. While there were many and diverse manifestations of apocalypticism, they are divisible into two primary strands: a political messianic movement, which was principally a response to external domination, and a spiritual messianic movement, which was principally a response to widespread Hellenization within the Jewish community. It is axiomatic that messianism and eschatology are responses to crisis, and the late Second Temple period was fraught with crisis. However, the nature of each of the messianic movements was dependent on which crisis that particular movement felt was most salient.

The Jews of Palestine had not lived as an autonomous people since the destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians in 586 BCE. Their political life subsequent to that historical turning point was dominated by a series of imperial rulers, from Nebuchadnezzar to the Persians, to the various Hellenist powers: the Greeks, the Ptolemys, and the Seleucids. Yet, despite their total military hegemony over Palestine, these rulers were tolerant of the religious and, to some extent, the political autonomy of the Jews. Even in *galut* in Babylon the Jews were allowed to practice their religion relatively unhindered. In fact, many Jews chose voluntarily to stay in Babylonia after their exile had ceased, and transformed it into a cultural and religious center where the authoritative version of the Talmud would eventually be written. Cyrus the Great's decree in 538 BCE not only returned the Jews to their homeland, but also commissioned the rebuilding of the Temple in 515 BCE and allowed the Jews substantial religious autonomy in keeping with a Persian policy of toleration<sup>1</sup>. This policy remained in effect through the Alexandrian conquest in 332 BCE and through the Ptolemaic and the beginning of the Seleucid reigns. Under the Ptolemaic kings, Judea was considered an autonomous territory under the leadership of the institutions developed during the Persian period—namely, the increasingly powerful High Priest, and the Gerousia, or council of

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1. George Robinson, *Essential Judaism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs, Customs, and Rituals* (New York: Pocket Books, 2000), 297.

elders<sup>2</sup>. Far from limiting Jewish religious expression, the Ptolemys “confirmed the ancestral laws of the Jews as the binding code for the entire territory of autonomous Judea.”<sup>3</sup> However, the era of toleration ended with the ascendance of Antiochus IV in 175 BCE, and a new era of harsh imperial control began.

Antiochus IV was a dictatorial ruler who attempted to impose total control over the province of Judea. His actions ignited a surge of Jewish nationalism, which was the basis of the political strand of the messianistic boom of the late Second Temple Period. Antiochus raided the Temple to pay off war debts, and took control of the High Priesthood by appointing a puppet.<sup>4</sup> Then, in 167 BCE, he came to a fateful conclusion: it was “the Jewish religion, with its militant monotheism, that lay behind the stubborn resistance of the Jews to the innovations he wished to introduce.”<sup>5</sup> This represents a crucial turning point in Jewish history—it was the first time a ruler had turned his animosity not against the Judean state, but upon the Jewish religion itself.<sup>6</sup> His subsequent outlawing of Judaism and persecutions of those who continued to practice released a wave of nationalism that fueled the Hasmonean Revolt, which succeeded in toppling Antiochus by 164 BCE. The Hasmonean period was brief, and was itself mired with corruption and instability. By 66 BCE, the Roman general Pompey had secured control over Judea, which would be controlled by the repressive Herodian and Roman regimes until the destruction of the Second Temple and the end of the Jewish nation-state in 70CE.

The shift from tolerant rulers and religious autonomy to repressive imperial regimes was the salient factor in the birth of explicitly political eschatological messianism. Philip Davies and John Rogerson describe the messianic expectation as “essentially not a religious doctrine but a political reflex.”<sup>7</sup> As the governance of Judea grew more repressive, the Jews felt increasingly in need of divine intervention to aide them in their redemption. They drew upon the prophetic visions of earlier Jewish literature to imagine a messianic figure who could redeem them from oppression and exact vengeance upon their tormenters. This impulse was not a new innovation in Jewish thought. Joseph Klausner, a leading scholar of messianism summarizes, “[In ancient times] the political part of the belief in the Messiah took...first place during periods of trouble and distress precisely because it declared comfort and the hope that political freedom would return to the Jewish people.”<sup>8</sup> Prophetic figures, especially during the period of the Babylonian Exile, also preached messianic redemption and rebirth in the face of utter tragedy and oppression. The appeal to messianism as a tool to face political upheaval is thus a well-documented trend in Jewish theology, which emerges as powerfully as ever before in the face of the new reality of repressive imperialism.

This messianic zeal was transformed from an abstract theological concept into a political reality that would define the rest of the Second Temple period by a totally new development: mass religious martyrdom. Traditional Jewish theology holds that the messianic era will be preceded by a period of great turmoil and chaos.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the new phenomenon of martyrdom, Jews being killed by the imperial rulers of Judea for practicing their religion, was seen as irrefutable proof of the

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2. M. Stern, “The Period of the Second Temple” *A History of the Jewish People*, ed. H.H. Ben-Sasson, trans. George Weidenfeld and Nicolson Ltd. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976), 191.

3. Ibid, 193.

4. Raymond Scheindlin, *A Short History of the Jewish People: From Legendary Times to Modern Statehood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 36.

5. Stern, 205

6. Scheindlin, 38

7. Philip Davies and John Rogerson, *The Old Testament World* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 343.

8. Joseph Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel: From Its Beginning to the Compilation of the Mishnah*, trans W.F. Stinespring (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), 11.

9. See Daniel 12:1, “It will be a time of trouble, the like of which has never been”

imminence of the eschatological period. As Stern points out, “The presence of martyrs was a sign that the End of Days was approaching, and the belief in the eschatological significance of the events served to justify the sacrifice.”<sup>10</sup> In that way, the dead were not only sanctified, but also viewed as necessary precursors of the End Times. Martyrdom became desirable, because it served a distinct teleological purpose. It is not at all difficult to see how this doctrine encouraged the more fervent messianists to engage in violent rebellion as a means of hastening salvation.

Many movements attached themselves to this new distillation of the political messianic and eschatological hopes of their generation, and began to actively revolt in hopes of inaugurating the New Era. In 45 CE, Theudas led an unsuccessful messianic-liberation movement. Later, during the reign of Emperor Felix, an Egyptian Jew, whose name is lost to historians, led an unsuccessful attempt to free Jerusalem from Roman control.<sup>11</sup> However, the most significant movement of this type was the Zealots. Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian and former slave, describes the Zealots as a group who had “a passion for liberty that is almost unconquerable since they are convinced that God alone is their master.”<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, they pursued a philosophy of direct action against Rome, which they sincerely believed would usher in the Messianic Era. Stern believes, “The practical implication of this philosophy was that it served as a permanent incitement to revolt...by whatever means, irrespective of realities.”<sup>13</sup> This would be their downfall, when, in 66 CE, they led the disastrous Great Revolt against Rome. The Zealots were not alone in their belief that direct engagement against the Romans would bring messianic redemption. Many of the participants of “the Great Revolt against Rome in AD 66-70 surely believed themselves to be fighting in the eschatological battle that would be followed by the reign of the Messiah.”<sup>14</sup> The political messianic theology, which emerges out of the condition of oppression, was actualized as a doctrine of revolutionary violence. The zeal of the believers was strong enough to inspire them to engage the most powerful army of their time in the hopes that such a conflict would bring about messianic redemption.

Political messianism was not only concretized as violent action; it was also reflected in a new genre of Jewish literature, the apocalypse. Jewish apocalyptic literature, in which a mystical seer probes the secrets of the heavens and usually obtains knowledge about the end of days, appeared largely as a response to the persecutions. Stern notes that this transition probably emerged when, “The contrast between the glorious future envisaged for Israel and the sorrows of her actual condition...intensified the urge to imagine an ideal world as a spiritual consolation. Thus prophetic vision was replaced by apocalyptic vision.”<sup>15</sup> From the persecutions of Antiochus IV onwards, true prophecy in the Biblical sense no longer existed. To fill the vacuum, apocalyptic visionaries rose up as the primary commentators on current events. The persecutions of Antiochus directly influenced some, like the authors of the Apocalypses of Daniel and Enoch.<sup>16</sup> Daniel, the only canonical apocalyptic work, was almost assuredly composed during the Antiochian reign.<sup>17</sup>

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10. Stern, 285

11. Geoffrey Wigoder, ed. *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), s.v. “Messianic Movements” by H.H. Ben-Sasson.

12. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities* 20:97ff cited in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, “Messianic Movements”

13. Stern, 274

14. R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, “Messianism in Jewish History” in *Essential Papers on Messianic Movements and Personalities in Jewish History*, ed. Marc Saperstein (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 42

15. Stern, 290

16. Davies and Rogerson, 322

17. Klausner identifies Daniel with the Antiochian period for four reasons, 1) In Chapters 8 and 11 the book gives almost exact details of the reign of Antiochus but does not appear to know the end of the story 2) The Book of Daniel itself claims to be a “seal of prophecy” which obviously could not have been claimed by an earlier prophet 3) The Hebrew vocabulary is from a relatively late period 4) Daniel

The book is messianic in essence, describing a variety of visions of the end of times and the ascent of Israel over her enemies. Specifically, it predicts the end of a Hellenist kingdom that is dominating Judea (clearly a reference to the Seleucids). The first half of Enoch, a pseudo-epigraphic work,<sup>18</sup> was composed around fifty years after the persecutions. It understands the uprising of the Hasmoneans as a signal of the upcoming messianic period. Enoch depicts the oppressors of the Israelites as a series of birds of prey, during the reign of the ravens (representing the Seleucids), a ram (representing the Maccabees) rises up to defeat the raven and bring about the End of Days.<sup>19</sup> A variety of other pseudo-epigraphic work filled with messianic and eschatological themes were produced throughout late-Hasmonean and the Roman period until the final exile of the Jews from Judea. The deluge of such writings during this period demonstrates the magnitude of the response to the harshness of the imperial paradigm of the late Second Temple period.

Spiritual messianism, a very different kind of eschatological theology from its political cousin, also cropped up during this period. Spiritual messianism was not a reaction to crises emanating from outside the Jewish community, but rather, to what some perceived to be a religious crisis within the community. From around 200 BCE, Hellenistic influences grew pervasive, especially among Judean elites.<sup>20</sup> The trend persisted throughout the late Second Temple Period. The Hasmonean rulers inspired particular concern for traditionalists by adopting Greek names and court manners.<sup>21</sup> Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE to 50 CE) attempted to fuse Platonic philosophy with traditional Jewish theology, which many contemporary religious authorities perceived as a threat to traditional Judaism. The internal transformation, wrought by the integration of Hellenistic norms into Jewish society at all levels, resulted in the emergence of separatist groups that declared themselves the only true heirs of the Biblical tradition. The impurity they perceived in their community led them to conclude, like political messianists, that they were living at the dawn of the eschatological era. Some scholars contend that this type of response to the pressures of cultural change is not atypical. Werblowsky, for example, argues, “The analysis of modern messianic movements in ‘primitive societies’ suggests that these are to a large extent connected with the stresses and tensions of an acculturative situation.”<sup>22</sup> This should not be surprising, given that crises tend to promote just such responses, and the upheaval of cultural and religious norms is just as much a crisis as the upheaval of political conditions.

The most significant spiritual messianic community of the late Second Temple period was the Qumran group, a radical segment of the Essene sect.<sup>23</sup> While the origins of the community remains a topic of scholarly debate, there is a general consensus that they were part of the priestly class who felt disenfranchised by the assent of the highly Hellenized priests during the Hasmonean Period. They subsequently isolated themselves in the desert, and came to regard themselves as the sole remnant of true believing Jewry. Frank Cross describes the Essenes as, “Separatist, in the radical sense that they regarded themselves as the only true Israel and separated themselves fully from contact with their fellow Jews.”<sup>24</sup> The development of the Qumran community came about

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appears in the Writings in the original Hebrew Scriptures, indicating it was not written until after the Nevi'im had been canonized. Klausner, 225-226.

18. Pseudo-epigrapha refers to non-canonical works, not included in the Septuagint, which are usually characterized by their attribution to figures of the past, like Enoch, Baruch, and Ezra. From Lawrence Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Ktav Publishing House, 1991), 6-7.
19. Klausner, 286
20. Stern, 197
21. Ibid, 231
22. Werblowsky, 38
23. While the identification of the Qumran group with the Essenes is still debated, a majority of scholars seem to be convinced of their connection. See Davies and Rogerson, 340-1; Stern, 273
24. Frank Moore Cross “A Historical Context of the Scrolls” *Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Hershel Shanks (New York: Random House, 1992), 24

not through discontent with the treatment of the Jews by such external powers as the Seleucids or the Romans, but rather out of a concern with the character of the normative Jewish body.

The Qumran community's deep dissatisfaction with the current order led them to believe that all would be uprooted by an imminent eschatological conflict. They envisioned this conflict in terms of an apocalyptic war between the Children of Light and the Children of Darkness. The details of this conflict attest to a very different set of messianic goals than those held by the political messianists. The Children of Light represented only the members of the Qumran community, who regarded themselves as the only remaining faithful, and therefore the only ones worthy of Divine salvation. The Children of Darkness represented all earthly wickedness, Jewish as well as pagan. The Qumran documents, however, direct their ire primarily against the normative Jewish community, which they felt was corrupted by Hellenistic practices. The leader of the Children of Darkness is the Wicked Priest, probably associated with the Hellenized Hasmonean priests, whose presence had been the original impetus for the Qumranite's retreat into the desert. It is an interesting phenomenon that the eschatological hopes for divine retribution are not turned outward, as in the case of the Zealots and the other political messianists, but are instead focused inward on the "corrupt" parts of the Jewish corpus itself. Their rejection of the rest of Israel as "wicked" leads to a new development in eschatological theology. Whereas Biblical theology promoted the idea that the whole ethno-national entity was collectively redeemed, the Essenes viewed redemption as essentially elective, in which only members who held specific beliefs are eligible for redemption. In a broader context it is significant to note that this idea would be taken further by Christianity, which would claim that salvation did not come through any ethnic or national allegiance, but rather through a pure faith in the divinity of Jesus.<sup>25</sup>

The primacy of spiritual redemption over political redemption in the theology of the Qumran group is also evident in their conception of the nature of the Messiah. The Qumran Essenes believed that there would be two messianic figures, one priestly and one political. The Dead Sea Scrolls term the messianic figures the Messiah of Aaron and the Messiah of Israel.<sup>26</sup> This belief is based on the prophecy of Zechariah, who wrote, "These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord."<sup>27</sup> It is absolutely clear from the documents is that the Qumran group believed that the priestly messiah would be preeminent over the earthly messiah.<sup>28</sup> The Qumran community, however, was not entirely indifferent to the political concerns of other Jews of the time. They firmly believed in the coming of a political messiah who would redeem them from tyranny both without and within. Their emphasis on the priestly redeemer over the earthly redeemer, however, underscores the greater weight given to concerns of corruption in the Temple and among the normative Jewish authorities above concerns about political domination.

Whereas the political messianic groups believed that it was necessary to initiate violent rebellion in order to hasten the coming of the eschatological period, the spiritual messianists used ascetic practices to bring about their redemption. The Essene community "was crystallized apocalyptic vision. Each institution and practice was a preparation for or, by anticipation, a realization of, life in the New Age of God's rule."<sup>29</sup> Since they believed that so much of the rest of the Jewish community had been corrupted by foreign ideas and norms, they sought to return to the basics, and by doing so renounce Hellenism. By living their lives at what they understood to be a higher spiritual level, they made themselves worthy of being considered part of the righteous remnant that would be redeemed with the coming of the Messianic Age.

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25. Werblowsky, 41

26. Geoffrey Wigoder, ed. *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), s.v. "Eschatology" by Louis F. Hartman

27. See Zechariah 4:14

28. Lawrence Schiffman, "Jewish Sectarianism in Second Temple Times" in *Great Schisms in Jewish History*, eds. Raphael Jospe and Stanley Wagner (New York: Ktav Publishing, 1981), 26.

29. Cross, 26

The above discussion shows a meaningful conceptual distinction between political and spiritual messianic movements in the late Second Temple Period. Yet, like most historical dichotomies, it is not completely unambiguous. Politics and theology are both systems that seek to resolve the great questions of a society, and as a result, they oftentimes intersect. The gray areas that united the two strands of messianic movements demonstrate the degree of overlap between these two epistemologies. Political messianists responded to domination by imperial powers with a renewed hope for an age in which God would reign supreme. Spiritual messianists responded to the Hellenization of religious practices and social norms, through visions of an Earthly conflict between believers and heretics. Both groups held onto essentially the same vision, the triumph of Israel over her enemies and the beginning of the Messianic era. This is not to say that the movements had identical beliefs and aims. The political and spiritual messianic movements emerged as separate responses to different problems within their society, with different methodologies for bringing about the Messianic era, and different hopes for what that era would entail. Yet, at their most essential level, all the diverse groups were responding to a sense that they were living in a time of terrible crisis by hold fast to their faith in a God who, in times of hardship, redeems His people.

# Hollywoodization of the Holocaust: The Method of Representing the Holocaust in American Films

Shahab Elliot Hakakzadeh

The Holocaust is perhaps the most disturbing and compelling event in modern history. The enormity of the Nazi genocide of the Jews haunts the contemporary mind with important historical, ethical, psychological, and theoretical questions. In the post Holocaust years, there have been genuine works on the Holocaust rooted in the necessity to furnish truthful pictures of the unprecedented horrors. One unique way of representation has been works of art, which constitute a major sphere of cultural reflection and metaphysical scrutiny.<sup>1</sup> In this analysis, I will examine how one important form art, the American cinema, meet the crucial challenge of dealing with the extraordinary nature of the Holocaust. This paper will focus on the importance of cinema as a means to convey information and in its capability to influence collective memory. While noting cinema's specific potentials and strengths, the paper will concentrate more on the limitations of films. Specifically, films based on the Holocaust are changing the way the actual event is viewed. They are making the Holocaust more universal, trivial, and entertaining. More importantly, actual history is omitted in order to entertain.

This paper covers *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959), *Holocaust* (1978), and *Schindler's List* (1993) because of their relevance to the theoretical framework and because they are turning points in Holocaust cinema.<sup>2</sup> These American films are among the most important Holocaust films, and have had quite an impact on Holocaust memory. I am attending to the role of the United States in particular because it is a nation that may appear to have little interest in disputes regarding the Holocaust memory. The United States, however, has moved to the forefront of this debate, contributing to what some analysts characterize as the "Americanization" of the Holocaust. This process involves the United States adopting an event as its own despite having little or no relation to it initially. It has popularized the genocide of the Jews and made it far more accessible to larger audiences.<sup>3</sup> In some ways, the Holocaust has become a commercial profit, what some, including Tim Cole, refer to as the "selling of the Holocaust" or the "Holocaust industry."<sup>4</sup> To counter this trend, I believe the academic world should take a greater responsibility in teaching the history.

## Theoretical Framework

For the most part, the Americanization of the Holocaust has occurred through the "Hollywoodization" of the Holocaust. Television and movie screens have significantly influenced the popular beliefs regarding the Holocaust. Film records historical events, communicates information, spreads familiar ideological views, among many other things.<sup>5</sup> Cinema offers a strong route into the collective mind. As film historian Judith Doneson notes, "Film can create and revive memory, especially in its capacity as a popular entertainment."<sup>6</sup> When film approaches a subject

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1. Ilan Avisar, *Screening the Holocaust: Cinema's Images of the Unimaginable*. (Indiana University Press 1988)
  2. I propose to analyze probably three of the most influential American films on the Holocaust. At the time these films were released, they received much attention and were tremendously popular.
  3. Ronald J. Berger, *Fathoming the Holocaust: A Social Problems Approach*, (New York 2002), 141.
  4. Tim Cole, *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler—How History is Bought, Packaged, and Sold*. (New York 1999), 1-3. Cole discusses how the Holocaust has become the most talked about and represented event of the twentieth century, and how it has become a business industry.
  5. Avisar, *Screening the Holocaust*, 4.
  6. Judith E. Doneson, *The Holocaust in American Film*, (Syracuse University Press 2002), 4.

such as the Holocaust, it brings an enormous potential to educate. However, one must first address the question whether the Holocaust can be represented via film, and if so, how? Who has the legitimacy to tell the story, and within which context? We know that with film, there is always the possibility of diluting the event, which is an issue both in terms of authentic memory of the Holocaust as well as for those concerned with the aesthetics of film. Art is usually slighted for the sake of mass appeal.<sup>7</sup>

Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, for one, argues that the Holocaust cannot be represented, because “whoever has not lived through the event can never know it. And whoever has lived through the event can never fully reveal it.”<sup>8</sup> He calls for a taboo on Holocaust representation, as words and pictures are simply insufficient to describe the enormity and uniqueness of this event, and images are not able to convey the unimaginable. Wiesel claims that there is no such thing as Holocaust literature, as the very term is a contradiction. Agreeing with Wiesel, other critics are troubled by the Holocaust being represented in popular culture, especially in films. Theodor Adorno points out, “Popular culture is entertainment,” and “entertainment is betrayal.” Adorno agrees with Wiesel that after Auschwitz, there could be no poetry, since deriving pleasure from artistic representation of pain is disagreeable, dishonorable, and ultimately might blur the distinction between victim and perpetrator. Wiesel’s call, however, has not been heeded as the Holocaust has appeared in film, television, novels, and more. Recently, the release of the blockbuster film *Schindler’s List* has made Wiesel’s assertion increasingly improbable.<sup>9</sup>

In the United States there is great concern regarding the “Americanization of the Holocaust,” resulting in violation of its sacredness and the increasing of its trivialization. Films based on the Holocaust may fictionalize events to produce drama, telescope time, avoid filling the movie with too many minor characters, and simply to be more entertaining. Feature films are obviously commercial endeavors, with economic interests. As a result, the stories have to be changed to attract moviegoers. Given certain formulaic plot additions that guarantee box office success, the event unfortunately becomes distorted through the process.<sup>10</sup> Despite this, it may still be better to have “Hollywood Holocaust” than no films at all. Since most Americans have not experienced the Holocaust, most of their information regarding the Holocaust must come from second-hand sources, the mass media being the largest of these. As Alvin Rosenfeld states, “For most people a sense of the Nazi crimes against the Jews is formed less by the record of events established by professional historians than it is by individual stories that reach us from popular films and movies.”<sup>11</sup>

We must also consider the context under which the Holocaust becomes relevant for people who have no tangible understanding of its dimensions. One proposition argues that the Holocaust enters America as a “refugee” event. The event must be reshaped and molded to make it comprehensible for the American public. Doneson recently argued that the move toward Americanization must be in a direction meaningful for Americans, for whom the Final Solution was a foreign event.<sup>12</sup> American films based on the Holocaust, which have been very influential in bringing attention to the event, have also done more to “Americanize” the event than any other medium. In this regard, American films that deal with the Holocaust serve as a dual function. While focusing on themes portraying Nazism and the persecution of the Jews, they also explore contemporary issues germane to American society at the time of their appearance. In *The Diary of*

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7. Ibid., 4.

8. Quoted in Lynn Rapaport, “Hollywood’s Holocaust: Schindler’s List and the Construction of Memory,” *Film and History*, 32,1 (2002): 56.

9. Ibid., 56.

10. Ibid., 57.

11. Alvin H. Rosenfeld, “The Americanization of the Holocaust,” *Thinking About the Holocaust after Half a Century*, (Indiana University Press 1997), 123.

12. Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 9.

*Anne Frank* (1959), the Holocaust becomes a symbol for the suffering of all people, in *Holocaust* (1978) the event also becomes a universal message for mankind; but moreover, trivialization, commercialization, and popularization are very evident. Finally, *Schindler's List* (1993) has come to represent the most valid Hollywood interpretation to date of Holocaust history, but it has vast problems in its own right.<sup>13</sup>

### The Diary of Anne Frank (1959)

Hollywood did not address the Nazis's genocidal treatment of the Jews in Europe until 1959 with the filming of *The Diary of Anne Frank*—some fifteen years after the end of the Holocaust. First published in English translation in 1952, *The Diary of Anne Frank* remains one of the best-known and best-loved stories of World War II. It was made into a play in 1955, and finally a full-length film in 1959. Despite its perception as the symbol of the Holocaust for most people, *The Diary of Anne Frank* was Americanized just like other major Holocaust films. The Americanization of the story is partly what defines Anne Frank's image for people in this country, and why they have come to cherish her so much. In a survey conducted in 1996 at the University of Michigan, *The Diary of Anne Frank* was still named as the predominant source of Holocaust education. Even those who had not read the book or seen the movie knew Anne Frank's name and could connect it to the Holocaust, which is something they could not do with Adolf Eichmann, the Warsaw Ghetto, or Dachau.<sup>14</sup> What captures audiences is Anne's universal nature, both in character and outlook, as well as her luminous optimism.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, *The Diary of Anne Frank* gives a vague understanding of this horrific event. Among many things, *The Diary of Anne Frank* is universalized—robbed of its Jewish specificity. It has become not really a story of the Holocaust, but a young girl during war.

Anne Frank has become a popular symbol of victimization. Notwithstanding the wonderful virtues of Anne and the moving story of her family, the transformation of her case into a universal symbol is a contemporary phenomenon. Lawrence Langer argues along these lines and dismisses the importance of the original story, contending that Anne's diary has been "cherished since its appearance as a celebration of human courage in the face of impending disaster."<sup>16</sup> *The Diary of Anne Frank* greatly contributes to the universalization of the Holocaust, i.e., adopting and adjusting images of the Holocaust in order to allow a broad consensus of the population to identify with the event at the cost of its Jewish particularity. As Doneson points out in *The Holocaust in American Film*, the Holocaust as a universal symbol of suffering allows Americans to find significance in an event that they did not experience.<sup>17</sup> The screenwriters probably believed that it was impossible for an American audience to identify with the characters who had been victims of Nazi racial hatred and persecution. Through minimizing the horrors involved, and decreasing the Jewishness, the likeliness of all suffering is maintained for the purpose of audience identification. Those who have faced adversity, however, will find it easier to identify with what happened to the Frank's and European Jewry.<sup>18</sup>

While trying to universalize *The Diary of Anne Frank*, the film robs the diary and the Holocaust of its Jewish specificity. For one thing, there is a vague understanding that Anne Frank was a Jew, and the film tries at its best to not make her appear "too Jewish." Religious ritual and

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13. *Ibid.*, 9.

14. Hilene Flanzbaum, *The Americanization of the Holocaust*. (The Johns Hopkins University Press 1999), 1. The basic story of Anne Frank involves Anne and her family hiding in an attic during the war years, but in the end the entire family gets killed except Anne's father, Otto Frank.

15. Peter Novich, *The Holocaust in American Life*. (Houghton Mifflin Company 1999), 117.

16. Quoted in Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 61.

17. Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 61.

18. *Ibid.*, 61.

culture are put aside, with the exception of the famous Hanukkah scene. But then again, this “Jewish” scene is Americanized in order to dissolve ethnic differences. To make a “foreign” religious rite comprehensible, the actors give the Hanukkah prayer in English, not Hebrew, a language that does not fit American landscape. The creators of the film hoped for identification of the audience with the people in hiding. In other words, “They see them, not as some strange people, but persons like themselves, thrown into this horrible situation.”<sup>19</sup> Moreover, in the diary itself Anne specifically speaks about Jewish persecutions and anti-Semitism, sections that could have easily been incorporated into the film. Instead universal remarks that do not even appear in the original diary are substituted: “We’re not the only people that’ve had to suffer. There has always been people that had to...Sometimes one race...sometimes another.”<sup>20</sup> The Jews and the Holocaust can be the symbol for the suffering of mankind.<sup>21</sup>

Though *The Diary of Anne Frank* is considered a “Holocaust” movie, this picture does not depict much from the Holocaust or the war years, but rather is a story about a girl’s journey through adolescent life. The film, and the diary itself, lack the tragic details of the unfolding process of genocide. The film does not show death camps, gas chambers, or people being murdered. The implementation of the Final Solution plays only a peripheral role, and the Holocaust is essentially the context within which the diary is written, rather than the central focus. According to Rosenfeld, “To limit one’s understanding of the Holocaust to Anne Frank’s diary is to grasp only the most preliminary outline of the coming war against the Jews.”<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the diary and the film were and continue to be the “Holocaust bible.”<sup>23</sup> The film could have focused more on the themes of the Holocaust, but it would have been difficult to universalize that aspect of the story. More importantly, by effectively separating the film from its Holocaust context, it was possible to create a film with a happy ending.

Continuing its newly found American traditions, *The Diary of Anne Frank* resorts to a truly American phenomenon—the optimistic ending (which is relevant to most Holocaust films and will be discussed later). The film ends with Anne saying, “In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart,” which is probably the motto of Anne and the film itself.<sup>24</sup> It is a film that ends “not on a note of final gloom, but of moral triumph.”<sup>25</sup> This was an intentional decision on the part of the director Garson Kanin. He justified the upbeat ending on the grounds that he did not wish to inflict depression on an audience. As Cole describes, “Hollywood opted to give Anne Frank a happy and hopeful ending, rather than death from sickness in the overcrowded filth of a Bergen-Belsen barrack.”<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the film really celebrates the struggle for harmony in the midst of impending disruption. As psychotherapist Bruno Bettelheim suggested, this ending is actually a negation of the reality of Auschwitz; that is if man is good, then Auschwitz could not exist. He contends, “The universal success of *The Diary of Anne Frank* suggests how much the tendency to deny the reality of the camps is still with us.”<sup>27</sup> So in a sense, the film tries to change and ignore history for sales purposes.

Compared to the Hollywood version of Anne, the real Anne Frank knew much more about the events transpiring around her. In her diary, Anne stated, “There is in people simply an urge to destroy, an urge to kill, to murder and rage, and until all mankind, without exception, undergoes a great change, wars will be waged.”<sup>28</sup> The question then arises as to why the film is so optimistic

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19. Ibid., 74.

20. Stated in the film *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959).

21. Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 76.

22. Rosenfeld, *The Americanization*, 116-17.

23. Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, 23.

24. Stated in the last minutes of *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959).

25. Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, 34.

26. Ibid., 34.

27. Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 77.

28. Quoted in Avisar, *Screening the Holocaust*, 120.

when it is dealing with such a tragic event? The answer to this question partly lies with the other pictures yet to be discussed. But simply, if films are too heart rending, they would not draw the public, leaving films, such as *The Diary of Anne Frank*, without as much sales.<sup>29</sup>

Altogether, *The Diary of Anne Frank* is not simply a Holocaust film, but more of a symbol and metaphor for that era. Anne Frank's suffering stands for all suffering. We are not the only ones to suffer, says Anne; sometimes one race, and sometimes another.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the film tries to make the general point on what could happen when racism prevails, perhaps as a warning to the American public and its treatment of minorities. This film was in essence the first international popularization of the Holocaust. Nevertheless, it was the American imagination that decided how the Holocaust was to be remembered, ironically making it an American memory. And this American memory is not allowed a hint of the pessimism but only speaks optimistically of an enduring belief in human goodness in spite of everything. The "Hollywood" Anne Frank is a new creation who comes and offers reassurance that the central tenet of liberalism—that humans are essentially good—is still valid.<sup>31</sup> *The Diary of Anne Frank* evolves from a European to an American work of a universal symbol of the Holocaust. It became the leading factor in the universalization of the Holocaust.<sup>32</sup> *The Diary of Anne Frank*, however, was only the beginning of this phenomenon.

### Holocaust (1978)

Without a doubt, the most important moment in the entry of Holocaust into general American consciousness was NBC's presentation, in April 1978, of the miniseries *Holocaust*. More than 120 million Americans watched all or most of the four-part, 9 ½ hour program. It was observed that more information about the Holocaust was imparted to Americans over these four nights than over all of the preceding thirty years. *Holocaust* was probably the threshold event in the dynamics of Holocaust consciousness in America, and among the first popular films to focus on the Final Solution as a specifically Jewish event.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, *Holocaust* served as a catalyst for resurgent fascination with the World War II era, and furthered the penetration of the event into the American popular consciousness. *Holocaust* presents two parallel dramas: the unfolding of the Final Solution experienced by the Jewish Weiss family, and the stage of planning and annihilation of the Jews by the Nazi hierarchy, mostly planned by the Nazi Eric Dorf. The Weiss family is uprooted, deported, and killed (with the exception of the youngest son, Rudi).

While *Holocaust* increased people's knowledge, it also dramatized an actual event. This miniseries took Nazi atrocities out of the province of specialized study and made it into a "prime-time" phenomenon—with both the benefits of exposure and the drawbacks of distortion. *Holocaust* illustrates the rewards and tendencies inherent in films made for mass audiences—from the power of sensitizing, to the danger of romanticizing and trivializing. Most importantly,

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29. Ibid., 121.

30. Stated in *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959).

31. Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, 35.

32. *The Diary of Anne Frank* was the beginning of universalizing the Holocaust. In general, later Holocaust films have also tried to universalize their films as well, such that at the present time, the Holocaust has been assimilated into the American sensibility, ultimately constructing a distinctive framework or paradigm that assists the population, when confronted by starvation in Somalia or ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, for example. See Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 83, 222.

33. Jeffrey Shandler, "Schindler's discourse: America Discusses the Holocaust and its Mediation, from NBC's Miniseries to Spielberg's Film," In Yosefa Loshitzky, *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List* (Indiana University Press 1997), 153.

*Holocaust* blurs the distinction between fact and fiction, such that fictional characters are acting out history.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, this Miniseries was faithful to the narrative conventions of Hollywood's "formula." Its story is too contrived (almost everything important to the history of the Third Reich and the persecution of the Jews from 1933 to 1945 happens to the members of two families), and there is also a happy ending (the young hero Rudi makes it to Israel). Probably at no point does *Holocaust* convey the impression of searing pain or unendurable anguish, or represent the actual experiences of starvation, suffocation, and other incidents of Nazi atrocities. The characters do face forced separation between lovers, the death of close friends or family, and social corruption. Despite its great success and the information it conveys, the miniseries still has aesthetic shortcomings. *Time* magazine writer Lance Morrow points out, "One senses something wrong with the television effort when one realizes that two to three black-and-white concentration camp still photographs [displayed in the context of narrative by a fictional SS officer]—the stacked, starved bodies—are more powerful and heartbreaking than two to three hours of dramatization."<sup>35</sup> Undoubtedly, films and movies based on the Holocaust, just like the miniseries, do their best to diminish the horrors of the actual atrocities and to present a bland drama that fails to provoke a sustained aesthetic reaction corresponding to the extremity of the authentic human sufferings.<sup>36</sup>

Universalization and commercialization are also themes in *Holocaust*. Rather than writing a film about average Jews in Europe, the writer of the film, Gerald Green, instead wanted an upper-middle class, assimilated German family to be the leading roles of the film, so that Americans, both Jewish and non-Jewish, could more readily identify with them. To universalize the story, Green used the Jewish Weiss family, who do not appear to be very different from an American family; and the viewer watching the insanity of the tragedy can almost recognize them as his neighbors. More generally, universalization implied focusing on the centrality of the Jewish suffering during the Final Solution and applying its lesson to modern evil. An issue that offended many was the commercialization of the show, such as the intrusive use of commercials during a program dealing with such an issue. But it must be remembered that television is a profit-making industry in the United States, and that this film was no exception.<sup>37</sup>

*Holocaust* was an extremely powerful and controversial film, and it had its fair share of critics. The title of the program, for example, was one issue that angered many. Among them, Elie Wiesel was especially disturbed, because he believed it distorted the meaning of the event. Holocaust, a TV drama? Holocaust, a work of semi-fact and semi-fiction?<sup>38</sup> On the day the NBC series aired, Wiesel remarked in a *New York Times* article entitled "Trivializing the Holocaust: Semi-Fact and Semi-Fiction:"

Untrue, offensive, cheap...an insult to those who perished and to those who survived...It transforms an ontological event into a soap opera...We see long, endless processions of Jews marching toward Babi Yar...We see the naked bodies covered with "blood"—and it is all make believe. The Holocaust is unique; not just another event. This series treats the Holocaust as if it were just another event...Auschwitz cannot be explained nor can it be visualized...The dead are in possession of a secret that we, the living, are neither worthy of nor capable of recovering...The Holocaust is the ultimate event, the ultimate mystery, never to be comprehended or transmitted. Only those who were there know what it was; the others will never know.<sup>39</sup>

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34. Annette Insdorf, *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust*. (Cambridge University Press 2003), 4-5.

35. Quoted in Avisar, *Screening the Holocaust*, 129

36. *Ibid.*, 130.

37. Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 185.

38. *Ibid.*, 173.

39. Elie Wiesel, "Trivializing the Holocaust," *New York Times*, 16 April 1978, 2:1.

These are truly strong words by the Holocaust scholar and survivor Wiesel, who was quite offended by the Miniseries. Other writers in the popular press in 1978 and after, like Wiesel, attacked *Holocaust* as sacrilegious. The critic Molly Haskel argued, “How can actors, how dare actors, presume to imagine and tell us what it felt like!” She added, “The Holocaust is simply too vast, the elimination of 6 million people from the earth too incomprehensible, to fit into...the reductive context of the small screen.”<sup>40</sup> The assertion that only those who were there can know what it was like is in a sense profoundly true. At the same time, it again makes a sharper than justified distinction between the Holocaust experience and others. In this vein, Raul Hilberg wrote, “If you were not there, you cannot imagine what it was like.” Nevertheless, this is probably a good reason why many were fascinated with watching the miniseries worldwide. It was in fact the very “falsity” of Green’s teleplay that enabled it to fulfill its mission—to move and inform those without any desire to be moved and informed. There had obviously been other films based on the Holocaust, but none of them ever achieved the audience or occasioned as much discussion as *Holocaust* in 1978.<sup>41</sup>

Gerald Green’s *Holocaust*, like most other Holocaust films has a happy ending, which is another issue that angers some. Lawrence Langer, who has written extensively on Holocaust literature, is bothered by the Americanization of *Holocaust*; by which he means the upbeat finish to a film that of necessity demands a gloomy ending. To do otherwise, according to Langer, is to negate the impact of all that predates it as well as defeat the reality of the Final Solution. Though *Holocaust* has a happy ending (though probably not as happy as *Schindler’s List*), *Holocaust* in essence strengthens the Zionist viewpoint that Jews can fight and resist but that weak, passive Diaspora Jews usually do not. Rudi Weiss, the only survivor of the Weiss family says to his family at the beginning of the film, “They mean to kill us all, but they won’t kill me without a fight.” And according to Green, that is perhaps the moral of *Holocaust*. Rudi is indeed the bridge between the Holocaust and Israel. The Jew who fights back is the Jew who survives; and Rudi is the prototype of the new Jew—the Israeli.<sup>42</sup>

This is not to say that the miniseries did not have its positive side. For one thing, many became fascinated with the subject. The number of books and films dramatically increased following the showing of the Miniseries. More impressive is the fact that since the showing of *Holocaust*, a number of major public school systems incorporated into their curricula required courses and topics on the Holocaust, which is probably a better method of learning about the event than through the media.

*Holocaust* is seen by many as a metaphor that helps us deal with contemporary tragedy and avoid future disaster. Though this film identifies the Final Solution, particularly as a Jewish event, one of the main purposes of the Miniseries was to have a contemporary paradigm. *Holocaust* as a metaphor teaches us a contemporary lesson. As America becomes a nation of immigrants, *Holocaust* reminds us not to renege on America’s principles, as it happened when lack of concern for the Jews paved the road to Auschwitz.<sup>43</sup> In defense of *Holocaust*, Gerald Green defending his stance in an article by writing that *Holocaust* is very influential, and that every major newspaper and magazine critic, every major religious group, and educational group have found *Holocaust* stirring, important, and of high moral value. Green quotes Frank Rich by saying, “No movie or show can make an audience feel what it was like to be a Jew in the Holocaust..., but *Holocaust* does a lot to increase our comprehension of its unfathomable subject.”<sup>44</sup>

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40. Shandler, *Schindler’s Discourse*, 158.

41. Novich, *The Holocaust in American Life*, 212.

42. Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 159. Whereas in *Holocaust* there is only one surviving Jewish character that the viewer has followed along, in *Schindler’s List* there is a much happier ending in where 1,100 Jews survive and all of the Jewish characters one has attached to.

43. Doneson, *The Holocaust*, 191.

44. Gerald Green, “In Defense of *Holocaust*,” *New York Times*, 23 April 1978, 2:1.

## Schindler's List (1993)

The third major film that has had great impact on the shaping of Holocaust memory is Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*. Directed by probably the most famous Hollywood director, the film was seen by approximately 25 million Americans at movie theaters and 65 million Americans when it was first shown on television. One can say that *Schindler's List* has become for the present generation the most important source of historical information affecting popular perception of the Holocaust. It is a movie with a considerable impact—responsible for what one writer described as the emergence of a “Schindler's List Effect.”<sup>45</sup> For some, *Schindler's List* almost holds the status of a primary source. It is not seen simply as a representation, but as the real thing. Teachers across the country use this film to educate students about this horrific crime. However, one must question whether *Schindler's List* portrays reality. Does the movie convey information about the Holocaust, or is it simply influenced by the Americanization aspect?

Spielberg declared the film a document, and tried to make it as realistic as possible. To accomplish this, he shot the film at actual sites such as Krakow. Spielberg also wanted to treat the Holocaust as a central event of modern history and as a compelling human experience. He wanted *Schindler's List* to usurp the privileged position of a serious artwork that makes a definitive statement about the Holocaust. The black-and-white photography and the length of the film (185 minutes) exemplify this drive to convey a sense of its generic identity as a historical epic. Nevertheless, *Schindler's List* ought to be recognized as a film that marshals the familiar Hollywood cinematic technique of the Hollywoodization of the Holocaust.

Spielberg's *Schindler's List* is ultimately an “Americanized” story of the Holocaust, which fosters particular national values and celebrates certain fundamental values associated with the American culture. Spielberg has not given us a documentary film in *Schindler's List*, but the contemporary example of the “Hollywood Holocaust.” Much like contemporary popular American Holocaust institutions, the Hollywoodization of the Holocaust is to be expected from a popular director who makes fantasy films. As Cole mentions, “The man who gave us *E.T.* also has given us the Hollywood Holocaust hero Oskar Schindler, and the man who gave us *Jaws* has also given us the Hollywood Holocaust villain Amon Goeth.”<sup>46</sup>

The story of Oskar Schindler, a German who eventfully saves approximately 1,100 Jews, is a story of the Holocaust which takes place within the context of the Second World War. However, *Schindler's List* exclusively focuses on the story of Schindler and his deeds during the war, with much less emphasis on Hitler, World War II, and other major players. We must then decide if *Schindler's List* is a story about the Holocaust or Oskar Schindler? According to Thomas Kennealy, the author of the book *Schindler's List*, which the movie is based on, “You could look through Oskar and see every phase of that period of history that we know as the Holocaust, because he was involved in every part of it.”<sup>47</sup> Spielberg defends himself by claiming that *Schindler's List* is not “the Holocaust story,” but rather “a Holocaust story.” Spielberg, however, created a new image of the Holocaust now seared on the public consciousness, which will have a lasting impact. It is very problematic to have audiences, who are mostly not well educated about the Holocaust, confuse one Holocaust story with “the Holocaust story.”

In *Schindler's List*, Spielberg gives us a “Holocaust” where one good man makes a difference, rather than a “Holocaust” characterized by the banality of evil and the indifference of many. In stressing Schindler's heroism and Jewish passivity, Spielberg adopts a gendered typed approach. Similar to *Holocaust*, where the weak Jew Karl (played by James Woods) needs the reassurance of his Christian wife Inga (Meryl Streep), Spielberg portrays Jews as weak and

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45. Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, 24.

46. *Ibid.*, 76.

47. Quoted in Rapaport, *Hollywood's Holocaust*, 60.

Christians as heroes. Heroism is given a masculine face and victimhood a feminine one as Spielberg suggests that for the weak feminine Jew to be saved there needs to be a strong Gentile man. For Spielberg, that savior is Schindler, who is the epitome of masculinity. In the end, Spielberg's Holocaust has been simplified to a story of "good versus evil." The result is that the film ignores any consideration of the structural context of the mass murder of Europe's Jews. By situating this murder within the classic categories of hero and villain, Spielberg takes the Holocaust out of history. The film does not focus on perpetrators and victims, but rather on rescuers and survivors. As a result, the film displaces the evidence and documentation on which it is based and acts in people's minds as a pretext of historical evidence.<sup>48</sup>

Most significantly, *Schindler's List* is a Holocaust film that has a happy-ever-after story. It is a story based on rescue and survival—which many would argue is not the story of the Holocaust. It is a story of Nazis saving Jews. As I have already mentioned, the 1959 film *The Diary of Anne Frank* closes with the reassurance that "in spite of everything, people are really good at heart." It is in these words of Anne that we take with us a symbol of hope and strength rather than despair. Thus, the "Hollywood Anne" comforts us that people are still decent, thus silencing any challenge that the Holocaust might make to our naïve optimism in human nature. The same is mostly true with *Holocaust*, when one is reassured that resistance and struggle will get one through, after we watch the hero Rudi survive and make it to Israel. *Schindler's List*, though similar to these films, is quite different in that it also offers us a happy ending, where the 1,100 Schindler Jews survive, rather than one where the 6 million Jews not on the list are killed. But while in *The Diary of Anne Frank* only Otto Frank survives and in *Holocaust* only one of the family's child survive, in *Schindler's List* virtually every character in whom the audience has emotionally invested lives. Thus, Spielberg has given us a movie about World War II in which all the Jews live. As Joshua Green of *The Los Angeles Times* writes, "After liberation from death camps, black and white did not turn to color, nor did survivors link arms and walk over a hill singing Israeli songs, as occurred in *Schindler's List*... That's entertainment, not history."<sup>49</sup>

It is very troubling that many will rely on *Schindler's List* as their main source for perceiving and understanding the Holocaust. The film's slogan, "The list is life," is probably the complete opposite of the most typical Jewish Holocaust experience—execution, starvation, and death. Most importantly, the film leaves out the most important aspect of the Jewish experience of the Holocaust—genocide. *Schindler's List* also leaves out the social context of the war, anti-Semitism, and the host of other factors which influenced the course of events. This film is less a history of Nazism or a history of the Holocaust, and more an uplifting example of well-intentioned and well-executed Hollywood filmmaking.<sup>50</sup>

In reality, the Holocaust was quite different from the Hollywood Holocaust. Among many issues, Hollywood gives us optimism rather than historical pessimism. In *Schindler's List*, we see the execution of Goeth, comforting us that justice has been done. We then see the survivors walk past Schindler's tomb. It is doubtful that a happy ending to a Holocaust story is an appropriate way to conclude any telling of the Holocaust. Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer notes the acclaimed French director Claude Lanzmann, who made the 1985 Holocaust documentary film *Shoah* and knew that he could not have a happy ending to a film on the Holocaust.<sup>51</sup> Lanzmann closes his film not with a note of triumph, but one of despair. The final words in the film, by Simchah Rotem, a participant of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, are, "I am the last Jew. I will wait for the morning, and for the German." In many ways, *Shoah* has an appropriate ending to the story, but even this film may be too happy a ending because of redemption. In *Shoah*, Rotem is alive and able to reflect

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48. Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, 83-7.

50. Rapaport, *Hollywood's Holocaust*, 61.

51. *Ibid.*, 62.

52. Stated in Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, 87.

back on his feelings, actually speaking in Israel.<sup>52</sup> As mentioned before, Zionist closures are very common in Holocaust films. In *Holocaust*, this is by far the ending theme of the miniseries. Like *Holocaust*, Spielberg begins his film in Europe, but ends it in Israel. These films, like many others submit the experience of the Holocaust to the Zionist perspective, which sees the creation of Israel as a process of secular redemption. According to Saul Friedlander, they “suggest a mythic link between the destruction of European Jewry and the birth of Israel—i.e. catastrophe and redemption—which in turn, give a new understanding to the Jews of the Diaspora, as victims or survivors.”<sup>53</sup>

*Schindler's List* is not the best method to learn or remember the Holocaust. We cannot completely blame Spielberg's film or other Hollywood epics. Undoubtedly, some are right when they claim that no film can recreate an inhuman reality. Neither *Schindler's List* nor the others can be blamed for not depicting gassings or emaciated bodies of concentration camp inmates. We are obviously not seeing things as they actually were, but rather seeing things as Hollywood has made them. Hollywood, from Anne Frank to Oskar Schindler, offers a Holocaust that “still believes that humans are good at heart.”<sup>54</sup> It is not only *Schindler's List* or Hollywood that blurs images and reality by presenting a virtual Holocaust that threatens to usurp the Holocaust of history. The problem may lie in a generational gap. For Spielberg and others, what matters more may be survival. As Cole points out, “The mourning over the six million Jews who perished in Europe is symbolically transformed into a celebration of the approximately five million Jews living in America.”<sup>55</sup> Hollywood and this modern generation have probably forgotten the dead and remember only the living, as a film like *Schindler's List* portrays.

## Conclusion

The mass media is an integral means for teaching about the Holocaust, and it is how our society can remember, represent, and commemorate this tragic event of the twentieth century. Feature films, such as *Holocaust* and *Schindler's List*, is where a majority of the public will come to learn about the Holocaust. They are widely distributed, widely viewed, and easily digested. The 1994 American Jewish Committee's Survey on “What Americans Know about the Holocaust,” found that twice as many adults gained their knowledge about the Holocaust from television and movies, than from books. As Primo Levi notes, “the gap that exists grows wider every year between things as they were in the camps and things as they are represented by the current imagination fed by approximated books, films, and myths.” Major films such as *Schindler's List* are teaching people about the Holocaust, but actual history is not gained through the images of such a film.<sup>56</sup> For films to overcome some of their problems, they need to retain more of a relationship with historical reality. This means that they must show the main stages in the genocide process: identify the Jews as victims, personal actions and decisions, recorded events, and more. Holocaust films must not only entertain, but also contain truth. For the time being, it may be best to call on the academic community to monitor Holocaust representation to prevent Levi's hypothesis. While Holocaust films have definitely increased people's awareness of the Holocaust, it is not certain it has increased their understanding of the event. If academia takes a stronger role in teaching Holocaust history, less people will come to rely on Holocaust films to learn about history.

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53. Ibid., 87.

54. Yosefa Loshitzky, “Holocaust Others: Spielberg's *Schindler's List* versus Lanzmann's *Shoah*,” in Loshitzky, *Spielberg's Holocaust*, 115.

55. Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, 93.

56. Ibid., 93.

57. Rapaport, *Hollywood's Holocaust*, 64.

## **Paralyzed Between Opponents: American Failure to Prevent the 1967 Arab-Israeli War**

**Noah Matthew Gellman**

Top officials of the Israeli government decided they could not wait any longer. The time was just after daybreak, the date, June 5, 1967. For two weeks, the Israelis had nervously watched as Egyptian President Nasser called for the withdrawal of the U.N.E.F. from the Israeli-Egyptian border, built up his own forces in Sinai, and closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping. In 1967, Israel was a small country of two million that was just a few miles wide at its narrowest point, and surrounded by hostile enemy neighbors. Israeli officials knew that if war broke out, their best opportunity to win would come from a preemptive Israeli strike. The crisis had been building for two weeks, but the Israelis had thus far been restrained by the United States. The Israeli Defense Forces had mobilized and had been waiting, but for how long could they wait? The United States was restraining Israel from engaging their enemy, but what was the United States doing to ensure Israel's survival? American diplomats had time and again assured Israel that a preemptive strike was a poor course of action. They insisted that the United States would reopen the Straits and cool Arab ambitions so that the area could return to a pre-crisis status quo. But the United States could not follow through. The question then arises, why did the United States, despite of its power, fail to prevent the Arab-Israeli crisis and the ensuing war?

In 1967 the United States' Middle East objectives could be classified into two categories: maintaining friendly relations with Arab nations and ensuring the survival of Israel. In late May 1967, the United States would find these objectives difficult to achieve when opposing enemies, both of which the U.S. supported, began to escalate hostilities. Secretary of State Dean Rusk best described the American position in the origins of the crisis, "There had been a general recognition that (the U.S.) cannot stay out of the problems of the Near East and that the Arabs cannot be permitted to drive the Israelis into the sea."<sup>1</sup>

To protect Israel, the U.S. had to stop a war from commencing, but to please the Arabs the U.S. could not appear to be taking the side of Israel. The Arabs produced stern warnings for the Americans; Saudi Arabian Petroleum Minister Yamani recommended "that the U.S. keep (its) hands off the crisis, work through the UN and not try to be a policeman...If the U.S. does not stay out of this conflict, the U.S. is finished in the Middle East."<sup>2</sup> But if the United States was to resolve the crisis diplomatically, it had little time to do so. From the moment Nasser closed the Straits, Israel was prepared to launch a first strike to neutralize the Egyptian threat. Eugene Rostow, Special Assistant to the President, describes the U.S. policy predicament:

I am gravely concerned at the time factor. An Israeli ultimatum...would open up a dramatic prospect of great power confrontation in an area where, as I said to you the other day, none of us can hope to control local combatants, except by such direct military combatants on one side or the other as to constitute an unavoidable challenge to the other side.<sup>3</sup>

But direct military action was out of the question, yet the U.S. remained short on time.

The U.S. needed to use its power to defuse the crisis and move the predicament to the U.N. By moving the crisis to the U.N., the United States could reopen the Straits, appear impartial in the

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1. "Document 43: Memorandum of Conversation, May 24, 1967," in United States, Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Arab-Israeli War, 1967* (Washington D.C.:GPO, 1998) [FRUS Arab-Israeli War]
  2. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 56: Memorandum of Record- May 24, 1967
  3. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 97: Telegram from Rostow to LBJ in Texas- May 28, 1967

region, and prevent war against Israel. Secretary Rusk summed up the U.S. position when advising his ambassadors, “If asked regarding our basic intention, you should respond our aim is to remove present danger to peace and resolve the current problem by means of international action through the United Nations.”<sup>4</sup> Regardless of U.S. efforts, on June 5<sup>th</sup>, the war began. Where did the U.S. go wrong, and why? Despite its power, did the U.S. fail in its objective to avert war and move the crisis into the U.N.?

## Reopening the Straits of Tiran

The U.S. strategy to handle the crisis developed into a two-fold approach. The preliminary U.S. objectives were to reopen the Straits of Tiran with a multilateral maritime force as well as to prevent the Israelis from initiating a preemptive strike. The United States believed that if both these objectives could be achieved, the crisis could be defused and could then be resolved in the U.N. This strategy made the most sense to American officials. Reopening the Straits to Israeli shipping would remove the Israeli rationale for war. Meanwhile, an international fleet would comprise the force to open the Strait, so the U.S. would not be seen as directly aiding Israel against an Arab opponent.

Furthermore, the United States discouraged an Israeli preemptive strike to buy the time the U.S. needed to create the multilateral force or to get the crisis in the U.N. This approach not only disassociated the U.S. with Israel, but also to protect Israel (if Israel did initiate hostilities, the U.S. would not be able to help her.) But the strategy was flawed. The U.S. did not actually intend to open the Straits because such action was not diplomatically or politically possible. In the end, an opening of the Straits of Tiran would run counter to U.S. overarching objectives in the region. The maritime option was pursued with little intensity and in reality it was an excuse to buy time in an effort to appease the Israelis and move the crisis to the U.N. Unable to buy the time it needed and unaware of Israeli anxiety until it was too late, the U.S. failed to achieve its objective of a U.N. solution.

To defuse the crisis, the U.S. attempted to reopen the Straits of Tiran to satisfy Israel and to appear impartial to the Arabs. This effort to buy time by creating a multilateral maritime force, however, would not work because the U.S. was not and could not be serious about implementing such an option. The odds of the United States’ success in reopening the Straits, while pleasing both the Arabs and Israelis, were very low.

The United States knew it would not achieve an international maritime force. Rather than giving up the idea, the U.S. used the channel to buy time. The military plan to open the Straits was titled Operation Red Sea Regatta. It called for a two-step approach. First, maritime nations would assert the right of free passage through the Straits. Second, military ships would escort freighters through the Straits while, if necessary, British and U.S. bombers would neutralize the UAR airfields.<sup>5</sup> But Regatta was flawed. To begin with, the operation called for U.S. military support. American officials, however, were opposed to committing troops to the region because the military was already committed to Vietnam, not to mention public intolerance of another foreign war.<sup>6</sup> This removed U.S. military involvement in the region as an option. The ‘Arabists’ in the State Department and Arab ambassadors feared that if the U.S. did move to open the Straits, then a violent confrontation with Nasser was more likely to occur.<sup>7</sup>

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4. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 111: Circular telegram from State Department to all posts- May 31, 1967

5. Oren, 105

6. Oren, 105

7. William B. Quandt, *United States Policy in the Middle East: Constraints and Choices*—Prepared under grant from The Ford Foundation (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1970). 41

U.S. engagement against an Arab country ran counter to overarching U.S. policy in the region, and the handling of the crisis was no exception. By the end of May, the NSC had made clear to Rostow and the President that the maritime option was flawed and would not satisfy U.S. objectives. Harold Saunders of the NSC wrote, "We argued that our policy (of opening the straits) worked to Israel's best interest too. Now we are committed to side with Israel and, in opening the Straits of Tiran, even to wage war on the Arabs. In short, we have chosen sides-not with the constructive Arabs and Israel but with Israel alone against all Arabs."<sup>8</sup>

The United States, however, thought that perhaps the threat of a maritime force would cause Nasser to back down and Regatta would never actually have to be implemented. This strategy was also flawed. U.S. policymakers were aware that, "The Arabs would consider any multilateral force, no matter how constituted, to be an instrument of U.S. policy."<sup>9</sup> With a primary American goal being to please the Arab nations by appearing impartial to both Israel and the Arabs, a maritime force, even if multinational and only a threat, was an impossible option. U.S. top officials received more warnings along the same lines from the Defense Department. In a memorandum to his superior, Deputy Assistant Secretary Hoops wrote:

It would not be possible to present a western blockade running as simply an assertion of a recognized international right. Those propaganda media would almost certainly succeed in branding the U.S. as the ally and protector of Israel against Arabs...(In doing so) Nasser could severely damage United States and West Europe, politically and economically, without firing a shot.<sup>10</sup>

A maritime force, therefore, was not seriously considered by the United States. Moving on the idea of opening the Straits, the U.S. would be setting itself up for disaster and would fail to achieve its Arab objective; therefore the U.S. did not try to create a multilateral maritime force.

Aside from failing to pursue a maritime option, the United States was not capable of obtaining the support of other countries or agreeing on a plan of execution. By June 4, the United States had no military commitments from any other countries. Operational support, if it did come, would only come from the U.K., Australia, and the Netherlands.<sup>11</sup> The United States sought the participation of far more than three countries. To make matters worse, the United States could not agree with these three other nations, most notably the U.K., on how to execute a forceful reopening of the Straits.<sup>12</sup> By June 5, no action had been taken, no other nations had agreed to help, and the United States was less serious about carrying out its intention to reopen the Strait than ever before. The United States realized that it would have to go it alone if the Straits were to be opened and this, like many other factors, ran in direct contradiction to the unbiased position the U.S. was trying to present the Arabs.

A multinational maritime force would not serve U.S. objectives nor would it serve the objectives of the other participating nations. For this reason, the United States gave up on the idea of a multinational force or even a forceful reopening of the Straits. Rostow admitted to the President, "We may not succeed: Probably we shall not."<sup>13</sup> The same message was reflected by other officials who were closely monitoring the crisis. In Cairo, the American Ambassador noted, "I have come to the conclusion that there is no prospect for success of our present tactic of mobilizing maritime powers to reopen the Straits, except by exercise of military force which would

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8. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 114: Memorandum by Harold Saunders of NSC to Rostow and attachment 1- May 31, 1967

9. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 126: Memorandum from National Board of Estimates- June 1, 1967

10. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 137: Memorandum from Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Affairs Hoops to McNamara- June 2, 1967

11. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 144: Memorandum from Rostow to LBJ- June 4, 1967

12. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 58: Memorandum of Conversation- May 25, 1967

13. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 87: Telegram from Rostow to LBJ in Texas- May 28, 1967

be out of proportion to real U.S. interests at stake and would have most damaging repercussions on U.S. position throughout the Arab world.”<sup>14</sup>

We may ask why the U.S. continued to maintain the appearance of pursuing an international campaign to open of the Straits. When Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran and created the crisis, the United States initiated a policy of reopening the Straits to calm the Israelis. On May 24, “The Cabinet had decided to authorize steps to assure the right of innocent passage through the Straits with a thought in mind that this could be a deterrent to Israeli action.”<sup>15</sup> Though the cabinet was optimistic at the onset, that attitude quickly shifted. The U.S. government, most notably The Pentagon, was skeptical of using an international fleet and did little to bring it into existence.<sup>16</sup> But Defense Secretary McNamara, along with his colleagues, had reassured Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eben that the United States was committed to reopening the Straits.<sup>17</sup> The United States wanted to prevent war in the region, especially a war initiated by Israel. To prevent an Israeli first strike, the U.S. had to assure the Israelis that the United States would reopen the Straits, thereby removing Israel’s motivation for initiating war. The Vice President summed up American mentality when he said, “At the end of the road, we have a large stake in keeping the Straits open. Unless Israel thinks we are going to back them, it will attack.”<sup>18</sup> Despite knowing that a multilateral naval force was out of the question, the U.S. had to maintain that this was the U.S. course of action to hold back the Israelis.

Desiring to work through the U.N., the United States had a vital interest in buying time and prolonging the outbreak of war in an effort to move the crisis into the chambers of the Security Council. Here in lies the United States failure. The U.S. did not buy enough time. It simply overestimated the amount of time before the Israelis would strike, thereby not using American power effectively. Even though Eban had told President Johnson that the Israelis believed Egypt was preparing to strike, President Johnson wasted time by choosing to exhaust the U.N. before putting together a coalition. The President did not believe Eban, so he continued with his policy.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the United States did not appreciate the level of Israeli urgency until a few days before the war actually broke out. Aware that the maritime force was inept, United States policy morphed into appeasing the Israelis by attempting to convince them the U.S. would open the Straits. Despite U.S. power and Israeli dependence on America, the United States failed to convince the Israelis not to attack. Just before war broke out, the Israelis called the Americans on their bluff and exposed American failure. “Our (Israel’s) view is that the United States does not intend to open the Tiran blockade forcibly or to take concrete steps in the near future in order to solve the problem between Egypt and Israel. Yet we do think that the U.S. understands our need to act, and we believe that we must act.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Preventing a Preemptive Strike**

“(The United States) will expect Israel to take no unilateral military action to open the Straits until all peaceful means have been fully utilized. It further believes that since military

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14. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 128: Telegram from Embassy in UAR to State Department- June 2, 1967

15. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 43: Memorandum of Conversation- May 24, 1967

16. Quandt, 43

17. William B. Quandt, 42

18. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 72: Memorandum for the record- May 26, 1967

19. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 77: Memorandum of Conversation- May 26, 1967

20. Oren, 151

activities at this particular point would be very likely to open up general hostilities in the area, the issue of the Straits of Tiran should be handled as an international matter. In this effort, Israel will have the full support of the United States.”<sup>21</sup> The United States’ approach of buying time so to move the crisis into the U.N. was the strategy the U.S. developed to please both the Arabs and Israelis. The U.S. was therefore opposed to an Israeli preemptive strike because this course of action would do no good for either side and would prevent the crisis from being solved by the Security Council. The U.S. strategy to buy time, so to move the crisis to the U.N., was centered on halting an Israeli preemptive strike because the U.S. did not believe the Arabs would initiate hostilities. The general feeling among U.S. officials was that Nasser would welcome, but not seek a military showdown with Israel. His forces were stationed in a defensive position and not in a position to attack.<sup>22</sup> President Johnson furthered this assessment when, speaking on CIA information, he advised his cabinet, “The U.S. assessment does not agree with that of the Israelis: our best judgment is that no military attack on Israel is immanent, and, moreover, if Israel is attacked, our judgment is that Israel would lick them.” Consequently, American desire to quell a preemptive strike did not open Israel to vulnerabilities, rather the U.S. attempted to prevent an Israeli first strike because they knew that the Arabs would not strike first. Even if they did, the U.S. was confident that Israel would still win.

The Israelis did not share this confidence. The prevention of Israeli hostilities was done not only to buy time, but to support Israel as well. To add weight to its policy, the United States took a hard stance against Israeli preemptive action. President Johnson made clear to the Israelis that, “Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go alone.”<sup>23</sup> Acting with the knowledge that Israel would prevail in war regardless of who attacked first, Johnson appeared to be threatening Israel with no U.S. support should Israel initiate hostilities. Johnson had an additional motivation for making that statement. Johnson was warning that should Israel take preemptive action, they would truly have no help. With respect to an Israeli first attack, neither international perception nor the United States Congress would approve U.S. military support for an aggressor. In a memo that reached to the highest office, American position was defined as, “Though we have ourselves chosen force to stop aggression in Vietnam, we argued strongly against pre-emptive war on the basis of our own decision not to use this device against the U.S.S.R. and because world opinion would not permit us to come to the aid of an aggressor.”<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, Congressional support for an aggressor was limited. Considering that there would be no international support for Israel, should they act preemptively, “Secretaries Rusk and McNamara made it very clear that...there is a passionate aversion on the hill to any unilateral action by the U.S.”<sup>25</sup>

Aside from a lack of Congressional and international support, should Israel strike first they would open themselves up to yet another enemy, the U.S.S.R. Soviet Premier Kosygin wrote President Johnson, “Should Israel commit aggression, and military operations begin, then we will render aid to those countries that are subjected to aggression.”<sup>26</sup> The United States wanted to buy time, but they also wanted to support Israel. In light of CIA assessments, the President warned Israel not to strike first and that if they did they would be fighting alone. This warning was issued not only to scare Israel and buy time, but also because the U.S. was sending a warning to the Israelis that under no circumstances of Israeli preemptive action could the U.S. be of any help.

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21. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 36: Letter from Rostow to Israeli Ambassador Harmen- May 22, 1967

22. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 100: Telegram from Embassy in UAR to State Department- May 30, 1967

23. George Lenczowski, *American Presidents and the Middle East* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990). 108

24. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 114: Memorandum by Harold Saunders of the NSC to President Special Assistant Rostow and attachment- May 31, 1967

25. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 130: Memorandum of conversation- June 2, 1967

26. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 84: Letter from Kosygin to LBJ- May 30, 1967

The United States wanted to prevent an Israeli preemptive attack to protect Israel and to buy time, even at the cost of ignoring past U.S.-Israeli promises and U.N. guarantees. Acting under the belief that the Arabs would not initiate hostilities and that Israel would win regardless, the United States moved to ignore past promises in a failed attempt to protect Israel from war. In February of 1957, following the Suez War, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles reached an agreement with the Israelis that, in exchange for an Israeli evacuation of Sharm al-Sheikh and Israel permitting U.N. forces to be stationed there as observers, the United States pledged to recognize the Gulf of Aquaba as an international waterway and that the United States was “prepared to exercise the right of free and innocent passage and to join with others to secure general recognition of this right.”<sup>27</sup> This guarantee transgressed into Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, according to which Israel would have the right to protect its flagships transiting the Strait if fired upon.<sup>28</sup> But in 1967, the U.S. was clearly stuck between the Israelis and Arabs. The United States refused to act on their guarantee, and even went so far as to forbid the Israelis to act on their U.N. guarantee to reopen the Straits. But the United States had lost sight of its goal. The crisis was reaching a boiling point and the United States had no plan. They wanted to prevent Israeli action long enough to allow U.N. involvement, but ironically a U.N. guarantee is what ensured Israel’s right to use force. Desperately trying to please Israel while not offending the Arabs (by appearing to have advocated an Israeli attack) the United States’s dilemma of trying to satisfy two enemies (and not having a real plan on the table) guaranteed that U.S. policy was destined for failure.

The American policy toward Israel of trying to buy time by means of deception, threats, and refusing guarantees, resulted in a waste of time. The American strategy was to buy time by preventing an Israel preemptive strike by any means necessary. The United States thought that they could use their power to calm the Israelis, to make promises, and to threaten no help. But the U.S. did not appreciate the apocalyptic feeling in Israel until the morning of June 5<sup>th</sup>. Israeli intelligence reports suggested that Nasser was posing to attack, but the U.S. did not agree.<sup>29</sup> Though they suggested setting up a joint intelligence commission to share information, the United States the commission never materialized.<sup>30</sup> In the end, the United States was paralyzed between helping the Israelis and placating the Arabs. Meanwhile, a meeting of the Security Council was still weeks away. Because of its situation, the U.S. could create no real policy and what was an effort to buy time was in reality an exercise in wasting time.

On the other hand, the President was working desperately to appear neutral toward the Israelis to satisfy the Arabs. In the President’s mind the best way to please the Arabs was to shift the crisis to the U.N. He had emphasized that handling the problem in the U.N. was a wise course. “(President Johnson) was sure that wise leadership of the U.S. would facilitate a solution in the U.N., but to do so and not lose Arab support, the U.S. must remain impartial.”<sup>31</sup> But the United States had a great obstacle to overcome to appear impartial. A CIA memo described the situation as, “One almost certain objective of the Soviets is to see the U.S. more firmly and publicly identified with Israel. This would have the obvious effect of making the entire Arab world...convinced that the U.S. is irrevocably committed to their common enemy.”<sup>32</sup> For the Soviets to give the United States a ‘black-eye’ (among Arabs) ran directly counter to the U.S. objective to stay in the center. The Soviets wanted to make the crisis a U.S.-Arab confrontation,

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27. Quandt, 154

28. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 141: Circular Telegram State Department to Arab Capitals- June 3, 1967

29. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 73: Special Report of Watch Committee- May 26, 1967

30. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 71: Memorandum from Secretary Rusk to President Johnson- May 26, 1967

31. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 83: Telegram to Embassy in Jordan from State Department- May 27, 1967

32. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 79: CIA Memorandum- May 26, 1967

and though they did not create the crisis<sup>33</sup>, the U.S.S.R. would do everything it could to achieve its goal, short of war.<sup>34</sup> The Soviet's role in the crisis forced the United States into a situation where, with every move, the U.S. had to be conscious of their appearance and this made American ability to act that much more difficult and that much more complex.

In addition to avoiding a 'black-eye' in the region, the United States wanted to avoid an Israeli preemptive strike because the U.S. was convinced that such an action would appear to have the blessing of the United States. Top U.S. officials were aware that, "apparently both the Arabs and the Soviets think the U.S. is capable of commanding Israel."<sup>35</sup> Therefore, any action on the part of Israel would be interpreted as having been approved by the United States. Furthermore, the Arabs and Soviets were aware of both Eben and Amit's visits to the U.S., for that reason, any Israeli action would appear to be acceptable to the United States.<sup>36</sup> The United States had an overbearing objective in the crisis to see that they appeared indifferent to each side. An Israeli preemptive strike would erase any American aspirations to achieve neutrality. Rather, buying time to resolve the crisis through the U.N. would allow the U.S. to handle the crisis in an international arena where it would be much easier to appear neutral.

United States's interest in appearing neutral had immediate significance. For years the U.S. had built influence in the Middle East among moderates, despite the Arab Cold War. Now that Nasser was a direct player, the Arab Cold War could not be ignored. At the time of the crisis, the Arab Cold War had pitted radical Arab leaders, such as Nasser, against moderates in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan.<sup>37</sup> The United States wanted to avoid being pitted with Israel to avoid driving the moderate Arabs away from American influence toward Nasser. But any U.S. action in the Straits, or an Israeli-Arab war, would be interpreted as an American attack on Nasser. And such an Arab interpretation could potentially drive a wedge between the U.S. and moderate Arabs.

The United States failed to use its power to properly deal with the Arabs, and allowed its influence to wane as a result of the policies immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities. The Americans wanted to be impartial to both sides, but American diplomacy dealt almost exclusively with Israel. As a neutral power, or at least claiming to be one, the United States could have made more of an attempt to work with the Arab nations, most notably Egypt, to try and defuse the crisis.

Throughout the crisis, the United States did not make strong use of its influence in the region to prevent Nasser from enlisting moderate Arab support. Regardless of the path the United States chose (to communicate with the Arabs) the U.S. made the mistake of focusing on Israel and not the Arabs. In reality, "The moderate Arabs—and in fact, virtually all Arabs who fear the rise of Nasser as a result of the crisis—would prefer to have him cut down by the Israelis rather than by external forces."<sup>38</sup> Had the U.S. effectively communicated with the Arabs, the Americans may have identified this course of action and a unification of Arab nations against Israel and the west may have been avoidable.

Yet another option for the U.S. to solve the crisis and achieve American objectives would have been to work with the U.S.S.R. While the Soviets did want to take advantage of the situation, they did not instigate the crisis or want a war in the region (because the Soviets knew that Israel would win a war against the Arab nations, who were fighting with Soviet weapons.)<sup>39</sup> During the crisis, the Soviets used the hotline between Moscow and Washington for the first time since its instillation four years earlier. American policymakers, however, never acted on the Soviet initiation of communication. The U.S. failed to realize that the Soviets could apply pressure to

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33. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 42: Memorandum for the record- May 24, 1967

34. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 41: Telegram from Embassy in USSR to Department of State

35. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 130: Memorandum of conversation- June 2, 1967

36. Lenczowski, 107

37. Lenczowski, 108

38. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 144: Memorandum from Rostow to LBJ- June 4, 1967

39. FRUS Arab-Israeli War, Document 136: Memorandum from N. Davis to NSC to Rostow- June 2, 1967

their Arab clients, possibly for a political settlement with Israel.<sup>40</sup> Fearful of a superpower confrontation, the United States never made use of this avenue.

## Conclusion

On June 5, 1967 Israel made a preemptive strike against Egypt and the United States had officially failed to use its power to prevent the war. Stuck between the Arabs and the Israelis, attempting to help both, attempting to hurt neither, the two sides fought while the Americans looked on. No multilateral maritime fleet was ever assembled, the Israelis were bitter with the Americans for wasting so much time, and the moderate Arabs had signed treaties with Nasser. The Americans had failed miserably. They failed to use their power effectively because they did not want to offend either side. Two weeks before the war began, the Americans believed that a multilateral maritime force would be assembled, it would open the Straits, the Israelis would not attack, and the issue would be resolved in the Security Council under Article 51. But as the first week of the crisis progressed, the U.S. came to realize that opening the Straits would do nothing to serve U.S. objectives, and it was not even possible, given the timetable. The Americans, however, did not give up, they stuck with their plan. Trying to buy time, the U.S. threatened to not help Israel, should they initiate hostilities. But with Regatta out of the question, the U.S. had no plan to back up the threat. Meanwhile, the Soviets were thrilled with their enemy's predicament and they attempted to gain from it as much as possible. The United State eventually realized that a policy that seemed so sound in its inception was actually a terrible idea. Furthermore, the attempt to buy time while ignoring the apocalyptic feeling in Israel eventually undermined U.S. diplomacy. In the end everything the United States had hoped to achieve through its policy failed.

Paralyzed by its predicament, unable to support the Arabs without harming Israeli relations, and unable to support Israel without harming Arab relation, U.S. policy never gave itself the opportunity to explore options outside of a maritime action or an attempt to buy time. By June 5<sup>th</sup>, the Americans had come to a horrifying realization that they should have just let the Israelis strike two weeks before. Instead, a failed U.S. policy cost the Americans their influence in the region. In the aftermath of The Six Days War almost no U.S. policy objective had been achieved. The war had broken out, the U.N. was not playing any role, and moderates were driven toward Nasser, strengthening him. Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Algeria, and Sudan ended diplomatic relations with the U.S., with Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Algeria becoming dependent on the Soviets.<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile, the land that the Israelis conquered serves today as the very heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that rages in the West Bank and Gaza strip.

[*Editor's Note:* While Noah Gellman's extensive research demonstrates the difficult position of the United States during the 1967 crisis; we believe that current politics dictate that the Editorial Board express that the contents of this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of Phi Alpha Theta or *Quaestio*.]

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40. David Pollock, *The Politics of Pressure: American Arms and Israeli Policy Since the Six Day War* (London: Greenwood Press, 1982). 20

41. Lenczowski, 108

## A Question of Violence: Buddhism and Acts of Self-Immolation during the Vietnam War

Aaron Romeo Slosberg

On June 11, 1963, Thich Quang Duc, a seventy-three-year-old Buddhist monk, sat serenely in the lotus position on the corner of Phan-Dinh-Phung Street in Saigon. His fellow monks proceeded to saturate his body with gasoline. Quang Duc then allowed himself to burn to death as thousands of onlookers watched the monk's perfectly still body be consumed by flames.<sup>1</sup> Over the course of the Vietnam War thirty-six monks, one laywoman, and two American Quakers would follow Quang Duc's example.<sup>2</sup> In the twentieth-century Vietnam endured decades of war, foreign occupation, and chaotic instability. A people divided by both domestic and international disputes, the Vietnamese experienced unspeakable violence and hardship. As the United States escalated the military conflict with the Communist forces in the North, the relatively passive Buddhist community of South Vietnam began to mobilize their resistance efforts following Quang Duc's powerful act of self-immolation (also referred to as auto-cremation).

A leader of the "engaged Buddhism" movement and influential peace activist in Vietnam, the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh stated in response to Quang Duc's self-immolation, "The Vietnamese monk, by burning himself, says with all his strength and determination that he can endure the greatest of sufferings to protect his people."<sup>3</sup> However, intuitively the unequivocally violent act of burning one's self to death seems opposed to the fundamental Buddhist precept of non-violence. In this paper I examine the moral tension caused by Buddhist self-immolations during the Vietnam War. My analysis gives particular attention to the precedence for and results of the first modern case of Vietnamese self-immolation: Thich Quang Duc. Furthermore, I outline the opposing viewpoints concerning self-immolation within the Buddhist community and draw conclusions on whether this type of violence is justified by the Buddhist tradition.

### Buddhist Precedence for Self-Immolation

In Mahayana Buddhism the ancient *Lotus Sutra* remains one of the holiest texts. In chapter twenty-three, the bodhisattva Medicine King makes the offering of his own body to the Buddha by performing various acts of self-mutilation, including burning his body: "Anointing his body with fragrant oil...and calling on his transcendental powers, [he] set fire to his body...The Buddhas in these worlds simultaneously spoke out in praise, saying: 'Excellent, excellent, good man! This is true diligence.'"<sup>4</sup> While many scholars have argued that this sacrifice was meant to be taken metaphorically, ardent believers have often interpreted the sutra literally and with dire consequences.<sup>5</sup> Despite the interpretative debate, the *actions* of the bodhisattva in the *Lotus Sutra* are indisputable and therefore provide the doctrinal basis for Buddhist self-immolation.

Evidence for self-immolation can be found in Buddhist practice as well. In a letter addressed to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on June 1<sup>st</sup> 1965, Thich Nhat Hanh describes one manifestation of self-immolation in modern Mahayana practice:

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1. C.A. Joiner, "South Vietnam's Buddhist Crisis: Organization for Charity, Dissidence, and Unity." *Asian Survey* v.4, no.7 (1964): 918.
  2. C. Queen, "Introduction: the Shapes and Sources of Engaged Buddhism." In C. Queen & S.B. King (Eds.) *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia*. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1996): 1.
  3. T.N. Hanh, *Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire*. (Clinton, MA: Hill and Wang, Inc., 1967), 106.
  4. B. Watson, *The Lotus Sutra* (B. Watson, trans.). (NY: Columbia University Press, 1993), 282.
  5. Ibid.

During the ceremony of ordination, as practiced in the Mahayana tradition, the monk-candidate is required to burn one or more small spots on his body in taking the vow to observe the 250 rules of a *bhikshu*, to live the life of a monk, to attain enlightenment, and to devote his life to the salvation of all beings...when the words are uttered while kneeling before the community of *sangha* and experiencing this kind of pain, they express all the seriousness of one's heart and mind, and carry much greater weight.<sup>6</sup>

These comparatively minor burns are by no means directly equivalent to the fatal burning experienced by Quang Duc and others. However, they do suggest the praise and elevated status accorded to acts of physical sacrifice in Mahayana Buddhism. Perhaps these small acts of self-mutilation, under no duress, can be extrapolated to legitimize self-immolation under the extreme threats and pressures of war. Additionally, "voluntary termination of life, or sacrifice of the body" by numerous methods, including fire, frequently took place in medieval Chinese Buddhism.<sup>7</sup> Jan Yiin-Hua closely examined the moral conflict that stemmed from the medieval Chinese monks' religious suicides. He concluded that the monks' actions were indeed justified within the Buddhist tradition, stating that religious suicides were "practical actions needed to actualize spiritual aims" and demonstrated great acts of selflessness.<sup>8</sup>

### Thich Quang Duc's Self-Immolation

Thich Quang Duc's self-immolation was vividly recorded by photographers and writers alike. *New York Times* reporter and eyewitness to the event, David Halberstam, gave the following account:

I was to see that sight again, but once was enough. Flames were coming from a human being; his body was slowly withering and shriveling up, his head blackening and charring. In the air was the smell of burning human flesh; human beings burn surprisingly quickly. Behind me I could hear the sobbing of the Vietnamese who were now gathering. I was too shocked to cry, too confused to take notes or ask questions, too bewildered to even think...As he burned he never moved a muscle, never uttered a sound, his outward composure in sharp contrast to the wailing people around him.<sup>9</sup>

Malcome Browne's award-winning series of photographs capturing the event were published in countless international publications. President Kennedy received the infamous photo on his desk that very day.<sup>10</sup> The international media effectively engraved the powerful image of the "burning monk" into the collective consciousness of the world's population. Quang Duc's self-immolation roused the Vietnamese "engaged Buddhist" movement to action and eventually led to the overthrow of the oppressive, American-backed Diem regime in November 1963. On a less tangible level, Quang Duc brought the suffering of the Vietnamese people to the forefront of international thought. As Hanh wrote, "By burning himself, Thich Quang Duc awakened the world to the suffering of the war and the persecution of the Buddhists."<sup>11</sup> All these results contribute to

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6. Hanh (1967), 106.

7. J.A. Benn, "Self-cultivation and Self-immolation: Preparing the Body for Auto-Cremation in Chinese Buddhism," 15 February 2000 Available: <[http://helios.unive.it/~pregadio/aas/benn\\_no\\_char.html](http://helios.unive.it/~pregadio/aas/benn_no_char.html)> (February 2003): 1.

8. Jan Yiin-Hua, "Buddhist Self-Immolation in Medieval China." *History of Religions* v.4, n.4 (1965): 265.

9. D. Halberstam, *The Making of a Quagmire*. (NY: Random House, 1971), 211.

10. R.T. McCutcheon, *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis and the Politics of Nostalgia*. (Oxford Press, 1997).

11. T.N. Hanh, *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1993), 43-45.

the significance of Quang Duc's actions, however, the motivations and meaning of his act can never be fully understood.

Careful study of the events surrounding Quang Duc's self-immolation can help provide insight into the meaning of the event. A series of letters written by Quang Duc several weeks prior to the act and the volatile political-religious atmosphere in South Vietnam reveal some possible motives. On May 8<sup>th</sup> 1963, a group of Buddhists in the city of Hue flew religious flags as part of a celebration of Buddha's birth. Ngo Dinh Diem, the pro-Catholic president of South Vietnam, had banned the use of Buddhist flags despite Vietnam's 80 percent Buddhist population, ordered the flags torn down, and the crowd dispersed. Government troops opened fire on the crowd, killing seven children and one woman.<sup>12</sup>

This event galvanized the Buddhist population against the oppressive Diem regime and sparked widespread protests. Quang Duc along with the Unified Buddhist Church wrote several letters to the Diem government requesting "legal equality with the Catholic Church, an end to arrests, greater freedom to practice their faith, and indemnification of the families of victims of the May 8 shootings."<sup>13</sup> The Diem government ignored these requests and arrested large numbers of Buddhist activists. In 1968, of the 1,870 prisoners held in Chi Hoa Prison, Saigon, 1,665 were listed as "Buddhists" and only fifty as "Communists."<sup>14</sup> These political events set the immediate backdrop for Quang Duc's self-immolation. After the Hue Massacre, Western reporters in Saigon were made aware of Buddhist plans to escalate the protests through "staged suicides."<sup>15</sup> The Buddhist community was privy to the fact that their peaceful protests were not impacting the Diem government nor receiving coverage by the international media therefore Quang Duc and his fellow monks began preparing for his self-immolation.

On the day of the immolation, 300 monks blocked the streets surrounding Quang Duc and prevented anyone from interfering with the event.<sup>16</sup> While there was clearly some collaboration between Quang Duc and the Buddhist community, the exact degree of involvement remains unknown. Hanh explains that "Self-immolation usually occurs at a most unexpected moment and is not included in the program of action. No one has the courage to arrange for someone else's self-immolation. Whenever a person has declared his intention to burn himself the Buddhist Church has appealed to preclude the tragic act. But once such an important decision has come to a man, the authority of the Church is no longer important."<sup>17</sup> Despite Nhat Hanh's comments, there is ample evidence (the hints to reporters, gasoline tests by monks, protestors blocking emergency vehicles passage, etc.) to suggest that Quang Duc made others aware of his intentions and was in turn aided by his peers. True, there was no official endorsement of Quang Duc's self-immolation by the Unified Buddhist Church in Vietnam, but the actions of the Buddhist community in the weeks prior to the event and during suggest an implicit and explicit support of Quang Duc's act.

### **Opposing Buddhist Interpretations of Self-Immolation**

The central problem arises out of the tension between religious suicide and the Buddhist doctrine of non-violence. How can such a seemingly violent act be reconciled with Buddhist ethics? Hanh begins his defense of such acts by making a clear interpretative distinction: self-

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12. S.B. King, "Thich Nhat Hanh and the Unified Buddhist Church: Nondualism in Action." In C. Queen & S.B. King (Eds.) *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia*. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1996): 327.

13. G. Kahin, *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam*. (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 149.

14. King (1996), 334.

15. L. Skow & G. Dionisopoulos, "A Struggle to Contextualize Photographic Images: American Print Media and the 'Burning Monk.'" *Communication Quarterly* v.45, n.4 (1997): 393.

16. M. Browne, *Red Socks and Muddy Boots: a reporter's life*. (NY: Times Books, 1993), 9-10.

17. Quoted in King (1996): 336.

immolation is not suicide. Hanh states that “Suicide is an act of self-destruction, having as causes the following: (1) lack of courage to live and to cope with difficulties; (2) defeat by life and loss of all hope; (3) desire for nonexistence (*abhaya*).”<sup>18</sup> The Vietnamese monks who burned themselves did not embody this definition of suicide, according to Hanh, “It was because of life that they acted, not because of death.”<sup>19</sup> In fact, the self-immolations during the Vietnam War were examples of the Buddhist concepts of selflessness and Hanh’s “engaged Buddhism.” Hanh starts from the premise that the first principle of action is to eliminate suffering. Since all things are interconnected and codependent, humans must be able to empathize with both the victim and victimizer. Quang Duc’s, and others, actions “expressed the unconditional willingness to suffer for the awakening of others.”<sup>20</sup> Hanh therefore conceives of self-immolations as a sacrifice whereby monks are willing to share in the sufferings of others. Yiin-Hua agreed with Hanh’s assessment stating that self-immolation demonstrates the great acts of selflessness that are elevated in the Buddhist tradition.<sup>21</sup> It seems that the crux of Hanh’s argument is that the intentions of the monks who sacrifice themselves outweigh or offset the violent nature of the act. This is a familiar notion in Buddhism where merit is gained from the intentions of the person and not the act itself. Thus, it was the selflessness, empathy, and sincerity motivating the monks’ actions that compensated for the violence involved.

Despite the apparent advocacy from Hanh and others, there is a latent recognition that self-immolation is a morally flawed act. Nhat Chi Mai, a lay disciple and friend of Hanh, famously burned herself to death on May 16, 1967. Before her death, she had a conversation with Buddhist Sister Cao Ngoc Phuong, which is recorded in Phuong’s autobiography:

“Mai,... I asked the Executive Council of the Buddhist Church to support eight of us in a fast until death as a prayer for peace. But the Council did not approve, and, without their backing, we knew that our act would be useless.”

“Of course they wouldn’t approve!” she interrupted. “Who would care for your aged mother?”

“I know that I would commit the sin of impiety towards my mother by killing myself, but if my death should help shorten the war and save lives, I would be willing to pay for the sin of impiety in another life.”<sup>22</sup>

This exchange shows that there was an open acknowledgment of the demerit accrued by renegeing on one’s social duties. This could be a reflection of the Confucian influence in Vietnam, which stresses filial piety and fulfillment of rigid societal obligations. There appears to be a karmic calculation involved in the decision to kill oneself: if the motivation is selfless and pure, then merit will be gained; on the other hand, one will collect negative karma due to the violence involved and harm caused to others in the community (family obligations, etc.); therefore, one who “willingly accepts the negative karma that is due is in fact freed of all negative karmic consequence.”<sup>23</sup> Clearly, there are conscious moral considerations, both positive and negative, involved for Buddhists considering self-immolation.

Although Hanh praises self-immolation in his writings, he is extremely cautious to openly

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18. Hanh (1967), 107.

19. D. Berrigan & T.H. Hanh, *Raft is Not the Shore: Conversations toward a Buddhist-Christian Awareness*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), 61.

20. Hanh (1993), 43-45.

21. Yiin-Hua: 250-265.

22. C.N. Phuong (Chan Khong), *Learning True Love: How I Learned and Practiced Social Change in Vietnam*. (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1993), 96-97.

23. S.B. King, “They Who Burned Themselves for Peace: Quaker and Buddhist Self-Immolators During the Vietnam War.” *Buddhist-Christian Studies* (2000): 10.

endorse the act or even label it as morally acceptable: “We do not intend to say that self-immolation is good, or that it is bad. It is neither good nor bad. When you say something is good, you say that you should do that. But nobody can urge another to do such a thing.”<sup>24</sup> This attitude recognizes the potential ills that may arise from self-immolation abuses. As previously stated, the Unified Buddhist Church never officially endorsed any of the self-immolations in Vietnam, however, Quang Duc’s heart, which supposedly did not burn, was enshrined and treated as a sacred relic.<sup>25</sup> There seems to be a disconnect between official Buddhist positions and informal reaction to the self-immolators. The Dalai Lama commenting on the 1998 self-immolation of Thupten Ngodup, who was protesting the brutal Chinese occupation of Tibet, states that the incident was “most unfortunate” and that he has always urged “the Tibetan people to eschew violence.”<sup>26</sup> As Sandie King points out, it is not what the Dalai Lama said but what he left unsaid. His statements contain no direct condemnation of the act and no unequivocal decree that others should not follow Ngodup’s example.<sup>27</sup>

Opinions regarding self-immolation among the Buddhist community vary greatly. Sallie King asked three Southeast Asian Theravada monks, five Thai Buddhist laymen, an American-born Theravada monk living in Thailand, and two Tibetan monks about their feelings concerning the practice of self-immolation.<sup>28</sup> Even in this limited sample, a multiplicity of opinions emerged. Of the Southeast Asian Theravada monks two opposed self-immolation and one supported it. Those in opposition cited the first precept prohibiting violence and that the extreme nature of the act furthers division rather than reconciliation. The supporter of self-immolation said it was *dana-paramita*, the perfection of giving, in his words, “the greatest gift is to give a life.”<sup>29</sup> The American-born Theravada monk strongly supported self-immolation given the proper intentions. The Thai laymen, although divided in their support, interestingly pointed out that self-immolation is more acceptable in Mahayana Buddhism, which emphasizes the selfless acts of the bodhisattva, than in the Theravada tradition. Neither of the Tibetan monks felt self-immolation was wrong, but expressed that it is an advanced act meant only for a qualified bodhisattva.

## Conclusion

As commonly found with other Buddhist issues, there is no unified stance on self-immolation, but rather a variety of opinions, each justifiable in different manners. Some argue that historians should only analyze the Vietnamese self-immolations within the context of the war, where thousands of innocent people were killed daily and the word “shocking” was reserved only for the most unprecedented and obscene cases. The problem is that the self-immolations of Thich Quang Duc, Nhat Chi Mai, and the thirty-five other monks during the Vietnam War were not confined to the extreme circumstances of that specific time and place. My analysis focused on the implications of the original and truly unique death of Thich Quang Duc, but what about those who followed his example? What about “the imitators”? With each act of self-immolation that initial shock value decreased. In fact, in my research I could not even find a list of names for all thirty-seven Vietnamese Buddhists who took their own lives in such a disturbing manner. Instead, the same few names appeared over and over in the literature: Thich Quang Duc, the first to commit self-immolation; Nhat Chi Mai, the only woman and layperson; Norman Morrison, the Quaker who burned himself to death in front of the Pentagon in 1965. The frequency of self-immolations even

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24. Berrigan and Hanh, 62.

25. J. Schechter, *The New Face of Buddha: Buddhism and Political Power in Southeast Asia*. (NY: Coward-McCann, 1967), 179.

26. King (2000): 13.

27. *Ibid.*, 13-14.

28. *Ibid.*, 13

29. *Ibid.*

caused Madame Nhu, an influential figure in the Diem regime, to callously refer to the acts as “barbecues.”<sup>30</sup>

Even more alarming are the self-immolations performed by persons without a “noble cause” or religious background. Many Buddhist leaders in support of self-immolation commented that it is a practice that should be restricted to the most enlightened and learned of men. However, there is no way to prevent or predict the influence that a bodhisattva’s “justified” self-immolation will have on a random person who is, perhaps, not completely sane or easily influenced. In 1996, Kathy Change burned herself to death on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania for no clear reason and was said to have been incoherent at the time.<sup>31</sup> It would be unfair to assign blame to Thich Quang Duc for this unforeseeable event, but the fact remains that there is a connection between modern self-immolations and those which occurred during the Vietnam War. As Sallie King states, “If the indirect, but inevitable, consequence of a self-immolation is imitation of that act by others of quite varied motivation, then the original self-immolation bears partial karmic responsibility for those imitations.”<sup>32</sup> Thich Nhat Hanh’s remarks that self-immolation should not be labeled “good” because that would on some level recommend they act, are unfortunately not reflected in the actions of the Buddhist community at large. Authoritative condemnations of self-immolation are almost non-existent in Buddhism.

The question inevitably arises as to whether the ends justify the means. It is fairly unequivocal that Thich Quang Duc’s self-immolation had powerful effects in Vietnam. The rise of Buddhist activism, the fall of the Diem regime, and an increased international awareness of the suffering occurring in Vietnam can all be linked to Quang Duc’s self-immolation. While these events were incredibly significant, the war situation and correspondent suffering of the Vietnamese people continued to escalate for the next ten years. In other words, I find it difficult to classify self-immolations as entirely effective means for abolishing suffering in Vietnam. My views are of course inextricably bound to the confines of Western thought. I lack the cultural background necessary to fully comprehend the Buddhist perspective on self-immolation. Having acknowledged this fact, I still find the obviously violent act of burning one’s self to death contrary to Buddhist ethics.

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30. King (1996): 327.

31. King (2000): 12.

32. Ibid.

## Wit and the English Jest-Book

### Laurence (Lonnie) Robbins

A GENTLEMAN admitted to walke with a Nobleman in his Gallery, after many commendations of the pictures there hanging, for the best he had seene, had leave given him to chuse where he would, and it should be his owne. The Gentleman espying a faire Table, wherein the ten Commandements were curiously drawn in golden letters, even this (saith hee) so please your Lordship, shall be my choice; for this likes my fancie best. But the Lord recalling himselfe, answered; that onely I forgot to except; for I have vowed, and vowed by mine Honour, these ten Commandements shall never goe from me. Well (quoth the Gentleman) doe what you can, I assure your Lordship, *you shall never keepe them.*<sup>1</sup>

A quick and clever wit has long been considered an important asset for any person who has aspirations of being a part of cultured society. Even today, authors and comedians can achieve either notoriety or fame through means of social commentary. The roots of this tradition are timeless, and can be witnessed as far as we have means to do so. In Antiquity, the importance of wit could be seen in the plays of Aristophanes and Cicero's speeches, which were filled with subtle (and sometimes overt) critiques that juxtaposed peoples' words against their behavior. These critiques demonstrated what sorts of behavior were considered acceptable in a "civilized" society, and what sorts of behavior were not. One important aspect of understanding the role of wit in society is the means by which it was conveyed to contemporaries.

In the 1480's a new genre of literature appeared in England: the Jest-Book. These books fulfilled the same role of social critique and behavioral commentary as Cicero's speeches. The books themselves were filled with stories, which at first glance were irrelevant or at best irreverent. However, they served a very important purpose. The jests provided examples of what was considered witty or clever, and worthy of a person who wants to be a part of "civilized" society.

The resounding theme that appeared in these books, and in many other writings of fifteenth and sixteenth century England, was Folly. References to fools in literature were abundant, whether referring to a professional fool at court, or simply a person who behaved foolishly. In this literature, people were often compared to fools, as Nicholas Breton put it, "I have thought good (finding the corruption of this Age) to put a *Foole*, to thy *Knave*."<sup>2</sup> Another popular theme in the books pitted people against fools in a competition that the fools inevitably won. In *The Witty and Entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan, Commonly Called the King's Fool*,<sup>3</sup> George perpetually embarrassed a wide variety of high officials ranging from church bishops to the King himself. There is a story that takes place at the end of George's life. The King sends him a letter demanding to know why he had been away from court for so long, threatening to send his Lyon heralds for George if he did not appear within 20 days. The fool responds:

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1. Armstrong, Archie. *A Banquet of Jestes and Merry Tales* (London, Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1889) first published in 1630. 26.
  2. Breton, Nicholas. *Pasquils mad-cap, and Pasquils fooles-cap* Printed in facsimile. (Amsterdam, Theatrum Orbis Terrarum; New York, Da Capo Press, 1969). Originally published in 1600. From Pasquill's Mad-Cappe. A4.
  3. *The Witty and Entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan, Commonly Called the King's Fool* (Newcastle-on-Tyne. W.R. Walker, Machine Printer, Royal Arcade. N.D. possibly 1725-1800)

My honour'd liege, and sovereign king,  
Of your boasting great I dread nothing,  
On your feud and favour I'll fairly venture,  
Or that day I'll be where few kings enter.<sup>4</sup>

Plays like *King Lear* or *Twelfth Night* clearly demonstrate that there was a kind of wisdom attributed to fools by the close of the sixteenth century; however this type of foolish wisdom could also be witnessed at the opening of the century. In the opening line of *The Praise of Folly*, Erasmus demonstrated that folly is something that exists in the public imagination. He opens the book with the line, "At what rate soever the world talks of me (for I am not ignorant what an ill report Folly has got, even among the most foolish)."<sup>5</sup> Erasmus even indicated disciplines where folly was discussed by academics. Rhetoricians "have written so much and so exquisitely of Fooling."<sup>6</sup> Erasmus demonstrates that folly was more than simple jesting or foolery. He writes, "They attribute so much to Folly, that what many times cannot be clear'd with the best Arguments, is yet now and then put off with a jest: unless, perhaps you'll say, 'tis no part of Folly to provoke laughter, and that artificially."<sup>7</sup>

It is fascinating that Erasmus chose to use folly as the language to discuss his scathing criticism of all types of behavior he considered inappropriate, including the state of the Catholic Church and of the clergy.<sup>8</sup> Using folly as a means of communication, writers in early modern England were able to critique what they saw among their contemporaries, and to shape the behavior deemed appropriate. The jest-book fills one small part of what Norbert Elias calls the "Civilizing Process."<sup>9</sup> Writers used folly as a means to cull unwanted behavior out of society.

### Characteristics of the Jest Book

The first Jest-Book that appeared in English illuminates the importance of the genre. In 1484 William Caxton translated Aesop's Fables from French, at the end of his work he added two sets of jests (one from Alfonse, and the other by Poge).<sup>10</sup> For Caxton, these jests were important enough to be added to Aesop's pearls from antiquity. After Caxton's *Aesop's Fables*, there was a forty-year gap before the appearance of the first great jest-book *A C. Mery Talys*<sup>11</sup> (published in 1526). The books rapidly grew in popularity. In the Huntington Library alone there are some fifty

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4. Ibid., 21

5. Desiderius Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly*, trans. John Wilson (1668). (Mineola, New York: Dover Thrift Editions, 2003), 5

6. Ibid., 42.

7. Ibid.

8. Rather than looking at Erasmus' criticisms themselves, I am particularly interested in the question of why Erasmus chose folly as his means of criticism. He was clearly not concerned with tempering his statements. It is my belief that in the sixteenth century, folly was commonly associated with the language contemporaries used to critique social behavior. By using folly therefore, Erasmus was actually strengthening his arguments by employing folly as the means of his discourse.

9. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* Trans. Edmund Jephcott. (Malden, MA. Blackwell Publishing 2000)

10. Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric*, ed. by Peter E Medine. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994). Originally printed in 1560. 178.

11. Paul M. Zall, *A Hundred Merry Tales: and Other English Jestbooks of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 10.

12. Also called *A Hundred Merry Tales*, *One Hundred Merry Tales* or *The Hundred Merry Tales*.

examples of jest-books that date from the seventeenth century.<sup>12</sup> After the eighteenth century, they devolved into chapbooks, or tales for children. Apparently, by this point, the jest-books had lost some of their credibility as an appropriate resource for fully developed and rational people.

The books resemble modern joke books in their structure; yet their intended audience was quite different from their modern counterparts. Where modern joke books often appeal to children, the Jest-Books were written for the educated, yet they were not “literary.” According to Paul Zall, “Jests are meant to be said as well as read, their style is conversationally dramatic, vernacular vs. literary, and sometimes seemingly taken down from actual speech.”<sup>13</sup> In some cases the authors<sup>14</sup> of the jest-books claimed that they were works of little importance, they even claim to contain only “many proper and pleasaunt inventions, for the recreation and delight of many and to the hurt and hinderance of none.”<sup>15</sup> The jests were, however, used as far more than an innocent diversion. The English certainly did not invent jesting. In fact, “the earliest English jestbooks were translations from French, Flemish, and Latin.”<sup>16</sup> As a future research idea, it would be interesting to compare the variations in the jest-books among different languages.

The jests themselves ranged from stories that were several pages long and led to a tag line or moral, to short blurbs, which contained something witty that one person had done or said to another. The moral tag was almost invariably present. The first tale in *A C. Mery Talys* is a story about a miller who only knew of two commandments rather than of the Ten Commandments. The first commandment for the miller was “command me to you” and “command me from you.”<sup>17</sup> And his second commandment was “dout the candle” and “dout the fire.” The moral of the tale is “By this tale a man may well perceive that they that be brought up without learning or good manners shall never be but rude and beastly, although they have good natural wits.”<sup>18</sup>

As an aid to the user, many of the books contained an indexing system for easier access to particular jests. This indexing system varied from book to book, however in each case the folio or page number was given to indicate where the jest could be found (see figure 1). Each jest was titled and introduced, e.g. “How the Lean Fool set fire on the Wheelbarrow that he loved so, unknown to himself.”<sup>19</sup> The Jest that began this paper was published in 1630, and was supposedly written by Archie Armstrong, Jester to James I. This jest is titled “A Nobleman in his Gallery.” Frequently the jests were simply numbered, or both, numbered and titled, as in, “Jest 28. How Mr. Peters made an Ass of a Gentleman.”<sup>20</sup> Sometimes the books were broken up into sections. Archie Armstrong’s *Banquet of Jests and Merry Tales* not only titled each jest, the book itself was divided up into categories of jests, such as “Court Jests,” “Campe Jests,” “Colledge Jests,” “Citie Jests,”<sup>21</sup> and “Countrie Jests.” *Tarlton’s Jests* (published in 1611) was divided into “His Court-Witty Jests,” “His Sound City Jests,” and his “Countrie Pretty Jests.”<sup>22</sup> This level of division, however, was uncharacteristic for the books; a simple table of contents was more typical. The indexing system of

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13. Paul M. Zall, ed., *A Nest of Ninnies: and Other English Jestbooks of the Seventeenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970). IX.

14. Zall. *A Hundred Merry Tales*, 1-2.

15. The identities of the authors appear to be frequently in doubt. Many books are attributed to authors that probably could not have written them. Sometimes these authors are scholars and in one case, even a court fool – Archie Armstrong: who was a fool to James I and Charles I until he was eventually exiled for ridiculing the Archbishop Laud.

16. Title Page of the *Mirroure of Mirth*. Published in 1583. See Zall., *A Hundred Merry Tales*, 351.

17. Zall, *A Hundred Merry Tales*, 2.

18. Command = commend

19. Zall, *A Hundred Merry Tales*, 65.

20. Zall, *A Nest of Ninnies*, 45.

21. Ibid. In “Tales and Jests of Hugh Peters” published in 1660. 202.

22. Citie Jests is by far the largest section of the work. It is divided into two separate parts. Taking up 91 pages of the 236-page book.

23. W. Carew Hazlitt, *Shakespeare Jest-Books: Vol 2*. (London: Willis and Sotheran. 1864) 190-260.

the jests, using both titles and occasionally divisions, indicates the methods by which the books were to be used. If one were familiar enough with the books, it might have been possible to look through the books in advance to better familiarize oneself with a particular jest that might be appropriate in a certain social situation.

We can also use jest-books to trace changes and similarities in popular myth. Marcolphus was a figure in antiquity, famous for outwitting the wise King Solomon. His character changed throughout the centuries, “For some obscure reason, about the twelfth century, Marcolphus is transformed from a brilliant wit to a dull, cloddish bumpkin who can do little but parody the sententious Solomon. He becomes, in effect, a Teutonic peasant, gradually acquiring a trick or two, and eventually by the end of the fifteenth century develops into Til Eulenspiegel, whom we see again as the English Howleglas.”<sup>23</sup> In fact the woodcut that appears in the 1528(?) edition of Howleglas was the same as on the edition of Salomon and Marcolphus of the same time<sup>24</sup> (See figures 2 and 3).

Some of the books were supposedly factual. They are actually simply jest-books. Robert Armin was one of the two actors who played Shakespeare’s fools. He wrote (and rewrote) a book originally called *Foole upon Foole* (published in 1600) eventually republished in 1608, with revisions, as *A Nest of Ninnies*. His work was a character study of six different types of fools. We know some of the fools (such as Will Somer, the famous court fool of Henry VIII), but we do not know if some of the other fools in the book ever existed. The format of his books was identical to the jest-books.

Physically, the jest-books were small, almost pocket sized. They were printed on inexpensive paper with simple font. These were not large sober volumes, and thus it would be quite easy to overlook the importance they had in the daily life of the gentleman in the early modern period. However, the size of the books was a feature of their function. Figure 4 shows an image of *The Wise and Ingenious Companion* next to a six-inch ruler. The book is roughly six and one quarter inches tall and perhaps four and one half inches wide (when closed). The jest books are rarely more than seventy-five pages long, and thus quite slim. These books are portable and easily hidden. The small size of these books figure into the manner of their use, it was necessary for wit to appear to seem spontaneous and effortless.

## Function and Rules

Jest-books played a roll establishing the criteria for social success. They had become an important part of rhetoric, and a significant source for material that the courtier or any other speaker could use to demonstrate his wit. For example, Thomas Wilson’s *Art of Rhetoric* printed in 1553 deals with many of the same topics as jest-books, and in places resembles a jest-book (Wilson gives an extended account on humor, in which he begins to list joke after joke in the same manner as a jest-book).<sup>25</sup> *The Art of Rhetoric* imitates an illuminated manuscript. The first letters of the chapters are illuminated and there are pointers in the margins, which resemble *glossa* (see figure 5). However, later generations have not viewed the jest-books, however popular they might have been with contemporaries, with the same sort of legitimacy of Wilson’s book.

The legitimacy of the jest-book lies hidden in the purpose of the books. Jestings was part of the courtiers “Hidden Art.” In his *Book of the Courtier* Baldesar Castiglione wrote, “Surely witty thought, good and bad and in varying degree, come to anyone’s mind whatever his talent, and then

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24. Zall, *A Hundred Merry Tales*, 4.

25. Gordon Duff, ed., *The Dialogue or Communing Between the Wise King Salomon and Marcolphus*. (London: Lawrence and Bullen. 1892) originally printed 1492.

26. Wilson, 168-173.

it is judgment and art that polish and correct these.”<sup>26</sup> There is an inherent difference between being a witty person and a person with witty thoughts.

The art of social behavior could be forged through practice and memorization. Thomas Wilson described what method should be used to refine the courtier’s memory. He created a memory palace where each important idea was given a location. There is no reason to imagine that the technique used for memorizing things should not be applied to jests. Interestingly, although the idea of creating a memory palace was certainly not new, the language Wilson used was certainly influenced by a literate culture. He describes the function of memory in a manner that is closely related to manuscripts and books. His image of the function of places in memory is:

1. The places of memory are resembled unto wax and paper
2. Images are compted like unto letters or a seal
3. The placing of these images is like unto words written
4. The utterance and using of them is like unto reading<sup>27</sup>

A series of rules that became more and better defined, dictated the use of books and jests. These rules became better defined as the books were used with greater frequency. The application of these rules served to cull unwanted behavior out of English society.

In 1700 *The Wise and Ingenious Companion* appeared with an introduction that contains instructions on the use of the book. The book was printed in both French and English, each page is duplicated, with the English version on the left leaf, and the French translation on the right (see figure 4). The author, Abel Boyer, attempted to use his jest-book to assimilate foreigners into English life. He stated, “My chief Design in this Collection is to facilitate the Learning of the French Tongue to the English, and that of the English Language to Foreigners.”<sup>28</sup> Boyer made a point of stating the good that his jests served. He wrote, “We may draw a double advantage from true *Jests*, for besides that they serve to make us merry, and revive now and then a fainting Conversation: Several of them are full of good and wholesome Instructions, applicable to the different Exigencies of Life, bothe in public and private Fortune.”<sup>29</sup> Although the text in the book consists of little more than witty stories and phrases, placed within the context of Europe in 1700, the book contains far more substance.

The ability to jest was a key factor for anyone who wanted to thrive in public and social life. Jestings and wit were closely associated with the popular themes of folly and wisdom that infused society in England and the rest of Europe. Johan Huizinga discusses why folly and wit play such key roles in life in early modern Europe. They have a role in what Huizinga calls the “Play Element of Culture.”<sup>30</sup> This Play Element is based on the idea that “play” is an animal instinct, cats and dogs can play, thus it is not a rational activity. This sort of play carries no moral function. On the other hand, there are “higher forms of play”<sup>31</sup> that occur only in relation to culture.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, Thomas Wilson echoed this idea in *The Art of Rhetoric*, for man was “endued

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27. Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier: The Singleton Translation*. Ed. Daniel Javitch. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 2002.) 103-104.

28. Wilson, 237.

29. Abel Boyer, *The wise and ingenious companion, French and English. Being a collection of the wit of the illustrious persons, both ancient and modern. Containing their wise sayings, noble sentiments, witty repartees, jests, and pleasant adventures* (London, Printed for Tho. Woodward, 1700) Introduction, 10.

30. *Ibid.*, 7.

31. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (New York : Roy Publishers, 1950) Foreword.

32. *Ibid.*, 7.

33. Although he does not state it, Huizinga’s viewpoint has a very Aristotelian flavor to it. Aristotle would say that activities which are not rational, are beneath the realm of human capacity. A person who pursues a life of play is not fulfilling his potential as a human, because he is performing an activity that

with reason and appointed lord over all other things living.” As such, he is endowed with certain special knowledge. The person is able to “excel men wherein men do excel beasts.” The best person was the one who was, “among the reasonable of all the most reasonable, and among the witty of all most witty, and among the eloquent of all most eloquent - him think I among all men not only to be taken for a singular man, but rather of be counted for half a god.”<sup>33</sup>

For Huizinga, play is superfluous, yet “it creates order, *is* order.”<sup>34</sup> Play always involves a sort of tension created by certain rules. The purpose of playing is competition, and the stakes of the outcome create the level of tension in the game.<sup>35</sup> In this light, jesting itself can be seen as a game, (*a jou d’esprit* or game of wit) in which the outcome is the social order. Archie Armstrong lends a clear example of this game at work in his jest titled *Two Schollers and a Miller* (which is categorized as a college jest):

Two Schollers merrily disposed, seeing a Miller Ride before ‘em on the high way, spurred up their Hackneyes to overtake him, with a purpose to Jeere him; and when they came at him, sayd one of them, God speed (Miller!) whether art thou (if a man may aske) more foole or knave? The Miller (riding betwixt both) answered, *Truly Gentlemen I am betweene both.*<sup>36</sup>

An important aspect of Armstrong’s jest is the swiftness with which the miller responds to this attack. To demonstrate a quick wit, one had to be armed with the weaponry of the game. The jest-books provided the cannon fodder. Abel Boyer explains:

Now the use a Gentleman ought to make of Jestes and Stories is, never to quote them but when they come pat and *a-propos* to the Subject, and before those who are disposed to hear and be merry with them; without courting the occasion of being thought a pleasant and jocose Man, for Persons of a nice Discernment will presently take notice of those nauseous Affectations: and as the judicious *La Bruyere* has it; *That Man who endeavours to make us Merry, seldom makes himself to be esteem’d.*<sup>37</sup>

The jests must appear completely natural, one does not want to be caught trying to remember a certain story, and one certainly never wants to laugh at his own jest:

We must also observe never to usher in Jestes or Stories with formal Commendations, which will prevent our hearers from being agreeably surpriz’d; for ‘t tis by this surprise that the pleasure they give is principally excited. Likewise, when we begin to tell them, we must not begin to laugh our selves, if we intend to make the Company laugh’ for those who promised us Mirth before-hand, are seldom so good as their Words; and how silly and ridiculous does that Man look who laughs by himself, at a cold and thread-bare jest, whilst the rest can hardly force a Smile to keep him in Countenance? Lastly we must avoid telling a Jest or Story several times over to the same Persons, an Impertinence which makes the Conversation of old People so very distasteful.<sup>38</sup>

These rules define how the game of jesting is to be played. For Huizinga, these rules are both shaped by the game, and they shape the game. He describes playing as being “Anterior to culture.”<sup>39</sup> Thus, if play comes before culture, it helps to shape that culture; in particular, play shapes the method by means of which the culture shapes itself. Norbert Elias proposes that the

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any animal is capable of performing. For Aristotle the best human is the one who best fulfills the potential of what it is to be human.

34. Wilson, 41-43.

35. Huizinga, 10.

36. *Ibid.*, 48.

37. Armstrong, 98.

38. Boyer, Introduction, 9.

39. *Ibid.*, 9-11.

40. Huizinga, 19.

change in culture is a part of the move away from a society in which the nobility were warriors to a more “civilized” class of courtier.<sup>40</sup> Elias agrees with Huizinga that this is not a rational process<sup>41</sup> (play not being rational), however Huizinga’s viewpoint is much less insidious than Elias’s “gilded cage.”

Play, and thus jesting, is about winning: winning honor, respect, and praise. A successful jest is little more than a nobleman demonstrating his virtues.<sup>42</sup> Methods of communicating these virtues are frequently couched in the language of Folly and its opposite – Wisdom. These ideas pervade much of the writing of the time. In *The Praise of Folly*, Erasmus juxtaposes the two ideas. Folly takes credit for all great things that have been accomplished and the wise man is viewed as a sour fool. Particularly sacred to Folly is the professional Fool, whom she praises above all others for they are not burdened with silly concerns such as fear of death or impending evils.<sup>43</sup>

### Significance: Social Tension

The jest-books frequently represented tensions within society. It was common to see the commoner best an educated man:

An Universitie Doctor, hearing a fellow Commoner speake louder at dinner than the rest, bad a Servitor that waited goe to him, and tell him *Vir sapit, qui pauca loquitur*; which being delivered him, commend me, saith he, to Mr. Doctor, and tell him again, *Vir loquitur, qui pauca sapit*.<sup>44</sup>

In real life, not everyone was an appropriate subject for jesting. Because the stakes in jesting were so high, one could risk coming off badly against a social inferior. “In jesting we keep a mean, wherein not only is it meet to avoid all gross bourding and alehouse jesting, but also to eschew all foolish talk and ruffian manners, such as no honest ears can at once abide, nor yet any witty man can like well or allow.”<sup>45</sup> The lower classes and buffoons were treated as pariahs in the literature. The “vilification of the buffoon in the courtesy manuals [was] intended to preserve the integrity and purity of the nobility” (to which the ideal courtier belonged).<sup>46</sup> The jest-books and courtesy manuals make a clear-cut division of the classes.<sup>47</sup> There was a very marked difference between jesting appropriate for an educated courtier, and for a common clown or fool. In *The Book of the Courtier*, Castiglione wrote, “It is not seemly that the Courtier should always make men laugh, nor yet after the fashion of fools, drunken men, the silly, the inept or buffoons. And although these kinds of men appear to be in demand at courts, yet they do not deserve to be called courtiers, but each should be called by his own name and judged for what he is.”<sup>48</sup> This division was so sharp

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41. Elias. This theme is prevalent throughout the book, primarily in part four, chapter IV “The Courtization of the Warriors.”

42. Elias, 365.

43. Huizinga, 65.

44. Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Clarence H. Miller, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 54

45. Armstrong, 87. I am translating “*Vir sapit, qui pauca loquitur*” as “A man understands, who speaks little,” and “*Vir loquitur, qui pauca sapit*” as “A man speaks, who understands little.”

46. Wilson, 167/4-8.

48. Chris Holcomb, *Mirth Making: The Rhetorical Discourse on Jest in Early Modern England* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 130.

48. It is interesting to note that there is no difference made for clergymen. A foolish priest was just as likely to be the subject of a jest as anyone else.

49. Castiglione, 106/46.

that Nicholas Breton, in his caustic poems “Pasquil’s Mad-Cappe” and “Pasquil’s Fooles-Cappe,” even went so far as to say that wealth made all the difference:

If he be rich, although his nose doe runne,  
His lippes doe sluer, and his breath doe stinke,  
He Shall have napkins faire and finely spunne,  
Pilles for the rhowme, and such perfumed drinke  
As were he blinde, he shall not seem to winke:  
Yea let him cough, halke, spit, and farte, and pisse,  
If he be wealthy, nothing is amisse.<sup>49</sup>

And he that wants this wicked kind of drosse,  
May talke of Nuttes, but feede upon the Shales,  
In steede of Grasse be glad to gather Mosse,  
And steede of Hille be glad to keep the Dales,  
With chilling blasts in steede of blessed gales.  
Valure, Wit, Honor, Vertue, Beauty, Grace,  
All little worth, if Wealth be out of place.<sup>50</sup>

A depiction of a person being bested by a fool was an effective means of ridicule. In the case of George Buchanan an interesting transformation took place in order to increase the effectiveness of his stories. The actual Buchanan was a sixteenth-century humanist author. He was a scholar and tutor of James I. Sometime after 1725 a 21-page jest-book appeared entitled *The Witty and Entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan Commonly called the Kings Fool*. Interestingly George’s character was transformed in the book. He was described as having made “great progress in learning,” and “as for his understanding and ready wit, he excelled all men.” Yet, “he was a servant or teacher to James VI and his private counselor, but publicly he acted the fool.”<sup>51</sup> Each story contains an episode in which George outwits someone, and concludes with a witty remark or tag line. One prevalent theme in the work contains stories of George (a Scotsman) outwitting English bishops and clearly demonstrates the social tensions between England and Scotland, along with religious tensions. Transforming George into a fool does not reflect poorly on him, but rather on those he outwits.

## Conclusion

Fifteenth century authors looked back into the distant past for their inspiration in behavioral and intellectual matters. Examples of foolish (and wise) behavior from ancient Greece and Rome abound in *Praise of Folly*, but Erasmus completely ignored the civilizations during the millennia between the fall of the Empire to his own time. While looking to antiquity for inspiration however, their society was structured on rules that had developed over time. The civilizing process that Elias identifies as a feature of the late-Middle Ages as move away from warrior society expressed itself in very sublime ways. The importance of wit and a quick mind was one such method. Rather than beginning in the Middle Ages, this process is a part of the natural evolution of society. Different rules and means of conveyance have appeared and disappeared over time. These rules, however, were (and are) directly influenced by their immediate predecessors.

The jest-books served as a virtual textbook for which ideas were acceptable or not. They contributed to the proper definition of social behaviors as much as more respectable works such as

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50. Breton. 4.

51. *Ibid.*, 19.

52. *The Witty and entertaining exploits of George Buchanan*, 3.

courtier's manuals, books of rhetoric, and humanist writings. The jest-books embody an activity articulated in a competition, not only among the nobility but in all levels of society.

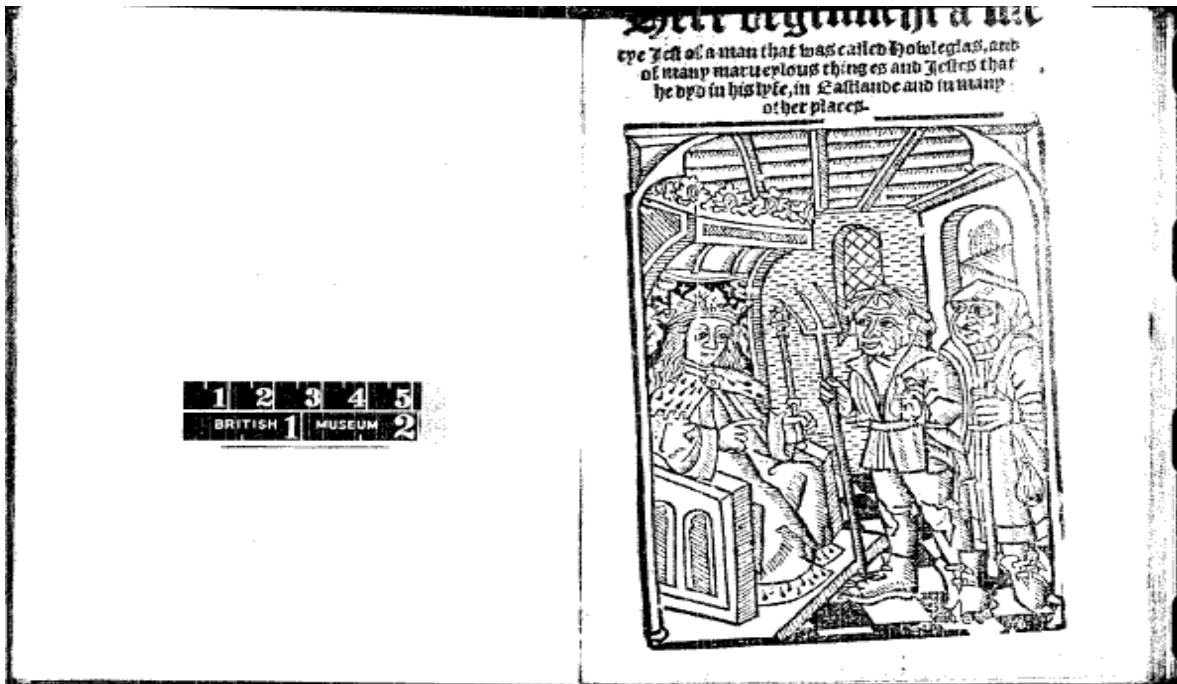
Appendix A: Figures

Figure 1. Table of Contents from A C. Mery Tayles. Each jest is titled and can be quickly located by folio number.

<p><b>The kalender</b></p> <p>¶ Of the mylner that sayd he hard neuer but of ii. commaunders and ii. dowrys. folio. i.</p> <p>¶ Of the cyrcle that callid the prest by John &amp; he callid his maister cat. fo. i.</p> <p>¶ Of the wyfe that mayd her hulbande to go for in the beere in the nyght wyle her penytyz lay with her in her bed. fo. i.</p> <p>¶ Of hym that playd the dewyll and came thowyn the wares &amp; mayd the myn that stole the connyz to come away. fo. i.</p> <p>¶ Of the lye man that bequethid his thyng for a lypell ground with the galows. fo. ii.</p> <p>¶ Of the gentylman that lost his rymg in the gentylwomans bed &amp; a nother gentylman found it after in the same bed. fo. ii.</p> <p>¶ Of the husband man that alkyd for maister pypot the physyche. fo. iii.</p> <p>¶ Of the folke that bare his thoyz to cloutyng. fo. iii.</p> <p>¶ Of hym that sayd that awomas tong was lightest met of degeffio. fo. iii.</p> <p>¶ Of the woman that folowyd her fourth hulbandys herce &amp; wept. fo. iii.</p> <p>¶ Of the woman that sayd her wooc came to late. fo. iiii.</p> <p>¶ Of the mylner with the golden thombe. fo. iiii.</p> <p>¶ Of the hostman of pzeond that prayd doner to hang up the frere. fo. iiii.</p> <p>¶ Of the prest that sayd nother corpus meus noz corpus meum. fo. iiii.</p> <p>¶ Of the ii. freers wherof the one louyd not the vie hed noz the other the taylc. fo. iiii.</p> <p>¶ Of the welchman that throue hym for bychynng his sail on the fryday. fo. v.</p> <p>¶ Of the merchaunt of lods that put nobles i his mouth i his deyth bed. fo. v.</p> <p>¶ Of the mylner that stole the nuttyz &amp; of the taylor that stole a shep. fo. v.</p> <p>¶ Of the iii. elemntys wher they shulde sone be found. fo. vi.</p> <p>¶ Of the woman that powyd the potage in the Juggys male. fo. vi.</p> <p>¶ Of the weddyd men that cam to heuyyn to clayme theyr bepytage. fo. vi.</p> <p>¶ Of the merchaunte that chargyd his sonne to lynde one to syngre for his lowle. fo. vi.</p> <p>¶ Of the mayd washyng clothyz and answeryd the frere. fo. vi.</p> <p>¶ Of the ii. wyfe men of gotam. fo. viii.</p> <p>¶ Of the gray frere that answeryd his penyent. fo. viii.</p> <p>¶ Of the gentylman that bare the lege bozde on his nek. folio viii.</p> <p>¶ Of the marchantys wyfe that seyde the wolde take a nap at sermon. fo. ix.</p> <p>¶ Of the woman that leyde a she lypid a nother yere the wolde haue a bokol dis hat of her owne. fo. ix.</p> <p>¶ Of the gentylman that wyllyd his toth in the gentylwomans tayle. fo. ix.</p> <p>¶ Of the welchman that counsellid hym how he had slayn a frere. fo. ix.</p> <p>¶ Of the welchman that coude not get but a lypell male. fo. ix.</p> <p>¶ Of the gentyl woman that sayd to a gentylman ye haue a berde a boule &amp; none benetye. fo. x.</p>	<p>¶ Of the frere that sayd our lord fed us. 39. people with. ii. h. thys. fo. x.</p> <p>¶ Of the frankysre that wold haue had the frere gon. fo. x.</p> <p>¶ Of the good n. in that sayd to his wyfe he had yll fare. fo. x.</p> <p>¶ Of the frere that bad his chyld make a later. fo. x.</p> <p>¶ Of the gentylman that alkyd the frere for his beuce. fo. x.</p> <p>¶ Of the .iii. men that chace the womā. fo. x.</p> <p>¶ Of the gentylnā that taught his cooke the medefyns for the tothake. fo. xi.</p> <p>¶ Of the gentylnā that promysid the coler of orfoyd a farrenet tpyet. fo. xi.</p> <p>¶ Of maister welton that bought the byshop of Notwyche. ii. sekensys. fo. xi.</p> <p>¶ Of the yeman of gard that sayd he wold bete the carter. fo. xi.</p> <p>¶ Of the prest that sayd our lady was not so curyous a woman. fo. xi.</p> <p>¶ Of the folc that wold go to the dewyll. fo. xi.</p> <p>¶ Of the plowmanys sonne that sayd he saw one make a gos to kretis twys etly. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the maydys answer that was with elyde. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the seruant that rymyd with his maister. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the welchman that deliueryd the letter to the ape. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of hym that sold ryght nought. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the frere that told the iii. chylders fortunys. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the boy that bare the frere his maisters money. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of whyty spencer the bochers man. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the courtier and the carter. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the yonge man that prayd his slole to tech hym his pater noctet. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the frere that ptechyd in epyne expownyng the que maria. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the curat that ptechyd the actyces of the Crede. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the frere that ptechyd the .x. commaunders. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the wyfe that had her hulband ete the candell furst. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the man of la wyz sonnyz answer. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the frere in the pulpit that bad the woman leue her babelyng. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the welchman that cast the shot in to the ket. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the man that bad the dome wyfe. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the ptooz of arches that had the lypell wyfe. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the ii. nonnyz that were shrymyn of ons prest. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the schyere that sholde haue bene made knyght. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the man that wold haue the put stand there as he wold. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the penyent that sayd the shepe of god haue mercy upon me. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the hulband that sayd he was John daw. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the sholer of orfoyd that prayd by souphastey. ii. chepys. iii. fo. xii.</p> <p>¶ Of the frere that stole the podyng. fo. xii.</p>
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**Figure 2.** Woodcut from *Howleglas* (1528?) (By permission of the British Library).



**Figure 3.** Woodcut from *Salomon and Marcolphus* (1530?) The two books used an identical woodcut. Image approximately six inches by four and one half inches. (By permission of the Bodleian Library).



**Figure 4** *The Wise and Ingenious Companion*. Printed in English on one page and French on the facing page. The book is only 6 inches tall. The purpose of printing in both languages is to aid in the learning of English. (By permission of the Huntington Library)



**Figure 5.** *The Art of Rhetoric.* The first letter of each section is illuminated and there are notes in the margins that resemble *glossa*. The font is a close gothic script that resembles had written lettering. (By permission of the Huntington Library)

GVALTERVS HADDONVSD,  
IVRIS CIVILIS, ET REGINAE MAIE  
STATI, a Libellis supplicibus:

**R**etorice logice soror, est affata sororem;  
Quem didicit nuper, sermo Britannus erat.  
Retorice tacuit, magno percussa dolore:  
Nam nondum nostro nouerat ore loqui.  
Audiit hæc, Logices, Vulfonis forte, magister  
Qui fuerat, nostros addideratq; sonos  
Retorice mutam, verbis solatus amicis  
Seuocat, & rogat num esse Britanna velit  
Deiciens oculos respondit velle libenter,  
Sed se, qua posuit, non reperire, via.  
Ipse vias (inquit) tradam, legeq; loquendi:  
Quomodo perfecte verba Britanna loces.  
Liberat ille fidem, nostro sermone politur  
Retorice, nostra est vtraque facta soror.  
Anglia nobilium si charus sermo fororum  
Est tibi, sermonis charus & author erit.

THOMAS VVILSONVS IN  
Anglicam Rhetoricen suam.

**A**nglia si doceat, quod Græcia doctat, quid obstat  
Quo minus ex Anglis Anglia, vera sciat.  
Non (quia Græca potes, vell calles verba Latina)  
Doctus es, aut sapiens; sed quia verba vides.  
Aurea secreto tegitur sapientia sensu.  
Abdita sensa tenes Anglus: es ergo sciens.  
Sed mea Rhetoricen nequeat cum lingua polire:  
Cui vacat, hoc vnum quod valet, oro velit.

*The art of Rhetorique.* Fol. 1.

*What is Rhetorique.*

**R**hetorique is an arte to set foꝛthe by vtterance  
of woꝛdes, matter at large, oꝛ (as Cicero doeth  
saie) it is a learned, oꝛ rather an artificiall de-  
claracion of the minde, in the handelyng of any  
cause, called in contention, that maie thꝛough  
reason largely be discussed.

*The matter whereupon an  
Orator must speake.*

**A** Orator muste be able to speake fully of all those  
questions, whiche by lawe and mannes oꝛdinaunce  
are enacted, and appoynted foꝛ the vse and pꝛofite of  
man, soche as are thought apt foꝛ the tongue to sette  
foꝛward. Now Astronomie is rather learned by demonstra-  
cion, then taught by any great vtterance. Arithmetique smal-  
ly needeth thuse of eloquence, seynge it maie be had wholly by  
nombꝛyng onely. Geometrie rather asketh a good square,  
then a cleane slopyng tongue, to set out the arte. Therfoꝛe  
an Oratoris pꝛofessio, is to speake onely, of all soche matters  
as maie largely be expounded, foꝛ mannes behoue, and maie  
with moche grace be set out, foꝛ all men to heare them.

*Rhetorique de-  
cupied aboute  
all lawes, con-  
cerning man.*

*Questions of  
twoo sortes.*

*Of Questions.*

**E**very question, oꝛ demaunde in thinges, is of twoo  
sortes. Either it is an infinite questio, and without  
ende, oꝛ els it is definite, and comprehended within  
some ende.

Those questions are called infinite, whiche generally are  
pꝛopounded, without the comprehension of time, place, and  
persone, oꝛ any soche like: that is to saie, when no certaine  
thing is named, but onely woꝛdes are generally spoken. As  
thus, whether it be better to marie, oꝛ to live single. Whiche  
is better, a Courtiers life, oꝛ a Scholers life.

*Questions  
infinite.*

Those questions are called definite, whiche set foꝛthe a  
matter, with the appoyntment, and namyng of place, time  
and persone. As thus. Whether now it be best here in En-  
glande, foꝛ a pꝛiesse to marie, oꝛ to live single. Whether it  
were meete foꝛ the kynge to make, that now is, to marie  
with a stranger, oꝛ to marie with one of his own subiectes.

*Questions de-  
finite.*

*¶.*

*Now*

## Place and Intellect: Influences in British Attitudes toward European Integration

Jean Schindler

*Britain needs to be in the driving seat of Europe. In the driving seat, or in the passenger seat, that's pretty good, you know, cause you can take a sleep for a little bit... 'Are we there yet?' At the moment, Britain's not even in the European car. We're outside the car, at the traffic lights, going, 'We're going to clean your windows, all right?'—Eddie Izzard*

The concept of a common European identity is one that has been evolving for many years. It accelerated in its development after two world wars. Those catastrophic and devastating ordeals made concerns about the loss of national identity seem less important to many in light of the security that could be gained through some form of integration. For the British, however, national identity has remained a critical issue, overshadowing whatever advantages offered by a closer association with her neighbors. Geographical separation from the continent facilitated an intellectual divide. Thought in Britain and in continental Europe developed on paths that sometimes paralleled, occasionally crossed, and often diverged from one another entirely. Perhaps nowhere is this clearer than in the way they approach problems, both in their methodologies and their motivations, which has given rise to commentary from observers and participants in the process of European integration alike. While differences in cultural experiences and legal systems are common to all European nations, the British sometimes appear to be a special case. Attempts at integration—defined as the deliberate actions by policy makers to create rules to establish common institutions and regulate or inhibit social and economic flows, as well as to pursue common policies—seem to break down not over incompatibility, but over preferred methods and the perceptions each nation has of the other. This can be viewed in light of the fact (with notable exceptions existing, of course, on both sides) that, while many, particularly early, continental advocates for European union seemed to favor federalism (a wide-ranging pooling of sovereignty usually involving greater democratic participation by electorates in the process), almost every major British advocate has seemed to favor functionalism (the progressive economic and cultural harmonization that could eventually spill-over into political unification). Even Churchill, who initially appeared to be advocating for federalism, was actually advocating functionalism for the continent, but functionalism in Britain's approach to the issue. Churchill may have subconsciously stumbled onto an idea. Could federalism and functionalism be made to work together, to form a united Europe? It may mean that European Union would evolve over a couple of hundred years rather than a few decades, but the edifice that would emerge from such a drawn-out and deliberate process might be much more stable than one built out over less than a century. The problem of British integration seems primarily to be one of perception and methodology, and only secondarily an issue of law and sovereignty. Though Britain is far from the continental federalist ideal, it has nonetheless been moving in its own fashion to closer functional unity with Europe, which could, at some point in the future, evolve into a more complete federal union.

### Geography

The first contributor to the perception of Britain as fundamentally different from continental nations is geography. The English Channel, the Strait of Dover, and the North Sea all serve to isolate Great Britain from continental Europe and help explain the fact that England has not been invaded since the Norman conquest of 1066. Shakespeare referred to this as “the silver sea, / Which serves it in the office of a wall/ Or as a moat defensive to a house, /Against the envy

of less happier lands.”<sup>1</sup> This buffer from the continent also prevented Britain from sharing with Europe the same conclusions about preventative measures against future wars. After World War I, Charles de Visscher, a Professor of Law at the University of Ghent, was convinced that Europe could only experience “a return to the feeling of security and mutual confidence” through the “aid of an established organization capable of guaranteeing by military sanctions the maintenance of the established order.”<sup>2</sup> However, in Britain, the prevailing political opinion opposed any form of closer European association—the Foreign Office did not even have on file any publications from Count Coudenhove Kalergi, a prominent and active advocate of European federalism, during the 1920s and ’30s.<sup>3</sup> After World War II, the realities of conquest and humiliation further eroded continental faith in national sovereignty and gave even stronger impetus to the drive for some form of federation. Britain, however, emerged from the war unoccupied and victorious, and saw no need to change – in fact, victory affirmed the rightness of British institutions and the British place in the world.<sup>4</sup> In 1951, Churchill would, in a government note, declare the need to “resist any American pressure to treat Britain as on the same footing as the European States, none of whom have the advantages of the Channel and who were consequently conquered.”<sup>5</sup>

European involvement was seen by the British as an option, and not as a necessity. Anthony Eden, Churchill’s foreign minister in 1951, once told a pro-European colleague, “You see the difference between us is that you’re a European animal and I’m basically an Atlantic animal.”<sup>6</sup> It is inconceivable that, say, two Frenchman could have such conflict of geographical national identity. No Italian would tell another, “You’re a Tyrrhenian animal, and I’m basically an Adriatic animal.” But the watery divide has made possible this dualistic tug on British interests and identity. Though France, Spain, Belgium, and others all had empires and colonies, they never had the choice to turn their backs on European politics and devote themselves to their global interests. Their involvement in the world was inseparable from their involvement in Europe.

### Differences in Tradition

But if the geography served the British as a protection against occupation and other continental ills, the thought processes and methodologies that developed on the British side of the barrier often prevented them from being understood and trusted by their neighbors across the Channel. The very ways by which the British tackle problems causes them to both regard the Europeans as difficult and impractical, which in turn alienates the Europeans. In 1950, Harold Macmillan summarized what he saw as the difference between the two:

The continental tradition seeks to reason a priori and descends, as it were from the summit to the plain; it proceeds from general principles, which it then applies to practical issues...The British, on the other hand, prefer to discuss problems a posteriori, ascending from practical experience towards the summit.<sup>7</sup>

To continental advocates of federalism, the British attention to detail and practical issues appeared to be an attempt to slow things down and to dominate the process. Konrad Adenauer saw Britain

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1. William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, act II, scene 1
  2. Charles de Visscher, *The Stabilization of Europe*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1924.), 82.
  3. Philomena Murray and Paul Rich, eds., *Visions of European Unity*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 25.
  4. David Gowland and Arthur Turner, *Reluctant Europeans: Britain and European Integration 1945 – 1998*, (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000), 22-23.
  5. Sean Greenwood, ed., *Britain and European Integration since the Second World War* (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1996), 47.
  6. Greenwood, 47.
  7. Derek Heater, *The Idea of European Unity*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), 151.

as trying to exploit “us poor, dumb Continentals.”<sup>8</sup> Sir Oliver Harvey, British ambassador to France, observed in 1950 that one series of negotiations offered, “A classic example of the difficulty of reconciling French cartesianism with British empiricism, the French habit of proposing lofty aims and then thinking out the methods of achieving them with the British habit of only advancing step by step.”<sup>9</sup> To the British, establishment of the practical details was the only way to build the foundation on which to base a closer and more extensive association. Philosophical visions of the future were considered useless for the pragmatic purposes of daily life. Harvey, in an earlier 1950 dispatch to the Foreign Office, would refer to the formation of the Council of Europe as an example of how the French maintained that “the creation of European machinery would stimulate the growth of European consciousness,” whereas “the British held that until that consciousness had developed the machinery would be useless and probably dangerous.”<sup>10</sup> One British Undersecretary at the Foreign Office, Sir William Tyrrell, was typical in dismissing Austrian Coudenhove Kalergi as “a thoroughly impracticable theorist.”<sup>11</sup> One historian has commented:

[The differences] seemed acute: between a British tradition of efficient administration and continental laxness in implementing agreed rules, between a majoritarian government able to press legislation through Parliament and the delays and compromises which characterized continental coalitions.<sup>12</sup>

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1979 – 90) took a sterner perspective, and declared herself “distrustful...of that un-British combination of high-flown rhetoric and pork-barrel politics which passed for European statesmanship.”<sup>13</sup>

### Functionalism vs. Federalism

This may help explain why many leading British exponents of European integration, such as E.H. Carr, tend to be functionalists, while many continental exponents tend to hope for federalism. The British, by establishing the working details of daily life, felt they could from them build the bonds of lasting union; the continentals, by establishing the political super-structure, hoped to bring about the best possible arrangement all at once. It also helps explain why the British often seem, by their attention to detail, heartlessly pragmatic, and the Europeans, by their pursuit of seemingly idealistic visions, often rely excessively on “a consensus or even corporatist style of politics.”<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that the British have always been entirely hostile to the federal idea. In 1938 the Federal Union was founded in London and attracted considerable support.<sup>15</sup> But as one historian noted, in England, “the federalist ideas did not make the crossing from intellectual “think tank” to the policy papers of the senior civil servants.”<sup>16</sup> By the early 1940’s the functional approach became highly fashionable.<sup>17</sup> Carr considered federalism almost synonymous with “utopianism,” a collection of “elegant superstructures” with no chance of success.<sup>18</sup> The concept of “organic growth,”<sup>19</sup> as advocated by British scholar of functionalism

8. Paul Johnson, *Modern Times*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 599.

9. Gowland and Turner, 46.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Murray and Rich, 24.

12. W.J. Mommsen, ed., *The Long Way to Europe*, (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1994), 130.

13. Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993), 727.

14. Elizabeth Pond, *The Rebirth of Europe*, (Washington: Brookings Institute Press, 1999), 21.

15. Murray and Rich, p. 54.

16. Heater, 148.

17. Murray and Rich, 54.

18. *Ibid.*, 51.

David Mitrany, harmonized with British traditions—namely her organically developed, unwritten constitution, uniting a society of those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.<sup>20</sup>

### Sovereignty and Legal Compatibility

While geography and methodology stand as special barriers to British-continental understanding, the twin issues of sovereignty and legal compatibility also pose a particular problem for Britain. A 1967 White Paper presented by the Lord Chancellor titled “Legal and Constitutional Implications of United Kingdom Membership of the European Communities” dispels:

The idea that the continental origin of the relevant provisions would necessarily make them difficult to apply in the United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom legislation on matters of this kind has been framed in virtually identical terms for England and Scotland and has fitted with equal aptitude into both legal systems despite the antithesis between the common law tradition of the former and the Roman law associations of the latter.<sup>21</sup>

The British and the Scottish found common ground in their legal systems to. What the White Paper does not mention is that, despite the disparate nature of the two systems, grounds were found for their merging together into the United Kingdom. The fact that the Kingdom was united with some degree of coercion, and that the coerced are now, in these more liberal times, moving toward devolution, presents interesting problems that need further investigation.

British Prime Minister Harold Wilson (1964 – 70, 1974 – 76) observed in 1967, when Britain reapplied for membership in the European Community (EC), that membership would result in a curtailment of British control over her tariff and commercial policies. However, he added:

We must...remember that restraints of this kind on our legislative freedom are by no means unprecedented. We have accepted them, for example, in accepting the Charter of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty, in our membership of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and again in E.F.T.A. We need, therefore, to keep this aspect of membership in a due sense of proportion.<sup>22</sup>

It should come as no surprise that British integration with Europe has continued to take place along interesting lines. The creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951 was both a functionalist and a federalist initiative in its pooling of sectoral interests and its creation of federalist-style institutions.<sup>23</sup> A modified functionalism, dubbed neo-functionalism, which incorporates the autonomous activities of political institutions in the integration process, has produced some progress, as seen during the 1980s as the members of the EC agreed on the Single European Act in 1986, the Social Charter in 1989, and finally the Treaty on European Union at the end of 1991.<sup>24</sup> EU nations “now allow a full 50 percent of their domestic legislation and 80 percent of their economic legislation to be written in Brussels.”<sup>25</sup> The problem for Britain may not be so much an issue of legal incompatibility as it is of national character.

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19. Ibid., 53.

20. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (New Rochelle, New York: Arlington House)

21. E. Lauterpacht, ed., *British Practice in International Law*, (London: The British Institute of International and Comparative Law, 1967), 150.

22. Ibid., 147

23. Murray and Rich, 10.

24. Ibid., 5.

25. Pond, 23.

## Conclusion

It would seem that the difficulties surrounding the issue of British integration are primarily those of perception and methodology, and only secondarily an issue of law and sovereignty. Though Britain is far from the continental federalist ideal, she has nonetheless moved in her own fashion to a closer integration with Europe. This could evolve into closer federal union. Each nation of Europe has its own unique set of challenges to overcome regarding integration. But historian William Wallace observes, “[The] distinctiveness of the challenge each nation faces is to be found more in the national history each has inherited than in the dilemmas for future policy.”<sup>26</sup> Britain’s history presents her with the twin features of geography and a distinctive intellectual tradition to ponder. Churchill’s pronouncement that “we help, we dedicate, we play a part, but we are not merged and do not forfeit our insular or Commonwealth-wide character”<sup>27</sup> casts a long shadow through time, but appears to be increasingly obsolete. Geoffrey Howe, Margaret Thatcher’s nemesis in the Conservative party, urged that the European enterprise not be seen “as some kind of zero-sum game,” and quoted Churchill in saying that “it is also possible and not less agreeable to regard’ this sacrifice or merger of national sovereignty “as the gradual assumption by all the nations concerned of that larger sovereignty which can alone protect their diverse and distinctive customs and characteristics and their national traditions.”<sup>28</sup> This vision of a larger sovereignty will only result from a change in society’s perceptions, not the integration process.

Social interaction between Britain and the continent is burgeoning. The Number journeys across the channel continue to increase; 330,000 Britons now own homes on the continent. Young Britons travel around Europe as if they are in their own territory.<sup>29</sup> Sir Christopher Mallaby, former British ambassador to France, wrote recently that “rivalry and prejudice will not disappear but cooperation and contact between Britain and France will gradually erode them.”<sup>30</sup>

Unfortunately, British identity would probably be in danger of disintegration without some sense of separation from the continent.<sup>31</sup> For the adjustment to an alternative framework for British loyalty and pride to work, Britain needs to “rediscover and re-emphasize those elements of Britain’s history that place it firmly within a European context.”<sup>32</sup> If Britain finally decides to bow to the pressures of the twenty-first century, rethinking its identity could very well be its greatest challenge. Finally, if Britain truly wishes to integrate into the life of the continent, it must also study more deeply the nature of the changes that have taken place in there, and revise its perceptions accordingly. Then Britain may perhaps emerge stronger, and, perhaps, be once again at peace with her place in the world.

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26. Mommsen, 109.

27. Greenwood, 47.

28. *Ibid.*, 185.

29. Mommsen, p. 131.

30. Philippe Chassaing and Michael Dockrill, eds, *Anglo-French Relations, 1898-1998*, (Hampshire, England: Palgrave Press, 2002), 10.

31. Mommsen, 131.

32. *Ibid.*, 132.

## János Kádár: Soviet Quisling or Caring Socialist?

### V. Shain Alexander

During the height of the Cold War, the United States House Committee on Un-American Activities published a series of booklets—dossiers describing in lurid detail the world’s most maniacal communist leaders. In September 1957, the committee spotlighted János Kádár, Secretary General of the then People’s Republic of Hungary. Kádár was described as:

A man with ambition, but no integrity, personal drive but no character, a certain shrewdness of the unsophisticated and a natural political skill, but devoid of high intelligence or morality...Kádár, although a native Hungarian, is an instrument of Soviet imperialism.<sup>1</sup>

The United States thusly characterized Hungary as a nation lead by a moron but controlled by the Soviet Empire. Moreover, the entire Cold War was fought under the premise that the Soviet satellite states were simply pawns in a worldwide game of chess between capitalism and Communism. Endless policy prescriptions, economic programs, and the escalation of the arms race all resulted from this assumption. But what if the United States was wrong?

This paper sets out to investigate the leader of Hungary, János Kádár, from 1956 until 1988. In particular, how was he able to implement the radical economic reforms heralded as the *wirtschaftswunder* of Hungary between 1968 and 1972? How did this unassuming man, supposedly devoid of high intelligence impose reforms that decentralized the socialist economy and privatized nearly a third of the gross national product under the nose of the imperialist Soviets?<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the answer is that Kádár, despite the United States’ best information, was not a puppet for the USSR.

I contend that Kádár wielded considerable political power in central Europe that was only validated by the Soviets, not in their control. The political camaraderie between Kádár and Nikita Khrushchev, coupled with a strong Soviet loyalty situated Kádár in a unique position of power to carve out a niche of independence within the Soviet Bloc, even after Khrushchev was replaced in the Politburo. The paper begins by examining Kádár’s childhood and early Party involvement to establish his motivation as a leader. Then, it turns to the aftermath of the 1956 Revolution that branded Kádár a traitor and hoisted him into the most powerful position in Hungary. Finally, the paper explicates the economic reforms that shaped Hungarian lifestyle.

The question of Kádár’s relationship to the USSR affects not only how we view the Cold War in retrospect, but it also makes us reexamine how we interpret core-peripheral economic relations in general. If this paper succeeds at showing that the relationship between Hungary and the Soviet Union was more of a give-and-take than a satellite-empire, then it seems that US foreign policy towards Hungary during the Cold War could have been improved. No, Kádár was definitely not a closet-capitalist. But he did share the ultimate goal of improving the quality of life for his citizens just like the presidents of the United States.

### Kádár’s Early Party Involvement

János Kádár was born János Czermnik in the Austro-Hungarian Empire to a peasant on 25 May 1912, in the town of Fiume (now Rijeka) later lost in the Treaty of Trianon<sup>3</sup> to Yugoslavia. János Kádár was his third and final name, as it was customary to change one’s name when entering

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1. Committee on Un-American Activities United States House of Representatives, *Who Are They?* (Washington DC: US House of Representatives, 1957), 5.
  2. Ivan T. Berend, “Hungary: Eastern Europe’s Hope?” *Current History*, Vol. 91, No. 568 (1992), 381-384.
  3. Trianon was only one sub-treaty of the larger Treaty of Versailles in 1919 that dealt specifically with Hungary.

the Party, and again when promoted to a high rank within the Party. Although the date is unclear, sometime during Kádár's childhood he and his mother moved to Budapest to seek employment. Kádár left school at age 14 to apprentice for a mechanic and financially support his mother. He never knew his father.

In 1928, Kádár, a childhood chess prodigy who remained an avid player throughout his life, won a chess tournament sponsored by a worker's organization in Budapest. The prize was a copy of Engels's *Anti-Dühring*. It was Kádár's first political exposure and a turning point in his life. He later wrote:

I read [the book] over almost eight months, who knows how often? I became more and more absorbed in it. My friends tried to drag me away and tapped their foreheads, indicating that there was something wrong with me. I can't say that even then I fully understood the *Anti-Dühring*, the first Marxist book to fall into my hands, but from then on I considered life in a different way.<sup>4</sup>

And in 1930, after running into a childhood friend who had joined the then illegal Communist Party, Kádár himself joined during the ultra right-wing Miklós Horthy era. By 1942, after the hanging of the Party's two main leaders, Kádár was elected to the five-man Central Committee in Hungary.<sup>5</sup>

## 1956 Revolution

During the period after the Second World War, Kádár played a relatively minor role in the party under the Stalinist leadership of Mátyás Rákosi. It was not until the 1956 Revolution that Kádár was thrust into a position of power, almost by default. During the revolution, Kádár fled to the Soviet Union leaving Prime Minister Imre Nagy to go it alone against the invading Soviet troops. After the revolution was squelched on 7 November 1956, Kádár returned to Hungary in a convoy of Soviet tanks and was given the task of reestablishing the Party regime by Soviet Party Secretary Nikita Khrushchev. Kádár was chosen largely because of a lack of viable Hungarian candidates. The political thaw in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin had spread to the Eastern Bloc countries as well, and loyal Stalinists like Rákosi, who employed the same brutal methods of enforcing their will, were purged from the Party. Kádár had remained a safe distance from Rákosi, and was seen as a reformer within the Party. More importantly, Kádár was a nominee who was acceptable to Josip Tito in Yugoslavia during a period when Soviet-Yugoslav relations needed mending after the rift between Stalin and Tito. The show trials, executions, and purges of the past decade had all been in the name of anti-Titoism, and Khrushchev was looking to improve inter-party relations. And to ensure his position, Kádár was one of the only Communist leaders with legitimate working-class roots, instead of a petty bourgeois background.<sup>6</sup>

From the beginning of Kádár's leadership of Hungary, he aimed at improving the quality of life of Hungarians through economic prosperity. By the arrival of the mid 1960s, it was clear that major economic reform was necessary to continue achieving this goal. But this was a dangerous time for reform in the Soviet Bloc. Leonid Brezhnev would usurp power from Khrushchev in Moscow and uprisings in Poland and Czechoslovakia would all upset the balance of power in the game where Kádár teetered dangerously close to disaster. János Kádár would need to win the confidence of the new leadership in the USSR in order to undertake the most radical economic innovations in the history of the Soviet Bloc.

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4. János Kádár, *Socialist Construction in Hungary* (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1962), 8.

5. William Shawcross, *Crime and Compromise, János Kádár and the Politics of Hungary Since Revolution* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1974), 44.

6. *Ibid.*, 91.

## Economic Reforms

The two concrete goals of Kádár's economic policies were the increase in real wages and availability of consumer goods.<sup>7</sup> The first step towards these ends was the collectivization of agriculture, but without the feature of compulsory deliveries. This was unique to Hungary. Instead of compulsory deliveries that lead to shortage and surplus due to human error, the state offered incentives for productivity and reasonable market prices. The lack of strong centralization linked with this new approach to socialist farming actually lead to satisfactory production and output in both the private and collective farms—in spite of Marxist theory.<sup>8</sup>

Two men are believed to have been the strongest influences in shaping Kádár's economic policy—Nikita Khrushchev and Rezso Nyers. During Khrushchev's reign as Party Secretary of the Soviet Union, he discussed ways to renovate the Soviet economy with Kádár, his trusted friend and ally. The Soviet leader himself implemented new strategies to develop industry and agriculture by dividing the Soviet Union into economic regions with corresponding Party units assigned to each. Historian Andrew Felkay writes, "This was probably the turning point that lead to [Khrushchev's] demise."<sup>9</sup> Regardless, this is still a clear indication that he encouraged Kádár to experiment with improving his own economy.

Rezso Nyers was the second man to influence Kádár during the 1960s. He was a high-ranking Party member who Kádár looked after personally and made the spokesman for economic matters. Nyers's background was in the Social Democratic Party, which later merged with the Communist Party, and he had studied new economic renovations in the Soviet Union. In 1962, Nyers was named as Secretary of the economic policy department of the Central Committee and became the leader of reform behind Kádár.<sup>10</sup> In lectures published by the Party's Political Academy, Nyers argued the only way to maintain Hungary's economic growth was modernization and investment in advanced technology. The problem was this technology was not available from the Soviet Union; only western capitalist countries possessed it.

Kádár realized that central planning needed to be eased in order to allow managers a degree of freedom to generate a positive profit margin (where there often was none before). However, decentralizing economic planning seemed to fly in the face of communism. But Khrushchev helped Kádár find an ideological justification for this change. Nemchinov, Novozhilov, and Kantorovich, three Soviet economists working under Khrushchev published articles about economic reforms in Soviet Union which later became the direct model for Hungary and the perfect justification for reform.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of 1964 the Central Committee sponsored a workshop on theoretical economics that was given the task of developing the New Economic Mechanism (NEM). It was designed to be a set of blueprints for economic reform to ensure continued growth and the ultimate goal of increasing the standard of living in Hungary. Although it took another four years to bring into action, NEM focused on major structural changes, the most significant being massive reduction of the role of central economic agencies.<sup>12</sup> Decentralization and competition were going to propel Hungary into the 1970s.

However, before the NEM could be launched, the idea had to be sold to the new Soviet Party Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev. Kádár and Brezhnev had no prior relationship before his new

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7. Andrew Felkay, *Hungary and the USSR, 1956-1988* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), 179.

8. Ivan T. Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe 1944-1993, Detour from the periphery to the periphery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 149.

9. Andrew Felkay (1989), 180.

10. László Kontler, *Millennium in Central Europe, A History of Hungary* (Budapest: Atlantis Publishing House, 1999), 440.

11. Alex Nova, *The Soviet Economy* (New York: Praeger, 1963), 296.

12. Charles Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986), 165.

appointment in 1964, and without Khrushchev's approval, it was not obvious if such radical reforms would be possible. Another shake up occurred in leadership, this time in Hungary. In June 1965, Kádár resigned as the premier of Hungary in order to concentrate on his duties as first Party Secretary.<sup>13</sup> He was also elected to the Presidential Council, the highest governing body. However, Kádár's position of authority in Hungary remained unchanged and the new premier Gyula Kállai was only a puppet for Kádár.

From 1964 until its debut in 1968, Kádár would keep Moscow continually informed regarding the progress and details of the NEM with neither Soviet endorsement nor rejection. In 1965, Nyers gave a progress report claiming that in the mid 1960s "rapidly increasing domestic consumption, demand for better quality goods, and growing foreign trade necessitated structural changes."<sup>14</sup> He felt the political atmosphere was ripe for change. Soon after the report, Kádár traveled to Moscow to meet with Brezhnev and inform him of Hungary's intention to implement the NEM. The Soviets, however, did not publicize the trip and made no public mention of the meeting.

In the following year, Kádár sent Nyers to meet with the political and economic leaders of the USSR to provide technical details of the NEM. No major objections were launched, which green lighted the Hungarian Central Committee's endorsement of the plans and set a launch date for 1 January 1968. The approval by the Party Congress was the last step towards realizing the NEM. Shortly before the Congress, Brezhnev and Soviet ambassador Andropov visited Budapest unexpectedly "to exchange information and discuss the relations between the two countries and Parties."<sup>15</sup> The meeting was again kept quiet and there was no sign of approval from the Soviets.

During the 9<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in November and December of 1966, Brezhnev praised Kádár and Hungary saying:

Hungarians have reasons to be proud. What other European nation could boast of a six-fold increase in prewar industrial production, and a threefold growth of the national income? There isn't a single capitalist country in Europe that can match this record...[Kádár] is a remarkable Communist and an exceptional human being, a towering personality in the Hungarian and international revolutionary Communist movements.<sup>16</sup>

Despite these accolades, he mentioned nothing of the NEM. People seemed to think that Brezhnev approved of Kádár, but was not ready to make a formal endorsement of his new plan. In February 1967, Kádár again met with Brezhnev in Moscow to court the Soviet leader. But once again, there was no endorsement by Moscow. The remainder of the year saw the Romanian boycott of the Soviet Bloc's condemnation of "imperialist" Israeli aggression, and a growing separation between the USSR and China (particularly because of Mao Tse-Tung).

During September of 1967, Kádár and Brezhnev signed the "Soviet-Hungarian Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance Treaty" in Budapest.<sup>17</sup> The NEM once more received very little attention, but Kádár's fierce Soviet loyalty won him credibility with Brezhnev during a time of floundering relations between the USSR, Romania, and China. The Soviets allowed the NEM to proceed as a reward for Hungary's loyalty under Kádár. Still, during an interview on 31 December 1967, the eve of the enactment of the NEM in Hungary, Brezhnev made no reference to it when asked about the future of Hungary. Kádár, who politically lived by the slogan "those who are not against us are with us," must have applied this logic to Brezhnev's treatment of the New Economic

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13. László Kontler (1999), 440.

14. Andrew Felkay (1989), 183.

15. Ibid., 185.

16. Kalman Pécsi, *Thirty Years of Hungarian-Soviet Economic Relations* (Budapest: A Magyar Népköztársaság Tájékoztató Hivatala, 1958), 368.

17. László Kontler (1999), 435.

Mechanism, though it seems likely that Brezhnev would not have failed to squash the NEM under more favorable political conditions for the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup>

The NEM was the key to continued growth and prosperity in Hungary during a time when internal resources were shrinking. It was an adaptation of capitalism it seemed, but Kádár justified, possibly even to himself, that “so long as the means of production were in Socialist ownership, the economy would be protected from the ‘evils of capitalism’—exploitation, unemployment, and depression.”<sup>19</sup> This justification was hard for Brezhnev to swallow, but success in the Hungarian agricultural sector due to decentralization and the knowledge that Kádár and the Party were firmly in control of Hungary (and loyal to the Soviet Union) helped persuade Brezhnev to let Kádár undertake this experiment.

After the launch of the New Economic Mechanism on 1 January 1968, Alexander Dubcek’s Czechoslovakia underwent a political thaw. The relaxation of the press and political opposition, which became known as the “Prague Spring,” prompted the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet and other Eastern European soldiers to restore the order of a strong Communist state. Meanwhile, Kádár’s Hungary was undergoing an even more radical economic transformation, and closely monitoring the events unfolding to the north.

The year after the Prague Spring marked a turning point in the relationship between Brezhnev and Kádár. In February 1969, Kádár met the Soviet Premier in Moscow for an informal discussion of foreign policy and Party issues. Brezhnev was very pleased with Kádár’s loyalty and cooperation during the invasion of Czechoslovakia and was particularly vocal in his appreciation. Kádár was also very pleased with the admiration and attention given to him by Brezhnev. Further updates on the progress of the NEM were given to Moscow by Nyers following the meeting, but this time they were greeted with subtle approval.<sup>20</sup>

The results of the NEM in the early 1970s were quite successful. The most dramatic result was that the Five Year plans, a hallmark of Soviet socialism, became only “indicators” to influence production plans with monetary incentives. They were no longer the entire determiners for production plans and quotas. Coupled with this, businesses could make their own decisions regarding the fate of their profit, even though the state still owned the investment. Management could determine on a case-by-case basis how much money to invest in salaries and expansion. This meant that wages and certain prices were also decentralized and could be adjusted based on productivity and profit. All this led to the establishment of new, smaller, and more efficient businesses throughout Hungary that could keep pace with a modernizing Europe.<sup>21</sup>

This newfound independence led to a shift in industry towards branches dependent on higher technology and away from the processing of raw materials. Pharmaceuticals, televisions, refrigerators, and busses reached levels of the highest international standards and could be exported to the west for much greater profits than if they were sent eastward. The independence and gradual reliance on market forces helped curb shortages and improve quality of consumer goods. Hungarian ready-to-wear fashion caught up to within seven years of trends in the west<sup>22</sup> (and has perhaps languished there).

The modernization and increase in productivity of Hungarian agriculture was another important component to the decentralization of the NEM. Farmers and cooperatives became free to choose their own crops and cooperative leaders (through democratic means of even non-Party members). Moreover, the NEM virtually eliminated barriers for purchasing modern equipment and machinery, including fertilizers, from the capitalist western countries—including the United States. This freedom to import was necessary to modernize the agricultural sector, which Nyers claimed

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18. Andrew Felkay (1989), 190.

19. *Ibid.*, 191.

20. *Ibid.*, 219.

21. Charles Gati (1986), 166.

22. László Kontler (1999), 441.

was the only solution to keep pace and achieve continued economic growth. The improvement of agriculture allowed the industry to become a major force in Hungarian exports and helped to balance the Hungarian trade deficit. But during the off-season, the NEM encouraged workers to help meet the growing demand in the service industry by setting up small private shops and restaurants—all in the name of productivity.<sup>23</sup>

In terms of agricultural success on paper, the NEM impressed even western nations during the early 1970s. The annual growth rate of agriculture doubled, and Hungary topped the list of most productive agricultural sectors in the world, beating both France and the United States. Grain yields in Hungary exceeded the European Economic Community average. Meat, fruit, and vegetable per capita production came in a close second to only the most advanced economies in the world.<sup>24</sup> Hungary was suddenly comparable to its highly modernized Western European neighbors that it had so sorely lagged behind for centuries.

## Conclusion

In light of the relative success of Kádár's reforms under the New Economic Mechanism, what accounts for its implementation? Kádár's only significant political training was by the Party itself, perhaps beginning with the copy of Engels's book *Anti-Dühring*. It is not surprising then that Kádár was a steadfast Communist. But he was also a man of common sense. Every historian and colleague recounts Kádár's commonsense attitudes towards problems and his homespun philosophizing sprinkled with Lenin and Marx. Perhaps this is best illustrated by his love for extemporaneous speaking.

Kádár was a true Communist confronted with the ultimate problem; Communism *Soviet-style* did not work. His solution was to apply practical, sensible solutions to the problems of centralized economic planning. His conclusion: Centralized planning needs help. With help of advisors and ideologists, Kádár devised a plan that remained true to the foundation of Marxism, the means of production continued to be owned by the state to prevent exploitation, found ideological justification in Lenin (an unimpeachable source) for his national deviance from the USSR, and incorporated an economic plan that worked.

What made Kádár's situation remarkable was the political balancing between economic health and political stability in the form of Soviet approval. His personal relationship with Khrushchev was the foundation to build the political fortitude and courage to follow through. And, it was Kádár's undeniable loyalty to the Party that assured the Soviets he was not a counter-revolutionary working to infest the Soviet Bloc with petty bourgeois capitalism and materialism. Rethinking the US Congress's description of Kádár leaves us questioning whether capitalism and socialism are as disconnected as history has made them out to be.

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23. Charles Gati (1986), 166.

24. László Kontler (1999), 441.

## Women or Machines? Pregnancy and Its Importance in the Life of a Slave Woman

Allison Starr

It is well-documented that female slaves were considered to be less valuable than their male counterparts. Females were believed to be weaker and thus less productive than male workers. For this reason, some slave communities were composed solely of male laborers. However, after the abolition of the slave trade, and as the need for slave labor continued to grow in areas of South America and the United States, the value of female slaves increased dramatically. Their value as laborers was recognized as being comparable to that of male slaves, and, more importantly, female slaves were recognized as a legitimate way to replenish the slave population after importing slave labor became illegal. The ability of female slaves to give birth to a new generation became an important factor in increasing the value of the women in slavery. The life of a slave was already harsh, and this increased value can be argued as being, while seemingly beneficial for the female slave, an actually detrimental situation. The abolition of the slave trade and the subsequent increase in value of female slaves was, overall, a negative experience for women in the history of slavery.

For slave owners, the female slave was valuable on two levels; they had the ability to produce labor of their own as well as to create a new labor force by having children. However, a slave owner could only profit from a female slave's reproductive capabilities if he could entice her to have children.

Getting a slave woman pregnant in the first place was not always easy. Slave masters encouraged their female slaves with a variety of methods to bear children. On some plantations women were given clothing and extra food after they gave birth to a healthy child.<sup>1</sup> Other slaves were promised manumission in exchange for producing a certain number of healthy children.<sup>2</sup> Some slave women were subjected to less positive means of persuasion, however. Slaves who refused to bear children voluntarily were sometimes beaten. Some were raped, either by white masters, or by other slave men whom the masters had told to breed with the women. Other women could be sold if they were determined to be infertile; it was a crime to knowingly sell an infertile slave woman at the price of a potentially childbearing woman.<sup>3</sup> It is clear from the lengths that masters went to encourage their slaves to have children that one of the most important characteristics of a female slave was her ability to reproduce. This task alone was worth the rising prices of the female slaves to most slave masters. Despite the incentives or threats offered to enslaved women, some slaves did not bear children.

Infertility was not an infrequent occurrence among women in the slave community. Many factors could have rendered a slave woman infertile and so it is difficult to determine the exact cause of infertility in many of the cases. Female slaves, particularly those who worked in the fields, were subjected to long hours of difficult work. They were also exposed to such diseases as yellow fever, smallpox, cancer, as well as various infections, either stemming from injury sustained while working or developed otherwise.<sup>4</sup> Slave women were also frequently malnourished, a topic of later discussion. Each of these factors could have contributed to infertility and difficulty conceiving a child. Harsh punishments like whippings and beatings could have also injured the women enough to render them barren in some cases. Other women could simply have been born

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1. Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 1985).

2. White, 100.

3. *Ibid.*, 101-2.

4. Todd L. Savitt, *Medicine and Slavery: The Diseases and Health Care of Blacks in Antebellum Virginia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978).

infertile. Whatever the causes, barrenness was often a reason for selling a slave. This treatment further emphasized the idea that women, although monetarily valuable, were thought of as little more than breeding livestock.

Some women capable of bearing children were not eager to do so. Often the victims of rape and other types of sexual abuse, many women did not know the paternity of the children they carried. This was the case of the slave Celia in the Melton McLaurin account of the trial of a slave woman accused of killing her master. Celia did not know for certain if the child she claimed to be carrying was that of her slave lover George, or of her abusive master, Robert Newsom.<sup>5</sup> Some slaves were undoubtedly unhappy about bearing children of rape. Other women, even if they knew the father of the baby, were simply reluctant to bring a child into the world knowing that the child would be born into bondage.

Some slaves became pregnant at a very early age, or very soon after giving birth to another child. For these reasons it is likely that some slave women turned to abortion to prevent children from being born. Abortion was difficult to prove, but West African natives were known to have practiced abortion in some cases and so it is likely that the tradition and technique was imported with the slaves to the New World. There are reported cases of midwives aborting pregnancies for female slaves.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes plants and herbs were given to pregnant women, other times sharp objects were inserted into the birth canal to induce miscarriage.<sup>7</sup> In the Caribbean, women had access to abortifacient plants like yams, mangoes, papayas, and limes.<sup>8</sup> Although slave women had to hide abortion from their masters (failure to do so could lead to severe punishment), this method of birth control was undoubtedly one way that women prevented children from being born.

Despite these factors, most slave women eventually did give birth. Birth records from a plantation in Fluvanna County, Virginia indicate that the average slave woman on that plantation had three children.<sup>9</sup> Before the children could be born, the slave women endured nine months of pregnancy, potentially a difficult time for a female slave. In Virginia, as with some other slave states, pregnant slaves were given a few amenities to compensate for their altered state. Some women were either allowed time off from work or they were assigned less strenuous jobs.<sup>10</sup> However, pregnant slaves did not always benefit from better care during their pregnancy. When women become pregnant, their nutritional needs change. Pregnant women need to consume more iron, folic acid, protein, calcium, and vitamins A and C than they otherwise would, if they want to help ensure a healthy child is born.<sup>11</sup> Records indicate that slave diet was rarely altered to accommodate these changing needs. Fluvanna County slave women were allotted mostly salt pork and cornmeal, with a few vegetables.<sup>12</sup> Some slave women were given more food when they became pregnant, but most were not allotted more until *after* they had given birth to a healthy child. Also, the nutritional value of the extra food they received was not generally any better than before. The quality of the nutrition was much more important than the quantity of food given to a pregnant slave.<sup>13</sup> Poor nutrition manifested itself in a variety of ways, including bad teeth, skin

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5. Melton A. McLaurin, *Celia, A Slave: A True Story* (New York: University of Georgia Press, 1991).

6. White, 84.

7. David Barry Gaspar & Darlene Clark Hine, *More Than Chattel* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996).

8. Gaspar, 205

9. R.L. Higgins, S. J. Marqusee, "A preliminary analysis of the birth records for slave women from the Bremo Plantations, Fluvanna County, Virginia." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (Annual 2001): 80.

10. Savitt, 116.

11. Rebecca Johns Trissler, "The child within: a guide to nutrition counseling for pregnant teens." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* v99, n8 (August, 1999): 916.

12. Higgins, 80.

13. White, 99.

lesions, miscarriage, low birth weights, and low growth rates for newborn children.<sup>14</sup> To encourage a healthier and easier pregnancy, many slaves attempted to supplement their diet by growing vegetable gardens and purchasing small amounts of food in addition to their weekly allotments. However, it is unlikely that these attempts could have made up for all the deficiencies in the slave diet.

Nutritional deficiencies aside, a pregnant slave also faced the challenge of keeping up with the strenuous workload of plantation life. Both field and house workers faced long days of hard work. Although they tired more easily, pregnant slaves were still expected to put in long days. Fluvanna County records indicate that slaves on one plantation worked an average of twelve hours a day.<sup>15</sup> As mentioned above, some slave owners allowed pregnant slaves some time off to rest, while others allowed the women to work at “less strenuous” tasks such as spinning, weaving, and washing.<sup>16</sup> These tasks, though possibly less difficult than planting and harvesting, were nonetheless laborious tasks that required hard work on the part of the slave women.

One of the only instances of special treatment given to pregnant women that can be seen as truly beneficial was sparing them from harsh punishments. A slave woman who misbehaved on the plantation was generally not beaten badly, although some instances of excessive abuse did occur. Though it was not the norm, one account tells of a woman in labor who was dragged out of her home and whipped so badly she died. She was thought to be using her pregnancy as an excuse to not work.<sup>17</sup> Usually, though, this did not happen. If a pregnant female slave was sentenced to death for some offense, the execution was sometimes postponed until after she gave birth.<sup>18</sup> Still, some slave women accepted charms and performed rituals to help ensure a safe pregnancy, despite these few concessions.<sup>19</sup>

If a woman survived her pregnancy without much problem and progressed to full term, she still had one major obstacle to becoming a mother, childbirth. Childbirth was a dangerous part of the slave woman’s life because of the many deaths that resulted from it. Death records from Virginia indicate that nearly two percent of deaths for slaves in 1850 were caused by maternity.<sup>20</sup> There could have been several reasons behind this statistic. Most children delivered to slaves were delivered by midwives. Doctors were only called in when there was some sort of emergency. Occasionally, problems during childbirth arose, and it was usually up to the midwives to deal with them. Women commonly suffered from prolapsed uteri, childbed fever, post-natal hemorrhaging, and infection.<sup>21</sup> Complications also arose that required attempts to save the life of either the mother or the baby at the expense of the other. For example, there are records of instances when the baby was not able to pass through the mother’s cervix. In order to save the mother, the baby’s skull had to be crushed with forceps and a craniotomy performed in order to extract the baby.<sup>22</sup> Later, as medicine became more sophisticated and the doctors and midwives gained experience and training, the caesarean section was improved so that both the mother and the baby could be saved, in many cases. Previous to this time, the operation had been used mainly to remove a baby from an already-dead mother. Midwives adopted this improved technique for use during difficult deliveries. As midwives became more experienced, fewer women were likely to die as a result of complications during childbirth.

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14. Savitt, 87.

15. Higgins, 80.

16. White, 110

17. Dorothy Sterling, *We Are Your Sisters: Black Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 1984).

18. One example was the consideration of the slave Celia’s pregnancy. McLaurin, 121

19. White, 111

20. Savitt, 143 Table 9a.

21. *Ibid*, 119.

22. *Ibid*, 118.

In addition to this advancement, slave women were not solely dependent on midwives for their deliveries. Doctors could be called to assist in delivery if serious complications arose, however slave owners were reluctant to call for professional help unless they felt that the cost of the female's life outweighed the cost of medical attention. Occasionally, slave women were sent to hospitals to deliver their children. These hospitals were not like the sterile medical centers of modern times. Hospitals to which slave women were sent often consisted of nothing but a one-room cabin containing several beds and a surgical area. Doctors ran these hospitals, but frequently the attendants were not formally trained.<sup>23</sup> The hospitals did have equipment not readily available to the common midwife in case of emergency, and for this reason, they can be considered beneficial institutions. Delivering slaves brought to the Tourou Infirmary of New Orleans could expect to have their babies delivered by a doctor for a surgical fee.<sup>24</sup> Women could also obtain medical care after delivery to prevent infection and post-natal complication, as well as for illnesses not related to childbirth, such as syphilis, measles, and psychological illness.<sup>25</sup> Slave hospitals, though equipped with surgical apparatus, were still not guarantors of health and safety. The knowledge and necessity of sterilization and cleanliness were not yet developed. Joseph Lister did not discover antiseptics until 1865, after the end of the Civil War.<sup>26</sup> For this reason, many women who made it safely through delivery died of infection after childbirth. Doctors simply did not know to wash and sterilize their hands and equipment before performing any type of surgery on the women and there were no latex gloves to prevent transmission of pathogens. For this reason, hospitals designed to save the lives of slave women could frequently do more harm than good.

Even if a baby was born without any special medical intervention and the mother survived the birthing, there was a significant likelihood that the child would not grow up healthily. Many infants died in their first days. At the time, the deaths were frequently attributed to infanticide or "smothering." Current examination of medical records suggests that many of these infants died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or of tetanus contracted through the exposed umbilical.<sup>27</sup> Other children succumbed later to childhood diseases such as whooping cough and diphtheria.<sup>28</sup> Instances of infanticide were difficult to prove, but the mothers and attendants of infants who died were often suspected. Recent studies show, however, that infanticide was rare; most babies died from infection or disease.

The struggle for slave women in their reproductive years did not end when they safely delivered their child. Once the babies were born, life for the new mothers became even more difficult. Often, women were forced to go back to work too soon after delivery for them to fully regain their strength.<sup>29</sup> Women on the plantation in Fluvanna County put in, on average, twelve hours of work in the fields each day and were given a total of about 45 minutes to nurse their children. Women who worked closer to their homes were given even less time to tend to the infants.<sup>30</sup> Other records indicate that women were forced to bring their children into the fields with them, strapping the infants to their backs, in order to have time to care for the babies.<sup>31</sup> Then, after their work in the fields was finished, the women had to come home and prepare meals for their family and tend to their gardens, in addition to caring for their children. Slave mothers rarely had any time to relax. On some plantations elderly slaves and children too young for fieldwork were

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23. Katherine Olukemi Bankole, "A critical inquiry of enslaved African females and the antebellum hospital experience." *Journal of Black Studies* v31, n5 (May, 2001): 517.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2001 ed., s.v. "Joseph Lister."

27. Savitt, 120-1

28. Savitt, 55-7.

29. Sterling, 38.

30. Higgins, 80.

31. Gaspar, 200.

charged with childcare to ease the burden on the mothers, but the majority of the burden remained with the mother. Slave mothers faced challenges even after their difficult pregnancies were over.

Clearly, the ability to bear children had a significant impact on the lives of female slaves. Some slaves were offered incentives to repopulate slave society, while others were threatened. Some were forcibly impregnated; others created families voluntarily. The value of female slaves increased with the abolition of the slave trade, but this change did not mean that women slaves were always treated well.

Some women used this new value as a way to rebel. They used what little control over their bodies they had, and turned to abortion to prevent children from being born into slavery. Some women ran away, taking their children with them, thus robbing their owners of not only that entire family, but also the children that the slave master might have wanted the women to have later. Female slaves sometimes feigned pregnancy and fatigue from childbirth in order to get out of going to work.

Female slaves had, at one time, been considered too feeble and frail to be of any real worth to a plantation owner. They were imported mainly to keep the male workers happy. However, with the abolition of the slave trade, women became a genuine source of new slave labor. This change in attitude was less a positive step into the manumission of female slaves than a setback in terms of their being treated like livestock: breeding machines. The acknowledgment of women as important child-bearers *was* something significant, however, it was more a hindrance than a help to female slaves gaining freedom in an otherwise misogynistic world. The life of a female slave was ultimately made more difficult by the elimination of the slave trade because the burden on her became, not only to produce labor of her own, but also to produce a new labor force for the slave-owning community.

# Women in Afghanistan: A Tumultuous Twentieth Century

Diana L. Trembly

*“Anytime there is a revolution in our country, it is bad luck for the women.”*

- King Amanullah’s sister<sup>1</sup>

A woman shrouded in a blue burqa, her face seen only vaguely through mesh netting: it is an image that the entire world has come to recognize as a symbol of the oppression of women in Afghanistan. After September 11, 2001, when attention focused on Osama bin Ladin, the leader of the fundamentalist Islamic group Al Qaeda in Afghanistan upon the invitation of the Taliban rulers, the world suddenly turned its eyes towards Afghan women. To the western world, it seemed as though these women had been hidden behind the veil, silent and subjugated, forever. History tells another story, however. Afghanistan immersed in the first decades of the twentieth century as a progressively modern state with a leader dedicated to the advancement of women. In the middle decades women began to gain ground in women’s rights with small, but significant, steps. However, internal reactionary forces and external forces created turmoil that all but destroyed Afghanistan. Women’s rights or lack thereof, became a key issue in the region, often used as a marker for various factions’ political platforms rather than a cause in and of itself. Geopolitical motives, religious fundamentalism, traditional patriarchal structures hinged on economics and honor, ethnic and tribal conflict all contributed to the history of women’s rights in the region—issues that are still not resolved today. This paper highlights the progress of women’s rights in Afghanistan and its impediments from 1919 to the emergence of the Taliban in the mid-1990s.

## A Brief Overview of Afghanistan

Afghanistan is in a region that is always at the center of political upheaval. The country was in fact an arbitrary creation of British colonialism. In ancient times, Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan both passed through and conquered its people as part of their conquests. Its key geographic location has made it an area of intense interest first to Great Britain, Persia, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire, and later to the United States, the Soviet Union, Iran, and Pakistan. During the days of colonialism, Afghanistan was valued more for its strategic location than its resources – and as a result, little infrastructure was built, as with other British colonies. Afghanistan’s borders were arbitrarily drawn up by British civil servants to coincide with current geopolitical needs. Despite the various ethnic and tribal groups suddenly finding themselves grouped together, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the people of Afghanistan began to conceive of themselves as a nation and desire their own sovereignty. After a series of wars with the British, Afghanistan was able to claim its own independence in 1919 under Amanullah Khan.

Islam serves as a unifying force in Afghanistan society. Afghan law, both local and national, is historically based on the *Shari’a*, or Islamic law. Reactionaries and fundamentalists interpret Islamic law as a means of subjugating women, though in reality it is patriarchy, not Islam that dictates the inequality between men and women.

The patriarchal structure of Afghan society is vital to understanding the antagonism toward women’s rights in the region. It is tied to honor and economics. Families consist of the eldest male heading over a large extended family that includes cousins and kinship ties through marriages, which are always arranged. A man’s honor is hinged on his control over his property. Women are considered property, and so control over a woman, particularly her sexual propriety, is crucial. The segregation of women is a primary way of enforcing this. Women gain honor primarily through

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1. Deborah Ellis, *Women of the Afghan War*, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2000), 184.

the bearing of sons. In terms of economics, women are an asset. They contribute to a large portion of the household work and bring high bride prices, which are a firmly engrained tradition in Afghan society. Thus for women to go outside the family sphere for education, employment, or for other causes not only causes dishonor to her family, but is also viewed as economically crippling. These patriarchal practices are viewed as Islamic practices, even though they are not stipulated in the *Qur'an*.

When looking at women's rights in Afghanistan, one has to distinguish between urban and rural, as well as the upper, middle, and lower class. About 85% of the population is rural. Most are extremely poor, making their living as small farmers. They are disconnected with urban centers. Because Afghanistan's infrastructure is extremely weak, the government's political power was guaranteed only in Kabul and other major cities, dependant upon the loyalty of tribal and religious leaders. In the early twentieth century, authority was in the hands of powerful tribal leaders and local law was dictated by them. During the Cold War the United States and the Soviet Union viewed the country as both a strategic and ideological battleground. They began investing in building an infrastructure, though much of it has been damaged by civil war. Kabul, however, was a modern city by the 1950s, with a minority of highly educated middle and upper class women. The idea of women's rights was much more accepted and understood among these urban elite, and measures in regarding women's equality were spearheaded by them.

### The Progressive King

In 1919, after the third Anglo-Afghan war, Amanullah Khan ousted the British and claimed independence for Afghanistan. He was concerned with making Afghanistan an independent and modern country, and like most other countries seeking to combat westernization, women's status in society became a vital issue. He introduced reforms in women's rights that were drastically different from the status quo. The targeted issues remained important through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1923, he proposed a new constitution that included women's suffrage. Even his contemporaries, the modernizers of Turkey and Egypt, did not propose such a measure.<sup>2</sup> Concerned with education, he sought to create a class of modern intellectuals. He opened many secular schools and sent many students to study abroad in Europe. Women, as well as men, benefited from these educational programs. In addition, he also sought to curb polygamy and prohibit the bride price.<sup>3</sup>

His wife, Queen Saroya, was also very progressive and advocated women's rights as a means to a new and modern Afghanistan. She and other female members of the royal family founded the Afghan Women's Association in their homes, which later grew considerably in importance. It had its home base in Kabul, and satellite offices throughout Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup> In a symbolic gesture, she stood in public and tore the veil from her face, shocking the conservative mullahs.<sup>5</sup> King Amanullah then declared the veil was voluntary.

Religious and tribal leaders considered his reforms un-Islamic, a threat to their power, and an embarrassment to Afghanistan. The newly centralized government imposed measures that took away the autonomy these leaders had historically enjoyed. Specifically, these leaders wanted to retain polygenic practices and bride prices, and they were opposed to education for girls.<sup>6</sup> Because Amanullah had not built up a strong army, these reactionaries were able to easily oust him in 1929. Nine months later Mohammed Nadir Shah came to power.

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2. Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, (London: Zed Books, 1986), 71.
  3. Valentine M. Moghadam, "Revolution, Religion, and Gender Politics: Iran and Afghanistan Compared," *Journal of Women's History* 10, no. 4 (1999): 177.
  4. Nahid Massoud, interview by Diana Trembly, audio recording, 6 December 2003.
  5. Asta Oleson, *Islam and Politics in Afghanistan*, (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1995), 145.
  6. Moghadam, 177, citing Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969).

## Conservative Changes

King Amanullah's overthrow set the tone for further reforms in the region; it was to be relatively gradual. The exile of the king was caused by his intense "symbolic secularization" of Afghanistan. To negate this secularization, Nadir Shah reversed many reforms regarding girls' schools, polygamy, veiling, and other progressive reforms.<sup>7</sup> In addition, other civil rights such as freedom of the press or the right to organize political parties were heavily restricted until the redrafting of the Constitution in 1964. After Nadir Shah's assassination, his nineteen year old son Mohammed Zahir Shah (1933 – 1973) took power. His prime minister, Mohammad Daoud, overthrew the king in 1973 while he was on vacation in Italy and proclaimed himself president. Daoud showed interest in increasing women's education, employment, and civil rights, as well as hastening Afghanistan's modernization. During these years, Afghanistan's political relationship with the Soviet Union and the United States was dominated by Cold War policy, which meant that it benefited inasmuch as it was regarded as strategically important. Its relationship with Pakistan, meanwhile, grew increasingly troubled, which had ramifications during the civil war. In April 1978, Daoud was assassinated by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, a Communist party that had formed in 1965 after the new Constitution allowed limited organization of political parties.<sup>8</sup> This *coup d'état* would change the course of Afghan history, including women's history.

There was not been a large organized women's movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but various smaller movements impacted Afghan society. The Afghan Women's Association grew to be the largest and most influential women's organization, with various centers around Afghanistan. This organization provided health care, a literacy program, vocational training, a day care center, and even a movie theater that showed educational videos to young new mothers regarding proper childcare. The organization also took women's handicrafts, which they would sell and then reimburse the women to give them some degree of financial independence. Other grassroots organizations also formed in Kabul and urban areas to promote education and health care issues among poor and rural women. At various times women were able to organize protests regarding specific issues.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, students in Kabul began to organize themselves into political and social parties in protest of the status quo. Women played a part in these student organizations and many ended up joining the Communist party, which benefited them during the years of Soviet occupation. The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan formed under communist principles during these years, though they vigorously opposed the occupation.

In rural areas, there was not a woman's movement, for several basic reasons. First, women were traditionally isolated from outside society and thus had little access to new ideas such as women's rights. Fathers and husbands often sought to quell any household rebellions by secluding women and keeping them dependant upon men for survival. Thus, challenging the traditional patriarchal structure upon which their livelihoods were based made little sense for most women. In addition, the lack of infrastructure meant that telephones, roads, telegraphs, and other means of communication and transportation were simply not available. Few women outside the cities were literate during these years, making even basic communication over distances difficult.

Women, starting in the 1950s and continuing into the 60s and 70s, began to take advantage of the political opportunities slowly opening up to them. Often women were selected to serve in diplomatic positions, such as in 1958, when Afghanistan sent their first woman delegate to the United Nations.<sup>9</sup> The new Constitution of 1964 allowed women to vote. The first elected parliament, in 1964, had four women out of its 216 members, a mere 1.85 percent, but it was a

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7. Oleson, 180.

8. Moghadam, 177

9. Ellis, xii.

start. By 1977, the parliament was composed of over 15% women.<sup>10</sup> It was created with women delegates on the Loya Jirga. The Loya Jirga (Grand Council) is a highly respected council in Afghan society, consisting of notables from various backgrounds who make important decisions regarding legislature, foreign policy, and other key administrative issues. One woman objected to the draft of the Constitution because she wanted women's rights stated explicitly. However, the committee disagreed with her objection, saying "Afghan" stood for both men and women, not merely men, upon which the woman withdrew the objection.<sup>11</sup> While equality in the eyes of the law between the sexes was theoretically included, it was not actually applied.

Promoting literacy in rural areas in the 60s and 70s became a primary goal of reformers, despite its difficulty to implement. Education has never been very strong in Afghanistan, even for males: in 1967 it was estimated that the literacy rate was around only 10 percent.<sup>12</sup> In 1931, the Constitution made education mandatory for all children.<sup>13</sup> This had two implications: children would receive some secular education, as opposed to purely Islamic religious instruction, and girls were legally included in this plan. Yet, this was hindered by the fact that rural areas often had no schools close by and if they did, fathers did not want their daughters attending. In the fifties more serious efforts began to be made in the way of education as more schools were constructed in these areas with women teaching and the Afghan Women's Organization encouraging education.

It was in the 1960s that the Women's Democratic Organization (WDO) began to form as grassroots women's organization with literacy as its primary goal. Later it would come under the wing of the Communist government and many of its members would become disenchanted with the forced literacy programs implemented. Fahima Vorgetts, a women's rights activist for Afghan women remembers:

We worked in the community, trying to persuade women and their fathers and husbands that everybody has the right to education. We quoted verses from the Qur'an that praise the value of reading scripture and allude to the importance of education for both sexes. This approach was effective. Many previously apprehensive men were willing to allow their wives and daughters to be educated, and women in turn were eager to learn.<sup>14</sup>

WDO effectively used Islam to support literacy among girls, as opposed to suppressing Islam while supporting literacy among girls. Rural religious families were often willing to accept women's education as long as they did not feel it contradicted with their religious beliefs. It would be the later association of suppressed religion along with forced literacy that helped create such an aversion to forced literacy programs.

For those in Kabul and other urban centers, access to primary education was easier and more accepted, with the ultimate goal of higher education. Women benefited from the establishment of Kabul University, taking advantage of their legal right in 1959 to learn alongside Afghan men.<sup>15</sup> Women studied engineering alongside their male counterparts at Kabul University in 1965. By 1979, 60% of the teachers at Kabul University and 50% of the students were women.<sup>16</sup>

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10. Arline Lederman, "The Zan of Afghanistan: A 35-Year Perspective on Women in Afghanistan," *Women for Afghan Women*. Mehta, Sunita, ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 47.

11. *Ibid.*, 48.

12. Oleson, 193.

13. *Ibid.*, 181.

14. Fahima Vorgetts, "A Vision of Justice, Equality, and Peace," *Women for Afghan Women*, 94.

15. Ellis, xvii, citing Edward Giradet and Jonathan Walker, *Essential Field Guides to Humanitarian and Conflict Zones: Afghanistan*, (London: Paul and Co, 1998), 55.

16. *Women for Afghan Women*, 24 citing "What are the conditions of women in Afghanistan, and how do they view the U.S. military campaign and the possible political options in Afghanistan?," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, 11 November 2001, <[http://www.fpif.org/faq/0111afghwomen\\_body.html](http://www.fpif.org/faq/0111afghwomen_body.html)> (December 2003).

The practice of sending Afghans abroad to study higher education was first widely implemented by King Amanullah, and continued with subsequent kings. This practice benefited Afghanistan immensely. Afghanistan was the leading nation of students who returned home after studying abroad.<sup>17</sup> In 1968 it was suggested by some members of the Kabul University board that women be excluded from studying abroad, which resulted in hundreds of women organizing a protest against such a measure.<sup>18</sup> Nahid Massoud, today a nurse in Southern California and member of Human Rights Watch, was part of a small highly selective program, funded by the U.S. in 1977 and supported by President Daoud, to send Afghan women abroad to the American University in Beirut to study the field of nursing. The goal was to have the women return to Kabul University to establish a bachelor's program of nursing. This was a major step in trying to revolutionize health care in Afghanistan and recognizing the importance of women's involvement in the field of health care. However, due to the political unrest in both Lebanon and then Afghanistan that prevented the students from returning, the goal was never accomplished.

From the 1950s onward, women increasingly entered the workforce. The vast majority of educated women sought employment, and various fields were opening up to them. In 1959 women first became flight attendants for Ariana Airlines, where they worked unveiled. Before the civil war, statistics showed that 70% of schoolteachers, 50% of civilian government workers, and 40% of healthcare workers were women. Rural women, however, rarely were employed outside the home. As previously noted, the Afghan Women's Organization set up a program in which poor women could bring their handicrafts in to be sold, for which they were then reimbursed. This granted them at least some economic independence, but the fact remained that they had limited opportunities compared to women in the cities.

Though the burqa is a fixation of Western observers, education and employment were issues that Afghan women themselves were far more concerned with than banishing the practice of veiling. In 1959, the unveiling of women came about from the highest level of government, in a dramatic moment in history designed to deliver a strong message to the reactionary mullahs:

At the celebration of Jashn in 1959, Prime Minister Daoud, other members of the royal family, the cabinet and high-ranking officers appeared at the celebrations, without any prior announcement, with their wives and daughters unveiled. In response, a delegation of religious leaders had an audience with Daoud Khan in which they accused him of being un-Islamic and introducing infidel ways into Afghanistan. The Prime Minister informed the delegation that veiling was going to be a voluntary matter and if they could find incontrovertible justification for purdah and the veil in Islamic Law, he would be the very first to reimpose purdah on his womenfolk. Daoud Khan was on the theologically firm ground here as the Qur'an, hadith, and Hanafi code do not specifically prescribe the veil but rather decency in dress and behavior. The mullahs did not take up the challenge and the public agitation which followed was quelled immediately with imprisonment of the leaders.<sup>19</sup>

The symbolic act of prominent government official's wives appearing unveiled, with the subsequent indignation by religious leaders, demonstrates the power the highest levels of government wielded in urban Afghanistan to influence women's issues by the end of the 1950s. While this moment echoes the move of King Abdullah's wife when she publicly tore off her veil, it met with more success than the first act. The prime minister was in a much more politically stable position to demand change and challenge religious leaders and then punish those who agitated

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17. Lederman, *Women for Afghan Women*, 53.

18. Ellis, xvii, citing Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 651.

19. Oleson, 195

against his actions than Abdullah. By this time, conservative religious forces were not necessarily an obstruction to women's issues, provided that the national government supported it.

By the sixties, accounts of women visiting Afghan reveal that women in the cities did not wear the burqa, but brightly colored headscarves in public. Nahid Massoud recalls that she never wore the burqa in the 60s and 70s, though she did cover her hair when she entered the mosque or went to religious ceremonies. Again, in rural areas, these reforms had little effect.

Marriage reforms did take place among the educated urban class during this time, but rural practices remained largely untouched. Arranged marriage was the rule, polygamy was a common practice, and girls were frequently married at the age of thirteen or fourteen. The urban elite of the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, rarely practiced polygamy, and marriage mates were only suggested rather than imposed upon women. Dating and divorce were not options for any Afghan woman. The bride price is a transaction that occurs before marriage can take place, often the most expensive transaction that families enter into. A woman has economic value, so families expect compensation for their loss. The bride's family, however, pays for the festivities leading up to the marriage. The Marriage Law of 1934 specifically disapproved of and called for limitations on the high bride prices, lavish gifts and celebrations, which were banned in the Marriage Laws of 1921 and 1924.<sup>20</sup> This was a futile attempt to keep families from accruing major debt. The tradition of expensive weddings, however, is not divided among class lines; Ms. Massoud tells how even in the United States affluent Afghan families will spend an enormous amount of money on weddings.

In 1972, Afghanistan crowned its first and last Miss Afghanistan. The pageant was a deliberate attempt to help modernize Afghanistan and it also served to promote the social program of literacy. Zohra Yusuf Daoud, the daughter to Afghanistan's surgeon general, recalls:

As the winner, I was afforded the opportunity to travel to big cities like Herat, Mazaar-e-Sharif, and Kandahar to fulfill my responsibility as Miss Afghanistan: to promote the county's literacy program in areas where there was little encouragement to get an education...I witnessed the few things that would change me the most as a young woman...I learned that there were places in Afghanistan where men and women did not stand on equal ground...a stark contrast to my own experience. In Kabul, I had taken equality between men and women for granted with respect to religion, culture, and law."<sup>21</sup>

Zohra Yusuf Daoud was representative of many of the young upper-class urban women of Afghanistan during this time period. She enjoyed a life of relative equality among men, with little or no knowledge of the status of women outside of major cities such as Kabul. There was limited possibility of organized aid by urban women to rural women in terms of issues of status and rights simply because urban women were unaware of the issues that rural women faced.

### **Political Upheaval and National Devastation**

When the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) took power in 1977, it began what would be known as the Saur Revolution. The PDPA immediately instituted a number of reforms with a communist agenda. A year later, groups throughout Afghanistan, who would become known collectively as the Mujahideen, began organizing militarily with the intent of removing the new government from power. The U.S., Iran, Saudi Arabia, China, and Pakistan supported the Mujahideen for various reasons, but primarily the U.S. and Pakistan did so because of their aversion to a Communist government in power. The United States and other countries provided foreign aid and weapons, while Pakistan allowed the Mujahideen to base themselves in its country and set up refugee camps. In the meantime, factionalism broke out in the PDPA and in

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20. Ibid., 182

21. Zohra Yusuf Daoud, "Miss Afghanistan: A Story of a Nation." *Women for Afghan Women*, 104-105.

September of 1979, President Taraki was killed by his top aid, Hafizullah Amin, then took power. In response to the Afghan threat to the PDPA and increasing factionalism, Soviet forces entered Afghanistan in December of 1979.<sup>22</sup> Though there were a number of Afghans who welcomed the Russians and their ideology, the majority of Afghans sought to have them and the PDPA removed. The subsequent fighting that occurred was extremely complex and outside the scope of this paper; warlords fought amongst each other and against the occupation, with loyalties changing daily, while foreign powers played politics in an attempt to gain the upper hand in the region.

The Soviet Union's war in Afghanistan is often likened to the United States' Vietnam. When the Soviet forces finally pulled out in 1989, Afghanistan was in ruins and in a power vacuum—allowing fundamentalist warlords to take power and further devastate the country. Recently elected president, Sayid Mohammad Najibullah, remained at the head of a government that had essentially ceased to function. Afghanistan was ruled by the Mujahideen warlords.

During the 1980s women in Kabul took advantage of the freedom brought by the Soviet occupation, particularly those in the Communist party. Women became active in the government, with seven female members in Parliament by 1989 and a greater number of women on the Loya Jirga. Women also participated in various organizations committed to a range of goals, such as the Council of Trade Unions; Democratic Youth Organization; the Afghan Women's Council; the Afghan Red Crescent Society; the Peace, Solidarity; and the Kabul Women's Club. Several prominent women emerged at this time, such as Dr. Soheila, who was not only the chief surgeon at the military hospital, but held the rank of general as well. Valentine M. Moghadam describes the changes she witnessed when in Kabul in early 1989, in which women were employed in almost every occupation, from news anchor to policewoman to veterinarian without gender segregation.<sup>23</sup>

One of the PDPA's aspirations was to reform marriage practices in rural areas, which the former government had not been able to do. The government issued Decree No. 7, which included a limit on the bride price, a ban on forced marriage or marriage by deception, and a minimum marriage age of sixteen for women and eighteen for men.<sup>24</sup> In addition, family courts, generally headed by female judges, enabled women to seek a divorce, where issues such as alimony, child custody, and child support were addressed.<sup>25</sup> This all served to threaten both the patriarchal and economic structure, which revolved around such practices.

No reform, however, caused as much conflict as the literacy program. The new government's intense literacy program, led by the Democratic Organization of Afghan Women (DOAW) sparked much of the early agitation of the civil war. By August of 1979, 600 new schools had been established through the program, but the government had trouble with attendance. The PDPA attempted to enforce it, sometimes through physical force. This inflamed animosity. The aversion to the program so intense that in 1978 refugees entered Pakistan citing the mandatory program as their reason for seeking asylum.<sup>26</sup> The forced implementation of such a program created future hostilities toward women's education both in Afghanistan and in the refugee camps. Opposition to such programs, Asta Oleson explains, came from a reactionary tendency:

Whether justified or not, the equation of the existing social order with Islamic values led with inevitable logic to the equally unfounded assumption or claim that the enemy represented everything anti-Islamic...the enemy was represented as embodying all kinds of godlessness. The struggle was thus transformed from the political level to become a

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22. Moghadam, 179.

23. *Ibid.*, 181

24. *Ibid.*, 178.

25. *Ibid.*, 179.

26. *Ibid.*

struggle between Good and Evil. The same pattern appeared in the anti-Amanullah campaign in 1928 – 1929.<sup>27</sup>

This type of reactionary resistance has posed the most threat to women's rights in the region.

Women suffered greatly at the hands of the Soviet Union, the Communist government, and the warlords. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch documented the abuses of the government against its people, which included imprisonment in deplorable conditions, torture, and sexual assault. The planting of land mines by the government led to numerous civilians wounded and dead and many of these mines still remain today.

During the civil war, a women's group emerged committed to women's equality and the end of the Soviet occupation: the Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan (RAWA). In 1977, Meena, a health care worker and the daughter of an architect and a mother who was illiterate, founded RAWA. The original goal of RAWA was women's equality. Information about the organization's work was provided through its bilingual magazine, *Payam-e-Zan* (Woman's Message). However, when the Soviets entered Afghanistan, RAWA became one of the leaders of the underground resistance movement, though it was without the blessings of the Mujahideen. RAWA was a Maoist organization ideologically opposed to fundamentalist Islam, and perceived as a threat. Meena, while in Pakistan establishing schools and hospitals in the refugee camps, was assassinated by Islamic fundamentalists on February 4, 1987 in Quetta, Pakistan.

RAWA continued to fight for Afghan women's rights, both underground in Afghanistan and with caution in the refugee camps in Pakistan, which it has continued. RAWA played a significant role for women during these years. Meena was invited by the French government in 1981 to represent the Afghan resistance movement and also met with several other European dignitaries in her efforts, helping to create awareness about the Afghan political situation.<sup>28</sup> According to their website, the organization distributed leaflets, staged demonstrations, recruited for an underground movement, and set up schools and hospitals (namely Malalai Hospital in 1986) in the refugee camps. In response to such activities, "a number of our activists were arrested in Kabul underwent horrible tortures and some of them languished for about eight years in the notorious prisons."<sup>29</sup> On December 7, 1988 they held a demonstration in Rawalpindi decrying the "reactionary fanatics who are savagely suppressing our grieved people."<sup>30</sup> Other demonstrations were often canceled due to threats, however, and the leaders often went into hiding because they could not count on protection from the Pakistan police.

It is unclear to what extent women in Afghanistan participated in the resistance, since the Mujahideen did not look favorably on women's participation and went so far as to assault women they considered deviant. Yet almost every Afghan family was involved in the civil war in one way or another, and women seem to have had some part in aiding the efforts of what were then known as the freedom fighters. For example, in rural villages, sheltering local fighters from the government was a common practice. According to one report, a few women even served as assassins; one woman called Fadia supposedly killed fifteen men, though she was captured.<sup>31</sup> This account, however, is not backed by any other accounts. Women were able to articulate their political stance more freely in Kabul where the Mujahideen had not yet established any power. Numerous women were engaged in protest of the Soviet Union throughout these years—most notably the 1980 killing of fifty high-school students, thirty of whom were girls, during a protest.<sup>32</sup>

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27. Oleson, 279.

28. *Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)*, December 2003, <<http://rawa.fancymarketing.net/index.html>> (December 2003).

29. *Ibid.*

30. Moghadam, 184.

31. Ellis, 8 citing *Afghan Information Center Bulletin*, no 57, December 1985, 10.

32. *Ibid.*

Afghan's civil war and the USSR's subsequent involvement first created the refugee problem that still exists. Refugees of this war went to USSR, Iran, and mostly to Pakistan to escape the turmoil in their country. The exodus of Afghans began in 1979—by the end of the year there were 600,000 refugees, but this was a petty number compared to the 3.7 million refugees in 2002.<sup>33</sup> During the civil war, conditions were unfavorable to women because the Mujahideen were in charge of the camps. In the prisons and refugee camps, they were subjected to inadequate living conditions. The threat of assault, particularly sexual assault, was constant. In 1988 in Peshawar, Pakistan, 104,600 boys and 7,800 girls in the camps were enrolled in school. Women were allowed medical aid only by female health workers, and widows were secluded to their own camps.<sup>34</sup> RAWA and the Afghan's Women Council, however, were able to establish themselves in the camp and create a number of improvements that otherwise would not have been possible.

### A New Chaos

After the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1989, President Najibullah remained in power, but by April 1992 the government was taken over by the Mujahideen who established the new Islamic state of Afghanistan. Burhanuddin Rabbani became president of a decentralized government essentially ruled by the various factions of the Mujahideen.<sup>35</sup> From 1975 onwards, these groups had been actively fighting each other, and then the Soviet Union, for power, but at this time they were free to terrorize Afghanistan with no repercussions. The new government had little control over the country or even Kabul, and the fighting not only continued, but grew worse.

The United States faces a great deal of blame for its role in putting reactionary forces into power. The Cold War dictated all foreign policy, so keeping Communism out of Afghanistan became the top objective at the expense of all other considerations. Women rights activists across the globe were vocal in their opposition to the conflict in the region, but they were a decided minority. Gloria Steinem writes of the protests she and other women engaged in 1980 regarding U.S. support for the Mujahideen, "American feminists were ignored, and the United States finally gave a staggering \$3 billion in support of religious extremists and gender apartheid."<sup>36</sup>

In the capital and other cities controlled by the newly established state, the initial impositions on women's freedoms were conservative in nature, but they soon became increasingly severe. Initially, women were able to continue to work and go to school, though they were required to cover their hair when out in public. A year later the Supreme Court ruled that they should be entirely veiled whenever they left their houses.<sup>37</sup> This same year it was also deemed unsuitable for women to learn anything other than Islamic principles in their education, and then to be taught only by male relatives.<sup>38</sup> Educated working women were placed on the periphery of society, viewed as deviant for their participation in what was deemed un-Islamic behavior. As lawlessness became more prevalent in Kabul and other cities, women began to fear leaving their home, particularly for fear of getting hit by stray gunfire or poor accuracy missiles. Education and employment practically cease to exist as priorities, and survival became the main issue. Amnesty International has estimated that 25,000 people died between 1992 and 1996 in the fighting that occurred, the vast majority in Kabul.

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33. RAWA website citing then UN Coordinator for Afghanistan Eric De Mul. Full report available online <<http://rawa.fancymarketing.net/kill505.htm>>

34. Moghadam, 181, quoting Henry Kamm, "Afghan Refugee Women Suffering from Isolation under Islamic Custom," *New York Times*, 27 March 1988, A1.

35. *Ibid.*, 183.

36. Gloria Steinem, "The Kaleidoscope of Memory." *Women for Afghan Women*, 66.

37. Ellis, xix.

38. *Ibid.*, 42.

Prior to the Soviet withdrawal, these same men were portrayed by the western media as “freedom fighters,” a romantic image of men fighting for their traditions against the Communist threat. It was primarily after 1989 when the atrocities these warlords and their men committed were exposed. Many of the atrocities the Mujahideen committed were related to century-old ethnic and tribal disputes and women suffered the consequences due to the fact that they were viewed as property. Under the terrorism of the Mujahideen, women were subjected to torture, rape, kidnapping, imprisonment, and starvation. Abducted women were generally raped, forced into marriage, sold into prostitution, held for ransom, and/or killed. Rape and forced marriage were used as a terrorist tactic of punishment and intimidation against opposing forces. In addition, such practices were condoned by warlords as part of the spoils of war for their fighters. Ethnic minorities were particularly at risk.<sup>39</sup> Several warlords addressed the complaints from human rights groups, but they were a considerable minority.

A new group of fighters were eventually able to dominate the political situation in Afghanistan. The Taliban arose out of rudimentary religious schools in the refugee camps in Peshawar, Pakistan nurtured by the Pakistani Interservices Intelligence. In 1994, the Taliban took its first major city, Kandahar, and by 1996 they controlled most of the country. The atrocities committed against women under the Taliban are the best documented period of women’s rights in the region. These men had only fundamentalist religious instruction and their oppression of women was immediate and severe. The Taliban imposed some of the harshest measures against women, cutting off education, employment, and health care to women and enforcing seclusion and veiling with harsh punishments that included public beatings and executions.

## Conclusion

The U.S. invasion after September 11, 2001 unseated the Taliban and women’s issues finally received a solid international platform. Numerous groups are working to improve conditions for women in Afghanistan. Worldwide awareness is also a key issue. Misunderstandings abound in the West regarding women in Afghanistan. Afghan women dislike the image of themselves perpetrated in the media as helpless victims brutal male oppressors. They also seek to clarify misconceptions about Islam and the idea that it stipulates female subordination.

The common perception is that Afghan women have been liberated from oppression since the Taliban, but conditions remain unstable. The invasion allowed the same type of Mujahideen warlords to again take control of the countryside. Zoya, a woman who worked underground in Afghanistan during the Taliban occupation describes the current feelings of many Afghans:

No one in the refugee camp was sorry to see the Taliban defeated. But no one rejoiced when the Taliban fled Kabul and the fighters of the Northern Alliance, which included several veteran Mujaheddin fundamentalists, took over the capital..., we all knew that although they now spoke of democracy, elections and even women’s rights, the Northern Alliance leaders who had taken power had blood on their hands. They were the same warlords who had bombed and tortured their own people in the early 1990s.<sup>40</sup>

The future for women in Afghanistan is extremely precarious at this point in time. More research is needed on this topic, particularly regarding the role that women themselves played in creating change during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The well-off urban women as well as the women in the refugee camps have had the chance to tell their stories, but little is known about rural women and their involvement in women’s issues and the civil war.

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39. “Women in Afghanistan: A Human Rights Catastrophe” *Amnesty International*, (London, Amnesty International, 1991).

40. John Follian and Rita Cristofari, *Zoya’s Story*, (London: Headline Book Publishing, 2002), 233.

## The Radio President: Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Fireside Chats

David Matthew Rodriguez

The Great Depression affected the lives of millions of Americans during the 1930s. The fear of unemployment, hunger, and poverty – to name a few – was common among many individuals. Americans were no longer optimistic as they had been during the Roaring Twenties, and they certainly found no comfort during the early depression years under the lackluster President, Herbert Hoover. Not until President Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to office in March of 1933 did the nation feel a sense of restored hope. Within weeks of his inauguration, Roosevelt immediately undertook the tasks of solving the country's economic depression and assuaging the qualms of the American people. The method Roosevelt used to help mollify and explain the myriad effects of the Great Depression was the radio.

One of the pivotal reasons why Roosevelt was able to touch the lives of the downtrodden and restore confidence in the nation during the Depression years was because of his radio speeches known as the fireside chats. Roosevelt's fireside chats allowed him to comfort the American people, explain to them the steps the government was taking to combat the depression, and ultimately restore hope in the nation's people and institutions. My intention is not to examine each fireside chat word for word, but rather to explain its impact and significance to the lives of ordinary Americans during the Great Depression. During a time when the idea of buying a car, sending children to college, or a lifesavings was no longer a reality, Americans turned to Roosevelt for hope. Hope they found in the form of a smooth and confident "radio" voice. Roosevelt was their communicator, they his audience. He was their political messiah, they his people.

To appreciate and understand the importance of Roosevelt's fireside chats it is important to understand radio and its place in national politics. President Woodrow Wilson was the first president to use the radio in its simplest form. The election results of 1920 were the first to be radio broadcast and President Warring Harding was the first president to be broadcast on a radio network. The 1924 Republican and Democratic conventions were the first to be fully radio broadcast and during his seven year term in office, President Calvin Coolidge made thirty-seven radio speeches. The 1928 elections were fully broadcast and President Herbert Hoover made nearly one hundred radio speeches during his four years in office.<sup>1</sup>

One reason why Roosevelt was able to communicate successfully and comfortably over the radio was because he was the first president to have experience using it prior to taking office. As governor of New York, Roosevelt used the radio to pressure the legislature into passing his programs or to win over the people on legislative matters. His long time secretary, Grace Tully, recalled that, "Mr. Roosevelt first took to the radio as a field of battle when he became ensnarled with a recalcitrant legislature in Albany a year or so after becoming Governor."<sup>2</sup> He did the same with Congress in his fireside chats. Nonetheless, Roosevelt understood the importance of the radio during his early political career as a means to effectively communicate with his people, especially if he wanted to win their support on legislative issues.

By the time Roosevelt took office in March of 1933, the country was economically, physically, and emotionally suffering from the effects of the Great Depression. Banks closed, the unemployed filled the streets, and people lost their homes. Roosevelt was smart to use the radio to restore confidence and delineate his relief proposals to the nation. Radio, claimed the *New York Times*, "can and will play a great deal in creating a new confidence in our government and our

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1. Orrin E. Dunlapp Jr., "Talking to the People," *New York Times*, 14 Mar. 1933: X8.
  2. Grace Tully, *FDR: My Boss*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), 88.

institutions, and that the creation of such confidence is radio's most important function at this time."<sup>3</sup> Radio was used as a way to eliminate fear during difficult times. People did not have to rummage through newspapers to understand what their government was doing to assist them, especially when they were in desperate need of relief. Instead, they could listen to their president's encouraging voice over the radio. Even if Roosevelt could not provide them with direct relief via the radio, he at least provided them with heartening words.

Immediately following his inauguration on March 4, 1933, Roosevelt began the task of restoring confidence to the nation. The purpose of his fireside chats, Roosevelt noted, was to "banish, so far as possible, the fear of the present and of the future which held the American people and the American spirit in its grasp."<sup>4</sup> Again, Roosevelt comprehended early on that to ameliorate the fears of the American people he had to directly communicate to them. Radio was the method, the fireside side chat his message.

Harry Butcher, the manager of the CBS Washington Bureau, coined the phrase fireside chat to describe Roosevelt's "radio-speaking style."<sup>5</sup> The term was positive and comfortable. According to Betty Winfield, people "could...imagine the president sitting comfortable at his desk in front of the fireplace of his quiet study and talking easily, just as if he were physically in their homes or they in his."<sup>6</sup> The term also presented Roosevelt with a fatherly image, someone who was firm, confident, and definitive. He provided the first and last word, always.

What was fascinating, if not surreal, about Roosevelt's fireside chats was that people really felt like he was personally talking to them. Roosevelt spoke clearly and he used words that everyone could understand. He had, what one professor called, the "ideal voice." "His sentences are smooth and compact, not drawled out in a jerking fashion; his articulation is very clear and his rhythm is excellent."<sup>7</sup> There was a sense of security in his voice. That is why those who listened to his fireside chats felt like Roosevelt comprehended their troubles and could assist them with their problems.

Roosevelt delivered a total of thirty-one fireside chat speeches during his twelve years in office. He made four during his first year in office – which will serve as the basis of my discussion shortly. Nevertheless, each fireside chat addressed a specific issue, lasted anywhere from fifteen to forty-five minutes, was generally delivered from the White House, and broadcast on national radio networks generally on Sundays at 10 p.m., when the public was relaxed.<sup>8</sup>

Roosevelt cared about the delivery of his speech and made every effort to sound genuine, not trite. He spoke eloquently and paced himself, not speaking more than 100 to 120 words per minute.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, he was able to elongate and prolong his vowels and consonants, as well as stress and emphasize words or phrases when necessary.<sup>10</sup> Immediately following the delivery of his first fireside chat, Roosevelt turned and asked the broadcast engineers, "Was I all right?"<sup>11</sup>

Roosevelt's fireside chats were particularly personable because he assiduously spent a great deal of time preparing for them. First, Roosevelt wrote his own speeches and supplied much of the content. He was, however, assisted by members of his cabinet and personal advisers such as Harry Hopkins, Raymond Moley, Robert Sherwood, and Samuel Rosenman.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, he read, reviewed, and revised each draft thoroughly, such that by the time he gave the speech, had

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3. Dunlapp, X8.

4. Lawrence W Levine and Cornelia R. Levine, *The People and the President*, (Beacon Press: Boston, 2002), 34.

5. Winfield, 104.

6. *Ibid*, 104.

7. "Roosevelt's Voice Held Radio's Best," *New York Times*, 16 Mar. 1935: 25.

8. Levine and Levine, 16.

9. *Ibid*.

10. *Ibid*.

11. Dunlapp, X8.

12. Winfield, p. 106.

had it nearly, if not completely, memorized. To give his speeches intimacy, he used words and phrases such as “My friends,” “you,” “I,” and “we.”

Perhaps the best way to understand the significance of Roosevelt’s fireside chats and its place in national politics and society is through the written correspondences it engendered. People not only listened astutely to Roosevelt’s fireside chats, they responded enthusiastically as well. People of different ages, nationalities, and political parties from all over the country sent Roosevelt personal letters, drawings, poems, pictures, and even recipes. There are two accounts for the barrage of correspondences he received following his fireside chats; the first has to do with the significance of the radio, and second has to do with the delivery, if not power, of the fireside chat.

First, as Lawrence and Cornelia Levine argue, radio “greatly stimulated the importance of the written word in the form of the growing stream of letters from listeners.”<sup>13</sup> It had the ability to inspire correspondence. This was because people who listened to Roosevelt over the radio really felt like he was directly talking to them. Consequently, people responded to what they heard by writing letters in an attempt to communicate with the president and be heard. If they felt like Roosevelt talked to them as if he knew them, they also wanted to reply and answer him like they knew him.

Second, the power of Roosevelt’s fireside chats – delivery and message – also accounts for the large number of correspondences he received from many Americans. As previously mentioned, Roosevelt addressed each fireside chat to a particular issue. Nevertheless, people could understand the issue not only because he delivered it clearly and smoothly, but because the issue – such as banks – was generally one that most people could understand or were interested in knowing about. He gave his listeners a subject worth writing about. This was coupled with Roosevelt’s fatherly and ideal voice that encouraged people to write to him.

Franklin Roosevelt delivered his first fireside chat from the Oval Office on March 12, 1933, eight days after his presidential inauguration. He devoted his speech to one of the most salient issues facing the country, the banking crisis. At the time Roosevelt delivered his speech, banks had shut down, people’s lifesavings were swept away, and the government had issued a bank holiday on March 6.<sup>14</sup> His overall intent was to restore confidence to the nation’s people and financial institutions. It worked.

Like most of Roosevelt’s fireside chats, he began by warmly introducing his listeners to the subject he is going to be talking about, in this case banking. “My friends,” he remarked, “I want to talk for a few minutes with the people of the United States about banking...but more particularly with the overwhelmingly majority of you who use banks for the making of deposits and the drawing of checks.”<sup>15</sup> Next, he generally gave a brief explanation of the subject and the reasons for it. “Because of the undermined confidence on the part of the public, there was a general rush by a large portion of our population to turn bank deposits into currency or gold.”<sup>16</sup> As if this is not enough, he goes on to explain that the “bad banking situation” was partly the result of “incompetent or dishonest bankers.”<sup>17</sup>

Roosevelt next mentioned what the government was doing, or planning to do, to correct or ameliorate the problem. He talked about legislation that “allows the twelve Federal Reserve Banks to issue additional currency...to meet every legitimate call.” Further, “it is the government’s duty,” mentioned Roosevelt, “to straighten out this situation and to do it as quickly as possible – and that job is being performed.”<sup>18</sup> Lastly, he always left his listeners with words of confidence and hope.

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13. Levine and Levine, 4.

14. Russell D B white and David W. Levy, Eds., *FDR’s Fireside Chats*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 11.

15. “The President’s Speech,” *New York Times*, 13 Mar. 1933: 1+.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*

“You people must have faith; you must not be stampeded by rumors or guesses. Let us unite in banishing fear.”<sup>19</sup>

It is fairly easy to understand why listeners found Roosevelt’s first fireside chat, like many others, favorable. It was cordial, simple, addressed an issue that most people could relate to, and made clear that the government was doing everything within its power to assist the abject nation. The phrase, “My friends,” was mentioned more than two times in his first fireside chat. Nevertheless, the public responded positively to it. Why?

First, the speech was articulated clearly. People did not have to decipher what the President was saying. He used words everybody could understand, even banks. As Will Rogers observed, Roosevelt’s speech demonstrated “what to do with big vocabulary – leave it at home in the dictionary.”<sup>20</sup> Several listeners even commented on Roosevelt’s appealing voice. “You have a marvelous radio voice,” wrote one man from Cincinnati, Ohio, “distinct and clear. It almost seemed the other night, sitting easy in my chair in the library, that you were across the room from me.”<sup>21</sup>

Roosevelt’s radio voice also instilled confidence in the nation’s people and financial institutions. “Your wonderful clear...exposition of the bank and banking situation,” wrote one person from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, “will do a great deal toward restoring confidence in our institutions.”<sup>22</sup> This was true. Following Roosevelt’s fireside chat speech, 4,507 national banks reopened, including 567 state member banks as well.<sup>23</sup> The *New York Times* even confirmed that Roosevelt’s speech instilled confidence in the nation’s banking institutions. “This happy result,” claimed the *New York Times*, “may be due in part to the calm and reassuring radio address which President Roosevelt made on Sunday evening.”<sup>24</sup> It was Roosevelt’s fireside chat on banking, together with his simple, clear, and smooth radio voice that restored confidence in the nation’s people and financial institutions. People felt like Roosevelt cared and understood their problems. They liked that the government took steps to ameliorate their plight. They found him concerned, friendly, and neighborly.

Roosevelt’s second fireside chat, was given on May 7, 1933 “in the same spirit and by the same means” as the first one.<sup>25</sup> As in his first fireside chat, Roosevelt introduced the subject, explained the situation, mentioned what the government was doing to ameliorate the problem, and left his listeners with words of encouragement. Roosevelt devoted the speech to his administration’s legislative feats such as the Civilian Conservation Corps and explained his administration’s legislative proposals considered, but not yet acted upon by Congress, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority and Farm Relief Bill. More importantly, he ended his speech with words of encouragement. “Throughout the depression you have been patient....Every ounce of strength, every resource at our command, we have devoted and we are devoting to the end of justifying your confidence.”<sup>26</sup>

Once more people responded to Roosevelt’s fireside chat and commented on his radio voice. “You talked as easily and as informally,” described James Dunn, “who had just dropped in to visit the folks.”<sup>27</sup> Roosevelt’s ability to inspire confidence and optimism is shown in a letter written to him by an individual from Chicago, Illinois. “There is hope,” wrote L.L. Brande, “that

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19. Ibid.

20. Will Rogers, “Will Rogers Claps Hands for the President’s Speech,” Editorial, *New York Times*, 14 Mar. 1933: 17.

21. Levine and Levin, 38

22. Ibid, 53.

23. Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), 43.

24. “Banking Normal Again,” *New York Times*, 14 Mar. 1933: 14.

25. Buhite and Levy, 19.

26. Ibid, 27.

27. Levine and Levine, 69.

the measures you are taking may be effective. When you took office we were rapidly drifting toward a bloody revolution. Thanks to you there is now some light ahead.”<sup>28</sup> One woman from Rhode Island was even willing, if she could, to give Roosevelt some water when he coughed while delivering his second fireside chat.<sup>29</sup>

Roosevelt’s third and fourth fireside chats, delivered on July 24, 1933 and October 22, 1933, were essentially a synopsis of the New Deal’s accomplishments. In his third fireside chat, Roosevelt made it clear to the American people “that all of the proposals and all of the legislation since the Fourth Day of March have not been just a collection of haphazard schemes, but rather the orderly component parts of a connected logical whole.”<sup>30</sup> Similarly, his fourth fireside chat speech explained how the government was “constructing the edifice of recovery” and providing for “the greatest good to the greatest number.”<sup>31</sup> As always, Roosevelt talked and the people responded.

Following Roosevelt’s third fireside chat one man wrote, “Your radio talk last night was the brightest ray of hope for the future of the American nation I have seen in many a year...”<sup>32</sup> Commenting on the NRA, he wrote, “You have eliminated child slavery from industry are you going to free us all from wage slavery and the domination of wealth and material possession?”<sup>33</sup> What is interesting about this letter, and many others like this, is how people commented on Roosevelt’s legislative proposals. While many Americans praised his radio-speaking style, many also approved of his recovery legislation and even encouraged the government to do more. To them, Roosevelt’s recovery legislation symbolized that the country’s new direction.

The ability to appeal to the country’s various political ideologues highlights yet another impact of Roosevelt’s fireside chats on national politics. The Democratic Roosevelt not only received adulation from members of his own party, but from Republicans and Socialists as well. “While I didn’t vote for you,” wrote one Socialist from Florida following Roosevelt’s fourth fireside chat, “I am convinced that what you are doing at Muscle Shoals, and with the NRA is giving us the substance of Socialism without the name.”<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, some Republicans and Socialists who wrote to Roosevelt were apparently encouraged, if not elated, by Roosevelt’s legislative accomplishments. Roosevelt’s recovery legislation and proposals may have been implemented for personal or political reasons, but they attempted to benefit most, if not all, the country’s people. Republicans and Socialists were not immune from the drastic effects caused by the Great Depression.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was able to restore confidence to the nation as a result of his fireside chats. His confident and clear radio voice suited him and the nation perfectly, especially when Americans looked to the president for assurance, encouragement, and relief. He addressed issues many people could relate to, and explained to them what the government was doing to ameliorate their plight. His fireside chats were cordial and personal. As a result, people felt like Roosevelt was talking to them. Even if Roosevelt could not provide relief to every listener who heard him speak, he at least left them with words of hope. He was their radio president.

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28. Ibid, 73.

29. Ibid, 70.

30. “The President’s Speech,” *New York Times*, 25 Jul. 1933: 1+.

31. “The President’s Speech,” *New York Times*, 23 Oct. 1933: 1+.

32. Ibid, 86.

33. Ibid, 87.

34. Ibid, 90.

## Book Reviews

*Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide.* Edited by Richard G. Hovannisian. (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2003. Pp. 301. \$39.95).

This is a volume of essays edited Richard G. Hovannisian, one of the most prominent scholars in the field of Armenian history and the Armenian Educational Foundation Professor of Modern Armenian History at the University of California, Los Angeles, regarding past and current issues confronting the Armenian Genocide. Specifically, *Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide* includes essays by various scholars on topics ranging from the effects of the Armenian genocide on a global scale to what must be done to prevent future reoccurrences of such crimes against humanity.

Hovannisian lays the theoretical framework for the volume in the introduction through a detailed explanation of the term genocide by drawing on various examples from the Armenian Genocide, Holocaust, and Cambodia among others. In subsequent chapters, a historical overview of the Armenian Genocide is presented by Donald Bloxham, who finds the case of the Armenians to be an undisputable *fact*. During the decline of the Ottoman Empire around the late nineteenth century more than 100,000 Armenians were massacred throughout the eastern provinces, collectively known as Turkish or Western Armenia, under the rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Some scholars consider this to be an independent precursor of the later Armenian Genocide, while others regard it as the beginning of what continued under the Young Turk Regime a few years later. The Young Turks (also known as the Committee of Union and Progress) overthrew Sultan Hamid II in the year 1908 with the motto of “liberty, equality, and justice”, but they soon espoused a racist ideology with the goal of Turkifying the Empire. This led, under the cover of World War I, to the deporting of the Christian minorities, mainly Armenians, through forced marches to the deserts of Syria. These deportations continued well through the war years and beyond. The symbolic date for the beginning of the Genocide is April 24, 1915, the day when hundreds of Armenian intellectuals and civic leaders were arrested in Istanbul, deported, and a short time later killed in desolate places in Anatolia. At this time there were more than 2 million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire (mainly in the eastern regions of the empire where the massacres were most intense). By 1918, less than one fourth of the Armenian population remained alive. Unfortunately, these crimes, while universally condemned, were not punished on an international level.

In another chapter, Simon Payaslian examines the role of the United States and its response to the Armenian Genocide. The United States received eye witness accounts from its ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr. Morgenthau urged the U.S. government to prevent further annihilation of the Armenian people. William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State at the time, advised Morgenthau to push the Turkish government to halt the killings. By the end of 1916 a political change turned the tide against the Armenian people. That year, the new Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, disregarded the Armenian question—showing little or no interest in the matter for the sake of building stronger ties with Turkey. He justified this by arguing that national interests surpassed humanitarian needs. Today, this continues to serve as the grounds for the U.S. government’s refusal to recognize the Armenian Genocide. In 2000, the U.S. Congress at the request of President Clinton tabled a bill recognizing the Armenian Genocide. His justification was similar to Robert Lansing’s in the sense that both succumbed to Turkish political pressures and wanted to protect the investments and what they perceived as the national interests of the United States.

This volume differs from similar works in its attempt to give a more accurate depiction of official Turkish historiography and problems of denial. Turkish-born sociologist Fatma Muge Gocek discusses in her chapter the importance of correcting the Turkish historiography to include the Armenian deaths of 1915. She argues that Turkish historiography is written in three narratives with respect to the Armenian issue. The first is the Ottoman Investigative Narrative, based on accounts of the Ottoman Armenians which are published by a Turkish state or political group. The second is the Republican Defensive

Narrative, based on the works of the Turkish state, which were trying to justify the nationalistic manners which specifically denies the genocide. And the third is the Post Nationalistic Critical Narrative, which can only be found in with a new contemporary Turkish society and would eventually allow for Turkish recognition of the Armenian tragedy. Currently it seems that the first two narratives are in effect because of a strong denial of the Armenian Genocide. At the same time there is ample evidence that the events are *factual*. Eventually with the growth of scholars such as Gocek, a post nationalistic view will emerge, and Turkish historiography be corrected.

The Armenian Genocide is properly addressed throughout the writings of Richard Hovannisian's volume, *Looking Backward Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide*. It gives a new revival to a subject which has become increasingly muffled in recent years. The importance of proper historiography cannot be understated; and Richard Hovannisian proves to be a leading role model for that through this work.

University of California, Los Angeles

Alex Janoyan

*Coming of Age in Mississippi*. By Anne Moody. (New York: Dell Publishing, 1968. Pp.1, 384. \$6.99).

Anne Moody's *Coming of Age in Mississippi* brilliantly captures that moment in time when hate existed in one of its most virulent forms. As a historical work, it is a touching reminder of the daily injustices blacks endured in the segregated South. But Moody's life story is not simply another run-of-the-mill historical autobiography. The ability of the work to underscore the peculiar morality white southerners used to justify their actions compels readers to seriously question their own notions of right and wrong. *Coming of Age in Mississippi* also has the power to inspire people of all races to courageously fight against the social injustices within American society. All Americans should read *Coming of Age in Mississippi*—there are few primary source works of this historical period that confront segregation, racism, and hate so candidly.

Throughout the work, Moody speaks quite openly about her feelings—offering an unfiltered view of how she sees the world. In her adolescence, Moody tells of how “[She] began to hate people. [She] hated the white men who murdered Emmett Till and [she] hated all the other whites who were responsible for the countless murders” (129). Unlike some histories, which see the Civil Rights Movement as a peaceful struggle rooted in Christian values, Moody acknowledges that many blacks did have an underlying hate of southern whites. Such hate, however, is understandable considering the discrimination blacks coped with on a day-to-day basis. Moody writes, “Before Emmett Till's murder, I had known the fear of hunger, hell, and the Devil. But now there was a new fear known to me—the fear of being killed just because I was black” (125). By speaking about her fear of being murdered simply for being black, Moody gives readers a very real sense of how frightening it was to be black in segregated Mississippi. Such candidness is also evident when Moody talks about the nature of morality in the South.

In the segregated South, Moody claims that the basis of morality was neither divine nor spiritual—the true basis of morality was in fact race. Throughout *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, Moody uses her own real-life experiences to illustrate this point. A telltale example of race-based morality is the nature of sexual relations between blacks and whites. In her work, she candidly speaks of how “[Negro men who had sex with white women] knew too well that they would not get off as easily as the white man who was caught screwing a Negro woman” (131). The double standard of morality regarding sexual relations is even more startling considering the fact that most black men were virtually never in close contact with white women. As Moody bluntly states, “It was almost impossible for such an affair to take place. Negro men did not have access to white women. Whereas almost every white man in town had a Negro woman in his kitchen or nursing his babies” (Ibid.). Although there was greater likelihood of a white man having sex with black woman, morality was distorted in a way that made black men the more likely perpetrators of sexual transgressions. By not extenuating the injustice of southern morality, Moody compels people to think about their own ideas of right and wrong without being didactic or idealistic.

And thus, her honest and realistic approach may be even more receptive than the works of some civil rights activists.

Though Moody's approach may not evoke the same amount of passion as an emotive civil rights tract, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* still provides readers with more than enough inspiration to impel them to right the wrongs in society. Moody's commitment to the Civil Rights Movement is enough to inspire anyone. In the work, she writes "something happened to me as I got more and more involved in the Movement. It no longer seemed important to prove anything. I had found something outside of myself that gave meaning to my life" (263). It is these types of enlightening experiences, which she speaks so openly about, which truly inspire people. It is these awakening experiences that show ordinary people that they too can shape the course of history. At one point, Moody even reveals the more idealistic side of her personality when she says, "I could feel myself change. For the first time I began to think something would be done about whites killing, beating, and misusing Negroes. I knew I was going to be part of whatever happened" (255). Yet such idealism is always tempered by her profound understanding of the cruel realities of her times, and her outspoken nature. At the close of her autobiography, while everyone is singing "We Shall Overcome" on her bus ride to testify at the COFO hearings in Washington, she questions whether blacks will ever achieve the equality they rightly deserve. As Moody says, "I WONDER. I really WONDER" (384).

Moody may have wondered whether the Civil Rights Movement would ultimately succeed, but she need to wonder about whether or not her autobiography succeeds in openly and accurately depicting life in the segregated South. Yet *Coming of Age in Mississippi* does not read like a dry high school history book; it manages to be interesting and thought provoking without distorting reality in anyone's favor. But more significantly, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* possesses a great amount of courage—it is a very daring work. Such frankness is still absent in many of today's historical narratives.

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Vincent Lim

## About the Authors

**V. SHAIN ALEXANDER** is a fourth-year European Studies and Philosophy double major with a minor in Political Science. Originally from Oklahoma, Shain abandoned the Great Plains and headed west for California in modern Steinbeck fashion. During his junior year, Shain studied abroad in Budapest at the Central European University and Eötvös Loránd University where he studied Central European political history and how to make a mean goulash. Recently Shain was selected as a Junior Teaching Fellow by the European Union to educate secondary school students in California about the EU. This paper was written under the guidance of the Director of the European Studies Program at UCLA, Professor Ann-Christina L. Knudsen, however any shortcomings of the paper are the sole responsibility of its author. Shain would like to thank Professor Knudsen and Mark Heller for their invaluable advice and intellectual support throughout his undergraduate career.

**NOAH GELLMAN** is a junior majoring in History with a minor in Political Science. Noah's interest in Middle East politics and International Relations is the result of years of political interest and advocacy. The views expressed in his work materialized during a four-month internship under Ambassador Gerald Carmen (former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations) as part of the U.C. Washington Program. Additionally, Noah is an active member of the UCLA community and the Upsilon chapter of the Sigma Pi fraternity, where he holds the position of Social Chair. In 2004, Noah received the Vesty Award in recognition of his service to the chapter. Noah's interest in national politics and international relations has placed him on the course for law school, with an eventual transition to the political world. Noah would like to thank Professor Marc Trachtenberg for his wisdom and guidance, which contributed to the paper's fruition.

**ADAM GREENWALD** is a second-year, in the College Honors program, planning to double major in History and Judaic Studies. He originally wrote this paper for History 191A: Ancient Jewish History, taught by Professor David Myers in fall 2003. Since coming to UCLA, Adam has been honored with Dunn and Miller Honors Scholarships and the Alumni Scholarship, as well as an Outstanding Sophomore Citation from the Golden Key Society and membership in the ALD/PES Honors Societies. He recently returned from the Spiegel-Hillel Alternative Spring Break Trip where, along with nine other UCLA students, he helped to build a school in rural Honduras and studied globalization and international development. He currently plans to pursue a career either in either the Rabbinate or education. Adam would like to thank Dr. Myers, Rabbi Chaim Seidler-Feller, and Pablo Vivanco for their assistance in preparing this paper.

**SHAHAB ELLIOT HAKAKZADEH** will graduate *summa cum laude* this June as a History and Political Science double major. Shahab has been a member and a leader on several campus groups and organizations, including the Pre-Law Society, Pi Sigma Alpha, and the Undergraduate History Association. While at UCLA, he has been involved in research projects involving international negotiations and treaties, and recent U.S. presidential speeches. He has recently been inducted into Golden Key, received the outstanding tutor award from the DARE PLUS tutoring program, and attained College and Departmental Honors. Shahab is also a contributing author for the PSSO Quarterly. This paper was written under the guidance of Professor Saul Friedlander, and originally presented for an undergraduate seminar on Holocaust Historiography in fall 2003. Following graduation, Shahab is planning to attend law school.

**ALEX JANOYAN** is a third-year History major and Political Science minor, who will be graduating in June 2005. Alex is a first year member of Phi Alpha Theta and has been actively involved with the UCLA Armenian Student Association. He specializes in Armenian and Middle Eastern History. Currently, Alex is working on an independent project researching the history of the Armenian Diaspora of North America and plans on submitting it for publication some time. His book review was originally written for History 112 C: Armenian History: Armenia in the Modern and Contemporary Times, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries in the winter of 2004.

**VINCENT LIM** is a third-year History major. He is an editor for *Poindexter Journal*—an intercollegiate journal of undergraduate work—where he has published an essay entitled “(Cultural) Essentialism,” dealing

with the delicate issue of cultural analysis. He has also published an article in UCLA's *PSSO Quarterly*, discussing the applicability of Samuel Popkin's reasoning voter theory to the 1960 U.S. Presidential Election. Currently, Vincent is working as an editor for *Aleph*—UCLA's Undergraduate Research Journal in the Humanities and Social Sciences. His review on *Coming of Age in Mississippi* was written for Professor Mary Corey's ever popular and ever fascinating the United States Since 1960 class

**LONNIE ROBBINS** is an "unconventional" student who will graduate *summa cum laude* in June (to the dismay of all) [especially the cynical editor of this volume]. In the fall of 2004 he will begin a Ph.D. program at Northwestern University in Tudor England. He wrote this paper for Visiting Professor Simon Teuscher, who helped Lonnie expand it into an undergraduate honors thesis. Lonnie would like to thank his parents for providing him with the opportunity to go back to school. He would particularly like to thank his wife Alysia for her support and patience (and for proofreading) [thus allowing the editor to wring his hands of all mistakes] and his daughter Lily (for being an adorable bug).

**DAVID MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ** will graduate *summa cum laude* in June 2004 a History major with College Honors. His paper was written during an undergraduate seminar, Popular Culture in the United States, with Professor Richard Weiss. David has been active in his community and on campus having served as the inaugural Editor-in-Chief for the Academic Advancement Program's student journal, *Crossing Borders*, past secretary of the Undergraduate History Association, and history tutor for UCLA Athletic Tutorials. He credits history professor Dr. Ken Kurz and AAP Director Adolpho Bermeo for his success. This fall David will be attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he will be pursuing his doctoral studies in United States history. He plans on becoming a history professor and community activist.

**JEAN SCHINDLER** is majoring in history, with a minor in political science, and is planning to graduate in June 2005. She recently completed a five-month internship with the State Department in Washington, DC. Prior to her internship, Jean served as the secretary for Phi Alpha Theta. She plans to pursue a joint degree in law and international relations. This paper was written for a historiography seminar taught by the estimable Professor Ann-Christina Knudsen in the autumn of 2002.

**AARON ROMEO SLOSBERG** is a third-year, Religious Studies and History double major with a minor in Philosophy. He is a Gold Shield Alumni Scholar and an active participant in the UCLA community. Aaron is currently researching the neurological aspects of religious experience for his honors thesis. His eclectic academic interests center on the philosophical, historical, and biological expressions of religion. After graduation, he plans to volunteer in South America and take time off to travel the world. Eventually, Aaron hopes to continue his formal education and teach at the university level. This paper was originally written for Professor George Dutton's course on Southeast Asian society and religion.

**ALLISON STARR** grew up in the San Fernando Valley in California. She is currently a graduating senior with a double major in History and Classical Civilization. She loves working with her fellow students. This year she worked as a Resident Assistant in the residence halls. She is also a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society and has served for two years as the co-chairman of UCLA's annual "Daisy Day" program. She has loved writing from childhood, writing short stories since the age of six. This paper is her first published work.

**DIANA TREMBLY** will graduate *summa cum laude* as a History and Sociology double major with a minor in English (and Departmental Honors in Sociology). During the 2003-2004 academic year Diana served as the president of the Undergraduate History Association. As an active member of Phi Alpha Theta she worked extensively to co-program events in the History Department with UHA. Diana wrote this paper as part of a History of Women's Rights course with Professor Ellen DuBois. After graduation she plans to take a year off before attending law school, where she hopes to focus on human rights law.