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The Histories Volume 17, Fall 2023

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David O'Brien, Cooper Smith, Cameron Arnold, Maya Martin, David Kiniry, and Kayleigh Zeman

This edition of the Histories is dedicated to the memories of Dr. George Stow and Brother Edward Sheehy for all their years of service to the La Salle History Department as well as the La Sallian community as a whole.

Greetings Historians,

We hope you enjoy the first edition of the Histories since our hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic has halted the publication of this journal, it has not stopped La Salle students from continuing the noble pursuit of exploring, evaluating, and analyzing past events. It is our hope that with this edition, La Salle students can find inspiration to explore history, not just for the sake of academics but also for intellectual growth and interest in the past.

The essays attached focus on a wide variety of topics, from ancient Indian philosophy to the history of American Rock and Roll. The plethora of topics throughout this brief volume demonstrate the variety of topics La Salle students explore. The variety of different topics illustrates the vastness of history as a field. Everyone, from those interested in the sciences to those interested in business, can find value in exploring the past.

Respectfully,

David O'Brien, Editor

The Histories Vol 17, Fall 2023**Table of Contents**

| | |
|--|------------|
| The Jewish Diaspora and the Ottoman Empire, Cooper Smith | 4 |
| 1920s Turkey and the Shaikh Said Revolt, David O'Brien | 20 |
| The History of Yoga, Cameron Arnold | 34 |
| Jack the Ripper: British Gender, Class, and Crime in 1888, Cameron Arnold | 50 |
| The History of Rock and Roll Music, Maya Martin | 68 |
| Oswald Spengler and his Cold War Legacy, David O'Brien | 79 |
| The First African Republic: A Survey of The Political and Economic History of The Republic of Liberia, Cooper Smith | 105 |
| The British Response to the Irish Potato Famine, David Kiniry | 118 |
| From Monarchy to Territory: American Annexation of Hawaii, Kayleigh Zeman | 133 |

The Jewish Diaspora and the Ottoman Empire

By: Cooper Smith

In reading the histories of empires, cultures and civilizations it is inevitable to find a trend of overlapping interactions between different groups of people. The notion that nations can be neatly placed in adequately drawn boundaries is a very modern one. Even in the most homogenous nation states there is at least one identifiable group with sufficient differences from the general body of people to constitute themselves as a minority group. To look at the history of an empire's dominant people and extrapolate it to be the history of all peoples living within that empire would be to omit the countless testimonies of minority populations. When reading history, more often than not, one will eventually come across the testimonies of Jews. The widespread historical accounts of Jews are attributable to the unfortunate history of exile, dispersion, and expulsion, which they have sustained for more than two millennia. In this paper I will be exploring the history of Jews in the Ottoman Empire. Knowledge of Ottoman Jewish contributions is essential to understanding the history of the Ottoman Empire. This paper provides insight on the impact Ottoman history had on its Jewish communities and how the responses from those communities drove Ottoman historical development.

Prior to its expansion, the territories of the Ottoman Empire possessed some pre-Ottoman Jewish populations. From Greece in the north, Iraq in the east, Egypt in the south, and Palestine in the west the growing Ottoman Empire brought many Jewish communities under its rule during its period of expansion. The Jewish populations outside of Palestine formed over several centuries of conquest and relocation by the Achaemenid, Macedonian, and Roman (Byzantine) empires, lands which would come under the domain of the Ottomans. Upon the Conquest of Constantinople by Sultan Mehmet II in 1453, one of his first decrees pertaining to the city was to

initiate a policy of relocation of Greek Christians and Romaniote Jews to the newly named imperial capital of Istanbul. Far from intending to be a policy of captivity, Mehmet wished to revitalize the city after it had sustained decline, plague, and siege over several decades. To make Mehmet's "Rûm" a truly cosmopolitan city he needed Jewish and Christian communities within the capital. As early as the 15th Century the Ottomans saw a Jewish presence in the power center of the empire as essential to becoming a great, formidable power in the style of Rome. The Romaniote Jews of Greece would constitute the largest Jewish population of the city and enjoy more privileges in business than any other class. This high position of the Romaniotes would diminish after only a few decades with the arrival of new Jewish immigrants escaping persecution in Christianized Iberia.

The Romaniote Jewish population absorbed by the Ottomans would be superseded as the dominant Jewish population in the empire with the arrival of Sephardic Jews fleeing persecution in Iberia. On March 31, 1492, the personal union of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile issued the Alhambra Decree ordering all Jews within the kingdoms to convert to Christianity under penalty of expulsion. Wishing to retain their Jewish identity, many of the Sephardi fled to neighboring Christian states, which had not imposed such edicts. In response to the Edict, Mehmet's son and successor Sultan Bayezid II adopted a policy of toleration and acceptance that facilitated a great migration of Sephardim into Ottoman territory. Like his father, Bayezid understood the benefits which a Jewish class could bring:

Ottoman sovereigns already knew from experience that some Jews could be useful to them. They did not need to wait for the Sephardic emigration to have among them Jewish doctors or important businessmen, Italiotes or Romaniotes, who, by the way, would never be entirely eclipsed by the success of the Sephardim. Another saying commonly attributed to Bayezid II clearly suggests this: "Ferdinand is said to be a well-advised prince, but he impoverishes his kingdom and enriches mine." In sum, Bayezid continued the straight line of pragmatism manifested by his father, Mehmed II, but whereas Mehmet II had

brought that pragmatism to bear mainly for the benefit of Istanbul, his renascent capital, its effects would be more broadly disseminated under his successor.¹

While it is true that Bayezid's policy of toleration benefited the whole of the empire in the same fashion that Mehmet's policy of relocation benefited Istanbul, there were much wider implications than simply an influx of capital and more people to work professional occupations. By allowing the Sephardim to freely move and settle within the empire, Bayezid laid the foundations for a culturally unified Ottoman Jewry. At its height, every corner of the Ottoman Empire possessed a unique Jewish community. Under Bayezid's successor, Sultan Selim I, and his successor, Sultan Suleiman I the Magnificent, the Ottoman Empire obtained territories in Syria, Iraq, Arabia, Yemen, Egypt and Morocco, each possessing its own long-established Jewish communities. Each of these communities possessed their own religious traditions, language, and history. Far from being a cohesive body, each community held negative perceptions of other Jewish communities and professed a superiority in their own culture. With the integration and dispersal of Sephardim across the empire, the Ottomans established a common Jewish class, unified in religious traditions, language, and cultural history. It is this shared history of expulsion and integration that made the Sephardim a distinct Ottoman variety of Jew.

While the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire was ruler over Muslims and non-Muslims alike, his non-Muslim subjects possessed obligations and privileges distinct from those of his Muslim subjects. Many of differences in status between the Muslims and the "People of the Book" were commanded by the Quran itself, and therefor fell under the body of sharia. While Muslims were

¹Abdelwahab Meddeb et al., *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013). 178.

obliged to pay the zakat and provide military service, non-Muslims had no such obligation, and were instead compelled to pay the jizya tax as compensation for their protection by the state.² Besides the Quran's mandates on how rulers are to treat non-Muslims, the Sultan allowed his non-Muslim subjects to enjoy partial governing autonomy through the millet system. Through their respective millets Christians and Jews were able to choose leaders in their local communities. These leaders would intercede with the Sultan on behalf of their millets, govern the millets according to their customs, and act as overseers for the faith. One notable deviation from this model was the Jewish millet in Jerusalem. After the Ottoman conquest of the 16th Century the Jews of Jerusalem possessed the privilege of selecting their own local Rabbis, but this privilege was revoked in the 18th Century. In place of an autonomous Jewish millet, a handful of wealthy Sephardic Jews in Istanbul were given the authority to appoint local leaders for the Jerusalem millet.³ Along with the positions held in the millets, Jews exercised political influence through other offices and occupations. A sort of secular Jewish governing position existed in the nasi. This secular leader would represent the interests of his local Jewish population, and conversely, execute the will of the local Ottoman administrators, particularly in tax collecting. In the realm of foreign commerce Sephardic merchants (like Yosef Nasi and Saloman Ya'is) engaged in trade between the empire and the European powers and were held in high esteem in the Sultan's court.⁴

In the early days of the Ottoman Empire the Jewish population enjoyed the free practice of their religion, economic stability and prosperity, and positions of authority within their semi-

² Quran 9:29.

³Bruce Alan Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge University Press, 2004). 62.

⁴José Alberto Tavim, "Sephardic Intermediaries in the Ottoman Empire," *Oriente Moderno* 93, no. 2 (2013): 454–76, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22138617-12340026>. 459.

autonomous millets and within imperial offices. This comfort that Jews enjoyed in the Ottoman Empire after the catastrophe in Iberia fostered various cultural and religious developments. Building on older traditions and common experiences, these new developments would touch Jewish communities around the world and capture the attention of Ottoman and Jewish authorities within the empire. The greatest development in Jewish religion to come from the Ottoman Empire was a Kabbalistic Messianic religious movement known as Sabbateanism.

Sabbatai Sevi, the founder of Sabbateanism, was born August 1, 1626. In the Hebrew Calander this day was the 9th of Ab in the year 5386. In addition to being born on the Sabbath, Sabbatai was also born on the day that the First and Second Jewish Temples were destroyed, a date which was believed to be the birthday of the Messiah in Rabbinic tradition. Born in Greece to a merchant father Sabbatai's family moved to Smyrna as it was developing into a major commercial hub in the empire. Sabbatai quickly became proficient in Talmudic studies and Jewish law, being ordained hakham, or rabbi, at age eighteen. He later went on to study Kabbalah, a school of Jewish mysticism, which holds that God exists as an unknowable, unmanifested *En-Sof* that created the universe through a series of emanations. He is to have said that the *Tif'ereth*, one of the emanations, or Sephirot, of God was the true manifestation of the unknowable Godhead, the God of Israel known by the unspeakable Tetragrammaton. Sabbatai was known to go through episodes of religious ecstasy, followed by episodes of deep depression. For this the rabbis of Smyrna took him to be ill or possessed, and so they did not take immediate action against him when he publicly ate forbidden foods, spoke the unspeakable name of God, and violated other commandments. Sabbatai, claiming to have been anointed as the Messiah with oil by the patriarchs, asserted that these acts were indications of the Messianic age and the world to come. In the early 1650s he was cast out of Smyrna by the rabbinic authorities.

In the 1660s Sabbatai made his way to Jerusalem. It was during this time that he established a relationship with Abraham Nathan Ashkenazi, or Nathan of Gaza. Indeed, it was the work of Nathan of Gaza that propelled Sabbateanism into an internationally recognized religious movement. Nathan, also a scholar of the Talmud and Kabbalah, claimed to have received a revelation from an angel declaring Sabbatai Sevi to be the Messiah. Though Nathan did not reveal this prophetic vision, Sabbatai publicly proclaimed himself to be the Messiah in Jerusalem. Nathan's second prophetic episode occurred as a possession of his body by a spirit of God in the presence of a congregation of rabbis in Gaza. In 1665, Sabbatai left Jerusalem after he was excommunicated by the rabbis there. He traveled throughout the Levant preaching his Messianic mission. In the meantime, Nathan of Gaza published religious work on his revelations, preaching the Messianic mission of Sabbatai. More than the actions of Sabbatai himself, or even the doctrines of the movement, the Messianic fervor stirred amongst the Jewish population was mostly the doing of Nathan's authorship:

More decisive, however, than the esoteric doctrines that were evolved and crystallized during the following months in Nathan's letters and homilies, was the explosive force of the messianic message as such. It appealed to the people as a whole, stirred up longings, and triggered a mighty emotional upheaval... It is a remarkable fact: the mighty wave of penitence and messianic fervor was unrelated to whatever Sabbatai did or did not do in the months following his expulsion from Jerusalem... The messiah functioned as a slogan or image rather than as a living personality. Unencumbered by his actual presence, the movement developed rapidly by following the lines of popular apocalyptic tradition.⁵

It was not the esoteric, mystical elements of Sabbatai's religion that drove Jews to follow him, but rather an appeal to traditional Jewish Messianism: the belief that a Messiah would come from the line of David, who would fill the world with justice, and return the Jews and the Lost Tribes of Israel to the Holy Land in Palestine. This was a prospect particularly attractive to the

⁵Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah, 1626-1676* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016). 252.

Sephardic Jews in the Ottoman Empire who had not forgotten the hardships that drove their ancestors from their old homeland. Word of Sabbatai's messiahship spread throughout Europe and even into Jewish settlements in the Americas.

In preparation for the Messianic age and the world to come, many Jews in the empire sold their possessions and left their occupations, devoting themselves to the Sabbatean movement. To Sultan Mehmed IV this presented a direct challenge to Ottoman authority. In 1666 Sabbatai Sevi entered Istanbul. It was during this time that Sabbateans believed that Sevi would place the Sultan's crown upon his head and commence the Messianic age. Upon his arrival in Istanbul, Sabbatai was arrested and imprisoned, but this did not discourage his followers. It only emboldened their belief in the coming messianic age. Under the order of an Ottoman vizier Sabbatai was brought to Adrianople and presented an ultimatum: convert or die. The day after this ultimatum was presented to him, Sabbatai Sevi was brought to Sultan Mehmet, and it was before him that he renounced his Judaism and converted to Islam. While the apostasy of Sabbatai Sevi would be the end of the Messianic movement for most of his followers, several families of devoted Sabbateans joined him in his conversion. These individuals, known as the Dönme were crypto-Jews, acting openly as Muslims but practicing Jewish Kabbalah in secret, believing that Sabbatai's outward Islam was simply the last component of his plan before he ushered in the Messianic age.

Sabbateanism was not simply an isolated religious fad in the Ottoman Empire. Sabbatai's mystical messianism embodied two challenges the Ottoman Empire had to address in the centuries after its era of conquest. Under Mehmet IV's reign the Ottoman Empire saw a surge in the influence of Sufism, or Islamic mysticism. These innovative Sufis established a monopoly over the position of Imam, or preacher, in the mosques of major Ottoman cities and interior

territories. To address this pressing issue Mehmed instated a purge of Sufi mysticism. This purge against Sufism was extended to Sabbateanism for its mystic elements. The Ottoman Empire was also faced with problems in its bureaucracy during the 17th Century. Throughout the empire, bureaucrats acted more as local rulers rather than imperial administrators, taking tax revenues from their provinces and swelling their purses. Sabbatai further confounded this problem in the bureaucracy in his travels through the empire. During his time in Cairo he received the support of the leader of its Jewish community, Raphael Joseph Celebi. Prior to the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans in the 16th Century, the Egyptian Jews were governed under a rabbinical authority known as the nagid. After the Ottoman conquest this office was abolished and replaced by the çelebi. The çelebi was a secular bureaucratic position charged with acting as the financial authority within the Ottoman provinces. This position, even outside of Egypt, was a traditionally Jewish position, following the trend of establishing secular Jewish authorities to act as governing agents for the empire over its Jewish subjects.⁶ Sabbatai's claim of Messiahship threatened the secular nature of these positions, since many çelebi were followers of Sabbatai and believed he would take control of the empire. Mehemet could not tolerate a man who could threaten the loyalty of his Jewish subjects and Ottoman bureaucrats.

Sabbateanism as a breakaway movement was not an anomaly in Ottoman history. Rather, it served as a precursor to nationalist independence movements, which would bring about the diminishment of Ottoman territorial holdings in the 19th Century. Nationalist fervor in the Balkans created the momentum for successful independence movements in Greece and Bulgaria. The loss of control over Balkan territories was accompanied by a long period of corruption

⁶Jane Hathaway, "The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah: The Sabbatai Sevi Controversy and the Ottoman Reform in Egypt," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 117, no. 4 (1997): 665–71, <https://doi.org/10.2307/606448>. 668.

within the military classes and self-aggrandizement of the tax-farming ayan class, which the Ottoman Empire relied on for receiving government revenues. To reverse this trend of decline the Ottoman Empire initiated the Tanzimat Period, an era of reform intended to create modern state institutions. The reform period began with the Hatt-i Humayan of 1839, a decree of royal intent issued by Sultan Abdulmejid I. The proclamation declared the commitment of the state to the creation of institutions that would protect the life, honor and fortune of its subjects, execute a uniform system of taxation, and ensure a regular system of levying troops.⁷ The expressed goal of these reforms was to foster within the hearts of the Ottoman subjects a love for the Sultan and for their Ottoman homeland. In the eyes of the Sultan, providing equal justice to non-Muslim subjects, and securing their lives and property, would cultivate within them a new Ottoman identity, or Ottomanism. This Tanzimat project was extended further with the Hatt-i Humayan of 1856. Among the reforms issued in this decree, the administration of temporal property was transferred from the religious leaders of the millets to secular assemblies; all Ottoman subjects were admitted into military academies regardless of faith; and the mixed tribunals to hear cases between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects were established.⁸ The reforms of the Tanzimat between 1839 and 1876 had a substantial impact on what it meant to be a Jew in the Ottoman Empire.

In creating a centralized system of administration, many of the local, secular positions held by Jewish elites were abolished and the responsibilities and powers of those positions were placed in the hands of new Ottoman authorities. Inspection of local markets and the

⁷ The Rescript of Gülhane – Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu

⁸ Rescript of Reform – Islahat Fermanı
(18 February 1856)

administration of charitable endowments were placed into new Ottoman offices.⁹ Ottoman officers acted as intermediaries between the Sultan and local Jewish leaders. The old practice of tax-farming was abolished, and so were the old taxes that they collected. A uniform, progressive income tax was established and collected by state-employed tax collectors. In the Dardanelles, Jews found this new system to be particularly favorable, as it allowed them to retain more of their wealth, since the tax collector enjoyed his employment by the Sultan's pleasure and possessed no ability to keep a portion of the taxes for himself.

Along with centralized administration and mixed Ottoman courts, the Ottoman Empire reformed its legal system to be more easily understood and navigated by non-Muslim subjects. The result of this reform was the Mecelle, a civil code which retained the criminal and civil framework of the sharia while incorporating the commercial and maritime legal elements of the Napoleonic Code. These sets of reforms created conditions very favorable for Jews living in major Ottoman cities. Instead of having to deal with different sets of local Jewish authorities when conducting every-day activities, Jews need only heed the Ottoman authorities who exercised a uniform set of rules throughout the empire. This was particularly pleasing to the Jewish middle class and merchant class living in these major cities for the ease of carrying out economic activity. Indeed, because Jewish life became so reliant on the health of the state, when the empire suffered, so too did the Jewish merchant class. This reality was encapsulated in the First Crimean War. The economic damages sustained by the Ottoman Empire because of the war had a direct impact on Jewish communities. This sparked calls by local Jewish leaders to their communities to support the Ottoman war effort, invoking a sense of patriotic and philanthropic

⁹Mustafa M. Kulu and Seçil Akgün, *A Brief History of the Dardanelles Jews During Early Tanzimat Years, 1839-1845* (Middle Eastern Technical University, 2005). 92.

duty to support Ottoman soldiers. From demonstrations like these it is evident that, at least concerning the economic life of urban Ottoman Jews, the Tanzimat reforms were successful in creating within Jews a vested interest in the survival and success of the state, and through this, a sense of patriotism with the Ottoman Empire.

While Ottomanism brought Ottoman Jews within the fold of the nation's economy and political community there still existed points of confrontation between Muslim and Jewish subjects. These areas of conflict existed within the spaces of shared importance by people of multiple confessions, spaces which were integral to the daily social and religious life of Ottoman subjects. One of the most notable incidents of intra-Ottoman religious confrontation was sparked over the burial of a Baghdadi Rabbi in 1889. In mid-September of that year the revered Baghdadi Jewish Rabbi Somekh passed away. Consistent with Jewish burial practices the Rabbi had to be buried immediately after his passing. The Jewish congregation wished to bury the Rabbi in a burial shrine revered by both the Muslims and the Jews of the city. To transport the body to the shrine, the Jewish congregation had to pass through the Muslim neighborhoods of the city. They did this during an outbreak of cholera, violating the city's quarantine protocols. The Muslim residents of the city responded with violence, compelling the local Ottoman authorities to break up the fighting and arrest the participants. While Muslim detainees were released shortly after the incident, the Jews who were arrested during the altercation remained in Ottoman custody even after the quarantine had been lifted. The Baghdadi Jews petitioned the Sultan for their release, but this request fell on deaf ears. Seeing that the Ottoman state would not come to their rescue, the Baghdadi Jews relayed the testimony of their persecution to Jewish and European newspapers outside of Europe, bringing international attention to their situation. In response to this pressure, the Sultan freed the prisoners and removed the local governor who had imprisoned

them. This was only a minor victory for the Baghdadi Jews, as the governor was simply relocated to another position in the Syrian Province. They were also ordered to relocate the body of Rabbi Somekh to a Jewish cemetery. This order was justified under Islamic law, as according to the sharia, a non-Muslim could not be buried in an Islamic holy shrine, and the Jews had not established that the burial shrine was an area of Jewish religious importance. This exercise of power by the Ottoman government conveyed to Jews within and outside the Ottoman Empire that even with full economic and political integration into the modern state experiment, there would always be areas of life where the Jewish minority would be marginalized. Events like the one in Baghdad drove Jews away from identifying with a declining empire that did not fully respect their rights and towards a movement which advocated for the establishment of a national Jewish identity.

The end of the 19th Century saw the emergence of a new Jewish political movement. This movement, in the same vein of the nationalism which swept Europe during this period, advocated for the creation of a Jewish nation-state. The political organization and financial support for this new movement of Zionism was born in Europe, but considerations on the prospect of a Jewish state were ever-present for Ottoman Jews, and like in Europe, Ottoman Jews possessed a diversity of views on the proper role of Israel in Jewish life. To Ottoman Rabbis in the 19th Century, the Land of Israel possessed a great deal of religious importance but should not have been considered as a destination for Jewish immigration. To these Rabbis, only those Jews who were living in Jerusalem at that time should be financially supported, and only those elderly Jews able to afford the pilgrimage should be encouraged to live in Jerusalem. The time of Jewish return to the holy land, the Rabbis argued, was an event reserved for when the

messiah arrived.¹⁰ This argument proved to be unpersuasive to many Zionists, particularly secular Zionists, who were bent on creating a Jewish homeland rather than fulfilling messianic prophecy. By the 20th Century the first Aliyah, or Jewish migration to the Land of Israel had occurred with the support of Jewish philanthropy organizations and the sanction of the European colonial powers. Ottoman Jewish support for the Zionist project was evident at this time. One Sephardic publication in support of the Zionist project refuted the opposition to this migration by Palestinian Muslims in Jerusalem:

Many Muslim leaders in Jerusalem expressed their fear of the foreign Jews who arrive in the country and remain [here] under the protection of foreign governments, do not adopt Ottoman citizenship, do not learn the language of the state and do not take part in the duties of the homeland. . . . But these people [who criticize the immigrants] forget that many [Jews] wished to adopt Ottoman citizenship but were prevented from doing so by the [Ottoman] government itself.¹¹

The Sephardic author expressed that the Jewish immigrants of Palestine desired, but were denied, Ottoman citizenship. From the perspective of Ottoman Jews, this was simply another instance of the Ottoman state failing to fully incorporate Jews into the Ottoman body politic. All means of coexistence were exhausted, the only avenue by which Jews could enjoy all their rights without compromise would be with the existence of a Jewish state.

With a Jewish homeland emerging in the early 20th Century, Zionists worked to create institutions that foster a new national identity. To the Zionists, these institutions would need to instill within the nation the best component of both Jewish and Palestinian culture in order to create a cohesive identity out of the many Jewish groups emigrating from across the globe. This new “Hebrew” identity would supersede the Jewish identity which had been held by the

¹⁰Matthias B. Lehmann, *Ladino Rabbinic Literature and Ottoman Sephardic Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005). 158.

¹¹ ”The Time Is Here”: Ha-Herut

Diaspora in all countries they resided. One of the institutions created to instill this new Hebrew identity was the Herzlia Gymnasium. This institution taught youths on Jewish history and religion. The school also contributed to the revival and reconstruction of Hebrew from a dead language to the living, spoken language of present-day Israelis. The first country to give certification to the Herzlia Gymnasium was the Ottoman Empire. This accomplishment helped to legitimize the educational projects of Zionism, and which could not have been accomplished without the activism of Ottoman Jews.¹²

The history of Ottoman Jews is a testament to the fact that history is not a closed system. Historical events cannot simply be attributed to forces which are internal. Rather, internal and external forces exert themselves and interact with each other to produce the outcomes we live with today. The history of Ottoman Jews also informs us that the end of one history is the beginning of another. Though the Iberian Jews were expelled from their native Spain and Portugal, their descendants would live on to play a pivotal role in Ottoman political life and the formation of the modern Israeli state.

¹² Arieh Bruce Saposnik, *Becoming Hebrew: The Creation of a Jewish National Culture in Ottoman Palestine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

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1920s Turkey and the Shaikh Said Revolt

By David O'Brien

Turkey underwent a massive transformation over the course of the 1920s. Ataturk's regime radically shifted the cultural narrative surrounding the then recently collapsed Ottoman Empire. This massive shift directly affected two groups, Sufi Muslims and Kurds, more than any others. By the 1930s, Sufi orders had been abolished in Turkey and those who wished to continue practicing their faith had to do so either elsewhere or in secret. This would be the first story of many where Sufi Muslims go from being ordinary citizens to being ostracized by a Middle Eastern nation that is modernizing on a mass scale. By the 1930s, the Kurds would become the primary focus of the Turkish government's fight against ethnic diversity. The 1920s would be the foundation for a century-long feud between the Turkish government and the Kurdish minority.

This essay will examine the causes, courses, and consequences of the abolition of Sufi orders in Turkey during the 1920s. This will be done by first briefly discussing Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's rise to power and his policy agenda surrounding both Turkish nationalism and the role religion had to play in modernizing Turkey. The essay will then discuss the cultural impact Sufi orders had on this new government and how Sufism was viewed by Turkish nationalists during this time period. A brief description of the Kurds, and an evaluation of the Turkish government's position on Kurds as an ethnic group will follow. The paper will then discuss how and why these two groups allied with each other to fight the Turkish government during the Shaikh Said Revolts. The reasoning surrounding government policies surrounding the abolition of Sufi orders in Turkey will be discussed. The essay will conclude with an analysis of mystic groups like

Sufism in the post-World War I world as well as a summary of how Sufi orders exist in Turkey today.

After World War I, Sultan Mehmet VI sought to preserve what was left of the Ottoman Empire. The allies sought to break the Ottoman Empire and base the new borders of each nation by ethnic groups and their own imperial interests. In response to this numerous Turkish nationalist groups arose to combat the new territorial transition. As the battle for maintaining previous territories escalated, the military officer Mustafa Kemal began to consecrate himself as the leader of the resistance movement. While the Ottoman government did attempt to squash the Turkish nationalist movement, resistance to new Ottoman policies was fierce and many citizens viewed the war between Turkish insurgents and the Ottoman government as a war for Turkish independence. In 1920, in response to the allies and Greek forces securing marginal gains, Turkish nationalists created an assembly where numerous different resistance groups ranging from former Ottoman cabinet members to insurgents from Anatolia and Thrace formed a new government with Kemal as president. The new government sought to end foreign occupation of their territory and establish Turkish sovereignty. The new government sought to undo the territorial losses of the Treaty of Sevres. Once Kemal completely took the executive party and fully controlled the army he quickly defeated the Greeks. By 1922, the war was over and the Turkish nationalists signed an agreement with the Ottoman government which would legitimately establish the Turkish republic and fully remove the Caliphate as a political position and make it purely religious. In 1924, a new constitution was established with a much more radical agenda. The new constitution established the right to vote for all men eighteen and over and a national assembly. The republic, while seemingly democratic, was a one-party state in which Mustafa Kemal Ataturk ruled with essentially dictatorial authority. Ataturk utilized his

near-total control over Turkey to modernize, nationalize, and westernize the new state. He did this through the six policies of Kemalism: etatism, laicism (secularism), nationalism, populism, reformism, and republicanism. The policies of Kemalism led to a massive political, economic, and cultural overhaul.¹

The primary focus of social reform was to establish stronger cultural cohesion through emphasizing national identity and suppressing cultural and religious divides. This was done primarily through Turkish policies surrounding secularism as well as numerous policies meant to minimize ethnic diversity throughout Turkey. Policies to minimize ethnic diversity included the suppression of languages outside of basic Turkish, the modification of the education system to base the curriculum purely on Turkish nationalism, and most importantly resettlement policies that were utilized to destroy nucleic ethnic communities.

The policy-planning structure of government reform surrounding religion in Turkey would come to be known as laicism, being inspired by the French revolution. Following the path of modernization through westernization, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk sought to eliminate factors of religious revolt against the government. Ataturk sought to fulfill this doctrine by first eliminating the Caliphate, a title held by the Ottoman sultans as leaders of the Islamic community. Ataturk saw abolition as a necessity both for the Turkish government and for the modernization of the Islamic faith. In a direct address to the Turkish people, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk proclaimed, “Gentlemen, I must frankly and categorically declare that those who continue to occupy themselves with the chimera of the Caliphate and thereby mislead the Muslim world, are nothing but enemies of the Muslim world, and especially of Turkey.”² He saw the separation of church

¹William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2019).

²Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*

and state in Turkey as a necessity for both the survival of Turkey and the preservation of Islam in a rapidly progressing world. Following the abolition of the Caliphate, Ataturk launched a campaign to stop Turks from wearing the late Ottoman fez. First, he made a massive push for the people of Turkey to wear brimmed caps, which he claimed were the hats of modernity. Soon after, he banned the fez along with other religious garments in an attempt to foster more cultural cohesion. By having his citizens wear similar clothing and lessen cultural fashions Mustafa Kemal Ataturk hoped to foster a deeper sense of Turkish culture.

Soon after, Ataturk abolished all religious convents and Sufi lodges in an attempt to reform the Islamic faith in Turkey. In banning private religious orders, Ataturk sought to build a stronger sense of Turkish nationalism rather than allow the sort of religious diversity that he believed led to the decline and fall of the Ottoman Empire. He also abolished shariah and promulgated a legal code based on Swiss and Italian legal structures. He later transitioned Turkey from the Islamic calendar to the Gregorian calendar and authorized the translation of the Quran from Arabic to Turkish. Ataturk's laicist policies led to a massive overhaul of religious institutions in Turkey. While initially, these reforms were implemented for the sake of dividing church and state, they were easily the most radical anti-religious policy reforms the region had ever seen.

While all religious and ethnic groups were affected by this transition, Sufi orders and ethnic Kurds were marginalized significantly more due to their intrinsic cultural opposition to these reforms. Sufism was simply so diametrically opposed to the principles of Kemalism that it had no room to exist in a modernizing Turkey. Sufism is a form of Islam that focuses more on mystical practices rather than traditional communal worship. While the origins of Sufism have been lost over time, the root principles of Sufism are based directly on the story surrounding

Muhammad's ascension to heaven with his physical body. Sufis seek ascension to heaven through transcendental spiritual practices. Sufis believe that there are two methods of religious practices demonstrated in the Quran that allow people to live in conjunction with God. Sufis believe Islam is divided into exoteric and esoteric practices. Exoteric practices are viewed as lower practices that are followed by the majority of worshippers and are viewed as lesser methods of following God's will. Esoteric practices are viewed as higher practices that lead the individual to self-actualization and eventual merging with the divine. Traditional exoteric Islam, while not directly against Sufi beliefs, does utilize different methods for worship. While Sufis do respect the beliefs of traditional exoteric Islam, they do not follow Islamic traditions and instead worship through Sufi orders. Orders function as master-student organizations where Sufi masters initiate followers in their methods of esoteric practice. These transcendental practices vary wildly. Some focus on dancing, some on utilizing drugs, and some on strict meditation. Sufi orders often have rituals that break from societal norms. Members wear non-traditional clothing to differentiate themselves from the rest of society. Sufis also practice in their own temples and distance themselves from traditional Islam and general society due to their desire at attaining godliness through individualistic spiritual practices. Unlike other Islamic traditions, Sufi beliefs frequently worked outside the confines of society.³

Ataturk's policies were diametrically opposed to every aspect of Sufism. The individualism of Sufism was the opposite of the collectivism Kemalism sought to establish among the Turkish people. Sufis often wore vibrant and specific clothing to separate themselves from people outside of their orders, whereas Ataturk sought sartorial sameness. Sufis pursued

³ M. Brett Wilson, "The Twilight of Ottoman Sufism: Antiquity, Immorality and Nation in Yakup Kadri Karoasmanoğlu's Nur Baba," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 2 (2017): 233–53, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020743817000034>.

spiritual transcendence through meditation, dance, and different drugs, which obviously went against the cultural values Mustafa Kemal Atatürk sought to impart on society. Atatürk attempted to modernize dancing and prayer and bridge the gap between the Turkish culture and more “modern” cultures from the west. Sufis are often taught not to take part in politics or political agendas. Kemalists viewed their political disinterest with considerable skepticism.

Not only did the Sufi way of life directly contradict the new policies of the Turkish government, but the culture of Turkey was also beginning to turn on Sufi orders due to the negative stereotypes perpetuated by the media during this paradigm shift within Turkey. The general public’s shift in perspective surrounding Sufism can best be seen in the popular novel *Nur Baba*.⁴ Written in 1922 just before the abolishment of Sufi orders, *Nur Baba* depicted Sufi lodges as houses of sin. Sufi lodges were depicted as areas with widespread alcohol and drug use as well as sexual degeneracy. *Nur Baba* perfectly encapsulated the many negative stereotypes surrounding Sufi lodges and provided a perfect canvas to project the modernizers’ concerns about Sufi orders in the Kemalist period. In *Nur Baba*, Sufi lodges were shown to be cult-like organizations that lure the wealthy with promises of spiritual clarity and then break them down through constant exposure to vice. While the novel did portray the general philosophy and ideas surrounding Sufism in a positive light, it depicted the lodges as sites of sensuality rather than spirituality. *Nur Baba* had a profound effect on the Turkish people and, more importantly, a profound effect on Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Atatürk even hosted the author of the novel, Karasmanoğlu, at a private gathering. This is just one example of the rising cultural clash between Turkish nationalists and Sufism. The image of Sufis as degenerates who utilized the Islamic faith for their own selfish gains was something that had to be dealt with under Atatürk’s

⁴Wilson, *The Twilight of Ottoman Sufism: Antiquity, Immorality and Nation in Yakup Kadri Karasmanoğlu’s Nur Baba*

regime. The novel's depiction of Sufis as frauds and corrupt followers of Islam perfectly encapsulated the rising sentiment modernizers had surrounding faith-based institutions in Turkey. Nationalists believed the government should crackdown on institutions. Kemalists maintained that Sufism itself had to be removed due to the cultural stereotypes surrounding it, the individualistic nature of their communities, and their inevitable connection to Kurdish revolutionaries.

In addition to Turkish policies marginalizing Sufis, numerous ethnic groups saw the new Turkish government as oppressive.⁵ As the Turkish government sought to establish a basis of nationalism based on a new culture built on borders and ethnicity, it continuously marginalized people who sought to maintain their old culture. Ataturk viewed the cultural diversity of the Ottoman Empire as one of the primary reasons for its dissolution.⁶ Ethnic groups had been granted the right to practice their own traditions and live within localized communities as long as they did not interfere with the rule of the Ottoman government. As discussed previously, over the course of the establishment of the Turkish Republic non-Turkish ethnic groups became progressively more marginalized and the government sought to change the understanding of ethnic groups within the nation. Over time the term "Turk" evolved to mean anyone residing in Turkey and following of traditional Turkish principles.⁷ Unlike Armenians, who were marginalized by Turks due to material conflict surrounding territory, Kurds would go on to face oppression due to their cultural opposition to the new Turkish nationalism.⁸

⁵ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*

⁶ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*

⁷ Mesut Yegen, "Prospective-Turks' or 'Pseudo-Citizens:' Kurds in Turkey," *The Middle East Journal* 63, no. 4 (2009): 597–615, <https://doi.org/10.3751/63.4.14>, 599.

⁸ Mesut Yegen, 'Prospective-Turks' or 'Pseudo-Citizens:' Kurds in Turkey

Under the Turkish Republic, Kurds were initially given localized autonomy and the right to continue their cultural practices. Kurds were granted the right to follow their traditions within localized communities under the Turkish constitution of 1921. Ataturk issued a proclamation supporting this claim soon after the ratification of the 1921 constitution. “In accordance with our Constitution, a kind of local autonomy is to be granted. Hence, provinces inhabited by Kurds will rule themselves autonomously. ... [The] Grand National Assembly of Turkey is composed of the deputies of both Kurds and Turks and these two peoples have unified their interests and fates.”⁹ However, as the Turkish Republic became more stable over time, Kurds lost their rights as an ethnic group. Just three years later, this policy would drastically change and put the Kurds in direct opposition to the Turkish government’s agenda. Ataturk addressed his new policy surrounding minority ethnic groups and their position in the Turkish Republic in the introduction of the 1924 constitution, “Our state is a nation-state. It is not a multi-national state. The state does not recognize any nation other than Turks. There are other peoples which come from different races [ethnic groups] and who should have equal rights within the country. Yet it is not possible to give rights to these people in accordance with their racial [ethnic] status.”¹⁰ With this transition, the Turkish state moved from a policy of tolerance to one of assimilation. While initially, Kurds were viewed as just another ethnic group living under the Ottoman Empire, within just a few years since the Turkish Republic’s founding, Kurds were viewed as either a detriment to the Turkish government or Turks who had just not fully adapted to their new environment.

In response to Ataturk’s continuous policies against institutional religion, opposition was bound to emerge over time. By 1924, the first opposition party in Turkey emerged, the

⁹Mesut Yegen, 'Prospective-Turks' or 'Pseudo-Citizens:' Kurds in Turkey

¹⁰ Mesut Yegen, 'Prospective-Turks' or 'Pseudo-Citizens:' Kurds in Turkey, 599

Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası (TCF). The primary goal of this party was to protect the interests of religion under the Turkish republic. The formation of the TCF led to the collectivism of ethnic minorities, traditionalists, and religious Turks. This provided Shaikh Said the base he needed to engineer a rebellion against the Turkish government. Along with the religious backlash against the Turkish government, the Kurds had become increasingly frustrated with Ankara's policies, including restrictions of the Kurdish language, mass deportation of ethnic Kurds, and the economic exploitation of the Kurds. Due to these grievances, Kurds and those who opposed the secularization of Turkey created an alliance to launch a resistance movement against Ataturk's regime.

Throughout 1924, numerous splinter groups emerged and were dealt with by the Turkish government, but the continuous small-scale rebellions enabled the rising opposition to mobilize widespread discontent with Ataturk's regime. The Kurdish Sufi Shaikh Said sent numerous demands to the Turkish government anonymously and after not seeing results time and time again, he decided to initiate the first major revolt in the history of modern Turkey. After a failed attempt by the Turkish government to arrest numerous Kurdish nationalists, Shaikh Said declared that the Turkish government must be destroyed due to their consistent failure to meet the demands of the prophet. Shaikh Said was elected to lead the resistance in February 1925.¹¹

On February 20, 1925, the Kurdish rebellion was fully underway and the rebel forces managed to capture their first city. Over the course of the next month, numerous cities were captured by the insurgents and numerous battles were fought between the rebellion and the

¹¹ Ahmet Yükleyen, "Sufism and Islamic Groups in Contemporary Turkey," *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, 2008, 381–87, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cho9780521620963.015>.
Ahmet, Sufism and Islamic Groups in Contemporary Turkey

Turkish army. By March, the Turkish government had dealt with the majority of its opposition. By April, Shaikh Said had been captured and the revolt was officially defeated.¹²

Shaikh Said himself was both a Sufi mystic and a Kurd. While his revolution had clear ethnic roots, he attempted to expand his rebellion by providing a religious foundation and recruit those who opposed new Turkey's religious policies. In doing so, he merged both Kurdish and Sufi interests alongside his revolt. After its failure, Ataturk sought to remove all opposition to his regime. Kurds and Sufis were viewed as the two primary groups that led to this rebellion.

Following the Shaikh Said revolt, the Turkish government immediately cracked down on the Kurds. Ataturk placed over seven thousand people under arrest as co-conspirators and executed six hundred people. Kurds became and still remain one of the most marginalized ethnic groups in Turkey. The Shaikh Said revolt would be the first of many Kurdish rebellions against the Turkish government. Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, the Kurds have continuously attempted to re-establish their own ethnic identity and resist the government through guerrilla warfare.

The Turkish government immediately instituted policies that would go on to eradicate Sufi orders. After the revolt, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk banned the practices of Sufism, abolished all religious orders including Sufi lodges, and banned the Sufi practice of visiting Ottoman tombs. Sufis went from religious orders that could enjoy their religious practices free of inhibition to common criminals. While some historians and scholars blame the Shaikh Said Revolt for the ban on Sufism, the evidence suggests it is a small part in a much larger pattern that has been shown time and time again in Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's Turkey.¹³

¹² Ahmet, *Sufism and Islamic Groups in Contemporary Turkey*

¹³ Wilson, *The Twilight of Ottoman Sufism: Antiquity, Immortality and Nation in Yakup Kadri Karoasmanoğlu's Nur Baba*

Ataturk's treatment of Kurds has served as the foundation for the Turkish government's policy planning surrounding them. Almost a century after the Shaikh Said revolt, the Kurds continue to suffer from extreme oppression from the Turkish government. While there have been periods of modern Turkish history where Kurdish rights have expanded, Kurds continue to be an oppressed minority group to this day. Despite making up 18% of the population of Turkey, Kurds are not allowed representation in the Turkish government. Today, using the Kurdish language in public is an arrestable offense. Since the 1920s there have been dozens of other Kurdish revolts. Some have been peaceful, but those that shape public opinion and make up the of the cultural mind are the violent conflicts between domestic terrorists and the Turkish army.

Throughout the 21st century, Turkey has continued its old practices of mass exiling Kurds. The Turkish government has placed food embargoes on Kurdish villages and continues to harm innocent civilians due to the continuous conflicts between Kurdish nationalist groups and the Turkish government. Turkey has continuously been condemned by the west for its continuous violations of human rights when it comes to Kurds.

While there have been ceasefires between Kurdish separatists and the Turkish government, the individualistic nature of the separatist groups and the Turkish government's collective view of Kurds have made it incredibly difficult for the Kurdish minority to live in peace. Political, economic, and cultural equality continues to elude the Kurdish people. While in 2015, President Erdoğan attempted to negotiate a cease-fire and attain a viable solution to the continuous conflict between the Kurds and Turks, this plan has broken down.¹⁴ Erdoğan has arrested over 50,000 Kurds due to his fear of Kurdish terrorism. His regime has also expanded air bombings against Kurdish militants in Syria.¹⁵

¹⁴Lynn Rigsbee, "The Kurdish Tragedy," *Domes* 5, no. 2 (1996): 69.

¹⁵Rigsbee, *The Kurdish Tragedy*

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and the Turkish republic's sweeping plan to engineer a new culture in post-World War I Turkey can be argued to be one of the biggest cultural transitions in Modern Middle Eastern history. The systemic removal of Sufi practices can and should be viewed as a fundamental aspect of Ataturk's attempt to remove insulated and individualistic groups throughout the 1920s. The Turkish government's association of Sufis with Kurds, while seemingly only because of Shaikh Said's rebellion stemming from the two groups, makes up a larger pattern of the systemic removal of groups that ideologically opposed the Turkish nationalist agenda. Kurds were assimilated into the new Turkish culture and those who attempted to continue their traditions were viewed as pariahs, criminals, and undesirables.

In 1950, after the ousting of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's party from the Turkish parliament, stringent religious laws became significantly more relaxed. Ottoman tombs were reopened within the year, while initially they were closed to prohibit Sufis and other religious orders from enacting rituals at the site of their past mentors, theologians, and other major figures in their religious orders. Over time, interest in Sufism has reemerged throughout modern Turkey. Today, Sufi dances can be witnessed in numerous museums throughout Turkey. While interest in Sufism is continuously expanding in Turkey and numerous major political parties have openly admitted that they are willing to repeal the 1925 law that abolished them in the first place, practicing Sufism and operating a Sufi lodge is still technically illegal.¹⁶ Throughout the post-World War I world mystical orders have continuously become less and less common. Gnostic Christians congregate online rather than in their own churches. Kabbalist Jews are respected more so as academics rather than true followers of Judaism. Sufi Muslims continue to be marginalized by the Islamic community. While there is a growing interest in mystic traditions, political and larger

¹⁶Ahmet, Sufism and Islamic Groups in Contemporary Turkey

religious institutions are likely to continue marginalizing these groups for the sake of not only combating opposition but also maintaining the cultural dominance over those who seek to operate outside of their culture. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the policies of the Turkish Republic is one of the many stories of the marginalization of mystical schools throughout the modern world. Today, these orders are only allowed to emerge as long as they work in lockstep for the interests of the state they reside in. This can easily be seen in the allowance of Sufi dances for the sake of tourism rather than the actual preservation of a Ottoman cultural tradition that goes back to the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans.

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The History of Yoga

By Cameron Arnold

Yoga today is seen as simply a surface level workout that requires flexibility and meditation. However, yoga is rooted in a deep, rich history and philosophy. This essay will cover the history of yoga from an estimated 4500 BCE to an estimated 500 CE. Though yoga today is different from the yoga that will be discussed throughout this essay, it is important to explain the distinction. The modern practice of yoga today is mainly focused on poses and postures (called asanas), or the physical aspect of yoga. Yogic history shows that the practice is rooted in a specific philosophy and spirituality. Yoga and Yogic philosophy is rooted in the historical tradition of the Harrapans and Vedic peoples and shaped by three religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Patanjali, the most significant figure in yogic history, used the influences from Harrapan and Vedic cultures and their religions to bring together all aspects of yoga into the Yoga Sutras, the main text of yogic practice.

Definition of Yogic Philosophy

The direct translation of the Sanskrit word, Yoga, is yoking, or union.¹ Thus, yoga can be understood as the union between one's mind, body, and spirit as well as their connection with the natural world around them.² To yoke is to use unity to control, and the practice of yoga is to unite the breath, body, and mind for the purpose of bringing them under one's control so that they can liberate themselves.³ As the yogi Ashwini states, "Yoga is not an asana... Yoga is not a

¹"Yoga," Encyclopædia Britannica, October 6, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Yoga-philosophy>.

²"Philosophy of Yoga," Yoga Basics, accessed November 4, 2022, <https://www.yogabasics.com/learn/philosophy-of-yoga/>.

³Syama Allard, "Who Was Patanjali and What Are the Yoga Sutras?," Hindu American Foundation, September 23, 2020, <https://www.hinduamerican.org/blog/who-was-patanjali-and-what-are-the-yoga-sutras>.

religion.”⁴ Meaning that, yoga is not simply the action of poses, it is a way of living that unites one with the world around them. Though modern (western) yogic practices do not carry any direct religious connotations, they are rooted in the traditions and practices of Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. Historically, yogis believe that through eliminating their personal spiritual ignorance through the practice of yoga, they can break the cycle of reincarnation and live in harmony with the world and escape both sickness and death. By preparing their bodies through poses and proper breathing, they can then prepare their minds and spirits to live as one within the world.⁵⁶

Yogic History Timeline

Yogic history can be broken down into four distinct periods. The pre-classical period, the classical period, the post-classical period, and the modern period. For the purpose of this essay, we will only be focusing on the pre-classical and classical periods. The pre-classical period dates from around 4500 BCE to around 2500 BCE. This period is characterized by the Harrapan and Vedic cultures and their religious practices. The major texts that are referenced from this period are the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavad Gita. Hinduism arises out of this period as the inspirational backbone to the philosophy of yoga. The classical yoga period takes place around 100 BCE to 500 CE and centers around Patanjali, one of the most influential people in yogic history, who is best known for writing the Yoga Sutra. The first textual mention of practicing actual yoga poses, or asanas, as well as yoga philosophy is written in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra. In this period, both Buddhism and Jainism arise as well as additional inspirations to Patanjali and his work, which solidified the practice of yoga into one text. The post-classical

⁴“What Is Yoga?,” Proquest, November 19, 2011, <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/what-is-yoga/docview/904958084/se-2>, 1.

⁵Philosophy of Yoga

⁶What is Yoga?

yoga period witnessed the spread of the asanic practice of yoga as well as different types of yogic practices. It is generally dated between the year 500 to 1300 CE. The final period is known as the period of Modern Yoga, which starts in the 1800s and is the beginnings of popularized western yoga that most people know today.⁷

Cultures and Religions that Influenced Yoga in the Pre-Classical Period

Though yoga is practiced by many different cultures today, it can be traced back to two primary cultures: the Harrapans and the Vedic peoples. The Harrapans originated in the Indus River valley in the third millennium BCE. They were primarily influenced by the ancient Mesopotamians and traded with both the Mesopotamians and Egyptians. The Indus valley provided rich soil that allowed the Harrapans to be producers of wheat and barley as well as to develop new technological tools for farming such as plows. Their ability to provide food for themselves and their harvesting advancements allowed the Harappan peoples to participate in recreational activities and develop their spirituality, including yoga. This is seen from the remnants of Harrapan seals. While much of Harrapan culture has been lost due to the inability to translate ancient texts and the destruction of their civilization due to flooding, scholars have found seal stamps that contain not only their elaborate script but also pictures, one of which is a person seen sitting in a common yoga pose (see Figure 1). This seal stamp is the first recorded sign of yoga.⁸

⁷Alexia Koletsou, "How Old Is Yoga? (PLUS a Yoga History Timeline)," Yoga My Old Friend, March 6, 2022, <https://yogamyoldfriend.com/how-old-is-yoga-a-brief-history-plus-a-timeline-of-key-events/>.

⁸Jeremy Adelman et al., *Worlds Together Worlds Apart* (New York, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2021), 179-183.



Figure 1⁹

Hinduism was the first religion to come out of the Indus Valley and can be traced back to between 2300 BCE to 1500 BCE. It is strongly influenced by the Harappans and the Vedic peoples who lived around the Indus Valley during that time. There is no founder attributed to the Hindu religion, and believers credit the Hindu faith to an intellectual collective rather than any specific creator. Hindus worship a deity, the Brahman, a form of absolute reality, however they also recognize other gods. They also believe in reincarnation and Karma. Further, Hindus believe in the soul or “atman,” which, through practice and salvation, will become part of Brahman, leading to the connection of man with the absolute soul, ending the cycle of reincarnation.¹⁰

Both yoga and the Hindu faith are rooted in the Harappan and Vedic peoples’ culture and history. Additionally, their core texts are both written in Sanskrit. Yogic spirituality arises out of Hindu beliefs as the philosophy of yoga (ex: overcoming reincarnation) stems from the Hindu metaphysics. Both share in the idea that through self-discipline and the practice of uniting one’s mind, body, and soul, the individual can overcome the cycle of reincarnation. Yogis, however, do not incorporate the Brahman or the absolute soul as a part of their practice. The two spiritual

⁹ Adelman, et al., *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart*, 209.

¹⁰“Hinduism - Origins, Facts & Beliefs,” *History.com*, October 6, 2017, <https://www.history.com/topics/religion/hinduism>.

practices are both united and influence each other. They also both share a common text as the foundation for their beliefs: the Vedas.

After the Harappan population dwindled, nomads from the north, known as the Vedic peoples, migrated south into the Indus River basin around 1500 BCE. They brought their meditation practices with them and chanted texts known as the Vedas. A group built upon adaptation, the Vedic peoples were able to quickly assimilate and adopt the culture and practices of the people living in the places to which they migrated. The Vedic peoples then spread their beliefs and practices throughout the Indus valley. Additionally, they spread the use of major technological advances made by the Harappan peoples, such as the use of the plow and other sophisticated farming techniques, throughout the region. Additionally, they domesticated animals for the purpose of both pastoral farming and military warfare. This allowed them to continue to migrate across the region. By 1000 BCE, they made it as far as the Himalayas and continued to migrate south for another 500 years.¹¹ This migration allowed them to spread their scriptures, the Vedas, Upanishads, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavad Gita, and yogic practices.

Textual Evidence from the Pre-Classical Period of Yogic History

Though the first evidence of yoga stems from the Harappan Stamp (see Figure 1), the Vedas are the earliest textual evidence scholars have of yoga and contain the earliest documentation of the term yoga.¹² The knowledge contained in the Vedas are verses of songs, meditations, and rituals that were the foundation of the Vedic peoples' religion. Though there is no definite date for the composition of the Vedas as it was orally spoken for many years, historians credit them to be written down by Vyasa Krishna Dwaipayana between 1500 and 1200

¹¹Adelman, et al., *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart*, 256-259.

¹²Koletsou, *How old is Yoga?*

BCE.¹³ Some historians cite the original production of the Vedas to date all the way back to 2500 BCE.¹⁴¹⁵

Veda is the Sanskrit word meaning knowledge. There are four main Vedas: The Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda. Rig is Sanskrit for “praise,” and the Rig Veda is the Veda on the knowledge of praise and known as the Book of Mantra. It contains the history and culture of the Vedic peoples and is primarily dedicated to the Vedic god, Soma.¹⁶¹⁷ Yajur is the Sanskrit work for “worship” or “sacrifice,” and the Yajur Veda is the book of sacrifice. It is a guidebook for the sages who were performing the sacrificial rituals commonly practiced in Vedic culture. The Sama Veda is the knowledge of chant. Sama is the Sanskrit word for “same” or “equal.” It is essentially an abridged version of the Rig Veda with a specific guide for chanting.¹⁸¹⁹ The last book is the Atharva Veda and it is the book of spells. While all four Vedas are important for contextualizing yoga, the final Veda is unique to the other three, as it holds different spiritual meditations from the first three. The first three demonstrate where yogis get their primary form of yoga meditation: mantras or chanting which are important for receiving the spiritual knowledge for which yogis strive. And though yogis do not practice spells like what the Atharva Veda contains, this Veda is still important because it comprises the first mention of the word asana and specific stories of people practicing yoga poses.²⁰

¹³Subhamoy Das, “What You Need to Know About the Vedas—India’s Most Sacred Texts,” Learn Religions, January 30, 2020, <https://www.learnreligions.com/what-are-vedas-1769572>.

¹⁴Wendy Doniger, “Veda,” Encyclopædia Britannica, October 19, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Veda>.

¹⁵ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

¹⁶ Das, What You Need to Know About the Vedas—India’s Most Sacred Texts

¹⁷ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

¹⁸ Das, What You Need to Know About the Vedas—India’s Most Sacred Texts

¹⁹ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

²⁰ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

The Upanishads were Vedic texts inspired by the original Vedic texts and are considered as “the conclusion of the Vedic Revelation.”²¹ Like the Vedas, there is no known author of the Upanishads and no clear date for them being written down, though it is suggested by many historians to be composed between 1500 and 1000 BCE. The Upanishads differ from the Vedas as they focus more on philosophical teachings rather than Vedic history and spiritual devotion. The four main concepts that are taught in the Upanishads are karma, reincarnation, liberation, and teachings on the brahman and atman, which all stem from Hindu concepts. The teachings in the Upanishads reflect what is important to the yogi, especially the concept of reincarnation and liberation. A yogi’s goal is to avoid reincarnation and they do this by liberating themselves from this world’s desires.

Though there are over 200 different Upanishad documents, only two specific Upanishads are important for contextualizing the history of yoga. The first, titled the Katha Upanishad defines the concept of yoga. The Katha Upanishad directly discusses the yoking or union of the senses. It states that through the union of the individual’s five senses, the yogi can bring themselves under control and achieve the highest state of mind.²² The second is the Shvetashvatara Upanishad. This Upanishad discusses breathing and how to control one’s breath. This is important for the practice of yoga because the yogi that can control their breath and their senses, can achieve freedom.²³²⁴

²¹ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

²²Barbara Stoler Miller and Patañjali, *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom: The Yoga Sutra Attributed to Patanjali; a Translation of the Text, with Commentary, Introduction, and Glossary of Keywords* (New York: Bantam Books, 1998), 91.

²³ Patanjali and Miller, *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom: The Yoga Sutra Attributed to Patanjali; a Translation of the Text, with Commentary, Introduction, and Glossary of Keywords*, 177.

²⁴ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

The Mahabharata is a major Indian epic tale written in Sanskrit. The story, like the Vedas was originally passed on exclusively through oral tradition. It is suggested that the events in the story took place in the 8th century BCE and were written down around 400 BCE. Authorship of this epic is credited to one of the characters in the story, Vyasa. In this story, there is a spiritual battle between good and evil. The epic tale itself is incredibly long, but for the purposes of understanding yogic history, the section that is most important in the Mahabharata is the Bhagavad Gita. This section contains the dialogue between Krishna, the teacher, and Arjuna, the student. The Bhagavad Gita is known to expound on the concept of yoga as it explains what the yogi is trying to connect (or unite) within themselves. It states that one is trying to unite their own individual consciousness and the consciousness of the universe. Our consciousness is a part of the universal supreme consciousness and yoga will connect one's individual energy with it.²⁵ Krishna teaches how the yoga of perfect actions, the yoga of perfect devotion, and the yoga of perfect knowledge will help Arjuna achieve this connection with the perfect, supreme universal consciousness.²⁶

Cultures and Religions that Influenced Yoga in the Classical Period

The home of yoga during 100 BCE to 500 CE was South Asia. Characterized by diverse cultures coming together around religion and common language, South Asia was home to generations of yogis. Though South Asia was united in several ways, it lacked political unity. Eventually, when the Vedic peoples migrated to South Asia, they brought with them their Sanskrit language and Varna system, which continued to unite the South Asian region. This system allowed for Brahmins, or Hindu priests, to rule at the top of a hierarchical social system.

²⁵ Das, What You Need to Know About the Vedas—India's Most Sacred Texts

²⁶ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

This system led to much political instability and brought about rebellions in the form of new religions. Buddhism and Jainism were both responses to the unjust Varna system that ruled India during the first century. Patanjali's Yoga Sutra was an additional rebellion against the traditional Hindu faith and hierarchy in India.²⁷

Buddhism has a strong influence on yoga and specifically the Yoga Sutras. Buddhism, simply put, is the practice of achieving enlightenment. The religion is attributed to a man named Siddhartha who lived during the 5th century BCE. Siddhartha wanted to find enlightenment for himself and after much searching found what is known as the "Middle Path." The "Middle Path" or "Middle Way" refers to living in between the two extremes of indulgence and depravity and achieving balance. Buddha taught the "dharma" which means the way to righteousness that would lead one to attain the balance and enlightenment that Buddha set out to find.²⁸

The Dharma teaches five moral principles, Four Noble Truths, and the Eightfold Path. The moral principles that all Buddhists are taught to live by prohibit killing living things, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, lying, and the use of drugs or alcohol. Buddha also taught the Four Noble Truths, which are suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering, and the true path that would free one from suffering. The general idea of the Four Noble Truths is what Buddha believed to be the reason as to why humans feel pain and how to overcome it. The Eightfold Path contains Buddha's teachings on specifically how to end the suffering that he taught in his Four Noble Truths. They are right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.²⁹

²⁷Adelman et al., *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart*, 410-414.

²⁸"Buddhism - Definition, Founder & Origins," *History.com*, October 12, 2017, <https://www.history.com/topics/religion/buddhism>.

²⁹ Buddhism – Founder, Definition, & Origins

Buddhists achieve this enlightenment by following the Buddha's Eightfold Path. They also believe in karma and reincarnation. Buddhism relates strongly to the philosophy of yoga and there are many similarities between the two practices. Patanjali's contributions to yogic philosophy are similar to the contributions Buddha had to Buddhism. Both men are not considered deities but spiritual forces that achieved their own spiritual enlightenment through their practices. The two also have comparable texts. Buddhists have the Eightfold Path and yoga has the Eight Limbed path. Both Patanjali's and the Buddha's teachings contain similar instructions on how to achieve spiritual superiority. They also both explain similar points on meditation, concentration, and self-discipline as well as positive mindsets and actions, which all contribute to the morals that both practices strive to achieve.

Jainism is another religion that strongly influenced yoga philosophy. The term Jainism stems from the Sanskrit word for "means to conquer." The essential practice of Jainism is to conquer the bodily senses to achieve enlightenment. Jains and Buddhists share many common characteristics as well as foundations. Mahavira, founder of Jainism, was a teacher similar to the Buddha and a model for what Jains attempt to become through their practice. The main practice of Jainism is asceticism or extreme self-discipline. Through denying oneself worldly desires and constructions, Jains believe that one can achieve enlightenment. Another strong factor in the Jain belief system is the notion of Karma. Similar to Buddhists, Jains believe that matter produces the cycle of birth and death. One must free themselves from this matter to prevent new Karma to enter into their lives. Jains also believe that only through liberating oneself by the ascetic practices and yoga, can one achieve enlightenment.³⁰

³⁰Ralph G Strohl, Paul Dundas, and Umakant Shah, "Jainism," Encyclopædia Britannica, August 26, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Jainism>.

The practices of Jainism are rooted in yoga. The Jain faith does not exist without the practice of yoga. Jainism and yoga are similar both in their philosophies and the practices that each endure. The term yoga is referenced three separate times in Jain tradition and each time with a separate meaning. The first is yoga in a sense of meditation that is required of all Jains. The second refers to yoga's aspect of self-discipline, which is the foundation of asceticism in Jainism. And the third time yoga is mentioned, it is referring to yoga in its Sanskrit translation, to yoke, which is the most important concept in yogic philosophy. Karma is another important theme written in the Yoga Sutras that is also prevalent in the Jain texts.³¹

Textual Evidence from the Classical Period of Yogic History: The Yoga Sutras

The Yoga Sutras have strong Hindu, Buddhist and Jain influence. They are estimated to be written around 200 BCE by Patanjali. The Sutras are divided into four chapters and conclude with the method to achieve the liberation all yogis seek. Patanjali writes first about what the essence of yoga is: settling the mind so the individual can achieve our basic state, and the causes of suffering.³² He then goes on to discuss Ashtanga Yoga.

Arguably, the most important part of the Sutras for yogis is the eight-limbed path named Ashtanga Yoga. The Eight-Limbed path is essentially a manual on how to achieve the perfect state of mind for yogis. The first two limbs are Yama and Niyama. These two limbs determine what our actions should be and reflect our moral character. Patanjali goes more in depth of the first two limbs. The Yama, which specifically contains Patanjali's teachings on moral discipline, lists five specific truths: non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, non-attachment, and non-greed. The second limb, Niyama, also contains five specific duties or actions that yogis must maintain:

³¹Johannes Bronkhorst et al., "Contextualizing the History of Yoga in Geoffrey Samuel's *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: A Review Symposium*," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 15, no. 3 (2011): 303–57, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11407-011-9107-6>, 323-33.

³² Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

purity, contentment, self-discipline, self-study, and surrendering to the higher power. The next three limbs are Asana, Pranayama, and Pratyahara. Asana, the third limb, refers to posture, Pranayama, the fourth limb, refers to our breathing, and Pratyahara, the fifth limb, refers to our senses. These limbs explain how to bring control over our bodies, breath, and senses, an essential part of the yoga practice. The sixth and seventh limbs are the Dharana and Dhyana. These two bring our minds under our control through concentration and meditation. The fourth through seventh limbs are the active part of yoga, where the yogi brings themselves under control, unifies the body, mind, and soul, and attempts to achieve the perfect state, which leads the yogi to the eighth limb. The eighth limb is Samadhi which is “Bliss or Enlightenment” and is the result of perfecting the first seven. Patanjali’s eight limbs reflect the philosophical traditions and teachings that are still used in yoga today. The lack of emphasis on the physical, postural aspect of yoga indicates that the asanas do not make yoga what it is but are used as a method to achieve one’s spiritual contentment.³³³⁴

Patanjali and the Culmination of Yogic Philosophy

Patanjali is one of the most important historical figures in yoga history. Patanjali is considered as the father of yoga just as Buddha is the “father” of Buddhism.³⁵ His work, the Yoga Sutras, defines the second period of yoga history: the classical period. Patanjali was an Indian sage who is believed to have lived between the dates around 200 BCE to 200 CE. He is also credited of authoring two other texts: the Mahabhashya and the Carakavarttika. Patanjali is considered a divine figure within the Hindu tradition. His achievements in the practice of yoga allowed Patanjali to overcome sickness and death.³⁶ Yogis consider him to be an ultimate

³³ Koletsou, How old is Yoga?

³⁴ Allard, Who Was Patanjali and What Are the Yoga Sutras

³⁵ Allard, Who Was Patanjali and What Are the Yoga Sutras

³⁶ Allard, Who Was Patanjali and What Are the Yoga Sutras

example of what they want to become through their own practice of yoga. Patanjali is thought to have lived in the city of Gonda. Not much else is known about Patanjali or his life. Though Patanjali's other works are important for the Hindu tradition, the Yoga Sutras are the most important for yogic history.³⁷

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali was able to pull together all of the traditions that made up the yogic practice. Starting from the asanic practice that began with the Harrapans, Patanjali made sure that their influences carried into his Eight-Limbed path. He also drew from the meditative chants of the Vedic peoples, the foundational beliefs of Hinduism and even pulled from the practices and beliefs of Buddhism and Jainism to finalize the Yoga Sutras. Using the Vedas as primary inspiration, Patanjali incorporated meditation and ritual into his sixth and seventh limb. He also used the Upanishads to make clear what the practice of yoking the mind means in one's yogic practice, which is referenced at the beginnings of the Yoga Sutras. The Bhagavad Gita especially has a strong influence on Patanjali's teachings as it pertains to the ultimate union between self and universe. In addition to his beliefs about the causes of sufferings, Patanjali directly references two Buddhist terms: dukkha and nirodha. This indicates how much of Patanjali's work was directly influenced by that of Buddhist philosophy and therefore how much of yoga is influenced by Buddhism.³⁸ Patanjali's Yoga Sutras also contain vows that are near identical to the vows that all Jains take. These vows are all rooted in non-harming or non-violence.³⁹ Jain tradition and Buddhist tradition share such core values with each other and Hinduism as well as yogic philosophy that the four cannot exist in history without each

³⁷"Patanjali," Yogapedia, August 2, 2018, <https://www.yogapedia.com/definition/5149/patanjali>.

³⁸ Patanjali and Miller, *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom: The Yoga Sutra Attributed to Patanjali; a Translation of the Text, with Commentary, Introduction, and Glossary of Keywords*, 585.

³⁹ Johannes Bronkhorst et al., Contextualizing the History of Yoga in Geoffrey Samuel's *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: A Review Symposium*, 323-33.

other. Patanjali specifically takes from all these traditions to make an all-encompassing book that holds all of the practices and knowledge of yoga.

Conclusion

Yogic philosophy comes from several different traditions. It is dated back to the Harappan civilization in 4300 BCE. Yogic history is derived from Hinduism, which originated from the Harappan and Vedic peoples' tradition. The Vedas, Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita all come from the Vedic peoples and are foundational texts for the practice of yoga. The practice of yoga that is first seen in the Harappan Seals and mentioned in Vedic texts also share in the beliefs of Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains such as reincarnation, Karma, and certain ritual practices to achieve enlightenment or spiritual significance within the universe. All of these traditions were pulled together by Patanjali in his most important writing, the Yoga Sutras. Though the modern practice of yoga maintains a focus on the posture, yoga history is rooted in a rich philosophy. Patanjali explains that yoga itself is not a religion, but a way of life that one uses to achieve balance within the universe through uniting one's senses, body, and mind to bring oneself under control.

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Jack the Ripper: British Gender, Class, and Crime in 1888

By Cameron Arnold

At 3:40 AM on August 31, 1888, a woman was found murdered and left on the street in Whitechapel, London. Her throat was slashed, and she was stabbed multiple times in the abdomen. Her body was mutilated and disfigured. Following her death, another four women were found under similar circumstances. Due to the vicious manner of these women's deaths, the police confirmed that they were all done by the same killer. History dubbed him Jack the Ripper.

The true identity of Jack the Ripper was never discovered. Examining London society in 1888 through the lens of the Jack the Ripper case will reveal how class, gender, investigative methods, and press all contributed to the vulnerability of the women targeted by the killer. The victims were all lower-class women. The lack of forensics rendered the police ineffective and the fetishism of the crimes from the press confused the investigation. These women had little to no protection from the hardships of the East End and there was little the police could do to help.

Relevant British History

In order to understand these murders, it is important to know what was happening in British history at this time. The Victorian era is marked by the paradigm shift from an agricultural to manufacturing way of life, largely owed to the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution prompted a change in economics in Victorian England. Though the steam engine was invented over a hundred years before, it only became common in factories during the mid-1800s. This allowed for new jobs and major urban growth, London being no exception. Despite its already large population, people from all over England came to live in London for job opportunities in factories, the docks, and other trades. These jobs, however, did not always present new economic prosperity for the individual workers, and conditions in "sweated"

industries were very bad. Workers did demand change. For example, in June of 1888, Annie Besant organized the London matchgirls strike to fight back against the terrible conditions presented in the match making factory.¹ London, however, was not like all other industrial cities. London had a rich history and was filled with many different walks of life, ranging from rich nobles to poor street rats. London was a special hub for politics and commerce as well as industry. London functioned as a melting pot of both class and culture during this time.²

Context: Whitechapel

The industrial boom caused the already densely populated slums to radically expand. London differentiated itself into different districts including Whitechapel, or East End, the location of the Jack the Ripper murders. Though many parts of London had their slums, Whitechapel had especially appalling conditions. This district was mostly inhabited by the lowest class. Finding work was hard, if not impossible, without resorting to extreme measures. Work that was available was often done in abusive conditions, worse than the abuse people suffered from factories. The streets were crowded, dirty, and not well lit. Many people resorted to living in lodging houses that had rooms that could be rented for nights or weeks at a time. These rooms were far uncomfortable, unsanitary, and dangerous. Whitechapel's streets were also an unorganized maze of dodgy alleys, full of hidden alcoves and places to hide. Rife with prostitution and bars, Whitechapel was a breeding ground for crime. Public drunkenness was common. Petty crimes such as theft and vandalism were part of daily life. Gangs dominated the

¹Richard Jones, "Jack the Ripper 1888," Jack the Ripper - History, Victims, Letters, Suspects., accessed February 26, 2023, <https://www.jack-the-ripper.org/>.

²Kristen Lopez, "Victorian England: Society, Social Classes and Culture in the 1800s," Study.com, May 26, 2022, study.com/learn/lesson/victorian-england-society-social-classes-culture-1800s.html.

streets and controlled major prostitute rings. The police largely ignored their crimes. That is, until the murders of Jack the Ripper.³

Class and Women's Roles

In addition to the major population boom in the city of London due to the industrial revolution, there was also a cultural shift in social classes. Prior to the Victorian Era there was essentially only an upper and lower class. The upper classes contained nobility and wealthy landowners while the lower class contained the servants and peasants.⁴ With the Industrial Revolution came the rise a new middle class. The upper class transformed themselves from not only the nobility and ruling class, but also business owners that managed the new industries that arose during this time. The middle class became the group of professionals that could afford homes and an education, but still did not make as much as the upper class. The working class was a very large group ranging from skilled workers to the very poor. In the case of the latter, entire families, including children, often shared a single room. Work was hard to find, and women often resorted to prostitution so they could afford a place to stay and some food to eat.⁵

The rise of class issues also came with the rise of gender issues. Similar to class, prior to the Victorian Era, role of gender in society was completely different. Women were a part of their family's businesses, helping with basic duties like bookkeeping in addition to their domestic duties.⁶ But with the Victorian Era, there emerged a different look at the woman's role in work. There are three parts to this. The first is the upper and middle class "separate sphere," the second

³ Jones, "Jack the Ripper 1888"

⁴ Lopez, Victorian England: Society, Social Classes and Culture in the 1800s

⁵ "Social Life in Victorian England," British Literature Wiki, accessed March 27, 2023, <https://sites.udel.edu/britlitwiki/social-life-in-victorian-england/>.

⁶ Kathryn Hughes, "Gender Roles in the 19th Century," British Library, May 15, 2014, <http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/gender-roles-in-the-19th-century>.

is the rise of women contributing to the family income through factory work, and the third is the rise of prostitution throughout the lowest class.

Despite, women's assistance with businesses prior, the Victorian era brought about the notion that men and women had "natural" characteristics that contributed to their roles. Men were seen as providers, capable of work and labor. Women were seen as physically weak. Their duty was to maintain the household so it could be comfortable for the men. They were also in charge of preparing the next generation for this way of life. Women were raised to find a husband and take care of domestic duties while men were raised to perform the labor of work to provide for their house. The split of specific gender roles became known as the "separate sphere." This aspect of life was more common in upper- and middle-class society because lower class women could not afford not to work.⁷

The rise of new factory jobs during the Industrial Revolution allowed more women to find work. Some women found more financial freedom and some independence and were able to help their overall family income. Prejudices, however, were still held that they were the weaker sex and most of the upper-class frowned upon their choice to work rather than take care of their families. Over time, skilled factory work was dominated by men, and their wives sought to emulate the "separate spheres" of the upper and middle classes. The poorest women, however, had to work for the sake of their family's survival. They would sometimes pay other women to take care of their children while they were gone, or they would send their children to work as well.⁸

⁷ Hughes, "Gender Roles in the 19th Century."

⁸ "Social Life in Victorian England."

There are two main aspects as to why prostitution became a significant issue in terms of gender roles for women. The first is due to the societal norms of marriage. As mentioned before, it was part of a woman's duty to find a husband. Women were required to remain chaste until marriage. However, this was a double standard. While women were expected to remain chaste, it was normal for men to use prostitutes both before and during their marriage.⁹ Thus, the demand for prostitutes was higher than ever before. The second reason why prostitution became a big issue during this time was due to the economic disparity that accompanied the lower class. The disadvantage of lower-class women often meant they had to resort to prostitution in order to survive since other options were not available to them. They had very few options to earn their keep. Prostitution was a last resort for many of these women.

Both the demand for prostitutes and the necessity of work caused a massive increase in the number of prostitutes working in London. Women were not *just* prostitutes; rather they were forced to resort prostitution. The Victorians maintained the opinion that prostitutes were "fallen women" and went against the very values that they upheld in their society. Despite the societal shame that women received for being prostitutes, there was a demand for it in both the upper- and lower-class spheres.¹⁰

Understanding the context of the time period is necessary for understanding how Jack the Ripper's murders were able to occur and why his victims were so vulnerable to his attacks. The Industrial Revolution brought major changes to the lives of the men and women living in London. Not only did cities expand, but classes differentiated from each other in new ways and gender roles also changed. Jack the Ripper targeted poor women living in Whitechapel who were

⁹ Hughes, "Gender Roles in the 19th Century."

¹⁰Diane Aiken, "Victorian Prostitution," British Literature Wiki, accessed March 27, 2023, sites.udel.edu/britlitwiki/victorian-prostitution.

all suspected of prostitution, at some point lived in lodging houses, and struggled with alcoholism. This all had a major effect on the motivation behind the police and press investigation. These women were seen as unimportant, dregs of society. They were the “fallen” women in Victorian England. Due to the brutality of the murders, people throughout all of London were afraid. The police perhaps cared about solving this case more due to the public’s panic rather than a desire to bring justice for these women.

Crimes

The Victims

For the purposes of this paper, it is important to note that there is no exact certainty of whom Jack the Ripper killed. As mentioned before, death was common in Whitechapel, and it was (and remains) difficult for investigators to differentiate between the murders done by the Jack the Ripper and the deaths caused by other individuals. Although there are eleven women in the Whitechapel murder file, this essay will focus on the five canonical victims as reported by one of the main police investigators, Melville McNaughton. The five women, listed in order of their deaths, are Mary Ann Nichols, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, Catherine Eddowes, and Mary Jane Kelly.¹¹

Mary Ann Nichols was born on August 26, 1845, and married William Nichols on January 16th, 1864. Though she had five children with her husband, the marriage turned bitter, and the two separated in 1880. From there, Mary Ann fell into severe poverty and turned to alcohol to cope. She made money by working in a number of different workhouses and primarily lived in lodging houses, when she could afford them. She resorted to prostitution, much like

¹¹ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

many women in Whitechapel, in order to make up enough money for rent. Nichols had been staying in what was known as the White House common lodging until her last night.¹²

Eliza Anne Smith was born in 1841 and became Annie Chapman when she married John Chapman in 1869. The couple had three children together but split due to Annie's alcoholism in 1884.¹³ Living in the East End, Annie got her money partly from an allowance from her ex-husband, partly from selling her crochet work, and in extreme cases, through prostitution. Annie had been staying in a lodging house called Crossingham's right before her death.¹⁴

Elizabeth Stride was a Swedish immigrant born in 1843. She moved to London in 1866. She married in 1869 and separated in 1877 and had no children with her husband. Elizabeth had a history of drinking and numerous arrests whilst living in the East End. She lived with a man named Michael Kidney beginning in 1885. The couple lived in a lodging house together at the time of her death.¹⁵

Catherine Eddowes was born in 1842. In 1855, she met Thomas Conway, tattooed his initials on her arm, and eventually gave birth to three children. The couple never legally married and separated in 1880. She, like many other of the Ripper's victims, was a heavy drinker and was suspected of prostitution to afford her living. She lived with a man named John Kelly in a lodging house until the time of her death.¹⁶

Not much is known about Mary Jane Kelly's early life. She had been living with her lover, Joseph Barnett, since April of 1887. He told the police what Mary told him about her life, though none of it has been confirmed. She was supposedly born in Ireland and moved to London

¹² John J. Eddleston, *Jack the Ripper: An Encyclopedia* (ABC-CLIO Interactive, 2001). 18.

¹³ Eddleston, *Jack the Ripper: An Encyclopedia*, 29.

¹⁴ Jones, "Jack the Ripper 1888."

¹⁵ Eddleston, *Jack the Ripper: An Encyclopedia*, 40-41.

¹⁶ Eddleston, *Jack the Ripper: An Encyclopedia*, 52-53.

in 1884 where she began working at a brothel. She had gone to France with one of her clients but moved back to London and lived in the East End after a few years. She too suffered from alcohol abuse and most likely continued her work as a prostitute to earn a living. Around the time of her death, Barnette had moved out of the lodgings he and Mary were sharing.¹⁷

The Murders

On the night of August 30, 1888, Mary Nichols was kicked out of her Lodging House at Wilmott due to her being unable to pay the fourpence rent. She knew the only way for her to earn her keep was to resort to prostitution. Nichols told the lodging rent collector, "I'll soon get my doss money, see what a jolly bonnet I have now." At 2:30 AM, August 31, Nichols met with Emily Holland, a friend, and boasted drunkenly of her success of earning her keep three times and spending it on beer. She still needed to make money to pay for rent and left to find a new client. Emily Holland was the last to speak with Nichols before she died. She was found no later than fifteen minutes later by Charles Cross; her throat was slashed all way to her spine and her body was disemboweled.¹⁸

Early in the morning of September 8, 1888, Annie Chapman was turned out of her lodgings at Crossingham's lodging house as she could not afford that night's rent. Though she was inebriated, she was determined to earn enough money to stay in her lodgings. She left the lodging house shortly before 2 AM. Elizabeth Long witnessed Annie talking to a man at 5:30 AM, unsuspecting of the interaction. Only thirty minutes later, Annie's body found by John Davis, mutilated and disfigured.¹⁹

¹⁷ Eddleston, *Jack the Ripper: An Encyclopedia*, 63-64.

¹⁸ Jones, "Jack the Ripper 1888."

¹⁹ Jones, "Jack the Ripper 1888."

The first time the press was involved in the murders was on September 5 when *The Star* accused a man nicknamed the “Leather Apron” of the first two murders. On September 10, the police arrested “Leather Apron,” John Pizer. He was released shortly after providing an alibi for the two murders. A group of men, headed by George Lusk, formed the Mile End Vigilance Committee to help the police catch the murderer that same day.²⁰

A letter addressed to “The Boss” at the Central News Agency was written and signed “Jack the Ripper.” The agency ignored this letter for a couple days and only sent it to the police on the September 29. The police ignored the letter as well, believing it to be fake. They only took the letter seriously after receiving notice for two more murders the next day. This letter would lead to the serial killer’s infamous title.²¹

On September 30, the murderer would take two victims. Beginning with Elizabeth Stride, who left her lodging house for a night out on the town early Saturday night of September 29. At 12:45 AM the next morning, Israel Schwartz witnessed Elizabeth fighting with a man and thought it was a domestic squabble. At 1 AM, her body was found by Louis Diemshutz, with blood pooling around her head. His approach to the murder scene most likely scared the killer away. Most historians believe that the reason there were two murders this night was due to Jack the Ripper’s inability to carry out his full plan with Elizabeth Stride.²²

Catherine Eddowes left her lodgings that same evening to earn money to pay for rent. Concerned for her safety, her husband cautioned her about the murderer that was stalking the streets. She responded, “Don’t you fear for me. I’ll take care of myself, and I shan’t fall into his hands.” Later she was arrested for her drunkenness. She was released shortly after midnight and

²⁰ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

²¹ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

²² Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

three men saw her around 1:30 in the morning. Roughly fifteen minutes later, Police Constable Alfred Watkins found her dead. Following the same pattern as before, the killer slashed her throat and mutilated her body. He also slashed her face and took “souvenirs” from her corpse, including her kidney and part of her apron, though it was found later that night.²³

The next day, the police released the letter from Jack the Ripper to “The Boss” into the newspapers. This sparked the major coverage surrounding the murders. Another letter reached the Central News Agency on October 6 supposedly from Jack the Ripper. Unfortunately for the police, by releasing the original letter to the public, a series of fake letters were written purely for publicity. On October 16, George Lusk received a letter “from Hell” and a kidney that was suspected to be from the body of Catherine Eddowes. However, many doctors and police believed this to be a prank from a medical student and unrelated to the murders at hand.²⁴

The last of the crimes occurred over a month later. Early in the morning on November 9, a faint cry was heard from the room of Mary Kelly. It was not until 10 AM later that day that a man named Thomas Bowyer went to Mary’s room to collect rent and found her dead. She was described to be skinned down to the bone. Mary was the only one to be killed in her home, and her murder scene was the only one to be photographed. She is considered the last official victim of Jack the Ripper.²⁵

Investigation

Evidence and Forensics

The police arrested multiple people, but no one was officially found guilty. The murders stopped as suddenly as they started and continue to remain a mystery today. The physical

²³ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

²⁴ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

²⁵ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

evidence was minimal. Besides the bodies of the victims, the police did not have any evidence of who committed the crimes. The letters that were supposedly sent by the killer were proven to be gimmicks and did not add to the investigation. The only evidence to build off of came from the night of the double homicide. The first piece of evidence was part of Catherine Eddowes's missing apron, covered in blood. Finding this piece of evidence not only indicated to where the murderer fled but also how much blood would have been on the murderer as he did so. When discovering the apron, the officer also discovered the second piece of evidence. On the wall above the apron, a message was written in chalk. It read, "The Jewes are the men that will not be blamed for nothing." Some have said that this message is coincidental, but if this message were intentional, it would indicate very specific information about the killer: his antisemitism was connected to his desire to kill. Whatever this evidence would be able to provide the police, it was ordered to be quickly destroyed by the police out of fear of anti-Semitic unrest in the Whitechapel district.

Photography was also not widely used in investigations at this time. The only crime-scene photo taken of the Jack the Ripper case was of the last victim, Mary Jane Kelly. The bodies of the other victims were photographed after they were taken to the mortuary. The investigators specifically took pictures of the victim's eyes. Inspector Walter Dew requested these photographs because he believed that images of the killer would be left behind on the victim's retinas. He commented that, "the result was negative" and was unable to retrieve any conclusive evidence from this request. The last piece of evidence from this case was the shawl of Catherine Eddowes, which contained both fragments of the killer's and Eddowes's blood. While in today's world this would have been incredibly valuable, the Victorian Era's technology was simply not advanced enough for this to be of use. Thus, the police did not have a lot of evidence

to work with and what little evidence they did have, was destroyed, mishandled, or generally useless.²⁶

Police

Many historians question how the police even expected to catch the killer with their lack of forensics and evidence. Their main method was simply police presence. They used both their local knowledge of Whitechapel and witness statements to form their suspect pool. There were many officers involved with this case, with backgrounds ranging from the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police. The lead detective was Inspector Frederick George Abberline. He was put on the case after the death of Mary Nichols in September of 1888 due to his knowledge of the criminal underworld of the East End. Abberline, as well as many other officers, initially suspected the murders to be associated with the gangs that dominated the Whitechapel district. The officers made numerous arrests, though none of them were viable.

The police had no choice but to increase their presence in Whitechapel in hopes of catching the killer red-handed. However, the Metropolitan Police in 1888 were severely undermanned. The Mile End Vigilance Committee was one way the police force was supplemented. In addition to patrolling the streets with the officers, the Committee helped raise money for rewards and attempted to glean information from witnesses for the police. Because of the brutality of the murders, the Metropolitan Police force was additionally supplemented by the City of London Police. Their combined efforts, however, were not effective in stopping the killings or in discovering the identity of the murderer.²⁷

The Press

²⁶ Jones, "Jack the Ripper 1888."

²⁷ Jones, "Jack the Ripper 1888."

News coverage of the Jack the Ripper murders became increasingly more prevalent as the case continued. By the 1860s, newspapers were cheap, popular, and free of censorship. All classes enjoyed reading the news of the day, and politicians that were once vehemently against newspapers, now used them to their advantage. Newspapers were popular, but in order to be successful, publications had to be sensational. The Jack the Ripper case gave publications that sensation.²⁸

It was not uncommon for the newspapers to report on the deaths that occurred in Whitechapel. The victims were all lower-class prostitutes, so their lives were not significant to the average reader. When newspapers first reported on the death of Mary Nichols, not many people were interested. What shocked them was the brutality of the deaths of these women. The papers publicized the deaths of these women to sell copy. The sensation of this news increased when the police decided to publish the letter that Jack the Ripper supposedly sent. After this publication, newspapers published many letters “from” Jack the Ripper in order to spark readers’ interests. Not only did this perpetuate fear for the citizens of London, but it also led many police down false trails. The dangers of publicizing murders and evidence became apparent with Jack the Ripper. It likely assisted the killer get away with his terrible crimes.

Results

Due to the lack of forensics and witnesses, the police did not have much to go on in terms of a suspect list. Early on, it was assumed that the deaths were due to the violent gangs that ran prostitution rings. Police moved on from the theory surrounding gangs due to the unlikelihood of continuous murders without anyone providing more evidence. The police had no idea if the

²⁸ Ed King, “British Newspapers 1860-1900,” Gale, 2007, <https://www.gale.com/intl/essays/ed-king-british-newspapers-1860-1900>.

murderer was someone with medical knowledge, a butcher, a local to the area, or someone traveling far to commit the crimes.²⁹

John Pizer, nicknamed the “Leather Apron,” was the first to be arrested early on in the case. He was a local butcher in Whitechapel and was accused of having strong anti-Semitic beliefs. He was the perfect suspect for the police, but his alibi exonerated him. The “Leather Apron” was only the first in a long list of suspects who were accused of committing the murders. He was acquitted of all crimes and the police looked on for their next suspect.

One important suspect was a man named Montague John Drutt. He was a well-educated man who worked in the East End as both a teacher and a bartender. Inspector Macnaghten suspected him as the killer due to his proximity to the killings, Macnaghten’s belief he was insane, and the fact that Drutt’s family suspected him of the killings. Drutt committed suicide shortly after the murders stopped. Macnaghten saw this as an admission of guilt. Historians have since discredited this theory due to the incorrect information Macnaghten used to base his accusations.

Inspector Abberline accused a man named George Chapman, who was eventually arrested and convicted of murder in 1903 that was so similar to the murders done by Jack the Ripper that the police looked into his involvement with the case. Chapman had surgical knowledge and he arrived in England around the same time as the murders began. Despite the strong evidence against him, Chapman never admitted to the Jack the Ripper murders and was never found guilty for the deaths of the five canonical victims.³⁰

²⁹ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

³⁰ Jones, “Jack the Ripper 1888.”

Historian, Patricia Cornwell, names Walter Sickert as the killer. She applied modern forensic science to the last of the Ripper case evidence and discovered some interesting facts. Sickert was a painter who was inspired by the murders. His paintings have been famous for depicting parts of the murders that, Cornwell argues, of which only the killer would have knowledge. Additionally, Cornwell found DNA evidence in the letters written from Jack the Ripper that matches that of Walter Sickert. Though this evidence is not perfect, Walter Sickert is a strong contender for the true identity of Jack the Ripper. What largely discredits this theory is the idea that many investigators believe the author of the letters was not the killer. Sickert might have written the letters, but that does not mean he was officially the killer.³¹

Other historians discovered different DNA evidence that convicts another man. David Miller and Jari Louhelainen tested the shawl found on Catherine Eddowes after the attack, which was soaked in both Eddowes and the killer's blood. The DNA found is linked to another suspect, Aaron Kosminski, a Polish tailor who immigrated to London in the early 1880s. Though he was suspected by the police, he was sent away to an insane asylum shortly after the death of Mary Jane Kelly and never arrested. With this new DNA evidence, it is probable that Kosminski was the killer of Catherine Eddowes and is considered by many to be Jack the Ripper.³²

Despite the numerous suspects that both the police at the time and modern historians have found, the true identity of the killer will most likely never be discovered or confirmed. There is simply too much about this case left unknown. There is no way to confirm that the deaths of these women were all committed by the same man or even for the same reasons. Who the killer was is not important to the story of these women. The fact that they shared the same social

³¹ Patricia Cornwell, *Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper, Case Closed* (New York: Berkley Books, 2002).

³²Jari Louhelainen and David Miller, "Forensic Investigation of a Shawl Linked to the 'Jack the Ripper' Murders," *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 65, no. 1 (2019): 295–303, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1556-4029.14038>.

position is important to understanding this case. They were all members of the lower-class and were forced to resort to prostitution in order to survive. The lack of evidence and forensic procedures from the police in addition to the mass panic caused by the press allowed the killer to go unpunished by law. By sensationalizing the crimes, the press ignored and degraded the women who died. The identity of Jack the Ripper may never be discovered, but the identities of his victims should be remembered. The Jack the Ripper case goes beyond finding a serial killer, it demonstrates the marginalization and vulnerability of lower-class women.

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The History of Rock and Roll Music

By: Maya Martin

Rock and roll music's emergence in the 1950s completely uprooted and changed the world's concept of music. Although it is difficult to trace the exact roots of rock music, "In 1951, in Cleveland, disc jockey Alan Freed coined the term 'rock and roll' as he played black rhythm-and-blues hits."¹ Beginning with breaking racial barriers, the evolution of rock and roll continued to shatter ideas of right vs wrong and black and white. Rock music merged multiple genres of music, which led to a rise in popular black artists. Rock challenged gender norms and typical fashion for males and females. Famous artists, like Elvis Presley, contributed to the increase of sexuality within music. Women finally were able to take the stage and be involved in rock and roll. Because of the uprising and culture shock that was rock music, sharper divisions between the young and old emerged, which would go on to affect the world of politics. Rock and roll music was a cultural revolution that contributed to breaking barriers and challenging societal norms through the pushing the boundaries of and fusing different cultures and social concepts.

Initially, rock and roll music combined different genres of music to create the mix of culture and sound. Birnbaum, in *Before Elvis: The Prehistory of Rock 'n' Roll*, explains the integration of different music genres into rock and roll. Birnbaum states, "For the most part, the blues found its way into rock music through jazz, which has incorporated blues since jazz began... The evolutionary paths of jazz, blues, country, pop, and gospel music were closely intertwined."² This blend of music and varied instruments like guitar and drums made for large-scale popularity, especially among teens and young adults. By mixing country music, which was

¹ John Orman, *The Politics of Rock Music*, (Illinois: Nelson-Hall Inc. Publishers, 1984), 3.

² Larry Birnbaum, *Before Elvis: The Prehistory of Rock "n" Roll* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2013), viii.

largely popular in the South, with jazz, rhythm and blues, and pop, popular music in the northern parts of the US, rock united music genres and listeners throughout the country. An example of genre unity can be seen in Chuck Berry's Johnny B. Goode, as shown with his blend of country with gospel. Berry sings, "...Where lived a country boy named Johnny B. Goode, who never ever learned to read or write so well, but he could play a guitar just like a-ringin' a bell, go go, go Johnny go go..."³ Within the lyrics Berry talks about a "country boy" while at the same time talking about him playing a guitar like "ringin' a bell" which is not typical for country music. Within the instrumental part of the song as well, the upbeat piano and guitar mimic pop as well as rhythm and blues. This blending of different sounds, instruments, and ultimately cultures, kicked off the rock and roll era and the revolution it would become.

Moreover, the blending of music genres led to the breaking of racial barriers for much of the country; covertly however, it also negatively impacted many Black artists. Genres like jazz, rhythm and blues, and gospel, which came from Black culture, were all being combined into the melting pot that was rock and roll. Therefore, many Black artists were involved in the rock movement and created their own music as well. Motown, which was, "The same raw materials of gospel and rhythm and blues- R&B's core rhythm section, gospel's vocal dexterity, and the beat-laden music of both,"⁴ became an outlet for Black artists to create some of the most popular hits of rock and roll. The idea to create songs from music derived from Black culture while at the same time appealing to a white audience led to the creation of Motown. "That golden era between 1964 and 1971, Motown's version of bouncy black romance took on all comers and beat them on the charts. They became America's teenage soundtrack and everybody's dance track."⁵

³ Chuck Berry, "Johnny B. Goode," November 30, 2014.

⁴ Paul Friedlander, *Rock And Roll: A Social History*, 2nd ed, (Boulder, Colorado, United States of America: Westview Press, 2006), 170.

⁵ Friedlander, *Rock And Roll*, 184.

With a blending of music, a surge of music listeners, and an integration of cultures, Black artists were finally being recognized on a large scale in America.

Although Black artists involved with Motown were gaining recognition and popularity, many Black singers and musicians were still being overlooked by white artists. During the early stages of Rock and roll, "The story of white artists achieving fame after covering a song by a black rhythm and blues artists is a common one."⁶ Although more Black artists were signed to record labels and joined the music business, racism and inequality still found a way to seep into the music world. "Big Mama" Thornton, a singer prominent in the early 1950s, is a prime example of a Black artist who dealt with the frustrations of her song being overshadowed by a White artist. "She recorded a song called 'Hound Dog'... After 1956 though, Thornton's name would not be the one primarily associated with 'Hound Dog.' That year Elvis Presley recorded a cover version that became a smash hit."⁷ Even though rock and roll is praised for being a unifying form of music and integrationist, there was inequality in the business that is still not fully recognized by most of the country, even today.

In addition to breaking racial barriers, rock and roll successfully began a movement defying gender norms and societal standards. Artists like Little Richard and Big Mama Thornton created a path and openness to creating one's own style and comfortability. In the article "Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard, and the Queer Roots of Rock 'n' Roll," Tyina Steptoe states, "Like Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard visually and sonically blurred the line between masculine and feminine. Both artists' sartorial choices and music reflect a commitment to gender

⁶ Tyina Steptoe, "Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard, and the Queer Roots of Rock 'n' Roll," *American Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (February 28, 2018), 55.

⁷ Steptoe, "Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard, and the Queer Roots of Rock 'n' Roll," 55.

nonconformity and a rejection of heteronormativity.”⁸ Little Richard’s feminine outfits and Big Mama Thornton’s more masculine fashion not only embraced a personal sense of fashion but also paved the way for queer artists to become more comfortable in expressing themselves publicly. Big Mama Thornton wore suits and ties while performing and in everyday life, which was uncommon at the time. Everything from race, fashion, gender, and sexuality was being uprooted and leading youths to look at life in a way that had not before. Rock and roll fashion and the way people expressed their sexuality through their style was even recognized directly in lyrics. In the Barbarians’ hit song, “Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl,” the lyrics state, “With your long blond hair you look like a girl Yeah, you look like a girl You may be a boy, hey, you look like a girl.”⁹ The lyrics show that even if someone has “long blond hair,” it does not mean anymore that they are a female because all fashion and typical wear for genders are being challenged.

Rock and roll’s pushing of boundaries continued with many sexual notions within lyrics, fashion, and dancing. The controversy of the music amongst older generations during the time continued to grow, especially with sex-inspired music and popular artists such as Elvis Presley. Presley was known for pushing the envelope with his lyrics, but it was his dance moves on the stage that proved him to be very controversial. "Elvis in his early incarnations (especially in the 1950s) has been described by cultural theorists as the epitome of masculinity and virility, and of ‘dangerous’ sexuality, through his sexual gestures and energy, his youthful rebellion, and the crossing of various racial/musical, even class boundaries.”¹⁰ During a period when publicly displayed sexuality was not accepted, Presley and other rising artists started a culture shock.

⁸ Steptoe, “Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard, and the Queer Roots of Rock ‘n’ Roll,” 55-56.

⁹ Genius, “The Barbarians – Are You a Boy or Are You a Girl,” n.d.

¹⁰ Sharon Cowan, “The Elvis We Deserve: The Social Regulation of Sex/ Gender and Sexuality Through Cultural Representations of “The King” (Law, Culture, and the Humanities, 2010), 226.

Artists were dressed in scandalous outfits, sung about sex, and gyrated on stage, which caused conflicting views between teens and parents.

For example, Elvis Presley's appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show featured the singer performing the hit song, "Hound Dog,"¹¹ a cover of Big Mama Thornton's song. During the performance, Elvis is featured gyrating and provocatively dancing across the stage as young girls scream and cheer. "His pelvis gyrations set off reactions throughout the country. He appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show and shocked many parents, but somehow most of the kids got the message."¹² Although many teens loved Presley, he continued to anger parents and cause greater controversy for the rock and roll industry.

This controversy would become so prominent throughout society that it would soon become not only a cultural divide but also a political problem. Rock music was quickly associated with misbehaving teens and bad behavior. "In 1955, older people and some political elites started overreacting to rock music. A congressional subcommittee held hearings on the perceived relationship between juvenile delinquency and rock'n'roll."¹³ Rock and roll cemented itself as one of the most groundbreaking forms of music by being brought into and debated about within the political world. Rock musicians and listeners alike were furious with the desired censorship of their genre, which quickly became noticeable in the lyrics of many songs. In 1964, rock artist, Bob Dylan, released "The Times They Are A-Changin'" in hopes to bring light to older generations that they need to move with the time and accept where America is going. In each verse, Dylan addresses a different group of people including parents, lawmakers, and media

¹¹ Elvis Presley, "Elvis Presley "Hound Dog" (October 28, 1956) on The Ed Sullivan Show," YouTube, (September 9, 2020).

¹² John Orman, *The Politics of Rock Music*, 4.

¹³ John Orman, *The Politics of Rock Music*, 3.

writers. One verse states, “Come senators, congressmen please heed the call. Don’t stand in the doorway. Don’t block up the hall. For he that gets hurt will be he who has stalled. There’s a battle outside and it is ragin’. It’ll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls.”¹⁴ Dylan explains how living in the past and not changing with the times will only hurt the future more and leave little room for progress. Although teens and adults found it difficult to understand each other's feelings, it was important they find a middle ground, for the sake of national unity.

For some parents and adults, rock and roll was a “rebellion” and a “revolt” against religion. Many feared that rock music centered too much around the devil and evil. The 1972 version of *Rock* magazine, an article titled “Jesus vs the Bad Guy,” analyzes the use of the devil and Jesus within rock music to see who appears more. Even in a magazine supporting Rock and Roll, the article admits, “Recapitulating our somewhat limited look at the vinyl offerings, it would seem that the Lord is having heaping praise bestowed upon him, but the devil is ahead on points. As usual.” Even though the devil did have more appearances in rock music, the religious themes about Jesus and God were present in a lot of the music, contrary to the belief of many adults at the time. However, it was well known and even enjoyed by many teenagers that rock and roll music included songs and tropes about the devil or evil.

For teenagers, rock and roll was an outlet in which they could express their emotions and connect with the struggles and ideas presented in the music. Bruce Springsteen’s “Born to Run,” released in 1975, was the perfect embodiment of the American worker’s struggle. Artists like Springsteen brought together groups of people with common struggles and formed a community of listeners. In “Born to Run,” Springsteen sings, “Oh, baby this town rips the bones from your

¹⁴ Bob Dylan, “Bob Dylan - The Times They Are A-Changin’ (Official Audio),” YouTube, (March 11, 2019).

back. It's a death trap. It's a suicide rap. We gotta get out while we're young, 'Cause tramps like us, baby, we were born to run.”¹⁵ The song, an anthem for the hard-working young people of America, broke the charts and gave teens the feeling of freedom. The song broke barriers by making listeners feel “we were born to run” instead of being born to work and struggle to make ends meet. After working hard and living under a great deal of stress, Springsteen was able to give listeners an outlet to feel a sense of freedom and adventure.

With this sense of freedom coming from rock and roll, women began to utilize rock for their own sense of artistic freedom, and overtime female artists emerged and made a large impact. Before rock and roll, it was not common for women to be as popular as male artists or have well-known solo careers. “Given that the music industry is already highly competitive, the additional burden of sexism has served to further undercut women working in the industry on every level.”¹⁶ Women in the industry had to face sexism in a variety of ways through unequal pay, unequal opportunities, and a lack of general respect. Regardless of this, however, female artists were able to make names for themselves through their own hard work and dedication. For example, Aretha Franklin, a Black female singer prominent in the 50s, worked hard to publicize her name and gain respect from both men and women in her field. Her hit version of the song “Respect” flipped the original meaning of the sexist song into female empowerment and became a staple piece during the feminist and civil rights movements. Franklin sings, “What you need, do you know I got it? All I'm askin' is for a little respect when you come home.”¹⁷ The song empowered women to feel they should be treated as equals towards their husbands in their own homes and throughout their daily lives. In a time when women did not have much respect in the

¹⁵ Bruce Springsteen, “Bruce Springsteen - Born to Run (Official Video),” YouTube, (October 3, 2009).

¹⁶ Gaar, Gillian, and Ono. *She's a Rebel: The History of Women in Rock & Roll*, (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press, 1992), 442.

¹⁷ Genius, “Aretha Frankin- Respect Lyrics,” n.d.

music world or in general, Aretha Franklin and other female artists were able to show what women were capable of while strengthening others.

During the rock and roll movement, although much of the music was taking American roots, what was known as the “British Invasion” during the mid-1960s became a new era of music and pop culture. “The British Invasion started with the American release of I Want To Hold Your Hand... For the rest of the decade British bands and artists stormed the American charts and airwaves with rebellious reinterpretations of American rock ‘n’ roll.”¹⁸ The Beatles became one of the most popular and well-loved bands during the rock and roll era and came out with hit after hit in America. Not only did they produce musical hits, but they spread an influence throughout both Britain and America which helped popularize many other bands. “The Beatles and the British bands inspired many an American youth resulting in more home-grown groups, rather than solo singers, beginning to emerge on the American music scene.”¹⁹ With the influence of the Beatles, bands with multiple members became much more popularized. Although solo artists remained well-liked, groups could incorporate multiple instruments and sounds, growing their popularity.

Rock and roll music, fashion, and culture, although very different from when it first emerged, is still present in the art world today. The influence rock music has on many modern-day artists inspires them to write similar music, collaborate with older artists, and even mix some older music samples with their own. “A look into the future of popular and rock music reveals more questions than answers. What genres or styles of music will capture the attention of the

¹⁸ Bill Harry, *The British Invasion: How The Beatles and Other UK Bands Conquered America*, (New Malden: Independent Publishers Group, 2004), 13.

¹⁹ Bill Harry, *The British Invasion: How The Beatles and Other UK Bands Conquered America*, 13.

listener?"²⁰ Music has transformed so much from the original forms of rock music, so it will continue to grow and change, but there are aspects of rock music that continue to stay alive. The freedom that rock music gave listeners through feelings of inspiration and empowerment are bound to continue to grow throughout the history of music, no matter the genre.

In conclusion, rock and roll music began as a shock to the music world but quickly grew into a genre that would be loved by generations. Rock music caused much controversy by breaking barriers of race, sex, gender, and religion. Despite this, it became an outlet where these ideas could be adapted to move with the times. Rock was also an outlet for young people to connect with others, have an escape from reality, and develop their own identities. Overall, throughout the mid-1900s, rock and roll music and culture broke barriers and challenged societal norms through pushing boundaries and fusing cultures.

²⁰ Friedlander, *Rock And Roll*, 310.

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Oswald Spengler and his Cold War Legacy

By David O'Brien

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, in 1991, scholars and policymakers alike celebrated the perceived “end of history.”¹ Today, the majority of people would evaluate this celebration as so incredibly optimistic it bordered on overwhelming naivety. As political scientists, civil servants, and pundits involved in current affairs are forced to confront numerous policies and long-term agendas established by cold war policy makers in response to the threat of the Soviet Union, they are forced to confront the philosophies and ideologies of their predecessors in government. While many hope and attempt to change the current trajectory of the policies of the United States, this cannot be done without understanding the intellectual roots of modern American foreign policy, why, and how they have emerged overtime.

American foreign policy throughout the Cold War was intellectually indebted to the German historian and philosopher, Oswald Spengler. While numerous Kennan scholars reference Spengler’s influence on Kennan, few have had actually properly analyzed the similarities between Spengler’s concepts and Kennan’s ideas. For instance, Goldgeier has stated that there is more work to be done on Spengler’s reading of history’s influence on Kennan and his successors in the state department.² Additionally, numerous Kennan scholars, like Gaddis³ and Thompson⁴ view Spengler’s influence on Kennan as merely a symptom of his own pessimistic idiosyncrasies related to his personal life (Kennan had numerous strained personal relationships, suffered from a lifelong battle with depression, and a few mental breakdowns) rather than serving as an

¹ Francis Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man* (Penguin Books Ltd, 2020).

² “A Complex Man with a Simple Idea,” *George Kennan for Our Time*, n.d., <https://doi.org/https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/uploads/documents/Goldgeir%20Kennan%20Legacy%20Chapter.pdf>.

³ John Lewis Gaddis, *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York: Penguin, 2012).

⁴ Nicholas Thompson, *The Hawk and the Dove: Paul Nitze, George Kennan, and the History of the Cold War* (New York: Picador, 2010).

important intellectual foundation for his ideas and actions throughout his career as a statesman. Spengler's primary influence on Kennan includes: his method and analysis of cultural souls that exist in various cultures and civilizations throughout history, his evaluation of the rise of socialism as a symptom of the decline of Western Civilization, and his belief in Prussianism as the strongest ideology for the West as it enters its final phase of existence.

Spengler's ideas can be seen directly in Kennan's political ideology and agenda, especially in the latter's understanding of socialism as a form of decline in the West, his evaluation of the Soviet Union, and his containment theory. Furthermore, Kennan's views surrounding the conflicts of the 20th century as ideological rather than economic, and his own personal sympathies towards Prussianism and undemocratic government were based on Spengler's writings.

Spengler

Oswald Spengler, born in 1880 to a middle-class family, spent the majority of his early life studying a variety of different topics ranging from Mathematics to Latin at an elite preparatory academy in Halle, Germany. He received no direct education surrounding a particular topic but instead enrolled as a private student at a variety of different universities. After his first Ph.D. dissertation on Heraclitus was rejected, Spengler received his doctorate for a dissertation in biology. Following his education, he worked as a tutor, magazine writer, and briefly as a teacher with little success. However, following the outbreak of World War I, he became an overnight sensation with his first major work, *The Decline of The West Volume One*,⁵ where he synthesized the many topics he studied over the course of his life to create an all-encompassing philosophy of history.

⁵ Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West Volume One: Form and Actuality* (Rogue Scholar Press, 2021).

Following the publication of *The Decline of the West*, Spengler would go on to become a highly influential member of the German academy and a board member for the Nietzsche Archives. Though he would be removed from both positions after the rise of the National Socialist party, Spengler did manage to publish a variety of philosophical works with the Academy and Archives. His publications varied in topic but were largely centered around socio-political trends such as the consequences of industrialism on society⁶ to the rising political tensions throughout the 20th century⁷. While Spengler died in 1936, his last work *The Hour of Decision*⁸ prophetically warned another global conflict would occur within the next decade and argued it would determine whether the Anglosphere or the Teutosphere would lead Western society as it entered its final period before collapse.

Spengler's work followed a long tradition that sought to repair the rift between materialism and metaphysics. His works function as a response to the rising support of analyzing history from a materialistic perspective. While Cold War policy planners utilized his works as a foundation for their own thought, he was continuing the traditions of thinkers before himself. His primary influences, Goethe and Nietzsche, both argued in favor of incorporating cultural and psychological aspects into their analysis of a variety of topics. Both of their major works reflect this method and deviate from other philosophers who chose to adopt a more material or tangible analysis of society. This unusual approach contributed to Goethe and Nietzsche's immediate and ongoing impact in Europe. Their study of culture and metaphysical concerns influenced many intellectual projects and helped reimagine traditional debates such as that between Herodotus and Thucydides surrounding the method of historical analysis as myth vs direct events.

⁶ Oswald Spengler, *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life* (Arktos Media Ltd, 2020).

⁷ Oswald Spengler and K. R. Bolton, *Prussian Socialism & Other Essays* (London: Black House Publishing, 2018).

⁸ Oswald Spengler, *The Hour of Decision* (Rogue Scholar, 2020).

And now, finally, I feel urged to name once more those to whom I owe practically everything: Goethe and Nietzsche. Goethe gave me method, Nietzsche the question faculty – and if I were asked to find a formula for my relation to the latter I should say that I had made of his ‘outlook’ (Ausblick) an ‘overlook’ (Überblick). But Goethe was, without knowing it, a disciple of Leibniz in his whole mode of thought. And, therefore, that which has at last (and to my own astonishment) taken shape in my hands I am able to regard and despite the misery and disgust of these years, proud to call a German Philosophy.⁹

The primary goal of Spengler’s works was to actualize the concept proposed by Nietzsche in his work the *Will to Power*. Spengler, clearly built on Nietzsche’s conception of history as written in *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*. “The unhistorical,” writes Nietzsche, “and the historical are equally necessary for the health of an individual, a people and a culture.”¹⁰ Spengler’s works were dedicated to synthesizing both the unhistorical, being, ideals, and metaphysics, with the historical, becoming, action, and the physical.

However, Spengler’s methodology and approach reflects not only his admiration for Nietzsche but pulls from his background in biology as well. In utilizing this discipline, the influence from Goethe also becomes increasingly apparent. Spengler applied Goethe’s theory of morphology to analyze civilizations as organisms. In response to Kant, Goethe sought to establish a more naturalistic method of analyzing natural sciences through simply spectating and analyzing the interaction of living things rather than forming a hypothesis and testing it. He believed that establishing a hypothesis prior to observation leads to the individual focusing more on their own thoughts rather than proper analysis. The primary goal of Goethe’s methodology was to establish archetypal patterns in nature which would then be used to further understand the general nature of everything as a whole. Spengler utilizes Goethe’s methodology to analyze history rather than traditional sciences by establishing archetypal patterns for civilizations. This

⁹ Spengler, *Decline of the West: Volume One*, vii.

¹⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* (Indianapolis: Hackett, n.d.).

is followed by establishing a case that aspects of culture acting outside of the archetypal pattern emerge as an aspect to the culture's own lifespan, like that of an animal demonstrating different behavior than its peers. Thus, Spengler argues that there are objective "biological" laws that all civilizations are bound to follow and simultaneously supports an argument for cultural relativism, since cultures develop their own relative values, ideals, arts, etc. While the primary purpose of this essay is to analyze Spengler's relation to policymakers, one must keep in mind that his own ideas and methodology emerged from previous thinkers. Spengler himself, while an autodidact and anti-academic, would influence intellectual elites and be viewed as an intellectual giant of his era. Spengler's work would be utilized as an explanation for how and why the scientific and materialistic methodology of his time was not enough to resolve the problems of the human condition. Throughout his work he observed all of history as symbolic for a deeper unconscious process that is attempting to actualize itself in the material world. To Spengler, all actions and words are an attempt to actualize a deeper fundamental metaphysical concept.

But the prime symbol does not actualize itself; it is not operative through the form-sense of every man, every community, age and epoch and dictates the style of every life-expression. It is inherent in the form of the state, the religious myths and cults, the ethical ideals, the forms of painting and music and poetry, the fundamental notions of each science – but it is not presented by these. Consequently, it is not presentable by words, for language and words are themselves *derived* symbols. Every individual symbol tells of it but only to the inner feelings, not to the understanding. And when we say, as henceforth we shall say, that the prime symbol of the Classical soul is the material and individual body, that of the Western soul pure infinite space, it must always be with the reservation that concepts cannot represent the inconceivable and thus at the most a *significant feeling* may be evoked by the sound of words.¹¹

With Spengler's continuation of the metaphysical concepts proposed by Goethe along with the approach towards understanding history by Nietzsche, he developed his major work *The Decline of the West*. Spengler writes that history as a field is being evaluated incorrectly. Instead

¹¹ Spengler, *Decline of the West: Volume One*, 175.

of viewing history as a long list of empirical evidence and separating the field into various sub disciplines such as art history, eastern history, ancient history, medieval history, and modern history, history should be evaluated as a whole. Through Goethe's methodology, Spengler sought to analyze the world soul, which could only be done through a sweeping examination of all of world history, not an examination of specific time periods or epochs. Spengler believed epochs should be analyzed as turning points in a civilization rather than analyzed as specific events. Through breaking away from the paradigm established by Marxist and Whig historians where history is consistently evolving towards a specific end goal, Spengler paved the way for people to come to terms with the calamity of the early 20th century. Through an analysis of world history, Spengler developed a theory that over the course of time there has been nine civilizations: Egyptian, Babylonian, Indian, Chinese, Apollonian/Classical/Greco-Roman, Magian/Arabian, Mexican, Faustian/Western, and Russian. Each of these civilizations have their own "soul," which attempts to actualize itself through everything produced within itself ranging from all arts to all sciences.

The soul of each civilization endures a life cycle that is analogous to the four seasons or the various phases of life that humans endure. The first phase is Spring or adolescence, where the soul of civilization is completely unconscious and free and merely interacts with the world and allows itself to be influenced by nature and other souls. For the West, this phase is represented by early Christendom and the general domination of the church. The second phase is Summer or youth; here the soul begins to actively strive to attain its soul in a material sense. This is the period which is often viewed as the golden age of civilization and the pinnacle of art and culture. For the West, this phase is represented by the Renaissance Baroque period where Spengler believed the West had achieved its goal of creating art and science that perfectly encapsulated

infinity. After this period comes the most important epoch for each soul, where a specific figure initiates the transition of continuous actualization and success to failure and decline. Spengler viewed Socrates as the figure who best encapsulated this paradigm shift for the Greeks from the Hellenic warrior ideal expressed through Achilles and Odysseus to the ironic and pedantic Socrates. For the West, this paradigm shift is represented by Rousseau where the West once valued purity and continuous conquest came to admire general equality. Following this period, is Autumn or “manhood” where the soul begins to sacrifice aspects of its cultural ideals and principles for the sake of economic prosperity and stability. This period was represented in the West by the modern era. Finally, the civilization ends with Winter or old age where the civilization can no longer maintain itself and finally collapses. Spengler believed this period would begin in the West during the early 21st century.

While Spengler dedicates his work to explaining the three main souls, Apollonian/Classical, the Faustian/Western, and Magian/Arabic, the primary focus of his work surrounds the Faustian/Western soul. This is because Spengler’s viewed the West as the only soul he could fully grasp since he was a product of it. In addition to *The Decline of the West*, all of Spengler’s following works focus on the declination of the Western soul and the political and intellectual implications of societal decline. Best illustrated in his work *The Hour of Decision*, Spengler adds a particular emphasis on the importance of German civilization and its response to collapse, as he believed it was the country that best encapsulated the Western spirit.

The Western spirit is defined by its goal to actualize the infinite, which it does through continuous expansion and its continuous effort to overcome the natural world. This can be seen through the infinite nature of music and the decadence of paintings from the Baroque period. This can also be seen in Western sciences attempting to quantify things beyond human

perception as shown with imaginary numbers in mathematics and theoretical physics. Spengler considered the Baroque period as the pinnacle of the West and most capable of encapsulating the Faustian soul. Ultimately, however, Spengler viewed the attempts to perpetuate the soul as a tragic and futile endeavor as no soul can actually overcome the natural order of reality. Following World War I, Spengler's idea that the best time to live in the West had passed became widely popular throughout Germany and was legitimized by various intellectual circles.

In addition to the evaluation of the morphology of various cultural souls and analyzing their various stages, Spengler believed a new soul would emerge over the next millennium that would create a sophisticated culture: the Russian soul. Spengler argued that the Russian soul had been lying dormant for centuries as a result of the overwhelming influence of both the Magian soul and the Faustian soul, thus trapping the Russian soul in the "Spring" season/stage. As the West declines, the Russian soul will begin to emerge as the new dominating force of the world. Spengler argued that the success of Bolshevism in Russia was a symptom of the West's domination over Russia and maintained it would not remain socialist for a long period of time.¹² After the collapse of Bolshevism, the Russian soul will finally begin to emerge from its subservience under the Magian and Faustian souls and fully attain its own cultural identity.

Unlike the Faustian soul that strives for the infinite, the Russian soul strives to perfect the earth in front of it. The Faustian soul focuses on continuously building upwards and outwards, while the Russian soul seeks to perfect what it already has. This emphasis on the immediate demonstrates the general values of the Russian soul as well as the importance of rural life. While the Faustian soul sought the infinite through constant expansion and the Magian sought actualization through its current state of existence, the Russian soul finds the infinite in its

¹² Spengler, Oswald (2020) *The Decline of the West Volume Two: Perspectives of World History*, (Rogue Scholar Press), 196.

current state, making it somewhat of a synthesis of the two. Spengler argues that the emerging Russian soul is best illustrated through the architecture of Orthodox cathedrals compared to mosques and gothic cathedrals. While Orthodox cathedrals share the architectural designs of domes and spires, their focal point is flat surfaces, representing the infinite plain.¹³ Orthodox cathedrals focus on the plain, and there are signs of a future cultural architecture different from the general Magian architecture surrounding Russia; it had failed to emerge because the power of the two cultures surrounding Russia were too disparate and repellent from one another. However, because of Russia's location and size, neither the Magian or Faustian souls had been able to fully dominate the Russian landscape. This has further contributed to the slow germination of both soul's influence and Spengler's argument of Russia remaining in the "trapped Spring season." Yet, Spengler remains adamant that the Magian and the Faustian souls will eventually lose global influence, and the Russian soul will emerge and slowly overpower the two.

Spengler's two lesser-known works, *Prussianism and Socialism*¹⁴ and *The Hour of Decision*,¹⁵ both seek to address the issues that appear in his seminal work, *The Decline of the West*. *Prussianism and Socialism* defines the final phase of Western Civilization, socialism, and the appropriate response to it, Prussianism, a cultural and political agenda that seeks to maintain traditional German values. This is done through a highly disciplined culture and a hyper-militaristic society governed by aristocrats and military leaders.¹⁶ To Spengler, socialism represents the final stages of decline where egalitarianism and rationalism triumph over aristocracy and the unconscious soul. Socialism is the harbinger of the end of Western

¹³ Spengler, *Decline of the West Volume One*, 211.

¹⁴ Spengler, *Prussian Socialism*.

¹⁵ Spengler, *Hour of Decision*.

¹⁶ To Spengler, Prussianism serves as the complete inverse of socialism and the perfect response to decline since it would allow Western culture to continue while simultaneously combat modern egalitarian tendencies.

Civilization; it represents the complete destruction of all of his markers for what makes a civilization great. As discussed earlier, figures like Socrates, Buddha, and Rousseau each encapsulate the transition from culture to decline through their focus on rationalism and destroying hierarchy. Spengler supported hierarchy due to his belief that peak culture always occurred under aristocratic society. Spengler viewed increasing democracy as a sign of decline as shown with the decline of the classical world after the rise of populism as well as the reduction of high art under the enlightenment era. Additionally, one can attribute his opposition towards populism and his support for aristocracy again to his adoration for Friedrich Nietzsche and his work on the board on the Nietzsche Archive. Additionally, Spengler's animosity towards the common man likely stems from his thesis surrounding Heraclitus. Heraclitus, a critic of democracy, wrote "The best want one thing above all others, ever flowing fame among mortals. But the many stuff themselves like livestock."¹⁷ This quote directly reflects Spengler's own opinion on the masses and serves as a philosophical basis for why they must be governed. In contrast, Rousseau's concept of the social contract and his defense of egalitarianism functions as the birth of socialism as a concept and directly opposes what Spengler believes are the guiding factors of Western Civilization.

The most important failure of socialism is its mission to provide the greatest good to the greatest number of people, which will inevitably lead to mob rule. Spengler argued that under mob rule, civilizations are bound to collapse under themselves since the mob is incapable of governing itself beyond its own immediate material conditions and its inability to grasp the world-picture. Additionally, Spengler argued that all great leaders are bound to be viewed poorly by the general populace of their subjects. He provides Bismarck and Metternich as two pertinent

¹⁷ Heraclitus and T. M. Robinson, *Heraclitus: Fragments* (Toronto: Univ. Toronto P., 1991).

examples for his readers, both of whom were viewed poorly during their time but afterwards hailed as some of the great statesmen. Yet in contrast, Spengler argued that leaders under socialism rule for the sake of economic interests rather than the state. Since the masses, which lacked an aristocratic spirit, achieved more political power, Spengler believed they would utilize this for purely material gain rather than spiritual fulfillment. This would then lead to a ruling class dominated by the need for economic and material progress rather than spiritual and psychological fulfillment, the keystone of a proper culture. When nations are ruled under economic interests rather than state interests, all policies become utilitarian and rational rather than for the sake of a higher cause and actualizing the soul because of the masses' lack of desire for anything beyond basic comforts and material bliss. He condemned the failure of socialism to maintain hierarchy, allowing popularity to govern nations rather than genuine power, and its focus on the quantity of resources for a society over the quality of policies. Spengler believed socialist societies will continuously institute policies of continuous material expansion and gluttony at the cost of any and all spiritual fulfillment and noble deeds.

While Spengler viewed the rise of socialism as hopeless and claimed that collapse was inevitable, he did recommend Prussianism to arrest decline and salvage Western Civilization. Under Prussianism, socialist reforms were instituted pragmatically in order to maintain the power of the German hierarchy and its traditional values.

But the Prussian style demand not only a mere precedence of higher policy over economics; it demands that the economic life should be disciplined by a powerful state, which is the precondition of free initiative in private enterprise - for, whatever else it may be, it is not a mere super-party, complete with program and ready to press organization to the point of abolishing the idea of property (*Eigentum*); which, precisely among Germanic peoples, denotes freedom of the economic will, and lordship over that which is one's own.¹⁸

¹⁸ Spengler, *Hour of Decision*, 200-201.

Under Prussianism, the state is able to preserve its power while simultaneously addressing the economic necessities of the current political landscape. Prussianism as a policy agenda is best illustrated by Bismarck's social reforms that were instituted by the Junkers to placate the masses and maintain national strength. They can be additionally identified as traditional German principles under the reign of Frederick the Great.

In addition to his concept of Prussianism, in *The Hour of Decision*, Spengler identified the primary issues of his time and implored the German people to respond to them. Spengler warned that there will be another world war in the near future that will determine which European country will lead the West in its final period. This war would determine the guiding country for Western Civilization in its final era and how the West would be able to combat the two primary factors that will destroy it: socialism and the rise of more primitive souls among "colored" races.¹⁹ Spengler argued the solution to these issues is Caesarism, the use of strong executive authority to combat egalitarianism and put power back into the hands of elites who can properly govern the mob. Through sweeping executive authority and the reinstatement of hierarchy, the West would be able to combat the dangers of "socialism" and preserve itself against the rising rival souls.²⁰ Caesarism functioned as a compromise between populist sentiment and traditional Prussian values, which serve as a cornerstone to Western Civilization. However, Spengler made a point to inform the reader that even if the West succeeds in appointing a Caesar, this would only mitigate decline, not stop it all together. Thus, Spengler warned that the primary danger the West was facing was not any particular country rather it was the rise of Bolshevism as a whole. Spengler viewed Bolshevism, not as a Russian phenomenon,

¹⁹ Spengler views the Russian soul as part of the "colored" races due to its connection with East Asia.

²⁰ Spengler, *The Hour of Decision*, 201.

rather it was a sign of Faustian decline. This concept would go on to heavily influence George F. Kennan, the architect of American Cold War Policy.

George F. Kennan

While many major US policy planners utilized Spenglerian philosophy, the primary purpose of this essay is to analyze the connection between Spengler's ideas and George F. Kennan. Born in 1904, Kennan served as an ambassador in the foreign service from 1928 to 1947, the first director of policy planning from 1947 to 1949, counselor to the state department from 1949-1950, ambassador to the Soviet Union for a brief period in 1952, and the ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1961-1963. After his long career in the civil service, he would work as a critic of American foreign policy, ivy-league academic, and prolific writer. In his memoirs, Kennan referenced reading Spengler during his summer in Weimar Germany in 1926, a few months prior to entering the foreign service, "To this latter place I took Goethe's *Faust* and Spengler's *Untergang des Abendlandes*, wading persistently through them with the help of a dictionary."²¹ Spengler's effect on Kennan during his long career as a United States policy planner and analyst can be seen in government documents, personal notes, academic essays, and magazine articles. While Spengler left a sweeping effect on Kennan, it is only appropriate to evaluate the most impactful document of his career, "The Long Telegram" (1946).²² The concepts Kennan purposes throughout the "Long Telegram," mirror Spengler's. Additionally, "The Long Telegram" attempts to address the two emerging threats to Western Civilization: rise of socialism and its ideological hold over the Russian soul.

²¹ George F. Kennan, "A Personal Note." Essay. In *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, 19.

²² The Long Telegram was written in response to Stalin provoking fear throughout the United States during his speech at the Bolshoi theater, where he emphasized the need for expansion. Kennan wrote this analysis Feb. 13, 1946 after Former-Ambassador to the Soviet Union Harriman requested him to do so.

Kennan differentiated himself from the policy analysis of his contemporaries by viewing the USSR as not only a militaristic and economic threat but primarily as a cultural entity. To Kennan, the conflict of the cold war, while consisting of armed force and two opposing forces, was an ideological battle rather than a material conflict. Kennan's main goal was to ultimately mitigate the exact form of cultural decline described by Spengler via bolstering Western culture through improvement of national morale through art, culture, and civil service projects, which encapsulated Western civilization as discussed throughout Spengler's works.

Kennan continued to argue throughout his many works that America should focus on defeating socialism as an ideology rather than the USSR as a nation, the two of which while attached were not completely linked. This differentiated Kennan from the typical political realist concerned with decline. The majority of foreign policy planners and analysts, concerned themselves through utilizing global power dynamics for the sake of furthering the Wilsonian ideal of global peace and prosperity. This is best illustrated by figures like Edward Stennitus Jr. and Henry Wallace. Kennan, however, viewed global politics through the lens of cultural politics of both the United States and the West with the goal of both strengthening Western cultural and weakening foreign cultural organisms that may weaken the West. Kennan sought to defeat the Soviet threat through overcoming the socialist system both at home and abroad rather than directly competing with the nations within it. Spengler's teachings directly influenced his policies as shown through Kennan's focus and concerns of American decline stemming from culture and socialism rather than direct conflict with the Soviet Union on the international stage via force.

Spengler's influence is best demonstrated by the way in which Kennan viewed the soul of specific nations and civilizations as emerging. Kennan's conception of a nation's soul follows

Spengler's distinction between rural areas as the root of culture and urban areas as the root of decline. As Spengler stated in *The Hour of Decision*, Fascism as a form of government is bound to emerge in response to the crisis of socialism as it affects a nation's soul. According to Spengler's writing, Fascism would primarily stem from rural regions, while Communism would inevitably emerge from urban regions. This is because Fascism functions as a method of preserving the Western Soul, while Communism functions as a method of eroding it. Since Fascism stems from the soul, it is grounded in rural areas, the soul's roots. Since Communism actively erodes the soul, it is grounded in the most "soulless" parts of a culture, urban areas. Kennan clearly shares this sentiment with Spengler. For instance, during his service in Germany during World War II, Kennan makes a point to say that German cosmopolitans operated practically outside of Nazi culture. "The Berliners themselves - the simple people, that is - were, of all the major urban or regional elements among the German population, the least Nazi-fied in their outlook."²³ While some policymakers influenced by Spengler would continuously attempt to strike a balance between maintaining American ideals and the militaristic praxis of fascism, like policymakers Nitze and Kissinger, Kennan would come to fully develop fascist sympathies, likely due to his Spenglerian roots.

Rather than claim that Moscow is the center of the Russian culture, Kennan consistently referred to socialism as its own entity that had taken control of Russia. Kennan even claimed that the majority of Russian citizens did not even support the Communist regime. This can be seen, once again, in "The Long Telegram,"

First, [Communism] does not represent natural outlook of Russian people. Latter are, by and large, friendly to outside world, eager for experience of it, eager to measure against it talents they are conscious of possessing, eager above all to live in peace and enjoy fruits of their own labor. Party line only represents thesis which official propaganda machine

²³ George F. Kennan, "Wartime Service in Germany." Essay. In *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, 108.

puts forward with great skill and persistence to a public often remarkably resistant in the stronghold of its innermost thoughts. But party line is binding for outlook and conduct of people who make up apparatus of power--party, secret police and Government--and it is exclusively with these that we have to deal.²⁴

Kennan's thoughts surrounding the culture of Russia and the principles of socialism is reiterated in his article "Religion in Russia", published in 1992, after the collapse of the USSR,

And, taken together with many other glimpses of ordinary Russian life, this said something to me about the Russian people. It gave me a sort of ultimate confidence – a desperate and unreasoning confidence, if you will – in their ability to survive, somehow, the dreadful situation in which Russia now finds herself, to survive this crisis as they have survived so many others, and to play their part, once again, among the great peoples of the world.²⁵

While this article clearly stems from Kennan's personal experience with the Russian people, it perfectly mirrors Spengler's own thoughts surrounding Russian Orthodoxy lying in wait to establish itself as the foundation of the Russian Soul as discussed earlier. Kennan did not evaluate the situation in the USSR as any form of Russian culture. He viewed the Soviet Regime as superimposed on and alien to Russian society, where it is actively working to subvert and control each and every nation operating within it.

In "The Long Telegram," Kennan further argues that the best possible way to defeat communism is to reinvigorate Western society.

Much depends on health and vigor of our own society. World communism is like malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue. This is point at which domestic and foreign policies meets Every courageous and incisive measure to solve internal problems of our own society, to improve self-confidence, discipline, morale and community spirit of our own people, is a diplomatic victory over Moscow worth a thousand diplomatic notes and joint communiqués. If we cannot abandon fatalism and indifference in face of deficiencies of our own society, Moscow will profit--Moscow cannot help profiting by them in its foreign policies.²⁶

²⁴ George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, December 7, 2022, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1947-07-01/sources-soviet-conduct>.

²⁵ George F. Kennan, "Religion in Russia." Essay. In *At a Century's Ending: Reflections, 1982-1995*, 65.

²⁶ George F. Kennan, "The Long Telegram," Wilson Center Digital Archive, accessed December 5, 2022, <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116178>.

“The Long Telegram” directly warns the government that the battle of the Cold War depends on the spirit of the American people. The fight to stave off “indifference” is the keystone against collapsing into a communist dictatorship.

Furthermore, “The Long Telegram” is the first document which places the policy of containment, the basis for almost all US foreign policy surrounding the Soviet Union since its inception, in conversation. Kennan’s policy of containment focused on isolating the Soviet Union to stop its ideological, political, and economic principles from spreading throughout the world. Containment theorists believed that if socialism was contained and isolated from the rest of the world, it would cannibalize itself and no longer threaten institutions at odds with the Socialist ideology.

Soviet power, unlike that of Hitlerite Germany, is neither schematic nor adventuristic. It does not work by fixed plans. It does not take unnecessary risks. Impervious to logic of reason, and it is highly sensitive to logic of force. For this reason it can easily withdraw—and usually does when strong resistance is encountered at any point.²⁷

Kennan argued that the solution to Soviet power is not a direct plan targeting any aspects of the Soviets since its power is not backed by any form of logic. The solution is simply stopping Soviet power from spreading across the world through global intervention. While later on, the primary method of doing so would be through militaristic intervention and covert operations, Kennan went on record saying political intervention should be the primary method for stopping Bolshevism from spreading globally.²⁸

Kennan’s containment policy alongside his belief in strengthening the national spirit of the United States as well as the culture of the West as a whole demonstrates his belief that collapse is directly tethered to widespread social indifference or apathy. This parallels Spengler’s

²⁷ Kennan, “The Long Telegram”

²⁸ George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, 359.

analysis of cultural souls. Kennan's focus on Western principles and its own psychological fortitude illustrates its importance in combating soviet influence. Additionally, through isolating the Soviet Union, Kennan worked to isolate socialism to protect the West from the spread of communism.

In addition to "The Long Telegram," Kennan's, 1947 *Foreign Affairs* magazine, publication the article "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" illustrates his desire to resolve the issue of decline by influencing American public opinion. While "The Long Telegram" sought to illustrate the dangers of decline and the dangers of communism to state department officials, Kennan's article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" sought to illustrate the need for the American people to actively work towards the preservation of Western culture and American identity. "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" described and discussed the same ideas proposed by "The Long Telegram," however unlike "The Long Telegram" it was developed for public consumption. "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" illustrates Kennan's confidence in his ideas surrounding containing social contagions and bolstering the spirit of the United States in an attempt to halt decline.

In light of these circumstances, the thoughtful observer of Russian-American relations will find no cause for complaint in the Kremlin's challenge to American society. He will rather experience a certain gratitude to a Providence which, by providing the American people with this implacable challenge, has made their entire security as a nation dependent on their pulling themselves together and accepting the responsibilities of moral and political leadership that history plainly intended them to bear²⁹

Kennan's push for the American people to actively work towards overcoming the West's challenge of communism demonstrates his belief that the American people from statesmen to citizen has a major role to play in combating decline. However, this does not necessarily mean he

²⁹ Kennan, "Sources of Soviet Conduct"

believed in mass democracy or egalitarianism, rather he seemed to believe that the involvement of the American people was a necessary compromise for combating communism in the west.

While Kennan does differ from Spengler in his more democratic beliefs surrounding cultural psychology, he was by no means a supporter of mass democracy. As Spengler pushed for the West's aristocrats to lead the masses into working towards the West's preservation as shown with his discussion of characters like Cecil Rhodes and Mussolini as the ideal "Caesars" for the West's final phase, Kennan believed a benevolent dictator may be necessary to protect the West from itself. Over the course of his life, Kennan grappled with what he believed the ideal form of government could be.

This internal conflict is evident in Kennan's beliefs surrounding democracy as his views were often contradictory with his work as a statesman. He spent the majority of his life attempting to preserve Western democracy while simultaneously resenting it. He shared Spengler's belief that egalitarianism was doomed to bring about nothing more than chaos and destruction and that a nation could only persist when governed by an elite body that took the form of a dictatorship or a representative elite. As the United States continued to push for more equal rights such as strengthening the rights of women and minorities, his outlook became more pessimistic.

Kennan concludes "The Long Telegram" with: "Finally we must have courage and self-confidence to cling to our own methods and conceptions of human society. After all, the greatest danger that can befall us in coping with this problem of Soviet communism, is that we shall allow ourselves to become like those with whom we are coping." While on the surface, Kennan may be warning about the dangers of any form of authoritarianism, he seems to be much more concerned with a specific type of authoritarianism that feeds off of indifferent masses. Since his early days as a foreign policy analyst, Kennan demonstrates an active concern surrounding

Soviet dictatorship but is willing to support an undemocratic government as long as it coincides with its own nation's principles and values. Despite Kennan's active work towards dismantling Prussianism and combating global authoritarianism throughout his service working for the United States military during World War II, he actively supported hierarchical and aristocratic governments. His anti-democratic views, while rooted in other thinkers he was influenced by like Burke and Gibbons, stems from ideas pushed by Spengler throughout his many works.

Kennan grappled with the traditional democratic values of the United States over the course of his life. He wrote about the failures of democracy and his beliefs that both capitalist and socialist policies will only exacerbate them further. Kennan believed the only viable solutions to preserving the west was either a benevolent romantic dictator, that would inspire the common man while simultaneously operating outside their authority or a landed aristocracy that would govern the state. "if any democracy survives it will be, as in Latin America, a romantic-Garibaldian type of democracy, founded on the interaction of an emotional populace and a stirring, heroic type of popular leader."³⁰ Both of these solutions directly mirror Spengler's concepts of a Caesar figure and a Prussianist elite ruling class.

Kennan's views surrounding a landing aristocracy governing the United States can be seen best in his 1938 essay titled, "The Prerequisites"³¹ where he argues that the ideal form of government for the United States is a panel of oligarchs, referred to as the "Council of State." These oligarchs would be selected by the President and operate practically outside of any democratic oversight. This "Council of State" functions exactly as a Prussian government would under a chancellor where a select group of noblemen would run the state and the general masses

³⁰ George F. Kennan and Frank Costigliola, *The Kennan Diaries* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 336.

³¹George F Kennan, ms, *The Prerequisites: Notes on the Problems of the United States in 1938* (1938).

would have little to no say in the activities of the government beyond the executive. Over the course of Kennan's life, he would continually change his standards how democratic a society should be within his ideal aristocracy. These resulted in proposed governing methods such as an aristocracy of appointed advisors to a representative democracy with the same voting laws as the 18th century United States. Yet, while his ideas surrounding the ideal government changed throughout his life, Kennan always believed that, since a landed elite could not emerge due to the general principles of the United States, a dictator (or as stated previously a romantic Garibaldi-esque figure) was necessary for the preservation of the United States.

These views persisted over the course of Kennan's career. In 1957, during the period between his work as ambassador to the Soviet Union to Yugoslavia, he penned, "The truth is that democracy in the Western world could be saved from itself only by 50 years of benevolent dictatorship which would, like a doctor, restore the patient to a reasonable state of vigor and then put him on his own again."³² While this passage was only written in his personal diaries, it shows Kennan's prevailing belief that the only solution to preserving the west is some form of Spenglerian Caesarism.

While Kennan was ardently anti-democratic, his views were for the most part hidden from public life. Few of his writings actively spoke out against democracy. Those that did were hidden from the public. Over the course of his life, writings like "The Prerequisites" which argued against increasing suffrage and returning to a less democratic republic, although now found in the Princeton archives, were initially kept hidden from the public, so as not to hinder his reputation.³³

³² George F. Kennan and Frank Costigliola, *The Kennan Diaries*, 403.

³³ David Engerman, "George Kennan, A Conservative's Conservative," *Chicago Tribune*, August 22, 2021, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2005-03-22-0503220317-story.html>.

Numerous Kennan scholars such as Gaddis and Thompson argue that his anti-democratic views appear almost out of nowhere and attribute them more to his personal life and cynical attitude rather than his intellectual biography.³⁴³⁵ Thompson would go far enough to refer to Kennan as like the oracle of Delphi, where some of his thoughts were prophetic (his foreign policy views and assessment of NATO) while others were completely gibberish and nonsensical (his views surrounding American democracy).³⁶ While his troubled personal life was surely a factor in determining his disposition towards the various institutions he was surrounded by and the thinkers he may have been pushed towards, his ideas were built upon the philosophical and political concepts pushed by Spengler. Kennan's desire for a council of aristocrats to govern the state directly mirrors Spengler's Prussianism. Additionally, Kennan views Spengler's Caesar as the only worthwhile leader that can and should come to power in the west. Like Spengler, Kennan believed that since a Prussianist government is not attainable under the circumstances established from World War I for the West, a Caesar must rise to power to help soften the decline of the West.

George F. Kennan's views on both domestic and foreign policy owe a huge debt to the works of Oswald Spengler. Domestically, Kennan's views surrounding democracy were heavily influenced by Spengler's conception of Prussianism as shown by his negative views surrounding democracy and his beliefs on the form of government that should be instituted over democracy. Kennan's groundbreaking foreign policy theory, containment, owes a great debt to Spengler's conception of civilizational cultural decline. As discussed, Kennan based his theory on the best

³⁴ John Lewis Gaddis, *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York: Penguin, 2012).

³⁵ Nicholas Thompson, *The Hawk and the Dove: Paul Nitze, George Kennan, and the History of the Cold War* (New York: Picador, 2010).

³⁶ "The Hawk and the Dove: Paul Nitze, George Kennan, and the History of the Cold War," *New Books in National Security* (Spotify, February 18, 2010).

method of combating socialism through actively preventing the decline of the west through cultural institutions and morale rather than simply battling Russia on the world stage.

Conclusion

Spengler, who cited Nietzsche as one of his two major influences, dedicated his life's work to actualizing the concept proposed by Nietzsche in his work the *Will to Power*. Spengler, clearly building on Nietzsche's conception of history as written in *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* where he wrote, "The unhistorical and the historical are equally necessary for the health of an individual, a people and a culture."³⁷ Spengler's works are dedicated to fulfilling this mission; he analyzes the historical so it may include the eternal principles proposed by Goethe in his philosophical, scientific, and artistic works. He utilized a macrocosmic worldview of civilization to illustrate the likeliness of major cultures and civilizations to rise and fall. His works not only analyzed history from this perspective but also utilized this perspective to help understand the political events of his time. While his methods and concepts were utilized by German nationalists, his followers go far beyond them. These disciples have utilized his concepts surrounding cultural pessimism for their own ideology and agenda.

Kennan followed the teachings of Spengler throughout his long career as a statesman. He actively referenced the cultural soul as a concept in the majority of his work. He opposed democracy and capitalism and viewed them as directly leading to socialism. Additionally, he viewed Prussianism as the best solution to stave off the decline and collapse of Western Civilization in the post-war era. The roots of theories surrounding foreign policy as well as his

³⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* (Indianapolis: Hackett, n.d.).

method of analyzing global politics can be seen directly in the works and philosophy of Oswald Spengler.

Today, Spengler is often viewed as a darling to the far right and is mostly analyzed by intellectual historians and political dissidents. Many view his successors as political scientists and historians who utilized his analysis of cultural history as nothing more than a jumping off point. However, Spengler's work has a significantly deeper impact on both American life and the world than simply a method of historiography, political analysis, and reading material for a select few. Major political figures beyond those discussed over the course of this essay have utilized Spengler as their foundation including: Adolf Hitler, Malcom X, Richard Nixon, and more. Additionally, Spengler has influenced major academics across many fields including: Ludwig Wittgenstein, Samuel P. Huntington, Arnold J. Toynbee, Carol Quigley, and more. Additionally, authors such as: H.P. Lovecraft, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Henry Miller credited Spengler and his works as incredibly valuable to their own intellectual development. While Spengler may be brushed aside as nothing more than an outdated figure whose effect on history stops at the early 20th century, his ideas must be understood to properly analyze today's circumstances.

Today, political scientists, civil servants, and pundits involved in current affairs are forced to confront numerous policies and long-term agendas that are the direct result of Spengler and his followers. Policy agendas affecting both domestic and foreign policy have been built on the ideas purported by these figures and more importantly function as the basis of all future policies to be enacted. While many desire change in American foreign policy, this cannot be done without understanding the intellectual roots of modern American foreign policy, why, and how they have emerged overtime.

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The First African Republic: A Survey of The Political and Economic History of The Republic of Liberia

By Cooper Smith

In the motley assembly of African nation-states there stands a western coastal state whose history breaks from the standard narrative of the continent. The Republic of Liberia and Ethiopia were the only nations not to be colonized by the European imperial powers. Yet even with this company Liberia stands apart: Ethiopia's sovereignty was threatened by an encroaching Italian force, a force which the Ethiopians were successful in repelling. Liberia on the other hand faced no such episode. In all their scheming and chicanery with tribal chiefs, religious leaders, and petty kings, the European powers appeared to possess a level of respect for Liberian sovereignty comparable to the respect the "civilized" Western nations had for each other. A survey of the coastal nation is necessary in order to understand how Liberia became immunized to the plague of Western colonization.

The origins of the Republic of Liberia lie in an American resettlement movement which emerged at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. In 1790 the slave population of the United States was around 697,697, by 1820 the number of slaves had increased to 1,538,128. The growth of the slave population became a grave concern for many Americans. Many Americans detested slavery as corrosive to the morality of both slaves and their masters. American statesmen understood the finer feelings of the soul towards mankind as indispensable to the capacity of self-government under a republican form. To corrode these feelings would make citizens callous towards their fellow man, training them to view their neighbor as things to be dominated and controlled rather than equals within the body-politic. Slavery was abhorred for corrupting the morality of the slaves as well, stunting their impulse for self-reliance, and inculcating habits contrary to those necessary to sustain republican government. To the

manufacturing North, slavery threatened the very existence of its infant industries. The life blood of the Northern free-labor system rested in an artisan apprentice class to both produce value and expand the system by establishing independent workshops. It was readily apparent to the North that this expansion could not be accomplished while free-labor artisans were competing with a slave-labor class in the same states. The vast acres of land and labor necessary to continue a plantation economy precluded the possibility of independent artisan workshops springing up around them. Worse still, the Southern planters understood that expansion was necessary for the survival of the plantation economy. The concentration of slave populations in the South would cause the ultimate collapse of the plantation model through a surplus supply of slave labor, or through slave rebellions like the Gabriel Prosser rebellion of 1800, the Denmark Vesey rebellion of 1822, and the Nat Turner rebellion of 1831.

It was evident that the unregulated growth of the slave population was untenable for peace and security in the American system. Many religious groups and concerned statesmen called for the gradual emancipation of the slaves. This too was seen to be untenable as the cost of educating and incorporating the freed Blacks into a society holding deep prejudices against them seemed to solve none of the problems intended to be solved. The concerns and grievances with slavery precipitated the creation of the American Colonization Society (ACS). The object of the ACS was philanthropic in nature: to see the repatriation of manumitted slaves and free blacks to the African continent for the establishment of their own colonial settlements. To the ACS this was the best way of remedying the ills of slavery. Repatriation would provide American freemen a fresh start on a continent free from the prejudices of whites. The freedmen would be given their own land to till, cultivate, and improve, thereby revitalizing the spirit of self-reliance and ownership of one's labor, which slavery had suppressed. Most importantly these freedmen would

bring Protestant Christianity to the African continent. Through charity and good habits, the American Colonization Society set out to create a free, black, Protestant republic on the African continent, the efforts of which culminated in the founding of the Republic of Liberia.

The recolonization project was attractive to many free Black Americans. Motivated by a spirit of adventure, a mission to escape discrimination and prejudice, and the desire to own the fruits of their own labor, roughly 16,000 black freedmen emigrated to the Liberian settlement via the American Colonization Society. The emigrants to Liberia came from a variety of backgrounds. Some were slaves manumitted on the condition that they would be repatriated to Africa, others were slaves who earned enough money to purchase their freedom and sought a better life outside the United States, others still were freeborn blacks dissatisfied with second-class status.

It was the prerogative of the ACS that the black settlers concern themselves with agriculture rather than industry. The agrarian program of the ACS was guided by the ideals of Jeffersonian Democracy, the philosophy was that the best republicans were those who earned their daily bread by working the soil. Before the settlers could concern themselves with industrial labor, they first needed to conquer the natural environment around them through the agricultural improvement of the land. In 1819 the *Elizabeth* set sail as the first emigrant voyage of freedmen to Sierra Leone. The agents of the ACS were charged with negotiating purchases of land from the local tribes to build the first Liberian colonial settlements. The *Elizabeth* was equipped with clothing, building materials, munitions, and farming equipment, provided with assistance from the United States and safe passage by the Navy.

The conflict between the settlers and the native Africans began to germinate the moment they stepped foot on the continent. The first mission of the ACS agents was to secure a land

purchase from the native tribes. The natives, however, were reluctant to cooperate with the agents and settlers. The agents sought to build their settlement at Cape Mesurado, which was under the control of the Dei tribe. King Peter of the Dei refused to cooperate with the agents, believing that they would impede the operation of the slave trade and disrupt commerce between the tribes. There too was a cultural disconnect between the agents and African tribes. The African tribes did not possess the same concept of property as the Americans. To the Dei, land was not owned by a single individual but held in common for the benefit of all, placed within the public trust of the king. The king was incapable of disposing of land, especially to those he believed would harm the interests of the tribe. Having lost patience in negotiating with the natives the agents resorted to the compulsion of the pistol, forcing King Peter to give them land for a settlement.¹

The freedmen settlement perturbed the native Dei, Golla, Bassa, and Vai tribes, and so in 1822 a military assembly of the tribes conducted a series of invasions on the settlement in an affair known as the Dei-Settler War. The settlers were vastly outnumbered by the native forces, yet they were successful in repelling the persistent invasions with advanced firearms and cannons. The military superiority of the settlers forced the tribal coalition to begrudgingly accept the Cape Mesurado settlement. The kings of the native tribes acquiesced to peace treaties which opened trade between the settlers and the natives, allowing the settlers easier access to the hinterland of the colony.² The tribes were dissatisfied with this arrangement, in part because they did not fully understand the terms of the treaties they were forced to sign, but also because

¹M. B. Akpan, "Black Imperialism: Americo-Liberian Rule over the African Peoples of Liberia, 1841-1964," *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 7, no. 2 (1973): 217-36, <https://doi.org/10.2307/483540>.

²Jeremy I. Levitt, *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia: From 'Paternalitarianism' to State Collapse* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2005).

settlements were allowed to expand along the coast, excluding the natives from places of religious significance and areas integral to tribal life, such as fishing spots. For this, warfare and skirmishes would define the relationship between the settlers and the natives in the succeeding decades of the colonial period.

The sieges which befell the settlers, and their successful repulsions of those invasions, were formative in the development of the settlers' Americo-Liberian identity. The tribal raids revealed the work demanded for the recolonization project to be successful. The American-born settlers, being separate and distinct from the native Africans, saw these battles as a price to be paid for their freedom.

On July 26, 1847, the Republic of Liberia declared its independence from the American Colonization Society and established its own constitution of government. As the founding documents of Liberia, the Declaration of Independence and Constitution outlined the principles of Americo-Liberian identity and their place on the continent. The Declaration describes the Liberian people as having originated in America but coming to the African continent to improve their position from that which they had in America. The Declaration professed Liberia as a place of refuge for those downtrodden by the cruelties of slavery and affirmed the sovereignty of God. The Declaration professed the mission of Liberia to be the eradication of the African slave trade and the Christianization of the native African population. The Constitution of Liberia, shaped in the mold of the United States Constitution and the state constitutions, established an independent legislature, executive, and judiciary with the same powers as their American correlatives. The Constitution also included provisions peculiar to the Liberian mission, such as the reservation of

Liberian citizenship to those of African descent³ and the power of the President to appoint officers to instruct the native Africans in agriculture and husbandry.⁴

Indeed, the science of agriculture was greatly improved in the Pepper Coast with the arrival of the Americo-Liberians. The settlers brought with them modern farming technologies, techniques, and notions of private property ownership to the continent. The use of scythes, cradles, and sickles to grow cash crops was a system unknown to the native Africans who were familiar with using primitive hoes to grow disparate yields of rice.⁵ The communal system of property ownership was forced to make way for the Western notion of private property. Lots of acreage around the principal settlement were distributed to settlers in a manner resembling the homesteading system of the United States. As such, many native Africans were forced out of their territory as the land was cleared to make room for cash crops. Sugar cane in particular showed promise as a successful cash crop in the farm settlements along the St. Paul River in the 1840s. A prosperous milling industry sprung up around the sugar plantations in the following years, and in 1863 Liberia sold seventy-two thousand pounds of sugar to the United States, British settlements, and settler enclaves.⁶

³ “The great object of forming these Colonies, being to provide a home for the dispersed and oppressed children of Africa, and to regenerate and enlighten this benighted continent, none but Negroes or persons of Negro descent shall be eligible to citizenship in this Republic” Liberian Constitution (1847) Art. V § 13

⁴ “The improvement of the native tribes and their advancement in the arts of agriculture and husbandry, being a cherished object of this government, it shall be the duty of the President to appoint in each county some discreet person whose duty it shall be to make regular and periodical tours through the country for the purpose of calling the attention of the natives to these wholesome branches of industry, and of instructing them in the same, and the Legislature shall, as soon as it can conveniently be done, make provisions for these purposes by the appropriation of money” Liberian Constitution (1847) Art. V § 15.

⁵Santosh C. Saha, “Agriculture in Liberia during the Nineteenth Century: Americo-Liberians’ Contribution,” *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 22, no. 2 (1988), <https://doi.org/10.2307/485903>.

⁶Tom W. Shick, *Behold the Promised Land: A History of Afro-American Settler Society in Nineteenth-Century Liberia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

With the Declaration of Independence and Constitution ratified the Republic of Liberia stood as sovereign power among the company of nations. Liberia could now legitimately exercise the power of sovereigns, particularly the collection of tariffs and control over claimed territory. The first nation to recognize Liberian sovereignty, interestingly enough, was Great Britain, not the United States. Due to Southern opposition to the recognition of a Black African republic, United States recognition of Liberia was delayed until the Lincoln Administration. The treaties of commerce and friendship were not well received by British merchants and the natives. Merchants and natives had been conducting trade with each other decades prior to the establishment of the Republic. Recognition of Liberian sovereignty cut British merchants off from a reliable market, forcing them to work through the middle-man settler.⁷ Though the British merchants protested to their Foreign Office their complaints did not impede the amicable relations blossoming between the two nations. President Joseph Roberts of Liberia met with Foreign Secretary Palmerston on several occasions to solidify economic ties. The British hoped that Liberia could be a supplier of cotton to fuel its textile industry, gifting the nation five gin rollers in the hopes of spurring its cotton production.

Relations began to sour as the Liberians began seizing British ships for violation of the nation's navigation and commerce laws. Worse still the Liberians believed these British merchants were encouraging native discontent, as evident by a Kru assault of the Bassa Cove Settlement.⁸ The navigation controversies centered around the Gallinas River territory which was an area of dispute between Liberia and British Sierra Leone. Tensions reached a boiling point when Liberian forces seized two British merchant ships in the Mannah River in

⁷*Behold the Promised Land*

⁸*Behold the Promised Land*

1869. The merchants were convicted of violating the navigation laws and inciting native opposition to the government. The British government challenged the seizures and the convictions by sending a naval squadron to the Liberian coast. The British demanded an indemnity payment of nearly five thousand British pounds, a demand to which the Liberians were forced to assent. Liberia was cash poor at this time, so the nation resorted to marketable raw materials like palm oil and camwood to pay off the indemnity.

The indemnity and an empty treasury prompted the newly elected President Edward James Roye to take out a one hundred-thousand-pound loan from a British bank. The loan, Roye hoped, would be repaid through Liberia's agricultural sector, but the declining global price of sugar and coffee in conjunction with the erroneous terms of the high-risk loan only dug Liberia into a deeper hole.⁹ The fervent unpopularity of the loan prompted demonstrations in the capital, and Roye was forced to resign. The Republic elected its former President Joseph Jenkins to office once again in the hopes of providing stable leadership to bring the nation out of economic devastation.

Though Liberian sovereignty had been tested by tribal uprisings, violations of commercial law by foreign merchants, and indemnity to the British, Liberia enjoyed a juridical statehood over some six hundred miles of internal hinterland. This is to say that, with the exception of some territorial disputes, the international community recognized Liberian sovereignty over the land it claimed, though it had no formal civil or military control of the internal territory. In the 1880s Liberian sovereignty was threatened by the Berlin Conference and the Scramble for Africa. The European nations, in establishing "effective occupation" as the

⁹Agriculture in Liberia during the Nineteenth Century: Americo-Liberians' Contribution

standard for delineating territorial claims, placed Liberia's unoccupied internal territory in jeopardy of British and French expansion. Liberia tried courting foreign investors and engineers to assist in building military garrisons and civilian settlements in the Liberian frontier but were unsuccessful. Liberia itself engaged in the Scramble for Africa, to be a step ahead of the British and French, by moving to incorporate the native Muslim towns of Medina and Jenne.¹⁰ When Britain and France received word of this, they moved to limit Liberian power by acting upon their claims to disputed territory; in 1882 Britain took control of the long-contested Gallinas River district for Sierra Leone and in 1891 France annexed the territory between the Cavalla and San Pedro rivers for Cote d'Ivoire. Liberia formerly ended the territorial disputes between Britain and France through a set of treaties whereby Liberia formally recognized their claims to the contested areas, and Britain and France renounced their ancient claims to settled Liberian coastal territory. These treaties produced the political geography which Liberia possesses to this day, cementing its juridical statehood.

The Twentieth Century saw a revival of American commercial interest in Liberia. Liberia joined the Allies in World War I after Germany declared war against the United States. Liberia again declared war against Germany in World War II in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor. Liberia provided a strategic African base for the Allies in the African front. During the interbellum period Liberia's economy underwent developments in its resource sector, specifically in rubber and iron. Strengthened relations with the United States allowed the Firestone Rubber Company to establish modernized rubber plantations in the Republic, producing a valuable commodity and employing a substantial portion of the labor force.¹¹ Liberia's rubber supply was strategic for the

¹⁰“Black Imperialism: Americo-Liberian Rule over the African Peoples of Liberia, 1841-1964,”

¹¹George Dalton, “History, Politics, and Economic Development in Liberia,” *The Journal of Economic History* 25, no. 4 (1965): 569–91, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022050700058423>.

Allied military effort, since the global supply of rubber was controlled primarily by the Germans and the Japanese.

The Rubber Revolution in Liberia continued to drive Liberian economic development into the Twentieth Century. Between 1950 and 1960 Liberian government revenue grew eightfold, and the debt incurred by the nation grew to almost one hundred million dollars. The gross domestic product of the nation doubled during this period as well. Under the stewardship of the Firestone Company Americo-Liberian entrepreneurship was able to flourish as Liberians were educated on the agricultural methods and quality standards necessary to build a thriving rubber industry.¹² Though Liberia was making economic strides in the mid-Twentieth Century its gains were very unevenly distributed. Nearly all government investment went to developing Monrovia, the capital, into a modern city.¹³ Infrastructure projects were carried out under a plan of harmonizing the nation's economic sectors, which is to say the connection of Liberia's rubber plantations and ore mines to the capital city. The native Africans were largely left behind in this great leap forward for Liberia, the majority of them being forced into subsistence agriculture or wage-labor on the sugar and palm oil plantations.

To the extent that Liberia was a settler state from its very inception, it too suffered the same fate as Africa's other settler states. In 1989 the Americo-Liberian regime, which had ruled the country for nearly a century and a half, was overthrown in a military coup orchestrated by Samuel Doe, a member of the Krahn people. The military coup was followed by a decade of political repression and selective ethnic killings by the Doe dictatorship. Doe himself was later

¹²History, Politics, and Economic Development in Liberia

¹³Louis P. Beleky, "The Development of Liberia," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 11, no. 1 (1973): 43–60, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022278x00008077>.

overthrown in another coup, and the Republic was thrown into a period of civil war and genocide which lasted until 2003.

Some final consideration ought to be given as to why Liberia met this fate. Deficiencies in the strength of the Americo-Liberian nation can be attributed to the pusillanimity of the United States in African recolonization. Due to immense opposition from the Southern slaveholding class, the United States lacked the political will to engage in an active campaign of territorial purchase, repatriation, education, and investment of freedmen to Africa. The recolonization movement prevailed in popularity and perceived feasibility over abolitionism even up to the Lincoln administration. In fact, Lincoln created an emigration office in the Department of the Interior for the specific purpose of finding areas suitable for recolonization.¹⁴ In a conference with a delegation of Black intellectuals, Lincoln proposed the formation of settlements in Central America and Africa, drawing upon the successes of recolonization of Liberia.¹⁵ These plans never came to fruition, as abolition proved more expedient to the interests of Northern political and economic interests than recolonization and was likely a far more attractive outcome for enslaved Blacks. Consequently, Americo-Liberians never constituted more than ten percent of the Liberian population, making them extremely vulnerable to native upheavals. The lack of fresh blood to the continent likely resulted in an atrophied ruling class. The majority of progress in Liberian occurred under the presidencies of Roberts and Tolbert, the former serving for twelve years and the latter serving for twenty-seven. Each man made great strides for Liberia, but failed

¹⁴ United States Dept. of the Interior. (1862). *Report of Colonization and Emigration*. Washington, DC: GPO. <https://archive.org/details/reportoncoloniz00lincgoog/page/n6/mode/2up>

¹⁵ Lincoln, Abraham. *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. Volume 5, pp. 370-375, 1809-1865. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/lincoln5/1:812?rgn=div1;singlegenre=All;sort=occur;subview=detail;type=simple;view=fulltext;q1=April+16,+1862=trgt>

to build strong institutions which could inculcate habits of good government in their successors. A larger Americo-Liberian settler population could have increased the likelihood of intermarriage between settlers and natives, helping to diffuse the tensions between the two groups and foster cooperation and assimilation of the natives into settler systems. Instead, Liberia suffered the fate of both the apartheid state and the post-colonial state: the overthrow of the ruling settler class, followed by bloody civil war between adversarial ethnic and religious groups.

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The British Response to the Irish Potato Famine

By: David Kiniry

From 1846 to 1852, the British-controlled island, Ireland experienced one of the greatest and most tragic famines in modern world history. Due to the Irish agricultural economy being dependent on the potato, Irish society was ill-equipped when a potato blight ravaged the crop. While the official death toll of the blight is impossible to fully calculate due to the lack of official record keeping practices at the time, census numbers taken just before and after the famine, show there was a 1.5-million population drop from 1841 to 1851.¹ This complete devastation of the Irish people has been labeled many things: a famine, a tragedy, a devastating bout of bad luck combined with bad circumstances, but it is rarely labeled as preventable. While it may have been impossible to predict the potato blight, there were clear signs that a famine was to emerge, which the British Empire's Imperial Government ignored. The lack of action at the beginning blight, along with the laissez-faire relief effort that followed only served to exacerbate the famine to catastrophic levels. The British Imperial Government completely failed the Irish people, in both preparation and response, and their policies are therefore responsible for the utter devastation the Great Famine brought upon the Irish people, their society, and their culture.

Throughout the nineteenth century the British Empire directly controlled the island of Ireland. Thus, the British had massive influence on Ireland and governed it in every facet, including in directing the Irish economy in relation to the rest of the Empire. Britain placed a great emphasis on fostering potatoes as the main crop within Ireland as potato crops could be

¹ Cecil Woodham-Smith, essay, in *The Great Hunger: Ireland, 1845-1849* (London: Penguin, 1991), 411.

grown in rougher terrain as well as support a burgeoning Irish population more readily.² The limited space and the little fertile ground that the potato needed to grow allowed the British to use the more fertile lands of the Emerald Isle to serve their own purposes, only increasing the burden on the lynchpin of Irish agriculture that was the potato.³ This made the potato crucial for the survival of Irish people. As the Irish relied more on the potato, they continued to be unprepared to deal with any potential disruption to the annual potato crop.

The earliest traces of the potato blight were identified within letters from English botanists to the British Parliament in the year of 1845. In these letters, there is concern raised over the fact that there is a noticeable downturn in the annual crop yields.⁴ Due to the Imperial British Empire's management of the Irish agricultural system this matter would need to have been handled by direct action from either the British Parliament and Prime Ministers, Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel, or the Crown. When the blight began to impact the potato crop, the people began to suffer famine, and the British Government needed to provide relief.

The ultimate goal of the British Empire during this time period was to upgrade their economy through continually expanding both the material and volumes of raw materials that could fuel manufacturing. This constant expansion also continuously allowed for new trade routes to open, allowing the imperial economy to thrive beyond what was previously thought possible. Unfortunately, capitalism often placed profit above people within the empire, especially outside of its metropolitan population. This can best be seen throughout the early stages of the potato blight. As Prime Minister, Lord Russell took office in 1846, he believed in maintaining

²Dean M Braa, "The Great Potato Famine and the Transformation of Irish Peasant Society," *Science & Society* 6, no. 2 (1997): 193–215.

³ Braa "The Great Potato Famine and the Transformation of Irish Peasant Society." p. 200

⁴ Lyon Playfair and John Lindley to James Graham, "'Potatoes (Ireland)'," November 15, 1845.

the laissez-faire economy and believed the market would resolve the crisis overtime.⁵ This attempt to avoid disrupting the Irish economy throughout the beginning of the famine led to a massive missed opportunity by the British to prevent what would come.

It is important to keep in mind, Prime Minister John Russell was not the man originally who was in power at the beginning of the blight. While the Whig government led by Prime Minister Russell would control the position for much of the crisis, initially the Tories led parliament during the crisis. Led by Prime Minister Robert Peel, the Tory government became aware of the early stages of the blight in 1845. While the Tories undoubtedly did not wish to interfere with the Irish economy too much, they did provide a better relief plan than the future Whig-led government. The Tories provided one of the earliest forms of direct relief that Ireland would receive, this came in the form of the British Empire purchasing £100,000 worth of cornmeal, maize, and various other grain.⁶ While this would initially seem successful, this is actually one of the first examples of how the British Imperial relief efforts would fail to meet the specificities of the issues within Ireland. Since maize was not traditionally seen by Irish mills, the mills were ill-equipped for the complicated milling process thus delaying relief.⁷ This indicated one of the problems with the British Empire: they were either unfamiliar or never bothered to learn, about the specific aspects of the culture or capabilities of the people they conquered. Even the Irish people, who were geographically close to England, suffered due to a less than adequate initial relief effort by the Tory government. These failures would contribute to

⁵ Woodham-Smith p. 410-411

⁶ Woodham-Smith p. 54-56

⁷ Woodham-Smith p. 64-65

the split of the Tory government, leading to the inevitable replacement of Prime Minister Robert Peel with Whig John Russell.⁸

One of the biggest proponents of the laissez-faire economy was Her Majesty's Treasurer, Sir Charles Trevelyan, who also wielded considerably influence when it came to the relief effort.⁹ Due to the high degree of influence that Sir Charles Trevelyan had in the economic policy of the Whig government, he became the de facto decision maker when it came to the Irish relief efforts.¹⁰ The cruelty from the imperial system is evident here in the disregard of the Irish for the sake of the potential monetary gain for the empire. This is evident in the application of the market-first relief solutions advocated by Trevelyan. The justification of these policies highlighted the belief that human life was not worth saving if it meant monetary losses. Trevelyan dismissed plans to provide adequate relief to the Irish people due to the fear that they would become dependent on the British Empire's aid.¹¹ These early solutions to the beginnings of the potato blight demonstrates a lack of empathy from those within the British Empire's Government. While there were reports that indicated every Irish county's potato crop was being impacted with blight at concerning levels as early as January 1846, there was simply no action taken beyond leaning on the market to sort itself out and remedy the problem.¹² In continually pushing for potato monoculture, the British Empire set Ireland up to be ravished by just a couple bad yields of the crop. While the lack of action from the British Government in the beginning is

⁸Michael Doheny, *The Felon's Track; Or, History of the Attempted Outbreak in Ireland, Embracing the Leading Events of the Irish Struggle from the Year 1843 to the Close of 1848* (Dublin: M.H. Gill, 1951).

⁹Ciarn Murchadha, essay, in *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony 1845-1852* (London: New York: Continuum, 2011), 50.

¹⁰Murchadha p. 50

¹¹Murchadha p. 54

¹²Rep., *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into Matters Connected with the Failure of the Potato Crop*, 1846.

appalling, it is not comparable to the British Government's actions during the worst years of the famine that had yet to come.

Once it became undeniable that the Irish people were suffering under the potato blight, there were extra relief efforts made to address the crisis. In the early months of 1847, one of the earliest forms of relief came in the form of soup kitchens and workhouses.¹³ Soup kitchens have a near identical meaning today, but workhouses are a bit more of an unfamiliar concept. These workhouses were poorhouses that operated much like tenement housing.¹⁴ The overcrowded and unsanitary nature of these workhouses became a breeding ground for various diseases, which would devastate the malnourished Irish paupers.¹⁵ Furthermore, unwilling to fully fund a mass relief effort, the British Government forced Irish landlords to fund this initial relief effort through various taxes.¹⁶ This partial commitment to initial relief effort by the British would prove to be just as damaging to the Irish people as previous half-hearted attempts at resolving the crisis. Due to the way these workhouses and soup kitchens were financed, landlords could in turn reduce their financial responsibility by evicting their tenants.¹⁷ This would further exasperate the housing crisis that had begun to make itself apparent in the years just preceding the Great Famine.

These initial "hard" responses to the growing famine within Ireland all shared something in common, the British failed to fully commit to any of their relief efforts. This is due to the prevailing British sentiment about the growing famine. London believed the majority of the

¹³"Soup Kitchens and Workhouses," Ask about Ireland, accessed December 1, 2022, <https://www.askaboutireland.ie/learning-zone/primary-students/subjects/history/history-the-full-story/ireland-in-the-19th-centu/soup-kitchens-and-workhou/>.

¹⁴ "Soup Kitchens and Workhouses." n.d.

¹⁵ "Soup Kitchens and Workhouses." n.d.

¹⁶ I. Francis Stewart Leland Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine. Volume II* (London: Fontana Press, 1973). p. 30-32

¹⁷ Lyons p. 32-34

conditions that led to the potato blight were caused by the Irish people.¹⁸ The British felt that their resources were being wasted on helping the Irish ease the famine, leading to the belief that Ireland needed to handle the famine rather than the British Empire

The “Gregory Clause” of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1847 was especially notorious. It established that the Irish would be required to give up all but one-quarter acre of their land prior to receiving any relief from the British government.¹⁹ This only further facilitated the mass displacement of Irish people, leaving them with a choice between starving but holding one’s homestead or giving up everything for the potential of receiving inadequate relief. The strain of the potato blight on the Irish economy, combined with the economic burdens of the early relief efforts, as well as the predatory Gregory Clause proved to be too much for the Irish housing economy. Mass evictions followed and starving peasants overwhelmed the workhouses.²⁰ While it is impossible to track exactly how many evictions occurred as documentation only began in 1849, it is estimated that hundreds of thousands of people were evicted from their homes.²¹ The rapaciousness of the imperial system would be illustrated through the “investment” the British made into Irish land. The Encumbered Estates Act of 1849 allowed mortgaged or abandoned Irish properties to be auctioned off at exceptionally low rates, primarily to English investors.²² They bought large swaths of Irish land, an estimated 5,000,000

¹⁸Chris Morash and Richard Hayes, *“Fearful Realities”: New Perspectives on the Famine* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000). p. 60

¹⁹1. “Poor Law Amendment Act of 1847 and the Gregory Clause,” Encyclopedia, accessed December 1, 2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/international/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/poor-law-amendment-act-1847-and-gregory-clause>.

²⁰ “Soup Kitchens and Workhouses.” n.d.

²¹1. Ciarán Reilly, “That Diabolical System’: Evictions in Famine Ireland.,” RTÉ, 2020, <https://www.rte.ie/history/famine-ireland/2020/0805/1157526-that-diabolical-system-evictions-in-famine-ireland/>.

²²Padraig G Lane, “The General Impact of the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849 on Counties Galway and Mayo,” *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society* 33 (1972): 44–74, <https://doi.org/http://www.jstor.org/stable/25535443>.http://www.historicalballinrobe.com/page_id__166.aspx#:~:tex t=The%20Encumbered%20Estates%20Acts%2C%201848%20and%201849%2C%20allowed.

acres of the 32,595 square miles total was sold over the years of 1849-1857.²³ This means that nearly one quarter of the entire nation of Ireland was bought up by various investors during one of the greatest famines in world history. Britain's imperial mindset was not exclusive to the Government, it was further shared by the citizens of the empire. Government officials and British citizens alike placed the economic advancement of Great Britain over the well-being of the entirety of the nation of Ireland.

This mindset of placing the British economy over the individual needs of people was no better illustrated than the decision surrounding exporting food out of Ireland.

Chart 1: Irish Grain Trade, 1842-51 (All numbers in 1,000 quarter)²⁴

| Year | Exports | Imports | Surplus | Maize Import |
|------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 1842 | 2,583 | 280 | +2,258 | 20 |
| 1843 | 3,206 | 74 | +3,132 | 3 |
| 1844 | 2,801 | 150 | +2,651 | 5 |
| 1845 | 3,252 | 147 | +3,105 | 34 |
| 1846 | 1,826 | 987 | +839 | 614 |
| 1847 | 970 | 4,519 | -3,549 | 3,287 |
| 1848 | 1,953 | 2,186 | -233 | 1,546 |
| 1849 | 1,437 | 2,908 | -1,471 | 1,897 |
| 1850 | 1,329 | 2,357 | -1,028 | 1,159 |
| 1851 | 1,325 | 3,158 | -1,833 | 1,745 |

²³The General Impact of the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849 on Counties Galway and Mayo

²⁴Cormac Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

This chart illustrates that while there was a concerted effort to lower exports, increase imports, as well as import maize as an additional food source for the starving Irish, there was still a significant amount of food being exported from the famine-stricken nation. While it is commendable that the British Imperial Government did attempt to make relief efforts in terms of reducing food exports while simultaneously increasing the imports, when compared with the total amount of the potato crop that was lost each year due to the blight, relief was simply inadequate to make up that difference. In 1844, a mere few years before the blight, the potato yield would be an astounding 14,862 tons for the year.²⁵ In comparison, in 1847 the total potato crop yield in the now blight stricken nation would only manage to produce a paltry 2,046 tons of usable potatoes, or one twelfth of the total amount that was produced just prior to the onset of the Great Famine.²⁶ In 1855, the yield of 6,287 tons of usable potatoes was still less than half of the pre-famine amount.²⁷

This disparity between the pre-blight and post-blight numbers is only further indicative of the influence that the imperialist policies had in bringing about the conditions necessary for the blight to occur. As discussed earlier, the economic control that Britain exercised over the Irish people greatly influenced their farming practices as well. When Irish population grew in the years prior to the famine, the British would encourage the farming of the potato as it was cheap and easy to grow, while also being able to adequately sustain the burgeoning Irish population.²⁸

This created a cycle in which the ease of growing the potato allowed the Irish population to

²⁵Austin Bourke, "The Extent of the Potato Crop in Ireland at the Time of the Famine," *Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, 1959. p. 11

²⁶ Bourke, p. 11

²⁷ Bourke, p. 11

²⁸ Braa, p. 199

grow, thus necessitating (with imperial guidance) the growing mono-agricultural system of relying on the potato as the lynchpin for Irish society. The overreliance on the potato became evident once the blight began to have much less impact on the yearly potato yield within Ireland. While the yield of 1855 more than tripled in comparison to its absolute low in 1847, it was still less than half of it was at the absolute peak just prior to the blight taking a stranglehold on the crop.²⁹ This shows that some of the main factors in the absolutely devastating impact that the blight had on Irish society was undoubtedly an imperial consequence. Once the Irish population fell because of the massive death toll of the Famine, the potato crop bounced back but to a more natural yield, rather than the exorbitance of the years prior. The push for the Irish agricultural industry to focus solely on the potato, as both a means for personal consumption and economic factors, is what set up the conditions that caused the Irish Potato Famine to be so devastating.

The overall impact that these years was absolutely debilitating to all facets of Irish life. When something as simple as having enough food to feed one's family becomes uncertain, it becomes difficult to maintain the other fundamentals of a functional society. The easiest and clearest way to illustrate the utter devastation to Irish society would be the death tolls.

Unfortunately, like with most events of this nature, it is impossible to pinpoint an exact number that died during the Great Famine. The best estimate that can be looked at are census numbers, unfortunately due to a bombing of the public records office in 1922, most census records prior to the 20th century were destroyed.³⁰ However, thankfully there exists estimates that can be used to easily show the rapid drop in population that Ireland experienced due to the imperial response to the potato blight.

²⁹ Bourke, p. 11

³⁰“Ruin of Public Record Office Marked Loss of Great Archive,” The Irish Times, March 30, 2012, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/ruin-of-public-record-office-marked-loss-of-great-archive-1.1069843>.

Chart 2: Population of Ireland, 1841-1926³¹

| Year | Population in Thousands |
|------|-------------------------|
| 1841 | 8,175 |
| 1851 | 6,552 |
| 1861 | 5,799 |
| 1881 | 5,175 |
| 1901 | 4,459 |
| 1926 | 4,229 |

While this does show the short-term impact, with some of the drop-off from 1841-1851, the long-term impact of the potato blight on the Irish people is still evidently shown. Even eight decades after the active period of famine, Ireland was still losing population at a steady rate due to the long-term consequences of the Famine, especially emigration.

As discussed earlier, some of the major consequences of the potato blight were felt within the economy. The tax strain combined with the restrictions upon receiving aid led to mass evictions and rampant land speculation by the British. With the options in Ireland essentially being limited to being forced into the workhouses or being starved, many families simply no longer considered Ireland to be a viable place to survive let alone live. What this resulted in was mass emigration of the Irish people in the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Between 1845 and 1855 alone, more than 1.8 million Irish immigrants arrived

³¹Cormac Grada, "The Population of Ireland 1700-1900 : A Survey," *Annales de Démographie Historique*, 1979, 281–99, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3406/adh.1979.1425>.

in the United States.³² While the comprehensive numbers are difficult to track exactly due to the substandard records of the 19th century, it is estimated that Irish emigration totaled upwards of 6.5 million Irish people left Ireland for various destinations.³³ While this had the unintended effect of spreading Irish culture out into the rest of the world, it meant that Irish culture and society were weakened on the island itself.³⁴ The English had already been suppressing different facets of Irish culture prior to the Great Famine, with the imperial language becoming the language of business and the Irish language having been relegated to the poor classes by the start of the 19th century.³⁵ The potato blight only accelerated this erasure, with the English language becoming increasingly necessary to survive, and the Irish language having been largely eliminated, only recently rebounding in usage.³⁶ It is clear that the consequences of the potato blight making Ireland so inhospitable for that terrible half-decade had a lasting impact on both the strength of the Irish population, as well as its culture.

Calling the Great Famine a tragedy falling on the nation of Ireland is disingenuous, as there really was no strong Irish nation at the time. Irish culture was infringed upon by English customs, and there was no sort of self-governance that Ireland had as they were truly just a cog in the British Empire's imperial machine. It was not the Irish people's prerogative to become so reliant upon the single potato crop, it was the British's stranglehold on both the agricultural industry and an ever-increasing influence on the land ownership in Ireland. Yet, in spite of the complete lack of Irish autonomy, the prevailing British attitude to the onset of the famine was

³²Irial Glynn, "Irish Emigration History," University College Cork, 2017, <https://www.ucc.ie/en/emigre/history/>.

³³"Emigration from Ireland in the 19th Century," Irish Genealogy Toolkit, 2019, <https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/emigration-Ireland-19th-century.html>.

³⁴Annie Bruce, "World's Biggest St. Patrick's Day Celebrations," *Fodors Travel Guide*, March 14, 2017, <https://doi.org/https://www.fodors.com/news/events/worlds-biggest-st-patricks-day-celebrations>.

³⁵Bernard Jackson, "The Irish Language: A History and Overview," Dialang, May 12, 2021, <https://dialang.org/the-irish-language-a-history-and-overview>.

³⁶ Jackson

that it was an Irish problem that needed to be solved by Ireland, and more importantly with Ireland's pocketbooks. The British Imperial government, both the Torys and Whigs, subscribed to the laissez-faire approach to economics, which encouraged as little interference, and thus aid, with the economy. This economic influence was seen heavily within the decision to never fully halt the export of food out of Ireland, while also burdening landlords with harsh taxes in order to fund the relief soup kitchens and workhouses. The British economy was always placed before the needs of the Irish subjects to the crown. A similar phenomenon, to an equally if not more horrifying degree, would happen to British India during World War II as Winston Churchill made the decision to deny food to a famine-stricken India in order to feed British troops for the war.³⁷ It is simply the imperial style of governance that will always put the interests of the overall empire, making it less likely that necessary relief efforts take place in times of crisis in individual nations within the empire.

The Irish Potato Famine set Ireland back as a nation, as a people, and as a culture for a century. It has become a common thread for people with Irish ancestry to be able to trace back as to the initial reason for their family to have left Ireland. The Great Famine became the defining event in nineteenth century Irish history, with another event not exceeding its consequences its magnitude until the Troubles in the late 1900s, over a century later. This did not have to be the legacy of the potato blight though. While this blight devastated the potato, it did not have to completely devastate the Irish people. The agricultural conditions imposed by the British, reliance of the potato to support a rapidly growing Irish population, and the slow initial response to the identification of a possible blight increased the likelihood that the blight would prove to be

³⁷Madhusree Mukerjee, *Churchill's Secret War : The British Empire and the Ravaging of India during World War II* (London: New York Basic Books, 2011).

more devastating than necessary. Furthermore, the relief efforts themselves fell short of what was necessary for the Irish people to stave off the mass starvation that was occurring. The refusal to fully stop exporting Irish goods, the initial failure of understanding what food goods Irish infrastructure was equipped to handle, the failure of the soup kitchens and workhouses made the situation far worse. While the British Imperial government cannot be blamed for the blight taking hold upon the potato, but it their imperial influence increased the destructive nature of the blight. The mass evictions and emigration, something that British land speculators took full advantage of, only served to further extend English influence within Ireland. The erasure of culture, continuing population declines, and the struggle for autonomy continued to be felt deeply throughout the twentieth century, with the relationship between Ireland and England is forever defined by tension and violence. The preparations and famine relief efforts put in effect by the British Empire were, while in line with imperial expectations, not even close to being adequate. Today, the consequences of the Imperial British are still felt throughout the world.

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From Monarchy to Territory: American Annexation of Hawaii

By Kayleigh Zeman

In the latter years of the 1880s and early 1890s, the Hawaiian kingdom experienced many internal struggles and economic hardships that destabilized the monarchy and opened the door for the government to be overthrown. This opportunity created an intense division within American politics over annexing Hawaii as a United States territory and resulted in extensive media coverage for both sides of the debate which extended into a broader debate over the possibility of the United States as a global power. The annexation question polarized American politics and cast a shadow over American diplomatic activity in the Islands themselves. This debate, beginning with Queen Liliuokalani's deposition in 1893, took almost half a decade to be decided, and ultimately resulted in the acquisition of Hawaii as an American territory at the turn of the 20th century. This victory for pro-annexationists, mainly due to support generated from coinciding foreign policy conflicts, simultaneously invigorated American expansionism and marked the beginnings of American imperialism abroad.

The Hawaiian monarchy began around the mid-1790s and saw eight ruling monarchs over a period of one hundred years until its eventual overthrow in 1893. King Kalakaua, coronated in 1874, became stained with political instability and corruption scandals throughout his reign.¹ Kalakaua's most notable accomplishment was signing a reciprocity treaty with the United States in 1875, which would later be renewed in 1887. This treaty marked the beginning of Hawaiian relations with the U.S and gave Hawaiian sugar a favorable position within American markets, which in turn provided a major boost to the Hawaiian economy.² In 1887,

¹ Gerrit Parmele Judd, *Hawaii, an Informal History* (New York (State): Collier Books, Collier Macmillan, 1961), 1-92.

² Judd, 1915. *Hawaii, an Informal History*, 94-100.

towards the end of his rule, Kalakaua, under direct threat of violence, signed the Bayonet Constitution into law. This Constitution, proposed by various American businessmen and missionaries, reduced the power of the Hawaiian monarchy and established a cabinet of mostly white settlers that stood against indigenous sovereignty. Under this Constitution, acts of the monarch would not be considered valid unless first approved by the newly created cabinet.³ Additionally, the Constitution led to the majority of native Hawaiian voters to be disenfranchised.⁴ Though this constitution was unpopular with the Native population, it laid the foundation for future annexation arguments and played a significant role in the eventual deposition of the monarchy.⁵ On the American front, President Benjamin Harrison signed a bill known as the “McKinley Tariff” into law three years later, which altered the way foreign sugar was taxed. Named after Congressman and would-be President William McKinley, this tariff admitted foreign raw sugar into the U.S duty-free (reversing previously established tariffs⁶) while a bounty of two cents on the pound was paid for American-produced sugar.⁷ This legislation completely negated the “differential advantage” Hawaiian sugar had in the American market under the previously established 1875 reciprocity treaty.⁸ Signed in the last year of Kalakaua’s reign, this American policy had devastating consequences for the Hawaiian economy and set up economic disaster for Kalakaua’s successor.

³ Ralph S. Kuykendall, and A. Grove Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1961), 171.

⁴ Wynell Schamel and Charles E. Schamel. *The 1897 Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii*. (*Social Education* 63, no. 7 (Nov, 1999)), 403.

⁵ Daniel M. Cobb, *Say We Are Nations: Documents of Politics and Protest in Indigenous America Since 1887* (H. Eugene and Lillian Youngs Lehman Series. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 13.

⁶ Kuykendall, and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 175.

⁷ Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Kalakaua Dynasty, 1874-1893*. (3. Vol. 3. 3 vols. The Hawaiian Dynasty. Honolulu, HI: University Press of Hawaii, 1967), 466.

⁸ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 175.

After Kalakaua's death on January 20, 1891, his sister Liliuokalani was named to the throne.⁹ One of Liliuokalani's primary goals was restoring the old powers of the monarchy by reversing and replacing the 1887 constitution. In her own words, Liliuokalani tried to "restore some of the ancient rights of [her] people"¹⁰ that she felt had been trampled under the Bayonet Constitution. Drawing on historical precedence, Liliuokalani justified her intentions by highlighting, "the right to grant a constitution [...] has been, since the very first one was granted, a prerogative of the Hawaiian sovereigns."¹¹ She additionally claimed that "petitions poured in from every part of the Islands for a new constitution"¹² and that by attempting to draft a new constitution, she was following the will of her people. Liliuokalani's new constitutional ambitions were popular with natives but heavily unpopular with American businessmen, who viewed her intentions as a major threat.¹³ This would eventually play a key role in her deposition. Another major issue Liliuokalani had to address during her reign was the economic depression that resulted from the McKinley tariff instituted just before Kalakaua's death. This tariff, while beneficial to Americans, devastated Hawaii as the loss of its "differential advantage" in U.S markets forced Hawaiian sugar to compete with other nations like Cuba. Throughout Hawaii, sugar production quickly decreased, property values dropped, wages and employment stagnated before declining, and sparked an overall economic depression for the islands.¹⁴ The Queen attempted to negotiate with the U.S to limit the devastation but neither side could agree

⁹ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 173.

¹⁰ Liliuokalani, *My Own Nation, 1899*, as quoted in Cobb. *Say We Are Nations: Documents of Politics and Protest in Indigenous America Since 1887*, 14.

¹¹ Queen of Hawaii Liliuokalani, 1838-1917. *Hawaii's Story d by Hawaii's Queen, Liliuokalani*. (No place, unknown, or undetermined: Lee and Shepard, 1898), 238.

¹² Liliuokalani, *Hawaii's Story d by Hawaii's Queen, Liliuokalani*, 230.

¹³ Gavan Daws. *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands*. (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 266.

¹⁴ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 175.

on terms.¹⁵ This economic instability fostered the beginnings of annexation discussions, as some viewed annexation as a way to counter the depression and re-invigorate the sugar industry.¹⁶

Economy aside, Liliuokalani's focus on retracting the 1887 constitution made many Americans in Hawaii, particularly Minister John Stevens, lawyer Lorrin Thurston, and Secretaries of State James Blaine and John Foster, nervous and sparked talks of resistance. While annexation was initially proposed as an option, the opposition (led by Minister Stevens) focused on taking control of the government away from Liliuokalani.¹⁷ These men then formed the Annexation Club in early 1892, a secret group that opposed revising the 1887 constitution and promoted annexation.¹⁸ As Liliuokalani continued to push her constitutional reform agenda, the Annexation Club (supported by some Washington politicians) formed the Citizens Committee of Public Safety, which proposed establishing a temporary government as a later avenue for annexation.¹⁹ In the process of planning this coup, Stevens used his position as a minister to summon 160 U.S Marine soldiers into Honolulu's harbor, which he claimed was to "protect [...] American life and property."²⁰ The Committee then took possession of *Aliiolani Hale*, a main government building, and declared the monarchy overthrown on January 17th, 1893. The Republic of Hawaii was enacted in its place, led by Judge Sanford B. Dole.²¹ This republic was intended as an "interim government [...] to keep the way clear for annexation whenever the United States government became ready to take up the question."²² In her cession of power, Liliuokalani claimed to be yielding to the force of the United States, which made its presence

¹⁵ Judd, 1915. *Hawaii, an Informal History*, 101.

¹⁶ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 175.

¹⁷ Kees van. Dijk, *The Failed Annexation of Hawaii*. (In *Pacific Strife*, 359–80. Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 366-369.

¹⁸ Kuykendall. *The Kalakaua Dynasty, 1874-1893*. 532-3.

¹⁹ Dijk. *The Failed Annexation of Hawaii*, 371.

²⁰ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 178.

²¹ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 178.

²² Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 183.

known through Steven's calling of American troops into the Islands.²³ This would go on to be a large part of President Cleveland's later investigation into the monarchy's overthrowal.

With the monarchy's overthrowal, the annexation question sparked heavy controversy throughout the United States and created intense debate surrounding not only Hawaiian annexation but also America's role as an imperial global power. Many supporters of annexation were also pro-expansionist, viewing Hawaii and her islands as a lucrative opportunity for America that could not be ignored. For the United States, Hawaii offered a brand-new market for American goods²⁴ while simultaneously providing large amounts of sugar and cheap labor back to the American public.²⁵ The desire for Hawaii played into the economic belief during the 1890s that "the surplus of manufactures, if not marketed overseas, would topple domestic prices, retard economic growth, and possibly spark labor turmoil, even social revolution."²⁶ Hawaii offered the perfect opportunity to expand American markets and prevent these fears, while additionally providing beneficial goods for the seemingly small price of annexation. Control over the Hawaiian Islands would also provide American ships unrestricted commercial access within the Pacific and would considerably strengthen U.S trade relations.²⁷

This economic perspective went hand-in-hand with an ideological perspective rooted in beliefs surrounding the early American ideal, Manifest Destiny. Beginning with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the United States regularly used Manifest Destiny as an argument to justify westward expansion and territorial acquisition.²⁸ This argument resurfaced strongly from the

²³ Dijk. *The Failed Annexation of Hawaii*, 372.

²⁴ Thomas J. Osborne. *Trade or War? America's Annexation of Hawaii Reconsidered*. (*Pacific Historical Review* 50, no. 3, 1981), 285–307.

²⁵ Osborne, *Trade or War? America's Annexation of Hawaii Reconsidered*, 303.

²⁶ Osborne, *Trade or War? America's Annexation of Hawaii Reconsidered*, 298.

²⁷ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*. (*The Advocate of Peace (1894-1920)* 60, no. 1, 1898), 8–10.

²⁸ Tom Coffman. *Nation Within: The History of the American Occupation of Hawai'i*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 53.

very outset of the debate and formed one of the main pillars of the pro-annexation platform. The term “manifest destiny” dates back to the 1840s and meant that “it was manifest or evident that the United States was destined to expand,” though the sentiment of expansion preceded the term.²⁹ By the time the Hawaii debate occurred, Manifest Destiny as a historical precedent had been well-established. Some annexationists pointed to other examples of annexation in American history, mainly that of Texas, New Mexico, and Alaska, and used these states to push back against rhetoric that territorial annexation went against American morals.³⁰ Others went so far as to argue that America’s “manifest destiny [was] to become a great Pacific power,”³¹ and viewed acquiring Hawaii as the first step at fulfilling that destiny. More radical believers went beyond American history to draw comparisons between the United States and other historically successful empires. One annexationist asked, “are we going to limit our bounds as the Romans did after the time of Trajan?”³² while another cited German Chancellor Otto van Bismarck’s beliefs that, “when a nation ceases to acquire it begins to lose.”³³ These comparisons were used to establish credibility and historical legitimacy for Hawaiian annexation while simultaneously tapping into nationalist sentiments around America being a successful empire to further build support. All in all, arguments rooted in Manifest Destiny were powerful and added strength to the pro-annexation side of the debate.

Political strategy and advantage in geopolitical relations abroad was another major argument made for annexation. One proclaimed annexationist, Arthur Curtiss James, argued that

²⁹ Mark Joy. *American Expansionism, 1783-1860: A Manifest Destiny?* (Seminar Studies. Hoboken: Routledge. 2014), xxvi-xxvii.

³⁰ Arthur Curtiss James. *Advantages of Hawaiian Annexation*. (*The North American Review* 165, no. 493, 1897), 758-60.

³¹ *American Law Review, Advocation of the Annexation of Hawaii*. (*American Law Review* 32, 1898), 110.

³² *American Law Review, Advocation of the Annexation of Hawaii*, 111.

³³ Frank L. Coombs. *A Plea for the Annexation of Hawaii*. (*Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine* 30, no. 177), 273-275.

“[by] holding Hawaii, [...] our western coast would be safe against attack from any country.”³⁴ Curtiss touched upon one of the most influential arguments as Hawaii’s position within the Pacific offered a unique place for a robust U.S military presence while additionally keeping the island out of the hands of other foreign powers.³⁵ One poll of House representatives revealed that, “sixteen of the fifty-nine members of the House that spoke in favor of annexation indicated that the main reason [...] [was] to protect the western coastline in the future.”³⁶ Many also argued that by taking the islands, the United States would prevent other countries, particularly Japan, from conquering Hawaii for themselves and thereby pose a bigger threat to the U.S.³⁷ President Benjamin Harrison himself argued in an address to the Senate that “it is essential that none of the other great powers shall secure these islands” and insisted that “such a possession would not consist with our safety and with the peace of the world.”³⁸ Additionally, American possession of the Hawaiian Islands would result in “the United States dominating the Pacific,”³⁹ which would further strengthen the power and domination of the American military globally. Hawaii held a unique geographic position at the center of the Pacific, which acted as an important place for American military vessels to refuel during various military engagements abroad,⁴⁰ which became crucial during the Spanish-American war.⁴¹ Some also argued that annexing Hawaii fell under Congressional powers to “provide for the common defense”⁴² and was thereby a necessary

³⁴ James. *Advantages of Hawaiian Annexation*, 759.

³⁵ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*, 9.

³⁶ Osborne, *Trade or War? America’s Annexation of Hawaii Reconsidered*, 294.

³⁷ William Michael Morgan. *The Anti-Japanese Origins of the Hawaiian Annexation Treaty of 1897*. (*Diplomatic History* 6, no. 1, 1982), 23–44.

³⁸ Benjamin Harrison. *February 15, 1893: Message Regarding Hawaiian Annexation*. (Miller Center, February 23, 2017)

³⁹ Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands*, 288.

⁴⁰ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*, 9.

⁴¹ Kees van. Dijk. *The United States Becomes a Colonial Empire*. (In *Pacific Strife*, 381–400. Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 398.

⁴² American Law Review, *Advocation of the Annexation of Hawaii*, 111.

action for the government to undertake. By framing annexation as an issue of national security, President Harrison and many other pro-annexationists played on American fears and reinforced the idea that annexation was a natural and essential step for United States foreign policy.

On the other hand, many Americans were firmly against United States acquisition of Hawaii and argued that exercising American power in an imperial context would violate democratic values. Many Americans took pride in democracy and the freedoms enumerated within the United States Constitution, which helped build the foundation for the anti-annexation platform. Standing against annexation, one pro-peace group argued that “it is not the duty of the United States to extend its free institutions by methods which trample under foot the very principles on which our civilization is built.”⁴³ Since most Native Hawaiians did not want to be annexed, anti-annexationists argued that annexation would directly counter the fundamental aspects of American representative democracy.⁴⁴ Many also argued that annexation only served the interests of oligarchs within the Islands, to which American annexation “would be adding wrong to wrong.”⁴⁵ Countering the Manifest Destiny argument made by pro-expansionists, this quotation highlights the high moral standard many Americans held the country to and argued that annexation would tarnish that standard. Some anti-annexationists tried to counter examples of prior annexation (like Texas or Alaska) by emphasizing America should not push past existing costal limits and should instead be bound by each oceanic coast.⁴⁶ This stance can also be seen in speeches made by Grover Cleveland, who stood against Hawaiian annexation throughout his second presidential term. In one speech, Cleveland declared that “the United States, in aiming to maintain itself as one of the most enlightened nations, would do its citizens gross injustice if it

⁴³ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*, 9.

⁴⁴ Schamel and Schamel. *The 1897 Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii*, 403.

⁴⁵ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*, 9.

⁴⁶ Coombs. *A Plea for the Annexation of Hawaii*, 273.

applied to its international relations any other than a high standard of honor and morality.”⁴⁷

Cleveland’s remarks embody sentiments felt throughout the country that annexation would reflect poorly on the U.S government and be hypocritical to democratic values held sacred to millions of citizens.

Additionally, the anti-annexation argument countered claims that Hawaii would strengthen the American military and offer valuable strategic military positioning. While some argued that Hawaii would act as a key re-coaling station for Pacific missions, others disagreed and insisted Hawaiian possession would instead put an undue strain on the Navy. Hawaii’s position in the middle of the Pacific, thousands of miles from the western coastline, would greatly expand the area which the Navy would be obligated to defend.⁴⁸ This would require costly expansion for the Navy and an overall increase in military spending. The additional territory would also result in American “entanglement of in all the vexatious, annoying, and disgraceful international complications from which [...] we have, on principle, kept ourselves free.”⁴⁹ This excerpt highlights potential unnecessary foreign policy engagements for the United States that when paired with costly military expansions, further emphasizes the downsides of Hawaiian acquisition. Proper usage of the American military was another aspect of this anti-annexation platform. One anti-annexation group argued that “the whole system of American civil and religious liberty would thus be imperiled before an all-devouring militarism, against which [...] our nation has always stood.”⁵⁰ This group warned against overly aggressive uses of American military forces, fearing that annexing Hawaii would push the U.S into the footsteps of

⁴⁷ Grover Cleveland. *December 18, 1893: Message Regarding Hawaiian Annexation*. (Miller Center, February 23, 2017)

⁴⁸ Coombs. *A Plea for the Annexation of Hawaii*, 273.

⁴⁹ The Advocate of Peace. *The Annexation of Hawaii*. (*The Advocate of Peace (1894-1920)* 59, no. 7, 1897) 153.

⁵⁰ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*, 9.

other nations that were characterized by their militarism. Fears surrounding American militarism combined with excessive costs and unnecessary foreign policy concerns represented another facet of the opposition to annexation.

Contrary to the beliefs of many American annexationists, the majority of Native Hawaiians were bitterly against incorporation into the United States since the debate's origin. Native protests began in the early 1890s and culminated in an armed revolt in January 1895. Though this revolt was immediately suppressed by the Provincial government forces, it represented some of the earliest and strongest opposition to American involvement by the native population. Another important example of native resistance was the 1897 Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii, which was presented to Congress by the Hawaiian Patriot League and Queen Liliuokalani herself. This petition contained the signatures of nearly 22,000 Native Hawaiians (out of a population of 39,000)⁵¹ advocating for “the independent autonomy of the islands of Hawaii.”⁵² Countering arguments that Hawaii was incapable of self-government, one activist group challenged, “all the dissensions, riots, and troubles recorded in [...] these islands have ever been *by or through* foreigners seeking to wrench the power [...] from natives”⁵³ These sentiments were held by members of all social classes, extending up to Queen Liliuokalani herself. After her deposition, Liliuokalani wrote “*Hawaii's Story'd by Hawaii's Queen, Liliuokalani*” which intertwines her autobiography with Hawaii's complex history. She writes, “my people, about forty thousand in number, have in no way been consulted by those, three thousand in number, who claim the right to destroy the independence of Hawaii.”⁵⁴ This

⁵¹ Schamel and Schamel. *The 1897 Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii*, 403-4.

⁵² Noenoe K. Silva. *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) 131.

⁵³ Silva. *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*, 131.

⁵⁴ Liliuokalani, *Hawaii's Story d by Hawaii's Queen, Liliuokalani*, 335.

declaration references native movements against annexation and uses them to contextualize the true minority of pro-annexationists within the Hawaiian Islands. She even pleads with American audiences, writing that for Hawaiians, “their form of government is as dear to them as yours is precious to you. Quite as warmly as you love your country, so they love theirs.”⁵⁵ This excerpt appeals to Americans’ national pride and uses that pride to reframe annexation from the view of Liliuokalani and her people. When these statements are examined in conjunction with the protests and petitions issued throughout the annexation process, it highlights how unwilling a majority of natives were to American involvement.

It took almost seven years for Hawaii to make the transition from a deposed monarchy to a formally annexed United States territory, as annexationists faced various political and social obstacles to their goal. The first attempt at an annexation treaty, signed by President Harrison in February of 1893, did not get voted on. Grover Cleveland’s second presidential term began a few weeks after the treaty was proposed and Congress was instructed to wait until the new administration begun before voting.⁵⁶ The terms of this treaty would concede all rights of sovereignty and public property to the U.S, transfer the Hawaiian national debt to the United States, restrict Chinese immigration, and prevent Hawaii from engaging in diplomatic or economic relations with any other countries while conferring American trade benefits onto the Islands. This treaty would also allow the existing Republic to continue ruling, though stipulations were made to compensate Queen Liliuokalani with yearly payments.⁵⁷ Wanting the matter to be promptly dealt with, Harrison urged Congress to vote while insisting that “the overthrow of the

⁵⁵ Liliuokalani, *Hawaii's Story d by Hawaii's Queen, Liliuokalani*, 373.

⁵⁶ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 178-9.

⁵⁷ John W. Foster, et al. *Proposed Treaty for the Annexation of Hawaii*. (*American Advocate of Peace* (1892-1893) 55, no. 3, 1893) 56–57.

[Hawaiian] monarchy was not in any way promoted by this Government”⁵⁸ but ultimately failed to get the treaty considered. Upon his inauguration, Cleveland withdrew Harrison’s treaty and began a formal investigation into American conduct within Hawaii. He argued that the debates around the Hawaiian monarchy had “caused serious embarrassment” for the government and wanted clarity on the circumstances that led to the change in government before continuing forward with annexation.⁵⁹ Due to Cleveland’s anti-imperialist views and the ongoing Congressional investigation, the annexation debate remained relatively untouched for the rest of his term, not coming up again until William McKinley’s election in 1896.⁶⁰

Cleveland’s anti-imperial position heavily influenced his decision to withdraw the Harrison treaty and launch a formal Congressional investigation into American activity.⁶¹ This investigation was ultimately led by James H. Blount, a Democratic Congressman from Georgia. Prior to this position, Blount had worked in the House of Representatives for over fifteen years and made his anti-expansionist views known throughout a variety of foreign policy issues.⁶² Handpicked by President Cleveland, Blount conducted his investigation through a series of interviews, written statements, and petitions offered by any and all willing parties. The goal of his investigation was to construct a clearer picture of the Hawaiian situation for both the President and Congress. Queen Liliuokalani and President Dole both refused direct interviews but a wide range of islanders from both sides of the debate agreed to talk with Blount. The investigation took about four months to complete, with Blount staying in Hawaii from his arrival in late March 1893 to the submission of his completed report in July. Ultimately, this

⁵⁸ Harrison, *February 15, 1893: Message Regarding Hawaiian Annexation*.

⁵⁹ Grover Cleveland. *December 4, 1893: First Annual Message (Second Term)*, (Miller Center, February 23, 2017).

⁶⁰ Schamel and Schamel. *The 1897 Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii*, 403.

⁶¹ Dijk. *The Failed Annexation of Hawaii*, 376.

⁶² Tennant S. McWilliams. *James H. Blount, the South, and Hawaiian Annexation*, (*Pacific Historical Review* 57, no. 1, 1988) 26-8.

investigation led Blount to believe that American capitalists had ignored native opposition and aided the overthrow of the monarchy while also citing the American military as a principal part of the annexationist's coup.⁶³ Blount even went so far as to point the finger at Minister Stevens, writing, "the American minister and the revolutionary leaders had determined on annexation [...] and agreed on each part each was to act until the very end."⁶⁴ The results of this investigation brought light to many of the morally grey areas of American involvement in both Liliuokalani's overthrow and the establishment of the Hawaiian Republic. Blount's findings were key to many of President Cleveland's subsequent actions regarding Hawaii throughout his administration.

After reading Blount's report, Cleveland felt the U.S. had wronged Hawaii and used that as the foundation for many of his later Presidential actions. Cleveland believed that on a fundamental level, the "occupation of Honolulu by the United States [...] was wholly without justification" and that the Provincial government "did not appear [to have] the sanction of either popular revolution or suffrage."⁶⁵ This illustrates just how exposing Blount's investigation was for the prior behaviors of both the United States and the Hawaiian Republic. In these excerpts, Cleveland condemns the temporary Hawaiian government while simultaneously chastising the United States under the Harrison administration for attempting to negotiate with a government established without the consent of its people. Morally, Cleveland also argued that "substantial wrong [had] been done which a due regard for our national character as well as the rights of the injured people requires we should endeavor to repair."⁶⁶ For Cleveland, one of the main avenues for "repair" was to restore Liliuokalani and the monarchy back to power, which he tried to order

⁶³ McWilliam. *James H. Blount, the South, and Hawaiian Annexation*, 33-8.

⁶⁴ James H. Blount, as quoted in, McWilliam. *James H. Blount, the South, and Hawaiian Annexation*, 38.

⁶⁵ Cleveland. *December 18, 1893: Message Regarding Hawaiian Annexation*.

⁶⁶ Cleveland. *December 18, 1893: Message Regarding Hawaiian Annexation*.

in November of 1893. This measure ultimately failed, as the Provincial Government refused to resign or approve the monarchy's restoration which left Cleveland without many options. All he could do was let Congress decide if and when reinstatement should occur. Ultimately, Congress refused to authorize American military forces to restore the monarchy but ruled against any American involvement in Hawaiian affairs in early 1894.⁶⁷ This ruling quelled the annexation debate until William McKinley's 1897 inauguration.

Though he did not initially run on a pro-imperial expansion campaign, McKinley became increasingly agreeable to the idea within the first year of his term as president.⁶⁸ The current Republican party's platform favored both expansion and annexation.⁶⁹ Commenting on McKinley's election, commissioner to Hawaii William O. Smith wrote, "the difference between the attitude of the present administration and the last one, is like that of the difference between daylight and darkness."⁷⁰ McKinley himself declared that "annexation was no new scheme"⁷¹ and another observer remarked that he "took up the Hawaii question so promptly and so vigorously."⁷² This open attitude toward annexation was markedly different from Cleveland's firm objections and resulted in the President signing in a second annexation treaty in June of 1897.⁷³ This treaty was then proposed to the Senate later that December.⁷⁴ Many American pro-imperialists thought this treaty would pass with a wide margin of support, due to both McKinley's Republican-based enthusiasm and the eagerness of the Provisional Government to be annexed. Naysayers believed that "the sentimental clamor for annexation [was] evidently

⁶⁷ Dijk. *The Failed Annexation of Hawaii*, 378-9.

⁶⁸ Daws, Gavan. *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands*, 286.

⁶⁹ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 187.

⁷⁰ William O. Smith, as quoted in Daws, Gavan. *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands*, 286.

⁷¹ William McKinley, as quoted in Daws, Gavan. *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands*, 286.

⁷² Dulles, as quoted in Dijk. *The United States Becomes a Colonial Empire*, 382.

⁷³ Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod. *Treaty of Annexation of Hawaii*. (In *Encyclopedia of Historical Treaties and Alliances*. 2nd ed. Facts on File, 2005)

⁷⁴ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 187.

waning,”⁷⁵ especially after the Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii had been presented to Congress that same December. This petition was concrete evidence that Hawaiians themselves did not want to be annexed by the United States, and this information helped sway multiple senators into voting against the treaty.⁷⁶ Overall, this treaty was identical in terms to Harrison’s earlier treaty in transferring sovereignty, assuming debt, and restricting immigration, but also included a provision that terminated any previously established foreign treaties.⁷⁷ Overall, the Senate fell short in winter 1897 of collecting the necessary two-thirds majority vote (which amounted to 60 votes⁷⁸), with 39 senators opposing annexation and again resulted in a failure to ratify.⁷⁹

Constitutionally, all treaties must begin in the Senate, a fact which left annexation supporters with limited options, especially as two treaties already had failed to pass. Drawing on Texas’ annexation half a century earlier for inspiration, annexationists began drafting joint resolutions to be presented near-simultaneously in the Senate and the House of Representatives in the spring of 1898. Because these pieces of legislation were presented as resolutions and not treaties, each bill only required a simple majority in each house to succeed. With the Spanish-American war beginning in April, both resolutions passed later that summer and were successfully signed into law by McKinley July of that same year. This joint-resolution, named the Newlands Resolution,⁸⁰ bore heavy resemblance to the previous two Senate treaties and offered many identical provisions, however it differed in a monetary provision allotting \$100,000

⁷⁵ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*, 8.

⁷⁶ Schamel and Schamel. *The 1897 Petition Against the Annexation of Hawaii*, 404.

⁷⁷ Phillips and Axelrod, *Treaty of Annexation of Hawaii*, 2.

⁷⁸ Morgan. *The Anti-Japanese Origins of the Hawaiian Annexation Treaty of 1897*, 24.

⁷⁹ The Advocate of Peace, *The Annexation of Hawaii*, 8.

⁸⁰ Alfred S. Hartwell. *The Organization of a Territorial Government for Hawaii*, (*The Yale Law Journal* 9, no. 3, 1899) 107–13.

for the American President to enact these resolutions.⁸¹ The official transfer of sovereignty over the Islands from the Republic of Hawaii to the United States occurred almost exactly a month later, though the Republic remained the primary government for several years afterwards.⁸²

The overall success of annexationists in the incorporation of Hawaii can be attributed in large part to coinciding foreign policy issues, mainly that of the Spanish-American war and the threat of Japanese involvement in Hawaii. Beginning formally in spring of 1898 and lasting through the winter, this war marked the beginning of America's formal imperial empire. As part of peace negotiations, Spain ceded both Puerto Rico and Guam as territories while additionally selling the Philippines to the U.S for a lump sum of \$20 million.⁸³ These territorial gains marked an important development in the argument for Hawaiian annexation, as it lessened reservations for acquiring American territory abroad after the war. Additionally, the war gave "the American government [...] a taste for territorial expansion with the United States in control of its own shipping routes in the Pacific, not dependent on other nations."⁸⁴ This gave further strength to the annexationist platforms built on commercial and economic benefits within the Pacific. The desire for a permanent American-controlled military base and re-coaling station, particularly at Pearl Harbor, was another argument exacerbated by foreign policy issues at the time. Though the U.S had been given usage of Pearl Harbor in the Reciprocity Treaty of 1884, many American politicians worried that this legislation would be repealed by either nation as opposition to the agreement grew. Annexation was the most popular option among Americans for retaining control of Pearl Harbor.⁸⁵ Building on both military and economic arguments made at the outset

⁸¹ Modern History Sourcebook: *Annexation of The Hawaiian Islands, 1898* (Fordham University: Internet Modern History Sourcebook, 1898).

⁸² Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 188-89.

⁸³ Office of the Historian. *The Spanish-American War, 1898*, (U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State, 2017).

⁸⁴ Dijk, *The United States Becomes a Colonial Empire*, 396.

⁸⁵ Osborne, *Trade or War? America's Annexation of Hawaii Reconsidered*, 303-6.

of the debate, the success of the Spanish-American war bolstered annexation support throughout the country and played an important role in the eventual passage of annexation legislature. Support was additionally gained through fears of Japan and its intentions toward Hawaii. By 1897, Japanese immigrants made up almost a quarter of Hawaii's population. This resulted in major immigration restrictions, which angered Japan and resulted in multiple Japanese warships stationed in Hawaiian harbors. This in turn alarmed many Americans, particularly those within the McKinley administration, and culminated in an increased American naval presence in Hawaii with a major push towards annexation in Washington.⁸⁶ Japanese involvement in Hawaii greatly accelerated the timeline for American annexation, especially when paired with the Spanish-American War's outcome. These foreign policy concerns explain the majority of why annexationists ultimately won the Hawaii debate, especially when taken in conjunction with economic and commercial concerns.

The annexation of Hawaii by American interests represents an important development in the United States' presence as an imperial power, later becoming essential in later 20th century geopolitics. Though the annexation question created intense debate from its beginning, annexationists (aided by the outset of the Spanish-American war and strong economic benefits) ultimately triumphed and helped to launch the United States into its current status as a global empire. Though the annexed nation did not officially become an American territory until 1900, it marked an important step towards statehood for the Islands.⁸⁷ These islands, just over forty years into being a U.S territory, thus became the centerpiece for American involvement in the second World War as Pearl Harbor sustained attacks by Japanese forces. Hawaii became one of many American controlled territories abroad and continues to be valuable to the United States today,

⁸⁶ Morgan. *The Anti-Japanese Origins of the Hawaiian Annexation Treaty of 1897*, 25-31.

⁸⁷ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 193.

despite the controversies surrounding its acquisition. These islands remained United States territories for almost sixty years until President Dwight Eisenhower signed a formal proclamation granting Hawaii statehood in 1959.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Kuykendall and Day. *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State*, 303.

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