

*The*  
**Thetean**



*The*  
**Thetean**

A Student Journal for  
Scholarly Historical Writing

**Volume 46 (2017)**

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The *Thetean* is an annual student journal representing the best of historical writing by current and recent students at Brigham Young University. All papers are written, selected, and edited entirely by students. Articles are welcome from students of all majors, provided they are sufficiently historical in focus. Please email submissions as an attached Microsoft Word document to [theteansubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:theteansubmissions@gmail.com). Manuscripts must be received by mid-January to be included in that year's issue. Further details about each year's submission requirements, desired genres, and deadlines should be clarified by inquiring of the editors at the same address.

Publication of the *Thetean* is generously sponsored by the Department of History, in association with the Beta Iota Chapter of the Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society. Material in this issue is the sole responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the views of the editors, Phi Alpha Theta, the Department of History, Brigham Young University, or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All copyrights are retained by the individual authors.

Phi Alpha Theta, Beta Iota Chapter  
Brigham Young University  
Provo, Utah

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## Foreword

THE WORLD WE LIVE IN IS FAR FROM PERFECT. PREJUDICE, MISUNDERSTANDING, and fear of the “other”—whoever that other might be—still abound. Perhaps some of these characteristics are simply human and will never be eradicated entirely. But I truly believe that one remedy for these feelings is the study of history. After all, history takes us to times and places completely foreign to us. It requires us to try to understand people’s thoughts, fears, motivations, and reasoning even though they are completely different from our own. Well-researched and well-written history helps us remove labels and discard oversimplifications and generalizations, helping us see the complexity of people and situations. In the end, hopefully we take away from history more than simply important dates and figures. Instead, we take away a new sense of empathy or understanding. This process helps us, in turn, to seek greater understanding and empathy for our fellow human beings in the world today.

The essays in this volume of the *Thetean* are great examples of well-written history, history that helps us understand people from vastly different circumstances. We received sixty-four submissions this year, and it was extremely difficult to narrow down the pool of papers to just ten! So the papers you see published here represent some of the highest quality of historical writing and research from BYU students. They examine a wide variety of topics in an extensive range of time periods and geographic locations: the effect of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple; the beliefs and rituals of the Maya; the effect of non-Chinese groups in China; an index of prohibited books in Inquisition-era Spain; Progressive Era politics in Utah; Mormon women’s views on suffrage in the 1920s; the role of jazz in the Cold War; the unity and identity of Anglo-Saxon England; the Irish struggle for free trade; and lastly, the memory of the Great War in interwar Scotland.

This volume required an enormous amount of effort from many different individuals. Both authors and editors worked hard to create wonderful pieces of history. I'd especially like to thank Ian, Madison, Henry, Shantel, Ryan, Eleanor, Addison, Sydney, and Natalie for their wonderful work as editors. Our faculty adviser, Dr. Alisa Kesler-Lund, provided invaluable support, guidance, and expertise throughout the process. Marny Parkin's help was also invaluable, as she created the design and layout of this issue. I'd also like to thank Angie Thomas, the manager of administrative services in the History Department for her service to the *Thetean* not only this year but also in past years.

The process of putting together a scholarly journal has definitely been an enlightening process for us as editors. It allowed us to read a lot of wonderful history and to discuss an assortment of ideas, people, places, and events. We hope the reader will also find greater insight, understanding, and empathy as he or she delves into the many topics these essays explore.

—Tyler Balli  
*Editor-in-Chief*



## Jazz and Music Diplomacy in the Cold War

Mitch Rogers

IN THE SOVIET UNION IN THE 1950S, EVERYONE JAMMED. WHILE HIGH Soviet officials worked their hardest to jam the incoming *Voice of America* and *Music U.S.A.* radio broadcasts, Soviet musicians and youth jammed underground to the hot swing and blue harmonies of American jazz. Jazz, with its rebellious syncopations, rogue tunings, and egalitarian arrangements, connected with the Soviet people. Amicable cultural exchange between the two superpowers only began in 1958, and even then it only took place in small, mitigated steps.<sup>1</sup> Knowing the Soviet proclivity for American music, American statesmen saw the opportunity to replace the stodgy, pedantic propaganda of *Radio Free Europe* with something more powerful and popular—jazz, America’s only original art form. In the Soviet Union, jazz broadcasts and tours from America’s finest jazz groups exemplified what political scientist Joseph S. Nye Jr. dubbed “soft power”: convincing and converting another country’s citizens through the appeal of culture and values instead of military or economic force.<sup>2</sup> Jazz music proved to be a perfect lever of soft power in the Cold War because it could entice

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1. James Reston, “U.S., Soviet Widen Exchange in Arts and Other Fields,” *New York Times*, 28 January 1958, accessed 16 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

2. Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), x.

Soviet citizens through popularity and appeal rather than force, leading to the changed mindset which eventually eroded the power of the USSR.

Combining the theory of soft power with current scholarship on the role of jazz diplomacy in State Department strategy elucidates the effectiveness of the jazz tours to the Soviet Union in the 1960s. Nye began to develop his theory of soft power in 1990 in his book, *Bound to Lead*, as he sought to show that American power abroad included more than just military might and economic influence; rather, a *third* power, a soft power, which included music, movies, brands, and styles, also asserted American ideals into the world. While often “misunderstood . . . misused and trivialized,” the idea has nonetheless entered into the foreign policy vernacular.<sup>3</sup> Fredrick Starr initiated scholarship on the development and proliferation of jazz in Russia with his 1983 book, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917–1980*.<sup>4</sup> Other historians have built on his themes and initial research since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The most significant historian to explore the State Department’s jazz tours was Penny Von Eschen. In her 2006 book, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, Von Eschen relates the history of the jazz tours, “following the musicians” to the USSR, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia throughout the Cold War. Von Eschen pays particular attention to how the ostensibly admirable ideals of these trips abroad represented the face the State Department wished to show the world; Von Eschen argues, however, that the jazz tours’ international message of democracy and equality actually contradicted the tumultuous issues of race, society, and American identity that Americans faced at home. According to Von Eschen, any success that the jazz tours had in converting foreign opinions came from local enthusiasm for the jazz ambassadors themselves, as “audiences never confused or conflated their love of jazz and American popular culture with an acceptance of American foreign policy.”<sup>5</sup>

Western governments had long used broadcast propaganda to win Eastern hearts and sympathies; however, the penetration, popularity, and effectiveness of clumsy, broadside transmissions like *Radio Free Europe*, which started in 1949, paled in comparison to purely music-based programs like the influential *Music U.S.A.* radio show, which launched 6 January 1955.<sup>6</sup> The US government

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3. Nye, *Soft Power*, xi.

4. Frederick S. Starr, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917–1980* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1983), vii–viii.

5. Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 270.

6. Edward Hume, “Big Jazz Behind the Iron Curtain,” *Look*, 20 November 1962, 61–63.

started the show as a chance to “lay its case directly at the feet of Soviet youth.”<sup>7</sup> An informal poll in 1957 (Nye preferred opinion polls to measure soft power effectiveness)<sup>8</sup> showed that Soviet citizens hated the “didactic” programming being force-fed to them by programs like *Radio Free Europe* and loved *Music U.S.A.*’s musically heavy, politically light jazz hour.<sup>9</sup> The host, Willis Conover, was described as “the most famous American virtually no American had ever heard of” and as “more effective than a fleet of B-29’s.” He “fought the cold war with cool music” by pumping out jazz to as many as thirty million people behind the Iron Curtain.<sup>10</sup> Acknowledging that the true strength and popularity of the show dwelt not within himself, but within the music, Conover said, “It’s harmful to call jazz a *weapon* against communism. You’ll drive listeners away. Jazz is its own propaganda.”<sup>11</sup> Jazz, as a soft power resource, drew in listeners without any overt force, building up goodwill toward American culture in Soviet hearts and minds.

Early musical tours to the Middle East and Asia provided evidence of this growing goodwill, putting many skeptical politicians at ease. According to the United States State Department report on international exchange entitled *Mutual Understanding in the Nuclear Age*, issued in 1957, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie’s big band tours to the Middle East “not only aroused an interest in American jazz [in the Middle East] but stimulated interest in all things ‘American.’”<sup>12</sup> If American diplomats feared that exporting pop culture would prove pointless, they could now be assured of jazz’s usefulness abroad. The same report also quoted the *Manila Times* as saying of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, “We submit that American economic and military power cannot be ignored. But we also submit that such power is not the best aspect of American civilization.”<sup>13</sup> The State Department report on cultural diplomacy was a clear indication of the efficacy of soft power, which is neither economic nor military in nature. Soft power, through cultural marketing, had the ability to foster fond feelings in ways “hard power,” through guns and dollars, could not.

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7. Starr, *Red and Hot*, 244.

8. Nye, *Soft Power*, 6. [ic— jazz music in particular—p Id War

9. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*, 16.

10. Robert McG. Thomas Jr., “Willis Conover Is Dead at 75; Aired Jazz at Soviet Bloc,” *New York Times*, 19 May 1997, accessed 17 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

11. Hume, “Big Jazz Behind the Iron Curtain,” 62–63.

12. US Department of State, *Mutual Understanding in the Nuclear Age*, 1956.

13. US Department of State, *Mutual Understanding in the Nuclear Age*.

After the first jazz diplomacy tours, American diplomats knew that they had a powerful “sonic secret weapon” with which to wage the Cold War.<sup>14</sup> American musicians had toured in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, yet the most important venue, the USSR, had yet to hear American swing. The Soviet Union had been jamming American broadcasts for years and maintained a ban on Americans traveling within the country.<sup>15</sup> In 1958, American and Soviet officials initiated talks to “increase fivefold the cultural, technical, education and sports exchanges between the two countries.”<sup>16</sup> While the Soviets still kept their airwaves and travel heavily regulated, they opened their gates to certain specific performing groups, including the Philadelphia Symphony. No jazz artists were included on the approved list of cultural exchanges, however.

A year later, the Soviets began to change their tune. On 31 October 1959, officials in Moscow announced a continuance of the strict regulations on what “ideas and arts” could enter Soviet territory.<sup>17</sup> Soviet official Georgi A. Zhukov, chairman of the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, decried the exchanges as a “‘Trojan horse’ whose stomach could be filled with ‘anti-Soviet material.’”<sup>18</sup> Zhukov stated “corrupted films and art” would instill this anti-Soviet sentiment in the USSR. The *New York Times* reported that in 1959 the Soviet Union had yet to receive a “leading jazz band,” signifying Soviet belief that the term “corrupted art” applied to jazz.<sup>19</sup>

A specific caveat from the original 1958 deal mandated that no radio or television broadcast could be political.<sup>20</sup> This stipulation foreshadowed the Soviets’ quick accusation of Trojan horses and corruption, which indicated the suspicion, fear, and wariness of Soviet officials toward imported American culture. Could American culture lead to the entrance of “decadent Western” ideals in the Soviet Union?<sup>21</sup> But Soviet officials misplaced their fear—it was not the

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14. Felix Belair, “United States Has Secret Sonic Weapon—Jazz,” *New York Times*, 6 November 1955, 1, 42.

15. Reston, “U.S., Soviet Widen Exchange in Arts and Other Fields.”

16. Reston, “U.S., Soviet Widen Exchange in Arts and Other Fields.”

17. Max Frankel, “West Denounced on Culture Issue: Russian Says It Tries to Use ‘Trojan horse’—Bars Any Easing of Soviet Control,” *New York Times*, 1 November 1959, accessed 16 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

18. Max Frankel, “West Denounced on Culture Issue: Russian Says It Tries to Use ‘Trojan horse’—Bars Any Easing of Soviet Control.”

19. Max Frankel, “West Denounced on Culture Issue: Russian Says It Tries to Use ‘Trojan horse’—Bars Any Easing of Soviet Control.”

20. Reston, “U.S., Soviet Widen Exchange in Arts and Other Fields.”

21. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 92.

overtly intentional political propaganda that was winning Soviet sympathies, but the undeniable catchiness of jazz and other American creations, as Conover and the *Music U.S.A* broadcasts demonstrated.

Although Soviet officials had yet to allow any American jazz groups tour the Soviet Union, the Soviet population's interest in jazz was powerful, as demonstrated in Conover's passionate fan base. Bootlegged, black-market recordings of Conover's *Music U.S.A.* circulated behind the Iron Curtain, selling for up to forty rubles (approximately forty-four dollars).<sup>22</sup> In February 1961, Leonid Osopovich Utyosov, a renowned and reputable Soviet symphony conductor, announced in no uncertain terms, "We need jazz."<sup>23</sup> Utyosov declared, in the face of "an official taboo on most forms of Western jazz," that the Soviet Union should welcome American jazz musicians for the good of Soviet art and music. In his opinion, genre was less important than quality, and "[good] jazz is art and a bad symphony is not art."<sup>24</sup> Utyosov rejected the association of jazz with Trojan horses, decadence, and "capitalist evil."<sup>25</sup> He wrote, "I must say that jazz is not a synonym for imperialism and the saxophone was not born of colonialism."<sup>26</sup>

While jazz's soft power softened the prejudices of the highest echelons of the Soviet art community, it also penetrated the lowest ranks. On 6 April 1961, the Soviet newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* announced a plan to establish a network of jazz clubs "decorated in a light and gay manner" to accommodate the large demand from Asian, African, and Latin American students in the Soviet Union.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, by spring of 1962, the *New York Times* reported that budding amateur and student musicians were coming together to play jazz. On the walls of their venues, these groups of jazz enthusiasts posted notices that called out Soviet music authorities on the unnecessary and detrimental sanctions against jazz music. These young musicians, much like Utyosov, believed that there was true merit in "good" jazz music, which, to them, meant music from artists like Duke Ellington, John Lewis, Miles Davis, and Gil Evans. The

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22. Hume, "Big Jazz Behind the Iron Curtain," 62.

23. Osgood Caruthers, "A Top Soviet Orchestra Leader Tells Russians: 'We Need Jazz,'" *New York Times*, 27 February 1961, accessed 18 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

24. Osgood Caruthers, "A Top Soviet Orchestra Leader Tells Russians: 'We Need Jazz.'"

25. "Soviet Changes Its Tune and Urges Jazz Clubs," *New York Times*, 7 April 1961, accessed 18 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

26. Caruthers, "A Top Soviet Orchestra Leader Tells Russians: 'We Need Jazz.'"

27. "Soviet Changes Its Tune and Urges Jazz Clubs."

youth jazz movement did not call for an absolute shucking of government restrictions; rather, they desired an open-minded, tasteful approach to jazz, allowing only the best to be taught and propagated.<sup>28</sup> Without experienced teachers, bad taste—and bad jazz—would become dominant. This reversal, from jazz prohibition to (limited) jazz liberation, opened the door for further jazz penetration in the Soviet Union.

Without the Soviet interest in jazz, American soft power could not have any potency. In order to attract and “seduce” a foreign people with culture, the audience is just as important as the performer. According to Nye, “soft power depends more than hard power upon the existence of willing interpreters and receivers.”<sup>29</sup> This is why, in the words of jazz scholar Mario Dunkel, culture cannot simply be “poured on” a passive or resistant audience.<sup>30</sup> Since Soviet youth actively petitioned for and desired American jazz for both entertainment and musical education, jazz’s soft power was compounded. Listening to jazz had prepared Soviet citizens to accept American culture and, intrinsically nestled within American culture, American ideals.

By 1962, the stage had been set for an American musician to go to the Soviet Union. Soviet interest in jazz was undeniable, and American officials now saw their opportunity to capitalize on jazz as covert propaganda in the communist bloc. One question remained: Who should be sent first? Who could maximize America’s soft power? Several factors converged to affect the decision. First, there were racial considerations. Race relations in the United States had long been a cultural black eye on America’s soft power tactics; the Soviet Union frequently criticized the US for its hypocritical stance, promoting freedom for all on the one hand while systematically discriminating against minorities on the other. According to Nye, a country optimizes its soft power “[w]hen a country’s culture includes universal values and its policies promote values and interests that others share”<sup>31</sup>—and could thus be undermined by bigoted domestic policies like segregation. By choosing jazz, an original American art form that was developed, pioneered, and perfected by African American musicians, the State

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28. Theodore Shabad, “Benny Goodman’s Band, Due in May, Will Find Dixieland Being Played in Moscow,” *New York Times*, 29 April 1962, accessed 18 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

29. Nye, *Soft Power*, 16.

30. Mario Dunkel, “Jazz—Made in West Germany,” in *Music and Diplomacy*, ed. Rebekah Ahrendt, Mark Ferraguto, and Damien Mahiet (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 149.

31. Nye, *Soft Power*, 11.

Department made a proactive attempt to rebut this criticism. So, should the first band to enter the Soviet Union feature a black bandleader?

Musical aesthetics also played into the decision. Through the 1950s, jazz experienced drastic changes. The pioneers of jazz and swing were now considered “moldy figs” by the young vanguard; bebop, formulated by Dizzy Gillespie and saxophonist Charlie Parker, was the dominant style, yet stood on shaky ground after the 1955 death of Parker; and “free jazz,” the modernist, avant-garde subgenre of Ornette Coleman, had not yet established credibility for itself and would certainly be rejected by the classical, rigid tastes of Soviet officials.<sup>32</sup> In 1962, the State Department finally selected classically trained white clarinetist and “King of Swing” Benny Goodman, a man who had written bold open letters to the Soviet Union demanding permission to tour the USSR. Goodman would lead a racially integrated big band playing old-school swing tunes on this unprecedented journey behind the Iron Curtain.

Goodman’s long-desired tour both slaked the Soviet thirst for jazz and forced discussions about culture, repression, revolt, and change. The strong, underground Soviet jazz following that the *New York Times* previously reported on showed up, holding informal jam sessions with Goodman’s musicians and engaging in extended, knowledgeable conversations about the latest developments of the jazz community. The band’s first official concert on 30 May 1962, held in Moscow’s Central Army Sports Arena, filled forty-six hundred seats, including one very important, surprise guest.<sup>33</sup> Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev attended the concert after receiving a last-minute, hesitant invitation from American ambassador Llewelyn E. Thompson Jr.<sup>34</sup> According to the *New York Times* front-page headline the next day (featuring a photo of the grinning premier), Khrushchev was “please[d] but puzzle[d]” by Goodman’s show, and left at intermission, reportedly to tend to state business.<sup>35</sup> Commenting on the concert, Khrushchev said, “I enjoyed it. . . . I don’t dance myself, so I don’t understand these things too well.”<sup>36</sup>

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32. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 95–96.

33. “Benny Goodman Concert Pleases but Puzzles Khrushchev,” *New York Times*, 31 May 1962, accessed 14 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

34. Office of the Historian, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963*, vol. 5, *Soviet Union*, “Telegram from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State, May 31, 1962, 1 pm,” <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v05/d199>.

35. “Benny Goodman Concert Pleases but Puzzles Krushchev.”

36. “Benny Goodman Concert Pleases but Puzzles Krushchev.”

Khrushchev's positive, if lukewarm, comments toward the concert contrasted a later conversation with Goodman himself. When the Goodman band returned for six final concerts in Moscow after six weeks of touring the Soviet Union, the swingman and the premier had a brief exchange about music, where Khrushchev said, "I don't like Goodman music. I like good music."<sup>37</sup> After the two agreed on the greatness of Mozart, Khrushchev retorted, "And yet you play this bad music." While Khrushchev's opinion toward Goodman's music and jazz in general was ambivalent at best, it reflected a changing attitude in the Soviet high command. Thompson, in a State Department memo, said that "[the] significance of [this] event is that despite their own lack of understanding and even dislike of jazz music, Soviet leadership has yielded to popular pressure, particularly of Soviet youth. This is probably most striking evidence that public opinion is beginning to play some role in Soviet affairs."<sup>38</sup>

This change in public opinion had real effects on the integrity of Soviet power. In 1997, former KGB official Oleg Kalugin reflected on the influence of cultural exchanges and soft power, saying, "Exchanges were a Trojan horse for the Soviet Union. They played a tremendous role in the erosion of the Soviet system. . . . They kept infecting more and more people over the years."<sup>39</sup> Perhaps Zhukov's fear of "Trojan horses" was not so irrational, after all. If the premier himself was forced to buckle under the pressure of his people in a matter as trifling as dance music, what else must he be obliged to yield to?

By 1963, popular pressure on the Communist regime forced Soviet officials to reconsider many practices. Max Frankel, writing for the *New York Times*, announced that the inexorable influx of American culture had an undeniable effect on Khrushchev.<sup>40</sup> The Premier confessed that the ideological bundle of American imports like jazz, makeup, and sex, was "mounting pressure" upon his government. However, Khrushchev also saw potential benefit in appeasing his citizens; as one observer noted, "Like the father who plays music for his cows . . . it's not that he loves music, just more milk."<sup>41</sup> That must be why

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37. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 118.

38. Office of the Historian, "Telegram from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State, May 31, 1962, 1 pm."

39. Nye, *Soft Power*, 45

40. Max Frankel, "New Spirit in Soviet: Jazz, Lipstick and Freer Expressionism Mark Period of 'Post-Repressionism,'" 17 August 1962, accessed 19 November 2016, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

41. Frankel, "New Spirit in Soviet."



Frankel reported that “Jazz—good, bad, and atrocious—[was] everywhere in the Soviet capital.”<sup>42</sup> Popular tastes demanded a dialogue and give-and-take between those in power and those under oppression; for Khrushchev, denying his people jazz now had political consequences.

Some scholars, writing about the deployment of jazz in the Cold War, refute that jazz was an exclusively “American” art form. Soviet jazz pioneer Oleg Lundstrem, the “grandfather of Russian jazz” who lived through the waxing and waning of regulation on jazz music in the USSR, said, “I don’t like it when you say, ‘Russian jazz.’ . . . Jazz belongs to the whole world.”<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, music historian Mario Dunkel points out that other countries, specifically West Germany, also used jazz as a means of cultural diplomacy.<sup>44</sup> If jazz was not a singularly American art, could it still be used as a soft power means of seduction? Or was it no more useful than any other form of music in musical diplomacy, “[generating] . . . dispositions and opportunities”?<sup>45</sup>

Although fans and artists the world over play, appreciate, and expand jazz, the music still carries with it an undeniable American essence. The American Lois Armstrong swung the first blue notes; Willis Conover and *Music U.S.A.* introduced the wider world to jazz; and American artists like Charlie Parker and Miles Davis had made all major stylistic innovations, with a few exceptions. More than these concrete reasons, though, jazz still bears an American ideological label. Historian Lisa E. Davenport wrote, “[Jazz] emerged as a unique symbol of the artistic and cultural dynamism of American democracy. . . . Jazz’s polyrhythms, syncopation, collective improvisation, and melodic lines often emerged in what musicologist Gunther Schuller calls the ‘democratization of rhythmic values.’”<sup>46</sup> Jazz, even expatriated and naturalized around the world, still sounded like America.

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42. Frankel, “New Spirit in Soviet.”

43. Michael May, “Swingin’ Under Stalin: Russian Jazz During the Cold War and Beyond,” in *Here, There and Everywhere: The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture*, ed. Reinhold Wagnleitner and Elaine Tyler May (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000), 179.

44. Dunkel, “Jazz—Made in West Germany,” 148.

45. Damien Mahiet, Mark Ferraguto, and Rebekah Ahrendt, “Introduction,” in *Music and Diplomacy from the Early Modern Era to the Present*, ed. Rebekah Ahrendt, Mark Ferraguto, and Damien Mahiet (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 10.

46. Lisa E. Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 16.

Jazz, by itself, did not win the Cold War. Rhythm and blues did not precipitate *glasnost* and *perestroika*, nor did bebop tear down the Berlin Wall. But wars are fought with more than just guns and rockets, dollars and cents. Some battlefronts cannot be conquered with weapons or driven to bankruptcy with aggressive spending. In a “total war” like the Cold War, a struggle on military, economic, and cultural levels, stockpiles of goodwill and positive reputation can be just as crucial as stockpiles of ammunition and cash. American statesmen used musical and cultural diplomacy as soft power tactics to win over the Soviet youth and populace, which slowly induced political and cultural renovation within the Soviet Union. *Music U.S.A.*, jazz clubs, and Benny Goodman were only the beginning; jazz continued to set Soviet toes tapping throughout the rest of the Cold War, slowly winning Soviets over to American ideals.

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*From Spokane, Washington (the dry part of Washington that no one cares about), Mitch Rogers is double majoring in history (where his heart is) and economics (where his wallet is). Caught between countervailing interests in jazz history, economic development, and used bookstores, Mitch hopes to enter a professional field where he can use his roaming curiosity to make the world a cooler place. As evidenced by his thick-rimmed glasses held together by superglue and faith, Mitch's hobbies include writing pedantic think pieces and reading small fonts in dim light. On the occasions when providence leads him outside of Provo, Mitch enjoys schlepping his backpack of books and dirty clothes to such places as New York, Washington, DC, and Brazil.*

# “No Nation More Tenacious of Its Past”

## National Historical Memory in Interwar Scotland, 1920–1934

Susannah Morrison

LOOKING BACK OVER THE LAST CALENDAR YEAR AT THE END OF 1929, one Glasgow newspaper concluded, “Certainly no year within the memory of any living Scot has witnessed so much heart-searching. Never before has there been so much airing of the question: what is wrong with Scotland?”<sup>1</sup> The question might as well have been posed about the entire decade of the 1920s. Scotland emerged from the Great War essentially demoralized, with a devastated industrial sector, an influx of Irish immigration, and a flood of mass Scottish emigration to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Facing this onslaught of postwar domestic problems, Scotland found itself increasingly distanced and isolated from England, its erstwhile partner in empire. While Scottish factories were closed en masse, putting thousands of men out of work, high-profit nonindustrial enterprises developed in the southeast of England, draining Scotland of wealth, along with its position of power as one of the key facilitators of empire.<sup>2</sup> As the Scots suffered dramatically higher rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, and chronic overcrowding than their fellow Britons south of the border, English platitudes such as “Scotsmen only need to believe

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1. *Daily Record* (Glasgow), 31 December 1929, quoted in Richard J. Finlay, “National Identity in Crisis: Politicians, Intellectuals, and the ‘End of Scotland’, 1920–1939,” *History* 79, no. 256 (1994): 246.

2. Finlay, “National Identity in Crisis,” 246–47.

in themselves again” fell on increasingly deaf and despairing ears.<sup>3</sup> Although Scotland had in fact suffered higher per capita casualties than any other nation of the United Kingdom in the Great War,<sup>4</sup> England and the English experience of war tended to dominate war commemorations, doubtlessly exacerbating Scottish resentment and feelings of neglect within the Union.<sup>5</sup>

As Britain recovered from a war ostensibly fought to defend the right of national self-determination and remained embroiled in an ongoing civil war in Ireland over precisely this same issue, questions of nationhood occupied a prominent place in the British national consciousness. Scholars disagree as to what extent this debate entered Scottish public dialogue—and indeed, to what extent the Scottish conceived of themselves as a distinct and independent people during this crucial period. I. C. G. Hutchison has rejected any nationalist ethos at work in postwar Scotland, asserting that Scotland in fact emerged from the war with a newfound enthusiasm for the Union. His claim is based on election data between 1914 and 1924, during which the staunchly Unionist Tory party enjoyed a surge of popularity among Scottish voters.<sup>6</sup> However, statistical data is an inherently limited source; it cannot shed light on the complex cultural currents at work in Scottish society or, indeed, on why the Scots voted the way they did. Gordon Urquhart and Catriona Macdonald determine that the Great War fueled a revived sense of national identity in Scotland; however, their ultimate conclusion—that Scotland remained, generally speaking, passively content with the status quo of the Union—is called into question by a detailed study of postwar sources.<sup>7</sup> Richard J. Finlay has provided by far the most complex and nuanced reading of the sources, concluding that the combined influences of the Great War, economic depression, and mass unemployment all triggered

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3. *Daily Record* (Glasgow), 18 August 1931, quoted in Finlay, “National Identity in Crisis,” 247.

4. T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1999), 309.

5. Tom Lawson, “‘The Free-Masonry of Sorrow’?: English National Identities and the Memorialization of the Great War in Britain, 1919–1931,” *History and Memory* 20, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2008): 89–120.

6. I. C. G. Hutchison, *Scottish Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 29.

7. Gordon Urquhart, “Confrontation and Withdrawal: Loos, Readership, and ‘The First Hundred Thousand,’” in *Scotland and the Great War*, ed. Catriona M. M. Macdonald and E. W. McFarland (East Linton, UK: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 125–44; Catriona M. M. Macdonald, “May 1915: Race, Riot, and Representations of War,” in *Scotland and the Great War*, 145–72.

a national identity crisis in 1920s Scotland, no longer sure of its role within the Union and empire.<sup>8</sup>

In order to further parse out this fragile national identity, poised on the verge of transformation from abstract cultural current to concrete political force, one must turn to a variety of documentary sources. I have chosen to focus my examination primarily on the 1920s and 1930s archives of the *Scotsman*, a popular Edinburgh daily broadside, widely regarded as Scotland's national newspaper. These archives have traditionally been underutilized by historians, but they offer a candid, revealing, and original glimpse into the state of Scottish society and nationalist sentiment during this period. Although the voices preserved in these archives belong, by default, to a privileged and educated elite, the debates, issues, and arguments with which they concern themselves were disseminated across a broad readership, drawn from all sections of society. Accordingly, these elite opinions do not only reflect Scottish nationalism as it stood in the 1920s: rather, they were also highly influential in helping to shape and inform public opinion on the topic.

Given the class and educational background of the *Scotsman's* contributors, it is perhaps unsurprising that the paper's archives are peppered with references to episodes of Scottish history. However, these frequent invocations of Scottish history are not merely a self-conscious display of erudition. Rather, they illustrate an important cultural trend at work. As the Scots navigated their complex postwar reality, the memory and interpretation of Scottish history—spanning from pre-Christian Celtic times to the Reformation—became a vital force underpinning both personal and institutional responses to domestic crises and controversies. In the process, these authors contributed to a broader revival of interest in the Scottish national story, helping to revive and popularly promote the long-dormant notion of the Scots as a viable independent people.

## Historical Consciousness and Nationalist Interests

There are a number of criteria by which nationalism may be defined. Within the context of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, history was considered the “raison d'être of nationalism”; indeed, shared roots and culture had provided the most compelling justification for the unifications of both

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8. Finlay, “National Identity in Crisis,” 242–59.

Italy and Germany in 1871.<sup>9</sup> Historical narratives, however selectively read and employed, are a powerful rallying point for nationalist sympathy. Awareness of a shared heritage is a powerful common foundation on which feelings of national community may be developed.<sup>10</sup> For Scotland, which had lacked political autonomy since 1707, whose culture and language had been alternately demonized and fetishized by the English,<sup>11</sup> and whose economic well-being was strongly linked to English financial backing,<sup>12</sup> national pride could most readily be found in memories of a past free from the all-encompassing domination of its neighbour to the south.

George Malcolm Thomson, a Scottish scientist and amateur nationalist historian, succinctly identified the unique power of history within the Scottish context: “The past . . . is a unique psychological key to the future. . . . Scotland is only to be understood as an ancient kingdom of Europe. No other definition can give meaning or direction to her life. This is one of the points from which one starts in planning the Scottish future.”<sup>13</sup> Only in unlocking the door to Scotland’s past, Thomson suggested, could a way forward for the Scottish nation be found. By coming to a deeper understanding of Scotland’s historical achievements and traditional identity as an independent kingdom, Thomson’s contemporaries would be better prepared to articulate and pursue a vision of the Scots’ national destiny as an autonomous people.

According to various Scottish intellectuals of the interwar period, however, it was precisely this knowledge of Scotland’s glorious past that many seemed to lack. One letter to the editor of the *Scotsman*, dating from 6 October 1934, explicitly attacked the Scots’ historical literacy, asserting that it was “doubtful” that “the Arbroath Declaration of Independence . . . , the most stimulating of

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9. John Tosh, *Why History Matters* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 43.

10. Joep Leerssen, “Setting the Scene for National History,” in *Nationalizing the Past: Historians as Nation Builders in Modern Europe*, ed. Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 71–85.

11. Hugh Trevor-Roper, *The Invention of Scotland: Myth and History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 191–215.

12. The Glasgow and Clydeside region was the prewar seat of British industry, but London still dominated as Britain’s financial capital, creating an often uncomfortably strained relationship. For more information, see Tony Dickson, *Scottish Capitalism: State, Class, and Nation, from before the Union to the Present* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1980), 245–86.

13. George Malcolm Thomson, *The Kingdom of Scotland Restored* (London: Humphrey Toulmin, 1930), 10.

Scots historical documents, which should be known to every school child . . . , was known to very many Scottish teachers.”<sup>14</sup> The Arbroath Declaration, a letter sent to Pope John XXII in 1320, affirmed Scotland’s status as a sovereign nation, with the right to use force against the English when provoked. Its issue marked a pivotal moment in the Scottish national story—and yet, one from which the Scots were, apparently, entirely isolated. From the perspective of this concerned citizen, ignorance of Arbroath was indicative of a larger problem: the Scots were chronically disconnected from their own history, suffering from a form of national amnesia.

Andrew Gibb, a nationalist lawyer and politician writing in 1930, identified empire as the vehicle by which the Scottish willfully forgot their own history: “Thoroughly gratified with his new role of Empire-builder and potential millionaire, the Scotsman forgot that what rendered him so capable of withstanding the hard knocks of fortune was his descent from a race which had as indignantly rejected the role of lickspittle to the Englishman as he had gratefully adopted it.”<sup>15</sup> From this perspective, the purging of Scottish history from the national memory was due to mercenary selfishness; the Scots consciously traded off their proud legacy of anti-English resistance in favour of imperial glamour.

However, these views are an unnecessarily pessimistic assessment of the state of the nation. Rather, public discourse of the time was interwoven with interactions with Scottish history. As the Scots navigated their postwar challenges, their nation’s history proved a fruitful reference point to place both their present and their future in a broader perspective.

For example, the importance of the memory of Scotland’s traditional government was reflected in a news article published in the *Scotsman* on 12 April 1920, detailing the events of a meeting agitating for the Home Rule movement. Quoting one of the speakers at the meeting, the article reads, “Let [us] seek to restore the old Scottish Parliament in the ancient city of Edinburgh in order that the Scottish people . . . might work out their own salvation in their own way.”<sup>16</sup> The memory of Scotland’s pre-Union parliament, centered in the traditional royal capital at Edinburgh, clearly continued to exert a presence in the Scottish psyche as a positive model of governance which might be revived as a solution

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14. George Dott, “Scotland the Nation,” *Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 8 October 1934.

15. Andrew Gibb, *Scotland in Eclipse* (Edinburgh: Dunedin, 1930), 35.

16. “Home Rule for Scotland: Necessity for Prompt Administration,” *Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 12 April 1920.

to Scotland's crushing postwar problems. The revival of the Scottish Parliament would, in some way, return Scotland to its ancient governmental roots—a shift viewed as essential to the “salvation” of the Scottish national soul.

## Scottish History in Commemoration of the Great War

Given the recent horrors of the Great War, the Scottish national soul was evidently much in need of “salvation” in the form of healing and recovery. Accordingly, Scottish history was of particularly key importance to debates surrounding how Scotland and the Scottish people ought to commemorate the Great War. On 4 September 1922, the *Scotsman* published an article discussing a public meeting in Edinburgh to commemorate the execution of medieval Scottish hero William Wallace. The article paraphrases one of the speeches given, reading, “The old Wallace fighting spirit was still in the Scottish character. [The speaker said] he could quote incidents in the Great War which would likewise thrill their hearts.”<sup>17</sup> Although Scotland's history is at the heart of this quote, for obvious reasons given the context, it provides a fascinating insight into how Scotland's past and present intersected in the popular consciousness during this period. Scotland's involvement in the Great War was not in defense of imperialist Britain; rather, it was a natural continuation of the quasi-mythic Scottish past. The Great War offered a fruitful arena within which the Scots could live and act out their national warrior mythos, following in the footsteps of their distant heroic ancestors. Just as crucially, however, the Great War provided an opportunity for the expansion of the Scottish national mythology. Building on the example set by medieval freedom fighters, the exploits of the Scottish soldiers of 1914–1918 similarly qualified them for entry into the national canon.

This association between Scottish soldiers' involvement on the Western Front, with the nation's pre-Union military tradition, is carried on in an open letter by the Duke of Atholl published in the *Scotsman* on 21 December 1922. In discussing the need for a uniquely Scottish war memorial, Atholl invoked the country's history, openly appealing to his readers' national pride: “Scotland has ever stood pre-eminent among the nations of the world for her love of freedom

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17. “Scotland's Greatest Asset,” *Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 4 September 1922.



and independence. Some 8000 men fell at Bannockburn<sup>18</sup> and some 10,000 at Flodden<sup>19</sup> in this sacred cause.”<sup>20</sup> The moral crusade of the Great War is here equated with Scotland’s medieval struggle for independence, sovereignty, and status within both the British Isles and Europe more broadly. Atholl freely suggests that the Scottish historical narrative of heroic defense against imperialist aggressors has prepared the Scots to serve as defenders for other oppressed nations, such as Belgium. Taken literally, the historical comparison borders on the subversive, as it associates England, Scotland’s erstwhile imperialist aggressor, with Germany, Belgium’s imperialist aggressor. Regardless of whether this subversive element was intentional, however, Atholl’s proposal clearly demonstrates the very real ways in which Scottish historical narratives were co-opted and shaped to fit contemporary political agendas.

Scottish history was also invoked in further public discussions relating to the building of the Scottish War Memorial in Edinburgh. Indeed, even the decision to build the memorial in the ancient capital of Edinburgh, rather than the modern industry titan of Glasgow, was influenced by historical concerns;<sup>21</sup> a prominent place within the walls of Edinburgh Castle was selected as the site of the memorial precisely due to the city’s (and the castle’s) perceived connections to Scotland’s pre-Union past.<sup>22</sup> A speech given by the Duke of Atholl in 1920 represents the unabashedly nationalist ethos underpinning the war

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18. Bannockburn was a battle fought on 24 June 1314 between the Scottish army, under Robert the Bruce, and the English army, under Edward II. Despite having a dramatically smaller force, Robert the Bruce successfully liberated Stirling Castle from English occupation—a symbolically and militarily significant victory in the First War of Scottish Independence.

19. Flodden was a defeat suffered by Scotland on 9 September 1513, when an army under the command of James IV attempted to launch an invasion of England through Northumbria, to divert Henry VIII’s forces away from his campaign against the French, the Scots’ traditional allies. The English defenders, commanded by the Earl of Surrey, had a resounding victory—while James IV was killed in battle, compounding Scotland’s national humiliation.

20. Duke of Atholl, “The Proposed Scottish War Memorial,” *Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 21 December 1922.

21. Jenny Macleod, “Memorials and Location: Local versus National Identity and the Scottish National War Memorial,” *Scottish Historical Review* 80, no. 227 (April 2010): 78.

22. Juliette MacDonald, “‘Let Us Now Praise the Name of Famous Men’: Myth and Meaning in the Stained Glass of the Scottish National War Memorial,” *Journal of Design History* 14, no. 2 (2001): 119.

memorial: “If the people of Scotland wished to have a National War Memorial to commemorate their own dead, it would not be in Hyde Park . . . put up with Government money, but it would be put up by Scottish hands, with Scottish money, on Scottish soil.”<sup>23</sup> This deliberately oppositional nationalist ethos at work in the planning stages for this Scottish War Memorial was prevalent throughout the building process. The memorial was funded through mass fundraising efforts in Scottish parishes, as well as within Scottish diaspora communities throughout the empire.<sup>24</sup> In every detail, this memorial was intended to belong exclusively to the Scottish people. Notions of Union were all but abandoned, as the Scottish devoted themselves to the commemoration of their own national sacrifice and grief.

Indeed, the Scots took a lively and active interest in the design and construction of the Edinburgh war memorial, as evidenced by a particularly opinionated letter sent to the editor of the *Scotsman* by a J. T. Soutter on 2 April 1927. In this letter, Soutter analyses the long-standing public debates concerning the memorial’s design, claiming that the argument fundamentally stems back to “the age-long struggle between Celt and Saxon.”<sup>25</sup> Jumping over more than the previous millennium of Anglo-Scottish relations, Soutter situated his argument squarely in the sixth and seventh centuries, appealing to Scotland’s pre-Christian Celtic past as the root of Scotland’s distinction from England. Far from being a symbol of pan-British unity like that being built in London, Soutter wants the memorial to reflect this ongoing ancient contention, claiming that “if Edinburgh is to erect a War Memorial, she should express herself rather as a Scottish than a Saxon city.”<sup>26</sup> Soutter’s letter offers a fascinating glimpse into the psyche of an ordinary middle-class Scotsman. He sees the commemoration of Scotland’s war dead as an opportunity to very publicly and very visually define the distinction between Scottish and English. Instead of the national differences being erased under the all-encompassing umbrella identity of “British,” Soutter insists on Scotland’s war dead being commemorated exclusively as Scots. His sentiments were echoed elsewhere in the Scottish press, most prominently in the *Aberdeen*

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23. Excerpt from the Duke of Atholl’s speech at Glasgow, 22 February 1920, quoted in Jenny Macleod, “‘By Scottish Hands, with Scottish Money, on Scottish Soil’: The Scottish National War Memorial and National Identity,” *Journal of British Studies* 49, no. 1 (Special Scotland Issue) (January 2010): 73.

24. Duke of Atholl, “The Proposed Scottish War Memorial.”

25. J. T. Soutter, “Edinburgh War Memorial,” *Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 2 April 1927.

26. J. T. Soutter, “Edinburgh War Memorial.”

*Press and Journal*: “Scotland wishes to remember [the fallen] as Scotsmen, as men who carried on the tradition of centuries of warriors who have not their peers in the annals of the world in arms.”<sup>27</sup>

This oppositional and historically based identity is ultimately reflected in the monument’s singular and highly distinctive architecture. Described by one architectural historian as simply “un-English,”<sup>28</sup> the building incorporates elements of Gothic, Classical, and Scottish Baronial styles and is considered to be the most elaborate national war memorial in the United Kingdom.<sup>29</sup> Prominent figures of Scottish history—the Caledonian chieftain Calgacus, the medieval freedom-fighter William Wallace, the beloved king Robert the Bruce—are prominently represented in stained glass windows, both as heroes of the nation and as denizens of a paradisiacal New Jerusalem.<sup>30</sup> One journalist offered a particularly poetic and succinct summation of the relationship between the nation and its war memorial: “Into this memorial, Scotland has put her instinctive reserve, her proud and even dour reticence . . . wrought in epic poem, with glass, stone, and carving for words. . . . If ever the essence of a race was embodied, it is here in the sanctuary, close to the heart of Scotland.”<sup>31</sup> Among all the monuments dedicated to the memory of the Great War in Britain, the Scottish War Memorial stands alone in its poignancy, clarity, and simplicity—and its importance as a tangible expression of national identity cannot possibly be underestimated.

## Scottish History and the Irish Question

Of all Scotland’s postwar challenges, none appears to have challenged the Scottish national soul—or divided the Scottish public—more fiercely than the

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27. “Scotland Remembers,” *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 15 July 1927.

28. Angus Calder, “The Scottish National War Memorial,” in *Memory and Memorials: The Commemorative Century*, ed. William Kidd and Brian Murdoch (London: Routledge, 2004), 71.

29. MacDonald, “Let Us Now Praise the Name of Famous Men,” 119–20; Jenny Macleod, “Britishness and Commemoration: National Memorials to the First World War in Britain and Ireland,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 48, no. 4 (October 2013): 651.

30. MacDonald, “Let Us Now Praise the Name of Famous Men,” 125–26.

31. N. Scrymgeour, “The Story of Scotland’s Shrine: Scotland’s Soul in Stone; the Shrine as Symbol of Scotland’s Pride and Sorrow,” *Sunday Post Supplement* (Dundee), 11 November 1928, quoted in MacDonald, “Let Us Now Praise the Name of Famous Men,” 127.

question of Irish immigration. In 1921, Irish Catholics in Scotland numbered 600,000, accounting for 15 percent of Scotland's overall population.<sup>32</sup> At the same time as the Irish entered Scotland in vast numbers, 392,000 Scots left Scotland for new lives overseas from 1921–1931.<sup>33</sup> As different factions of Scottish society sought to determine an appropriate response to this dramatic shift in Scotland's genetic, cultural, and religious makeup, competing interpretations of Scottish history battled for predominance in the public domain. One version, pioneered by institutions like the Church of Scotland and heavily influenced by the widespread anti-Irish racism prevalent at all echelons of the British establishment,<sup>34</sup> prioritized Scotland's staunchly Presbyterian inheritance from the Reformation, privileging an exclusive, anti-Catholic, and racially charged iteration of Scotland's identity. Another interpretation, championed by self-proclaimed Celtic nationalists, such as Hugh MacDiarmid, supported Celtic solidarity, arguing in defense of the Irish on the basis of their shared racial extraction. Once again, some Scottish nationalists rooted their argument in their nation's pre-Christian Celtic past, invoking the long-dormant spectre of the Anglo-Saxon migration to Britain to emphasize the traditional brotherhood that ought to exist between Ireland and Scotland.<sup>35</sup>

In 1923, Church of Scotland officials in Glasgow prepared a notorious report entitled "The Menace of the Irish Race to Our Scottish Nationality." The report was published for broad dissemination in the *Scotsman* in May 1923; reflecting a highly selective and religiously charged understanding of Scottish history, Church officials protested the growing Irish presence in Scotland as "the beginning of the destruction of the unity and homogeneity of the Scottish people."<sup>36</sup> The report invoked the wars of religion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to provide justification for an exclusive and narrow application of Scottish nationality. Indeed, the report's authors demonstrated a curious amnesia regarding pre-Reformation Scottish history, claiming that "it was not

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32. Stewart J. Brown, "'Outside the Covenant': The Scottish Presbyterian Churches and Irish Immigration, 1922–1938," *Innes Review* 42, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 25.

33. Graham Walker, "Varieties of Scottish Protestant Identity," in *Scotland in the Twentieth Century*, ed. T. M. Devine and R. J. Finlay (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 254.

34. G. K. Peatling, "The Whiteness of Ireland Under and After the Union," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 1 (January 2005): 115–33.

35. Wales, as per usual, was absent from the discussion.

36. Church of Scotland, "Menace of the Irish Race to Our Scottish Nationality," *Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 15 May 1923.

until large numbers of Irish Roman Catholics came over from Ireland that the Roman Catholic Church began to grow.”<sup>37</sup> Ignoring the fact that Scotland was, in fact, Catholic for far longer than it was Protestant, the Church of Scotland chose to associate the nation unequivocally with the Reformation, proudly hailing Scotland as “this historic home of the Reformed Faith.”<sup>38</sup> Inventing a romantic version of Scotland’s past, the Church painted Scotland as the inviolable, quasi-sacred home of Protestantism, urging its parishioners to take action against the threats posed by an Irish Catholic demographic invasion.

The Church’s use of the Scottish Reformation as anti-Irish propaganda was met with support by right-wing nationalists, such as Andrew Gibb and George Malcolm Thomson.<sup>39</sup> However, other public voices within Scotland flatly rejected such notions, instead embracing the Irish as a fellow oppressed people resisting “Anglo-Saxon imperialism.”<sup>40</sup> Indeed, Scotland’s literary community, led by nationalist poets such as Hugh MacDiarmid, who saw themselves in the tradition of Robbie Burns, welcomed the Irish influx into Scotland “as a means of countering the malign effects of the Reformation.”<sup>41</sup> Directly contradicting institutional historical arguments, which dated the beginning of Scottish history at the Reformation, MacDiarmid instead identified the Reformation (and, by extension, the long-term establishment of English cultural predominance in Scotland) as the root of the modern country’s woes. MacDiarmid advocated for “re-Catholicization” and “the exhaustion of Protestantism” as the answers to Scotland’s national malaise.<sup>42</sup> According to this school of historical interpretation, national regeneration and rejuvenation could come about only through Scotland’s rejection of Anglo-Protestant encroachment in favor of spiritual reunion with its true Celtic and Catholic roots.<sup>43</sup>

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37. Church of Scotland, “Menace of the Irish Race.”

38. Church of Scotland, “Menace of the Irish Race.”

39. Liam McIlvanney, “The Scottish Renaissance and the Irish Invasion: Literary Attitudes to Irishness in Inter-War Scotland,” *Scottish Studies Review* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 80; Richard J. Finlay, “Nationalism, Race, Religion, and the Irish Question in Inter-war Scotland,” *Innes Review* 42, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 53–54.

40. *Liberty* (London), 9 October 1920, quoted in Finlay, “Nationalism, Race, Religion, and the Irish Question,” 50.

41. McIlvanney, “The Scottish Renaissance and the Irish Invasion,” 80.

42. Hugh MacDiarmid, *Albyn, or, Scotland and the Future*, in *Albyn: Shorter Books and Monographs*, ed. Alan Riach (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1996), 12.

43. McIlvanney, “The Scottish Renaissance and the Irish Invasion,” 86.

This sharply contrasting debate over interpretations of Scottish historical identity demonstrates the very real way in which Scots of the interwar period used their history to understand and contextualize ongoing contemporary cultural shifts. The way in which individuals and institutions chose to remember and present history reflects their own biases and agendas—but also provides an indication of how different Scottish interest groups used their history to present competing interpretations of the past, present, and future Scottish nation.

## Conclusion

Contrary to the image of utter historical disconnect and apathy championed by Gibb and Thomson, Scottish history clearly and consistently occupied a central role in Scotland's postwar struggle to determine and articulate its preferred vision for the future. The memory and interpretation of Scottish history, spanning from Celtic times to the Reformation, determined the varying lenses through which the Scots responded to the aftermath of the Great War and the realities of a postwar world. Scotland's erstwhile political independence as a sovereign kingdom set both the precedent and the tone for discussions pertaining to both home rule and independence. Scotland's quasi-mythic warrior past determined how the Scots contextualized their experiences in the Great War and informed how they felt the conflict ought to be commemorated. Competing interpretations of the true roots of modern Scottish identity—whether dated from the Reformation or from fragmented cultural memories of a far-distant Celtic past—contributed to public debates surrounding mass Irish immigration in the 1920s. Lord Macmillan, quoted in a *Scotsman* article of October 1934, reflected more generally on the role of Scotland's history in its national identity: "No nation has shown itself more tenacious of its past, not as with some less happy peoples, in order to foment present grievances,<sup>44</sup> but rather as an inspiration for the future."<sup>45</sup> Although the tide of Scottish nationalism was stemmed with the outbreak of the Second World War, the question has never quite disappeared from public discourse in Britain. Scotland might have voted against independence in the 2014 referendum; however, with

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44. We may surmise with which side of the Irish debate Lord Macmillan sympathized.

45. George Dott, "Scotland the Nation," *Scotsman* (Edinburgh), 8 October 1934.

a second referendum potentially looming on the horizon in 2018<sup>46</sup> and tense debates on government devolution and membership in the European Union continuing to flurry in both Westminster and Holyrood, it is clear that these issues are far from resolved.

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46. Severin Carroll, "Late 2018 Could Be Best Time for New Scottish Referendum, Says Sturgeon," *Guardian*, 9 March 2017, accessed 9 March 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/mar/09/late-2018-could-be-best-time-for-new-scottish-referendum-says-sturgeon>.





# “Always Leading Out in that Which Is Great and Good”

## Mormon Women’s Perspective of Women’s Rights Fifty Years after Suffrage

Ashley Anderson Webb

ON A COLD THURSDAY IN EARLY FEBRUARY 1920, NEWLY ENFRANCHISED women from across the nation huddled together in Chicago for a seven-day-long Golden Jubilee. The anticipated passage of the Nineteenth Amendment lay only three states’ ratification and half a year away. That same Thursday, women in Utah looked back half a century to 12 February 1870, when the Utah territory granted its women the right to vote. While reflecting on their own history, Utah’s women also cast their eyes outward, joining their sisters throughout the US who looked forward to the future of nation-wide suffrage. Many prominent female leaders of the Mormon Church represented Utah women at the national jubilee, while local organizations of women celebrated in Utah. Mrs. Susa Young Gates, who attended the convention in Chicago, represented “the earliest pioneer voter present, she having married at sixteen and cast her vote in 1872.”<sup>1</sup> Mormon women experienced the national suffrage movement through celebratory jubilees, interactions with national women’s leaders, and the writing of their own religious authorities—through it all, they expressed a profound sense of empowerment and pride.

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1. Susa Young Gates, “Suffrage Won by the Mothers of the United States,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 5 (May 1920): 254.

Although 1920 marked the commencement of political liberation for women throughout the United States, Mormon women of 1920 looked back “one hundred years ago, [to when] the world was on the threshold of a new era.”<sup>2</sup> This historical “threshold” represented not only a political movement, but a religious one; it was the founding of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which initiated when Joseph Smith claimed to have seen and conversed with God in 1820.<sup>3</sup> Due to religious persecution, the main body of the Church emigrated west. Headquartered in Salt Lake City, they eventually became a United States territory before achieving statehood in 1896. Continued persecution, especially in regards to the Church’s acceptance of polygamy, contributed to a changing and unstable political climate in the Utah territory. It took almost thirty years for women to permanently secure the vote in Utah. However, Mormon women of the twentieth century attributed their progress toward equal rights to their religious heritage, beginning in 1820.<sup>4</sup> Commemorating the

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2. In 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was passed, making it unconstitutional to deny women the right to vote on account of race. See Susan M. Hartmann, “How the West and the Nation Was Won for Woman Suffrage,” *Reviews in American History* 33, no. 1 (March 2005): 78–83; Julia P. Farnsworth, “A Sentiment,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 4 (April 1920): 191.

3. Mormons believe that in 1820 Joseph Smith, at fourteen years of age, saw God the Father and Jesus Christ in a spiritual vision occurring in Palmyra, New York. This event was referred to as “The First Vision” and was seen as the commencement of a “restoration” of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Mormons believe that necessary principles and teachings of Jesus Christ were lost through the ages following Christ’s ministry and that God restored the teachings and church of Christ in modern times, naming Joseph Smith as leader and prophet. As a part of this “restoration” of truth from God, Mormon writers in 1920 claimed that Joseph Smith’s teachings helped women understand their God-intended place and gave them social and religious rights which they were previously denied. For more detailed information on Joseph Smith’s First Vision and the history of the Church see Milton V. Backman, *Joseph Smith’s First Vision* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980); Milton Backman, *Eyewitness Accounts of the Restoration* (Orem, UT: Grandin Book, 1983); Joseph Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, comp. and ed. Dean C. Jessee (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984); Hyrum Andrus, *Joseph Smith, the Man and the Seer* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1960); Richard Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984); Paul Cheesman, *The Keystone of Mormonism* (Provo, UT: Eagle Systems International, 1988); Andrew Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980); Truman Madson, *Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1989).

4. Jean Bickmore White summarized the history of women’s suffrage in Utah: “Women’s Suffrage . . . was won twice in Utah. It was granted first in 1870 by the territorial legislature

anniversary of Joseph Smith's "First Vision" while simultaneously documenting the struggle for national suffrage in 1920, female church leaders venerated the newly formed church as the primary mechanism for achieving the goals of the women's rights movement. Leading Mormon women in 1920 framed church history to show the church championed women from its founding. Bridging cultural divides between "new" Mormon women and pioneer foremothers, these leaders condemned the historical oppression of women while refuting that controversial doctrines like plural marriage made Mormon women "slaves to men."<sup>5</sup> Church doctrine informed Mormon women's interpretations of the contemporary women's rights movement, and as they examined their history through writing in the *Relief Society Magazine*, women expressed gratitude for the "blessed" state of knowledge and liberation.<sup>6</sup>

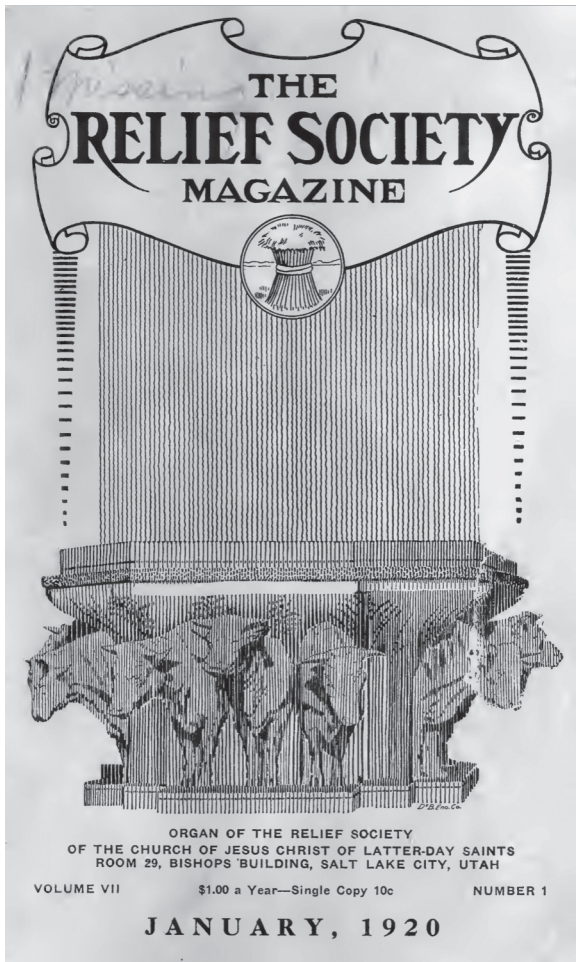
Owned and published by the General Board of the Relief Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the *Relief Society Magazine* gave voice to many of the political and religious opinions of female and male Church leadership. Particularly in 1920, the magazine intertwined tenets of the women's rights movement with Mormon doctrine, demonstrating their compatibility.

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but revoked by Congress in 1887 as part of a national effort to rid the territory of polygamy. It was restored in 1895, when the right to vote and hold office was written into the constitution of the new state." For an in-depth history of nineteenth century women's suffrage, see Beverly Beeton, *Women Vote in the West: The Woman Suffrage Movement 1869–1896* (New York: Garland, 1986); Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage* (New York: Arno Press, 1969); Jean Bickmore White, "Woman's Place Is in the Constitution: The Struggle for Equal Rights in Utah in 1895," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 42 (Fall 1974); Thomas G. Alexander, "An Experiment in Progressive Legislation: The Granting of Woman Suffrage in Utah in 1870," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 38 (Winter 1970).

5. Polygamy alarmed the nation in the second-half of the nineteenth century. Some Mormon women publicly refuted the argument that they were the slaves of Mormon men and defended the practice of plural marriage, demonstrating ways in which it actually exalted women's status because women were less tied to domestic obligations and were given distinct opportunities apart from their national counterparts (particularly in education). The prolonged struggle of suffrage and Mormon women's outspokenness for controversial religious tenets like polygamy allowed Mormon women develop organizational structure within the Church and commitment to religious doctrine and civil rights. See Jana K. Riess, "Heaven in Our Fair Land: Anti-Polygamy and Protestant Women's Mission to Utah, 1869–1910" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2000).

6. "Women to Fill Pulpits in the Protestant Churches," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 38.



*Cover of the Relief Society Magazine, January 1920. Image courtesy of Harold B. Lee Library.*

Seeking to strengthen modern Mormon women's commitment to the church, the *Relief Society Magazine's* contributors employed language of the contemporary women's rights movement.<sup>7</sup>

Although historians have argued that the controversial nature of some tenets of Mormon doctrine have divided Mormons culturally and geographically from mainstream America since Mormonism's founding, the church sought to repair differences with a renewed fervor of patriotism in the early twentieth century.<sup>8</sup> In 1920, Utahns recognized an opportunity to showcase modernity and enlightenment in their communities by portraying themselves as decades ahead of the nation in terms of suffrage and women's rights. In the prevalent issue of suffrage, the *Relief Society Magazine* reminded women in 1920: "Women have been given the right of franchise, first in the Church itself" in the form of common consent in 1830 and again with the organization of the Relief Society in 1842.<sup>9</sup> Mormon women in Utah witnessed the unfolding of a national movement that enfranchised American women in every state, offered praise and support, and also viewed their own rights in relation to non-Mormon women whom they perceived to be less privileged. The *Relief Society Magazine* presented an

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7. One of the greatest sources of insight into the hegemonic ideals and opinions of Mormon women during this period is the *Relief Society Magazine*. Established in 1914, it replaced the *Woman's Exponent* and was "owned and published by the General Board of the Relief Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints." The magazine invited members to submit opinions and articles for publication while also regularly featuring messages and sermons by Church officials. It therefore became a cultural collection of both official Church doctrine, local interpretation, and trends in the Mormon epicenter. Widely circulated and available for ten cents an issue or a dollar per year, it was widely read and was a source of religious study, international and local news, and entertaining literature; Contents Page, *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 2.

8. See Jan Shippo, "The Genesis of Mormonism," in *Religion and American Culture*, ed. David G. Hackett (New York: Routledge, 1995), 167. For discussion specifically on Mormon persecution in nineteenth-century Utah, see Grant Underwood, *Millennialism, Persecution, and Violence: The Mormons*, ed. Catherine Wessinger (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003); Dello G. Dayton, "Why Were the Saints Persecuted?," *Instructor* 98 (1963): 44-45; Glen M. Leonard, "Persecution," in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, ed. Donald Q. Cannon, Richard O. Cowan, and Arnold K. Garr (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000); Thomas Simpson, "Mormons Study 'Abroad': Latter-day Saints in American Higher Education, 1870-1940" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2005).

9. "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 4 (April 1920): 189.

idealized narrative that claimed that rights for women had been granted “by the prophet Joseph Smith, when he organized the Church.”<sup>10</sup>

Utah women achieved voting rights for the first time fifty years previous and maintained that right since Utah became a state in 1896. Mormon women no longer fought for legal suffrage for themselves. However, the political climate of 1920 provided opportunities for Mormon women to analyze women’s progress both within and outside of the church. They often did so through their own cultural and personal religious lens. In comparing their own history to that of other women in the nation, some writers in the *Relief Society Magazine* connected the advancement of women’s social and legal rights to evidence of the divinity of the Mormon Church. Because of this, Mormon women saw themselves, in pattern with their Mormon heritage, as “always leading out in that which is great and good.”<sup>11</sup>

## Women as Heiresses of the New Church

As the United States gradually moved towards suffrage for all women, female leaders of the church sought to remind women that female suffrage had already been achieved within the organization of the church. Taking advantage of the commemorative year that marked a century since the Prophet Joseph Smith’s First Vision, the General Relief Society Board retold the history of the founding of the church through a progressive lens of women’s rights. In an article entitled “Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women” in the *Relief Society Magazine*, Relief Society leaders claimed that women benefitted the most from Joseph Smith’s initial experience with God that led to the establishment of the church. This article was distinct from others of its kind as it outlined the specific results of the religious “restoration” *for women*. It compared women’s condition in religious and societal participation “in the olden days” to after the Prophet Joseph Smith received new truth and religious direction from God. The General Relief Society Board emphasized that previous to the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, restrictions from religious leadership and participation denied women equal access to “the Gate Beautiful,” “the Court of Sacrifice,” and “the Higher Place” (which symbolized holy temple ordinances

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10. Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman, “Women to Fill Pulpits in the Protestant Churches,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 38.

11. “Nurse Work,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 35.

and taking sacraments). Joseph Smith elevated women to an equal place in the church; Mormon women, like their male counterparts, participated in temple ceremonies and partook of the sacrament. "She is admitted not only into the courts of women, symbolically and equally in our own temples, but she is given a higher position in this sacred ordinance which she shares, side by side with her husband."<sup>12</sup> The board reminded women that the restoration of the gospel relieved some of the stigma, "superstition," and "oppression" that existed in Western culture and religion. Church leaders strove to demonstrate the ways in which the restoration was the original champion of women's rights in the modern era by claiming that the restoration was even more liberating and crucial for women and children than it was for men: "Men, because of superior strength and leadership, could force their way through the clouds of darkness and superstition, but helpless women and little children were sufferers. [Therefore,] the women with their little children were among the most blessed recipients of the results of that Vision."<sup>13</sup>

While this article victimized women as "sufferers," it established the church as the ultimate hero for women. In addition, it bolstered faith in the divine organization of the church by demonstrating that the church embraced truth that was ahead of the rest of society.

Mormon women often perceived their religious role in the church as distinct and superior to women's standing in other Christian sects. Because the church was less than one hundred years old, many Mormon women had personally converted to the church or had connections to their convert ancestors only a few generations back. Many had experienced other strands of Christianity and deliberately decided to join the Mormon Church. In so doing, women often challenged traditional gender roles by joining or defending the church against spouses, family, or society. Leonard J. Arrington found that these women, among other "early converts to the Church[,] found the experience to be a 'freeing experience' from the strict beliefs they formerly held."<sup>14</sup> Relief Society leaders during this time portrayed early Mormon women as having challenged gender conventions in mainstream Christianity by converting to a new and controversial religious order and defending it as strong and independent-thinking women.

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12. "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," 190.

13. "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," 189.

14. See Leonard J. Arrington, "Personal Reflections on Mormon History" *Sunstone* 8 (1983): 41–45; Katherine Sarah Massoth, "Writing an Honorable Remembrance: Nineteenth-Century LDS Women's Autobiography," *Journal of Mormon History* 39 (2013): 91.





*Image from the Relief Society Magazine showing “women who knew the Prophet Joseph.” This image represents one way in which the Relief Society encouraged women to consider the founding of the Church in ways that particularly aided women and to understand and relate to earlier generations of Mormon women. Image courtesy of the Harold B. Lee Library.*

Twentieth-century Mormons credited new religious ideology with effecting social change among Mormon women. In the same article, Relief Society leaders suggested, “In art and music, in medicine and in law, women have today, because of the opening seals of that Vision, equal privileges, equal rights, with men.”<sup>15</sup> Conveniently contrasting the conditions of 1820 with 1920, they remarked that “no woman could study higher mathematics or enter colleges or universities. Today she may go where she will and achieve what she is fitted for.”<sup>16</sup> While hyperbolic, these claims reveal the freedom that many Mormon women perceived and the ideals they held for the educational progress of women. By believing that the church enabled and encouraged these ideals, women manifested a sense of empowerment and pride in their membership.

15. “Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women,” 189.

16. “Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women,” 189.



In addition to the expansion of educational rights for women, female church leaders in the *Relief Society Magazine* of 1920 reminded women that they had almost no legal rights only a century previous. Again, these leaders sought to empower modern women with the belief that female Mormon ancestors experienced liberation through their religious affiliation. In order to depict a clear contrast, Relief Society leaders depicted conditions previous to the restoration of the church as dark and absolute. In another section of the article "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," the general board wrote, "In 1820 women were goods and chattels in the eyes of the law, men owned their women and their children, as they did their cattle and their houses."<sup>17</sup> To add to the inequality, women could not write wills, deed their property, or use their own earnings without their husband's consent. Furthermore, the article asserted, husbands could legally whip their wives "and [he] could dispose of her as he saw fit."<sup>18</sup> While men could seek divorce, the article claimed that women had no such comparable right. The long list of legal inequities perhaps encouraged women in 1920 to recognize rights they may have taken for granted. The article explicates what these contrasts are meant to suggest: that the progression of equal rights coincided with the establishment of the true church and gospel on the earth. As dreary as pre-1820 conditions appeared, Mormon women leaders portrayed the post-Restoration change like a switch that created light and equality for women. "Today women and men at last stand equal before the law in this country and in many parts of Europe. How strange that this [1920] should be the opening year of civil equality [suffrage] of women with men in this land of Zion, the United States of America."<sup>19</sup> By employing phrases such as "how strange," the author encouraged her readers to consider how the progression of women's rights throughout the world in the previous one hundred years did not happen coincidentally, but through divine power in relation to the church's establishment and growth.

In contrast to their own progress, Mormon women documented and commented on what they perceived as setbacks of other groups of women. "The Official Round Table" section of the *Relief Society Magazine*, written by Mrs. Clarissa Smith Williams and Mrs. Amy Brown Lyman, kept readers up to date on current events and offered commentary. In January 1920, the magazine published an article entitled "Women to Fill Pulpits in the Protestant

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17. "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," 191.

18. "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," 191.

19. "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," 191.

Churches.” It reported that “as a logical consequence of civil suffrage for women they are now demanding religious equality, or the right to minister in the churches, exactly as do men.”<sup>20</sup> Williams and Lyman emphasized the confusion of non-Mormon Christian women and remarked, “How blessed are the ‘Mormon’ women” who understood their God-given place through “restored” gospel truths. LDS women were candid about not desiring “exact” *sameness* with men. For the most part, they ascribed to a rigid system of “separate spheres.” Yet, they praised the privileges afforded them in the church, trusting that Joseph Smith and “his successors enlarged the scope of this righteous attitude on the sex question, from time to time as occasion required and as the times were propitious.”<sup>21</sup> Even though Mormon women attributed their religious and civic rights mainly to male leaders, they believed that they came to them from God.

On the topic of suffrage, female leaders reminded women that in the church women “have always voted on all matters of procedure, and on the support of all officers in the Church.”<sup>22</sup> This doctrine of “common consent” meant that all members of the church, male or female, voted publicly in church meetings on matters concerning the church and on the positions of church leadership. According to female leaders, this practice “makes the woman an equal with man in all her religious activities.”<sup>23</sup> Emphasizing this principle may have encouraged the modern Mormon woman to find common ground, understanding and appreciation for her female predecessors who aligned themselves with a religion in which women had an equal voice in decision making. In an era in which modern women questioned why and how older women in the church had supported and participated in polygamy, older female leaders (including Emmeline B. Wells, President of the Relief Society and defender of both polygamy and women’s suffrage)<sup>24</sup> sought to bridge generational divides and help younger women see the church’s progressive relevance through its history.

In pointing to the church as the benefactor of women’s rights, Relief Society women included church programs and institutions as indicators that the church valued women’s rights. “Organizations have been founded in the Church for the public and semi-public exercises of every gift and grace of womankind,

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20. Williams and Lyman, “Women to Fill Pulpits in the Protestant Churches,” 38.

21. Williams and Lyman, “Women to Fill Pulpits in the Protestant Churches,” 38.

22. “Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women,” 190.

23. “Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women,” 190.

24. Lola Van Wagenen, “Sister-Wives and Suffragists: Polygamy and the Politics of Woman Suffrage, 1870–1896” (PhD diss., New York University, 1994); Mary A. Johnson, “Emmeline B. Wells: Political Pioneer Leader,” *Pioneer* 51 (2004): 24; image 5, appendix.



*Photograph of Emmeline B. Wells at the time of her passing, having been one of the most famous and outspoken advocates for women's rights among the Mormon community. Image courtesy of the Harold B. Lee Library.*

from the oldest woman to the youngest girl child. There are avenues provided for the exercise of their talents and the development of their powers.”<sup>25</sup> One of these organizations was the female Relief Society. Officially organized by Joseph Smith in 1842 in Nauvoo, Illinois, he supposedly said, “The restored Church of

25. “Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women,” 190.

Jesus Christ could not be perfect or complete without it.”<sup>26</sup> Although it began informally and under female initiative, Joseph Smith decided to “organize the sisters under the priesthood after a pattern of the priesthood.”<sup>27</sup> Joseph Fielding Smith, sixth president of the church from 1901–1918, confirmed that “the Relief Society was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith as a fundamental part of the gospel.”<sup>28</sup> Even though the Relief Society did not function continuously throughout the nineteenth century, church leaders of the twentieth century referred to its divine origins, invigorating women with the belief that the Mormon Church uniquely afforded women many rights.<sup>29</sup>

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26. Today the Relief Society continues to function as “the official adult women’s organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is an essential part of the structure of the Church” at general, region, and local levels. “The organization provides opportunities for association, leadership, compassionate service, and education.” Joseph Fielding Smith (sixth president of the Church) said that through the Relief Society, “women of the Church are given some measure of divine authority particularly in the direction of government and instruction in behalf of the women of the Church.” For more on the history of the Relief Society, see Janath Russell Cannon and Jill Murray Derr, “Relief Society,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992): 1199–1206.

27. Mary Stovall Richards, “Review of Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society, by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Janath Russell Cannon and Jill Mulvay Derr,” *BYU Studies* 33, no. 4 (1993): 791–802; See Richard G. Ellsworth and Melvin J. Luthy, “Priesthood,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992).

28. “Story of the Organization of the Relief Society,” *Relief Society Magazine* 6, no. 3 (March 1919): 127–42.

29. “The organization informally dissolved during the factious events of 1844 after an Illinois mob killed Joseph Smith in prison. The following years marked great upheaval in the Church as its headquarters, leaders, and thousands of members and converts moved west to the Salt Lake Valley and western settlements. While ‘the organization [did not] function during the Saints’ westward trek and early settlement of Utah, women continued their charitable works and gathered as friends to support and minister to one another through prayer, testimony, and the exercise of the gifts of the spirit.” See Cannon and Derr, “Relief Society,” 1199–1206; Other female organizations, such as the Female Council of Health, organized in Salt Lake City in 1851 “for midwives and others interested in healing by faith and herbs” preceded official Church reorganization of the Relief Society. According to the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, “In 1866 President Young initiated Churchwide reorganization of the Relief Society, appointing Eliza R. Snow to assist bishops in establishing the organization in each ward. The minutes that she had recorded in Nauvoo became the common ‘Constitution’ for all local units, providing continuity of name, purpose, and organizational pattern.” See James B. Allen and Jessie L. Embry, “Provoking the Brethren to Good Works,” *BYU Studies* 31, no. 2 (1991): 115–38; Jill Mulvay-Derr, Janath Russell Cannon and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant: A History of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000); General Board of the Relief Society, *History of Relief Society, 1842–1966* (Salt Lake City: Church History Library, 1967).

Teaching the history of the church in a relevant context seemed to be an important priority for contributors to the *Relief Society Magazine*. Established relatively early on in the founding of the church, “The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo brought women into the formal structure of the Church and gave them significant responsibility and authority.”<sup>30</sup> Church leaders construed the legacy of the Relief Society throughout the century to encourage women to continue the work of moral reform, political involvement, and “looking to the wants of the poor” that their predecessors had begun.<sup>31</sup> Yet “the nineteenth-century format for local Relief Society meetings—based on charity work, sewing, testimony bearing, and scripture study—made way in the twentieth-century for a more varied and extensive educational program” in order to “save souls” through societal transformation.<sup>32</sup> While female leaders hoped to show that the Church consistently maintained women's rights as a priority and ideal, they also seemed able to acknowledge that the Relief Society program itself had adapted to changing times.

## Turning Outward

The perspective of Relief Society Leaders and Mormon women did not exist in a vacuum. The Relief Society publicly facilitated support for the national suffrage movement and in turn gained inspiration for the role of Mormon

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30. Cannon and Derr, “Relief Society,” 1199–1206.

31. “By 1880, the Relief Society had 300 local units, and each one cared for the suffering and needy within its ward boundaries, using an expanded corps of visiting teachers to collect and distribute donations. Ward Relief Societies managed their own financial resources, and many of them built their own meeting halls.” During the early days of the Church, “The Relief Society engaged in a number of bold and innovative economic activities spurred by the Church's movement for economic self-sufficiency. Ward societies initiated cooperative enterprises for making and marketing homemade goods, raised silk, established a grain storage program with local granaries, and helped finance the medical training of midwives and female doctors. With the support of ward units, the central board established the Deseret hospital (1882–1895). Assuming a new political role, the Relief Society sponsored a series of ‘indignation meetings’ to voice women's opposition to proposed antipolygamy legislation. After Utah women were enfranchised in 1870, the Relief Society encouraged women to vote. Then they actively campaigned for women's suffrage after they were disfranchised by the federal government in 1887.” See Cannon and Derr, “Relief Society,” 1199–1206.

32. Women of the Relief Society organized the Young Ladies' Retrenchment Association (later young women) and primary (children's) organizations in the 1870s. Women continued to lead these organizations in the twentieth-century.

women in society going forward. Mormon interaction with the non-Mormon nation on the basis of women's rights had played a significant role in the history of Utah and its path to statehood. The Relief Society maintained its political legacy steeped in publicized association with women's rights and the suffragist movement over the previous half-century.<sup>33</sup> The Relief Society had mobilized first-time female voters under national public scrutiny in 1870.<sup>34</sup> When the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 revoked the vote from women and men who were unwilling to renounce polygamy, the Relief Society again became a mechanism for political activism in order to secure suffrage. In these highly publicized and controversial struggles, the Relief Society affiliated with the National Woman Suffrage Association, the International Council of Women, and was a charter member of the National Council of Women.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, national suffrage leaders visited Utah throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Even after Utah women regained suffrage in the passing of the Utah Constitution in 1895, their support for and cooperation with the national women's rights movement continued. In early 1920, the *Relief Society Magazine* reported the visit of national suffrage leader Carrie Chapman Catt to Salt Lake City. This "was signaled by a victory convention arranged by Mrs. Emily S. Richards

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33. "The most long-lived of the society's economic enterprises was the grain storage program directed initially by Sister Wells in 1876 and continued until the close of World War I (1918), when the Relief Society sold 205,518 bushels of their storage wheat to the U.S. government at its request. The sale capped the Relief Society's intensive involvement in the war effort. A 'Wheat Trust Fund' was then established that made possible the purchase and storage of more wheat in 1941. Responsibility for the wheat continued until 1978, when the Relief Society transferred 266,291 bushels of wheat and nearly 2 million dollars in assets to the First Presidency for use in the Welfare program. In 1920 the general board terminated another longstanding enterprise, and closed its Nurse School as adequate professional schools were then in place."

34. Although the women of the Utah Territory were enfranchised two months after the women in Wyoming, "the experiment with woman suffrage in Utah received much more attention because it admitted nearly forty times as many women to the polling place as had the action in Wyoming." Additionally, most of Utah's women were members of the Mormon Church which practiced plural marriage. Some of Utah's earliest voters were even participants in plural marriage themselves. Both reformers and critics watched the Utah "experiment," questioning how suffrage and polygamy could coexist with the assumption that these two principles were antithetical. See Beverly Beeton, *Women Vote in the West*.

35. It became incorporated in October 1892 as the National Woman's Relief society with a board of directors composed of its general board and general presidency. Many ward units were also incorporated to facilitate management of property.

and her associate officers in the Suffrage Council of Utah.”<sup>36</sup> The *Relief Society Magazine* praised Catt and her associates who “gave intelligent talks on the questions of law, child welfare, public health, and improvement of social and vital conditions.”<sup>37</sup> Catt and Utah’s activist women reorganized the Utah chapter and Catt announced the merging of two major suffrage parties (the National League of Women Voters and the National Suffrage Association) that would occur the next February following the passage of the national suffrage amendment. Encouraging Utah women to continue their participation with the national movement into the future, Catt “outlined some possible avenues for future labor of the league in the matter of social hygiene, child welfare, and the improvement of existing laws.”<sup>38</sup> The next month, British suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst visited Salt Lake City, not for the sake of suffrage, but to discuss a peripheral women’s problem: labor strikes. A contributor to the *Relief Society Magazine* reported on Pankhurst’s proposal to Mormon women: “She says women have as many rights as men, and inquires what would happen if housewives went on strike for an eight-hour day.”<sup>39</sup> In this time of national importance and visibility for the suffrage movement, some of its most public and persuasive leaders prioritized their relationship with Mormon women and looked to the future for their assistance and cooperation.

Women continued to support suffrage leaders in 1920 because they were interested in expanding areas of reform that women’s rights movements increasingly embodied. Additionally, Mormon women’s perception of themselves as moral authorities perhaps engendered a greater sense of national interest. Suffrage sentiment had grown a part of Mormon society. Now, Mormon women looked to help champion the struggle for women elsewhere. Issues of the *Relief Society Magazine* during 1920 record numerous events that hosted national suffrage leaders and evidently influenced how Mormon women viewed themselves as part of the larger activism for women’s rights. Records of Utah women’s

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36. Emily Sophia Tanner Richards was a member of the Relief Society General Board. She was most known for founding the Utah Women’s Suffrage Association in 1889. Within the organization she acted as a state organizer, instituting local units throughout the territory. “Many, if not all of them, sprang from the women’s auxiliary organizations of the Church, most notably the Relief Society.”

37. “Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt Visits Utah,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 39.

38. “Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt Visits Utah,” 40.

39. James Anderson, “On the Watchtower,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 2 (February 1920): 98–99.





SUSAN B. ANTHONY



DR. ANNA HOWARD SHAW



MRS. CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT



MRS. SARAH M. KIMBALL



MRS. EMMELINE B. WELLS



MRS. EMILY S. RICHARDS

*Pages from the Relief Society Magazine in an article called "Suffrage Won by the Mothers of the United States," depicting women's rights leaders from national organizations on the left and Mormon women on the right, demonstrating the cooperation and consensus between the women and those they represented. Images courtesy of the Harold B. Lee Library.*



conventions indicate a transition in the emphases of national and local leaders. While Mormon women looked back in time to remember their divine mandate to social and legal rights, they also increasingly looked outward and forward. Now that universal suffrage was on the horizon, leaders emphasized other avenues of reform that they portrayed as meaningful to women particularly.

Evidently, Mormon women, as well as other women in the nation, were contemplating next steps for newly enfranchised women and the role local and national organizations would play. Mormon women had, to some extent, already initiated this transition into the organization's agenda by teaching and promoting these ideals in their own localities. The efficient and widespread organization of the Relief Society became a mechanism for promoting reform and education by social institutions, including government programs. For example, in early 1920, an announcement in the *Relief Society Magazine* declared that "through the kindness and courtesy of Senator Reed Smoot, the Relief Society will receive a consignment of Government pamphlets to be used for supplemental study."<sup>40</sup> The Relief Society incorporated these pieces of government-produced (and church-sanctioned) literature into their instructional materials. The pamphlets entitled "What is Malnutrition?" and "Diet for the School Child" demonstrate the type of standardized curriculum that both church and state endorsed. These essentially "domestic" issues had great relevance for women who often identified themselves within familial roles in home, the church, and society, and offered them a platform from which to engage civically.

## Reconciling Concerns Relating to Gender Roles

Mormon women generally adhered to the cultural stereotype of moral guardian and educator. *Relief Society Magazine* writers framed their arguments within these traditional contexts because many women embraced these roles as empowering and ennobling. The *Relief Society Magazine* reminded women: "The sons of mothers and husbands of wives have suffered during the long, dark ages, because, when woman is oppressed and children are neglected, or given false standards or morals of life, men are debased and enslaved."<sup>41</sup>

By contextualizing women's rights for their Mormon women audience, most of whom were wives and mothers, modern Mormon women preserved a

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40. "Attention, Friends," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 32.

41. "Opening the Gate Beautiful to Women," 189.

domestic and virtuous image which they used to refute anti-suffrage anxieties about women abandoning the home.

In order to mobilize activism and support, the women's rights movement encouraged women to integrate civic duties with traditional roles many women valued and identified with, such as that of mother. Outwardly, women did not argue for greater rights for themselves, but for laws that appeared to aid women in traditional roles and in nurturing the family. At a "Golden Jubilee" celebration to mark fifty years since women were first granted the right to vote in Utah, two women represented differing sentiments among Utah women in regard to suffrage locally and generally. Mrs. Smoot said: "Women's rights have been spoken of. I have never had any desire for more rights than I have. I have considered politics aside from the sphere of women; but, as things progress, I feel it is right that we should vote, though the path may be fraught with difficulty."<sup>42</sup>

Some Mormon women, such as Mrs. Smoot, did not initially desire to participate politically but perhaps gradually came to appreciate the right as the movement spread and pro-suffrage doctrine increasingly became more closely aligned with religious rhetoric.

To Mrs. Smoot, a Mrs. East "replied in her gentle but emphatic way: 'I cannot agree with Sister Smoot in regard to woman's rights. . . . I have always wanted a voice in the politics of the nation, as well as to rear a family.'"<sup>43</sup> Mrs. East challenged a main tenet of anti-suffrage debate that women who advocated actively for women's rights might not be content in familial roles. Although the *Relief Society Magazine* often painted a narrative of Utah women as liberal in terms of women's rights, Mrs. East's desire to reassure others that she had not abandoned her principal interest in motherhood by embracing an interest in politics, suggests the prevalence of this concern among Utah women. Mormon religious doctrine bolstered cultural beliefs that motherhood was the highest and holiest calling and that women's civic role involved advocating for children and moral family life. The Relief Society focused on its successes and advances for women within a domestic context and rarely criticized religious doctrines or cultural norms that kept women primarily at home.

Promoting the idealistic image of marriage and motherhood helped to soothe local and national public anxieties concerning the idea that the political sphere might "defeminize" women. The *Relief Society Magazine* acknowledged

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42. Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman, "Women Will Celebrate Golden Jubilee Marking Fiftieth Anniversary of Suffrage in Utah," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 3 (March 1920): 153.

43. Williams and Lyman, "Women Will Celebrate Golden Jubilee Marking Fiftieth Anniversary of Suffrage in Utah," 153.

these anxieties among circles beyond Mormon society. While the magazine recorded "another striking development of suffrage" in Britain with Lady Astor accepting nomination to the House of Commons, the same article mentioned in passing, "English economists, by the way, are greatly troubled over the one and one-half million unmarried British women."<sup>44</sup> Lady Muir MacKensie proposed saving "this great tragic army of unmarried women" by offering a five-hundred-dollar dowry when women married and taxing unmarried bachelors over a certain age, but ultimately "demand[ed] of the government an answer to this problem."<sup>45</sup> MacKensie received honor in her appropriately directed feminine political participation by demonstrating that women continued to concentrate primarily on promoting traditional family life in society. This model of civil activism fit within Mormon culture, as well, and therefore the Relief Society readily praised both the person and the rhetoric of MacKensie.

Mormon women sought to prove that they had not been masculinized by suffrage, did not intend to abandon the home, and still viewed themselves primarily in the contexts of traditional feminine roles. Utah's nineteenth-century "experiment" had not sullied twentieth-century women. Therefore, Utah women stood as encouragement for the rest of the nation that enfranchised women would not abandon their femininity and society would not degrade. Especially in 1920, the *Relief Society Magazine* embraced a celebratory tone as it put Mormon society and Mormon women on a pedestal, primarily by contrasting them to the conditions of "Gentile" women throughout the nation and world.<sup>46</sup> Mormon women continued to support equal rights, expressing the opinion that women who were offered political rights would remain in their "natural" domestic sphere by choice, and society would continue undisturbed. Clarissa Williams, counselor in the General Relief Society Presidency, argued, "When women get the full right of choosing what they will do and what they will leave undone, then they will quietly swing back into their rightful place and the world will move on in its usual circles."<sup>47</sup> By downplaying the effect that enfranchisement might have on society, Mormon women sought to address anxieties that existed

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44. Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman, "Lady Astor, in the British House of Commons," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 38.

45. Williams and Lyman, "Lady Astor, in the British House of Commons," 39.

46. "Gentile" was a Biblical term signifying "other peoples; i.e., 'not Israelite' and later 'not Jewish.'" Early Latter-day Saints adopted this term to mean not Latter-day Saint. See "Gentiles," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 541.

47. Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman, "Women in Los Angeles," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 2 (February 1920): 103.

at both the local and national levels. They attempted to demonstrate traditional femininity to the world and to themselves by promoting and celebrating traditional roles of wife and mother.

In order to help their female readers envision ways in which civic and domestic roles could coexist, the general Relief Society leadership and female editors of the *Relief Society Magazine* identified real women as role models. Most 1920 issues of the *Relief Society Magazine* featured biographical articles portraying exemplary Mormon (and occasionally non-Mormon in the case of some national women's rights leaders) women. These real women served as models of religious and civic service and in some ways exemplified an ideal Mormon woman. For example, Mrs. Annie Wells Cannon actively participated in Republican politics in Utah and served a full term in the state legislature. She had been "an active Church worker since age 14," had experience in all aspects of Relief Society, and was the first president of the state War Mother's Association, being "the mother of three soldier boys."<sup>48</sup> Although the Relief Society General Board credited her as "a fluent speaker, a gifted writer, and a wise counselor," the magazine reminded readers that these were trivial accomplishments in comparison to her being "the mother of seven stalwart sons and seven lovely daughters."<sup>49</sup> Even though Annie had been actively engaged in public work since her youth, she had "not neglected the finer and better part of a woman's life, for she [was] an ideal mother and a diligent, loyal wife."<sup>50</sup> This analysis of Annie's life clearly marks her traditional family roles as her paramount achievement, even in contrast to her vast religious and political experience. Mormon women attributed the greatest meaning in life to the most traditional feminine roles. While Mormon women learned to focus primarily on their roles within the home, they did not seem to perceive this as inconsistent with the divine rights they believed they deserved.

Women attributed their understanding of gender and family roles to the teachings of the Church, which subscribed to an essentially separate-spheres ideology. In February 1920, the *Relief Society Magazine* republished an article by former Prophet and President of the Church John Taylor, entitled "Origin, Object, Destiny of Women," which reminded women that each chose before her birth a "kindred spirit . . . to be thy head, stay, husband and protection on

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48. "Mrs. Annie Wells Cannon, New General Board Member," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 2 (February 1920): 97; image 3, appendix.

49. "Mrs. Annie Wells Cannon, New General Board Member," 97.

50. "Mrs. Annie Wells Cannon, New General Board Member," 97.

the earth, and to exalt thee in the eternal worlds.”<sup>51</sup> Each woman likewise “covenanted” with her future children to bear and rear them in mortality. Therefore, the importance of roles such as wife and mother represented more than cultural norms for Mormon women, but were binding, eternal promises that they had already committed to fulfill. In addition, by properly fulfilling these roles in life, women would inherit “crowns, thrones, exaltations, and dominions” with her husband. In embracing the roles of wife and mother, a woman might “fulfill the designs of [her] creation.”<sup>52</sup> The theological beliefs of Mormons in gendered familial roles and their importance not just in contemporary society, but in the eternal world, encouraged Mormon women to embrace the roles of wife and mother in the home and within society.

Mormon women did not see themselves as alone in the defense of motherhood and traditional roles. Current events reported in the *Women's Magazine* demonstrate that Mormon women viewed national and international struggles for women's rights through a similar lens of domesticity in the political sphere. The magazine reported an international meeting of the National Women's Trade Union League of America that involved “forty delegates from sixteen foreign countries” in addition to local women and Relief Society Leaders. This convention, which Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman credited as “perhaps the most important movement among women of the world during the last month,” determined that “women must seek not protection against the evils of industry, but a position which will enable them, as women, to remove the evils of industry . . . which are detrimental to the home and to the welfare of children.”<sup>53</sup> This article, like many others in the 1920 publication, called upon the moral guardianship of women, motivating them within the context of their traditional roles.

The convention concluded that the most useful avenues for women's pursuits involved child labor legislation and medical inspection of schools. They determined, “We must emphasize not protection *of* women, but participation *by* women” to rid society of labor corruption which would erode family life, women's primary responsibility.<sup>54</sup> In the twentieth century, Mormon women

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51. John Taylor, “Origin, Object, Destiny of Women,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 2 (February 1920): 67.

52. Taylor, “Origin, Object, Destiny of Women,” 67.

53. Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman, “International Congress of Working Women,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 37.

54. Williams and Lyman, “International Congress of Working Women,” 37.

generally agreed that social reform was an important part of feminine domain. At the same time, some expressed a sense of moral and organizational superiority in church doctrine and programs which had allowed Utah to lead the nation not only in female enfranchisement, but in other endeavors of progressive reform.

In the March 1920 issue of the *Relief Society Magazine*, Clarissa Smith Williams and Amy Brown Lyman called another issue of society and family to the attention of the Relief Society. They reported that the Children's Bureau in Washington had been studying the rights of children born out of wedlock and that national conditions for poor and working children were alarming. However, the article concluded by saying, "Utah has little of this problem. Our children are kept in school and live in as ideal conditions as any children in the world."<sup>55</sup> The difference, as they pointed out, stemmed from the high moral standards of Utah's women. Mormon women perceived their society as exceptional, not only in advancing their personal rights, but also in affording them a place in politics and society to aid potential problems in the realm of family matters.

While the magazine focused primarily upon issues outside of Mormon society, it did encourage Utah women to take advantage of unique opportunities and privileges found within their own state. The *Relief Society Magazine* encouraged women to gain education or trade-skill experience. It promoted female training courses at the church-operated Dee Hospital in Ogden repeatedly throughout 1920.<sup>56</sup> The back cover of several magazine issues encourages women to "Put to Use the Dead Winter Months" by attending Utah Agricultural College where it advertised to women "159 Courses in 46 Departments Open to You."<sup>57</sup> By advertising in the *Women's Relief Society Magazine*, educational institutions promoted themselves to Mormon women in a way that reassured Church approval.

While Church leaders encouraged women to get an education, they were often reminded that education was "only effective as it functions in the betterment of the wife, the mother and homemaker."<sup>58</sup> In an article entitled "The Will and the Way," Ida Smoot Dusenberry, a member of the Relief Society, reminded

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55. Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman, "Reports From the Children's Bureau," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 3 (March 1920): 157.

56. "Nurse Work," 35.

57. Utah Agricultural College, Advertisement, *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 1 (January 1920): 63 (back cover); image 2, appendix.

58. Ida Smoot Dusenberry, "The Will and the Way," *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 2 (February 1920): 91.

**Put to Use the Dead Winter Months**

ATTEND THE  
**BIG WINTER COLLEGE**  
AT THE  
**UTAH AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**  
*(The Home of the Efficient Education)*

**REGISTRATION DEC. 4-6      QUARTER OPENS DEC. 8**

When outdoor work is slack, perfect yourself in your vocation by twelve weeks at Utah's great school.

You can prepare for your degree or take vocational work in the schools of Agriculture, Home Economics, Agricultural Engineering, Mechanic Arts, Commerce and Business Administration and General Science.

Send for special Winter circular. Address the President's Office, Utah Agricultural College, Logan, Utah.

**159 COURSES IN 46 DEPARTMENTS OPEN TO YOU**

*Advertisement for Utah Agricultural College encouraging women to enroll. Images are on the back covers of 1920 issues of the Relief Society Magazine. Image courtesy of the Harold B. Lee Library.*

women to take advantage of educational opportunities but to do so in order to better fulfill traditional feminine roles, especially that of mother. She declared that education for the purpose of mothering represented a “divinely ordained decree.” Simultaneously criticizing the “retarding of the world . . . due to inefficient mothers,” while praising Latter-day Saint women for not being idle, she denounced “the most unprogressive step in the educational career of woman-kind”: the pursuit of an education for “the mere fact of . . . assuring [a woman a] distinctive experience that one must acquire to appear in society.”<sup>59</sup> Essentially, a woman who pursued education, especially higher education, should not do so for her own selfish or vain purposes, but rather to make herself more qualified to fulfill traditional roles of wife and mother. Mormon women had exceptional

59. Dusenberry, “The Will and the Way,” 90–92.



educational opportunities, and as such, carried the expectation to give “to the world examples of ‘intellectual distinction’ . . . that show moral courage.”<sup>60</sup> As a society that boasted superior spiritual enlightenment, Dusenberry reminded Mormon women that they should be role models in character and in their practical pursuit of knowledge “for use and not for decoration.”<sup>61</sup> In so doing, Mormon women would “come to a full realization [of] woman’s greatest mission in life,” which was to effectively sustain motherhood personally and societally. She reminded women that motherhood would be a “woman’s greatest mission in life” and the avenue through which she could expect to enjoy the greatest fulfillment.<sup>62</sup> Like Dusenberry, many Mormon in 1920 women perhaps saw education primarily as a means to bettering oneself in important feminine roles.

## Conclusion

Mormon women leaders highlighted in print many female “firsts” in the 1920 edition of the *Relief Society Magazine*. In one month alone, triumphant headlines remarked on the first female store manager, first female census takers, and first female British magistrate. However, they also reported on women in Los Angeles who “were denied a place on a jury,” affirming to Mormon women that “we still have some battles to fight.”<sup>63</sup> Yet the tone of the *Relief Society Magazine* indicated to the reader that most of the battles were outside of “Zion.” Nevertheless, the consistency of these announcements throughout 1920 demonstrates that Mormon women were interested in the “tremendous step[s] in advance” and setbacks in larger society in regards to women’s political, social, and economic standing.<sup>64</sup>

The following statement embodies Mormon women’s perspective during the momentous year of 1920: “The present time itself is fraught with great significance for the women of this people, for the Church itself and for the world.”<sup>65</sup> Jubilees signified local and national celebrations of Utah suffrage, the beginning

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60. Dusenberry, “The Will and the Way,” 91.

61. Dusenberry, “The Will and the Way,” 91.

62. Dusenberry, “The Will and the Way,” 92.

63. Williams and Lyman, “Women in Los Angeles,” 103.

64. Williams and Lyman, “Women in Los Angeles,” 103.

65. Clarissa Williams and Amy Lyman, “Centennial of the Vision,” *Relief Society Magazine* 7, no. 3 (March 1920): 155.



of the founding of the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter-day Saints, and the passage of a national suffrage amendment in the United States. Mormon women regarded each of these events as progressive and applicable to their own lives and their society, as they recounted and sought to understand their fifty-year struggle for suffrage through a progressive narrative. They credited Mormon ancestors with the modern commencement of women's rights, emphasized by the centennial celebration of Joseph Smith's First Vision. Mormon women believed that unique spiritual knowledge likewise allowed them to prevail in their rights. In contrast to the divinely revealed equality that blessed Mormon women, female Church leaders in 1920 depicted other religions as disadvantaged in regards to women's rights. They attributed many of their rights to the church, yet also saw themselves as part of the larger movement for women's rights. They anticipated the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and turned outside of their society in order to promote women's advancement beyond the vote. In so doing, Mormon women held fast to established paradigms of moral femininity and motherhood that empowered and motivated their cause. Finally, as the nation anticipated suffrage for all women, Mormon women relied on gospel doctrine to support suffrage and to understand their gendered place in politics and society going forward.

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## “The Voice of the People, and Not the Voice of this House”

### Legislative Instructions in the Atlantic World and the Irish Struggle for Free Trade, 1779–1780

Ian McLaughlin

IN 1771, ON HIS WAY TO LONDON TO LOBBY FOR THE AMERICAN CAUSE, Benjamin Franklin visited the city of Dublin. While there, he visited with several members of the Irish Parliament, especially those who had their own gripes with British imperialism. “I found [the Irish Patriot Party] disposed to be friends of America,” he wrote of the experience to a friend, “in which disposition I endeavored to confirm them, with the expectation that our growing weight might in time be thrown into their scale, and, by joining our interest with theirs, might be obtained for them as well as for us, a more equitable treatment from this Nation [Great Britain].”<sup>1</sup> Much has been written on the connections between the Irish Patriot Party and the American rebels during the era of the Revolutionary War. From their use of nonimportation agreements to the specific nature of their grievances (in both cases, frustration at the restrictive Navigation Acts regulating trade and complaints about the extent of the British Parliament’s sovereignty), the two movements had much in common, as the interest of contemporaries like Franklin illustrates.

One important similarity between the two anti-imperial movements has often been overlooked, however: the novel practice, important to both, of

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1. Matthew Ogden, “The American Revolution in Ireland: Franklin’s Irish Front,” accessed 9 April 2016, [http://www.larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2011/eirv38n12-20110325/49-55\\_3812.pdf](http://www.larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2011/eirv38n12-20110325/49-55_3812.pdf).

sending written instructions to legislators. Toward the end of 1779, members of the Irish Parliament (MPs) found themselves petitioned by multiple grassroots Irish voters' groups who were lobbying for free trade with both Europe and the British Empire.<sup>2</sup> These petitions sparked fierce debate within the Irish Parliament. Many members of parliament, even among those who supported free trade in principle, were affronted that their constituents would deign to tell them how to vote. In this era, politicians either considered public opinion a non-entity or looked down upon it as the expression of mere demagoguery. They still subscribed to the notion that there existed a unitary national interest which all good statesmen naturally pursued over their own private interests.<sup>3</sup> It was considered unwise in these circumstances for the masses—what contemporary Irish statesman Edmund Burke infamously dubbed “the swinish multitude”—to be too directly involved in the political process.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, when Henry Grattan, leader of the so-called “Patriot Party,” which promoted both free trade and legislative independence from Great Britain, described MPs as “servant[s] of their constituents,” and “bound to obey [the instructions],” the result was a firestorm.<sup>5</sup>

The Americans underwent a similar controversy over legislative instructions at nearly the same time, as traced by Gordon S. Wood in his landmark work *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. Wood anchors the growing insistence on the power of the people to bind their legislators firmly within colonial history and the developments of the Revolutionary War. Overall, Wood argues, the debates over legislative instruction ultimately contributed to the development of a “uniquely American science of politics,” in which representatives were expected to “bring home the bacon” to their districts. However, as developments on the other side of the Atlantic would make clear, debates over legislative instruction were not only limited to America, they did not result from uniquely American factors. Both the Irish and American debates over legislative instructions were sparked by the entrance of the middle classes onto the political stage, and marked a broader reexamination of classical assumptions about the nature of representation, initiating debates that would indelibly shape the history and political culture of both nations.

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2. “Voters,” meaning property-owning Protestant men, a small percentage of the country’s overall population.

3. Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 24–27.

4. Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on the Revolution in France* (1792).

5. Maurice R. O’Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1976), 175–80.

## The Political and Economic Context of Revolution-era Ireland

Because Ireland was not a sovereign nation, its Parliament labored under two basic restrictions imposed by England. The first, enacted by Poyning's Law of 1494, made it so the government could not pass laws without the authorization of the English Privy Council. In practice, this meant that bills would be drawn up and debated in Dublin, and then passed on to Westminster for approval. If approved, they then became law; if disapproved, Westminster sent a revised, acceptable version back to Dublin for passage.<sup>6</sup> The second restriction was more symbolic than practical: the Declaratory Act of 1720, which asserted British legislative sovereignty over Ireland. (Indeed, the 1766 Declaratory Act for the North American colonies, passed in the aftermath of the Stamp Act crisis, was modeled on the earlier Irish version, further linking the two nations' anti-imperial causes.)

Ireland also suffered economically due to its relationship with Great Britain. Its economy was already small and stagnant, but the British system of trade restrictions, known collectively as the Navigation Acts, exacerbated this situation. Inspired by the economic philosophy of mercantilism, the Acts severely limited the trade of every constituent part of the empire in favor of England herself.<sup>7</sup> Ireland could not trade at all with Britain's Asian possessions, and could trade with the American colonies only if the goods went through English ports first. Different quotas and restrictions were placed on goods shipped from Ireland to Continental Europe, including on the most important Irish export, wool.<sup>8</sup> In peacetime, Irish merchants had often been able to get around the restrictions through smuggling.<sup>9</sup> But when the Revolutionary War broke out, Britain's newly active navy began to enforce the laws more stringently, and the country began to feel the full brunt of its disadvantaged position within the empire.

Ireland's poverty, considerably worsened by the newly reinforced Navigation Acts, was so severe by the time France entered the Revolutionary War on the side of the Americans in 1778 that it could not outfit an army. To be ready in case of invasion, Parliament and the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland reluctantly authorized groups of citizens around the country to form militia units known

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6. O'Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution*, 18–19.

7. Larry Sawers, "The Navigation Acts Revisited," *Economic History Review* 45, no. 2 (May 1992): 262–84.

8. *Speeches of the Right Hon. Henry Grattan* (New York: Eastburn, Kirk, and Co., 1813), xlix.

9. O'Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution*, 37–39.

as the Volunteers. Although they fought only once,<sup>10</sup> as the threat of invasion never materialized, the Volunteers remained in the public eye through frequent military parades.<sup>11</sup> Although staffed almost exclusively by middle-to-upper-class Protestants because Catholics were forbidden to bear arms, the Volunteers were immensely popular with Catholic and Protestant landowners alike.<sup>12</sup> They gradually increased in size—totaling about forty thousand members by 1780—until they became a cause of great alarm to the Lord-Lieutenant, Britain’s representative on the island and Ireland’s chief executive (more or less a colonial governor).<sup>13</sup>

The middle classes, who formed the backbone of the Volunteers, supported the agenda of Henry Grattan’s Parliamentary opposition party, the Patriots, including the removal of all restrictions on Irish trade (i.e., the full repeal of the Navigation Acts insofar as they applied to Ireland).<sup>14</sup> Early in 1779, committees around the country instigated nonimportation agreements to force Britain’s hand on the trade issue. Toward the end of the same year, the Dublin regiment of Volunteers paraded on King William III’s birthday (4 November), a traditionally Protestant holiday at the time, carrying signs like “A Free Trade—Or Else” and “Relief to Ireland.”<sup>15</sup> In the run-up to the parade, as reported by the *Dublin Evening Post*, “several cities and counties” prepared “to instruct their representatives, relative to their parliamentary conduct.”<sup>16</sup> Grattan was exultant at this outpouring of popular enthusiasm, hoping it would embarrass some of his more reluctant colleagues into supporting his agenda. It was days after this event that he gave his speech describing MPs as “servants of their constituents,” with which so many of his colleagues, even within his own party, took issue.

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10. In 1779, the Larne Volunteers forced a French privateer wandering off the coast to strike its colors. See R. B. McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 258.

11. McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution*, 259–60.

12. As evidenced by public subscriptions by Catholics and Protestants to pay the Volunteers’ expenses. See Alfred E. Zimmern, *Henry Grattan, the Stanhope Essay* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1902), 22.

13. McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution*, 261–62; Zimmern, *Henry Grattan, the Stanhope Essay*, 23.

14. O’Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution*, 20, 22–23.

15. O’Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution*, 174–75; McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution*, 267.

16. *Dublin Evening Post*, 21 October 1779.

Historians have long viewed this free trade crisis and the rise of the Volunteers as marking the emergence of the middle classes into Irish political life. This has been the case since at least 1902, when Oxford undergraduate Alfred E. Zimmern wrote a senior thesis asserting that by the demonstration of the Volunteers, “Public opinion was now at length awakened, [and] men began for the first time to look to Parliament as the embodiment of the national will.”<sup>17</sup> There is much truth to Zimmern’s assessment, but without considering the role of legislative instructions—as all sources but one have, and that only briefly—the argument is somewhat incomplete. Binding legislative instructions were the instrument through which the merchant and manufacturing classes ensured that their voices would not only be heard, but heeded. They arose out of a recognition that the older, established rights of assembly and petition were inadequate; a new innovation in Irish politics was, therefore, needed—a new weapon in the people’s political arsenal, as it were.<sup>18</sup> The authors of the instructions suspected—rightly, as it turns out—that Britain would not bow to the strength of nonimportation agreements and peaceful demonstration alone, but only to a vote of Parliament.

In America, the situation was much the same, although it took considerably longer to develop. The class from which the Founding Fathers were drawn—which included northern merchants like Samuel Adams and southern planters such as George Washington—felt shut out of the local elite by the system of aristocratic patronage that governed the colonies. As did the Irish, they relied on nonimportation agreements to pressure their recalcitrant British governors to address their demands for greater political autonomy. After numerous entreaties to Parliament and a petition to King George III himself failed, the colonists formed new state governments in 1776. Yet it quickly became clear that the interests of the voters in the new nation were anything but homogenous. Middling voters, many of them newly enfranchised, invoked pre-Independence mistrust of Parliament to argue that legislators in their states must be directly responsible to their constituents for their votes, and must yield to legislative

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17. Zimmern, *Henry Grattan, the Stanhope Essay*, 26.

18. While they may appear similar on the surface, petition and instruction are two very different political expressions. A petition is a statement which the full legislature must consider, and which generally any citizen of the nation may sign; instructions are more particularist: they express a popular sentiment, but only of a determined legislative district, and they come with the demand that they be heeded.

instructions when submitted.<sup>19</sup> They knew that the élite who still predominated among officeholders might very well ignore their interests without some kind of enforcement mechanism.<sup>20</sup> Thus, though the particulars differ considerably, the origins of legislative instructions in both Ireland and America share a common root in an uneasy alliance between the elected and electors.

## The Debates

Overall, between October and December 1779, around twenty cities and counties sent some kind of direction to their representatives in the Irish House of Commons, urging them to vote in favor of a “short” six-month budget bill to force the issue of free trade. (Essentially, they meant to threaten a government shutdown, à la Ted Cruz.) Although not all petitions used words as direct as “instruct” or “insist,” all “impl[ied] a degree of compulsion in addressing their representatives.”<sup>21</sup> One of the more aggressive examples comes from County Cork, whose resolution, along with its representatives’ response,<sup>22</sup> was published in the *Dublin Evening Post* on 25 November. The meeting of “Freemen and Freeholders” resolved “to recommend to, and instruct” its MPs “to exert [their] utmost efforts in Parliament, for obtaining that speedy and effectual relief, which the necessities of this nation so particularly demand.” The use of “to recommend” followed immediately by “instruct,” almost as if the latter were meant to replace the former, indicates that the men who drew up the resolution were conscious of using a new and bold form of address.

One representative, John Hely Hutchinson, a leading Patriot, accepted the instructions graciously, writing, “The Instructions of Constituents are always intitled [*sic*] to great respect.” Hutchinson goes on to specify that when the people speak “*on the greatest of all national concerns*, their sentiments ought to be received with reverence” (emphasis added). James Stewart and Armar Lowry Corry, responding to their Tyrone County constituents in the same issue of the *Post*, adopt similar language: “We shall be happy to accept your advice *in all great constitutional questions*” (emphasis added). The attention drawn to national, as opposed to local, concerns is further illustrated by a passage in

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19. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic*, 193–94.

20. In the early republic, property requirements for office holding were far higher than those for voting, leading to a large class divide between representatives and their constituents.

21. O’Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution*, 178.

22. Legislative districts often returned two MPs rather than one in this era.



Hutchinson's account where, in apologizing for a vote made in the previous legislative session, he describes the conflict he felt between "public Duty and local Affection." On that occasion, "Duty" induced him to vote against the parochial wishes of those he represented; this implicit mistrust of the ability of the people to choose prudently on issues of national concern makes the fact that both Hutchinson and the Tyrone MPs insisted that it was *especially* on the biggest, most important issues of the day that they desired the input of their constituents all the more curious. A clue to the discrepancy may be found later on in Stewart and Corry's response: "our endeavors in the public cause, will receive considerable weight when seconded by the voice of our constituents." Far from the "embarrassment"<sup>23</sup> historian Maurice O'Connell believes legislative instructions to have been for Irish MPs, the Patriots seemed to need the people—or what they could reasonably claim to be "the Voice of the People," in Hutchinson's phrase—as much as the people needed them.

Of course, not every MP felt this way. William Bronlow, himself a Patriot, objected to his party's appeal to public opinion. While he acknowledged that the people's opinions must be respected, he warned that if legislators were not free to vote their conscience in the end they would become "slaves, and not Trustees in whom the People confided their liberties."<sup>24</sup> Hutchinson's fellow Corkite MP, Richard Longfield, professed himself to be honored by the "close Union between the constituents of the City of Cork and me" upon receiving their instructions but declared that he would keep to his own counsel when voting on the short money bill. The feeling that Irish voters had been slightly impertinent persisted even after the trade restrictions were repealed by the British the next year. Thus an anonymous 1780 pamphlet criticized the advocates of free trade for having fallen into the "error . . . of dictating to [their] superiors, in a business which they do not understand."<sup>25</sup> The author wished that "the conduct of our affairs m[ight] be left free to the deliberations of our representatives . . . [for] they have virtue and spirit enough to do what is right in opposition to the resolves of arrogance and presumption."<sup>26</sup>

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23. O'Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution*, 181–82.

24. Irish House of Commons, 10 November 1779, qtd. in O'Connell, *Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution*, 176.

25. Anon., *A Candid Display, of the Reciprocal Conduct of Great Britain and her Colonies: From the Origins of the Present Contest, to the Claim of Independency*, in Harry T. Dickinson, ed., *Ireland in the Age of Revolution, 1760–1805* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013), 56.

26. *A Candid Display*, 34.

Both the MPs who refused to obey the instructions and the author of the pamphlet (who very well may have belonged in the former category) felt that binding instructions demeaned the dignity of the legislative station. If the aristocrats, who dominated the legislature, could not be trusted to make the wisest decisions on behalf of all the people, then who could be? The middle classes? Burke's "swinish multitude"? At some level, accepting legislative instructions threatened to undermine the very fabric of hierarchical society, for if the "better sort" were not in any substantive way "better," whence their right to rule?

The social tensions underlying the new American republic during the Confederation period exploded into a similar debate over legislative instructions during the winter of 1786–1787 in Maryland. The state's lower house, elected on a broad franchise, insisted, on the basis of instructions from their constituents, that the senatorial upper house join with it in passing a paper money bill that would have favored debtors over creditors—or the poor over the rich, broadly speaking. The senators, most of whom were landowners and who were elected mostly by other large landholders, opposed the bill. In response to the House of Delegates, they argued that the people had no right to give binding instructions to either house of the legislature: "The supreme power of legislation, is in the people—but when they choose representatives to make laws, . . . they are bound by the laws that shall so be made." As with many Irish MPs, the Maryland senators were still very much attached to the idea of the aloof statesman dispassionately pursuing the public good, and thus argued that they could not become "mere tools" of the people.<sup>27</sup>

## Conclusions

The debate over the right of the people to demand a short-money bill aside, the Parliament in Dublin did pass such a bill in December of 1779. Shortly thereafter, the British government, worried its island neighbor would go the way of the rebellious Americans, granted Ireland both free trade and the ability to pass its own laws. In commemoration, George Washington declared St. Patrick's Day 1780 a holiday for the Continental Army: "The general congratulates the army on the very interesting proceedings of the parliament of Ireland and the inhabitants of that country which have been lately communicated; not only as

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27. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic*, 369–72.

they appear calculated to remove those heavy and tyrannical oppressions on their trade but to restore to a brave and generous people their ancient rights and freedom and by their operations to promote the cause of America.”<sup>28</sup> Washington apparently links free trade with parliamentary autonomy (“the restoration of their ancient rights and freedoms”) in this statement, as the Irish Patriots themselves did, yet he most likely knew nothing of the debates about the role legislative instructions in provoking the passage of the short money bill and thus, the granting of both rights. But for the historian looking back, the question arises as to whether legislative instructions, beyond helping to guarantee the short-term causes of the Patriots, signaled a permanent shift in Irish attitudes toward representation in a more democratic direction. This is ultimately impossible to determine for certain because the era of Irish parliamentary independence lasted for less than 20 years. A 1798 rebellion—at the height of the French Revolution—led England to abolish the Dublin parliament entirely in the 1800 Act of Union.<sup>29</sup>

However, if an obscure parliamentary speech from 21 January 1785 is any indication, the debates of 1779–1780 did leave some mark on Irish politics. On that day, Thomas Burgh, Kildare MP, criticized a fellow MP for opposing a resolution in favor of the reform of so-called “rotten boroughs” (unfairly drawn legislative districts) in Great Britain. The public clamor for reform was so obvious, thought Burgh, that only “the disinclination of the many to obey the instructions of their constituents” stood in the way of the resolution’s passage.<sup>30</sup> Although this statement is far from unambiguous, it does indicate the continued use of legislative instructions after the crucial events of 1779 and, further, a growing assumption that these instructions needed to be respected. More tenuously, it might be stated that the legacy of legislative instructions was part of a broader turn toward acknowledging the sovereignty of the people—and thus it contributed, somewhat ironically, toward the sense of nationalism that fueled the 1798 rebellion, which ultimately rendered the idea of any popular participation in Irish politics moot.

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28. “General Washington’s St. Patrick’s Day General Order, March 16, 1780,” 25 March 2011, <http://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/the-man-the-myth/a-brave-and-generous-people/general-washingtons-st-patricks-day-general-order/>.

29. McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution*, 678–79.

30. *The Parliamentary Register; or, History of the Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons of Ireland*, 21 January 1785.

As for the Americans, Wood argues that they eventually retreated from the “acutely actual representation” implied by a total adherence to constituent instructions, but they did place an unprecedented emphasis on public opinion that would become a hallmark of American politics.<sup>31</sup> Yet for all of the peculiarities of the American situation—which Wood, by the nature of his argument, is keen to emphasize—the American struggle fits well within a broader transition within the Anglophone, and even European, worlds from the politics of aristocratic patronage in the eighteenth century to the emergence of genuine representative democracy in the nineteenth.<sup>32</sup> It is noteworthy that Wood, in his historiographical context, was eager to recover the ideological component of American political development from the shadow of Charles Beard’s *Economic Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution*. He may have gone too far. We have seen by comparison that the debate over legislative instructions in both Ireland and America, in spite of the vast social and economic differences between the two countries, arose out of similar structural factors and were contested by analogous interest groups—many of which, though they were sympathetic to the cause of the people, were too invested in a transatlantic ideology of aristocratic statesmanship to yield to (or to exploit) the new, democratic politics.

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*Ian McLaughlin, sometime native of a small Idaho town, is a senior studying history, with emphases in Latin America and modern Europe. With the questions of eighteenth-century rhetoric on democracy and sovereignty explored in the present paper, he has finally identified what the bourgeoisie like to call a “passion” and plans to pursue graduate study related to Irish political history after he bids farewell to BYU next spring. He wishes to dedicate this paper to his partially Irish American father, who has been an unfailing source of support, encouragement, and stimulating conversation and without whose generous feedback and encyclopedic knowledge this paper would likely never have got off the ground. A firm believer in the power of community engagement to ameliorate the structural solipsism inherent in contemporary Western society, Ian serves as co-chairman of his ward’s service committee, president of BYU’s chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, and vice president of its Quiz Bowl club.*

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31. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic*, 195, 612.

32. See J. W. Derry, *Politics in the Age of Fox, Pitt, and Liverpool* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001), 17.

## Rebirth and Renewal in Maya Ritual from the Precolonial Period to the Present

Madeline Duffy

**T**HE CONCEPTS OF REBIRTH AND RENEWAL WERE PARAMOUNT IN pre-Columbian Maya culture. Traditionally, the Maya believe that everything passes through a never-ending cycle of birth, maturation, decay, death, and rebirth. This cycle encompasses the elements of everyday life which the Maya could perceive: the human life cycle, the life cycle of crops, the seasons, and even the rise and fall of the sun. They noticed that all of these day-to-day happenings “have their beginnings in a creative act and ultimately weaken and die in an orderly succession of days that is both comforting in its predictability and terrifying in its unwavering finality.”<sup>1</sup>

Pre-Columbian Maya believed it was the responsibility of human beings to regenerate the world through ritual after it passed through any such death—especially at significant points in the calendar year. The degree to which the traditional Maya today carry out similar rituals testifies of how important these rituals were and are to the indigenous people of Central America. Today practically every major Maya ceremony focuses on that continuous cycle of rebirth and renewal.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Allen J. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients: Maya Ceremonies of World Renewal from the Pre-Columbian Period to the Present*, 1st ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016), 1.

2. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 1.

In the wake of the Spanish conquest and the subsequent Christianization of the Americas, the Maya held on to their most vital traditional ceremonies by reconciling them with Christian teachings—as is most notably seen in remnants of *Wayeb'* rituals now present in the Catholic Holy Week or *Semana Santa*.

## The *Wayeb'*

New Years' rituals in particular were intended, symbolically and literally, to recreate and rebirth the world and its ruling deities after their deaths at the close of the cyclical Maya calendar year.<sup>3</sup> For the Maya, the end of the solar year was a time of calamity and uncertainty followed by a rebirth—not only of the New Year—but of the earth itself, of the gods, and of Maya hope.

This period was not one of celebration as it is in other cultures who traditionally observe a New Year. Contrariwise, it was a dark and dangerous period characterized by evil and danger during which the earth passed through death. It was called the *Wayeb'*, or the days without name (*ixma kaba kin*), a five-day period at the close of the three-hundred-and-sixty-five-day calendar year that belonged to neither the previous nor the succeeding year and was outside of the orderly cycle of months and the safety of time's continuous flow.<sup>4</sup>

During the *Wayeb'* the Maya were mostly engaged in “praying to their idols to save them from the evil of those dangerous days . . . that they would give them a good new year, fertile and abundant.”<sup>5</sup> It was during this period that the Maya waited annually in tense uncertainty and carefully performed the rituals designed to rebirth the now-dead world, striving for perfect exactness, as one mistake could mean failure and destruction. Fray Diego de Landa, a Spanish bishop and early ethnographer (to whom we owe the majority of our knowledge of the pre-Columbian Maya), wrote of the exactness with which the Maya executed rituals during the *Wayeb'*, for any misfortunes that occurred following

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3. Gabrielle Vail and Christine L. Hernández, *Re-creating Primordial Time: Foundation Rituals and Mythology in the Postclassic Maya Codices* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2014), 97, 141.

4. Fray Diego Lopez De Cogolludo, ch. 5 in *Historia De Yucatán*, vol. 4., trans. Allen J. Christenson (Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones, 2006), 274.

5. Diego Lopez De Cogolludo, *Historia De Yucatán*, 274.

the *Wayeb'* were considered by the people as "owing to some sin or fault in the services [of the *Wayeb'*] or in those who performed them."<sup>6</sup>

Few texts survive from the precolonial Maya, and information about Maya culture is scarce compared to that of other ancient civilizations. The significance of the aforementioned *Wayeb'* period to the Maya is thus emphasized by the fact that the *Wayeb'* is featured in the majority of the surviving Yucatec Mayan texts. Indeed, the *Wayeb'* should be considered the most important ritual period in precolonial Maya civilization.<sup>7</sup>

But why do the Maya consider themselves so responsible for rebirthing the world? This "burden of the ancients," as Allen Christenson of Brigham Young University coined it, stems from essential Maya beliefs that extend said responsibility all the way back to the creation of the earth and mankind.

The account of creation in the Mayan *Popol Vuh* states that the gods created human beings to be caretakers of the world (responsible for Earth's nourishment and protection) and mediators between the spiritual and temporal. The gods made several drafts of the human organism out of different materials until they found the model that would be able to fulfill mankind's purpose. One of their initial failed attempts involved wood. This draft didn't succeed "because the wood people did not 'remember' their creators" and therefore failed to carry out their responsibilities to the gods.<sup>8</sup> To solve this problem, the gods decided to create human beings from maize and blood. Blood, and not the brain, was considered in Maya belief to be the store of memory. This blood and maize combination would give humans "the ability to remember the gods and sustain them."<sup>9</sup>

Throughout the pre-Columbian Maya world, when the Maya executed new-year rituals associated with blood, they did so "in recognition of the role of blood in memory and a symbol of the way Maya ceremony connected contemporary Maya with their ancestors and with the gods" as well as of their divine responsibility to take care of the earth, and to ensure that both the earth and the gods had sufficient tribute in memory and blood to regenerate and survive another year.<sup>10</sup>

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6. Alfred M. Tozzer, trans., *Landa's Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán* (Cambridge, MA: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 1941), 136.

7. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 16.

8. "The Book of the People: Popol Vuh," accessed 1 November 2016, 3.

9. "The Book of the People: Popol Vuh," 3.

10. Allen Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 15.

### *Ritual Sacrifice*

Because of the importance of blood to the Maya, sacrifices of blood (either through bloodletting, animal, or full-blown human sacrifices) were reserved for the most important days of the *Wayeb'* and for the most important Maya gods. Pre-Columbian *Wayeb'* observances incorporated human sacrifice in several ways. Diego de Landa, in his *Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, mentioned ceremonies at the conclusion of the *Wayeb'* which involved animal sacrifices (mostly bird) and culminated in human sacrifices performed on the final day of the *Wayeb'*.<sup>11</sup> De Landa records the means of heart extraction from human sacrifices as follows:

If the heart of the victim was to be taken out, they led him with a great show and company of people into the court of the temple, and having smeared him with blue [a color very sacred to the Maya and representative of life and rebirth] and put on a *coroza* [headdress], they brought him up to the round altar, which was the place of sacrifice, and after the priest and his officials had anointed the stone with a blue color, and by purifying the temple drove out the evil spirit, the Chacs seized the poor victim and placed him very quickly on his back upon that stone, and all four held him by the legs and arms, so that they divided him in the middle. At this came the executioner, the Nacom, with a knife of stone, and struck him with great skill and cruelty a blow between the ribs of his left side under the nipple, and he at once plunged his hand in there and seized the heart like a raging tiger and snatched it out alive and, having placed it upon a plate, he gave it to the priest, who went very quickly and anointed the faces of the idols with that fresh blood.<sup>12</sup>

Bartolomé de las Casas recorded a similar account of *Wayeb'* sacrifice:

Upon reaching the altar of sacrifice the lord placed the victim in the hands of the butcher priest who was there ready for them. He with his ministers removed his heart with a knife and offered it to the idol, and the priest with three fingers took from the blood and sprinkled it on the idol, and then toward the Sun, carrying out many ceremonies that we will leave out so as not to dwell upon it further; and from there he walked to each of the altars, doing the same to each idol, because each had an altar dedicated to him, and the Sun had his, and the Moon, and the East, and the West, and the North, and the South.<sup>13</sup>

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11. Landa's *Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, 142–43.

12. Landa's *Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, 118–19.

13. Cited in Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 130.



Such violent rituals were required because of the need for human life to replace the lost life of both the physical world and of the gods themselves during the *Wayeb'*.

### *Ritual Death and Rebirth of Gods in the Wayeb'*

Indeed, even the gods the Maya served were believed to go through the cycle of death and rebirth during the *Wayeb'*. In the pages of the Dresden Codex that depict the *Wayeb'*, the gods of the four directions, or *Bacabs*, that normally preside over Maya ritual and ceremony throughout the year are distinctly marked not as absent from their temples, but as dead.<sup>14</sup> Certainly, the death of the gods who presided over the earth was credited for the disorder and destruction that occurred during the *Wayeb'* period. All hope was not lost, however, for in Maya belief the gods die periodically just as crops and men do—to be reborn at the start of the next cycle. So long as the Maya properly performed their rituals and offered tribute during the *Wayeb'*, the *Bacabs* would preside once more.

The ritual for rebirthing the *Bacabs* began at the start of the New Year, when the Maya would carve new stone effigies of the *Bacabs*. This was a very important duty—one many reputable sculptors would turn down for fear of making a mistake and being, in a manner, cursed by the gods in retribution.<sup>15</sup> In preparation for their work, sculptors would ritually purify themselves by offering sacrifice, fasting, and abstaining from sexual intercourse.

Once the *Wayeb'* was over, the new, carefully carved effigies were left in the temple, and the legitimate gods returned to their posts so that ceremonies throughout the rest of the year could proceed normally.<sup>16</sup>

### *The Raising of the World Tree*

In ancient Maya art and literature, accounts that reference the creation cite the raising of a sacred tree (often called the World Tree) as the culminating creative act, and as a metaphor for the rebirth of the world following its death.<sup>17</sup> In the *Wayeb'* Ritual of the *Bacabs*, four trees were first placed at each of the four cardinal directions. Their installation, or “opening” was when birth and creation

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14. Vail and Hernández, *Re-creating Primordial Time*, 102.

15. Landa's *Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, 160.

16. Vail and Hernández, *Re-creating Primordial Time*, 113.

17. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 47.

occurred.<sup>18</sup> These trees are depicted on the New Year's pages of the Dresden Codex as vertical columns marked with *tun* glyphs, denoting that the trees were carved from stone, topped with four leaf-bearing branches featuring a winding serpent.<sup>19</sup> Another tree, the Akantun, or World Tree, was symbolic of the regeneration of the earth itself after having been destroyed by a flood. This tree was placed at the center of the square formed by the other trees, marking the center of all creation. Because it was the ultimate token of new life after destruction, the Akantun was given that most sacred of Maya sacrificial offerings, representative of life itself and the purpose for which mankind was created in the beginning: human blood.<sup>20</sup>

### *The New Fire Ceremony*

At the conclusion of the New Year's rituals and the beginning of Pop, the first month of the new year, the Maya conducted a New Year's ritual common throughout Mesoamerica: the New Fire Ceremony. To the Maya this ceremony was a reenactment of the creation of the world, in which the gods struck new fire at the center of three hearthstones—thereby initiating life on Earth.<sup>21</sup>

Diego de Landa described the Maya New Fire Ceremony as beginning with a great feast. The priest would then purify the temple with incense and ritual:

[The priest sat] in the middle of the court, clothed like a pontiff, having near him a brazier and the little boards with incense. The Chacs [four attendant priests dressed in the guise of the rain god] seated themselves at the four corners, and stretched from one to the other a new cord, within which were to enter all those who had fasted, in order to drive out the evil spirit. . . . Once having expelled the evil spirit, all began to pray with great devotion, and the Chacs kindled the new fire, and lighted the brazier. . . . They burned incense to the idol with new fire and the priest began to throw this incense into it, and all came in their turn, beginning with the lords, to receive incense from the hands of the priest, which he gave them with as

18. Ralph L. Roys, *Ritual of the Bacabs* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), 10.

19. Nikolai Grube, *The Proceedings of the Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop: March 10–11, 2001*, University of Texas at Austin: *The Coming of Kings* (n.p., 2001), 502–3.

20. Landa's *Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, 141–46.

21. David Freidel, Linda Schele, and Joy Parker, *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path* (New York: William Morrow, 1993), 79, 112.

much gravity and devotion as if he were giving them relics. And they threw it into the brazier little by little, waiting till it had finished burning.<sup>22</sup>

The New Fire Ceremony concluded with each family returning to their home with some of this new fire, and relighting all of their homes and public buildings—ensuring that this new fire was the only fire at work as the new year began.

### *Ritual Cleansing of Home First Day of New Year*

After the *Wayeb'* period ended and Pop began, and the community had participated in “a feast to all the idols,” the Maya would symbolize the renewal of the earth and the newness of the year by ritually cleansing their homes. Homes were swept, and then all useful household objects (Diego de Landa cites “plates, vessels, stools, mats and old clothes”) were wrapped up with carved idols and cast into a pile outside of the city after which “no one, even were he in need of it, touched [them].” This part of *Wayeb'* tradition emphasizes the depth to which the pre-Columbian Maya believed in the world’s literal death and rebirth from year to year. Both on the grand scale (with the Maya participation in the rebirth of the gods) and on levels as personal as the family and home, the Maya had a conviction that the things of the old year had to pass away to make room for the new; and that to hang on to the past as the universe marched on in its continuous cycle could only lead to harm, on a global and local scale.<sup>23</sup>

## **Wayeb' Ritual Manifest in Post-Colonial, Modern Maya Practice**

Modern Maya Catholic practice maintains many elements of *Wayeb'* rituals, despite the near destruction of Maya record and culture by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. Modern Maya belief is a marriage of traditional Maya thought, as discussed above, and the Catholic tradition which the Spanish brought to the “new world” in the fifteenth century. The survival of Maya ritual into the modern era is thanks, in large part, to the syncretic nature of the traditional Maya which often adopts the ideas and practices of foreign groups and integrates them into native culture. This syncretic tendency is in itself a Maya

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22. *Landa's Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, 152–53.

23. *Landa's Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, 151–52.

tradition, present since the birth of Maya society, when rulers were multilingual and trade was the most important Maya work.<sup>24</sup>

Roman Catholicism and traditional Maya philosophy are inextricably intertwined in Tz'utujil belief (Tz'utujil is the language spoken by the Maya in the Lake Atitlán region). The Maya make no differentiation: "Any attempt to distinguish between the two would ultimately lead to an artificial thing that is foreign to [local] thought," says Christenson. Traditionalist Maya have no "interest in distinguishing ancestral Maya elements in their ceremonies from Christian ones. To them their rituals are conducted in the way they have always been done and will always continue to be done."<sup>25</sup> It is for that reason that the Maya consider their Catholicism more authentic than the Catholicism of Spanish immigrants. In fact, one modern Tz'utujil Maya is quoted as saying that traditionalist Maya are the "only true Catholics" because his ancestors practiced *their* form of Catholicism long before the Spanish conquerors arrived.<sup>26</sup> The Maya, from their perspective, have been practicing Catholics since the beginning of Maya ritual; and today as modern Maya participate in the Catholic rites associated with *la Semana Santa*, they also commune with their ancestors as they observe some of the same *Wayeb'* rituals that have been part of Maya culture for centuries.

## Maya Adoption of the Catholic Semana Santa

*La Semana Santa* holds significant meaning in postcolonial America beyond its ties to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. From the time Hernán Cortés first set foot on Mexican soil Easter Sunday 1519, Spanish conquest, the story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and early April were linked together in the minds of indigenous Americans. Five years later (again during the Easter season), Spanish forces headed by Pedro de Alvarado prevailed in establishing what then became the Spanish territory of Guatemala and declaring Alvarado as the territory's governor.<sup>27</sup> Christenson does not believe that the timing was coincidental in either case, but was "rather a conscious effort to link Spanish

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24. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 16.

25. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 9.

26. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 9.

27. Adrián Recinos, *Pedro de Alvarado: Conquistador de México y Guatemala*, vol. 2 (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1952).

military campaigns with the victory of God over death itself on *el día de Pascua* ('day of Easter').” Indigenous documents from the conquest demonstrate that the Maya acknowledged a link between the Holy Week and Spanish power, and that they saw the destruction of their world at the hands of the Spaniards in much the same way as they saw *Wayeb'*: “a period of universal death followed by rebirth.”<sup>28</sup> As a result, Easter came to replace ancient *Wayeb'* observances as the focus for ceremonies meant to regenerate the world. As *Wayeb'* rituals adapted and were incorporated into New World Catholic tradition, Easter in the Maya highlands would mean the preservation for many essential Maya ceremonies of world renewal.

Holy Week in Guatemala also falls at the close of the lengthy highland dry season. This phenomenon provides support for the traditionalist Tz'utujil belief that the earth dies during *La Semana Santa*. After “a complex cycle of ceremonies, processions, ritual offerings, and prayers” the rainy season begins, and new crops grow.<sup>29</sup> The Maya today sincerely believe that the world will not be reborn without these annual ceremonies and rituals performed during *La Semana Santa*. Because of this belief, each community member devoutly participates in Holy Week rituals, focusing on remaining pure in heart—“for should any of this be done in ‘anger or hatred, the result would be a world burdened by anger or hatred.’”<sup>30</sup>

## Elements of Wayeb' Rituals Practiced Today

### *The World Tree*

The rapid acceptance of Christianity on behalf of many Maya groups is, at first, baffling. One reason contemporary theorists believe the Maya were so quick to believe in Jesus Christ is the apparent association made between the Christian cross and World Tree sculptures that were raised during the *Wayeb'* (as Christ is raised on the cross during *la Semana Santa*).

Shortly before Spanish arrival on Maya land, the prophet Chilam Balam (the supposed author of *The Book of Chilam Balam*) commanded that the people of Mani (a small city near modern-day Merida) build a stone image of

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28. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 111.

29. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 2.

30. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 13.

the *yax che'el kab'* (a sacred world tree) in their central plaza that, according to Maya nobleman Gaspar Antonio Chi, resembled a Christian cross. Later, when the Spanish came brandishing crosses, the Maya recognized it as the world tree figure they had been worshipping under the direction of Chilam Balam, and immediately accepted both Christianity and the Spaniards into their communities.<sup>31</sup>

Postconquest, the Christian cross became “the most ubiquitous religious symbol throughout the Maya world.”<sup>32</sup> The Christian cross and the Maya World Tree eventually blended into a single entity in the minds of the Maya, as exemplified by their ceremonial placement.<sup>33</sup> “Crosses were placed at the four pathways entering into each colonial Maya community with an additional cross at the center, just as the World Trees functioned in the pre-Columbian world to mark the four cardinal directions and the center point of creation.”<sup>34</sup> Christian crosses today are often painted blue—a symbolic nod to the World Tree and Maya sentiments about rebirth.<sup>35</sup> The Maya consider these crosses to be living entities and sometimes clothe them in traditional Maya dress.<sup>36</sup>

### *New Fire Ceremony*

The New Fire Ceremony in highland Maya communities today focuses on the relighting of candles in the local church. On that night priests commonly focus sermons on the image of Jesus Christ as the “light of the world” to tie the New Fire Ceremony to modern Catholicism. At present the Maya observe the New Fire Ceremony on Holy Saturday. In the 1950s, the ritual took place early in the morning (around seven o'clock), “no doubt timed to coincide with the dawn following Christ’s return to the church. This first dawn after the procession of the Urna is considered ‘the first sunrise of the year,’ analogous to the first dawn of the ancient

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31. Mercedes de La Garza, *Relaciones Histórico-geográficas de la Gobernación de Yucatán: Mérida, Valladolid y Tabasco*, vol. 2 (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas, Centro de Estudios Mayas, 1983), 69.

32. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 62.

33. Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517–1570* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 162–63.

34. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 62.

35. Evon Z. Vogt, *Zinacantan: A Maya Community in the Highlands of Chiapas* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969), 586.

36. See photo taken by Marina Hayman, *Clothed Crosses, Valladolid*, in Christensen, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 63.

New Year's rites." Since the 1990s, however, the ritual has been moved to Saturday evening, likely with the intent to reinforce connections between New Fire rituals and Christ's resurrection early Sunday morning.<sup>37</sup>

### *Blood*

Blood is still an important element of Maya ritual and belief. A red stained-glass window sits above the entrance of the church in Santiago Atitlán. Just before sunset, the light which passes through this window causes the figures of saints arrayed inside the church to "cast red, blood-like shadows." Christenson recounts a story wherein the parish priest suggested that the window be replaced with one bearing the design of a white dove. The community vehemently opposed the idea: "How then will the saints bleed for us each evening as they did for our mothers and our fathers?"<sup>38</sup>

The community sees these effigies of saints not as lifeless portraits, but as animate, ensouled figures that continue the works of the saints they embody. These saints "are a living part of the everyday lives of the people of Santiago Atitlán. In every sense of the word, they need each other, particularly in times of crisis. Holy Week is the most critical of such times. . . . It is during this week that gods, saints, deceased ancestors and their living descendants work hand-in-hand to rebirth the world."<sup>39</sup>

### *Ritual Sacrifice*

In the mid-sixteenth century, two priests assigned to Santiago Atitlán, Fray Juan Alonso and Fray Diego Martín, discovered that the Tz'utujils were still practicing human sacrifice despite Spanish attempts to quash such "heathenistic" practices.<sup>40</sup> One custom which they found particularly distressing was the Tz'utujil practice of casting young people "into the Volcano Atitlán when it erupted in order to placate it. . . . A decade later Fr. Gonzalo Méndez climbed the trail up to the top of the volcano at night just in time to discover a group of Tz'utujils about to sacrifice a young girl."<sup>41</sup>

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37. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 330–32.

38. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 11.

39. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 11.

40. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 178.

41. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 178.

When the volcano near to the town of Atitlán roared or thundered, flaring up and casting forth fire (as was its custom with horrific suddenness), the devil persuaded them that it was hungry and was asking for something to eat; and its preferred feast was Indian maidens which they had always sacrificed in their time of heathenism, casting them into the fiery mouth of that conflagration; for only with this bloody offering could its fury be assuaged (Vásquez 1938, II, 28, translation by [Christenson]).<sup>42</sup>

After the initial evangelization efforts in the Colonial period, there were no resident priests in Santiago Atitlán between 1821 and 1964. This allowed human sacrifice, along with many other indigenous beliefs and practices, to continue relatively unabated, while others became mixed with Tz'utujil interpretation of Roman Catholic doctrine.<sup>43</sup>

Today, human sacrifice in the manner of the *Wayeb'* no longer persists. Nevertheless, remnants of *Wayeb'* sacrificial rites have remained prevalent in Holy Week rituals through the present day. Father Thomas Gage described rituals similar to the self-flagellation and sacrifice of ancient Maya in the seventeenth century. The most marked difference was not the rituals—it was their purpose. By the seventeenth century, the Maya did not offer sacrifice so that the world could be reborn. They now offered blood so that Christ could rise from the grave.<sup>44</sup> This record provides evidence that the Maya had by this point in time transferred *Wayeb'* bloodletting ceremonies to *la Semana Santa*. Contemporary records do not mention any other times during the year when bloodletting was practiced.

In traditional Maya communities today it is more common to sacrifice animals (primarily chickens and turkeys) during *la Semana Santa* because self-flagellation was outlawed by the Spanish shortly after conquest.<sup>45</sup> Still, some practice self-flagellation in private and bleed themselves much like their ancestors did preconquest.<sup>46</sup>

Some communities participate in what is called a “passion play” on Good Friday to commemorate and reenact the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Passion

42. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 178.

43. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 178.

44. Thomas Gage, *Travels in the New World*, ed. J. Eric S. Thompson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 240–41.

45. Christenson, *Burden of the Ancients*, 91.

46. Nathaniel Tarn and Martin Prechtel, *Scandals in the House of Birds: Shamans and Priests on Lake Atitlán* (New York: Marsilio Publishers, 1997), 269.



plays are a practice in which men and boys are nailed to constructed crosses in the manner of the crucifixion of Christ (some survive the torture, some are allowed to die and considered sacrifices) as a devotional exercise for the men involved as well as for their community.<sup>47</sup>

Regardless of changes that have occurred, sacrificial rites associated with the *Wayeb'* have survived nearly five hundred years by enmeshing themselves into local Catholic tradition.

### *Ritual Cleansing*

Saturday night of Holy Week (after the New Fire Ceremony is complete), many modern priests take advantage of having a full church to perform baptisms. As the priests do so, they (either advertently or inadvertently) link “the ritual rebirth of the children with the rebirth of the world, so that ‘all things are now made new.’”<sup>48</sup>

Monday of Holy Week, Maya communities gather to thoroughly cleanse the church. This is deliberate and careful work, since traditionalist Maya “believe that dust and other debris are laden with demons that carry all manner of malevolent influences.”<sup>49</sup> These must be removed in order for the world to be renewed. This practice is a clear remnant of the ritual home cleansing practiced by the ancient Maya during the *Wayeb'*.<sup>50</sup>

## Conclusion

Contrary to the assumptions of most postcolonial scholars outside of Maya studies, ancient Maya belief and ritual were never completely suppressed.<sup>51</sup> More than other surviving indigenous American groups, the Maya have what Robert S. Carlsen identifies as a “distinct and identifiable continuity with the

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47. Zachary Wingerd, *Symbol of Conquest, Alliance, and Hegemony: The Image of the Cross in Colonial Mexico* (PhD diss., University of Texas at Arlington, 2008), 141.

48. Wingerd, *Symbol of Conquest, Alliance, and Hegemony*, 332. See 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Revelation 21:1–8.

49. Wingerd, *Symbol of Conquest, Alliance, and Hegemony*, 179.

50. *Landa's Relación De Las Cosas De Yucatán*, 151–52.

51. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 4.

pre-Columbian past.”<sup>52</sup> Still committed to their responsibility to perform rituals to rebirth the earth and the gods, the Maya participate in *la Semana Santa* in a distinctly Maya way, “based on ancestral precedent and that the repetition of ancient words and actions was a means of preserving the lives and knowledge of *their ancestors* [emphasis added]. . . . As mediators between this world and that of the sacred, it is the Maya’s obligation to continue the actions of their ancestors in as authentic a manner as possible.”<sup>53</sup> Traditionalist Maya today do not look to “lay out a set of theological principles concerning the nature of the gods, man’s place in the universe, the symbolism behind ritual performances, etc.”<sup>54</sup> Rather, they continue the traditions of their fathers.

No matter their reasons for observing *la Semana Santa*, and no matter what origins the individual rituals of the Holy Week may have, each of the rituals of *la Semana Santa* is a Maya ritual now. Catholic rituals are as authentic in modern Maya culture as New Fire because Spanish conquest was and is part of modern Maya reality.<sup>55</sup> In keeping with the traditions of their ancestors, Maya from the conquest through the present day have preserved and adapted, protected and adopted, creating a *mezcla*, or mixture, of a culture that still lives—perpetuating rituals of rebirth and renewal in the Guatemalan highlands today.

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52. Robert S. Carlsen, *The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 5.

53. Carlsen, *The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town*, 12.

54. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 12.

55. Benjamin Walter, *On The Concept of History* (New York: Classic Books America, 2009).

## Limitations of the Index in Phillip II's Spain

Courtney Cook

ON 19 DECEMBER 1592, PHILIP II OF SPAIN COMPOSED A LETTER to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, a royal governor of Spain's northern coast. At war with England and France, Philip's concern in this instance was neither strategy nor war logistics, but rather books. Orellana de Chaves notified Philip previously in two letters that Spanish privateers had captured a French ship carrying books. The king expressed concern that the books be turned over to the proper authorities, the Inquisition, reminding his governor that not all books contain proper messages for Spanish readers.<sup>1</sup> Eager to maintain the religious purity of his people, Philip "ordered and mandated" that the books be inventoried and delivered to the office of the Inquisition.<sup>2</sup> In Philip's letter, he explicitly instructed Orellana de Chaves to keep the books away from prying eyes until they reached their destination as well as to watch for other cargoes containing books in the future.<sup>3</sup> The letter closes with the threat of punishment should Orellana de Chaves fail to follow Philip's instructions. As this episode demonstrates, the Spanish Inquisition intensely targeted

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1. Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, 19 September 1592, in *Letters of Philip II, King of Spain, 1592–1597*, in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, 1.

2. Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, 1.

3. Philip II to Diego de Orellana de Chaves, 1.

books and other scholarship, both secular and religious. Works published outside the empire were scrutinized and possibly censored before being deemed appropriate or prohibited.

Philip's implementation of the *Index of Prohibited Books*, the first Spanish version of which was produced in 1551, was not a novel method of combatting heresy within the church, though the Spanish monarchy did pursue it more vigorously than others. A subsequent, more expansive version of the Spanish *Index* was produced the year Philip became king, 1556, followed two years later by the crown's announcement that it would strengthen the Inquisition's attack on books. The new 1558 law decreed that "in these realms, no one may sell nor print" any book prohibited by the Holy Office of the Inquisition.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, booksellers were to display copies of the *Index* in their shops, and no book was to be published until it had been painstakingly scrutinized by the Office of the Inquisition and the printer had received a license to print said book.<sup>5</sup> By 1559, the *Index* had reached its most robust form and was implemented throughout the Spanish Empire. In Inquisition trials in Mexico, whether the accused were in possession of, or involved in the sale of, books on the *Index* proved crucial to the Inquisitorial verdicts.<sup>6</sup> Heretical books were burned in an *auto de fé*, the same way that many heretics were executed, showing the symbolic importance of the books to religious purity. Philip's concern in 1592 that Diego de Orellana de Chaves vigilantly watch for cargoes containing not only books on the *Index* but any foreign book, shows that Philip's concern with literary censorship had not diminished in the last decade of his life.

The inquisitor-general, who was appointed directly by the monarch, enforced Inquisitorial policies. In the first half of Philip II's reign, this position was given to Inquisitor-General Valdes, who played a key role in Inquisitorial reform during this period. The inquisitor-general headed the *Suprema*, a council whose members were also dedicated by the crown. The *Suprema* established tribunals in various cities throughout the Spanish Empire, which were charged

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4. *Reportorio de la Nueua Recopilacion de las Leyes del Reyno* (Alcala de Henares, 1598), 191.

5. *Reportorio de la Nueua Recopilacion de las Leyes del Reyno*, 191; David Goodman, "Philip II's Patronage of Science and Engineering," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 16, no. 1 (March 1983): 49; Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 120.

6. Martin Austin Nesvig, "'Heretical Plagues' and Censorship Cordons: Colonial Mexico and the Transatlantic Book Trade," *Church History* 75, no. 1 (March 2006): 1–2.

with enforcing orthodoxy at the local level. Inquisitor-General Valdes, realizing that the “limited personnel of the local tribunals simply could not generate the type of presence in the countryside that was necessary,” expanded networks of non-salaried officials, *familiars*, *comisarios*, *notaries*, and *alguaciles*.<sup>7</sup> These positions were designed to aid official inquisitors and were filled by volunteers. They did not have the same authority as the inquisitors to try individuals, but rather carried messages, took down testimonies, and prepared all evidence that would be given to the judge in a trial.<sup>8</sup> This was all designed to aid the Inquisition in extending its authority over the Spanish Empire.

Scholars long argued that the literary censorship of the Inquisition under Philip II, and other Spanish monarchs, was responsible for “arresting the development of the Spanish intellect.”<sup>9</sup> Henry Charles Lea, who published his extensive history of the Spanish Inquisition in 1907, acted as a prominent proponent of this theory. Scholars have since dismissed the idea that Inquisition censorship was extensive enough to entirely stifle Spanish scholarship and intellectual progression. For example, while acknowledging that scholars have blamed Philip II “for isolating Spain from the scientific revolution,” David Goodman argues that “Spain was no intellectual backwater” during the sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> This intellectual persistence stands in stark contrast to the goal of the *Index*, which was intended to be “the most efficient of instrumentalities for repressing the human intellect and aiding the forces of [church] reaction.”<sup>11</sup> These realities may be reconciled by understanding that although the *Index* was theoretically a supreme force of religious orthodoxy, in reality, malleability in its design, difficulty applying the regulations, and limitations in its scope allowed for intellectual life to persist in Spain under the reign of Philip II.

The Spanish *Index of Prohibited Books* was not the first of its kind produced in Europe. As early as the 1520s Spanish printing had been subject to the censorship of the Inquisition.<sup>12</sup> In 1544, the University of Paris published the first

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7. Sara T. Nalle, “Inquisitors, Priests, and the People during the Catholic Reformation in Spain,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18, no. 4 (Winter, 1987): 559.

8. Nalle, “Inquisitors, Priests, and the People,” 559.

9. Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 3:180.

10. Goodman, “Philip II’s Patronage of Science and Engineering,” 49.

11. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 3:484.

12. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 3:480.

official *Index of Prohibited Books*, and others would follow suit in the proceeding decade. The Spanish *Index* was not produced in a vacuum and carried echoes of its predecessors. For example, the 1551 Spanish *Index* derived its content all but entirely from the index produced by the University of Louvain in 1550.<sup>13</sup> The design of the Spanish indices differed from its counterparts. The Pauline Index produced by the papacy in 1559, for example, “was very restrictive: it prohibited the *opera omnia* of about 550 authors as well as additional individual titles. It went beyond heresy to ban anti-clerical and lascivious works.”<sup>14</sup> The Pauline Index listed works and authors that were banned in their entirety, leaving no room for flexibility.

The Spanish *Index* of 1559, however, allowed for grey areas to exist. While the *Index* did “prohibit books, which hereafter are composed, or divulged, containing errors against the faith, or against what the holy Roman Church teaches and approves,” it also stipulated that “books already printed and disseminated by Catholic authors, who are presently living . . . are not prohibited by this Index . . . although they may contain some opinions and doctrines which are unsure.”<sup>15</sup> The Spanish *Index* allowed for flexibility in regards to scholarship already in circulation. Furthermore, books printed in Spain were generally not considered suspect. The *Index* of 1551 for example, almost exclusively banned books published in France, in French, or in Latin, which most Spaniards would not have been able to read regardless of whether or not they were on the *Index*. A decree from the Suprema in 1558 states that “books printed in these kingdoms shall not be collected [by the Inquisition]. . . . So shall other books by Catholic authors [be returned to their owners].”<sup>16</sup> Thus, from the outset it is clear that the Spanish *Index*’s design was not capable of completely stifling the intellectual progress that Spain had already made. It is true that anyone reading such a book would be required to denounce any questionable material contained therein to the Inquisition, but the material was not outright forbidden.<sup>17</sup>

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13. J. M. de Bujanda, *Index de l'Université de Louvain, 1546, 1550, 1558* (Sherbrooke: Centre d'Études de la Renaissance, 1986), 61.

14. Paul F. Grendler, “Printing and censorship,” in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 45.

15. Index librorum prohibitorum et expurgatorum, 1612, regla XII.

16. Decree of the Suprema on Books, 1558, in *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478–1614: An Anthology of Sources*, ed. and trans. Lu Ann Homza (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2006), 215.

17. Decree of the Suprema on Books, 1558, 215.

Furthermore, the Spanish indices contained a novel category of books, one not addressed in other indices of the time: partially forbidden books.<sup>18</sup> Certain scholarship contained traces of heresy, but not enough to condemn the work as a whole. Thus, the *Index* provided a list of books that ought to be turned over to the Holy Office of the Inquisition, where questionable passages would be marked out and the book then returned to its owner.

As far as books in the humanities are concerned—which may contain glosses, arguments, letters, or annotations by Philip Melanchthon or other heretics—they will be returned to their owners once the heretical annotations have been removed or crossed out. . . . If certain Catholic books contain comments from prohibited authors, cross out the comments, afterward, the books may be returned to their owners.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, even while the Inquisition was attempting to enforce stringent orthodoxy, the *Index's* design was flexible, allowing for scholarship to continue circulating in Spain whether or not it strictly conformed to the church's position. For example, a critique of Erasmus in a bookstore in 1555 was noted to have fifteen pages cut out, pages which originally contained a reply from Erasmus regarding the critique. Books containing traces of Copernican astronomy and Paracelsian chemical medicine were not banned by the *Index* while books entirely by those authors may have been.<sup>20</sup> Unlike the Roman index that banned all works by Erasmus, the Spanish *Index* produced in the same year only prohibited his most controversial works.<sup>21</sup> Thus, Spanish intellectual life was not entirely cut off from the rest of Europe and stagnated as a result of the *Index*.

Despite the flexibility in the design of the *Index*, which allowed literary scholarship to persist circulating throughout the empire, its list of books entirely banned in the Spanish empire was extensive, increasing with each *Index* published during the reign of Philip II. However, these regulations proved difficult

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18. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 3:492; Henry Kamen argues that the Expurgatory Index, prepared in the Low Countries in 1571, may have been influenced by the Papal Index of 1564, which featured a small section of books that may be expurgated rather than prohibited.

19. Decree of the Suprema on Books, 1558, 215–16.

20. Goodman, "Philip II's Patronage of Science and Engineering," 51; *Index librorum prohibitorum et expurgatorum*, 1612, 669.

21. William Pettas, *A Sixteenth Century Spanish Bookstore: The Inventory of Juan de Junta* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1995), 19.

to enforce, both within the peninsula and in Spain's colonies, which limited the *Index's* effectiveness. The Archbishop of Seville, and Inquisitor-General, Lord Fernando de Valdes issued a decree in 1558 which included this observation: "It has come to our attention that some people are not observing [the *Index*] and that many people own, read, and transport [banned] books into these kingdoms."<sup>22</sup> Seville was not alone in struggling to enforce the *Index's* sweeping restrictions. Francisco Sancho, a professor at the University of Salamanca entrusted with the task of collecting books for the Inquisition, wrote to his superiors that: "Backed up by the authority of well-respected people, many think that members of the Suprema have no intention of excommunicating, censuring, or penalizing those who do not give up books prohibited by the edits."<sup>23</sup> The Spaniards discussed by both Master Sancho and Inquisitor-General Valdes were clearly aware of the restrictions in the *Index*. Yet they willingly ignored the book bans and even refused to believe that the Inquisition would punish them for doing so. Thus the Inquisition was unable to completely, or even largely, eliminate banned scholarly works circulating within the peninsula. It is therefore likely that Spanish scholars had access to the same works that their counterparts throughout Europe were using, if withholding books from the Inquisition was as common as Sancho and Valdes believed it was.

Inquisitors throughout the Spanish Empire experienced similar problems. A comisario was appointed at Vera Cruz in Mexico to inspect all literature entering the country, as Vera Cruz was the only Mexican port city approved to trade abroad. Similar officials were stationed throughout the rest the colony. Despite this, banned books continued to enter Mexico. Martin Nesvig argues that "the efficacy of [the Inquisition's] control was blunted by the distaste of individual comisarios in Veracruz for certain components of the *Index of Prohibited Books* as well as the widespread disdain for the Index among Spaniards."<sup>24</sup> Spain's Mexican subjects proved even more vehemently opposed to the *Index* than their counterparts in the motherland. Copies of indices and other pronouncements banning books which had been nailed to church doors were routinely torn down. "Others claimed that inquisitional censure was useful only to wipe their asses

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22. Decree of Inquisitor-General Valdés on Books, 1558, in *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478–1614*, 213–14.

23. Consultation of Master Sancho about the Books, 1558, in *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478–1614*, 217.

24. Nesvig, "'Heretical Plagues' and Censorship Cordons," 4.



(a common claim in fact).<sup>25</sup> Even local friars refused to relinquish books on the *Index*. It is true that certain comisarios enforced the *Index* vigorously within their domains, possibly eliminating all heretical books, but Nesvig's research makes it clear that this vigilance was not universal. With certain comisarios taking it upon themselves to defy the *Index*, banned books circulated within Mexico, allowing for intellectual progress in the colony to continue.

The inability of the Inquisition to enforce the Index is highlighted by William Pettas's analysis of Juan de Junta's bookstore in Burgos. Legal problems required Juan de Junta to file an inventory of his store, which contained 214 volumes in languages such as Spanish, Greek, Italian, Hebrew, and Arabic.<sup>26</sup> The inventory showed that the bookstore held eighty-two titles that were banned in their entirety by the Index of 1559; those eighty-two titles amounted to 673 books, or 4 percent of the collections' monetary value.<sup>27</sup> Pettas notes that the presence of so many titles which would incur the ire of the Inquisition was most likely due to the "bookseller's normal profit incentive, satisfying the Burgos market's demand for these . . . works. . . . The sense of danger to the [bookstore] for handling these materials was evidently not sufficiently felt at this time to cause the firm to dispose of them."<sup>28</sup> Thus, there were still enough people in Burgos purchasing the works of banned authors that the bookstore felt justified in carrying them.

A decree by Inquisitor-General Valdés in 1558 stated that "no one—no matter what his estate, rank, order, and quality, not even an archbishop—can read or own forbidden and suspicious books."<sup>29</sup> This decree, given at the height of Inquisitorial censorship, just after the crown's increased restrictions and leading up to the publication of the most rigid Spanish *Index* to that point, demonstrates the goal of the *Index*. However, this was not how the *Index* would be applied. Master Sancho's letter in 1558, which included his complaint that the *Index* was being ignored, also included questions about what institutions ought to be subject to the *Index*. The reply from the Suprema included a number of telling statements. Firstly, in response to an inquiry about "[prohibited] Bibles, which are hidden away by the booksellers," the Suprema stated that

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25. Nesvig, "Heretical Plagues' and Censorship Cordons," 4.

26. Pettas, *A Sixteenth Century Spanish Bookstore*, 8.

27. Pettas, *A Sixteenth Century Spanish Bookstore*, 19.

28. Pettas, *A Sixteenth Century Spanish Bookstore*, 19.

29. Decree of Inquisitor-General Valdés on Books, 1558, 213.

“the booksellers shall pledge not to sell or give away any of them . . . on pain of censures and the appropriate monetary penalty.”<sup>30</sup> The fact that the Suprema did not demand that the prohibited books be taken away from the booksellers is telling. Booksellers were extremely limited by the laws of 1558, and yet they were treated more leniently by the Inquisition for violations of the *Index* than were ordinary individuals.

Master Sancho also presented an inquiry about scholarly books:

Next, the edits from the Holy Office prohibit Hebrew books of Holy Scripture, the Qur’an, and any other book in Arabic. But it is unclear whether men learned in these languages can possess these books. . . . It is also unclear whether such books are allowed in public libraries which have not been visited by the Inquisition, such as exist in universities, churches, monasteries, and colleges; some of these libraries have declared that they have the Qur’an in Latin and in Spanish.<sup>31</sup>

The Suprema responded that, “People listed in this chapter can have the said books, and so can the libraries of universities, colleges, monasteries, and churches.”<sup>32</sup> While Master Sancho’s inquiry does not specifically address whether or not university libraries and other such scholastic institutions can retain all prohibited books of which they are in possession, the Suprema’s ruling makes it clear that these institutions were, to an extent, exempt from the *Index*, and allowed to maintain possession of the scholarly books they already had.

The universities and monasteries were certainly subject to Inquisitorial authority, as the arrest of Luis de Leon, professor at the University of Salamanca, would later demonstrate. However, leniency was given in regards to the *Index* because these people were qualified to use them. In regards to banned language books it was said that “it seems that professors of such languages must be permitted to use them.”<sup>33</sup> The *Index* protected those who would unwittingly be led astray by heretical or scandalous teachings. This gave scholars an iota of lenience, as they would more fully understand what they were reading. Thus it is likely to assume that scholarly study of such works continued in Spain during the Inquisitorial repression of heretical literature.

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30. Consultation of Master Sancho about the Books, 1558, 217.

31. Consultation of Master Sancho about the Books, 1558, 217.

32. Consultation of Master Sancho about the Books, 1558, 217.

33. Consultation of Master Sancho about the Books, 1558, 217.

The example of King Philip II, perhaps the most devout Spanish monarch, provides a glimpse into the limitations of the *Index*. Geoffrey Parker describes the king as a “voracious reader.”<sup>34</sup> Many nights of his youth were spent reading by candlelight, so much so that the household treasurer had to explain to Charles V why he had authorized spending so much money on candles for the prince.<sup>35</sup> By the time he took the throne, Philip’s personal library would include works such as the Qur’an, political and military treatises by Machiavelli, humanist studies by Johannes Reuchlin, and other works published throughout Europe, all of “which would later bear the inscription ‘prohibited by the Index.’”<sup>36</sup> While there is no evidence that the king continued to read these after the publication of the *Index*, in fact his constant occupation with bureaucratic tasks would suggest otherwise, they did remain in his personal collection, which would come to reside at San Lorenzo de El Escorial. King Philip himself, a man beyond the law, thus serves as a further example of limitations of the *Index*.

The scholarship actually taking place during the reign of Philip II is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is clear that the *Index* itself was not capable of completely stifling Spain’s intellectual progression. The *Index*’s design was inherently malleable. Between 1551 and 1554, the *Index* was especially flexible, making exceptions for books printed in Spain before the *Index* was published and included exceptions for books by Catholic authors that may not have been entirely orthodox. Furthermore, the Spanish *Index* was the first to include a category of books that may be expurgated rather than being banned in their entirety. Erasmus was one author who particularly benefitted from this flexibility. The challenge of sixteenth-century governing also served as a limitation of the *Index*. Although the *Index* was designed to regulate behavior in every corner of the Spanish empire, this proved impossible. Even within the peninsula the *Index* was limited. Juan de Junta in Burgos continued to stock prohibited books in his shop because the Burgos market demanded them. Inquisitor-General Valdes in Seville and Master Sancho in Salamanca both complained that people of all ranks were ignoring the *Index*’s restrictions, believing they would not be punished by the Inquisition. In Spain’s American colonies, people defied the

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34. Geoffrey Parker, *Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 29.

35. Parker, *Imprudent King*, 29.

36. Parker, *Imprudent King*, 29.

*Index* outspokenly, and even those responsible for enforcing the *Index* took it upon themselves to oppose its institution. Finally, although the goal of the *Index* was universality, exceptions were given for scholarly institutions such as universities and monasteries. While enforcement of Inquisition policies did slow Spain's intellectual progression in the sixteenth century, something accepted by most scholars, the limitations of the *Index* show that it is not a sufficient explanation for this. Thus Lea's proposition that the *Index* was responsible for "arresting the development of the Spanish Intellect," may be dismissed.<sup>37</sup>

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37. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 3:480.

# The Effect of the Destruction of the Jerusalem Temple on the Jewish Perception of the Sacrificial Cult

## A Look at Pseudepigraphical, Deuterocanonical, and Rabbinic Texts

Allen Kendall

**T**HOUGH MANY OF US ARE SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR WITH TODAY'S MODERN world religions and with ancient religion inasmuch as it is portrayed in our own religious literature, we often do not understand how we got from the ancient world to the modern. For the most part we understand how ancient Jews worshipped in Jerusalem according to the Law of Moses and that certain biblical practices have changed, but we are not aware of how this happened. This paper attempts to bridge that gap of knowledge by tracing the development of Jewish religious thought and practice vis-à-vis the sacrificial cult. Over the course of time, the slaughtering and sacrifices performed at the Jewish temple in Jerusalem vanished and were replaced with performances of prayers and acts of loving kindness, which in Christian parlance would be called charitable works. This development occurred over centuries in antiquity. This gives an example of how developments in antiquity shaped the modern world.

This religious development over time is not unique. The Hebrew Bible itself gives us examples of changes made in the practical application of the Law of Moses. For example, in Exodus, Yaweh commanded "consecrate to me all the firstborn; whatever is the first to open the womb among the Israelites, of human

beings and animals, is mine.”<sup>1</sup> The firstborn of the children of Israel were to be consecrated for priestly service. However, when certain circumstances had evolved, the tribe of Levites took over the priestly consecration: “Accept the Levites as substitutes for all the firstborn among the Israelites.”<sup>2</sup>

70 CE, the year when the Jewish temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, is considered by many to be a watershed for Judaism. The destruction of the temple was certainly a major event in Jewish history and had many implications for the Jews and their religion, but its implications on Judaism are perhaps not as momentous as may be thought. During the Second Temple Period, the majority of Jews did not live in Judea or its environs but scattered throughout the Mediterranean world. Though the Hebrew Bible commands the Jews to sacrifice, they were physically removed from the sacrificial cult in Jerusalem and thus had to deal with the inability to comply with the sacrificial aspects of the Law of Moses.

The deuterocanonical literature which originated from Jews scattered around the Mediterranean world show that in the variations of their religious lives, prayers began to take the place of temple rites. After the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE, the Jews who had previously had access to the temple cult faced the same dilemma. As it became increasingly clear that the temple would not be rebuilt, Judean Judaism began to follow the example of Diaspora Jews. Thus it became the norm throughout Judaism as a whole for prayers and acts of loving kindness to act as a substitute for sacrificial rites. This gradual trend can be seen in the corpus of Jewish deuterocanonical literature originating from the area around Judea. In this paper, I will explore the mandate of the Torah in regard to sacrifice in Jerusalem, how the deuterocanonical literature of Diaspora Jews before 70 CE dealt with this problem, and how the literature, both deuterocanonical and finally rabbinic, of post-destruction Judea followed the pattern set up by Diaspora Jews.

## Origins of the Dilemma: The Torah

Traditionally, the official closing of the Jewish canon occurred at the Council of Jamnia, near the end of the first century CE. However, the books making up the Hebrew Bible, as the Jewish canon is called, were written and considered

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1. Exodus 13:2. All scriptural quotations are from the NSRV. See also 13:11–16, 29:30.

2. Numbers 3:45.

authoritative well before this period. The Torah, containing the biblical books Genesis through Deuteronomy, was most likely compiled as we know it shortly after the return from the Babylonian Captivity (late sixth to early fifth century BCE).<sup>3</sup> The Torah is without a doubt considered the most important section of the Hebrew Bible. These five books contain the Law of Moses which governs Jewish religious life. The sacrificial cult, with all its specifications and detail, features prominently in this law code. In the Torah, the location of the sacrificial cult seems to be equally as important as the sacrificial rites themselves. Throughout the chapters of Deuteronomy, various passages discuss different aspects of sacrifices and offerings. In one place it states, “Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place you happen to see.”<sup>4</sup> There are several references to “the place that the LORD will choose.”<sup>5</sup> It is commanded that “only at [this] place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes—there you shall offer your burnt offerings and there you shall do everything I command you.”<sup>6</sup>

From other passages in the Hebrew Bible, we see that this “place” was generally accepted to be the temple that King Solomon built in Jerusalem. In the account of the dedication of Solomon’s temple in the first book of Kings, the prayer of Solomon, in reference to the temple, reads “that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, ‘My name shall be there.’”<sup>7</sup> The following chapter records a visit of God to Solomon, in which God confirms that the temple is his chosen place saying, “I have consecrated this house . . . and put my name there forever.”<sup>8</sup> This is also affirmed in the other account of the dedication of Solomon’s temple.<sup>9</sup>

It should be mentioned that while the veneration of the Jerusalem temple as the sole place of sacrificial cult was general, this view was not universal. Perhaps the most notable is the community at Qumran which gave us the Dead Sea Scrolls. This group, likely a highly ascetic group of Essenes, expressed hostility towards the priesthood of the temple at Jerusalem. However, this hostility was not common among Jews in general. Most of those who did not openly

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3. The dating of the composition of the Torah is a complex issue which we do not have time to discuss here. What is relevant to our purposes, however, is that it was completed and seen as authoritative at the beginning of the Second Temple Period.

4. Deuteronomy 12:13.

5. Deuteronomy 15:20. See also Deuteronomy 12:5–7, 13–28 ; 17:8; 18:6; 26:2; 31:11.

6. Deuteronomy 12:14.

7. 1 Kings 8:29.

8. 1 Kings 9:3.

9. 2 Chronicles 7:12.

venerate the temple were no worse than indifferent. Two communities of Jews built temples to Yahweh in Egypt: in the cities Elephantine and Onias. The Samaritans built a similar temple on Mount Gerizim. These groups, however, were minorities, and their temples do not seem to have been positively viewed by other Jews. Josephus said of the Jewish temple in the Egyptian city of Leontopolis: “Yet did not Onias do this out of a sober disposition, but he had a mind to contend with the Jews at Jerusalem.”<sup>10</sup> The general Jewish view of Samaritans is obvious throughout the books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Hebrew Bible, and throughout the Greek New Testament.<sup>11</sup> While these sects of Judaism represented a differing minority, they were just that: a small minority which did not represent the thoughts of the majority of Jews.

There was, however, enough of a scriptural basis in the Hebrew Bible to warrant eventual changes to the sacrificial system. When rebuking King Saul, the prophet Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obedience to the voice of the LORD? Surely to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.”<sup>12</sup> The book of Hosea states, “I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”<sup>13</sup> Eventually rabbis would comment upon these and other scriptures as a sort of justification or explanation of the changes made to the sacrificial system.<sup>14</sup>

## Diaspora Jews and the Dilemma of Sacrifice prior to 70 CE

The dilemma of reconciling the mandates of the Hebrew Bible regarding sacrificial ordinances and the impossibility of doing so was not unique to Jews following the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. During the Second Temple Period, the majority of Jews were Diaspora Jews, and did not live in or near Judea and its temple.<sup>15</sup> As these Jews, scattered largely throughout the Mediterranean world, could not take part in the sacrificial cult, they had to turn

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10. Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 7.10.3.

11. See Ezra 4, Nehemiah 4, and John 4:9, 8:48.

12. 1 Samuel 15:22.

13. Hosea 6:6.

14. See, for example, Micah 6:6–8, Jeremiah 7:22–23, and the final section of this paper.

15. Michael Tuval, “Doing Without the Temple: Paradigms in Judaic Literature of the Diaspora,” in *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History?: On Jews and Judaism before and after*



to other means to fulfill sacrificial obligations. This can be seen in the corpus of Jewish literature written outside of Judea and its environs. Here, I will discuss the Wisdom of Solomon, 1 and 2 Sibylline Oracles, and 3 Maccabees. From these sources it is evident that in practical religious life, prayer and righteous acts replaced sacrifices.

The Wisdom of Solomon is generally considered to have been composed in Alexandria between 30 BCE and 70 CE, and possibly even earlier.<sup>16</sup> The author writes as if he were King Solomon and extols the virtues of wisdom. As a product of the Diaspora, it addresses the dilemmas faced by Jews living far from the temple, albeit not necessarily directly.

In chapter 18, the author presents the story of the rebellion of Korah and the subsequent plague. In the biblical account, the plague is stopped by the high priest, Aaron, who offers incense under the direction of Moses.<sup>17</sup> This detail is important because under Mosaic law the high priest, Aaron in this case, was the chief officiator of temple rites and in a sense symbolized the entire sacrificial cult. The savior of the people in the Wisdom of Solomon is not named, suggesting a distancing of the Aaronid priests, who were recognized as the rightful officiators of the sacrificial cult. The Wisdom of Solomon account also makes an addition to the biblical text. The savior offers “prayer and propitiation by incense,” not just incense alone.<sup>18</sup> The emphasis is placed not upon the incense, but the prayer: “He conquered the wrath not by strength of body, not by force of arms, but by his word he subdued the avenger.”<sup>19</sup> It is also interesting to note that this prayer was offered by “a blameless man.”<sup>20</sup> Thus, the prayers of a righteous person are just as effective as, if not more than, the offering of incense.

The Sibylline Oracles are a complicated composite set of works. The oracles were written by Jewish authors claiming to be pagan prophets, justifying Judaism from a pagan perspective. There are a total of fourteen books included in the corpus, as well as several additional fragments. They were not, however, all written at the same time or place. The composition of these works spans several centuries. The first two Sibylline Oracles, however, are always combined

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*the Destruction of the Second Temple*, ed. Daniel R. Schwartz and Zeev Weiss (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 184.

16. The Harper Collins Study Bible (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 1348–49.

17. Numbers 16:46–48.

18. Wisdom of Solomon 18:21.

19. Wisdom of Solomon 18:22.

20. Wisdom of Solomon 18:21.

in manuscripts, and are believed to have formed one single literary unit.<sup>21</sup> It is on these two oracles which my discussion will focus. These oracles, though having undergone later Christian editing, are Jewish in origin. The Jewish sections of the text are agreed to date to the Roman period (30 BCE–70 CE) from Asia Minor.<sup>22</sup> The Sibylline Oracles reflect the views of the Diaspora Jews from whence they come.

The Second Sibylline Oracle employs a series of quotations from a work called Pseudo-Phocylides.<sup>23</sup> This portion of the text states, “God wants not sacrifice but mercy instead of sacrifice.”<sup>24</sup> The context of this statement is a discourse on mercy which is itself a specific act of loving kindness which “saves from death when judgment comes.”<sup>25</sup> This is how, the author claims, salvation is gained: not through sacrifices, but through acts of mercy towards others. We see elsewhere that the author urges the reader towards righteousness, but without the mention of sacrificial ordinances we would expect from a pious Jew.<sup>26</sup> We can thus infer that in the eyes of the author, such acts of righteousness are not only equal to, but perhaps superior than the rites of sacrificial cult, although this is not explicit.

3 Maccabees is also believed to have originated from Roman Alexandria before the First Jewish Revolt (30 BCE–70 CE), and could have been composed as early as the early first century BCE.<sup>27</sup> Despite its name, the book does not portray the events of the Hasmonean revolt, but the supposed attempt of Ptolemy IV Philopater (221–204 BCE) to enter the Jerusalem temple, his subsequent persecution of Egyptian Jews, and their deliverance at the hands of God. The

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21. Johannes Geffcken, *Komposition und Entstehungszeit der Oracula Sibyllina* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1902), 43–47; J. J. Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1983), 330; Tuval “Doing Without the Temple,” 221.

22. Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 331; Tuval, “Doing Without the Temple,” 221.

23. This is a work which claims to be written by a Greek poet from the sixth century BCE but was in fact written much later by a Jew and at some point incorporated into the text under discussion.

24. Sibylline Oracle 2:82.

25. Sibylline Oracle 2:81.

26. See, for example, Sibylline Oracle 2:39–148, which contains the entire quotation from Ps-Phoc.

27. John J. Collins, “3 Maccabees,” in *The HarperCollins Study Bible Fully Revised and Updated: New Revised Standard Version, with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*, eds. Harold W. Attridge et al. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006), 1574.

narrative of the work indicates its author's attitude toward the temple and sacrificial cult. This is certainly not hostile, but somewhat indifferent.

The use of the word "holy" in the text serves as a striking demonstration of a lack of veneration towards the temple. The Greek term meaning holy, *hagios*, is used fourteen times: nine times in reference to God, and five in reference to the clothing of the high priest or to the Jewish people.<sup>28</sup> It is for the most part God himself who is called holy. Anything or anyone else that is described as holy is not so because of any intrinsic quality of the object or person, but because it belongs to Yaweh. The author of 3 Maccabees does not refer to the temple as holy.

Two prayers for deliverance occur in the book. The first is offered by the high priest Simon in the temple, as the king attempts to enter it. The high priest makes reference to many of the spectacular acts of deliverance God has accomplished on behalf of his people, and prays, "Let your mercies overtake us, and put praises in the mouths of those who are downcast."<sup>29</sup> His prayer is answered, and the king is smitten. Though the prayer is answered with a divine manifestation, there is no real show of glory or divine majesty. It is notable that Simon prays facing the temple (*ex enantias tou naou*).<sup>30</sup> Facing the temple or the spot where it once stood was and still is a common feature of Jewish prayer. King Solomon and Daniel both prayed facing the temple in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>31</sup> The high priest prays following this custom, possibly implying that he thinks that doing so will help his petition. Taken alone, this might not provide much importance, but in comparison with the book's second prayer and its result, this detail seems to have some significance.

Ptolemy tries to eradicate the Jewish population by trampling them with elephants, but the priest Eleazar prays for deliverance. There is no reference to the priest facing the temple. In fact, there is no reference to the temple or Jerusalem at all, but like in Simon the high priest's prayer, there is reference made to past spectacular deliverances. Eleazar the priest ends saying, "Let it be shown to all the Gentiles that you have not turned your face from us."<sup>32</sup> This time, the Jews are delivered with a mighty show of power. "Then . . . God revealed

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28. Noah Hacham, "Sanctity and the Attitude Towards the Temple in Hellenistic Judaism," in *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History*, 156.

29. 3 Maccabees 2:2–20.

30. 3 Maccabees 2:1.

31. See 1 Kings 9:33, 44, 48; 2 Chronicles 6:34; Daniel 6:10.

32. 3 Maccabees 6:1–15.

his holy face and opened the heavenly gates, from which two glorious angels of fearful aspect descended.”<sup>33</sup> These angels then halt the approaching elephants, the king, and his armies. This display in turn leads not only to the Jews’ deliverance, but also to a change in the attitude of the king, who recognizes God’s power.

In each instance of the Jews’ deliverance, there are no sacrifices or offerings of any kind. In both instances prayer alone saves the people. We see further that a greater degree of divine manifestation seems to occur in conjunction with the attitude of the person offering the prayer. Simon, praying towards the temple, is not granted a miraculous epiphany, even though his prayer is still answered. Eleazar, on the other hand, seems to be portrayed as not putting stock in the holiness of a place, but directly in God. He is rewarded with God revealing his power, sending angels, and showing his glory. Whether the reference to the temple is meant to correspond to the lesser miracle is unclear, but at any rate the temple plays little importance in the first event, and none at all in the second.

From the ensemble of these works, it seems that Diaspora Jews, distanced physically from Jerusalem and the sacrificial cult, were forced to find a way to cope. Unable to fulfill the laws in the Hebrew Bible, they turned to other means of fulfilling these obligations: prayer and acts of loving kindness.

## **Developments in Judean Judaism as seen in Post-70-CE Pseudepigraphical Works**

When the Romans suppressed the First Jewish Revolt, destroyed Jerusalem, and burned the temple to the ground, the Jews of Judea were left in the same predicament in which the Jews of the Diaspora had already found themselves: How were they now to fulfill the injunctions of the Torah to perform offerings and sacrifices? As time passed, Jewish hopes of rebuilding the temple grew smaller, especially after the failed Bar Kokhba revolt and the expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem in 135 CE. As their hopes for a new temple faded, Judean Jews adapted in the same way as Jews scattered throughout the Mediterranean, replacing sacrificial ordinances with what could be termed sacrifices of the heart, or prayers and acts of righteousness. The gradual acceptance of this paradigm can be seen

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33. 3 Maccabees 6:17.

in the literature that originates from the Judean area after 70 CE, such as the Pseudepigraphical books of 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra, and the Apocalypse of Abraham.

2 Baruch is generally accepted by scholars to have been composed in Palestine after 70 CE, likely around 100 CE.<sup>34</sup> In the literary context, the character Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah, remains in Jerusalem after its destruction by the Babylonians. We can assume the work reflects the author's views of the destruction after the destruction by the Romans.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple at the hands of the Babylonians are a focal point of the book of 2 Baruch. The book opens with the declaration "I shall bring evil upon this city and its inhabitants. And it will be taken away from before my presence for a time."<sup>35</sup> Baruch gives a long, poetic lament over the city.<sup>36</sup> We can see that the destruction of the city and the temple are devastating to the author. The author talks about the temple being rebuilt in the future, but says, "That building will not remain; but will be uprooted after some time and will remain desolate for a time."<sup>37</sup> He goes on to state that the second destruction will be more disheartening than the first destruction of the temple.<sup>38</sup> Though the goal of the text is perhaps to convince the reader that it is an ancient prophecy of future events, since the narration is of the Babylonian sack of Jerusalem in 587 BCE, it expresses the hopes and fears of Jews following the Roman sack of Jerusalem in 70 CE. These Jews would have hoped that the temple would be rebuilt, but this was not an immediate possibility.

So, to the author, the destruction of the temple was clearly a devastating blow, but there seemed to be some hope that the temple would be restored. The book closes with a dismal scene, but with a slight ray of hope, "We have left our land, and Zion has been taken away from us, and we have nothing now apart from the Mighty One and his Law."<sup>39</sup> Though the temple is for the moment destroyed, Jews could take consolation from their continued possession of the Law of Moses and from their personal relationships with God.

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34. F. J. Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 617. See also Kenneth R. Jones, *Jewish Reactions to the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Apocalypses and Related Pseudepigrapha* (The Netherlands: AD Druck BV, 2011) 88–89.

35. 2 Baruch 1:4.

36. 2 Baruch 10:6–19.

37. 2 Baruch 32:3.

38. 2 Baruch 32:5.

39. 2 Baruch 85:3.

4 Ezra is generally acknowledged as being composed in Palestine after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, and before the Bar Kokhba revolt, probably around 100 CE, although the first two and last two chapters seem to be later Christian additions.<sup>40</sup> Some scholars date it to the reign of Domitian (81–96 CE).<sup>41</sup>

Like 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra contains a notable lament over the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, occurring in a vision.<sup>42</sup> Again, the destruction of the city and temple is a major blow to the author and that he still holds on to the necessity of sacrifice. Following Ezra's lament over Jerusalem, an angel explains parts of the vision he has seen. In this vision, a woman laments her earlier barrenness before having a son. She then laments the death of her son. It is stated that the woman is the city of Jerusalem, which was desolate before the first temple was built by Solomon. The death of the son is stated as representing the destruction of Jerusalem.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, as in 2 Baruch, the author of 4 Ezra seems to find consolation for the impossibility of sacrifice in other aspects of Judaism. In this case, even if he cannot perform sacrifices, he at least has the use and custody of the word of God in the writings of Moses and the prophets. The Jewish portion of the book closes with God commanding Ezra to write and restore the scriptures, implying this is where God intends his worship to be henceforth based.<sup>44</sup>

The Apocalypse of Abraham has proved more difficult to date, but is generally assumed to have been composed before the middle of the second century CE.<sup>45</sup> Because the book describes vividly the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple, Kenneth R. Jones asserts that it was most likely composed in the period following the destruction, the end of the first century CE.<sup>46</sup>

The temple seems to have been even more important to the author of the Apocalypse than to the authors of the previous two works. In the work, God tells Abraham, "This temple which you have seen . . . is my idea of the priesthood of the name of my glory, where every petition of man will enter and dwell."<sup>47</sup> Abraham laments the future destruction of this temple, which is burned with fire.<sup>48</sup>

40. B. M. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 520.

41. Jones, *Jewish Reactions*, 56.

42. 4 Ezra 10:20–24.

43. 4 Ezra 10:44–50.

44. 4 Ezra 14.

45. R. Rubinkiewicz "Apocalypse of Abraham," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 603.

46. Jones, *Jewish Reactions*, 257.

47. Apocalypse of Abraham 25:4.

48. Apocalypse of Abraham 27:3.

In the end, Abraham has to content himself with the wickedness of his descendants and their destruction. However, he finds, as in the other works, consolation in a different aspect of Judaism, in this case the coming of a Messiah. The book ends with promises of this Messiah amidst the latter day wickedness.<sup>49</sup>

In the three works looked at, lamentation over the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple is a major theme; however, in each it is not the main theme. 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra are more preoccupied with Rome and its punishment for having destroyed and scattered the chosen people. The Apocalypse of Abraham deals mostly with the wickedness of idolatry. These themes are much more fully developed and take up a considerably larger portion of the text. This makes it seem that, although the destruction was a blow to the authors, it could be endured. This is supported by the fact that all three are able to take comfort in aspects of Judaism besides the sacrificial cult.

## Culmination in Rabbinic Literature

The developments in Jewish Literature during the decades and centuries were officially formulated in Rabbinic literature. This Rabbinic tradition became the standard from which modern Judaism came into existence. While the works under discussion here are difficult to date precisely, it is generally agreed that they achieved the form in which we have them after the compilation of the Mishnah (ca. 200 CE), but before 600 CE.<sup>50</sup> This was a formative period for modern Judaism. It is here that we see the current stand of Judaism, that sacrificial ordinances are replaceable with prayer and acts of loving kindness. As these developed after the deuterocanonical works we have looked at, the ideas are more developed, and their statements are clearer, not needing much interpretation, if any.

In the Talmud, a compendium of rabbinic commentary on Jewish Law, we read, "I have sat in fast, and so my fat and blood have become less. May it be pleasing before you that my fat and blood that have become less be received as if

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49. Apocalypse of Abraham 29:9–14, 31:1.

50. *The Talmud of Babylonia: Bavli Tractate Berahkot*, vol. 1 of *The Talmud of Babylonia: An Academic Commentary*, trans. Jacob Neusner (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), xx; *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, trans. Anthony J. Saldarini (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Archive, 1975), 16; *Sifre to Deuteronomy: Pisqaot One through One Hundred Forty-Three*, vol. 1 of *Sifre to Deuteronomy: An Analytic Translation*, trans. Jacob Neusner (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 6–9. All translations of the rabbinic texts are from these sources.

I had offered them up before you on the altar.”<sup>51</sup> In the *Sifre*, a midrash on the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy,<sup>52</sup> we have a passage relating to prayer, stating that serving God with heart and soul refers to prayer.<sup>53</sup> Finally, in the *Abot*, a section of the *Mishnah*, there is a passage treating the replacement of sacrifice with acts of loving kindness. It features a dialogue between Rabban Johanan ben Zakki and Rabbi Joshua, where the latter addresses the former’s concern about the inability to offer sacrifices by saying that acts of loving kindness can perform atonement just as sacrifice.<sup>54</sup> Throughout these passages, references are made frequently to various sections of the Hebrew Bible, on which the rabbis base their claims.<sup>55</sup>

As is to be expected, since these works follow the destruction of the temple by several centuries, the corpus of rabbinic literature finalizes the earlier developments of the Judean deuterocanonical books. Now that the hope of rebuilding the temple has effectively been shattered, the rabbis make former adaptations to distance from or lack of a temple more permanent. They demonstrate that the concepts that entered Palestinian Judaism in the period directly following the destruction continued to hold sway and become widely accepted. Thus it seems that as their hopes of rebuilding the temple faded, the Jews embraced prayer and acts of loving kindness as acceptable substitutes to the sacrificial cult.

## Conclusion

Although the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE was indeed a major event in the development of Judaism, the subsequent changes we see take form in Jewish religion are not as shocking as we might think. Falling on a substitute for sacrificial worship was a trend in motion well before the Romans destroyed the temple. Jews throughout the Mediterranean had already faced the impossibility of participating in the sacrificial cult and had developed a method to reconcile this to the commandments of the Hebrew Bible to perform temple rites. The destruction of the temple merely caused this trend to continue. When the temple was destroyed, those Jews who had previously been

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51. B. *Berakhot* 17a.

52. A Midrash is a rabbinic commentary on Hebrew scriptures.

53. *Sifre* 41.XLI: VI 1–4.

54. *Abot R. Nat.* 4.21.

55. See *Hosea* 6:6; *1 Samuel* 15:22; *Deuteronomy* 6:5, 11:13; *Psalms* 141:23.



able to participate in the sacrificial cult began to adapt in the same way as those who could not. As it became clear that the temple would not be rebuilt, this paradigm was generally accepted throughout the Jewish world. Thus in this respect, 70 CE was not so much a watershed as an event, albeit a major one, in a series of developments in antiquity which worked to shape modern Judaism.

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# Non-Chinese in Chinese History

## The Enduring Influence of “Foreign Barbarians” in Ancient China

Caleb Darger

THE MODERN CONCEPT OF CHINESE NATIONALITY IS A RATHER recent construct. During China’s early Republican (1912–27) and Nationalist (1928–49) periods, leaders like Sun Yat-sen and Yuan Shikai embraced the idea of *Zhonghua minzu*, translated as “Chinese nation” or “Chinese races.” The inclusive term helped unify the Han Chinese people and four other major non-Han ethnic groups that comprised most of the Chinese population: The Man (Manchus), the Meng (Mongolians), the Hui (Uighurs and groups of Islamic faith in northwestern China), and the Zang (Tibetans). The term was later expanded in 1978 after the death of Mao Zedong to include fifty-one other recognized minority ethnic groups in China.<sup>1</sup> Although not officially recognized as Chinese until the twentieth century, these ethnic groups, as well as other non-Chinese, have been influencing the course of Chinese history for centuries. They have helped China avoid exclusive isolationism through frequent trade and by conquering and ruling China at various times. During these periods of non-Han rule, particularly up to Mongol rule in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, China experienced incredible technological and cultural advancements. Non-Chinese left an indelible impact by helping expand China’s worldwide influence and even its current boundaries.

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1. Alan Lawrance, *China Since 1919—Revolution and Reform: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2004), 252.

China has had a tumultuous relationship with the nomadic steppe peoples to the north for millennia. During the Han dynasty, the Xiongnu were constantly harassing the Chinese on their northern and western borders. In 138 BC, Emperor Wu ostensibly sent emissary Zhang Qian to the west to try to persuade the Yuezhi people to ally with China and defeat the Xiongnu. During his expedition, Zhang Qian encountered a myriad of different cultures and civilizations in central Asia, including those he called the “Dayuan,” or the Ionians.<sup>2</sup> The Dayuan had mighty horses, which Zhang thought could be helpful in defeating the Xiongnu. A number of trading expeditions followed in what came to be known as the Silk Road.

The Silk Road exposed China to people and goods from as far as western Europe and Africa; however, “the most frequented routes out of China led to India.”<sup>3</sup> By far, India’s largest cultural import to China was Buddhism. Sizable groups of Buddhist monks first began arriving in China in the second century, around the same time Daoism began to rise in popularity.<sup>4</sup> This was one of the rare times in China’s history where some Chinese, especially adherents of Buddhism, acknowledged the cultural superiority of another civilization. Various surviving records tell the story of Chinese monks that traveled both by land and sea to India to study original Buddhist texts. Often they would stay for many years to master the difficult Sanskrit required to read them, and “many important Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese at this time.”<sup>5</sup> Scrutiny of the Indian language made the Chinese more aware of their own language, and they began to recognize distinctive characteristics, such as a dependence on tones.<sup>6</sup> Sanskrit loanwords were adopted into the Chinese language, as well as common expressions that are still in use today.<sup>7</sup>

It would be impossible to overemphasize the impact of Buddhism on China; even today, the religion permeates much of Chinese culture. Buddhism broke the cultural domination of Confucianism. Despite some apparent conflicts between Confucianism and Daoism, the Chinese found a way to integrate the

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2. Gu Ban and Homer H. Dubs, *The History of the Former Han Dynasty* (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1938).

3. Valerie Hansen, *The Open Empire: A History of China to 1800* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015), 172.

4. Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 21.

5. Hansen, *The Open Empire*, 11.

6. John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

7. The Chinese word *shi* 是 (to be) emerged around this time.

three schools of thought and they have become mainstays of Chinese culture. Buddhist philosophy influenced a number of famous poets, including Tao Yuanming, Wang Wei, and Bai Juyi, as well as painters, architects, astronomers, and doctors.<sup>8</sup> It became so widespread that later rulers would use it to legitimize their rule. Among the most famous of these was Empress Wu Zetian, who was of Central Asian descent and became a great patron of Buddhism. Due to its inclusivity and openness to female sovereignty (in contrast to Confucianism), Buddhism proved to be a powerful means of political legitimization. Thus a non-Chinese ruler used a non-Chinese religion to maintain control over what was at that point the largest Chinese empire in history.

A number of non-Chinese ruled China at various times throughout the centuries. As China continued to expand its borders more non-ethnically Chinese peoples were absorbed into the polity. These groups helped redefine what it meant to be Chinese by intermarrying and by importing aspects of their cultures. At no time in history was this truer than during the Tang dynasty, which was established in AD 618. In the centuries prior to the Tang, various Central Asian invaders occupied China. N. Harry Rothschild writes that “the division between core Chinese culture and peripheral steppe life broke down, and the two spheres blended together.”<sup>9</sup> Steppe culture enriched China the way Buddhism had done several hundred years prior; both prevented Confucianism from “lapsing into a static cultural pattern.”<sup>10</sup>

Mixed blood and non-Chinese elite families during the Tang dynasty spoke Turkic languages as well as Chinese. But even as they became acculturated and migrated further southeast into the Yellow River Valley, many still hunted the steppe on horseback to maintain their martial skills. In fact, the son of Tang Taizong, the founding emperor, famously insisted on living a Turkic lifestyle, continuing to live in a yurt and refusing to speak Chinese. Perhaps the majority of elites from these powerful hybrid Chinese-Central Asian clans, however, studied Confucian classics and embraced various aspects of the dominating culture. Nevertheless, their Central Asian culture was also embraced by the Chinese, and it made an enduring impact. Central Asian fashions, dances, and hairstyles were immensely popular in China during the Tang dynasty.<sup>11</sup>

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8. “Buddhism in China, China Religions, Chinese Culture,” *China Today*, accessed 15 December 2016, [http://www.chinatoday.com/culture/china\\_religions/buddhism\\_china\\_religion.htm](http://www.chinatoday.com/culture/china_religions/buddhism_china_religion.htm).

9. N. Harry Rothschild, *Wu Zhao: China's Only Woman Emperor* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), 11.

10. Rothschild, *Wu Zhao*, 11.

11. Rothschild, *Wu Zhao*, 12.

The multiethnic Tang Empire enjoyed immense peace and prosperity, it was the Golden Age of China. The empire welcomed not only steppe peoples; people from a variety of places and cultures called China home. Due to economic stability and heavy migration, the population tripled from AD 630 to AD 755, when fifty-three million people were recorded.<sup>12</sup> The capital, Chang'an, which means "long-lasting peace," was the largest, wealthiest, and most advanced city in the world at a time when London was still just a market town of a few thousand people.<sup>13</sup> Chang'an's streets were frequented by thick-bearded Persian merchants, religious pilgrims from India, and musicians from Kucha. In fact, the Chinese violin (*erhu*), a quintessentially Chinese instrument, is believed to have arrived in China from Central Asia around this time. The first Chinese character of the name of the instrument (二, two) probably derives from the fact that it has two strings. The second character (胡) likely indicates that it originated with the Hu peoples, who traditionally inhabited frontier regions north or west of China.

Cultural imports brought by foreign merchants and residents in the Tang dynasty greatly enriched Chinese culture. Originally a Persian import, polo came to China in the early seventh century and became wildly popular among the nobility, who enjoyed it as a means of recreation.<sup>14</sup> The Indians showed the Chinese how to make sugar from cane, wine from grapes, and even how to make optical lenses. However, in spite of and maybe *because of* the influence of foreigners in China, the Tang inclusivity was not without its critics. Yuan Chen, a Chinese poet wrote:

Ever since the Western horsemen began raising smut and dust,  
Fur and fleece, rank and rancid, have filled Hsien and Lo.  
Women make themselves Western matrons by the study of Western makeup;  
Entertainers present Western tunes, in their devotion to Western music.<sup>15</sup>

Clearly, not every Chinese person viewed the amalgamation of cultures positively. Additionally, non-Chinese felt that *their* culture was being lost to Sinification.

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12. Adela C. Y. Lee, "The Exoticism in Tang (618–907)," Silkroad Foundation, accessed 15 December 2016, <http://www.silk-road.com/artl/tang.shtml>.

13. John Haywood, Andrew Jotischky, and Sean McGlynn, *Historical Atlas of the Medieval World, AD 600–1492* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2000), 20.

14. "History of Polo," Museum of Polo and Hall of Fame, accessed 15 December 2016, <http://www.polo-museum.com/sport-polo/history-polo>.

15. Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of Tang Exotics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 28.

Beginning with the An Lushan rebellion in AD 756, Chang'an was occupied by various foreign and rebel forces. In AD 765, an allied force of Uighurs and Tibetans occupied Chang'an and they passed several laws enforcing segregation, including a ban on intermarriage.<sup>16</sup>

Shortly after Chang'an was retaken by the Tang government in AD 883, most of the city's buildings were demolished and the construction materials were hauled to Luoyang, which became the new capital. Many residents moved to the new capital, and Chang'an never recovered. When the Tang finally fell in AD 907, China lapsed into a chaotic and disunified Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period. The Silk Road became less operative, and foreign influence dramatically fell. When the Song dynasty was founded in AD 960, wars and instability meant that foreign influence was relatively minimal compared to the Tang, being limited primarily to economics rather than culture. However, there was still a foreign presence in Song China, including a small Jewish population and Buddhist monks from countries like India and Korea. It is also worth noting that the constant conflict and threat of attack by neighboring foreigners influenced the Chinese to develop advanced military technology, including developments in the crossbow, and "fire lances" that discharged a gunpowder blast of flame and shrapnel.<?>

The Great Jin dynasty emerged during this period of disunion. The Jin is also sometimes known as the Jurchen dynasty because it was ruled by the Jurchen people who lived primarily in Manchuria in northeastern China. Like other non-Han peoples who ruled China before and after them, the Jin referred to their empire as *Zhongguo* (中國, often translated as middle kingdom), expanding the definitions of *China* and *Chinese*.<?> After taking over northern China, the Jin dynasty became increasingly Sinicized. About 1.5 million Jurchens migrated south into northern China over two decades, and this minority governed about 30 million people.<?> Some leaders married Han Chinese women and immersed themselves in Chinese language. Like the Tang rulers before, Jurchen rulers became learned in Chinese classics, and a number of them were

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16. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, 22.

17. C. J. Peers, *Soldiers of the Dragon: Chinese Armies 1500 BCE–CE 1840* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2006).

18. Because there is no explicit pluralization in the Chinese language, this could also be plausibly translated as "middle kingdoms."

19. Mark C. Elliot, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 60.

translated into Jurchen. The imperial examinations even started to be offered in the language of the ruling elite.<?>

Due to military conflicts with the Han Chinese-ruled Song in southern China, the Jin and Song had little cultural intercourse; consequently, different cultural developments took place in both regions. The Confucianism that became orthodox in the Song, for example, did not take root in the Jin. It was not until the Mongols conquered China in 1271 that north and south were reunited. The Jurchen were pushed back to the northeast where their descendants would later re-emerge as the Manchu and conquer China several hundred years later, creating the Qing dynasty.

The Silk Road began to flourish again under Mongolian rule. Kublai Khan claimed the Mandate of Heaven, and established the Yuan dynasty at Dadu, present-day Beijing.<?> This was the first time all of China was ruled from Beijing, and from this time to today, with the exception of two interludes from 1368 to 1420 and 1928 to 1949, Beijing would remain China's capital. The Mongols expanded China's boundaries through conquest, and the Yuan empire became the largest in China's history to that point. During modern territorial disputes, Chinese today often cite land claimed during this time as proof of historical precedence.

The Mongols made passing through Silk Road routes easier and safer by fighting corruption and destroying toll roads.<?> They were extremely open to both foreigners and foreign products and ideas. Marco Polo was given a hospitable welcome by Kublai Khan and Polo noted the apparent willingness of the Khan to entertain ideas from all religions, while still practicing the rituals of traditional Mongolian religion.<?> Although there were some conservative Mongols who resisted the blend of cultures, most recognized the value of a multiethnic and multicultural empire. After all, if it were not for Persian-built-and-operated

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20. John Dardess and Jing-Shen Tao, "The Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China: A Study of Sinicization," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 37, no. 2 (1978): 69–83.

21. Christopher J. Ward, "Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World (review)," *Journal of World History* 17, no. 1 (2006): 95–97. The "Mandate of Heaven" was a way for ancient Chinese rulers to legitimize their rule by claiming that they had been placed in power by divine mandate.

22. Silk Road "toll roads" were desert oases which travelers had no choice but to stop at. Operators would charge exorbitant amounts of money for water and other necessities, which deterred merchants from making the journey and stifled cultural and economic interchange.

23. Stephen G. Haw, *Marco Polo's China: A Venetian in the Realm of Khubilai Khan* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), 56.



catapults, trebuchet, and ships, the Mongols would not have been able to conquer the Southern Song. The Mongols were distrustful of the southern Chinese people, however, and developed a strict hierarchical legal classification system with Mongols on top, Central Asians and western Eurasians (*semuren*) next, followed by northern Chinese and subjects of the Jin dynasty (*hanren*), and lastly southern Chinese of the Song dynasty (*nanren*) on the bottom. People that belonged to the lower two classes were generally excluded from high official posts. Although they were allowed to take the imperial civil service examination, “they had to participate in more test subjects and exam questions that for them were more difficult, compared with the first and second class.”<sup>24</sup>

The Mongols did not have enough people to manage all the administrative duties necessary, so they brought in Muslims from present-day Xinjiang and Yunnan to serve as administrators.<sup>25</sup> They mixed with local Chinese populations, and their descendants are the Hui people, which are found scattered throughout China. Most of the 10.5 million Hui in China today are still adherents of the Muslim faith.<sup>26</sup>

In AD 847, Chen An wrote *The Heart of Being Hua*. In it he tells the story of Li Yan-sheng, an Arabian who was recommended to the throne by the military governor of Dalian. After the emperor had his abilities examined and found them to be superior to others who had also been tested at this time, he was offered a position. Some protested that China should not take imperial candidates from among the barbarians. Chen responded that the man had been recommended for his ability, and not his ethnicity, arguing, “If one speaks in terms of geography, then there are Hua and barbarians. But if one speaks in terms of education, then there can be no such difference. For the distinction between Hua and barbarian rests in the heart and is determined by their inclinations.”<sup>27</sup> Clearly, what it means to be “Chinese” has fluctuated over the centuries, and there has never been consensus. For some, even a greater command of the Chinese language and Chinese philosophy than most ethnically Chinese people

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24. “‘Four-Class System’ of Yuan Dynasty,” Travel China Guide, accessed 15 December 2016, <https://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/history/yuan/four-class-system.htm>.

25. Ward, “Mongols, Turks, and Others.”

26. Hannah Beech, “Islam in China: Why Beijing Oppresses Uighurs but Not the Hui,” *Time*, 11 August 2004, accessed 5 April 2017, <http://time.com/3099950/china-muslim-hui-xinjiang-uighur-islam/>.

27. Charles Hartman, *Han Yu and the Tang Search for Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 159.

did not automatically make a person Chinese. For many people in China these perceptions still exist. Although the People's Republic of China has expanded the definition of "Chinese" to currently include all peoples with homelands in the current political boundaries, outsiders find it near impossible to gain citizenship or recognition by the Chinese government and populace.

Despite all the mixing that occurred from Han Chinese having regular contact with non-Chinese, Chinese today are reluctant to acknowledge their debt to the alien peoples. The debt is indeed great; non-Chinese peoples have enriched Chinese culture for almost as long as recorded history. China was most open and inclusive when ruled by non-Chinese, and numberless technological and cultural advancements occurred during these times. The same kind of cultural amalgamation that occurred during the Tang and Yuan dynasties is happening today. One example is so-called "Chocolate City" in Guangzhou, where an Afro-Chinese culture is emerging.<sup>28</sup> The PRC as well as local Chinese residents are often resistant to and skeptical of the benefits that increased foreign presence can bring, and foreigners find it impossible to gain Chinese citizenship, even after marrying a local. Working visas are also hard to come by. But the Chinese need only to look to their own history to see the great potential that lies in embracing the many foreigners knocking at their door.

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28. Many ethnic Africans have intermarried with the local population but still find it difficult to procure visas and working permits. Furthermore, their children suffer from racial prejudice and often experience challenges in receiving state-sponsored services like health care and education.

## Angles and Angels

### Political Unity and Spiritual Identity in Anglo-Saxon England

Susannah Morrison

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM IN EUROPE IS A CONTESTED process, and most historians conclude that nationalist sentiments did not arise in the shattered remnants of the Western Roman Empire until the twelfth century.<sup>1</sup> However, a national consciousness developed in England long before this date. Although it was a fundamentally abstract concept, largely limited to the intellectual domain of the highly educated elite, English national identity in the Anglo-Saxon period was a vibrant and powerful cultural force. Memorably articulated by the Venerable Bede in the eighth century, this proto-national sentiment identified the Angles—the Germanic tribes who had invaded and occupied Britain two centuries previous—as a divinely chosen people, the earthly evidence of a new covenant between God and a new chosen people. Although the geographic entity now known as England was politically fractured along tribal lines, Bede relied on “a degree of sufficient self-awareness of . . . over-riding Englishness” in writing a definitive *historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*—an ecclesiastical history of the English people.<sup>2</sup> Although the Brit-

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1. Boyd C. Shafer, “The Early Development of Nationality,” in *Nationalism in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. Leon Tipton (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1972), 41–44.

2. Alfred P. Smyth, “The Emergence of English Identity, 700–1000,” in *Medieval Europeans: Studies in Ethnic Identity and National Perspectives in Medieval Europe*, ed. Alfred P. Smyth (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 26.



*A line engraving of Alfred from the mid-eighteenth century, done by George Vertue. Image courtesy of National Portrait Gallery.*

ish Isles of Bede's day were far from political or even cultural unification, he sought to establish an intellectual construct of the single *gens Anglorum*, on the basis that the English—brought across the sea to take ownership of a far-flung island on the edge of the known world—were a chosen people, with a narrative trajectory and ultimate destiny comparable to that of the Israelites of the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup>

Under the reign of King Alfred in the ninth century, this intellectual inheritance matured into a powerful political tool. Working to unify the people of Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria, and East Anglia following a generation of Viking raids and the establishment of a permanent Danish presence in the Danelaw, Alfred invoked Bede's vision of the *gens Anglorum*, attempting to capitalize on the latent political significance of this long-standing religious identity. As the king of Wessex and the leader of anti-Viking resistance, Alfred was instrumental in refining and articulating a vision of the

English people as both a cohesive political unit and a benefactor of a special relationship with God. Following the precedent of the Israelites of the Old Testament, this Anglo-Saxon covenant was predicated on a direct correlation between the virtue of the individual and the well-being of the state. Social cohesion could only be attained and maintained on a foundation of shared strict obedience to the divine covenant. Alfred populated his quasi-biblical English landscape with other key features of the Israelite identity: an anointed king, a holy language, and a promised land under attack from foreign pagans. Alfred's iteration of English identity provided a compelling narrative and sophisticated political weapon, designed to control the foreign threat of the Vikings while also promoting the hegemony of Alfred's own kingdom of Wessex. After all, a single people might not need a single leader—but a people of the covenant

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3. The definitive work on this subject is Nicholas Howe, *Migration and Myth-Making in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

certainly does.<sup>4</sup> Alfredian propaganda placed the king himself at the very heart of this new national story. Asser's biography, for instance, glorifies Alfred as a contemporary King David, singled out by God as the defender of the faith, the temporal savior of God's chosen people, and the founder of a new golden age. Although the full political impact of his nation-building project would not bear fruit until the reign of his grandson Æthelstan, Alfred created a cultural and political consciousness which superseded the Anglo-Saxon inheritance of long-standing political and ethnic separateness, and which laid the foundation for the creation of England as a single entity.<sup>5</sup>

Before delving more deeply into this topic, however, it may be fruitful to turn our attention briefly to the question of methodology. Attempting to relate such modern constructs as nationalism and national identity to a medieval religious framework is a thorny issue, fraught with problems of potential anachronism. As I have pursued this line of research, I have been repeatedly cautioned and restrained by Elie Kedourie's warnings of the dangers of approaching sacred historiography with a profane outlook: "Men who thought they were acting in order to accomplish the will of God, to make truth prevail, or to advance the interests of a dynasty, or perhaps simply to defend their own against aggression, are suddenly seen to have been really acting in order that the genius of a particular nationality should be manifested and fostered."<sup>6</sup> The purpose of this paper is not to promote a sense of English national predestination or exceptionalism. Rather, it seeks to explore the relationship between the English, their sacred history, and their embryonic national identity. The central players in this early phase of English intellectual history—Bede, Alfred, and the unsung background cast of anonymous writers, scribes, and clerics who facilitated their efforts—were acting precisely in the manner Kedourie suggested: working to accomplish the will of God, to make truth prevail, to advance the interests of a dynasty, or to protect against aggression. From their respective limited vantage points, it is nigh unto impossible that they could have envisioned an end goal of establishing a cohesive English nation. However, as their respective intellectual endeavors played out and bore fruit in the realm of reality, this theological

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4. Patrick Wormald, "The Venerable Bede and the 'Church of the English,'" in *The English Religious Tradition and the Genius of Anglicanism*, ed. Geoffrey Rowell (Wantage, UK: IKON Productions, 1992), 24.

5. Sarah Foot, "Making of Angelcynn: English Identity before the Norman Conquest," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6 (1996): 29.

6. Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London: Hutchison, 1960), 71.

and political legacy slowly became the foundation for a national identity which continues to define English nationalism to the present day.

## Setting the Narrative: Bede and the Beginnings of the Covenant

As gradually distilled and articulated throughout the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, the coalescing of a chosen people is a complex process, as much attributable to the written interpretation of events as to the events themselves. Although the Torah explicitly singles out the Israelites as a separate and special people on numerous occasions,<sup>7</sup> the transmutation of this religious identity into a nationalistic one was the product of several centuries. Shared cultural and historical memory, such as that of the Exodus or the Babylonian Captivity, and the compilation and canonization of a national scripture all contributed to the development of the ancient Israelites into the Jewish nation. Indeed, the notion of chosenness became “the *raison d’être* of the Jewish religion as well as the Jewish people.”<sup>8</sup> The identity of a divinely favored covenant people, so intrinsic to the consciousness of the Jewish diaspora, was adopted by early Christians, who saw themselves as the natural successors to the Jews. The Church Fathers, including Hippolytus, Origen, and Lactantius, generally agreed that, either through the Jews’ own disobedience (through their perceived role in the crucifixion), or through the mere expiration of their role as the earthly expression of God’s covenant favor, the Jews had lost their status as a chosen people.<sup>9</sup> Instead, the Christian church had succeeded the house of Israel as the recipients of God’s covenant favor. The fluid shape and parameters of this Christian covenant, however, offered opportunities for rulers and writers across western Europe—in the Holy Roman Empire, France, and elsewhere—to claim exclusive right to this covenant.<sup>10</sup> However, nowhere else in Europe adopted ownership of

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7. Genesis 17:7–8; Deuteronomy 14:2 (to name two prominent examples).

8. S. Leyla Gürkan, *The Jews as a Chosen People: Tradition and Transformation* (London: Routledge, 2009), 1.

9. Hippolytus, *Treatise Against the Jews*, 6; Origen, *Against Celsus*, 4.22; Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 4.11.

10. Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 130–31; Ernst H. Kantorowitz, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), 237–38.

the covenant earlier—or more consistently—than did the inhabitants of the British Isles.

The documented early roots of this phenomenon may be traced to Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*. Bede drew his understanding of history from Christian scripture, the common source of the “paradigmatic medieval historical narrative.”<sup>11</sup> This most influential of Anglo-Saxon authors viewed history as a source of evidence for the highly structured and symbolic nature of God's interactions with his children. Nowhere is this more evident than in Bede's almost fairy-tale-like retelling of the future Pope Gregory the Great's encounter with English slaves in the markets of Rome. This story, although seemingly unremarkable in its details, constitutes the crucial “myth of origin” which has defined the English nation, since before the English nation could even be said to exist.<sup>12</sup>

According to Bede's account, the future pope Gregory the Great, then a middle-aged abbot, was walking through the slave markets of Rome, when his attention was drawn to the fair skin and blonde hair of a few young English slaves. Upon enquiring as to the ethnic background of the boys and being informed that they were Angles from Britain, the cleric insisted that the boys were not Angles, but angels.<sup>13</sup> In his eyes, they were not slaves, but souls: pagan souls in need of salvation. It grieved Gregory to know that the boys' outer beauty, described by Bede as *venustus*—graceful, charming, well-proportioned—was out of harmony with the state of their souls.<sup>14</sup> In Bede's retelling of the story, his Latin vocabulary is highly significant, reflecting a deeper underlying meaning. The adjective *venustus*, used to describe the Angles' beauty, appears only one other time in Latin scripture: to praise Rachel, who was Jacob's favorite wife, the mother of Joseph, and one of the founding mothers of the twelve tribes of Israel. Just as Rachel was the origin of God's biblically chosen people, her divine purpose reflected in her beauty, so the Angles in the slave market of Rome, ethereally, angelically beautiful, may be considered the spiritual forerunners of the *ecclesia Anglorum*.<sup>15</sup> Steeped in early medieval theologies of predestination, Bede implied a link between the physical grace and beauty of the

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11. Stephen Harris, “Bede and Gregory's Allusive Angles,” *Criticism* 44, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 271.

12. Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England*, 118–21.

13. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, II.1.

14. Harris, “Bede and Gregory's Allusive Angles,” 273, 276.

15. Harris, “Bede and Gregory's Allusive Angles,” 274.

Angles and their destiny as God's chosen people. However, the Angles' external beauty was not in harmony with their sinful practice of paganism; only through embracing Christianity and becoming the recipients of God's grace could they collectively fulfil their predestined role as a new chosen people.

By so blatantly establishing the Anglo-Saxons as "the New Israel, the present-day chosen," Bede consciously reclaimed the biblical covenant for the English people.<sup>16</sup> In doing so, he validated a core feature of English identity, at a time when no "England" could be said to meaningfully exist: that the Germanic peoples of Britain, separated from the rest of Europe, poised on an island-precipice at the end of the world, were distinct, singled out by God's chosen representative on earth, and therefore, by God himself. This revolutionary identification of the English with the chosen people of the Bible would remain a vital intellectual, cultural, and, in time, political force in England for centuries to come.

## Crisis and Conquest

The Danish Viking attack on the monastery at Lindisfarne in 793 ushered in a new age in Anglo-Saxon England. The frequency and intensity of Danish attacks would increase over the next sixty years, until reaching a crescendo in 865, with the arrival of what the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle termed "the great heathen army." Landing in East Anglia and conquering their way across the island, the Danish invasion force devastated the balance of power in England. Indeed, by the time King Alfred was crowned King of Wessex in 871, the Vikings controlled almost all of Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia.

Despite a number of catastrophic temporary setbacks, Alfred miraculously managed to ultimately stem the flow of the Danish advance, taking back control of the city of London and successfully forging an alliance with the Viking leader, Guthrum. With the remnants of Anglo-Saxon sovereignty headquartered in Wessex, Alfred stood at the helm of a unique opportunity for the political unification of England.<sup>17</sup> He sought to consolidate various factions of Anglo-Saxons into a single polity, by reinvigorating and reinventing a sense of what it meant to be English. Like Bede, Alfred symbolically constructed a single English nation around the identification of the English as a chosen people.

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16. Andrew Scheil, *The Footsteps of Israel: Understanding Jews in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 147.

17. Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 39.



After all, from the time of Gregory's first missionaries to Britain, there had been great cultural currency attached to the notion of the Anglo-Saxons as a single people in the eyes of God—the idea that the Anglo-Saxons were “a people who, though they lived in ‘Britannia’ or ‘Saxonia’, and though they called themselves Saxons as well as Angles, were known in Heaven as the ‘*gens Anglorum*.’”<sup>18</sup> Alfred's achievement lay in developing this notion of the *gens Anglorum*, shedding its exclusively religious overtones and adopting an unashamedly political bent. Alfred and his court drew on the essentials of the biblical definition of the “chosen people,” which included an anointed king, a sacred language, and a promised land, in order to transform these elements into rallying points for the coalescence of a single English nation.

## Davidic Kingship in Britain

*De Rebus Gestis Ælfredi*, written by the Welsh monk Asser in 893, is one of the most significant sources on the life, times, and motivations of the king. Belonging to the same genre of biography as Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*, Asser's work is written as “an encomium, a celebration of Alfred's greatness for the edification of its multiple audiences.”<sup>19</sup> These two biographies—written by clerics roughly seventy years apart—revived the classical tradition of secular biography, reinventing the genre for the Christian world.<sup>20</sup> Given this shared genre, it might logically follow that Asser attempted to model his literary version of King Alfred after Einhard's interpretation of Charlemagne—which was, in turn, based on Suetonius' Emperor Augustus.<sup>21</sup> While there are indeed certain parallels between the portrayals of Charlemagne and Alfred,<sup>22</sup> there is another layer of cultural DNA underpinning Asser's biography. Falling in line with Alfred's comprehensive revival of the notion of the chosen English people, Asser used

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18. Patrick Wormald, “Bede, the *Bretwaldas*, and the Origin of the *Gens Anglorum*,” in *The Times of Bede: Studies in Early English Christian Society and its Historian*, ed. Stephen Baxter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 125.

19. Richard Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship, and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London: Routledge, 1998), 12.

20. See Helen Ann Hund, “Rex Francorum et Rex Angul-Saxonum: A Comparison of Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni* and Asser's *De Rebus Gestis Ælfredi*” (MA diss., Wichita State University, 2007).

21. Abels, *Alfred the Great*, 12.

22. Robert Stanton, *The Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2002), 91–92.



*An important assertion of monarchical significance and sovereignty in the premodern world, this coin featuring Alfred's image was minted ca. 887, in the middle of his reign. Image courtesy of National Portrait Gallery.*

the biblical precedent of King David as his chief model for the anointed scholar-king of Wessex. It has recently been argued that Alfred's cult of personality best aligns with Solomon, based largely on Solomonic iconography in West Saxon royal portraiture, as well as on Alfred's own legacy as a builder and a lawgiver.<sup>23</sup> However, less scholarly attention has been paid to Alfred's strong personal identification with King David, as reflected in the literary sources.

The use of King David as an allegorical figure is not, in and of itself, unprecedented in the Anglo-Saxon and broader European contexts. Bede's portrayal of the clashes between Oswiu and Oswin and the exile of Edwin, in seventh-century Northumbria, for example, was strongly influenced by the account of Saul and David's rivalry found in 1 Samuel.<sup>24</sup> On the Continent, Charlemagne also saw and celebrated himself as a new David.<sup>25</sup> However, given the Anglo-Saxons' prolonged self-identification with the Israelites of the Old Testament, the assumption of a Davidic identity by one of their kings takes on a new and particularly pointed political significance. Alfred's association with David was, in many ways, subtler and less overt than Charlemagne's—established, not through grandiose ceremonies or iconography, but through a careful literary alignment of the two kings' life stories, physical

23. Samantha Zacher, *Rewriting the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon Verse: Becoming the Chosen People* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 31; David Pratt, *The Political Thought of King Alfred the Great* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 170; Paul J. E. Kershaw, *Peaceful Kings: Peace, Power, and the Early Medieval Political Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 260–61.

24. J. McClure, "Bede's Old Testament Kings," in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J.M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. Patrick Wormald, Donald Bullough, and Roger Collins (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 90.

25. Henry Mayr-Harting, "The West: The Age of Conversion (700–1050)," in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, ed. John McManners (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 101.

appearances, personal traits, and ultimate destinies. By shaping Alfred's life trajectory to be parallel to that of King David, Asser promoted his king's personal political agenda, providing a compelling basis on which the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms might unite under a single leadership. After all, the biblical Israelites were the most blessed, and the most in keeping with their status as a chosen people, when politically unified under the leadership of a single anointed king. Asser's propaganda tried to recreate the same literary circumstances in ninth-century Anglo-Saxon England.

Throughout history, a king's right to rule has been based on genealogy; his legitimacy in claiming ownership of the throne and the land is derived primarily from "the authority of his lineage."<sup>26</sup> It logically follows, then, that a king seeking to consolidate his power and establish his right to rule would do so either by highlighting or inventing a noble genealogy. King David, for example, has one of the best-recorded ancestral lines in the Bible, traceable from the Book of Ruth through 1 Chronicles. Through his father, Jesse, David was also a member of the tribe of Judah. Reaching into more distant biblical genealogies, David was also considered a descendant of Noah—a golden pedigree, as far as establishing David's inherited right to rule.<sup>27</sup>

Conversely, Alfred also benefitted from an excellent genealogical record—albeit one certainly embellished and fabricated in places. The genealogy of the West Saxon royal dynasty is recorded both in Asser's biography and in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and the list essentially copies from one place to the other: a piece of "political fiction," it is intended to portray an unbroken line of succession reaching into Alfred's own day.<sup>28</sup> These genealogies served an invaluable ideological function, glossing over the betrayal of birthright which had placed Alfred on the throne—after all, Alfred had disinherited his two young nephews, Æthelhelm and Æthelwold, in order to claim the crown for himself.<sup>29</sup> The king's ancestry is, rather predictably, traced back to Cerdic and Cynric, the quasi-mythic Anglo-Saxon founders of the kingdom of Wessex, as well as to Woden, the Germanic warrior-god. The naming of Woden as one of Alfred's forefathers is a curious feature, a nod to the unique cultural fusion at work in Anglo-Saxon

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26. Alice Sheppard, *Families of the King: Writing Identity in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 54.

27. Gary A. Rendsburg, "The Internal Consistency and Historical Reliability of the Biblical Genealogies," *Vetus Testamentum* 40, Fasc. 2 (April 1990): 187.

28. D. P. Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings* (London: Routledge, 2000), 39.

29. Sheppard, *Families of the King*, 32.

society. Alfred's identification with a pagan god who "confers kingship and success in battle" was evidently considered essential to justifying his legitimacy as an otherwise thoroughly Christian king.<sup>30</sup> Crucially, however, Alfred's genealogy does not stop with this Germanic god. Rather, both Asser and the Chronicler extend it further back to Noah and, through him, to Adam. In and of itself, there is nothing outstanding about this line of descent; after all, the Bible, when taken literally, suggests that all mankind are the descendants of both Noah and Adam. However, the genealogy recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is distinct in that it channels the West Saxon line of descent through a fourth son of Noah, Scefa or Sceafa, who was born on the ark itself.<sup>31</sup> This fourth son, a common fixture in both Christian and Jewish apocryphal accounts, was created to fulfill a role that none of Noah's canonical sons, tainted by their crimes at the Tower of Babel, could: to be the recipient of peculiar esoteric wisdom, given directly from God.<sup>32</sup>

Alfred's genealogy, then, uniquely predisposed him to the office of kingship. His familial credentials established him as the linear heir of the West Saxon royal line, as well as an older, even richer inheritance, stretching back through a mysterious, pseudo-biblical past. Just as David's genealogy, both preceding and succeeding, was essential to his mission as the anointed king of a unified Israel, so was Alfred's genealogy transformed into something similarly momentous.

Asser's biography continues, tracking Alfred's life through his childhood as the son of King Æthelwulf. An anecdote shared both by Asser and in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle relates the visit of a five-year-old Alfred to Rome in 853. Both sources claim that, during Alfred's visit, Pope Leo anointed the child as king and designated him as his godson at confirmation.<sup>33</sup> However, the factual accuracy of this anecdote is called into question by most scholars, who generally agree that the story of Alfred's childhood anointing was a fabrication invented

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30. Thomas D. Hill, "The Myth of the Ark-Born Son of Noe and the West-Saxon Royal Genealogical Tables," *Harvard Theological Review* 80, no. 3 (July 1987): 381; this phenomenon may possibly bear similarities to the Roman emperor Augustus' enthusiastic promotion of his own supposed mythic descent through the goddess Venus and her son, the Trojan Aeneas. Just as this most Roman of emperors planted his family tree firmly in Trojan soil, so Alfred, supremely self-aware of his own English and Christian identities, highlighted the pagan god Woden as a forefather.

31. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 855.

32. Hill, "The Myth of the Ark-Born Son of Noe," 382–83.

33. Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, 8; *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 853.

during his reign to gain additional political legitimacy.<sup>34</sup> Even if Alfred was baptized in Rome as a boy, with the pope as his sponsor, there would have been no logical reason to anoint him as king, given that Alfred was his father's youngest son, with three living older brothers. However, if this anecdote was indeed fabricated, it was done so for a reason. Alfred seems to have been well aware of the political potency of this story. Not only did he propagate this story about himself, but he also had the scenario recreated for his grandson, Æthelstan.<sup>35</sup> It has been proposed that this story was intended to establish Alfred as a kind of English Charlemagne—a powerful political figure physically set apart through a papal anointing.<sup>36</sup> However, the story does bear a distinct similarity to that related in 1 Samuel 16: the anointing of the child David by the prophet Samuel. Like Alfred, David was the youngest son, picked over his elder brothers to be anointed as future king. Although the two stories of Alfred and David's childhood anointings hardly align perfectly, the core elements bear enough similarity to one another to be worthy of consideration.

Other incidents in the kings' lives bear more than a passing similarity to one another. The biblical record pays strong attention to describing the boy David's "comely person" and "beautiful countenance."<sup>37</sup> Similar epithets are applied to Alfred as a child. Asser notes that "through the years of infancy and youth, he appeared more comely in person than his brothers, as in countenance, speech, and manners, he was more pleasing than they."<sup>38</sup> The connection between physical beauty and divine favor in the medieval mindset was well-established; after all, as discussed above, the *venustus* beauty of Bede's Angles was taken as a signifier of their people's divine mission. The fact that Asser makes a point of marking Alfred out in childhood as being particularly beautiful, just as the biblical record marks out David, suggests something of a constructed parallel between the two figures, hinting at the predestined nature of Alfred's ultimate purpose as a Davidic figure for the Anglo-Saxons.

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34. Joseph H. Lynch, *Christianizing Kingship: Ritual Sponsorship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 118.

35. Janet Nelson, "The Problem of King Alfred's Royal Anointing," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 18 (1967): 161.

36. Janet Nelson, "A King across the Sea: Alfred in Continental Perspective," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 36 (1986): 56; Sheppard, *Families of the King*, 59.

37. 1 Samuel 16:12, 18.

38. Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, 22.

Other similarities in the narrative trajectories abound. For example, both Alfred and David were, at some point, compelled to retreat into wastelands—Alfred and his men hiding at Athelney in the marshes of Somerset while fleeing from the Vikings, and David, on the run from King Saul, taking refuge with his retainers in the Cave of Adullam. Both Alfred and David are noted as strong military leaders. Alfred's action at the Battle of Eddington in 878, for example, was marked by "great slaughter," committed "at length," and achieved "with the divine help."<sup>39</sup> David, fighting against the Philistines, was also involved in "great slaughter"; he routinely "left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel."<sup>40</sup> Although military prowess was an essential component of the ideal medieval king, it is also yet another way in which Alfred's biographer sought to emulate his portrayal after that of this archetypal biblical monarch. However, both Alfred and David were also noted for their shows of mercy. Alfred, notably, forged an alliance with his erstwhile enemy, Guthrum, the leader of the Viking army, and stood as his sponsor and godfather at baptism.<sup>41</sup> The entering-into of a religious bond symbolized the new diplomatic relationship between the two former foes.<sup>42</sup> A similar situation unfolded in 1 Samuel 24, when David, presented with the perfect opportunity to kill his rival for the throne, abstained from doing so, and instead arranged a peace treaty with Saul.<sup>43</sup> Although mercy was, of course, an essential characteristic of the ideal king, the emphasis Asser places on Alfred's clemency and new-found friendship with Guthrum is deliberate, drawing a further line of connection between Alfred and David.

Certain aspects of the kings' respective reigns, as well, bear similarity to one another. For example, Alfred originally only inherited the throne of Wessex, ruling the southwest corner of England. However, as his military and diplomatic clout in the region increased, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that, "That same year [886] . . . all England turned to him, except that which was had by the Danish men."<sup>44</sup> According to Alfredian literature, then, the remaining independent Anglo-Saxon kingdoms initiated and entered into some kind of alliance or confederation with Wessex. Although it is unclear just how far West

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39. Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, 56.

40. 1 Samuel 19:8, 27:9.

41. Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, 56.

42. Lynch, *Christianizing Kingship*, 216–17.

43. 1 Samuel 24:8–22.

44. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 886.

Saxon hegemony extended under the terms of this agreement, it may be concluded, at least, that English resistance efforts against the Danish were to be led by Alfred and his lieutenants. Crucially, both the compiler of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Asser himself take care to stress that this alliance was a voluntary motion on the part of the surrounding kingdoms. Although it would be anachronistic to assume that this alliance meant that Alfred now ruled over an entirely politically united England, it does mark an important stepping stone towards the coalescing of a single English nation.

A similar political development unfolded during the process of King David's consolidation of power over a united Israel. Following the death of his predecessor, King Saul, David was crowned king of Judah in the south, with his capital at Hebron.<sup>45</sup> However, Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, launched a rival claim to the throne, sparking continued civil war in the north. Following Ish-bosheth's death, the elders of Israel "came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron . . . , and they anointed David king over Israel."<sup>46</sup> Although David's rule over a united Israel was far from uncontested, marked by continued war with the Philistines, as well as by internal rebellions and civil wars, the biblical history emphasizes that David's assumption of kingship over all twelve tribes was initiated by the local, non-Judahite population. Regardless of the empirical truth of events, this is the surviving interpretation—one which was eventually copied by Asser in recording the circumstances of how Alfred's Wessex came to dominate the political, military, cultural, and linguistic landscape of ninth-century Anglo-Saxon England.

A last significant parallel between Asser's Alfred and the biblical David is to be found in the kings' literary talents. In addition to being a political, military, and religious leader, the Bible also ascribes David was also, famously, a psalmist. Although the authorship of the Psalms traditionally attributed to him is now widely contested by biblical scholars, the long-standing cultural memory of David as a sensitive, literary-minded poet remains in the Judeo-Christian tradition, equalling, if not overshadowing, his more concrete role as a political and military leader.<sup>47</sup> King Alfred's presence in the English cultural canon is marked by a similar tradition. Asser, for instance, pays great attention to

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45. 2 Samuel 2:1–3.

46. 2 Samuel 5:3.

47. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler, ed., *Jewish Study Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1282; James A. Diamond, "King David of the Sages: Rabbinic Rehabilitation or Ironic Parody?," *Prooftexts* 27, no. 3 (Fall 2007): 323–426.



Alfred's campaigns of linguistic and cultural revival. Alfred's own words, in his infamous preface to the Old English translation of the Pope Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis*, likewise enshrine his linguistic and cultural efforts, rather than his military achievements and political maneuvers. The historian Æthelweard, writing about the king's final years, follows this tradition. His discussion of Alfred's death and legacy, for instance, focuses primarily on the king's accomplishments as a scholar and translator.

Finally, in the same year, the magnanimous Alfred passed from the world, king of the Saxons, unshakeable pillar of the western people, a man replete with justice, vigorous in warfare, learned in speech, above all instructed in divine learning. For he had translated unknown numbers of books from rhetorical Latin speech into his own language—so variously and so richly that [his] book of Boethius would arouse tearful emotions not only in those familiar with it, but even in those hearing it [for the first time].<sup>48</sup>

Although Æthelweard does acknowledge that Alfred was “vigorous in war,” his primary emphasis is on Alfred's wisdom and learning. At Alfred's death, his most significant achievements, deemed most worthy of being recorded in summation of his reign, were academic, rather than military. Alfred, as it might be assumed he preferred to be remembered, was a learned man, a scholar, and a writer, capable of evoking powerful emotion in his readers—a dramatically different figure than the brilliant, violent warrior-king portrayed in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

The parallels between the biblical record of King David, and the aspects of Alfred's life, personality, and reign which he himself and his biographers chose to emphasize, are strong and compelling. However, Alfred's self-identification as a type of David is also attested to by the king's personal translation efforts. According to William of Malmesbury, Alfred undertook the project of translating the Psalms into Old English.<sup>49</sup> Although the king died before he was able to complete his project, a convincing argument has been made that the fifty Old English prose psalms surviving in the Paris Psalter are the product of this effort.<sup>50</sup> One cannot help but be struck by the choice to translate the Psalms as

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48. *Chronicon Æthelweardi*, in *Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, trans. Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (London: Penguin, 2004), 191.

49. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, trans. J. A. Giles (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1847), 120.

50. Janet Bately, “Lexical Evidence for the Authorship of the Prose Psalms in the Paris Psalter,” *Anglo-Saxon England* 10 (December 1981): 69–95.



“an act of personal devotion,” by a king fully aware of the similarities between David’s situation and his own, attempting to repel foreign enemies while also seeking divine knowledge.<sup>51</sup> Each of Alfred’s prose psalms is introduced by a brief summary, which situates the psalm in David’s personal circumstances, and also relates it to the experiences of King Hezekiah and Christ.<sup>52</sup> The wording of these passages occasionally seems both pointed and personal, making it impossible to miss the parallels between David and Alfred’s sufferings and misfortunes. For example, the introduction to Psalm 10—“David sang this tenth psalm when he was driven to the wilderness by Saul the king, when his companions warned him to hide there”<sup>53</sup>—bears a striking similarity to the Chronicle entry for 878: “Here, the [Danish] army stole into Chippenham . . . and rode over Wessex, and there they sat. . . . The King Alfred, with a little band and with difficulty, sought the woods and a place secure from attack.”<sup>54</sup>

Another parallel may be found in the introduction to Psalm 6, which reads, “David sang this sixth psalm about his infirmity and his sufferings, and also about the fear of judgment on Judgment Day, and each one of those who sing it does likewise.”<sup>55</sup> This summary readily invites comparison to Asser’s lengthy discussions of Alfred’s physical ill-health. Asser records that Alfred suffered from recurring and excruciating bouts of “piles”, now assumed to be Crohn’s disease, from the “first flowering of his youth.”<sup>56</sup> The biography also includes a further curious—and highly relevant—anecdote regarding the origins of Alfred’s illness:

He [Alfred] realized that he was unable to abstain from carnal desire, [and] fearing that he would incur God’s disfavour if he did anything contrary to His will, he very often got up secretly in the early morning at cockcrow and visited churches and relics of the saints in order to pray; he lay there prostrate a long while, turning himself totally to God, praying that Almighty God through his mercy would more staunchly strengthen his resolve in

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51. Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, ed., *Asser’s Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (London: Penguin, 2004), 153.

52. Malcolm Godden, “Biblical Literature: The Old Testament,” in *Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 224.

53. *Liber Psalmorum: The West Saxon Psalms*, ed. James Wilson Bright and Robert Lee Ramsay (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1907), 19; translation is my own.

54. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 878; translation is my own.

55. *Liber Psalmorum*, 9.

56. G. Craig, “King Alfred: A Diagnosis,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 84 (May 1991): 303–5; Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, 74.

the love of His service by means of some illness which he would be able to tolerate.<sup>57</sup>

If Asser's anecdotal evidence is to be taken as authoritative, then, it may be inferred that Alfred believed there was a strong link between physical illness and sanctification in the eyes of God. When viewed in this broader biographical context, the summary preceding the Old English Psalm 6 takes on a special and highly personal significance.

Other psalm introductions invite comparison to Alfred's "lament over the decay of wisdom" in his preface to *Cura Pastoralis*.<sup>58</sup> For example, the introduction to Psalm 11 reads, "When David sang this eleventh psalm, he lamented that in his days righteousness and wisdom should be so confined."<sup>59</sup> Psalm 13's introduction expresses a similar sentiment: "When David sang this thirteenth psalm, he lamented to the Lord that there should ever be such little good faith and so little wisdom in his days."<sup>60</sup> Almost exactly the same anxieties are discussed in the preface to *Cura Pastoralis*. "We loved the name alone that we were Christians, and very few of us loved its practices. . . . Our ancestors, who held this place before, they loved wisdom, and through it, they got hold of riches, and bequeathed it to us. . . . We have let go both the riches and the wisdom, because we did not wish to bend our minds to their tracks."<sup>61</sup> Throughout the *Cura Pastoralis* preface, Alfred inserted himself personally into the process of his people's salvation. In an age when not even the church could be relied upon to adequately discharge its duties towards Christian worshippers, Alfred expanded the role of the king to include his service as an instrument in God's hands, through which to restore appropriate religious observances.<sup>62</sup> In pursuing his platform to extend access to "those books most necessary for all men to know," Alfred displayed his sensitivity to the spiritual needs of his people, and demonstrated his authority to act upon those needs. In doing so, he further consolidated the connection between his reign and the spiritual and temporal well-being of his people—a crucial aspect of the

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57. Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, 74.

58. Godden, "Biblical Literature: The Old Testament," 224.

59. *Liber Psalmorum*, 21; translation is my own.

60. *Liber Psalmorum*, 24.

61. Alfred the Great, *Preface to Cura Pastoralis*, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/uofc/eduweb/engl401/texts/alfdfram.htm>; the translation is my own.

62. E. G. Stanley, "King Alfred's Prefaces," *Review of English Studies* 39, no. 155 (August 1988): 353.

Davidic identity. Examining the world through this allegorical and scriptural lens, Alfred saw himself and his people as quite literally reliving the experiences of David and the Hebrews.

Alfred's personal identification with David is further attested to in the translation itself, as Alfred's version of the text notably sought to downplay the strong parallels between David, as the narrator of the Psalms, and Christ.<sup>63</sup> Demonstrating remarkable sensitivity and restraint, Alfred appears to have been wary of developing too direct an analogy between himself and David, as to do so would have led to a potentially blasphemous parallel with Christ himself. However, as far as Alfred felt comfortable in implicitly developing the Davidic analogy, a fascinating glimpse into Alfred's understanding of himself and his unique role in relation to his people emerges. Alfred ultimately saw himself as the David of the Anglo-Saxons: called to bring God's word to God's children at a specific time and place in history, chosen to defeat his enemies and defend the faith, destined to peacefully unify the chosen people, and ordained to act as a prophet of the golden age to come.<sup>64</sup>

In choosing David as his biblical parallel of choice, and subtly but persistently reinforcing the analogy between their lives, achievements, and goals, Alfred turned religious devotion into a powerful political tool. He unambiguously cast the English in the role of the biblical Israelites, with a sacred responsibility to rally around their divinely appointed leader. He situated Anglo-Saxon history on the narrative trajectory of the Israelites, assuring his people of their divinely elected role to act as "an outpost, a bulwark, a stronghold . . . an avant-garde of truth in the midst of enemies and pagans."<sup>65</sup> Most importantly of all, he offered a compelling sense of hope for the future. If Alfred himself was David, then the truly golden age of Solomon was yet to come. With England protected by a watchful God, represented on earth by his favored earthly dynasty, there would be untold peace and prosperity yet to come—all that was necessary was to merely trust and obey.

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63. Stanton, *Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England*, 126.

64. Stanton, *Culture of Translation in Anglo-Saxon England*, 126–27.

65. Jan Assmann, "Memory, Narration, Identity: Exodus as a Political Myth," in *Literary Construction of Identity in the Ancient World: Proceedings of the Conference 'Literary Fiction and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Literatures: Options and Limits of Modern Literary Approaches in the Exegesis of Ancient Texts,' Heidelberg, 10–13 July 2006*, ed. Hanna Liss and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 8.

## Ex Lingua Gentes: Holy Vernacular

A divinely appointed king, however compelling, cannot define a chosen people—nor can he personally provide the grounds for political unification. Years of collective trauma at the hands of foreign invaders had taken its toll on the Anglo-Saxons. Although some form of peace had been reached through Alfred's alliance with Guthrum and the partition of the Danelaw, the England which Alfred occupied was both militarily weakened and spiritually threatened. The execution of Alfred's domestic political agenda rested on the successful pursuit of a plan to revive, protect, and consolidate England's cultural and religious traditions. Targeted Viking raids on the monasteries had, after all, spared few monks—the guardians of Latin and, therefore, the gatekeepers to the world of classical and patristic literature. With the very heart of Christian Anglo-Saxon culture under such concerted attack, Alfred undertook to correct his kingdom's loss of Latinists by sponsoring the translation of Latin works into Old English. As the earliest such program of national vernacular translation in Europe, Alfred and his court democratized the world of Latin Christianity, including the Vulgate Bible, and made it accessible to a vast new constituency of lay readers.

In order to justify the translation program, taking sacred texts from their original context of a sacred language, and rendering them in a less-sophisticated vernacular, Alfred promoted the notion of Old English itself as a new sacred language. In doing so, Alfred provided implicit support for the identification of the English as a chosen people. After all, the presence of a holy language—Hebrew—was one of the defining characteristics of the chosen people of the Bible, whose religious identity, theology, and conception of the world was strongly tinted through the lens of their language.<sup>66</sup> Although the promotion of Old English literacy was, in part, a simple matter of necessity due to declining Latin literacy, this movement led to the entrenchment of Old English as a literary and scriptural language. Unlike Latin, which was the lingua franca of European Christendom and, therefore, universally applicable, Old English was distinct, relevant only to the Anglo-Saxons. By promoting Old English literary culture, Alfred reasserted one of the most persuasive commonalities among the disparate Anglo-Saxon peoples—and transformed the common vernacular into an exclusively national successor to Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

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66. See Reuven Chaim Klein, *Lashon Hakodesh: History, Holiness and Hebrew* (Los Angeles: Mosaica Press, 2014), 23–39.

Alfred and his court were far from the first Anglo-Saxons to appreciate the political significance of the language shared among the different Anglo-Saxon peoples. Bede, influenced by such continental patristic scholars as Isidore of Seville and Cassiodorus, embraced the notion of “ex linguis gentis”—the idea that peoples and nations arise out of languages, rather than the other way around.<sup>67</sup> Although the England about which Bede wrote was far from politically or even culturally unified, Bede invented a unified England, on the basis of identifying a single English language.<sup>68</sup>

Now at present, this island, like the number of the books in which the divine law was written, has five nations and languages, namely that of the English, the Britons, the Scots, the Picts, and the Latins, in which are examined one universal sublime truth and true sublimity; Latin is held common by all the others in the study of scriptures.<sup>69</sup>

According to Bede, then, although the Anglo-Saxons of his own day were politically fractured, they could be considered unified through a common and mutually intelligible language<sup>70</sup> and through a shared Christian faith. Although this iteration of English nationalism was embryonic at best, and bore hardly any resemblance to the political realities of Bede’s day, his ongoing popularity as an author endowed his idealistic construct of England with wide-ranging and enduring cultural currency. Indeed, the cultural memory of Bede’s England proved an enduring one in Anglo-Saxon literature and history, providing the “ideological blueprint” for Alfred the Great’s own nation-building project in the ninth century.<sup>71</sup>

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67. See William McCready, “Bede, Isidore, and the *Epistola Cuthberti*,” *Traditio* 50 (1995): 75–94; Paul Meyvaert, “Bede, Cassiodorus, and the Codex Amiatinus,” *Speculum* 71, no. 4 (October 1996): 827–83; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, I.9.1.14.

68. John Hines, “The Becoming of the English: Identity, Material Culture, and Language in Anglo-Saxon England,” in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 7 (1994): 51.

69. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, I.1; translation is my own.

70. It is important to note that, despite identifying essentially one English language, Bede is still interested in exploring and preserving the dialect differences in Old English. For example, he notes that the name of the West Saxon king, ‘Ceawlin’, would be rendered as ‘Caelin’ in Anglian. See Hines, “The Becoming of the English,” 51.

71. Patrick Wormald, “‘Engla Lond’: The Making of an Allegiance,” in *Twenty Years of the Journal of Historical Sociology: Essays on the British State, Vol. 1*, ed. Yoke-Sum Wong and Derek Sayer (London: Blackwell, 2008), 113.

Although Bede's unique combination of Christian and linguistic nation building set a strong precedent in English thought, it was not until the Viking raids of the late 800s, and the "near obliteration of [the] Christian polity by pagan Vikings," that Bede's idea of English nationhood truly reached its apotheosis.<sup>72</sup> Revived by Alfred as a matter of political expediency, Bede's visionary definition of the *gens Anglorum* was the cornerstone of Alfred's own retroactive construction of the English nation. Expressed perhaps most succinctly in his preface to the Old English translation of Pope Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*, Alfred's sophisticated plan for the establishment of the English nation was based on a nuanced understanding of how the Anglo-Saxon language might be manipulated to support and reinforce his political agenda.

In setting forth his program of vernacular translation, Alfred elevated the English language as a natural progression of the holy languages of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Alfred appears to have been expanding on Isidore of Seville's theory of the *tres linguae sacrae*, as likely transmitted into Anglo-Saxon thought through Bede: the idea that the translation of holy writ from Hebrew to Greek to Latin did not represent a corruption of God's original will, but rather constituted a metaphorical unfolding of truth to the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans in turn.<sup>73</sup> Building on this idea, Alfred promoted the translation of scripture, along with other Latin texts, into Old English, as the next extension of the unfolding of God's will.

Then I remembered how the law was first found in the Hebrew language, and afterwards the Greeks learned it, and then translated it all into their own language . . . and afterwards, the Romans likewise . . . translated everything into their own language through wise translators. . . . Therefore, I think it better . . . that we translate some books . . . into the language which we can all understand.<sup>74</sup>

By casting his program of English vernacular translation as the next logical progression of this religious tradition, Alfred identified English as a new holy language, with a spiritual significance worthy of succeeding the efforts of the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans. Just as the medieval Christians claimed

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72. Wormald, "Engla Lond," 113.

73. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, 1.3.4; Mark E. Amsler, *Etymology and Grammatical Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamin's Publishing Company, 1989), 53.

74. Alfred the Great, *Preface to Cura Pastoralis*, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/uofc/eduweb/engl401/texts/alfdfram.htm>; the translation is my own.

exclusive right to the Jews' covenant, and just as pro-Anglo-Saxon authors like Gregory the Great and Bede reappropriated the Britons' claims to divine favor for themselves, so Alfred asserted that the torch had, in some way, been passed. Under his visionary leadership, the Anglo-Saxons were to adopt a civic mythology, in which they occupied the central role as the saviors of western Christian civilization, with their written language enshrined at its very heart.

### **“This Blessed Plot”: A Promised Land for a Chosen People**

Selections from the Old English poetic corpus further bolster and parallel Alfred's unique perspective on nation building. The Genesis A poem provides one of the most powerful and compelling literary commentaries upon the foundation and destiny of the English people. Composed by an anonymous poet at an unknown date, this poem survives in a single source: the late tenth century Junius II manuscript. A poetic adaptation of the biblical book of Genesis, this work covers through Genesis 22, recording the stories of the Creation, the Fall of Adam and Eve, and Noah's ark, concluding with Abraham's test of faith in sacrificing Isaac. Genesis A's rendering of the story of the survival of Noah and his family is of particular interest, as a work concerned with salvation over the sea. The central themes of the story suggest parallels with the migration of the Anglo-Saxons to Britain. Indeed, God's reassuring promise to Noah as he prepares to leave the ark might as well have been delivered to the Anglo-Saxons themselves:

A country is provided for you, delights on the land, rest from your journey on the water, beautiful on land. Go in peace out of the ark, lead you, and your companions, and all the offspring which I saved from chastisement by the waters on the hillside, out of this lofty building and onto the surface of the earth.<sup>75</sup>

The Anglo-Saxons distinguished themselves as a people predestined for salvation over the sea—the homilies of Ælfric establishing the sea as a type of Christian baptism in Anglo-Saxon theological thought.<sup>76</sup> The Anglo-Saxons' particular identification with Noah is further attested to by the regal tables of the royal

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75. *Genesis A*, lines 1486–92.

76. Bryan Sprinks, *Early and Medieval Rituals and Theologies of Baptism: from the New Testament to the Council of Trent* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), 129–31.

family of Wessex, which, as discussed above, traced the royal family's ancestry through Noah's line.<sup>77</sup> The Anglo-Saxons, like Noah's family, were a people singled out for survival in a new land, set apart especially for their use—a place full of “delights on the land,” where they might at last be safe from the harrowing of the flood. The flimsiness of the historical timeline notwithstanding, the spiritual significance which the Anglo-Saxons attached to their land remains clear. Ownership of the land offered tangible evidence of their covenant relationship with God—a reminder of divine intervention in the past, and a promise of further divine intervention to come.

Similar perspectives on England's divine inheritance are found in earlier sources. Both Bede, as well as the earlier British historian Gildas, agreed that the land of Britain (and, to a lesser extent, Ireland) was a uniquely blessed one, a mirror vision of the glories of Paradise made incarnate on earth. Both authors—Bede almost certainly copying Gildas' earlier precedent—began their histories with a Genesis-style scene of creation, situating Britain within its broader European context, before chronicling, with loving attention to detail, the material blessings lavished upon the island.<sup>78</sup> Gildas' Britain was supported by the twin lifelines of the Thames and the Severn, dotted with cities and castles, and dominated by broad plains, wildflowers, superior agricultural land, and charming pastoral tableaux.<sup>79</sup> Bede echoed Gildas' tribute to Britain's beauty, painting a vivid image of a literal land of milk and honey. His Britain was ideally adapted for agriculture, husbandry, and viticulture; its streams and rivers teem with fish and eels; natural hot and salt springs provide ready baths for residents; veins of precious metals running underground offer a source of untold wealth; situated in the far north, the land was blessed with long days in summer and long nights in winter.<sup>80</sup>

It is with this image of paradise that Bede began his history of the English people: a Garden of Eden waiting in the wings for the blessings of Christian conversion and miracles. Throughout the *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede rooted his narrative of the salvation of the English within the very soil of England itself—from Æthelthryth's uncorrupted body lying in her sepulchre, to the healing powers of the dirt where Oswald of Northumbria's body fell, to the muck and

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77. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 855.

78. Natalia Lozovsky, “*The Earth is Our Book*”: *Geographical Knowledge in the Latin West, ca. 400–1000* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 65–66.

79. Gildas, *On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain*, 3.

80. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, I.1.



filth where Cædmon the cowherd received the divine gift of song.<sup>81</sup> There was, in short, a spiritual power and potential lying latent within England itself, waiting to be unleashed in glorious expression of God's will for his children.

According to this perspective, the fate of the land and the fate of its people were inseparably linked. Alfred adopted Bede's notion of the inherent spirituality of the land, incorporating it into the intellectual force which lay behind his political project. Just as Bede understood England as a spiritual life-force to supersede the physical boundaries of earthly kingdoms, so Alfred recognized a powerful source of unity in the glorification and protection of that land. Alfred's preface to *Cura Pastoralis* established the definition of his construct of England: a geographic place, powered by a divine destiny and protected by religious orthodoxy. In short, the land suffered when it was not protected by the religious observance of its inhabitants. Surviving cultural memory of the sixth century Anglo-Saxon invasions, and the accompanying violent displacement of the native Britons, now formed a terrifying specter of loss confronting the Anglo-Saxons of the ninth century. What had happened to the Britons—dispossession of their land by a pagan foe—could well now happen to the Anglo-Saxons.

This historical anxiety haunted Alfred, as demonstrated throughout the preface to *Cura Pastoralis*. Describing England before the arrival of the Danes, Alfred retroactively superimposed a sense of national cohesive unity, describing what "happy times were formerly throughout England," a nation populated by wise and spiritual men, respected abroad for both its prosperity and scholarly pursuits.<sup>82</sup> Alfred's historical golden age, likely based on Bede's idealistic portrayal of the English church in the seventh century,<sup>83</sup> was presided over by "kings who . . . obeyed God and his messengers," and who, as a result, "maintained their peace and morality and authority within the borders, and also extended the homeland outwards."<sup>84</sup> Glossing over and even rewriting historical fact to allow for the existence of a single cohesive English kingdom, Alfred inseparably linked the morality and religiosity of kings to the security

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81. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, IV.19, III.9, IV.24; Renee R. Trilling, *Aesthetics of Nostalgia: Historical Representation in Old English Verse* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 17.

82. Alfred the Great, *Preface to Cura Pastoralis*, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/uofc/eduweb/engl401/texts/alfdfram.htm>; the translation is my own.

83. Wormald, *The Venerable Bede and the 'Church of the English,'* 25.

84. Alfred the Great, *Preface to Cura Pastoralis*, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/uofc/eduweb/engl401/texts/alfdfram.htm>; the translation is my own.

and preservation of the state. England was safe from foreign attack only when “God and his messengers” were obeyed; this domestic peace allowed, in turn, for England to exert its presence and extend its control on the international stage. The English people living in accordance with their identity as God’s chosen people provided the spiritual force necessary to protect their promised land from foreign invasion. However, once the English had rejected this identity through their wickedness, their divine protection was lost—and the profoundly disruptive presence of Vikings in England was ushered in. Just as Bede used the rise of the Church to symbolically unify England, so Alfred linked the spiritual collapse of the Church with the Viking devastation of England’s cultural, religious, and political status quo. His sponsorship of the translation program was strongly linked with his championship of a return to religious orthodoxy—after all, he ordered each episcopal see in England to own and make available a copy of his translation of Pope Gregory’s *Cura Pastoralis*. The subtext is clear: only by returning to their God, and by once again embracing their role as a chosen people, could the English expect peace for themselves and their land.

## Conclusion

It would be inaccurate to claim that Alfred’s idea of the English nation bore tangible fruit in his own lifetime. This notion was essentially intellectual; indeed, it would not be until the tenth-century rule of Alfred’s grandson, Æthelstan, that England could be said to be meaningfully united—and even then, only temporarily.<sup>85</sup> As tangentially as Alfred’s Christian mythology of an elect English nation ever intersected with reality, this ideal continued to carry cultural currency throughout the rest of the Anglo-Saxon period. In politicizing Bede’s heavenly *gens Anglorum*, Alfred redefined the English people’s relationship to their monarch, their language, and their land, shaping it after the image of their biblical predecessors to the covenant. Strands of Alfred’s intellectual DNA are visible in the writings of Ælfric, Wulfstan, and other prominent Anglo-Saxon writers—and, indeed, up to the present day. The ideas set in motion by Bede, and immortalized by Alfred, have indelibly shaped the course of English history: from the Protestant nationalist rhetoric of the Reformation,<sup>86</sup> to the

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85. Foot, “The Making of Angelcynn,” 46.

86. Rosemary O’Day, *The Debate on the English Reformation* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2014), 27–30.

influential Victorian fringe movement of the British Israelites,<sup>87</sup> to the recent triumph of English exceptionalism in the 2016 referendum on the United Kingdom's membership in the European Union.<sup>88</sup> Despite the centuries separating Alfred's reign with our own time, his ideas remain as lively a political and cultural force as ever—a testament to the force of his intellect and the far-ranging implications of his intellectual gift to the English nation.

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87. Michael Barkun, "Racist Apocalypse: Millennialism on the Far Right," *American Studies* 31, no. 2 (Fall 1990): 122–23.

88. David Champion, "Brexit and the Triumph of Insularity," *Harvard Business Review*, 24 June 2016, accessed 12 August 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/06/brexit-and-the-triumph-of-insularity>.



*President William Howard Taft and  
Governor William Spry converse en route  
to the Hotel Utah, 24 September 1909.  
Image courtesy of L. Tom Perry Special  
Collections.*

## Slim Winnings for Tubby Taft Utah and the Presidential Election of 1912

Natalie Larsen

**T**RAVELING ON A SPECIAL PASSENGER TRAIN FROM SALT LAKE CITY TO Los Angeles, Utah Governor William Spry waxed uncharacteristically eloquent with the reporters who hounded him for his insights on the 1914 congressional elections. Sent by the roundly Republican newspaper the *Los Angeles Times*, the reporters were looking to see how the dust had settled after the humiliating Republican losses two years earlier in 1912. Democrat Woodrow Wilson won a resounding victory that year, while Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party won eighty-eight electoral votes, and the incumbent president William Howard Taft limped away with a meager eight electoral votes. Considering those facts, the *Times* reporters paid careful attention to what the Republican governor had to say:

This hysteria which helped to bring about the overthrow of the Republican party is dissipating into a misty, musty past. . . . The people are returning to political sanity, having had enough of the temperate, so-called reform. . . . The third party movement, so alluring to many only two years ago, is far down in the discard, where it belongs. Every Republican should participate in the burial. In Utah the Republican ticket will win, as it won 1912.<sup>1</sup>

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1. "Hysteria Passes. G.O.P. Nears Triumph," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 October 1912.

Being the only Republican governor reelected in a state won by Taft, Spry's opinion mattered to the *Times* and the rest of the western Republicans. Out of the forty-eight states composing the nation at the time, only two states had cast their electoral ballots for Taft the past November: Utah and Vermont. Utah's results are particularly intriguing because they tell the forgotten story of how the machinations of powerful Republicans fought back against a tidal wave of populist progressivism and won four of Taft's eight electoral votes. This paper will examine Taft's victory in Utah and demonstrate that it stemmed primarily from the voters' acquiescence to the demands of a united front of Republican leaders.

Most historiography of the 1912 election mentions it in passing as simply the obvious result of a divided electorate splitting votes between the Republican Party's nominee William Howard Taft and the Progressive Party's (Bull Moose) candidate Theodore Roosevelt. Amongst Utah Republicans, it will be shown that the spoiler factor of Roosevelt's candidacy actually did little to affect the overall outcome because the state Republican Party remained united despite the fissure in the national party. For most of the first decade of the twentieth century, the state had been under Republican rule; the legislature, congressional delegation, governorship, municipalities, and newspapers were predominantly Republican.<sup>2</sup>

Democrat Woodrow Wilson and Socialist Eugene Debs were also strong presidential contenders, each seeking to claim the crown of the "progressive" from the political movement that swept the American electorate as a reaction to the Second Industrial Revolution. Three-time Democratic nominee William Jennings Bryan said emphatically in June of 1912, "We must nominate a *true* progressive!"<sup>3</sup> When Bryan later campaigned for Wilson in Utah, he claimed that Roosevelt was a "joy-rider progressive" who would go right back to driving slowly and respectfully through Wall Street.<sup>4</sup> "Progressive" meant reform oriented in the sense that governments ought to regulate the behavior of people and organizations in order to curb the influence of corporations and the harmful effects of the follies of human nature. Concerning the election of 1912,

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2. R. Gary Penrod, "The Elections of 1900 in Utah" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1968), 113–16.

3. Frank K. Kelley, *The Fight for the White House: The Story of 1912* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1961), 146–47.

4. "Big Crowd in Ogden Theater Greets Bryan," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 September 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sltrib27/id/101382>.

progressivism in Utah was met by a solid opposition of conservatism, which Ralph L. McBride has defined as the desire “to preserve the proven virtues of the past, while at the same time to be willing to step ahead, cautiously.”<sup>5</sup> Many excellent studies exist which analyze the influence of progressivism and conservatism in the state of Utah.<sup>6</sup> However, this paper will focus on explaining the outcome of the 1912 presidential election.

## The Mormon Question

As a general rule, the largest and most active voting demographic in the state of Utah is—and has traditionally been—composed of Mormons. Led by a hierarchy of priesthood leaders, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) is significantly different than many other churches or social organizations in the United States. The priesthood, LDS faithful believe, is the power to act in God’s name and know God’s will. The highest governing body is the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, composed of twelve men, and a First Presidency of three more apostles headed by the president of the church. To Latter-day Saints, church leaders are believed to constitute a direct link from the celestial realms of God to the unglorified, terrestrial world of fallen man. Latter-day Saint scripture teaches, “And the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord . . . neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people.”<sup>7</sup> Adherence to the advice of priesthood leaders is paramount to a Mormon’s salvation—even if such obedience is only political. As Mormon voters followed the counsel of their leaders, they assured Taft’s victory in Utah that November.

As a matter of context, it is important to understand how the LDS Church influenced the political process both directly and indirectly leading up to the 1912 election. During the nineteenth century, the Mormons were held under deep suspicion, not only by the federal entities who vehemently fought to

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5. Ralph L. McBride, “Conservatism in the Mountain West: Western Senators and Conservative Influences in the Consideration of National Progressive Legislation, 1906–1914” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1976), 4.

6. For a thorough explanation of the political climate of the time (and the era’s transformation in historiography), see Michael H. Paulos, Kenneth L. Cannon, and Ethan Yorgason, *Mormonism and the Politics of the Progressive Era* (Salt Lake City: DMT Publishing, 2012).

7. The Doctrine and Covenants 1:14.

destroy the institution of polygamy, but also by the contemporary non-Mormons residing within the state. Various anti-Mormon factions and coherent political parties welled up within the state during the 1890s and early 1900s as a reaction to a perceived combination of church and state. In a historiographic sense, the controversy around the combination of LDS Church and state has not changed much over the latter part of the twentieth century. Utah academic Milton R. Merrill attributed William McKinley's 1900 victory in Utah to interference: "The disappearance of Bryan's majority, a shift of 53,000 votes, was incontrovertible evidence of Mormon Church political control."<sup>8</sup> However, the LDS Church in recent years has directed the attention of historians to the 1896 "Political Rule of the Church," which prohibits church members from seeking public office without receiving the consent of higher ecclesiastical leaders.<sup>9</sup> By 1912, the controversy of the church's official political rule had died down and Governor William Spry, a Republican, actively sought to smooth over the ruffled feathers caused by years bickering between Mormons and non-Mormons. While political *permission* still had to be sought by members of the church, political *advice* was freely given over the pulpit or in private communication. The unqualified support given by LDS Church leaders to President Taft and his reelection campaign is essential to understanding how the tide of popular opinion flowed primarily in favor of Taft that year.

First, one must consider the fact that Reed Smoot, a leading member of the LDS church's governing body—the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—was also acting in his capacity as a US senator and Republican Party leader. Although not all of his activities as a Senator were political in nature, it must also be assumed that not all of his activities as an apostle were solely religious in nature. In a later section, his influence over the party will be examined.

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8. Milton R. Merrill, "Reed Smoot, Apostle in Politics" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1950), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, 218–19. McKinley had lost Utah to Bryan in 1896—87.7 percent to 13.3 percent.

9. The document states, "We unanimously agree to and promulgate as a rule that should always be observed in the church and by every leading official thereof, that before accepting any position, political or otherwise, which would interfere with the proper and complete discharge of his ecclesiastical duties, and before accepting a nomination or entering into engagements to perform new duties, said official should apply to the proper authorities and learn from them whether he can, consistently with the obligations already entered into with the church upon assuming his office, take upon himself the added duties and labors and responsibilities of the new position." "To the Saints," *Deseret Weekly*, 11 April 1896, 532–34.



LDS Church president Joseph F. Smith was well adjusted to his role as instigator of both religious and political controversy. It was by his insistence in 1896 that “the Political Rule of the Church” had been approved by the church’s governing body, the Twelve Apostles. The policy seemed to specifically target Democrat (and member of the Seventy) Brigham H. Roberts, who was running for Congress that year. Among many such instances of meddling, Smith’s detractors easily found fodder for their claims that he directly influenced political affairs in the state of Utah. The 1912 election proved to be particularly controversial. Just weeks before the election, President Smith published a glowing endorsement of President Taft in the *Improvement Era*, the official church magazine at the time:

No reasonable citizen who has investigated the political situation, with a view to learning the true status of the claims set forth by the various political parties, can in any way justly find fault with the present [presidential] administration. President William H. Taft has met the just needs of the people and economic demands of the country with steadfastness and wisdom. In the treatment of the great questions that have come before the nation, he has risen to the occasion and applied such conservative legal remedies as have won him true admiration from patriotic citizens of all parties. . . . So that, on the whole, whatever may be the outcome of the people’s choice, it is clear that President William H. Taft has made a good president, and his administration has been a success. Should the people call him once again to the presidential chair, it is not likely that they will regret it, but, on the contrary, will find their action wise, sensible, and sound.<sup>10</sup>

The backlash was immediate and fierce. Even the most seasoned political veterans criticized Smith’s endorsement as a completely out-of-line religious intrusion, a case of a “political bomb dropped from a clear sky.”<sup>11</sup> Not since the territorial days of Utah had the prophet made such a bold, unequivocally partisan statement in such a public way. Allies were quick to defend him as the

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10. Joseph F. Smith, “The Coming Election,” *Improvement Era* XV (October 1912), 1121–22. During the spring of 1912, the Mexican Revolution was threatening to brim over into all-out war in the Mormon colonies of Chihuahua. President Taft and his appointees had been actively negotiating with the Mexican consul. Smith is probably referring to those negotiations. See B. Carmon Hardy and Melody Seymour, “The Importation of Arms and the 1912 Mormon ‘Exodus’ from Mexico,” *New Mexico Historical Review* (October 1997): 297–318.

11. “Smith’s Approval of Taft,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 September 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sltrib27/id/101382>.

ensuing shockwaves continued to rock the Mormon vote. The church-owned *Deseret News* claimed, “[It] was not intended as anything but the expression of his personal regard for the President of the United States and his personal opinion of the policy of the administration. It is not meant as a declaration of the political faith of the Church.”<sup>12</sup> Some church members were confused by Smith’s intimation that those who found fault in Taft were “not reasonable citizens” nor had they investigated the political situation with “a view to learning the true status of the claims set forth by various political parties.” Nephi Morris, the Progressive candidate for governor, was actively campaigning for himself and for Roosevelt. In addition, Morris was serving as a stake president in Cache County, a weighty ecclesiastical calling in the LDS Church. He attended the October general conference of the LDS Church, where he and all other attendees heard President Smith say in reference to the Mexican Mormon refugee crisis, “I feel thankful a higher wisdom has dictated the course of the executive authorities of our nation by which they have kept their hands clean from the shedding of blood.” Later in the same talk, he defended his endorsement by quoting from scripture: “‘Wherefore honest men, and wise men should be sought for diligently and good and wise men should be sought for diligently and good and wise men ye should observe to uphold,’ in positions of honor and of trust, that they may execute righteousness and prove themselves worthy of the confidence and patronage of the people who elevate them to positions.”<sup>13</sup> It is likely that Smith’s high praise of Taft was the result of Taft’s vocal support of church members, who only months earlier had been expelled from Mexico as a result of the Mexican Revolution that had boiled over into hostility and danger.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps it was from this moment that the tide for Taft seemed irreversible in the Beehive State. President Smith, the Mormon prophet, not only endorsed William Howard Taft for reelection but defended that decision by citing scriptural mandate. The Latter-day Saint voters, obedient to their

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12. *The Evening Standard* reprinted the article the day after its initial publication. Unfortunately, a digital copy of the original is not yet extant. “Different Views On President Smith’s Article,” *Evening Standard*, 28 September 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/details?id=6197958>.

13. Joseph F. Smith, “Opening Address of the Eighty-third Semi-Annual General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” *Deseret News*, 4 October 1912, 4–8. See also Doctrine and Covenants 98:10.

14. For an excellent explanation of the Mormon Refugee Crisis of 1912, see Fred E. Woods, *Finding Refuge in El Paso: The 1912 Exodus from Mexico* (Springville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2012).

prophet, undoubtedly took Smith's endorsement seriously as they headed into the voting booth. With a twinge of despair, the *Salt Lake Tribune* editorial board bemoaned, "This whole unnecessary business is ill advised and unfortunate. Taft could have carried Utah without it, and while it will unquestionably aid him in a few surrounding states, it is better to go down to honorable defeat than to win by such methods."<sup>15</sup>

## Utah Republican Party Leadership: A House (Not) Divided

While LDS Church leadership was busy stumping for Taft, their terrestrial political allies also continued working behind the scenes. Nationally, Republicans divided into two camps: loyalists (who supported Taft) and progressives (who supported Roosevelt). In Utah, the divide was not nearly as dramatic. Sometimes, the bitterest enemies can become the best of friends as they coalesce around some unifying cause. The involvement of Utah in the presidential election of 1912 demonstrates exactly how such a union overpowered opposition and set the course for the state's future. It will be made clear in this section how a select group of old-guard Republican leaders kept the party unified enough so that the state of Utah favored Taft.

Campaigning for the Senate in 1858, Abraham Lincoln famously declared, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Just four years later, the same Lincoln, now the first Republican president, signed the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act, a law that banned polygamy. Mormons in Utah, the narrowly targeted demographic of the law, felt great animosity towards the Republican Party from that point on through the federal polygamy crisis of the 1870s and 1880s and, instead, supported the Democratic Party. Yet, during the statehood effort Democrats had been slow to act in favor of Utah's autonomy. Soon, political leaders in Utah found a strange new bedfellow with a California Republican machine run by Senator Leland Stanford. Allegedly, a special deal made by President Wilford

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15. "The Mischievous Meddling," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 October 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sltrib27/id/62180>. See also, "Leader of Mormon Church 'Cautions,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 6 October 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sltrib27/id/96269> and "Conference of Mormon Church," *Evening Standard* (Ogden, UT), 7 October 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/odgen15/id/84398>.

Woodruff and Elder George Q. Cannon guaranteed Republican support for Utah statehood—Democrats later claimed that the deal was made with one stipulation:

George Q. Cannon . . . had agreed to make every effort to transfer the Mormon vote in Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and other western states to the Republican Party in exchange for assurance by the Republican leaders that Republican support of anti-Mormon legislation and Republican opposition to statehood would be withdrawn.<sup>16</sup>

Debate has raged about the facts of that particular deal since 1889, yet little evidence remains to prove or disprove the theory. Regardless, the main Mormon voting bloc quickly overcame its aversion to the Republican Party and by 1904, the state was solidly Republican. Focusing on four of the most important figures in the Party in 1912, it becomes clear how the powerful conservative wing of the party was able to control the voter information and assert Utah's vote for Taft.

Unlike the national Republican Party, Utah's political climate had been steeped in conflict during the election cycles previous to 1912. The existence of various factions of LDS, Protestant, and progressive Republicans created a unique subtext in which party leadership had to navigate. Much of the progressive legislation, such as Prohibition, already aligned with the religious mission of the LDS Church and other Christian churches in the area, but prominent businessmen were concerned about not only the economic impact of Prohibition, but the appearance of church interference. However, the one uniting figure in the political melee was LDS apostle and US senator Reed Smoot. He formed a coalition of "many businessmen, including those involved in the liquor industry, President Joseph F. Smith, and other churches' leaders were strong backers as well."<sup>17</sup> This powerful machine, known as the "Federal Bunch," wielded considerable influence throughout Smoot's term in office. Due to his ability to build consensus, Senator Smoot became Taft's most aggressive defender within the Republican Party, a position that helped Taft win the state of Utah.<sup>18</sup>

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16. Quoted in Austin C. Wahlquist, "The 1912 Presidential Election in Utah" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1962), 19.

17. Brent G. Thompson, "Standing Between Two Fires': Mormons and Prohibition, 1908–1917," *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1983): 36.

18. "Standing Between Two Fires," 44.

A decade earlier, Smoot's arrival to the Senate summoned the fury of the majority-Protestant United States as the infamous Smoot hearings subsequently consumed the Senate's time for nearly two years. One man who consistently (if quietly) supported Smoot throughout the ordeal was none other than President Theodore Roosevelt. Once seated, Smoot supported Roosevelt's policies and campaigned for his election in 1904. Over the next four years, Smoot gained a reputation as an independent conservative—although he continued to remain a tactical ally to the President, who later said of him, “Generally I found Senator Smoot more favorable to the cause of conservation than the majority of his colleagues in the Senate, and on this matter I consulted him more freely than I did most other Senators.”<sup>19</sup> Although friendly towards Roosevelt, Smoot found a political soulmate with President Taft. The essential views of these two politicians coincided splendidly. In the Senate, Smoot was named to the important Finance Committee, where he was a vocal advocate of Taft's programs. Voting dependably with the conservatives, he was accepted by them as a reliable, diligent, and adept addition to their ranks. He was particularly enthusiastic in supporting the high protective tariff, as was President Taft. To both Smoot and Taft, a high tariff meant protection for American enterprise.<sup>20</sup> The mining, sugar, and wool interests in the state approved of his voting record. Taft did as well, asking and receiving various political favors of the senator.<sup>21</sup>

Wasting no efforts during the beginning of 1912, with apostolic vigor Smoot inundated the Utah Republicans early with pro-Taft literature and speeches. He made the rounds at Republican Clubs throughout the state where his message was always the same: “President Taft's administration [sic] has been fearless, honest and progressive, and he is entitled to renomination [sic] and election.”<sup>22</sup> Smoot was busy wheeling and dealing behind the scenes in order to help influence Utah's Republican delegates to vote for Taft at the national convention. Indeed, Merrill attributes Taft's victory *entirely* to these efforts.<sup>23</sup> However, Smoot's

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19. Theodore Roosevelt to Isaac Russell, 17 February 1911, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Dickinson State University, <http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record.aspx?libID=0216104>

20. Merrill, *Apostle in Politics*, 357.

21. Wahlquist, *Election in Utah*, 28.

22. “Proof of Progress,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 May 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/details?id=14298943>.

23. Merrill, *Apostle in Politics*, 133.

effectiveness would have been dramatically different were it not for the amiability and popularity of Governor William Spry.

While Smoot provided the connecting cables between Washington and Utah, Governor Spry seemed to connect the Republican establishment to the homes of families across the state. Eastern newspapers described the goodness of Spry, whose silvery whiskers portrayed the character of a kindly grandfather figure. An articulate man of refined taste and opinion, Spry was elected governor in 1908 with the promise that he would bridge the gap between the Mormon and non-Mormon (Gentile) factions of the state. For most of his term he made good on that promise. One humorous vignette from President Taft's visit to Utah illustrates how high the tensions between Mormons and Gentiles could be. Frustratingly little documentation remains in regard to that visit, but it is evident that Taft and Spry formed a special bond during the two days Taft spent in the state. The drama began on Sunday morning when the President asked Governor Spry and Senator Smoot to accompany him to the Unitarian church. They obliged, yet the security officers refused to grant entry to all three of the dignitaries as a matter of public safety. Presumably, the security officers didn't want to endanger Spry and Smoot by sending them into the crowded building. A few minutes later, the chief of security apologetically made his way back to the awaiting car and invited the Governor and Senator to enter the church. The Monday newspapers exploded with false accusations and a frenzy of animated language. The *Salt Lake Tribune* called Spry and Smoot names and said that they refused to enter a Unitarian church out of bigotry. The *Herald-Republican* shot back with its own claims. In all, there were so many different versions of the story that the *Tribune* immediately fired the young reporter who wrote the original piece. Spry himself either found the incident amusing or interesting, keeping cutouts of the newspaper articles in his personal scrapbook.<sup>24</sup> For both Taft and Spry, the whole episode only served to strengthen their political relationship. Within a month, national newspapers had made note of the burgeoning Republican alliance in Utah, where Spry soon announced his intention to assist Taft's reelection campaign.<sup>25</sup>

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24. William Spry, William Spry Papers, MS 1829, vol. 1, Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library Special Collections.

25. "Utah Solid for Taft in 1912," *San Francisco Call*, 6 October 1911, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1911-10-06/ed-1/seq-5/>.

Acting as governor and as one of the important figures in the Republican Party, Spry had been adamantly opposed to Roosevelt's nomination from the moment that Roosevelt announced his intention to run for president again. From the helm of the state, Spry steered Utah against the tide of Roosevelt's brand of progressivism. In his annual message to the legislature, Governor Spry proclaimed that "Utah stands in [the] foreranks of the progressive states. I caution against experimental laws and say the state's finances will not permit 'trifling with fads and theories' in legislation."<sup>26</sup> At the Republican convention in June, Spry earnestly solicited the support of the delegates, asking them to vote for Taft over Roosevelt. Spry told reporters:

Utah is for Taft. I have made a pretty thorough canvas of the situation among the members of our delegation and as the result my conviction is that the delegation as a whole will abide the decision of the state convention which instructed the eight Utah delegates to use very honorable means to secure the nomination of our president. I think they will, as they should, vote as a unit for Taft. I think there will be no break. While Roosevelt is claiming the Utah delegates, it is true that he is claiming other delegates which he will not get.<sup>27</sup>

The only obstacle to unanimity in the convention and the following events was delegate C. E. Loose of Provo. An old-guard party insider and mining magnate, Loose had made an earlier resolution to support Roosevelt—despite the instruction of party leaders—at the national convention. As late as a month beforehand, Theodore Roosevelt was in communication with Loose as he sought to win over the state. Roosevelt told Loose that he hoped "the delegates to the State Convention of Utah will stand with us in this fight for decency and for the right of the people to rule" and lamented the lack of transparency. He further declared, "If the people of Utah were given the chance to express their preference through a preferential primary that she would declare emphatically in our favor."<sup>28</sup> Shortly before the election, Loose was increasingly pressured

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26. Spry, Papers, vol. 4.

27. Spry, Papers, vol. 1., 37.

28. Telegram from Theodore Roosevelt to Charles Edwin Loose, May 1912, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Dickinson State University, accessed 22 February 2016, <http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record/ImageViewer.aspx?libID=0227820&imageNo=1>.

by the big Taft men—Smoot, Spry, and the junior senator from Utah, George Sutherland—to ignore his pledge to vote for Roosevelt. Feeling too pressured, he asked that Roosevelt be informed immediately: “Utah will not be misled into opposition,” Loose told Roosevelt.<sup>29</sup> However firm his spoken resolve was, Loose lived up to his name at the Republican convention, where he ended up voting for Taft on the first ballot. As perhaps the first high-profile Roosevelt man in Utah to jump ship, Loose resigned from his post in the Republican National Committee almost immediately thereafter.<sup>30</sup> Loose returned to his mines and continued to be politically active, but that year he supported Taft instead of his friend Roosevelt. Loose, among other mining magnates, used their influence in the 1912 election to favor their interests and assure the victory of Taft in Utah.

## Utah Mining Interests and the Election of 1912

Mark Twain reportedly said, “A mine is a hole in the ground, owned by a liar.”<sup>31</sup> During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these holes in the ground abounded in Utah almost as much as the wealth they produced for the politician-magnates who owned them. During the great industrial boom of the late 1800s, metal ore came to be the single most important industrial supply in the world. This was the era in which the skyscraper, train, rail lines, electricity, and indoor plumbing, and steel warships all came into vogue. These monumental building projects required massive amounts of steel, iron, and copper from new sources; quickly, the mining industry filled the cracks and seams of the American West in order to meet the high demand for America’s metal binge. Coal powered newly manufactured electric plants and warmed the homes of city folk through long winters. As miners streamed into the West,

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29. Telegram from Joseph M. Dixon to Walter F. Brown, 17 May 1912, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Dickinson State University, accessed 22 February 2016, <http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record/ImageViewer.aspx?libID=083040>.

30. “National Committeeman from Utah has Resigned,” *Montrose Daily Press* (Colorado), 28 June 1912, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

31. “A Gold Mine Is a Hole in the Ground with a Liar at the Top,” *QuoteInvestigator.com*, 19 July 2015, <http://quoteinvestigator.com/2015/07/19/gold-mine/>. Other versions of this quote abound, but the sentiment still rings true.



Utah was swept into the new industrial complex as mining quickly became the greatest source of jobs and revenue in the state.

Proving to be the moral antithesis of the Mormons, the miners themselves added rich diversification to the ethnic and religious makeup of Utah's voting demographic. Historian Dean L. May later observed, "Mormon towns were laid out in symmetrical patterns. The mining towns, in contrast, seemed almost kaleidoscopic, the unpainted wooden structures twisting up a narrow canyon, the main street offering a variety of amusements unknown to the nearby farming towns. The Gentiles grew from an estimated 8 percent of the territorial population in 1860 to 21 percent in 1880 and 34 percent in 1890. This, given the high Mormon birthrate, suggests an influx of major proportions."<sup>32</sup> Aside from religion, these new Gentile settlers were mainly working-class immigrants from across the globe; Greeks, Japanese, Chinese, and Slovakian immigrants brought with them to Utah an equally diverse set of political beliefs and ideas. Yet, these immigrant miners would prove to be pliable voters.

While the miners whittled their way down into the dark caves and tunnels of Utah, the mine owners themselves were enjoying a quality of life unimaginable to most of their employees. Free to run mine operations within the confines of a cushy on-site office or even from out of the country, the owners of the mines often found time for pleasure and politicking. Daniel C. Jackling discovered the Bingham Copper Mine in the Oquirrh Mountains in 1903 and created a revolutionary copper smelting process still in use today. In 1912, he began construction on a 17,000-square-foot mansion in California that would later be sold to Apple technology mogul Steve Jobs for millions of dollars.<sup>33</sup> Conversely, a Thomas Edison silent filmstrip recorded that same year at the Bingham Copper Mine showcases the habitations and living conditions of the Greek and Italian ethnic groups—dilapidated lean-to cliff dwellings, dirty water, and saloons dot the landscape.<sup>34</sup> Such disparity between owner and employee led to Utah's first notable case of labor violence as Italians and Greeks fought against each

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32. Dean L. May, *Utah: A People's History* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 116.

33. Patricia Leigh Brown, "Free to a Good Home: A Captain of Industry's Rejected Mansion," *New York Times*, 2 January 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/01/02/us/free-to-a-good-home-a-captain-of-industrys-rejected-mansion.html>.

34. Thomas A. Edison, "Copper Mines at Bingham, Utah," National Film Preservation Association, 1912, <http://www.filmpreservation.org/dvds-and-books/clips/copper-mines-at-bingham-utah-1912>.

other for recognition of their respective unions and improving their living conditions. As violence turned to bloodshed, Jackling terminated the employment of all the striking miners and sent in Mexican immigrants who agreed to work without union support or setting terms on living conditions.<sup>35</sup> Suddenly without work, the power of labor looked weak compared to the might of the magnates. In an election year, the grip of the mine bosses tightened—and workers were willing to pay attention—lest the workers be replaced by Mexicans willing to work without stipulations.

The case study of one especially prescient character in the political mining environment provides an interesting glimpse into the interests of both miner and magnate. John Hays Hammond had his start as a child participant in the California gold rush. Later, he embarked on a long career as a politician-magnate when he began working in Washington, DC, for the father of William Randolph Hearst, Senator George Hearst. Making his rounds as a mine operator in Mexico, China, and South Africa, Hammond soon found friends among many political circles. In 1907, he founded the enormously consequential Rocky Mountain Club, a collection of Republican politicians and wealthy donors who debated western policy, often setting the western agenda in Congress.<sup>36</sup> Among the influential members of this group were Theodore Roosevelt, engineer Herbert Hoover, mining profiteer W. B. Thompson, Daniel C. Jackling, scouting pioneer Frederick Russell Burnham, the aforementioned C. E. Loose, Utah's former senator Thomas Kearns, and various senators from Colorado, Idaho, and Montana. This group wielded considerable power within the mining industry; Kearns owned the *Salt Lake Tribune* and editorialized the strongest non-Mormon voice within the state of Utah.<sup>37</sup> Some research by Charles C. Hawley has suggested that the Club was especially influential among the Utah mining operation because of the involvement of Hays and Jackling. Though Hammond was not involved in day-to-day operation, "Jackling's significant contributions to the domestic economy were recognized throughout his lifetime with honorary degrees and prestigious medals. He gradually faded from the public

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35. Charles Caldwell Hawley, *A Kennecott Story: Three Mines, Four Men, and One Hundred Years, 1887–1997* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2015), 6.

36. "A Rocky Mountain Club Incorporates," *New York Times*, 20 January 1907. <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=950CE1D9153EE033A25753C2A9679C946697D6CF>.

37. Newell G. Bringhurst, "Thomas Kearns: Irish-American Builder of Modern Utah," *Journal of the West* 31, no. 2 (April 1992): 24–32.

view, but not in Utah, where his statue was placed in the rotunda of the state capitol in 1954.<sup>38</sup> From 1907 onward, the club—led by Hammond and made effective by Jackling—shaped public policy on mining and battled on the front lines of the Progressive-Republican reformation.

Although not all mine owners engaged in politics, Hammond especially held the attention of the president of the United States, William Howard Taft. Utah's mining connection begins with the friendship of Taft and Hammond, who became friends during their freshman year at Yale and then throughout their adult life. During the Taft presidency, Hammond became Taft's reliable traveling companion and policy advisor. At the 1908 Republican Convention, Hammond had even been briefly considered for the vice-presidential slot.

Despite their involvement in the Rocky Mountain Club, the Hammond-Roosevelt relation soured in 1910 as a result of Roosevelt's "haughtiness." By 1912, Hammond was fully committed to Taft's reelection. Just one month before Election Day, October 1912, the *North American Review* published a blistering piece of campaign propaganda by the president of the League of Republican Clubs—John Hays Hammond. In reference to his old friend Theodore Roosevelt, he wrote the following:

The very fact that a political party is dependent for its creation and continued existence upon the domination of any one man, however exalted may be his aims and however admirable his attributes, is in itself a menace to our political institutions, for it makes possible, under certain political exigencies, the future advent into public life of an *unscrupulous demagogue* whose influence might place in jeopardy a government where principles and not men should prevail.<sup>39</sup>

Though there is likely no surviving documentation to show whether any miners or mine owners read this particular plug for Taft, it is important to note that before the end of Taft's term, Hammond secured new patents for expansion from the government and the financing for expanded operations at Jackling's Bingham Copper Mine.<sup>40</sup>

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38. Hawley, *Kennecott Story*, 98.

39. John Hays Hammond, "Why I Am for Taft," *The North American Review* 196, no. 4 (October 1912): 433–49.

40. Hawley, *Kennecott Story*, 106–7.

More than just provide kickbacks for wealthy supporters, the Republican Party platform adopted in Chicago boded well in mining country because of its favorable attitude towards the miners themselves: "We favor such fair and reasonable rules and regulations as will not discourage or interfere with actual bona-fide home seekers [homesteaders], prospectors and miners in the acquisition of public lands under existing laws."<sup>41</sup> With the owners' fresh labor dispute victory on their hands, full advantage was taken in order to encourage miners to vote for Taft. Despite the reputation as an elite conservative in the pocket of big business, Taft is considered the most prolific "trust buster" of the Progressive Era; he was something of an enigma to the general working class, but amidst Utah's tense climate of the miners' struggle in 1912, his appeal was more widespread. The situation at Bingham Copper Mine in September, mentioned previously, was undoubtedly influential on the private sentiment of the miners. Taft, while addressing the mining disputes at Bingham Canyon and a sister strike in Ely, Nevada, stated, "The aim of the Republican Party is to see that American workers are enabled to meet the cost of living by keeping employed at good wages. . . . The Sherman [Anti-Trust] Law will continue to be enforced against all violators, however rich and influential they may be."<sup>42</sup> The owners of the mines, particularly Hammond, were close friends and colleagues of the president, making them unlikely targets for executive interference. In this time of crisis less than a month before the election, Taft's words reassured the working-class miners that he would be on *their* side in a second term.

Interestingly, very little was said about his Democratic rival Woodrow Wilson's position relative to the disputes. In the largest mining counties, the small company-owned newspapers narrowly focused on the presidential race between Taft and Roosevelt, mentioning Wilson very little. The *Eureka Reporter*, a company-owned paper of Juab County, ran front-page illustrations of William Howard Taft in every weekly edition for a month leading up to the election. The illustrations were included without an accompanying article. In one issue, the section titled "Mining Notes" read, "Don't overlook the Republican

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41. *Republican Party Platform of 1912*, 18 June 1912, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, 2016, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29633>.

42. "President Taft Sums up Situation," (Richfield Reaper, Richfield, UT), 10 October 1912, accessed 15 March 2017, <https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/details?id=9244190> Richfield\_Reaper\_\_1912\_10\_10\_President\_Taft\_Sums\_up\_Situation.pdf.

rally this evening. Speakers: Senator Sutherland and J. A. Melville candidate for judge. Good music.”<sup>43</sup>

As Election Day rolled in, rolling shifts were granted in several of the mines so that workers could ascend and cast a ballot. As election returns began to come in it became evident that the largest mining counties—Summit, Juab, Tooele, Garfield, and Carbon—were Republican strongholds. In Spry’s reelection bid, these five counties gave Spry an average of 44 percent. Talton garnered 28 percent, Morris 13 percent, and 13 percent among other candidates.<sup>44</sup> In the rural communities of Iron County the headlines raged, “A NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC VICTORY!” yet the *Eureka Reporter* drolly headlined with an advertisement: “You have tried the rest now try the best—Winchester Club Whiskey—11 years old.”<sup>45</sup> The miners, some of the few voters in the state who drank alcohol, probably appreciated the invitation to drink. Regardless, the voter participation was good in November. As their bosses could only shake their heads at the bad beating Taft had received, the miners could rest easy. They had done their part. Though Taft’s beating was bad nationally, he eked out a win by a plurality of votes in Utah because the miners and their bosses jointly recognized Taft as the most able candidate. Pressure came from both the top and the bottom: working-class strikers trusted Taft’s ability to arbitrate, and, from the top, executives could be assured that the status quo would be maintained.

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43. “Mining News,” *Eureka Reporter* (Tintic Mine, Juab County, UT), 1 November 1912, accessed 22 March 2016, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/eureka/id/60997>. Later in the issue, miners are encouraged to find out when they will be allowed out of work to vote.

44. Michael J. Dubin, *United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1912–1931: The Official Results by State and County* (Jefferson, NC: Macfarland and Company, 2013), 256–57. While exact statistics could not be found for Taft’s performance on a county basis, the results were statistically very similar in other elections. In 1916 for instance, Governor candidate Simon Bamberger won 55.2 percent statewide compared to Woodrow Wilson’s 58.7 percent victory. In 1908, the Democratic candidates showed the same trend, with gubernatorial candidate Jesse Knight winning 38.8 percent compared to William Jennings Bryan’s 39.22 percent.

45. “Democratic Victory Sweeps the Country,” *Iron County Record* (Cedar City, UT), 8 November 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ironco1/id/18364>; and “Advertisement,” *Eureka Reporter* (Tintic Mine, Juab County, UT), 8 November 1912, Utah Digital Newspapers, <http://udn.lib.utah.edu/cdm/ref/collection/eureka/id/61889>.

## Conclusion

In 1912, the voters of Utah did not act like sheep. Acting under the assumption that no one was physically coerced into voting for one candidate or another by the threat of violence or death, we know that Utah electors voted for Taft for their own reasons and personal conclusions. It is generally recognized that Taft's victory was not overwhelming—yet because of the number of candidates, his victory was impressive. Taft won a safe 37.46 percent of the vote over Wilson's 32.55 percent, Roosevelt's 21.51 percent, and Debs's 8.03 percent.<sup>46</sup> The unity of the Republican Party leaders, public support from the Mormon prophet, subtle control by mine owners, and the miners' own interests were all important factors in ensuring that the physically robust William Howard Taft won the four delegates from the state of Utah. The new president-elect, Woodrow Wilson, would soon gain the love and admiration of Utah and Taft's slim winnings would be part of Wilson's reelection landslide just four years later.

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46. Utah Secretary of State, *Abstract of the Returns of an Election Held in the State of Utah, Tuesday, November 5th, A.D. 1912* (Salt Lake City, 1912), <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/state.php?f=o&fips=49&year=1912>.

## Awards for Outstanding Papers Written in 2016

### *Women's History Award*

Katie Richards, "The American Revolution and American Independence as Depicted in the *Lady's Magazine*, August and September 1776." Written for a personal project.

### *LeRoy R. Hafen Award in North American History*

Taylor Rice, "Harbingers of Empire: Re-examining the Creation of the North-West Mounted Police and Their Role in Securing the North-West Territories for Canada and the Crown." Written for Jay Buckley, History 490.

### *Eugene E. Campbell Award in Utah History*

Natalie Larsen, "Slim Winnings for Tubby Taft: Utah and the Presidential Election of 1912." Written for Spencer Fluhman, History 364, and for Timothy Davis, History 200.

### *De Lamar and Mary Jensen Award in European History*

Susannah Morrison, "'No National More Tenacious of Its Past': National Historical Memory in Interwar Scotland, 1920–1934." Written for Matt Mason, History 323.

### *Fred R. Gowans Award in 19th C. Western US History*

William King, "'Wanton Destruction': Wildlife in Yellowstone National Park Before the National Park Protection Act." Written for Jay Buckley, History 490.

***Carol Cornwall Madsen Award in Mormon Women's History***

Kaytlin Nalder, "Polygamy and Women: A Look at Women's Arguments For and Against Polygamy in Utah." Written for Spencer Fluhman, History 364.

***Personal Family History Award***

Brianna Baker, "Eldon M Tolman: A Life of Service." Written for Jeff Nokes, History 200.

***William J. Snow Award in Western or Mormon History***

Lauren Wake, "Faith-based Utilitarianism: Early LDS Perceptions of the Salt Lake Valley." Written for Shawn Miller, History 490.

***Native American Studies Award***

Erik Perterson, "The Lawyer, the Politician, and the Secretary: Mormon Involvement in Federal Indian Termination Policy." Written for Jay Buckley, History 490.

***Latin American History Award***

Tyler Balli, "'Aventureros Sin Patira y Sin Ley': The Mexican Reactions to Henry Crabb's Filibustering Expedition of 1857." Written for Evan Ward, History 326.

***Cultural History Award***

Kira Haddock, "Marlon Brando: The Original Contender." Written for Matt Mason, History 490.

***History of Empire***

Berklee DeBry, "The Politics of Memorialization: Analyzing Former Nazi Concentration Camps to Understand Contemporary Politics." Written for Stewart Anderson, History 495R.