

# **Michigan State Journal of History**

**Volume 6, 2014**



## Table of Contents

Letter from Editor	4
The Mexican Problem <i>Daniel Sherwood</i>	5
A War Between the Pages: A Historic Look at the Influence of Vogue on Women During World War II <i>Caroline Voisine</i>	15
Armenian Nationalism: Emergent Political Organizations and Revolutionary Activity Surrounding the First World War <i>Connor Yeck</i>	27
Bandits and Heroes: The Partisan Struggle in the Soviet Union <i>Greg Spenchian</i>	42
Influences of Socialism and the Socialist Workers Party on the Detroit Gay Community During the 1970's <i>Sean Wolski</i>	58
Development of Episcopal Elections in the Early Twelfth Century <i>Trevor Mattis II</i>	70
The Folly of Manifest Destiny: Filibustering in Antebellum America <i>Kevin M Cunningham</i>	80
A Note on our Review Process	90
Essay Submission Policy	91



## **Staff of the Michigan State Journal of History**

### **Editor-in-Chief**

Mikhail Filipovitch

### **Board of Editors**

Renee Brewster  
Kevin Cunningham  
Trevor Mattis II  
Nathaniel Medd

### **Design Editor**

Kolt Ewing

### **Website Manager**

Elyse Hansen

### **Faculty Advisor**

Dr. Vanessa Holden

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

My first experience with the academic journal was purchasing Volume 5 as a freshman history major. When I look back, as a young, aspiring historian, the works within the journal established a realistic standard for academic excellence in my mind. Publishing a work in The MSU Undergraduate Historian was from then on a goal of my collegiate career. The journal, unfortunately, did not continue after the publication of Volume 5 in Spring 2010. And while I may never have had the opportunity to join the ranks of the great undergraduate academics that have authored works in these journals, I believe the spirit of that dream has been realized. It is with sincere pride that I present Volume 6 of the Michigan State Journal of History.

Volume 6 represents a restoration of the department's academic journal, and by extension the tradition of recognizing excellent undergraduate scholarship at the university. It is our good fortune to have seven exceptional works to help reestablish the journal's reputation in the academic community. The showcased research touches on a variety of subjects and geographic areas, from religion and sexuality, to the United States and the Soviet Union. Without question, it is the creativity of these authors that has made serving on the editorial board an experience worthwhile.

As a resurrection volume without editors with previous experience, the learning curve for the editorial board has been steep. In addition to the classes, research, work and other responsibilities that these remarkable individuals undertake as undergraduates at our university, their sacrifice in reading, editing and evaluating the myriad of works submitted to them is worthy of admiration. I can say with confidence that there is no position more demanding, nor more rewarding, than the one they hold. To Renee Brewster, Kevin Cunningham, Trevor Mattis and Nathan Medd, I can say nothing more than thank you. Without you, this project never would have left the drawing board.

Another group that was indispensable to the restoration and completion of this academic journal is the faculty of the Department of History. From offering advice on academic professionalism, to providing feedback on the proposed working of our editing process, to reviewing submissions, our gratitude goes out to Dr. Vanessa Holden, Dr. Emily Tabuteau, Dr. Karrin Hanshew and Dr. Peter Knupfer. Although space will not permit us to mention by name all the faculty and graduate students that assisted in reviewing essays in their area of expertise, as well as those that taught and mentored the selected authors, we owe you our gratitude. Without you, the academic quality of the journal would not be where it is today.

Last, but by no means least, a special thanks to department secretary Elyse Hansen and undergraduate Kolt Ewing. Their help and patience in technologically related affairs was essential to the completion of an electronic journal.

For the editorial board, our work is not finished. The next few months will be spent expanding our web presence, creating a constitution and critically assessing every step taken this year to ensure future editors can learn from our mistakes. For my part, I am excited to see what Volume 7 will bring.

*Mikhail Filipovitch  
Editor-in-Chief  
Michigan State Journal of History*

# The Mexican Problem

Daniel Sherwood

After the Reconstruction Era of American History, American politicians found the time, money, and power to continue their imperialistic tendencies in the Western Hemisphere. This essay examines the American public's split stance on intervention into Mexico and how interventionists justified American involvement to the public. Focusing on how alcohol consumption and issues of gender came to the forefront as justifications of America intervening into Mexico during their revolution, one can quickly see how America is subject to inaccurate information with a clear political agenda. Analyzing political cartoons, documents and letters from politicians, businessmen, and intellectuals, and rethinking American prejudices, this essay aims to shed light on the flaws of a foreign power intervening in another country's affairs.

The turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the United States brought a change of identity to the suddenly powerful nation. With new demonstrations of international dominance like Theodore Roosevelt's Great White Fleet, the beginnings of a cultural revolution led by "new money", and the further development of American Imperialism, the nation's leaders looked to continue the expansion of their nation. Finding the Western frontier settled, expansionists and other vested interests turned their eyes to the South of the United States' border.

Separated from America by only the Rio Grande and desert, Mexico was also in transition; still healing from the vast tracts of land lost in the Mexican American War and coping with the end of Porfirio Diaz's 35 year-long dictatorship, the political and social climate fostered the Mexican Revolution from 1910 through 1920. Mexico, unstable politically and economically, was an attractive addition to the United States' list of nations where they could drape their stars and stripes. The United States wanted to intervene but needed to justify their actions as necessary to the Mexican people to avoid global criticism and to garner domestic support. Americans interested in investing or acquiescing Mexico, then, depicted its people as incapable of being a part of an operable Democracy, stressing that Mexicans were in dire need of foreign aid. American intervention into Mexico led to intense debate, with interventionists, ultimately, prevailing. By justifying American involvement by stating their superiority and accentuating the "flaws" of Mexico the U.S. successfully influenced Americans into thinking intervention was conscionable. Citing the lack of quality men in Mexican politics and the population as a whole, alcohol consumption, and attacking the "peon class" of Mexicans, enough Americans felt that intervention was justified.

"The Mexican Situation" or "Problem"<sup>1</sup> as many American businessmen, educators, and politicians called it, was a topic of great contention. When analyzing essays, letters, and political cartoons it is clear, however, that American society was torn. The two political cartoons below show this division;

---

<sup>1</sup> Luis Cabrera, "The Mexican Situation."; Guy Stevens, "The Mexican Situation."; Enoch Bell, "Intervention and the Mexican Problem."; Henry Clews, "The Mexican Situation."; Roland Usher, "The Real Mexican Problem." as just a few examples



To the left, a stoic Uncle Sam watches over an errant dog whose sombrero reads “Mexican Revolution” while European leaders stand behind a wall labeled “Monroe Doctrine”, urging for something to be done. Europe, kept at bay by the doctrine’s heavy-handed claims over all of the Western Hemisphere, seems helpless in this cartoon. Europeans’ distance from the revolution, depicted as an animal and not a human like the other nations, shows the ultimate control the United States had over Mexico. Those who felt it was America’s job alone to cage the delinquent Mexican canine would have disagreed with the sentiments of the artist who drew the cartoon on the right. Here a feminized Mexico is entangled by the coils of a snake writhing in pain from the boot of a man, labeled “U.S.” Clutching the ground, attempting to escape the United States’ involvement, Mexico is certainly portrayed differently than on the left. Comparing these two political cartoons it is easy to see the difference of opinion between the artists. It was not just these two cartoonists who disagreed on the northern power’s role in Mexican affairs, but the American public as well.

Anti-interventionist Americans believed that it was not the place of the U.S. government to meddle in Mexican affairs and that any military presence would only hinder the current conditions in Mexico. Enoch F. Bell, the Associate Secretary of the American Board for Foreign Missions, was one such spokesperson. A reverend of the first, and one of the largest, American Christian missionary organizations, Bell’s words were distributed amongst the entire board and their readership.<sup>4</sup> Attempting to sway the American public away from intervention Bell stated, “Mexico’s needs cannot be met by force or intervention. Nor can her fundamental problems be solved by foreign swords. Not even if we [the U.S.] went with the purest altruistic purpose possible.”<sup>5</sup> Mr. H. Walker, a businessman in Mexico, agreed with Mr. Bell. In a letter, dated 1913, to Nebraskan Senator Gilbert Hitchcock, he wrote, “we in Mexico are...opposed to

<sup>2</sup> BBC. "In pictures: The Mexican Revolution through US eyes." BBC News. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-11787556> (accessed November 20, 2012)."

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Harvard University. "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions archives, 1810-1961: Guide.." Harvard Library. [http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/deepLink?\\_collection=oasis&uniqueId=hcu01467](http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/deepLink?_collection=oasis&uniqueId=hcu01467) (accessed April 21, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Enoch Bell, "Intervention and the Mexican Problem." *Journal of International Relations* 10.2 (1919): Print. 142.



intervention...we object...because we have been well treated here, and we object to the destructions of an interesting if turbulent nationality, because until the real reason comes it [intervention] isn't justified.”<sup>6</sup> Both Bell and Walker made it clear that they felt that intervention was not an advisable course of action but while they contended that America would only complicate matters, others disagreed strongly.

While some voices pined for the American government to remain uninvolved, to most Americans intervention was a very popular idea. Those who supported U.S. involvement in Mexican affairs listed Mexico's instability, the danger the revolutionaries posed to Americans, the jeopardy of American investments, and the perceived inferiority of the Mexican people all as points to support, what they felt, was an inevitable intervention. From letters to the government, publications in scholarly journals, or correspondences from one friend to another, some Americans were very passionate on the matter. John Wyeth M.D., a successful businessman, doctor, and founder of the pharmaceutical company Wyeth (purchased by Pfizer in 2009 for \$68 billion), felt strongly that the United States was meant to influence Mexico.<sup>7</sup> Wyeth had money and social power, making his opinion important. His statements, then, such as, “there can be no solution of this serious problem except by intervention” or “our national destiny is impelling us to the occupation of Mexico,”<sup>8</sup> not only had an audience, but an audience with money and the power to influence American policy.

Dr. Wyeth's sentiment displayed the depth of which intervention seemed to be rooted in some American's minds; so deeply in fact, that they felt it was their “destiny”. In 1912, American Consul Member Marion Letcher reflected the absolute certainty of the American imperialist when he remarked, “among Americans and other foreigners here [Mexico] there is but one opinion, and that is, the sooner or later intervention of the United States must come.”<sup>9</sup> Some Americans were so sure about intervention that they looked to the complete and total conquest of Mexico. The Superintendent of the Refugio Gold and Silver Mine in Zacatecas, Mexico is one such extremist. In a letter to a Mr. H. Swain, the Superintendent plotted the quantity of firearms, number of men, time of morning to strike, which “zones” are “organized”, and what areas would be best to “take” first in hopes that America could annex all of Mexico.<sup>10</sup>

The general feeling of superiority Americans had over Mexicans generated polarized reactions. During the time of the Mexican Revolution there were Mexican appeals to the U.S., their “big brother”, for “sympathy.”<sup>11</sup> And on the other hand, some Mexicans, like President Fransisco León de la Barra, refused to associate himself or the Mexican government, with

---

<sup>6</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "From Frontera, Mexico, Dated June 25, 1913." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. Print. 71.

<sup>7</sup> Sorkin, Andrew, and Duff Wilson. "Pfizer Agrees to Pay \$68 Billion for Rival Drug Maker Wyeth." *The New York Times*. [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/26/business/26drug.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/26/business/26drug.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0) (accessed April 21, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> John Wyeth, "The United States and Mexico." *The North American Review* 202 (1915): Print. 78.

<sup>9</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Political Conditions, Chihuahua District." *Counter-Revolution along the Border*. Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1983. Print. 160.

<sup>10</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Letter to Mr. H. L. Swain in Regard to Conditions in Mexico." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. Print. 33-49.

<sup>11</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Copy of Private Letter from Mexican Official." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. Print. 210.

“Washington [D.C.], because it might be construed as belligerency.”<sup>12</sup> Mexicans also maintained conflicting opinions in regards to the intervention as well, with either party supporting or declining American involvement. This complex relationship between the two nations and their different factions turned the conflict into “a war of national liberation against the United States” rather than a revolution solely between Mexicans, further complicating the already delicate situation in Mexico at the time.<sup>13</sup>

Amidst the debate and despite opposition, the U.S. crossed over their conterminous border with Mexico on two separate occasions. Twice the American government felt that they had the grounds to enter into Mexico with a military force and act as they pleased without any formal declaration of war or alliance. But their intervention did not present itself without justifications; Americans rationalized their actions by proving Mexico’s inferiority in comparison to the United States. Analyzing correspondences between American businessmen, politicians, and intellectuals on the matter of the Mexican Revolution, American superiority is a dominant theme. Their documents are wrought with a plethora of slights against the Mexican character, culture, and race. Americans attacked any and every element of Mexican lifestyle and further solidified the validity of American intervention on the basis of the desperate nature of Mexico.

From these many criticisms multiple themes emerged, one of the more interesting ones being in regards to gender, with Americans demeaning the masculinity of Mexico’s men. Criticism toward the males of Mexico came in different forms ranging from direct to subtle and from the huddled masses to the leaders. Either way, Americans found issue with the perceived ineptitude of Mexican politicians, the current conditions in Mexico that suppressed the few leaders that were there, and the lack of character of all Mexican men in general. American’s arguments were so infectious that they even influenced Mexican leaders to think the same.

The first and most prominent issue that Americans either created or embellished was in regards to Mexican men’s supposed lack of leadership abilities and poor moral character. At this time in America, men were supposed to be in control, powerful, wealthy, and independent. Americans judged Mexicans on criteria that were equally as unrealistic in the United States as in Mexico. American “gentlemen” insulted Mexican men for not possessing the traits of the “ideal” American, imposing American cultural norms and social understandings on an entire nation of men that lived by different rules. An American Consulate member from Chihuahua shows this discrepancy between the understanding of what a man “should” be versus what he observes in his report from 1913, noting the “melancholy failure on the part of the...party to find suitable and efficient men for public office” and finding “the men called to the public service” are without “any particular aptitude or fitness.”<sup>14</sup> Mr. Bell (mentioned earlier) agrees with the Consulate, stating that “to solve the Mexican problem...Mexico needs *men* [emphasis not added]-men with strong minds...men whom the spoils of office cannot buy...men who have honor...tall men.”<sup>15</sup> The economist Henry Clews, PhD, echoed Bell’s and the Consulate’s sentiment as well, stating, “above all, Mexico needs men – strong men of high and unselfish

---

<sup>12</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, “Washington Conference.” *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982; 1911. Print. 18.

<sup>13</sup> Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1987), 320.

<sup>14</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, “Occupation of Chihuahua by the federal troops and the rehabilitation of the State.” *Counter-Revolution along the Border*. Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1983. Print. 133-134.

<sup>15</sup> Enoch Bell, “Intervention and the Mexican Problem.” *Journal of International Relations* 10.2 (1919): Print. 147.

purpose, men of great executive ability.”<sup>16</sup> Clews, Bell, and the Consulate made it very apparent that they felt that the political and governing shortcomings of Mexico resulted from the absence of any capable men.

While some Americans blamed Mexican’s troubles on an absence of manly leaders others blamed the current system in Mexico for making it hard to be a man (still ultimately making it a gendered problem). For example, in 1912, American Consul Member Mr. M. Fletcher praised the “bright and capable men who plotted the revolution” but that they were unfortunately “deterred by caution or cowardice...hav[ing] not been able to lend...anything of dignity or respectability.”<sup>17</sup> Mr. Fletcher artfully acknowledged the capability and intelligence of the leaders in Mexico while simultaneously painting them in a negative light by referring to their “cowardice” and their lack of “dignity”. In an anonymous letter to General Wood of the U.S. Army a concerned American also showed that there are competent men in Mexico, they just have a hard time overcoming the current conditions – “all the strongest and most reputable men of the country [Mexico] are put into silence or exile.”<sup>18</sup> He said, “only a great man, or a combination of irresistible circumstances, could possibly hope for success under such conditions.”<sup>19</sup> The author of the letter does not feel that there are no men for Mexican politics, just that the conditions are so grave that it would be hard for anyone to overcome. Ultimately, whether or not these Americans felt that Mexico was without men, or the few men they had were suppressed by the circumstances, they insisted that that Mexico’s fate lay in the hands of the men.

It was not just Mexican political men who were flawed, according to Americans, but all of them, in all classes, and public spheres. Beginning with the subtleties, some Americans showed their disrespect for Mexican men and leaders of the Revolution by referring to them as “boys” or “children”. For example, Cambridge University professor, James Hurst, analyzes the Villista prisoners and the court trials surrounding the event, and how American judges and lawyers refer to the testifying Mexican men as “boys” and, in contrast, the Anglo adults as “men.”<sup>20</sup> Others were more blatant, such as the previously mentioned Superintendent of the Refugio Mine, who warned U.S. diplomats of the “class of men you would have to deal with” in Central Mexico, referring to the illiterate and uncivilized rebels.<sup>21</sup> Americans wrote off all men for being beneath them, despite their class or status in society. Even President Huerta was subject to the condescending tone of the American, being called a “boy” by Nevadan Senator Francis Newlands.<sup>22</sup>

Mexican men of all types were subject to disrespect from Americans. It is fascinating that these American depictions of men in Mexico were also adopted by some Mexicans themselves.

---

<sup>16</sup> Clews, Henry. "The Mexican Situation." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 54 (1914): Print. 164.

<sup>17</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Notes and observations on the progress of the revolution." *Counter-Revolution along the Border*. Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1983. Print. 103.

<sup>18</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Confidential Memorandum for General Wood." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982; 1911. 28. Print.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. Pg. 29.

<sup>20</sup> Hurst, James W. *The Villista prisoners of 1916-1917*. Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 2000. 18. Print

<sup>21</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Letter to Mr. H. L. Swain in Regard to Conditions in Mexico." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. 44. Print.

<sup>22</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Compania Mexicana de Pavimentos de Asfalto y Construcciones, S.A.." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982; 1913. 60. Print.

Mexicans, like Americans, attacked both the integrity of their own nation's men as well as the situation in Mexico. Governor of Coahuila, Miguel Cardenas, attested that the weaknesses of the government resulted from the lack of "thinking and substantial men of the country"<sup>23</sup> blaming the nation's misfortunes on men without any worth. And Colonel Enrique Portillo in his *Manifesto to the Mexican Nation* of 1912 said it is not Mexico that is man-less, but in order to rise above and "restore" Mexico from its "shattered" conditions, "she [Mexico] needs an absolutely immaculate man."<sup>24</sup> Both Mexicans and Americans felt that the nation was absent of pure men and found a scapegoat in an entire gender, rather than a few individuals.

Americans made it clear that they found issue with the men in Mexico for their lack of integrity and capability to run a nation. It was not just the character of these men that the Americans attacked but also their alcohol consumption. American critics swayed the feelings of the American public effectively by highlighting excessive drinking, and using the momentum from the Temperance movement in the United States that was occurring concurrently with the Mexican Revolution. Similarly with Americans' generalized critiques of the entire population of men in Mexico, they were equally as broad with their accusations of Mexican alcohol consumption.

Americans showed their ability to adopt offensive stereotypes based on little to no facts during their campaign for intervention. The following political cartoon shows not only the depiction of the generalized rowdy and drunken Mexican, but how accepted U.S.' imperialism became amongst the American public;



25

While the other nations (all of which had been victim to American intervention to some degree at the time of the cartoon's publication) are shown with good posture, nice clothes, and reading studiously, Mexico is drawn disheveled, drinking, and firing his pistol in the air. Next to the tame Philippines, Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua, Mexico is the only unruly student that Uncle Sam cannot control. This cartoon shows the arrogance of Americans – comfortable with the fact that Uncle Sam is teaching other nations the way of an American and appalled that the Mexican

<sup>23</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Saltillo, Coah., April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1912." *Counter-Revolution along the Border*. Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1983. 52. Print.

<sup>24</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Manifesto to the Mexican Nation." *Counter-Revolution along the Border*. Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1983. 169. Print.

<sup>25</sup> BBC. "In pictures: The Mexican Revolution through US eyes." BBC News. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-11787556>> (accessed November 20, 2012)."

pupil will not conform. This political cartoon's depiction of the Mexican people as drunk and disorderly was not atypical. The Superintendent of the Refugio Mine reflects the same generalizations of Mexicans when he writes about them as "devils", that are "simply animals" that "drink hard." He continues,

They are bad enough sober, but it is nothing compared to when they get drunk.

They all carry knives or machetes. About 99% of them get drunk whenever there is an opportunity. I never met a Mexican that wouldn't get drunk.<sup>26</sup>

The Superintendent is comfortable making sweeping generalizations about Mexicans, convinced of their unruly behavior and affinity toward alcohol. With Americans believing that Mexico was comprised of boozehounds they began to question their own safety as well as the safety of the American families residing in Mexico, feeling surrounded by irrational and drunk Mexicans. The complaints of the American populace in Mexico referred to the banditry and irrationality of the revolutionaries. Within these complaints alcohol consumption was a recurring theme that sometimes stole all the credit for Mexican's poor behavior and other times is just one of the many contributing factors to American's unease.

In a letter addressed to the Secretary of State postmarked from Tampico, Mexico from 1913 the author wrote that Mexico is unsafe because of the "trains [that] are frequently robbed" and how "Americans are threatened...and visited repeatedly [by the revolutionaries]."<sup>27</sup> This American tied the lack of safety with alcohol – "women have had to be brought in from the camps and sent to the United States as it is impossible to know what these bandits or alleged revolutionists will do when they become drunk."<sup>28</sup> This particular man cited the rebels' inebriation as what made them dangerous. R. E. Young, an American citizen and Chief Clerk of the Mazapil Copper Company, reporting on a revolutionary raid of his place of employment, also referred to the dangers of the rebels while under the influence of alcohol. He recounted, "that none of the foreign employees fired on the Rebels, or made any resistance, in any matter whatsoever." However, despite his employees' peaceful behavior, the rebels, "those of who...appeared to be intoxicated and completely beyond control...opened fire on the small group of defenseless foreigners."<sup>29</sup>

This train of thought is not one of antiquity; currently, people still remark on the consumption of intoxicating beverages during the Mexican Revolution in a similar manner. In the first volume of *Mexico and the United States*, published in 2003, a contributor writes, "one explanation for the fighting between Mexicans was...alcohol consumption."<sup>30</sup> Americans, then and now, felt that alcohol played a large role in Mexican's behavior, violence, and danger.

Just as with gender, Americans did not solely target the drinking habits of the greater population of the Mexican Revolution, but the leaders as well. The American Consulate, for example, wrote off "drunken Salazar" due to his "dependence" on alcohol.<sup>31</sup> William Bayard

---

<sup>26</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Letter to Mr. H. L. Swain in Regard to Conditions in Mexico." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. 39-40. Print.

<sup>27</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Political Conditions." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. Print. 110-111.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Rebel Attack in Zacatecas." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. Print. 25-26.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. p. 241.

<sup>31</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "Occupation of Chihuahua by the federal troops and the rehabilitation of the State." *Counter-Revolution along the Border*. Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1983. Print. 133.

Hale, a journalist, described President Huerta as "an ape-like old man" who "may almost be said to subsist on alcohol."<sup>32</sup> In an unsigned letter addressed to Com. Bayard Hale entitled "U.S. Naval Officer's View of the Revolution" the officer also stated that "Huerta had been considered in disfavor and was...an habitual drunkard."<sup>33</sup> Americans had a fundamental problem with these leaders for a multitude of reasons but oftentimes highlighted their alcohol consumption.

American public's split stance on intervention into Mexico was not separate enough, with one viewpoint conquering American decision making. Americans emphasized the absence of men in Mexican politics and the nation as a whole and the widespread alcohol consumption of Mexicans as major contributors to Mexico's predicament. It being almost 100 years after the Mexican Revolution, America can look to its problems with immigration and draw parallels between the two events. American intervention occurs often, to this day, into other nations that seem weaker than the U.S. and dependent on foreign aid. Revealing the falsehood of allegations by Americans to Mexicans during the Revolution shows similar fallacies in today's logic. Learning from the mistakes of the past the American people can avoid not only hardship of their own but imposing it on others.

---

<sup>32</sup> Benbow, Mark E.. "All the Brains I Can Borrow: Woodrow Wilson and Intelligence Gathering in Mexico, 1913-15." *Intelligence in Another Era*. N.p., 11 Dec. 2007. Web. 8 Dec. 2012.  
<<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol51no4/intelligence-in-another-era.html>>.

<sup>33</sup> Gene Z. Hanrahan, "U.S. Naval Officer's View of the Revolution." *Blood below the Border: American Eye-Witness Accounts of the Mexican Revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. Print. 145.

## Bibliography

### Primary

- "BBC News - In pictures: The Mexican Revolution through US eyes." *BBC - Homepage*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-11787556>>.
- Hanrahan, Gene Z.. *Blood below the border: American eye-witness accounts of the Mexican revolution*. Salisbury, North Carolina: Documentary Publications, 1982. Print.
- Hanrahan, Gene Z.. *Counter-revolution along the border*. Salisbury, NC: Documentary Publications, 1983. Print.
- Hurst, James W. *The Villista prisoners of 1916-1917*. Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 2000. Print.
- Clews, Henry. "The Mexican Situation." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 54 (1914): 162 - 165. Print.
- Usher, Roland. "The Real Mexican Problem." *The North American Review* 200 (1914): 45 - 52. Print.
- Wyeth, John. "The United States and Mexico." *The North American Review* 202 (1915): 76 - 79. Print.
- Bell, Enoch. "Intervention and the Mexican Problem." *Journal of International Relations* 10.2 (1919): 138-150. Print.
- McCann, Irving G.. *With the National guard on the border; our national military problem*,. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby company, 1917. Print.

### Secondary

- Mexico and the United States - Vol. 1*. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2003. Print.
- Linhard, Tabea Alexa. *Fearless women in the Mexican Revolution and the Spanish Civil War*. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 2005. Print.
- Johnson, William Weber. *Heroic Mexico: the violent emergence of a modern nation*.. [1st ed. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968. Print.
- Frazer, Chris. *Competing voices from the Mexican Revolution: fighting words*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood Press/ABC-CLIO, 2010. Print.
- Beardsell, Peter R.. *A theatre for cannibals: Rodolfo Usigli and the Mexican stage*. Rutherford [N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press ;, 1992. Print.

# **A War Between the Pages: A Historic Look at the Influence of Vogue on Women During World War II**

Caroline Voisine

When the United States joined the war in 1942, the entire nation jumped to support the patriotic cause. The popular fashion magazine Vogue was no different. The magazine made joining the war effort in itself stylish. Articles on clothes and lifestyle all portrayed ideas of fashionable patriotism. However, throughout the course of the war, Vogue went from showing its patriotic efforts in every aspect of dress and lifestyle to separating fashion and the War. In this research I explore the influence Vogue had on fashion as well as women throughout the duration of World War II.

In December, 1941 America joined it's allied nations to fight in the Second World War. This period of time led to an exciting change in women's clothing. While the war itself would leave a lasting impression on women's fashion, its impact can be seen at more than just face value. Meghann Mason's dissertation, *The impact of World War II on women's fashion in the United States and Britain* argues that fashion was directly impacted by rationing and government restrictions.<sup>34</sup> While that is inherently true, the impact on fashion during the Second World War was not based solely on the rationing limitations imposed by the government. Fashion was also impacted by the patriotic fervor that ensued as a direct result of the war. Fashion magazines encouraged women to dress patriotically with pro-war sentiments through the duration of the US's involvement in World War II. Vogue, in particular, encouraged women to express their patriotism by calling women to work and displaying fashions that adhered to government restrictions. This encouragement broke class barriers of respectability. The popular fashion magazine made joining the war effort itself stylish, and provided upper-class women with the fashion know-how to dress for it. Articles and editorials on clothes and lifestyle all portrayed these ideas of fashionable patriotism. However, throughout the course of the war, Vogue went from showing its patriotic efforts in every aspect of dress and lifestyle to separating fashion and the War. Articles acknowledged happenings of the Second World War but were not directly reflected in fashion editorials. In this research I explore the influence Vogue had on fashion as well as women throughout the duration of World War II. Vogue's articles and fashion editorials made it respectable and patriotic for upper-class women to enter the public sphere in working class roles.

For this research, I looked at issues of Vogue from 1942 through 1945. I sampled issues from January, July and September of those years, with a primary focus on the September issues. September, generally being the largest issue of many fashion magazines, I thought it would give the best look at changing fashions from year to year. I looked closely at January, 1942 because of it's close proximity with the United States entrance into war with Germany and Japan. Through my research I found that Vogue encouraged women to express their patriotism by calling women

---

<sup>34</sup> Meghann Mason. "The impact of World War II on women's fashion in the United States and Britain" (PhD diss., University of Nevada, 2011).



to work and displaying fashions that adhered to government restrictions. Not only did Vogue call women to work, but they also gave them the know-how to dress for their new lives. The popular fashion magazine made joining the war effort in itself fashionable, and provided women who had considerable means with the courage to leave their homes and help in any way with the war effort. However, the magazine did not keep this up through the entire time the United States was involved with the war. Nearing the end of conflict Vogue focused its fashion reporting as separate from the war effort.

#### Patriotic Dress and the Call to the War Effort

Meghann Mason's dissertation explores the major historical question of the impact that World War II had on women's fashion. That paper focuses primarily on how government restrictions and rationing had the biggest impact on fashions of the time period. The thesis focuses on the limitations that War imposed on designers, beauty product manufacturers, and the fashion industry at large. Within these rationing aspects Mason included: changes in shoe styles due to restrictions on leather goods, the move to the use of man made materials such as plastics, nylon and rayon, as well as fashion changes in head-coverings due to rationing on hair products. Her article also explored what women did in response to these limitations to remain fashionable. She uses magazines such as Vogue as one piece of her evidence.

“Maintaining beauty and allure were major wartime challenges faced by designers. American Vogue magazine's first cover for January after the U.S. entry into the war spoke of the new life American women would have to face and how to look gorgeous while doing it.”<sup>35</sup>

Vogue, as a primary source, takes an indepth look at exactly what sort of impact the war had on fashion. It also inspired me to look at the magazine articles more closely and see exactly what sort of information on dress was disseminated to the public through the duration of the Second World War. I do agree with Mason's argument that rationing greatly impacted women's fashion during the Second World War. However, fashion was not solely changed by rationing alone. Vogue took the idea of patriotic duty and molded it into the latest trend.

Vogue Magazine released an article and editorial in January, 1942, the month following the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the US's entrance into the Second World War, entitled *Our Double Duty Lives: War Work + Home Work*. The article described a woman's duty was to divide her life between supporting the war effort and her home life. It argued that women were the major component to total victory. The Article described the wearing of the uniform as something of the utmost importance. It was accompanied by a striking photograph with the double image of a woman in the looking glass wearing civilian attire with the same woman in a military style uniform standing directly behind her.

---

<sup>35</sup> Mason, “*The impact of World War II on women's fashion in the United States and Britain.*”



36

“To do this-as the women of Britain have done- to split our lives; to do war work and to run our houses and our children’s lives with same delight, but added need of treasuring life at home against war. And what ever our duties are, one symbol of our new double-duty lives is the uniform.”<sup>37</sup>

The wearing of the uniform shown above is not only a call to adorn military dress but it is also a symbol of how women should behave now that the United States was fully engaged in World War II. Vogue was directly encouraging women to leave their homes to participate in the war effort through work. Not only were they encouraging women to work, but they also gave women the fashion advice in which to do so. The woman in the mirror is beautiful and fashionable, but her image is also patriotic in support of the war effort. This image made the idea of the military styles and movement to the workplace fashionable and it would have had a direct impact on women’s dress even at the early stages of the US involvement in the war. Following this article is an editorial on women’s suits. The suits are accompanied with a short description and on where these pieces would be most useful and what made them fashionable. Mentioned again is the aspect of women wearing these garments for their new “Double Duty Lives.”

Michelle Boardman explores the aspect of patriotic scarves that surfaced as a fashionable accessory during the period of time in which World War II took place. Her thesis being

“Commemorative scarves functioned to physically express one’s pride as the designs included motifs, colors and symbols, such as capital “V” for victory, that formed a common vocabulary of patriotism during the war years.”<sup>38</sup>

What Boardman is saying in her thesis and throughout her argument is that it was fashionable to be patriotic and that it was encouraged by designers at the time for a woman to show her patriotism through her main avenue of self expression, which was dress and fashion. Boardman explores popular motifs and what they mean in a historical perspective. She also explores how scarves became fashionable not only as neckwear, but also as headwear due to women at work in the war effort. WOWs, or Women Ordnance Workers, helped to move head-scarves into mainstream fashion magazines as it became popular and patriotic to wear these fashions. She

<sup>36</sup> “Double Duty Lives: War Work + Home Work” *Vogue*, January 15, 1942. 75.

<sup>37</sup> “Double Duty Lives: War Work + Home Work.” 76.

<sup>38</sup> Michelle. Boardman, “Shoulder to Shoulder: Women's Patriotic Scarves of World War II.” *Dress (Costume Society Of America)* 25 (1998) 3-16.

also points out that due to restrictions on items such as glycerin, which was used in soap, women needed to find a way to cover up their less than perfect coif. Boardman supports the argument that fashion was not only impacted by rationing but also by a sense of patriotic duty.

While rationing may have been a catalyst to change in dress, something or someone had to make it fashionable. The “Double Duty” article does just that. There is a direct correlation between what was becoming fashionable and the representations of women entering the war effort. The article reads as if the magazine was telling women that it was their “Duty” to get involved with the war effort in order to be fashionable.<sup>39</sup> Vogue Magazine showed that women working was patriotic. Vogue, being a leading women’s fashion magazine, would have reached an audience who was affluent enough to purchase its pages and therefore would have emboldened white-collar and high standing women to join the war effort. Not only did this magazine influence fashion during World War II but also changed the women who bought it.

In July, 1943, Vogue published an issue that was dedicated to women and the workforce that now was calling for all women’s support. Among articles describing how women could get directly involved in the war with the WAVEs and the WACS, there was one article soothing the fears of upper-class women who wanted to get into the workforce. *Good Mothers...Good Workers*, answered the tough questions about how society would view women if they decided to add the role of breadwinner to their resumé that already included the job of mother. The author wrote that women who found that they were talented outside of child rearing and could afford to leave their children with others should do so. “If you are this mother, take heed and take heart, for you no longer need be torn by the problem of neglecting the war to raise your children, or neglecting your children to win the war.”<sup>40</sup> One question asked “If I work what is the best care I can give my children?”<sup>41</sup> The response was that the reader “should” have a maid to take of the children whenever they are sick from school. Also, the reader could rest assured that children would be at school for the majority of the day and the two months of the summer they could be sent away to summer camp.

Fashion itself is not solely about the items that a person or community chooses to put on their body. The role of fashion also takes into account moral and ethical decisions. By publishing this article, Vogue was telling women that it was okay to work and support the war effort in this way. Inherently they were saying that it was fashionable to leave your children in the care of others so that you could support your family and also your country. However, Vogue was not suggesting that women who needed a second income should work; instead it was that women who were at a higher social standing and who could afford household help should rejoice in the fact that supporting the war effort through work was now fashionably respectable. This article has nothing to do with rationings effects on clothing, rather, Vogue’s support of women in the workforce encouraged them to dress differently in their daily lives. Connecting back to the “Doubly Duty” lives, the magazine had already shown women what to wear for their future in the war effort. Vogue was now showing women how to put their new uniform into use. Vogue was encouraging women to be patriotic and support the war effort by making it acceptable for women with a higher social standing to leave the domestic sphere and enter the workforce.

---

<sup>39</sup> Double Duty Lives: War Work + Home Work.” 76.

<sup>40</sup> Evelyn Hill, “Good Mothers...Good Workers,” *Vogue* July 1, 1943. 26

<sup>41</sup> Hill, “Good Mothers...Good Workers,” 26

In another July, 1943 article, *Top-Flight Designer Makes Work Uniform Pretty*.<sup>42</sup> Vogue noted that designers were creating fashions that would allow women to be more comfortable in the workplace. The article described the latest designs of Muriel King and focused on how these garments could be worn in various settings that were both inside and outside of the work place.

“Designed them so a girl could move among whirling machines with complete safety- no hazardous pocket-flaps, flares, loose belts. Designed them so she might go from the plant gate to a five o’clock engagement with complete assurance.”<sup>43</sup>

Vogue was saying that women going to work would no longer need to worry about how she would appear once the work day was done. Instead, a simple change of accessories would allow these working ladies to be just as fashionable and feminine as if they had spent the day running errands around town. These new uniforms could be incorporated into a working woman’s everyday wardrobe. The article was accompanied by two photographs of models wearing Muriel King’s uniform designs. The first is of a jacket and skirt combination, the only way to identify that is actually a uniform is the air force plant insignia that is stitched into the sleeve. The second is of a model with her hand on her hip looking up into the distance in a slim shirt dress accessorized with a brooch on the collar, heavy chain bracelet and smart leather purse.



44



45

Throughout this article, it is evident that the war had a major impact on fashion. It was not only rationing that brought about these changes but also patriotic sentiments and the changing role of women on the homefront. Designers were now producing clothes that were not only uniforms but could be converted into everyday outfits. Fashions were needed to fill in the new lifestyle of the Upper and Middle class women during World War II. Day clothes would need to be appropriate for these women to straddle two different worlds: their new working world and their lives outside of the war effort. Vogue contributed to this change in that they deemed it worthy and acceptable for women to wear these new types of clothes. A respectable women could be seen in a work uniform and would be celebrated for helping her country. Patriotism was considered fashionable during the war years. Vogue’s impact on fashion during the war was through their encouragement of women to express their patriotism through the way that they

<sup>42</sup> “Top-Flight Designer Makes Work Uniform Pretty.” *Vogue* July 1, 1943. 40.

<sup>43</sup> “Top-Flight Designer Makes Work Uniform Pretty.” 40.

<sup>44</sup> “Top-Flight Designer Makes Work Uniform Pretty.” 40.

<sup>45</sup> “Top-Flight Designer Makes Work Uniform Pretty.” 40.

dressed and ultimately making it socially acceptable for women of high standing to work outside of the home.

### Without Paris

Before the war, Vogue was only interested in promoting European designers. However, in 1940 that all changed when they had no other choice but to report on what women would be wearing now that they only had American designers to produce garments.<sup>46</sup> As Germany invaded France, the couture houses of Paris were closed to the allied powers. Germany invaded Paris before the United States made it's official entrance into the war and, because of this, American manufacturers had no access to French designs as early as 1940.<sup>47</sup> As a direct result, Vogue began to feature American designers as they would have the Parisian designers in past years. Throughout the war, Vogue not only refrained from referencing Paris fashion houses in it's editorials and articles but also advertisements for department stores no longer used France as the model for the garments that they carried and sold. This practice continued even after the Allied Forces liberated France from the Nazi regime in 1944.

In the September, 1945 Vogue featured an article entitled, *New York Story; Ready-To-Wear Collections*, which showcased American designers as a front runner to Parisian couture.<sup>48</sup> The article described how Americans would rather go to a store in New York and immediately take home what they had picked out rather than have to send an order to Paris and wait for their clothes to arrive at a much later date. It discussed the many talents that American designers possessed that matched or rivaled those talents of Parisian designers. Even with the end of the War, Vogue remained loyal to the new successes of American designers of fashion.<sup>49</sup> This idea of New York as a new fashion capital gave rise to change in fashion in America. Vogue encouraged women to dress in American designs and to wear clothes that were American. By doing this, the magazine embraced the fact that it was fashionable to be patriotic and show one's patriotism through what a woman wore during the war. Daniel Delis Hill said that Vogue focused its efforts on American designers as soon as the French couture houses became unavailable to the American consumers in 1940.<sup>50</sup>

From then on, the very few French influences that arrived in the United States were met with disinterest. Vogue's promotion of American designers contributed to the notion of patriotism being fashionable during the Second World War. Not only did it help to stimulate the burgeoning American fashion market but it also stood as a symbol of America being a world power house. The more women bought into this concept the more likely they were to support the war effort. Vogue expressed patriotism as being the height of fashion in World War II therefore making it respectable for upper class women to demonstrate their fashionability by contributing to the war effort outside of the domestic sphere.

### Fashionable Rationing

---

<sup>46</sup> Sandra Stansbery Buckland, "Promoting American Designers, 1940–44: Building Our Own House," Berg Fashion Library, 2005. doi.10.2752/9781847882837

<sup>47</sup> Buckland, "Promoting American Designers, 1940–44: Building Our Own House"

<sup>48</sup> "New York Story; Ready-To-Wear Collections" *Vogue*, September 1, 1945.

<sup>49</sup> Daniel Delis Hill, *As seen in Vogue a century of American fashion in advertising*. (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2004). 70

<sup>50</sup> Hill, "As seen in Vogue; A century of American Fashion in Advertising." 70

Vogue advertised many fashions that adhered to, and even went beyond, the L-85 restrictions on garments. The magazine and its editors supported American designers who “unlike their counterparts in Paris and London, American fashion designers incorporated silhouettes, trimmings and details from military uniforms into their collections.”<sup>51</sup> This helped to launch the United States as a major fashion leader in the twentieth century and allowed the American fashion industry to flourish.

L-85 restrictions and rationing made an enormous impact on the fashion world in the United States during World War II. Many fashion historians are quick to assume that all garments made during this time period adhered to the government mandates on fabric usage.<sup>52</sup> After interviewing about 30 women who were over the age of thirteen in 1942, Jennifer Mower found that many of the garments these women described did not fit within the standards of L-85 restrictions. L-85s were set in place to conserve fabric for wartime usage. “The limitation order was designed to prevent rationing of wartime apparel by reducing the amount of yardage required for women's apparel by 15%.”<sup>53</sup> Through Mower’s research she finds that not all garments purchased during the war by her subjects met these requirements. Also, when she looked into museum collections, there were collections of clothing that made use of rationed metals, zippers and other non-fabric conserving materials. Vogue had no part in promoting designers who refused to comply with the L-85 restrictions. The pages of the popular magazine were riddled with articles on how to go above and beyond the limitations provided. Instead of conserving the least amount of fabric, Vogue published articles displaying garments and designs that conserved the most fabric possible. The magazine promoted fashions that were patriotic and those keeping in line with L-85s. By only displaying such types of clothing, Vogue implied that clothes that did not comply with restrictions were not fashionable.

Creating versatility in a woman’s wardrobe seemed to be the goal of Vogue in the Fall of 1943. With limitations on fabric usage and overall rationing of many civilian materials needed to produce women’s clothing, there had to be a change in the mindset of consumers on the homefront. Conserving fabric was the overall goal of American households. Vogue did not shy away from the conservation tactics set in place to support the war effort. In the September 1st issue there were several editorials and articles that commented on the fabric restrictions and gave women an idea of what was both fashionable and versatile for the upcoming season.

“The 1943 silhouette, whether because of the war, L-85 or its own spring-back, has narrowed itself to a direct, sure line, an uncluttered outline, a neat underdone look...essentially what has always been the best fashion. Elegance after all means righteousness without effort; simplicity with confidence behind it...”<sup>54</sup>

These narrower styles were a direct influence of the war and L-85 restrictions. The conservation of fabric for military use had implemented a Limitation Order on women’s clothing in 1943. However, instead of a backlash from designers and fashion promoters, there seemed to be an acceptance and pride for these restrictions on creative freedoms. Supporting the L-85s meant support of the war effort. Vogue’s article described the narrow silhouette as being the newest fashion sensation. This encouraged women to wear garments that met or even went beyond the

---

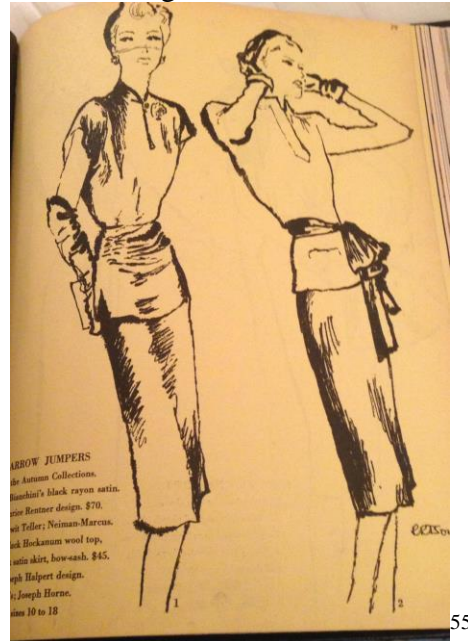
<sup>51</sup> Hill, “As seen in Vogue; A century of American Fashion in Advertising,” 71.

<sup>52</sup> Jennifer Mower, ““Pretty and Patriotic”: Women's Consumption of Apparel During World War II.” (PhD diss., Oregon State University, 2011), 80.

<sup>53</sup> Mower, “Pretty and Patriotic”

<sup>54</sup> “It Narrows Down To This” *Vogue*, September 1, 1943. 75.

Limitation Order 85. The next fifteen pages of this particular issue were filled with how to wear this new narrow look and what kind of garments met the fashionability of this trend.



While this editorial is different from those only a few months earlier, in that Vogue was not commenting on how to dress for work, it still sent a patriotic message to women in the United States: L-85 restrictions were not something that were oppressive to American women, instead the limitations would help America win the war and keep their natural freedoms. By wearing these types of garments and adhering to government sanctioned fashion choices, they were doing their patriotic duty as women on the home-front. Vogue was encouraging women to support the war effort by the way that they dressed and what type of clothing they chose to buy.

Vogue's impact on fashion during the war can be seen through, *Take The Measure Of Fashion*. To be fashionable as an upper-class woman, one would need to dress in such a manner that was patriotic. This does not mean that they should adorn themselves in stars and stripes, rather that they should show the utmost respect to their country by adhering to the restrictions that would help win the war. The magazine subtly suggested that women dress themselves to do just that by featuring garments that conserved the most fabric and would be approved of by the government. In this article, Vogue reinforced the Limitation Order 85 as something that could be and would be fashionable. In a style article on the new Fall silhouette of 1943, the magazine went through a number of the restrictions set in place by the L-85s and described in detail what types of clothing would meet these standards. Describing every possible aspect of dress that a woman might find herself wondering about the article even mentioned how collars would be affected. "No coat collars wider than five inches, but they stand up around your ears and make the most of themselves. No double collars. And sometimes no collars at all"<sup>56</sup>

To conserve fabric, the fashions of the time would have to change. Women had to support their country in the war. Although the impact of these government restrictions due to the war effort might not have been exactly what women and the fashion world wanted, Vogue seemed determined to be patriotic. In the introduction to this article, you can see the struggle that

<sup>55</sup> "It Narrows Down To This." 79.

<sup>56</sup> "Take The Measure Of Fashion." *Vogue*. September 15, 1943. 75.



the magazine seemed to be having with the restrictions but they found a way to make the most of it. "This is the year our government talks softly and carries a big yardstick-L-85...But this is also the year when all good clothes gain back what they forfeit in length, width, breadth, by a dimension beyond measure-the fourth dimension of Time."<sup>57</sup> The article goes on to explain how the clothes from 1943 that tow the line of Limitation Order 85 will be timeless and classic and never go out of style. The magazine is seemingly putting a spin on a restriction that otherwise might not be taken all that well by designers and high class consumers. However, by making the clothes that meet the L-85s restrictions, the clothes that every woman should be wearing and should want to be wearing, Vogue made the government sanctioned garments fashionable. Conserving fabric for parachutes and other wartime necessities was deemed a patriotic duty by the US government with the issue of Limitation Order 85. Clothes that met the restrictions might not have been fashionable without the help of magazines like Vogue. It is clear that rationing alone was not the biggest impact on fashion during the war years, it was, in fact, the idea of dressing in support of one's country as a patriotic duty that helped to propel rationing into fashionability.

### As the War Closed

By September, 1944, fashions were already beginning to change. Although L-85 restrictions and rationing were not near an end and the war would continue for another year, designers and magazines such as Vogue were ready for a change from these strict guidelines. Fall fashions for 1944 began to ease away from the strict, military simplicity and narrowness of 1942 and 1943. Although there was no defiance against fabric conservation, "Clues to this change are everywhere. Skirts are easing up. (Still there is no unfaithfulness to L-85, either in letter or spirit.)"<sup>58</sup> In this article, Vogue outrightly assured its readers that whatever fashions they see in the coming pages were still well within the limitation order. They were acknowledging that fashions were not being quite as conscious of saving fabric as they had in the past, but they were undoubtedly staying true to the war effort at home. In describing the silhouette of the coming year, Vogue's fashion editorial defended the fashionability of the fuller skirt.

"Many skirts are widening, easing up, moving off the Straight and Narrow, in nice ways. Some flare off to more width at the hem. Some, Like the three sketched here, are soft all the way around, with a measured fall of fullness. But all are easily within Government regulations."<sup>59</sup>

In the previous years of the war, Vogue had wholeheartedly supported government restrictions and here it was evident that they still did. However, in this particular season, they were encouraging women to wear less severely restricted styles of the past two years of war and, instead, dress more feminine.

---

<sup>57</sup> "Take The Measure Of Fashion." 75.

<sup>58</sup> "Autumn fashion collections... wardrobe plans, colour plans, costume plans." *Vogue*. September 1, 1944. 119.

<sup>59</sup> "Skirt situation-easing" *Vogue* September 1, 1944. 134.





The magazine was still encouraging women to dress within the regulations of government and support the war effort through their fashion choices. This marked a turning point in my research, in which Vogue began to move away from combining the war and fashion as one cohesive entity. At this time, I saw the shift of separation of fashion and the war; articles either talked about clothing and what was in style or only talked about the war with no regard toward a woman's wardrobe.

Later in September, 1944, Vogue's issues left out much talk of the war. Instead, the mention of the war was limited to one extensive article. Lee Miller, the famed war correspondent for Vogue in the 1940s, had written a "tell all" of her experience in a hospital in France. She wrote solely on her experiences: the fear of air raids, the death that surrounded the hospital and people she encountered during her time there. However, the only mention of fashion and the clothes that she wore, was a tiny label under her photograph. "Lee Miller in Special U.S. Photographer's Helmet, Her Stripes Painted on for Fun."<sup>61</sup> While this miniscule blurb of how the photographer chose to jazz up her military issued safety gear might be disregarded, the fact that it was mentioned showed that Vogue still had their eyes on what was fashionable during the war. The magazine was still looking at how women dressed as a show of support for the war effort even as the closing years to the conflict were well underway.

<sup>60</sup> "Skirt situation-easing" 134.

<sup>61</sup> Lee Miller, "U.S.A. Tent Hospital...In France" *Vogue*. September 15, 1944. 139.



62

Following Lee Miller's article on the bravery and experience of an American war hospital was an editorial on the biggest trends of the season. With such examples as ostrich feathers, the use of fur, and what colors could be paired together, it was a crash course in what was stylish for the 1944 Fall season. However, there were no practical explanations of how these fashions intersected with the war effort at home. Vogue was separating the idea of women, fashion and the war from one another by separating them within their articles. It could have been that in the closing years of the war, society was already starting its shift of women back into the domestic sphere as is seen in the 1950s and early postwar years. In the two September issues of 1944, there is no "Why Aren't You Working" campaign articles, nor was there an editorial on what fashions would best suit the new wardrobe of the woman involved in the war effort. In the second half of the US's time in World War II, Vogue seemed to be impacting fashion in an entirely new way than it had in January, 1942. A new found femininity was what the editorials were now portraying. "From a collection based solely on the laudable theory of understatement by day, eloquence by night; clothes that are worldly *and* pretty, entirely feminine..."<sup>63</sup> Instead of practicality, durability and how it coincided with the war, Vogue had determined that pretty and feminine were the most important qualities of fashion at this time. The magazine featured fashion as now removed from the war. The suit was no longer a uniform and going above the call of L-85 was not of the utmost importance.

### Conclusion

Previously it was accepted that rationing was the single factor that impacted fashion during World War II. Rationing was a major contributor, but it was also the encouragement of fashion magazines like Vogue that made being patriotic and adhering to government restrictions stylish and something women would actually want to participate in. Vogue made it socially acceptable for women to leave their homes and go to work for the war effort. They even showed women how they could dress for work and then convert into an acceptable, fashionable outfit for running around town. While the start of the war brought out a stylish wardrobe that was directly impacted by the war, the end of the war saw a decline in such attitudes. In the last two years of the war, fashion began to separate itself from the wartime wardrobe of women. At this time, Vogue found that fashion should be feminine and pretty but was still putting emphasis on American designers as being the best. Many factors went into fashion during Second World War, Vogue helped American women stay at the forefront of it.

<sup>62</sup> "By Sophie of Saks Fifth Avenue" 153.

<sup>63</sup> "By Sophie of Saks Fifth Avenue" *Vogue*. September 15, 1944. 152.

## Bibliography

### Primary

- "Autumn fashion collections... wardrobe plans, colour plans, costume plans." *Vogue*. September 1, 1944. 119.
- "By Sophie of Saks Fifth Avenue" *Vogue*. September 15, 1944.
- "Double Duty Lives: War Work + Home Work" *Vogue*, January 15, 1942.
- Evelyn Hill, "Good Mothers...Good Workers," *Vogue* July 1, 1943.
- "It Narrows Down To This" *Vogue*, September 1, 1943.
- Lee Miller, "U.S.A. Tent Hospital...In France" *Vogue*. September 15, 1944.
- "New York Story; Ready-to-wear collections" *Vogue*. September 1, 1945.
- "Skirt situation-easing" *Vogue*. September 1, 1944.
- "Top-Flight Designer Makes Work Uniform Pretty." *Vogue* July 1, 1943. 40.
- "Take The Measure Of Fashion." *Vogue*. September 15, 1943.
- "Top-Flight Designer Makes Work Uniform Pretty." *Vogue* July 1, 1943.

### Secondary

- Boardman, Michelle. "Shoulder to Shoulder: Women's Patriotic Scarves of World War II." *Dress (Costume Society Of America)* 25 (1998): 3-16.
- Buckland, Sandra Stansbery, "*Promoting American Designers, 1940-44: Building Our Own House.*" *The Berg Fashion Library*. 2005.
- <http://www.bergfashionlibrary.com/view/TCAF/chapter-TCAF0010.xml> (accessed 1 Dec. 2013).
- Delis Hill, Daniel. *As seen in Vogue; A century of American Fashion in Advertising*, Lubbock, Texas: Texas Tech University Press, 2004.
- Mason, Meghann. *The impact of World War II on women's fashion in the United States and Britain*. PhD diss., University of Nevada, 2011.
- Mower, Jennifer. "*Pretty and Patriotic*": *Women's Consumption of Apparel During World War II*." PhD diss., Oregon State University, 2011

# Armenian Nationalism: Emergent Political Organizations and Revolutionary Activity Surrounding the First World War

Connor Yeck

Most historical studies of Armenia and the First World War inevitably lean towards the brutalization of local peoples at the hands of the Ottoman Turks. This paper, however, aims to uncover a distinct trend of Armenian resistance during this period. Forged through Western ideologies, ineffective reform, international sympathy, and mounting violence, revolutionary organizations arose out of the fractured, nationalist landscape of the late Ottoman Empire, and provide unique glimpses of upheaval demonstrative of approaching chaos. Acting to counter well-known aggressions, and provide safety for Armenian communities, these political bodies remained extremely vocal surrounding the events of 1914-1918 and beyond.

On February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1915, the Ottoman interior ministry of Talaat Pasha issued Directive 8682.<sup>64</sup> Drafted in response to the disastrous status of imperial forces throughout the Caucasus and Suez, this correspondence not only encouraged increased domestic security, but openly warned of possible Armenian dissidence. Within this simple decree, it is possible to witness the sudden realization faced by the Ottoman state; namely, that fears of true revolt among Armenian communities had become a dire possibility, and therefore required federal attention. To provide a conclusive solution to such matters, the Sublime Porte chose to issue a further declaration in spring of the same year. Prominent Armenian community leaders, in Constantinople and abroad, were to be seized and detained on April 24<sup>th</sup> in what would be later be known as Red Sunday:

...the most recent rebellions...have demonstrated the continuing attempts of the Armenian committees to obtain, through their revolutionary and political organizations, an independent administration for themselves in Ottoman territory... You are therefore ordered to close down immediately all branches in your province...to immediately arrest all leaders and prominent members of the committees...and to transport them to other parts of the province, as not to give them the opportunity to engage in harmful acts.<sup>65</sup>

This preemptive measure, today commemorated as the beginning of sanctioned massacres, had a simple aim—by robbing any coherence from regimented dissidence, outright rebellion would collapse.<sup>66</sup> Such optimism, however, would prove wholly inadequate and ill-advised. Armenian resistance to Ottoman aggression during WWI was not created out of spontaneous insurgency, but rather spurred by decades-long organization within the framework of mounting nationalism. Honed by progressive ideologies, continual failure of promised reform, and increased harassment within Ottoman domains, the sentiments of Armenian nationalists

---

<sup>64</sup> David Gaunt, *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia During WWI* (Piscataway: Georgia Press, 2006), 66.

<sup>65</sup> Guenter Lewy, quoting Talaat Pasha, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005), 151.

<sup>66</sup> Daniel Allen Butler, *Shadow of the Sultan's Realm: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2011), 153.

would eventually coalesce to produce political-minded revolutionary organizations bent on the protection, democratic autonomy, and legitimacy of the Armenian people. In studying the trajectory of such movements, a remarkable persistence is discovered that extends well beyond the era of supposed genocide (1915-1918). Armenian nationalists skillfully adapted to the dynamics of contemporary upheaval, and thus maintained a presence that not only survived the turmoil of pre-war decades, but continued many years after the initial conflict. Though their goal of an enduring, independent Armenia would not be achieved until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, these revolutionaries offered hardened resistance to all transgression, and set upon any chance, domestic and abroad, for the betterment and protection of ethnic communities. Like the multitude of competing separatist bodies within the Ottoman state, the Armenian nationalists represent a distinct resistance that plays into a much larger history. Such movements tormented an already strained imperial structure, and would contribute immensely to its eventual and total collapse under the weight of a divided realm.

The relationship of nationalism and subversive political organizations can be examined as inseparable through prolonged, mutual histories. During the specific period of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, this is most notably examined in the studies of F. Müge Göçek, who provides a comparable analysis of nationalist movements and their presence during the waning years of Ottoman power. Through this research, several factors are seen as to provoke emerging nationalism; notably, the development of commercial ties with European nations, the occurrence of polarizing wars, and the presence of failed reforms.<sup>67</sup> From this framework, there then can occur cultural awakening, and above all, new ideas of personal identity within an imperial state. These characteristics can be directly witnessed among the Armenian peoples of this time. Intellectuals revisited Armenian history, focusing upon ancient, autonomous kingdoms;<sup>68</sup> scholars expanded and refined vernacular language, heralding a brief Armenian Renaissance based upon heroic legends;<sup>69</sup> foreign education grew in popularity, creating a generation of progressive-minded Diaspora;<sup>70</sup> while print journals flourished, popularizing patriotic ideals.<sup>71</sup> Through these combined elements, Armenian nationalism had found a basic structure capable of creating images of an ethno-religious identity; a new consciousness based on “past glories” and “oppressed condition.”<sup>72</sup> Yet among these varied components of nationalism, there arrives, Göçek notes, a further presence—that being the political organization. Within radical social movements, such parties came to play immeasurable roles. Regions, moved through cultural awareness, soon discovered the necessity for regimented action; and these groups, bent on revolutionary principles, were prepared to offer such opportunities while coming to function as a medium through which the “total mobilization” of the populace could be achieved.<sup>73</sup> In acting as a physical arm of the nationalist movement, they not only embodied the most defiant elements of communities such as the Armenian population, but became the tools through which the oftentimes violent task of nation-building could be achieved. With this understanding, it is then clear how distinct organizations would thrive in the chaotic years of the First World War.

---

<sup>67</sup> F. Müge Göçek, ed., *Social Constructions of Nationalism in the Middle East* (Albany: SUNY, 2002), 19-30.

<sup>68</sup> Göçek, 31-32.

<sup>69</sup> Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), 57-58.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 48-52.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 52-57.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 66.

<sup>73</sup> Göçek, 51

However, as is discovered, Armenian nationalism had matured at a dangerous point in regional affairs. Caught between Ottoman determinism and Russian intrigue, the movements of revolutionaries would suffer in the dynamic power-play of greater nations.

*Armenian Revolutionary Organizations: Hunchak and Dashnaktsutyun*

Rooted in the aforementioned social conditions, it is unsurprising to discover the vast collections of patriotic bodies which came to emerge throughout the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But for the purpose of analyzing Armenian revolutionaries, it is prudent to focus upon, above others, the Hunchaks and Dashnaktsutyun. These specific parties lack the brief-lived and indistinct nature of their contemporaries, and are advantageous to study for several reasons. Firstly, they represent groups which experienced large-scale organization in relation to areas of influence and physical presence; secondly, their existence was extremely pronounced, and therefore offers innumerable publicized episodes which aid in understanding tactics and ideological goals; and thirdly, both (in particular the Dashnaktsutyun) maintained an appearance within regional affairs for extended periods of time, and can be examined alongside other socio-political developments. Therefore, with these notions in mind, both organizations can be explored within the framework of evolving nationalism, and the likeminded agendas they came to follow.

The Hunchakian Revolutionary Party should be held, foremost, as a political structure brought about by enlightened, European circles. Founded in Geneva during the late 1880s, its initial assembly was comprised of Russian-Armenian youths sent abroad for a modern, Western education.<sup>74</sup> These students would adopt a Marxist ideology in their nationalist endeavors, and attempt to frame the struggle of producing an Armenian nation in regards to such philosophy. The Hunchak political program reveals a vision of continuous struggle bent on economic revolution and the fall of a corrupt and abusive Ottoman state.<sup>75</sup> Interpreting the anarchic conditions of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as signs of eventual collapse, the Hunchaks prepared their organization for opportunistic action. In a time of war, it was decided, a freed, socialist Armenia would be disentangled from the soon to be partitioned Ottoman Empire, and emerge as an autonomous state.<sup>76</sup> This program, in addition to ideological provisions, also explains the acceptable means through which such goals would be achieved. These included regional chapters and subcommittees, extensive propaganda, the use of terror, and the arming of irregular, citizenry groups

As with the Hunchaks, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, or Dashnaktsutyun (Federation), was conceived beyond the borders of Turkish Armenia with aims of radical involvement in Anatolian affairs. Formed within the Russian Empire, the Dashnaks' goal was to combine the otherwise scattered revolutionary efforts within Ottoman territories.<sup>77</sup> Through this general platform, the Hunchakian Party was absorbed by the Dashnaks for a short time, but would later sever itself with the coalition over dissatisfaction in the handling of Marxist affairs. Unlike the Hunchaks, however, the Dashnaktsutyun did not immediately advocate a fully independent Armenia, and instead campaigned for a land endowed with somewhat ambiguous

---

<sup>74</sup> Nalbandian, 104.

<sup>75</sup> "The Political Programme of the Hunchak Committee" in *Ottoman Archives*, ed. Ertuğrul Zekai Ökte (Istanbul: Istanbul Research Center, Historical Research Publishing Unit, 1989), 28-29.

<sup>76</sup> Ökte, 31.

<sup>77</sup> Nalbandian, 151.

economic and political freedoms.<sup>78</sup> Despite the large task afforded to this organization, and the rather nebulosity of its directives, members of the Dashnaksutyun would come to play part in arguably some of the most sensationalized and infamous episodes within pre-war Anatolia. Furthermore, this immeasurable presence would be maintained and furthered during WWI, and act as a forceful component in the eventual, desperate drive for an Armenian nation.

#### *Impact of the Hamidian Era: 1876-1909*

The core sentiments of Armenian revolutionaries originated in their disappointment with foreign and domestic policy. Gaining the perceived grounds for administrative change through various developments, political organizations faced repeated failures of promised reform, and therefore, felt greater encouragement and justification for radical action.

The ill-fated Armenian Question entered the realm of international politics with the close of the 1878 Russo-Turkish War. At this moment, territorial realignment had brought world attention to the newly autonomous Christian Balkan states (Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Montenegro.) In the conclusion of these post-war affairs, most concessions and agreements were facilitated by the Treaty of Berlin; an official accord that as well for the first time directly mentioned the Armenian peoples. The demands of this document, specifically Article LXI, would carry immense importance for nationalist movements. Armenians were promised protection from Kurdish tribal harassment, the implementation of provincial reforms, and subsequent Ottoman reports to the Great Powers on achieved progress.<sup>79</sup> In the same vein, an identical provision for guardianship was part of the Cyprus Convention that same year.<sup>80</sup> These developments led many advocates to believe legitimacy, and perhaps patronage had been established between Europe and Armenian communities. However, both pieces of international correspondence can be interpreted as producing similar outcomes. Follow-up attempts at achieving such reforms were deflected, delayed, or wholly ignored by the sultanate; despite their apparent authority over a failing Ottoman state, the Great Powers were undermined and received clear indication that their demands would not be met.<sup>81</sup> This medium of international inactivity, as Anatolia slid towards collapse, evolved into a central pillar of Armenian patriots. Harboring feelings of both dependency and abandonment towards the Great Powers, these groups not only began a ceaseless campaign of self-defense and armament, but one also of publicized sympathy to once again capture the attention of a powerful world that appeared absent as Armenians were put to the sword.

Facing the embarrassment of a lost Balkan claim and constant separatism among his realm, Sultan Abdul Hamid II's (r. 1876-1909) policies would prove as vital to the formation of nationalist movements as those of the listless European powers. The era was that of staunch overbearance and severity on the part of the empire to stem its own collapse; and therefore, as Göçek notes, the Armenians "faced a harsher, polarized, and more nationalistic Ottoman state."<sup>82</sup> Throughout the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the issue of Armenian populations had become a great inconvenience in attempts at imperial consolidation. International arrangements, as those

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 169.

<sup>79</sup> "Treaty Between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East" July 13, 1878. *The American Journal of International Law* 2, no. 4 (October, 1908): 401-424.

<sup>80</sup> "The Cyprus Convention of 1878". *National Union Gleanings* 7 (July-December, 1896): 229.

<sup>81</sup> Arman J. Kirakossian, *British Diplomacy and the Armenian Question* (Princeton and London: Gomidas Institute Books, 2003), 84-87.

<sup>82</sup> Göçek, 16.

previously mentioned, were seen as the meddling of European nations to stake an unwelcome claim within Ottoman affairs. Requests for reform, or threats of reprisals, came as affronts to the Sultan and his administration, and worked to steer such circles away from Armenian any sympathies.<sup>83</sup> As the Ottoman government attempted to regain its territorial integrity, Armenian groups only furthered a sense of unrest with increasingly drastic actions. Incidents in the regions of Zeitun (1894) and Sasun (1895) were met with brutal responses, while in Constantinople itself, a protest-turned riot (1895) and sudden seizure of the Ottoman Bank (1896) resulted in the indiscriminate slaughter of Armenia citizens.<sup>84</sup> This growing sense of distrust with the Armenian people, coupled with a collapsing imperial structure, resulted in an era of violent suppression collectively known as the Hamidian Massacres (1894-96). Revolutionary groups, nonetheless involved in the incidents mentioned above, witnessed the decimation of local, faultless communities at the hands of exploitive and unwieldy Kurdish *hamidiye* cavalry, and felt a sense of overwhelming justification to defend their peoples in hopes of radical alteration in policy that, it appeared, could soon arrive.<sup>85</sup>

When change did occur, and Abdul Hamid II was deposed in 1908 by elements of the Young Turk movement, there existed an era of apparent hope for Armenian domestic policies before the barbarism of WWI. A Westernized, secular ideology had come into power, and with it, as was imagined, a solution to the social and ethnic problems which riddled the empire. Of all peoples, it were the Armenians who had the greatest chance for reform. The Dashnaksutyun, alongside other underground elements from Anatolia, had participated in the overthrow with the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), and had thus become the de facto voice of Armenians within the new administration.<sup>86</sup> Short-term concessions, however, were meager. Political intrigue within Constantinople proved fatal to amiable relations, and after being replaced by a peripheral political group, members of the CUP staged a second coup in 1913. This movement, headed by the triumvirate of Enver, Talaat, and Djemal Pasha, would steer the Ottoman state beneath a banner of Pan-Turkism in attempts to salvage a splintered imperium.<sup>87</sup> The Young Turks distanced themselves from Armenian revolutionaries, and favored Muslim-Kurdish elements over distraught Anatolian Christians in their own nationalistic efforts.<sup>88</sup> Left with this tension, Armenian parties received further encouragement of outright revolt.

#### *Dashnaksutyun and Hunchak Pre-War Activities*

Between both parties, the Hunchaks and Dashnaks shared generalized goals while attempting to insure the protection and betterment of the Armenian people. Among city-strongholds and rural networks of *fedayi* militia, these agenda-based actions and desires can be summarized as thus: demands for a democratically independent/autonomous Armenia; implementation of promised reforms; the protection and armament of local populations; the widespread organization of provincial offices/subcommittees to spread revolutionary principles;

---

<sup>83</sup> Lewy, 8-10.

<sup>84</sup> Lewy, 22-29; Selim Deringil, "The Armenian Question Is Finally Closed": Mass Conversions of Armenians in Anatolia during the Hamidian Massacres of 1895-1897" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 2 (2009): 334-371.

<sup>85</sup> Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militants in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 3-19, 52-94.

<sup>86</sup> Roderic H. Davison, "The Armenian Crisis, 1912-1914" *The American Historical Review* 53, no. 3 (1948): 481-505.

<sup>87</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence* (Los Angeles: UCLA Press, 1967), 29-30.

<sup>88</sup> Davison, 482-83.



the extensive use of propaganda; the use of terror against Ottoman forces—military, administrative, and allied peoples; the decision to launch a coordinated attempt at revolt when national powers were preoccupied with war; the full attention, sympathy, and subsequent involvement of European nations in the Armenian struggle. It was this final condition, however, one of international recognition, which came to dominate pivotal cases of Armenian insurrection described in the succeeding section.

On the cusp of Hamidian atrocities, Armenian revolutionaries easily demonstrated the far-reaching purpose of their goals and the means by which the Ottoman state would be coerced into desirable action. The Hunchaks, for example, instigated violence in 1894 within the region of Sasun. Though these minor skirmishes were viewed as attempted revolt and therefore brutally crushed by government forces, they would nonetheless come to represent a historic accomplishment.<sup>89</sup>

The incident at Sasun was, beyond all else, an event to garner the sensational attention of foreign audiences. While the Ottoman state had previously offered such violent suppression to separatist activities—most notable being Albanian populations during the Balkan Wars—this particular episode took on dimensions far more severe than the former. Occurring at the perceived height of decline of an outdated empire, events such as Sasun gained special attention in the ‘West’. To be simply put: the revolutionary attempts of Albanians had been made by a Muslim peoples, while Armenians remained distinct, albeit distant Christians. Taken up by the sympathies of foreign press, Armenian revolutionaries had discovered their most potent tool in the pursuit of international leverage. The popular culture of Europe was more than willing to accept Ottomans being pitted as the historically ‘backwards’ Muslim Turks who reveled in sectarian violence. Exemplary headlines are innumerable. At Sasun itself, docile Christians were reported as having been cremated alive;<sup>90</sup> while in Orfah, such were slaughtered in the same manner as the Meccan lambs of the hajj, killed nonetheless in the presence of a Sheikh who recited verses from the Qur’an.<sup>91</sup> These sentiments were not merely confined to the European continent, and found ample footing in the United States as well. The most glaring testimonial to this can perhaps be seen in a work from 1896, simply entitled *Armenian Massacres*. Dedicated by its somber publishers to “the memory of the Christians massacred in Armenia by the Sword of Mohammed”, it offers clear evidence of the nearly hysteric attitude taken against Ottoman forces in portraying their attempts at consolidation and suppression. Here, 15,000 were slaughtered...The Kurds plunder, but do not generally kill unless resisted; but the Turks kill in cold blood and in ways suggested by the Arch-Fiend himself. The fate of the survivors is even worse that of those who have been killed...Everywhere they meet the dread alternative, ‘Become Moslems or die.’<sup>92</sup>

Through an outpouring of public outrage and horror at this supposed barbarism, the Great Powers were pressured to act. In direct response to Sasun, European states drafted a body of reforms to be immediately impressed upon the Sultan’s administration.<sup>93</sup> Such was the outcry over certain matters, that some Turkish sources cite the actions at Sasun a scheme solely and wholeheartedly enacted for the purpose of gaining European support, rather than any attempt at

---

<sup>89</sup> Nalbandian, 122.

<sup>90</sup> “Burned Their Bodies.” *Detroit Free Press*, Jul 15, 1895.

<sup>91</sup> “Awful: Details of Massacre.” *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Jun 13 1896.

<sup>92</sup> Frederick Davis Greene, *Armenian Massacres* (Oxford: American Oxford Publishing Co., 1896), 36.

<sup>93</sup> David Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 190-196.

revolutionary advancement.<sup>94</sup> Still, with these realities carefully in mind, the Hunchak-instigators of the incident found themselves prepared for other opportunities—one such instance being the Bab Ali demonstration of the following year. Prior to marching on the Sultan's residence in delivery of a petition, extensive precautions were taken by revolutionaries to insure freedom from blame. The Sublime Porte itself was informed of the intentions for a civil, non-violent protest, with a correspondence explaining "the intervention of the police and military...may have regrettable consequences, for which we disclaim beforehand all responsibility." But moreover, this same assurance was sent to numerous foreign embassies throughout Constantinople on the eve of the demonstration.<sup>95</sup> Thus, when a small melee between guardsmen and revolutionaries escalated into the blind slaughter of Armenian citizens, international backlash was quick to follow. The humble demands of the Armenians were printed abroad, while European powers forced the sultanate to sign one of many eventual reform packages which spurred temporary hopes.<sup>96</sup>

Accordingly, the Dashnaks followed suit in events of notoriety and publicity. On August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1896, an armed band of party-members seized the Ottoman Bank of Constantinople.<sup>97</sup> The individuals claimed intention of siege and destruction of the building if their demands for reform were not met, and directly appealed to the Great Powers in such matters. The takeover of this well-known institution had not been done merely in aim of destroying imperial property, but rather for the fact that the Ottoman Bank was a critical and lucrative Franco-British enterprise.<sup>98</sup> Pressured by this situation, European nations could not help but intervene. Their mediation ended the siege not only with a tentative agreement to demands, but as well asylum for the fighters in France—far from the Armenian pogrom which followed the bank's seizure.<sup>99</sup> Alongside this infamous demonstration, the Dashnaks are also credited with a failed attempt on Abdul Hamid II's life in 1905 outside the imperial Yıldız Mosque.<sup>100</sup> However, in regards to the event of WWI, this organization's most crucial contributions were its prominent operations in Eastern Anatolia. With the Van Vilayet (administrative district) firmly beneath their control, and arms freely flowing between Russo-Iranian territories into Turkish Armenia,<sup>101</sup> the Dashnaktsutyun sat poised to begin a competent resistance as Ottoman forces became entangled in global conflict.

### *Revolutionary Presence, 1914-1918*

Upon the empire's sudden entry into war in late summer 1914, Armenian revolutionaries were faced with weakened standings between themselves and the Ottoman administration. The Young Turks had requested Armenian communities act as provocateurs along Russia's Transcaucasia border; but this was rejected by the Dashnaks in favor of neutrality and continued efforts of potential reform.<sup>102</sup> Nonetheless, as 1915 began, these hopes were shattered alongside

---

<sup>94</sup> Ökte, 65.

<sup>95</sup> Nalbandian, 123-124.

<sup>96</sup> "Text Of The Armenian Protest." *New York Times*, Nov 10, 1895; Rodogno, 197.

<sup>97</sup> "Rebel Attack On Constantinople." *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Aug 27, 1896.

<sup>98</sup> Manoug Joseph Somakian, *Empire in Conflict: Armenia and the Great Powers, 1895-1920* (London & New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 1995), 19.

<sup>99</sup> Kirakossian, 263-268.

<sup>100</sup> "Blown To Death." *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Jul 24, 1905.

<sup>101</sup> Justin McCarthy et al, *The Armenian Rebellion at Van* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2006), 93-98.

<sup>102</sup> Hovannisian, 40-42.

Enver Pasha's "Pan-Turanian" army at the hands of the Caucasian winter.<sup>103</sup> Aided by logistical failures on the part of the Turks, Russian forces (bolstered by Russian-Armenian volunteers as well as native Turkish-Armenians) began a steady westward advance.<sup>104</sup> This uncontrollable decline would lead the Ottoman state to instigate infamous episodes such as the Red Sunday of Constantinople on April 24; and moreover, the Tehcir (Displacement) Law of late May, which began the systematic movement of Armenian populations into the imperial interior.<sup>105</sup> As mass deportations came to degenerate into massacres and increased abuse, far-flung Armenian populations began to act under the guiding hand of revolutionary leadership. Though scattered and short-lived, these early years of war maintained movements of resistance which seized opportunities of turmoil to undermine and challenge Ottoman power.

Of specific examples of Armenian resistance recorded outside the Siege of Van, the majority resulted from the loose military framework established by revolutionaries in provincial settings. An image of large scale regional organization had long been sought as a necessity of successful revolt. The Marxist Hunchaks, in their political agenda, felt obligated to win the support of the peasant and working masses. These populations would not only serve to strengthen guerilla numbers, but act as a foundation for a freed Armenia after successful revolution.<sup>106</sup> The Dashnaks followed similar paths, stating the need for direct interaction with the Armenian people, and an overarching presence in the form of committees and protection.<sup>107</sup> By the time of outright war, both parties had managed to permeate the society of the otherwise disconnected areas of Eastern Anatolia. Villages and rural communities had been instructed on the creation of militant bands, with information on administrative guidelines, acquisition of arms, and the sheltering of fellow fighters being received through inconspicuous mediums; one such Dashnak pamphlet, dated 1910, cited as being spread through local religious figures.<sup>108</sup> The foundations and presence of these resistances, while draining and disruptive on Ottoman forces, were often met with disastrous results. Prolonged operations are seen as difficult to maintain, and to often collapse with horrific ramifications for the local populace.

With scattered reports of disarmament, arrests, and wholesale killing, Armenian revolts often escalated through movements of self-defense.<sup>109</sup> At Zeitun, the historic site of an 1895 rebellion, the Hunchaks spurred an extremely effective resistance as Enver Pasha's armies had just begun their advance into the Caucasus.<sup>110</sup> This insurgency, however, was to be overrun early next year. Identical episodes across Anatolia are dutifully recorded in Dasnabedian's history of the Dashnaksutyun, and are interpreted as following a similar pattern: the population of Shabin Karahisar revolted in response to disarmament, resulting in massacres when fighters no longer remained supplied; in the region of Sasun, Dashnak munitions and province-wide defensive coordination staved off Ottoman advances, but eventually succumbed in part to sporadic,

---

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>104</sup> "Armenian Troops Capture Erzurum." *The Washington Post*, Apr 5, 1918; "Turkish Armenians In Armed Revolt." *New York Times*, Nov 13, 1914.

<sup>105</sup> Arshavir Shiragian, *The Legacy: Memoirs of an Armenian Patriot* (Boston: Hairenik Press, 1976), 10-12; Lewy, 152.

<sup>106</sup> Nalbandian, 111.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 168.

<sup>108</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Aspirations et Agissements Revolutionnaires des Comités Arméniens avant et après la Proclamation de la Constitution Ottomane* (Ankara, 2001), 179-186.

<sup>109</sup> Hratch Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation* (Milan: Grafiche Editoriali Ambrosiane, 1988), 110.

<sup>110</sup> "Deal Blow To Turks." *The Washington Post* (1877-1922): 3. Nov 13, 1914.

confusing movements of nearby Russian armies; embattled fighters on the Cilician coast took to mountainous enclaves, and were eventually evacuated by French warships to Port Said.<sup>111</sup> Besides these far-reaching, often short-lived examples of Armenian resistance, the Siege of Van in the spring of 1915 is worth elevation as a distinct effort which demonstrates revolutionaries' highly organized presence.

The Van Vilayet had long been a power-base for the Dashnaktsutyun. Rebellions had occurred in both 1896 and 1906, and the region had been home to assassination plots against its mayors and governors by Armenian fighters.<sup>112</sup> Under the apparent liberty afforded by an alliance with the CUP, Dashnaks had continued unbridled, pro-revolutionary activities without fear. The party held political strength and immunity in the region due to their brief Young Turk affiliation, and in 1908, even managed to nullify Ottoman Parliamentary elections after dissatisfaction with those chosen for the Van administration; similarly, the governor of the province would come to be removed at the party's request.<sup>113</sup> This temporary freedom proved critical for revolutionaries, who still fermented aspects of revolt and separation from Ottoman control. Over his period, Van had effectively transformed into a regional terminus for smuggled arms. The Dashnaks provided munitions to the people of the region, as well as warned of coming religious violence.<sup>114</sup> Additionally, the organization laid the groundwork for a trained, competent resistance. Manuals entitled "Instructions for Personal Defense" were circulated among Armenian communities, outlining techniques for waging effective partisan warfare.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, as situational conditions deteriorated, region-wide counter-activities began. Communications and transportation were disrupted by irregulars to such a point that, according to McCarthy, entire Ottoman divisions were retired in order to maintain internal peace; while in this simultaneous state of lawlessness, indiscriminate brigandage and sectarian violence flared between Armenian and Muslim populations.<sup>116</sup> Despite Ottoman attempts at suppression, Eastern Anatolia had emerged "completely at war" in March of 1915.<sup>117</sup>

The cause of the revolt in the physical city of Van is often disputed between historical sources; still it is clear that by late April, outright fighting had begun. Within their titular quarter, the Armenian populace rallied beneath the Dashnak-led body of revolutionary parties known as the Military Committee of Armenian Self-Defense.<sup>118</sup> This organization would oversee dimensions of the resistance such as munitions production, weapons distribution, and the building of fortifications. These revolutionary forces, despite nearby superior Turkish units, proved immovable through resourceful, desperate measures. The true intricacies of the city's defense can be best revealed through the recollections of Clarence D. Ussher, an American physician present within Van during its siege:

The Armenians joined house to house, built walls at night, and dug trenches across the roads. They built walls within walls to withstand the Turkish artillery and soon found just how thick these must be in order to stop the Turkish shells. The Turks would fire a volley with rifles and the Armenians would reply with pistols, but with surprising accuracy. Small boys would watch

---

<sup>111</sup> Dasnabedian, 110-115; Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, *Documents* (Ankara: Başarı Matbaacılık Sanayi, 1982), Document No. 37, 103.

<sup>112</sup> McCarthy et al, 115, 164-165.

<sup>113</sup> McCarthy et al, 135

<sup>114</sup> British Foreign Office, 195/2949, Molyneux-Seel to Lowther, Van, February 17, 1913.

<sup>115</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Aspirations et Agissements Revolutionnaires*. 67-70

<sup>116</sup> McCarthy, Justin, *The Ottoman Turks: An Introductory History to 1923* (London: Longman, 1997), 364.

<sup>117</sup> McCarthy et al, 195.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid, 201.

their chance, dash to the door of a Turkish position with a bundle of rags saturated with kerosene, ignite it, fan it with a fez or cap till the door was blazing and the smoke driving the Turks out, and then run back.<sup>119</sup>

However tenacious this resistance, it, like all others, was endangered by continuous exposure to Ottoman regulars. The chaos of the war's early months had begun to settle, giving the Turks a chance to redirect efforts at ending the Van rebellion.<sup>120</sup> However, to the rebels' great hope, a timely relief was reached in early May through Russian and Russian-Armenian reinforcements. Yet this apparent victory, accompanied with an Armenian governorship that gave glimpses autonomy, was short-lived. The ebb and flow of Russian and Ottoman offensives was entirely unpredictable. A counteroffensive by the Ottomans retook Van in late summer, only to lose it once more in January of the following year. It wasn't until 1917, with the advent of Russian revolutionary turmoil, that the military climate of Eastern Anatolia settled with an Ottoman presence. By then, the region had been gutted through mass exoduses of populations in wake of shifting armies, particularly those Armenians seeking refuge across the Russian border. Despite the scale and strength of the revolt at Van, and the undeniable impact it had on siphoning Ottoman resources away from other critical ventures, it ultimately failed. With the region known as Turkish Armenia once more in 'foreign' hands, and global conflict coming to a close, the prospects of revolutionaries now turned to salvaging any possibility of an established, sovereign state to the east.

### *Transcaucasian Presence of Revolutionary Organizations*

Facing their numerous Anatolian setbacks, Armenian nationalists demonstrated persistence and flexibility in pursuit of similar endeavors among Russia's Transcaucasian territories. In this region of ever-changing political chaos, such nationalistic groups welcomed a dynamic and often unstable environment that placed them at the forefront of localized affairs. Here, revolutionary bodies found themselves with rare positions of administrative power, and chances at providing the greatest tangible results yet afforded to the Armenian people. Though nearly achieving permanent autonomy, these efforts would ultimately falter beneath a newer, and greater power that had taken interest in the region.

Tenuous bonds had long existed between the Russian Empire and the populations of Transcaucasia and Turkish Armenia, oftentimes in relation to predatory, Ottoman movements; therefore, with the advent of global warfare, the Tsarist government of Petrograd once again turned to the territory in hopes of reclamation. This prospect is fully noted by the fact that both Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot—the guiding hands behind the partition of the Ottoman realm—gave assurances that Russian annexations of certain Anatolian provinces would go unchallenged in the course of the war.<sup>121</sup> These potential acquisitions, however, would be left unfulfilled. In February 1917, the first episode of the Russian Revolution began with the deposition of Tsar Nicholas II, and with it came a renewed sense of Armenian determination. Transcaucasia quickly transformed into a collection of hopeful soviets aligned with Petrograd; and shortly after, the region of then-Russian occupied Turkish Armenia was elevated beyond

---

<sup>119</sup> Clarence D. Ussher, *An American Physician in Turkey* (New York and Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1917), 250.

<sup>120</sup> Mesut Uyar and Edward J. Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2009), 267.

<sup>121</sup> Hovannisian, 59-60.

local jurisdiction and placed under direct control of the Provisional Government.<sup>122</sup> At this moment, the officialdom and recognition sought by Armenian nationalists seemed near at hand. Of course, revolutionary turmoil was far from settled. Political bodies such as the Bolsheviks found the current status quo as an ‘incomplete revolution’, and continued to vocalize their presence throughout Transcaucasia much to the annoyance of competing parties. It was here, at summits such as the First Regional Conference of Caucasian Bolshevik Organizations, that groups like the Dashnaktsutyun came under scrutiny for their patriotic principles. Bolshevik entities labeled Armenian movements as those of “bourgeois-nationalist parties”, and heavily condemned their activities which were seen as harmful to the new collective masses.<sup>123</sup> Finding this ideological conflict already in place, and Russian governmental integrity beginning to falter, it became clear to Armenian nationalists that greater steps must be taken to achieve any prospect of true independence. This would come about in the way of eventual separation from any existing power, and a total realignment of the Transcaucasian political climate.

Following a fragile year of reorganization, it was in October 1917 when Bolshevik elements finally seized power from an incompetent interim administration. Here, Armenian nationalists faced a paradoxical relationship with the new regime, as despite the aforementioned conflicts, the common sentiment of hopeful revolutionaries was the involvement of a powerful Russian state. Without a legitimate presence to solidify autonomous claims, it was determined there could be no Armenia; thus, when figures such as Vladimir Lenin denounced his new state’s continued activity in regions such as Turkish Armenia, revolutionaries were once more faced with abandonment and defeat.<sup>124</sup> While the inherited war of the Tsarist regime was held as an imperialistic enterprise threatening the weakened Russian state;<sup>125</sup> Armenian parties, in contrast, cried out at the thought of an emptied front—without Russian determent, Armenia would vanish, and Turkish advances would once again swallow the vulnerable region.<sup>126</sup> However, through desperation on part of the Bolsheviks, these objections were brushed aside. In an attempt to halt a German offensive launched in February 1918, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was drafted by Petrograd on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, effectively ending hostilities between the Central Powers and Russia. The text of the document, among other items, ominously called for an evacuation of Russian troops from Anatolia, as well as the disbanding of Armenian irregulars.<sup>127</sup> From this moment onwards, Transcaucasia can be seen to begin its timely drift towards frail and marginal sovereignty. The region’s amalgamated collection of soviets thereafter united beneath the banner of a Transcaucasia Commissariat. Supportive of the Provisional Government in the newly-begun Russian Civil War, this body immediately faced the prospect of an eastern-facing Turkish offensive that had begun in early spring. Beneath the pressure of this inherent threat, the multitudes of the Commissariat voiced wishes to break away from distant Russia altogether. On this development, the Dashnaks were faced with a critical choice. Remaining loyal to a still-powerful Russia would entertain hopes of a sanctioned, autonomous Armenia; doing so,

<sup>122</sup> Pascual C. Ohanian, *La Cuestion Armenia y las Relaciones Internacionales - Tomo 3* (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Ciencias de la Republica de Armenia, 2010), Page 523.

<sup>123</sup> Hovannisian, 85-93.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>125</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, *Looking Toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 123.

<sup>126</sup> Hovannisian, 96-98.

<sup>127</sup> Avalon Project at Yale Law School, “Foreign Relations of the United States : 1918 The Conclusion of the Peace of Brest Litovsk.” Lillian Goldman Law Library. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/bl04.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/bl04.asp) (accessed Feb. 21, 2014).

however, would also work to drive away Transcaucasian allies in light of impending Turkish advances.<sup>128</sup> Thus, with reluctance, Armenian nationalists favored the latter. A separate government was brought into existence, though entirely unprepared to deal with the situation at hand.<sup>129</sup> By the end of May, the short-lived Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic had dissolved. In chaotic attempts at consolidating any sort of independent claim, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia each broke away into separate entities. Declared independent by the Dashnak-led Armenian National Council, the dream of a free, autonomous Armenia was suddenly achieved on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1918.<sup>130</sup>

The First Republic of Armenia was fraught with difficulties from the moment of its inception. Though it had been stabilized by a hasty peace-agreement with the Turks shortly after the breakup of the Transcaucasian alliance, this truce offered little hope of gain for the new nation; Ottoman forces were given full access to Armenian roads and railways, and reserved the right to occupy the young republic if it failed to maintain peace.<sup>131</sup> Within its own borders, Armenia was in shambles. Nearly half of the population was comprised of starving refugees from wartime migrations, and its first year was marred with unrest at lack of supplies such as fuel and medicine.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, the new nation was only one of three in the distraught region. Conflicts with Georgia and Muslim Azerbaijan were inevitable over undeclared borders, and only contributed to its decline. Still, it were greater, external forces which would ultimately demolish the prospect of a freed Armenia. Since 1919, Turkish nationalists beneath Mustafa Kemal had been waging an insurgency against occupying Allied forces throughout Anatolia.<sup>133</sup> This revolutionary government had recently turned to Bolshevik Russia, and with the signing of a friendship-pact at Moscow, both then-unrecognized factions determinedly nullified the legislation of the Treaty of Sèvres—a war-ending decree signed by the victorious Entente powers which also allocated lands and rights to the Armenian people.<sup>134</sup> Acting beyond international jurisdiction, Turkish forces then drove east in September of 1920. Shortly after their advance, the Bolsheviks descended from Russia, offering timely deliverance to the Armenian Republic in the form of becoming a soviet state. With little choice between colliding forces and total disarray, the Armenian administration accepted, and on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Republic had ceased to be.<sup>135</sup>

During the chaotic two-year span which resulted in the demise of an independent Armenia, it is nonetheless vital to examine the works of nationalist movements. Revolutionary activities never faltered under this apparent collapse, and instead continued in determined efforts to produce a legitimate, and capable Armenian state. It is during this time that the enduring presence of such organizations came to play even greater roles, and worked to reveal an unending bond between the nation of Armenia and entities such as the Dashnaktsutyun. Perhaps most notable is the fact that the Dashnaks not only furnished the weak republic with its governmental community—all four prime ministers being of party rank—but as well acted as a militant arm capable of providing defense against leery neighbors in the absence of any foreign

---

<sup>128</sup> Hovannisian, 160.

<sup>129</sup> Suny, 125.

<sup>130</sup> George A. Bournoutian, *A History of the Armenian People* (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1994), 131.

<sup>131</sup> Hovannisian, 197.

<sup>132</sup> Bournoutian, 134-135.

<sup>133</sup> Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), 287.

<sup>134</sup> Charlotte Hille, *State Building and Conflict Resolution in the Caucasus* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 100; “The Treaty of Peace Between the Allied and Associated Powers and Turkey” August 10, 1920. *The Treaties of Peace 1919-1923* (1924).

<sup>135</sup> Bournoutian, 147-149.

aid.<sup>136</sup> Beyond uniting a struggling community beneath revolutionary politics, the group also committed itself to lead the infamous, retributive actions of a post-war world. The 1918 Ninth World Congress of the Dashnaktsutyun produced, among its proceedings, the planning of the overtly-named Operation Nemesis. This international effort was comprised of Armenian organizations seeking to locate those deemed responsible for crimes committed against the Armenian peoples.<sup>137</sup> As a result, leading Ottoman individuals such as Talaat and Djemal Pasha—already having been sentenced to death in absentia by Turkish courts—were assassinated by Armenians with direct ties to the Dashnaks.<sup>138</sup> Such episodes would not only serve to complicate unresolved Turko-Armenian relations, but also act as controversial evidence in deeming whether inter-war massacres were justified against perceived ‘unruly’ communities. Nonetheless, these events highlight the enduring prominence of revolutionaries; and likewise, their continued prevalence even when a freed, united Armenia had become an unlikelihood under contemporary pressures.

### *Conclusion*

Though seemingly defeated in their endeavors to produce a wholly sovereign and distinctly Armenian state, the original revolutionaries of the late Ottoman era should be viewed as part of a greater phenomenon. Whether Kurd, Greek, Serb, Arab, Armenian or other, the many peoples of the Ottoman Empire had long started upon unalterable paths to ensure and promote personal ethno-religious identities. Tempered by potent ideologies, foreign entanglement, and the perceived failures of the powers to be, these 19<sup>th</sup> century communities immeasurably hastened the disintegration of the Ottoman state well before foreign invasion and the events of the First World War. Encouraged by patriotic sentiments and cultural pride, such movements inevitably produced infamous collections of political parties; those of which, Göçek holds, were entirely vital to any long-lasting achievement on the part of nationalist campaigns. Entities like the Dashnaktsutyun and Hunchaks provided tangible outlets for the intellectual demands sought by a mobilized people. Such bodies were natural instruments in the elusive task of nation-building, and were more than willing to create, or counter, the drastic realities which came about in the tumultuous process. Though often violently suppressed, the impact of such resistance was undeniable. The Ottoman Empire could no longer exist, torn along ethnic lines in a rapidly developing world; nor ever hope to entirely end its internal quarreling. The revolutionary products of 19<sup>th</sup> century nationalism endured the numerous hardships in their decades-spanning history, and evolved to survive their many shortcomings and defeats. Therefore, it is fitting to see nearly eight decades after its collapse, an Armenia state reemerge from Soviet withdrawal; and more so, to see its administration populated by Diasporic elements of the Dashnaks and Hunchaks long kept abroad since the fall of the brief-lived, but determined First Republic.<sup>139</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> Dasnabedian, 129.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, 155.

<sup>138</sup> Talaat Pasha Slain In Berlin Suburb." *New York Times*, Mar 16, 1921;

"Djemal Pasha, Fugitive, Assassinated in Tiflis; Condemned as Author of Armenian Massacres." *New York Times*, Jul 26, 1922.

<sup>139</sup> Gerard J. Libaridian, ed., *Modern Armenia: People, Nation, State* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 221.



## Bibliography

### Primary

- "Armenian Protest." *New York Times*, Nov 10, 1895.
- "Armenian Troops Capture Erzurum." *The Washington Post*, Apr 5, 1918.
- "Foreign Relations of the United States : 1918 The Conclusion of the Peace of Brest Litovsk." Avalon Project at Yale Law School. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/bl04.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/bl04.asp) (accessed Feb. 21, 2014).
- "Awful: Details of Massacre." *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Jun 13, 1896
- "Blown to Death." *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Jul 24, 1905.
- British Foreign Office, 195/2949, "Molyneux-Seel to Lowther, Van, February 17, 1913."
- "Burned Their Bodies." *Detroit Free Press*, Jul 15, 1895.
- "Djemal Pasha, Fugitive, Assassinated in Tiflis; Condemned as Author of Armenian Massacres." *New York Times*, Jul 26, 1922.
- Ökte, Ertuğrul Zekai, ed. *Ottoman Archives*. Istanbul: Istanbul Research Center, Historical Research Publishing Unit, 1989.
- Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information. *Documents*. Ankara: Başarı Matbaacılık Sanayi, 1982.
- "Rebel Attack on Constantinople." *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Aug 27, 1896.
- Shiragian, Arshavi. *The Legacy: Memoirs of an Armenian Patriot*. Boston: Hairenik Press, 1976.
- "Talaat Pasha Slain In Berlin Suburb." *New York Times*, Mar 16, 1921.
- "Text Of The Armenian Protest." *New York Times*, Nov 10, 1895.
- "The Treaty of Peace Between the Allied and Associated Powers and Turkey" August 10, 1920. *The Treaties of Peace 1919-1923* (1924).
- "The Cyprus Convention of 1878" *National Union Gleanings* 7, (1896).
- "Treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East: Signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878". *The American Journal of International Law* 2 (1908)
- "Turkish Armenians In Armed Revolt." *New York Times*, Nov 13 1914.
- Ussher, Clarence D. *An American Physician in Turkey*. New York and Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1917.

### Secondary

- Bournoutian, George A. *A History of the Armenian People*. Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1994.
- Butler, Daniel Allen. *Shadow of the Sultan's Realm: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*. Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2011.
- Dasnabedian, Hratch. *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation*. Milan: Grafiche Editoriali Ambrosiane, 1988.
- Davison, Roderic H. "The Armenian Crisis, 1912-1914". *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (1948)
- Deringil, Selim. "'The Armenian Question Is Finally Closed': Mass Conversions of Armenians in Anatolia during the Hamidian Massacres of 1895-1897" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Volume 51, Issue 2. (2009) 334-371.
- Gaunt, David. *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia During*. Piscataway: Georgia Press, 2006.

- Göçek, F. Müge, ed. *Social Constructions of Nationalism in the Middle East*. Albany: SUNY, 2002.
- Greene, Frederick Davis. *Armenian Massacres*. Oxford: American Oxford Publishing Co., 1896.
- Hille, Charlotte. *State Building and Conflict Resolution in the Caucasus*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Hovannisian, Richard G. *Armenia on the Road to Independence*. Los Angeles: UCLA Press, 1967.
- Kazemzadeh, Firuz. *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1951.
- Kirakossian, Arman J. *British Diplomacy and the Armenian Question*. Princeton and London: Gomidas Insitute Books, 2003.
- Klein, Janet. *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militants in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011.
- Lewy, Guenter. *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005.
- Libaridian, Gerard J, ed. *Modern Armenia: People, Nation, State*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007.
- McCarthy, Justin et al. *The Armenian Rebellion at Van*. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2006.
- *The Ottoman Turks: An Introductory History to 1923*. London: Longman, 1997.
- Nalbandian, Louise. *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963.
- Ohanian, Pascual C. *La Cuestion Armenia y las Relaciones Internacionales - Tomo 3*. Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Ciencias de la Republica de Armenia, 2010.
- Rodogno, David. *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Somakian, Manoug Joseph. *Empire in Conflict: Armenia and the Great Powers, 1895-1920*. London & New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 1995.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor. *Looking Toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Turkey, Republic of. *Aspirations et Agissements Revolutionnaires des Comités Arméniens avant et après la Proclamation de la Constitution Ottomane*. Ankara, 2001.
- Uyar, Mesut and Erickson, Edward J. *A Military History of the Ottomans*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2009.

# Bandits and Heroes: The Partisan Struggle in the Soviet Union

Greg Spenchian

The partisan war in the Soviet Union during the Great Patriotic War has recently been the subject of renewed academic interest. The official history of the Soviet period hailed the struggle as a spontaneous and heroic rebellion of the proletariat, while their Nazi oppressors largely categorized the partisans as bandits and thieves. Drawing from a myriad of primary and secondary sources, many from the Stalinist era of Soviet history, this project is an attempt to build on past scholarship and answer some significant questions about the nature of the partisan struggle, as well as its lasting legacy in Soviet history.

The partisans of the Great Patriotic War have, in the years since 1945, occupied a central place in the pantheon of Soviet heroes. The official narrative is straightforward; left in the wake of the sweeping German advances of 1941-42, the citizens of the Soviet Union took up arms behind enemy lines, committing courageous acts of sabotage and resistance against the fascist invader, battling heroically against all odds for the motherland. While this is a politically convenient story, it leaves many of the more complex aspects of the partisan war unexplained. Those who fought, hailed as heroic defenders of the Soviet Union, often had no other option. The brutality of the German program of racial genocide in the East and the harsh retaliatory measures by the partisans themselves made everyday life for the local population unbearable. The partisan movement was initially conceptualized and implemented by the Soviet high command as a force of dependable Communists, appointees who often had difficulty adapting to the realities of working alongside Red Army soldiers and civilians. The composition of the average partisan unit would shift only by the final years of the war into a genuine movement of mass participation, as more citizens sought to prove their loyalty to the victorious Soviet Union and distance themselves from the hated German occupiers. The tension between Soviet authorities, Red Army troops, and the local populations caused by the partisan war would also act as catalysts for decades of social stratification, exacerbated by Soviet attitudes toward those who had lived in occupied territory. As a result, the partisan movement not only contributed directly to the war effort and the restructuring of occupied territory, it brought issues of societal division to the attention of authorities, soldiers, and civilians alike. This would have an enduring effect on society in the Soviet Union for decades after the war's official conclusion.

The basic circumstance that made the partisan movement unique in World War II is the tremendous scope of the initial German invasion, and the subsequent loss of such a massive amount of territory to the Wehrmacht. Inexplicably surprised by the beginning of Operation Barbarossa on 22 June 1941, the Red Army was decimated by the lightning assault of the German Army. Degen Lazarevich, an infantryman hastily attached to the 130<sup>th</sup> Rifle Division, recalled a demoralizing atmosphere: "The rifle companies were melting away before our eyes...total desertion began. How could this happen? Where is the front? Is the war still being waged? Why do I exist while my army and my country have collapsed?"<sup>140</sup> Across the length of the Soviet frontier, this attitude was pervasive. Nikolai Obrynba, a prisoner who would later join

---

<sup>140</sup> Lazarevich, Degen Ion. Interview. *I Remember*.

the partisans, painted a grim picture of life under German authority in 1941, lamenting that “humankind had fallen apart here...each of them had to be responsible for himself” – a fitting description for the beginning of the guerrilla movement in the Soviet Union.<sup>141</sup>

It was out of these dire circumstances that the first partisan units were formed, largely by chance. Red Army units caught in the wake of the advance fought for their very survival. Panicked, with no way of knowing what was happening on the front lines, many units lived off the land, posing a menace to both civilians and occupiers alike. More importantly, however, many avoided surrender. The Wehrmacht was stunned by such persistent resistance; the victories of 1939 and 1940 had convinced them that their opponents would sooner surrender than fight a hopeless war. Hitler’s Directive No. 21, issued in late 1940, even predicted the German forces would “crush Soviet Russia...before the end of the war against England”.<sup>142</sup> The reality in the East, according to one German soldier, was that “Red Army rearguards would fight to the last man...[and] behind the German line in those regions in which they had been welcomed civilian-supported partisan activity would spring up and produce actions of so bitter a nature than *any act of clemency could almost be construed as aiding and abetting the enemy*”.<sup>143</sup> This was essentially the nature of the conflict in the East, in stark contrast to the German experience in the West. Surrender and cooperation with the occupier were not an option; it was a simple and brutal war of annihilation, facilitated by the occupiers themselves through their own harsh policies. The Germans already began to suffer serious logistical issues in 1941; in advancing so quickly, they had left many Red Army units behind in areas like the Pripet marshes, units that would form the core for partisan bands that made logistics such a difficult situation. One Wehrmacht officer at the front recalled in his memoirs the “transportation crisis” which even in 1941 was “greatly aggravated by regular partisan attacks on the front-line troops” as the army stalled in front of Moscow.<sup>144</sup> Unprepared for the scope of the occupation, German reserves were being drained at an unsustainable rate even in the first year of war. Rolf-Dieter Muller states in his work on the war in the East, “virtually no strategic reserves were left...the power of any German offensives would steadily erode, especially as more and more troops were tied down behind the lines fending off partisan attacks”.<sup>145</sup> Though unorganized and unsanctioned by the Soviet state in 1941, these first “partisans” nonetheless had the Germans worried as the initial tide of their victory began to subside.<sup>146</sup>

It is easy to see, then, how one might be inclined to believe the Soviet legend of a partisan movement instantly materializing in response to the invasion. German General Heinrici himself reported with consternation on 23 June 1941 – one day into the invasion! – “lost soldiers

---

<sup>141</sup> Obryn’ba, Nikolaï. *Red Partisan: The Memoir of a Soviet Resistance Fighter on the Eastern Front*. Washington, D.C.: Potomac, 2007, p. 44

<sup>142</sup> Directive No. 21, 18 December 1940. Cited in: William L. Shirer. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011, p. 810

<sup>143</sup> James Sidney Lucas. *War on the Eastern Front: The German Soldier in Russia, 1941-1945*. London: Greenhill, 1998, p. 29. Emphasis added.

<sup>144</sup> Klaus A. Friedrich Schüler. *Logistik Im Russlandfeldzug: Die Rolle Der Eisenbahn Bei Planung, Vorbereitung Und Durchführung Des Deutschen Angriffs Auf Die Sowjetunion Bis Zur Krise Vor Moskau Im Winter 1941/42* (Frankfurt Am Main: P. Lang) 1987, cited in *Hitler’s War in the East*, p. 97

<sup>145</sup> Rolf-Dieter Muller, *Hitler’s War in the East, 1941-1945: A Critical Assessment*. Providence, RI: Berghahn, 1997, p. 93

<sup>146</sup> The term “partisan” here is used loosely. The Red Army soldiers left behind in German territory were obviously not intended to be a part of the Soviet partisan movement. As it turned out, they would eventually develop into its most effective leaders.

are sitting everywhere in the great forests...and often enough shooting from behind. The Russians in general are fighting the war in an insidious manner".<sup>147</sup> This frustration is evident in reports throughout the Soviet Union, from which one could conclude that the partisans were already enjoying a popular base of support. This was, however, pure fantasy. Despite their apparent success, the inexperience of the partisans and their political officers in conducting successful operations stymied the initial efforts of the Soviet leadership at creating an effective guerrilla force. As previously indicated, most of the success of the "partisan" war in 1941 came from the Red Army soldiers left behind in the German advance; less effective were the partisans approved by the Communist Party, and a popular resistance from the people was virtually nonexistent. This was especially illustrated in the western reaches of Belorussia and Ukraine, the latter having one communique that estimated "99 percent of the population hates the Bolsheviks... [they] especially hate the kolkhoz system, the NKVD, and that they confiscate all the bread."<sup>148</sup> Only recently brought under Soviet control, the antipathy toward the Communist system is evident in reports throughout the western territories subjugated to the Germans. It is worth noting that this communique was sent from Vinnytsia Oblast, the region just south of Berdichev – the city where Vasilii Grossman would describe liberation in 1944 as a scene where "old men, when they hear Russian words, run to meet the troops and weep silently."<sup>149</sup> Popular sentiment had clearly swung, if not necessarily in favor of the Soviets, then certainly against the Germans by the latter years of the war. In 1941, however, there was little to no local support for the Soviet partisans in the vast majority of regions the Germans took at such lightning speed, and justifiably so. Many of those regions had only recently been acquired by the Soviet Union, while collectivization and the purges had left the centralized government in Moscow relatively unpopular throughout much of the western USSR.

The distinction between Red Army soldiers and Communist Party partisans must therefore be stressed, particularly in these early years. One Communist Party official noted that "the main task of the partisan detachment then consisted of preserving strength and preparing it for decisive action, possibly only at the moment of the Germans' retreat."<sup>150</sup> Orders from the Central Committee dictated that "Party organizations under the personal guidance of their first secretaries should provide comrades who are experienced fighting, loyal to our party, personally known to the Party leaders and proven in practice, for the establishment and leadership of the guerrilla movement."<sup>151</sup> Partisan commanders were ordered to screen those attempting to join the resistance and admit only the "best parts of the local population...dedicated to our Rodina to the end."<sup>152</sup> In practice, this meant that all but the most devoted Communists were purposefully excluded from the partisan movement. Red Army soldiers – who often did not meet such criteria – maintained leadership of their own guerrilla bands, which often focused more on survival than

---

<sup>147</sup> *Third Reich at War*, p. 195

<sup>148</sup> Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001) p. 130

<sup>149</sup> Vasilii Grossman, *A Writer at War*, "The Killing Ground of Berdichev"

<sup>150</sup> R. R. Kruchok, *Vsenarodnoe Partizanskoe Dvizhenie v Belorussii v Gody Velikoï Otechestvennoï Voïny (iūn' 1941-iūl' 1944). Dokumenty i Materialy. V 3-kh t.* Minsk: "Belarus", 1967, p. 92

<sup>151</sup> KPSS v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh sezdov, Vol. VII, pp. 229-230; Cited in "Central Committee, Organization of the Struggle in the Enemy Rear. July 18, 1941", [www.soviethistory.org](http://www.soviethistory.org)

<sup>152</sup> S.V. Stepashin and V. P. Ĭampol'skiĭ. *Organy Gosudarstvennoï Bezopasnosti SSSR v Velikoï Otechestvennoï Voïne: Sbornik Dokumentov* (Moskva: Kniga i Biznes, 1995) p. 375-376

sabotage. Disdain between Communist Party and Red Army units predominated. One Communist scoffed, “What’s a guy who came out of encirclement anyway? That means he didn’t die in battle...No, we don’t need that kind. The Party picked and confirmed us.”<sup>153</sup> The focus on commitment to the Communist cause often came at the expense of military expertise, which resulted in disproportionate casualties for Communist units. The first actual partisans of 1941 were fractured, mostly consigned to minor roles of subsistence banditry and survival.

In a further blow to regional support, the burden of supporting the existence of these inactive detachments often fell directly on the local population. Considering Communism’s purported interest in the needs of the proletariat, the level to which the workers and peasants were sacrificed for the good of the state is alarming. This was a war in which any attempt to live peacefully under Nazi rule was grounds for execution for collaboration, making the targeting of the population before the invader reminiscent of the inward looking purges of the 1930s. This was taken to extremes by the partisans, even by the standards set in those uncertain days. One German report from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Panzer Army estimated that in the Orel region of Russia, from 11 December 1941 to 23 January 1942, guerrillas killed 33 German soldiers, 38 Russian policemen, and over 200 Russian civil officials and civilians.<sup>154</sup> Eliminating collaborators was certainly the primary concern, but also gave justification for general action against civilians even suspected of potential collaboration. One partisan explained, “If we didn’t [steal], the Germans would.”<sup>155</sup> Another remembered taking food from a village and returning later only to find “everything was burning”, the village destroyed and the people removed.<sup>156</sup> If there was nothing left for the village itself, there would be nothing left to aid the German war effort: such was the brutal logic of many partisan units. One desperate citizen wrote, “we live between the hammer and the anvil. Today we are forced to obey the partisans or they will kill us, tomorrow we will be killed by the Germans for obeying them.”<sup>157</sup>

From a desensitized perspective, this attitude served its purpose, to an extent; it discouraged collaboration and reminded the victims of the continued presence of Soviet power. However, indiscriminate killing made the German designation of the Soviet partisans as “bandits” seem valid. “For twenty five years the Bolsheviks ruled, promised a lot, but gave nothing”, claimed one report from Ukraine. “The population understands this business.”<sup>158</sup> What the guerrillas needed, then, was to find a way to generate the popular support they needed to function effectively, to give civilians reason to believe that helping the partisans - even with the risks attached - was a more attractive option than passivity. The top-down approach to partisan command taken by Soviet authorities through exclusively Communist Party means made such support nearly impossible. Indeed, as we have seen, such support was often explicitly discouraged. These first partisans were often isolated both from the government and the local population, directed by territorial Party officials with little experience in conducting guerrilla operations.<sup>159</sup> While the military situation at the front was worsening, the original 11,733

<sup>153</sup> A. F. Fedorov, *The Underground Committee Carries On* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952) p. 237

<sup>154</sup> Cited in Timothy Mulligan, "Reckoning the Cost of People's War : The German Experience in the Central USSR ", *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, vol. 9, pt. I (1982), p. 33

<sup>155</sup> Kizant Robert Danilovich, Interview. “I Remember”

<sup>156</sup> Emelin George Alexandrovich, Interview. “I Remember”

<sup>157</sup> Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-44*. (New York: St. Martin's, 2000) p. 146

<sup>158</sup> *Making Sense of War*, p. 130

<sup>159</sup> John Alexander Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in World War II*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1964, p. 90. It is worth noting that many accounts of the war against the partisans from the German perspective portray this early

partisans fielded directly by the Soviets in 1941 had dwindled to an insignificant force of 1,965 by early 1942, while the overall number of 87,000 recognized partisans had fallen to 30,000 in the same time frame.<sup>160</sup> Though estimates vary due to the difficulty of establishing exact numbers under such conditions, there is no doubt that the partisan movement was fading quickly by the spring of 1942.

Thus, the popular Soviet myth of a spontaneous and massive partisan uprising is undoubtedly exaggerated. Given the alienation that collectivization and deportation had fostered in many territories that had since fallen to the Nazis, Stalin's hesitation in embracing a genuine popular movement to throw back the invader is understandable. A popularly supported movement might prove to be impossible for the centralized state to control over a great distance. Moreover, a partisan force of the people could potentially be as much a threat to Soviet power as it would to the Nazis once the occupied territory was reclaimed. The most pertinent memory of partisan warfare for the Soviet government was undoubtedly the Russian Civil War, and even Red partisans in the civil war had been known for their "lack of discipline, military unreliability, political unorthodoxy, extreme localism, and general contempt for Bolshevik hierarchy."<sup>161</sup> Labelled collectively as *partizanshchina* by Soviet authorities, these were qualities abhorrent to the Stalinist regime.

The importance of a *Soviet* partisan movement was therefore the primary concern for Stalin in 1941 and early 1942, a goal that was reflective of the emphasized importance of the reinstitution of Soviet authority in areas under German occupation. The attempts to enforce Soviet power before fighting the German invader were evidence of the continued paranoia of the purges, a paranoia that led partisan units to find collaborators everywhere they looked. Even passivity was evidence of collaboration, and was dealt with accordingly. Indeed, instances of actual collaboration served to vindicate the Stalinist perspective that enemies were everywhere, and had to be forcefully punished as a reminder to maintain constant vigilance against the internal enemy. The initial partisan experiment, as a result, can only be classified as a failure. These units were more political bodies than military, taking heavy casualties for a cause that was hardly guaranteed to survive the year. They were exclusive against the people actually bearing the burdens of occupation, while remaining almost entirely stationary and inactive against the occupation forces. Soviet leaders would need to find a way to integrate a genuine popular movement into their idealized projection of Soviet power before the partisan war could succeed. Fortunately for the Soviet Union, the victories of late 1941 and early 1942 would provide the catalyst necessary to re-energize the partisan movement.

The stand in front of Moscow in particular showed that the Wehrmacht could be beaten, a development that had hitherto been in serious doubt. The effect of this cannot be underestimated. Prior to the defense of Moscow, it was unclear if the Communist government

---

state of affairs (particularly in western Ukraine) as being representative of the Soviet partisan movement as a whole – that is, that the local populations unanimously hated the partisans and resented Soviet power when it was reintroduced. This perspective, though not entirely accurate, helps to understand the attitude held by the German Army during the war. For further analysis, see: *War on the Eastern Front, Hitler's War in the East, The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia*.

<sup>160</sup> Kenneth Slepyan. *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas, 2006) p. 34, Boiarskii, V. I. *Partizany i Armii: Istoriia Uteriannykh Vozmozhnostei*. (Minsk: Kharvest, 2001) p. 80. The former number is assumed to be Communist Party partisans, while the latter likely represents all active partisans from the Red Army, local units, and Communist Party combined.

<sup>161</sup> Kenneth Slepyan. "Why They Fought: Motivation, Legitimacy and the Soviet Partisan Movement", p. 4

would even manage to hold onto power through the end of 1941; holding back the Nazi tide made it clear to Red Army troops, civilians, and partisans that Communism was far from dead. Prior to that, the blitzkrieg had “created the impression of German invincibility and inevitable victory...thus making any resistance futile.”<sup>162</sup> Few civilians would wish to engage in a “useless act of suicide” by resisting a Wehrmacht which had smashed the Red Army, taken Moscow, and decapitated Soviet leadership.<sup>163</sup> Halting the Germans at the front therefore opened the door to the first realistic resistance. Hitler’s soldiers were “tired, his units depleted, his supplies intermittent, his equipment unfitted for a winter campaign” – and this was in late 1941, at the high water mark of the advance on Moscow!<sup>164</sup> G.F. Pokrovskii, commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Voroshilov Partisan Detachment, noted: “[When] the population is certain that the Red Army exists, that the German rear burns, that we are the bosses there and not the Germans, we will use our sympathy with the population...unexpected action always gives positive results”.<sup>165</sup> One of the keys to the success of the partisan war was indicating that Soviet power had a real and quantifiable presence in occupied territory. To fulfill this mission, the Central Staff of the Partisan Movement, headed by Panteleimon Kondratevich Ponomarenko, was established in May of 1942.

The Central Staff would allow Moscow direct control of the partisan movement on military terms, without the “earlier reliance on Party affiliation and past service to the regime” that we have already seen had crippled the partisans in 1941 and early 1942.<sup>166</sup> Its task was also to bring the scattered partisan movement to heel, to bring direction and control to the Red Army units that had been living as marauders on the land, to ensure their continued existence as bastions of Soviet authority in occupied territory. Most importantly, this body would recognize the clear relationship between military success and popular support in guerrilla warfare. Nowhere was this clearer than in NKO (People’s Commissariat of Defense) Order 189, “On the Tasks of the Partisan Movement”. The partisan movement, on orders from Stalin himself, was to be turned into an “all-people’s movement...to draw into the partisan struggle increasingly the broad elements of the population.”<sup>167</sup> This new attitude was reflected in the papers and propaganda circulating throughout Soviet territory. One editorial in *Krasnaia zvezda* published on 29 September 1942 declared that “all honorable Soviet men and women, desiring to be liberated from the German yoke...are the partisans’ reserves”, reflecting an abrupt shift toward embracing the broad-based guerrilla movement.<sup>168</sup>

This change in attitude, developed more out of necessity than out of trust for the people to fight for the Soviet state, became a valuable propaganda theme through the course of the war. The struggle taking place in occupied territory became, in the official version of events, a unified movement in which the Soviet people from every ethnicity and background naturally came together in defense of the motherland. The truth is, of course, somewhat more complex. Though many nationalities were represented in the partisan movement, there was undoubtedly a desire on part of the Soviet leadership to overemphasize the multiethnic nature of the guerrilla bands in an

<sup>162</sup> Kenneth Slepyan. *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas, 2006) p. 33

<sup>163</sup> Christian Streit, “Partisans-Resistance-Prisoners of War,” *Soviet Union / Union Sovietique* 18, 1-3 (1991): p. 267

<sup>164</sup> Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich at War* (New York: Penguin, 2009) 204

<sup>165</sup> Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI), f. 69, op. I, d. 28, l. 33

<sup>166</sup> *Stalin's Guerrillas*, 42

<sup>167</sup> RGASPI, f. 69, op I, d. 3, l. 14

<sup>168</sup> Cited in: *Stalin's Guerrillas*, p. 50



effort to fulfill the conditions set forth in NKO Order 189. In Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, a large number of partisans were “imported” from other areas of the Soviet Union, and leadership even in Belorussia and Russia overwhelmingly remained in the hands of Red Army soldiers taking their orders from Moscow.<sup>169</sup> This naturally put the locally developed partisans at odds with the units upholding Soviet policy in occupied territory, who still operated under the philosophy that “a pure partisan war and its tactics must not tie fate to the population.”<sup>170</sup> Ponomarenko’s partisans were in the curious position of requiring local support while considering those same local villages as expendable in the fight against the Germans. The movement, then, was not as unified or as welcoming toward contributions of the people as Soviet propaganda made it out to be. Even so, though the struggle may have been supplied and reinforced from the Soviet heartland, the partisans’ fortunes were inextricably linked to the people in occupied territory.

From numerous sources fighting the guerrilla war, there exists substantial evidence that the partisan movement, particularly in the period after NKO Order 189, featured a distinct lack of prejudice. Forced into a war of survival, most partisans rarely discriminated against others within their own ranks. This was both the natural result of the pressure put on the partisans by the German occupying forces, which served as a common enemy for the population to unite against, and a testament to the Soviet commanders, who sensibly realized that discrimination within the ranks would only damage the war effort. James von Geldern asserts that “only German brutality and contempt for Slavs made for common cause”, yet the power of the bond this commonality created should not be underestimated.<sup>171</sup> David Glantz argues in his work on the Red Army that “crude patriotism...pan-Slavism, traditional Russian nationalism, some sort of loyalty to the Soviet state, or sheer hatred of the German invaders” were all significant motivating factors in sparking motivation to fight, and the variety of different motives gives credibility to the assertion that the partisan struggle involved a very real diversity within its ranks.<sup>172</sup> In a given unit, one might even find families fighting together on the front lines; the presence of women and even children in the guerrilla war was a stark reminder that the rules of conventional warfare, often skirted by the Red Army proper, were disregarded to an even greater degree within the partisan movement.<sup>173</sup>

Jews, in particular, had obvious reason to resist the German invaders, and thus occupied a pivotal role in the struggle. Embraced by some as fighters unwilling to be taken alive, viewed with disdain as outsiders by others, Jews represented a contentious minority within partisan ranks. One Jewish partisan recalled in an interview that his partisan unit “lived as one family” with “all sorts of nationalities”, claims which we have no reason to disbelieve.<sup>174</sup> Amir Weiner notes, however, that in the postwar Soviet Union, Jews came to be viewed as a natural anti-Soviet element, an “irredeemable” faction that needed to be “excised”.<sup>175</sup> Even during the war

---

<sup>169</sup> Ibid. p. 57

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. 159

<sup>171</sup> James von Geldern, “In the Forest”, [www.soviethistory.org](http://www.soviethistory.org)

<sup>172</sup> David M. Glantz. *Colossus Reborn: The Red Army at War : 1941-1943* (Kansas: University of Kansas, 2005) p. 586

<sup>173</sup> This is not to say that there were no ethnic or nationalist divisions within the partisan units. Though united in their goals in 1941 and 1942, the addition of a variety of minorities in the latter years of the war would exacerbate tensions on ethnic divisions. Even so, one cannot discount the testimony of many individual partisans who recount very good relationships within their units. See accounts such as: *Red Partisan*, interviews with Robert Danilovich Kizant and David Timofeevich Shtarkman.

<sup>174</sup> David Timofeevich Shtarkman, Interview. “I Remember”.

<sup>175</sup> *Making Sense of War*, p. 50-52

such attitudes were present, particularly before NKO Order 189. In Belorussia, a group of Jewish women were even shot directly by a partisan band when fleeing from the Nazis, prompting little to no official response from Soviet authorities in the area.<sup>176</sup> The declaration of the inclusion of all Soviet peoples in the struggle remedied this situation to an extent. Tuvia Bielski, one Jewish partisan, declared before a skeptical Slavic commander that “if you are a true Soviet leader, you should know that it is in the interest of our homeland to fight the German enemy, together. Our homeland does not differentiate between Jews and non-Jews, it only separates the loyal, disciplined citizens from harmful, destructive bands.”<sup>177</sup> Anti-Semitism, however, remained a part of the partisan movement throughout its duration. It reached a crescendo as more unstable elements filtered into the partisan ranks in the latter years of the war, as those who had previously collaborated with or lived under Nazi rule were forced to readjust to the realities of Soviet authority.

The reason for Jewish participation in the partisan war should nonetheless be obvious. The Germans in their official policy equated simply being Jewish with complicity in partisan operations, frequently making armed resistance the only option for the survival of individual Jews in occupied territory.<sup>178</sup> Some joined existing units, while others formed their own Jewish partisan groups. The Central Staff, for its part, discouraged the division of partisan identity such as that inherent in the formation of Jewish partisan units in the forests of Belorussia and Russia. Bielski, a Belorussian Jew, formed a particularly potent unit that grew to about 1,200 by 1944<sup>179</sup>. He and others like him often coordinated with Soviet partisans to attack the Germans and protect the local population, yet remained outside the limits of Soviet authority during the war. Only where the interests of the local partisan units and the Soviet-sponsored groups came together would they cooperate. “Don’t rush to fight and die,” Bielski exhorted his partisans. “So few of us are left, we have to save lives.”<sup>180</sup> Tactics of preservation - practiced by many self-sufficient guerrilla bands - were in direct opposition to the stated goals of the Central Staff, which regarded civilian lives as expendable in the ultimate struggle to drive out the German invader and reinstitute Soviet authority. This would enflame tensions not only between Moscow and the partisans, but also between partisan commanders and the population.

One of the primary tasks of the partisan movement, then, became convincing the locals that the guerrilla bands were fighting in the people’s best interests, regardless of the losses they were taking. Indeed, the partisan war was partially a war of propaganda, an effort on both sides to sway the population to one side or the other. As the Germans continued to tout their victories at the front, the partisans acted as a connection to the Soviet Union for the people in occupied territory, spreading the “truth” through dissemination of Soviet propaganda. Nikolai Obrynba, one such partisan, describes in his memoirs how his unit would leave leaflets or posters at the scene of action after a firefight, to let the civilians know that they “were fighting for [their] Motherland, for the liberation of the people.”<sup>181</sup> The importance of the civilians in the ongoing struggle is reflected in the language each side used when referencing the other. The Germans

---

<sup>176</sup> Hersh Smolar. *The Minsk Ghetto: Soviet-Jewish Partisans against the Nazis* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1989) p. 127-128

<sup>177</sup> Cited in: Nechama Tec. *Defiance: The Bielski Partisans* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993) p. 97

<sup>178</sup> Translation of Document UK-81. Source: Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression. Volume VIII. USGPO, Washington, 1946/pp.572-582, <http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/genocide/USSR2.htm>

<sup>179</sup> Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation (JPEF), <http://www.jewishpartisans.org/>

<sup>180</sup> Nechama Tec. *Defiance: The Bielski Partisans* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993) p. 82

<sup>181</sup> *Red Partisan*, p. 140

were, as early as 1942, forbidden from using the term “partisan” when referring to the guerrillas; they were “bandits” and “forest murderers” who preyed on the locals, marauders and parasites who threatened the security of German soldier and Soviet civilian alike.<sup>182</sup> To the partisans, the collaborators were “spies”, “kulaks”, and “enemies of the people”, Stalinist terms that were given a new urgency as the imagined enemies of the 1930s became very real enemies in the 1940s.<sup>183</sup>

This kind of delineation legitimized the Soviet worldview to the civilian population, giving some credibility to Stalin’s government as the “enemies” of the Soviet state – whether ideologically motivated or not – were suddenly brought to center stage in their collaboration with the Germans. Much of the language in Soviet propaganda distributed to the local population is reminiscent of the phraseology utilized in the Russian Civil War, the battle lines of which mirrored those of the partisan war in many respects; the drive to cleanse the anti-Soviet elements from occupied territory, a drive that would continue even past 1945, is a particularly striking example. George Emelin, whose guerrilla unit operated near Kerch, specifically mentions that his family intended to “follow the example of 1919” in abandoning their homes and fighting against the Germans from the countryside.<sup>184</sup> This is not accidental – the designation of collaborators as bourgeois foreign agents recalled basic Soviet myths about the origins of proletarian struggle and the fight against the Whites, a war similar to the current struggle in that there was no neutrality to be had by the unfortunate civilians on the territory in which it occurred.<sup>185</sup> One Belorussian partisan “imported” to Ukraine recalled that they “had two enemies – the Germans and the policemen” and “where we were going, there is a third enemy – bourgeois Ukrainian nationalists.”<sup>186</sup> Even partisan groups that had formed for self-defense rather than joining with the Soviets were often considered a threat by the Soviet command, reminiscent of the “Greens” who took part in the Russian Civil War. Suspicion of being a collaborator or spy was ever present among most partisan groups, and factional differences were often less clear than propaganda made it seem. In the ranks of the partisans, one’s contribution to the struggle was the single most important factor in determining one’s worth; the establishment of trust for new recruits, unaffiliated with either the Red Army or the Party, was therefore an often difficult endeavor.

As a result, the primary motivation for civilian resistance – survival – was not enough to exonerate elements deemed to be anti-Soviet, whether that was collaborators or “untrustworthy” minorities. Once the German intentions for the East became clear, resistance became “not only a realistic alternative but also the only possible course of action” for many Soviet citizens, a very real survival alternative to captivity.<sup>187</sup> Given the choice, the former victims of collectivization and deportation would most likely have elected to stay out of the conflict altogether. Confronted with the harsh brutality of German occupation policies, however, civilians were forced to pick sides. Once the prospects for Soviet victory became realistic and the burden of German occupation began to weigh on the population, resistance became an increasingly attractive

---

<sup>182</sup> *Red Partisan*, p. 139

<sup>183</sup> , RGASPI, f 69, op. 1, d. 28, 11. 57, 159; d. 29, 11. 62-63; f. 625, op. 1, d. 28, l. 87; IIAN ORF, f. 2 , raz. II, op. 4, d. 25, l.12.

<sup>184</sup> George A. Emelin, Interview. “I Remember”.

<sup>185</sup> See references in *Red Partisan*, Interview with Artiukh Viktor Ivanovich, “I Remember”.

<http://iremember.ru/partizani/artiukh-viktor-ivanovich.html>

<sup>186</sup> Yukhnevich Victor Kupriyanovich, Interview. “I Remember”.

<sup>187</sup> *Stalin’s Guerrillas*, p. 51

option. The Germans, for their part, mistakenly identified the growing partisan movement as a product of the “Jewish-Bolshevik” fanatics forcing the people to fight, which led to harsh reprisals against anyone identified as a Communist and the villages who sheltered them. A document issued to occupation troops in late 1942 asserts that “the enemy is using in his bandit struggle fanatical, Communist-drilled soldiers who do not hesitate to commit any act of terror...if this battle is not fought using the most brutal means...then we shall not master the plague”.<sup>188</sup> Rather than eliminate the hated kolkhoz system, the Germans adopted it themselves, turning it into racially inspired “full blown serfdom”.<sup>189</sup> Indeed, the indiscriminate nature of German oppression was a constant reminder of the Nazi belief that all Slavs were subhumans, easily expendable in the occupiers’ struggle against the partisans. The attitude that “anything that leads to success is proper”, as the aforementioned report asserted, ensured the use of increasingly brutal methods in an effort to establish order.<sup>190</sup>

These mass reprisals left no doubt that life under German occupation was unendurable to many who found themselves caught in this war of ideology. Manfred Messerschmidt and Omar Bartov have compiled considerable evidence that the Wehrmacht was indoctrinated in Nazi ideals.<sup>191</sup> This provides a persuasive argument that the harsh treatment of the conquered people in the East was implemented on every level of occupation, and thus contributed directly to the majority’s decision to resist Nazi rule. Categorizing the civilians under their control as “cruel, bestial, and animalistic” as Hitler did in his address of 3 October 1941, German troops could have in no way made compromises in their war of annihilation, which made reasonable treatment of the majority of Soviet civilians in occupied territory impossible. In the same month, Field Marshal von Reichenau issued an order to the troops under his command that explicitly forbade “the feeding of the natives and of prisoners of war who are not working for the Armed Forces”, classifying such activities as “misunderstood humanitarian act[s].”<sup>192</sup> This pervasive attitude would ultimately ensure the success of the partisan war, through the demolition of infrastructure and agricultural production for the villagers of occupied territory. It gave many civilians no other option than taking to the forests to join the partisan struggle, whether they previously had been steeped on Communist ideology or not.

As we have seen, this is particularly accurate in areas like Ukraine and Belorussia, where an initially noncommittal populace was driven to resistance by the mishandling of occupation. Contrary to many Soviet-era accounts, this was not a people’s crusade for Communism – this was a logical and reasonable decision to resist based on the overwhelming conditions faced in everyday life. A Party secretary in Smolensk Oblast noted that “when the fascists reveal themselves and what they represent to the peasants, when the peasants now have before them the

---

<sup>188</sup> Cited in *War on the Eastern Front*, p. 65

<sup>189</sup> Karel Cornelis Berkhoff, “Hitler’s Clean Slate : Everyday Life in the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, 1941-1944” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1998) 143

<sup>190</sup> Cited in *War on the Eastern Front*, p. 65

<sup>191</sup> Manfred Messerschmidt. “Harte Suhne am Judentum. Befehlslage und Wissen in der deutschen Wehrmacht.” In *“Niemand War Dabei Und Keiner Hat’s Gewusst”: Die Deutsche Öffentlichkeit Und Die Judenverfolgung 1933-45* (München: Piper, 1989)

Omer Bartov. *Hitler’s Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich*. New York: Oxford UP, 1991

<sup>192</sup> Translation of Document UK-81. Source: Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression. Volume VIII. USGPO, Washington, 1946/pp.572-582

ways of the Bolsheviks or the ways of the fascists...they say ‘No, Stalin is right.’”<sup>193</sup> Some partisans, unwilling to fight *for* the Soviets, were more than willing to fight *with* them against the Germans – in this way, many were brought under the indirect control of Moscow, affirming Soviet authority even in areas where support for the regime had been lukewarm before the war. Field Marshal von Reichenau, in the aforementioned order to occupation troops, argued that “the indifference of numerous apparently anti-Soviet elements...must give way to a clear decision for active collaboration”, or the population could be turned against the occupiers. Some, then, recognized that encouraging positive collaboration rather than alienating the populace would result in better long term prospects for the German Army in the East. In reality, such warnings went overwhelmingly unheeded by the rear guards as the war dragged on, pushing ever more civilians into the ranks of the partisans.

The fault for this, of course, is in basic Nazi ideology and the program of racial subservience and genocide in the East. Grossman, writing from Ukraine, recalled that “[Hitler’s] heavy-handed repression did more to turn the local population to the Soviet cause than decades of Stalin’s rule had done.”<sup>194</sup> The same could be said for any area under occupation. Though the Soviets may have provided the means for resistance, the Germans themselves overwhelmingly provided the motive. The partisans, of course, did not hesitate to capitalize on hatred directed against Germans to recruit new soldiers to their cause. Obrynba, whose unit operated predominantly in Belorussia, noted that initial mobilization had never reached most of the areas under occupation, thus providing an excellent resource of new recruits. He emphasized throughout his memoirs that maintaining good relations among the people was of the utmost importance, mentioning that “having joined the Partisans, stealing from the people was unacceptable, as it would stain our reputation.”<sup>195</sup> Other accounts declare similar sentiments of pride and noble intention, showing that many partisans truly believed that this was a people’s crusade against fascism. This should not, however, be interpreted as an unwillingness to engage in punitive action against civilians. Amir Weiner’s view of the war as the culmination of the Bolshevik Revolution indicates that as Soviet victory became more likely, the desire to purge anti-Soviet elements from the population was to become an increasingly important factor in the guerrilla war. The partisans, in general, would help civilians where the local population was deemed loyal to the Soviet Union; those who were viewed as collaborators or untrustworthy had no such luck.

As the tide of the war began to turn against the Germans, so too did the character of the partisan war. As we have already seen, the introduction of a mass participation movement had begun out of necessity in 1942. It reached its zenith in 1943 and 1944, leading to fundamental questions regarding the self-identification of many partisan units. Central Staff records indicate that the number of partisans had skyrocketed to 102,562 by January 1943, and then to 181,392 a year later; clearly, success on the battlefield had a direct impact on the number of partisans active behind the lines<sup>196</sup>. The rift within the partisan ranks between Red Army men and Communist Party-recruited guerrillas began to become overshadowed with the addition of such large numbers of local recruits, bringing with them their own motives and ideologies, rarely with any military discipline of their own. These new recruits were often regarded with contempt by Red Army and Communist partisans alike, viewed as opportunists and latecomers trying to prove

---

<sup>193</sup> *Stalin’s Guerrillas*, p. 39

<sup>194</sup> *Writer at War*, “In Berdichev”

<sup>195</sup> *Red Partisan*, p. 135

<sup>196</sup> Cited in: Kenneth Slepyan, *Stalin’s Guerrillas*, p. 188

their loyalty before the imminent return of Soviet power<sup>197</sup>. This attitude was not unwarranted; many who had formerly been collaborators and policemen working for the Germans abruptly switched sides as battles like Stalingrad and Kursk ultimately made Soviet victory seem not only possible, but increasingly likely. The question for the partisans, then, was how to manage the massive new influx of recruits, both to incorporate them into the existing partisan structure and to establish their motives for joining. The leadership of the movement remained overwhelmingly in the hands of Red Army men and, to a somewhat lesser extent, their Communist political commissars; how well, then, could a self-defense unit comprised of civilians be expected to join a partisan band and submit to military authority? Having lived in occupied territory during the war, these civilians were regarded with deep suspicion by other partisans and Soviet authorities alike, a condition that would remain largely unchanged in the aftermath of the war.

The inclusion of newcomers into partisan ranks in 1943 and 1944 was directly encouraged by Ponomarenko and the Central Staff, but in reality, such newcomers were often unwelcome by the veterans from 1941 and 1942. Partisans recruited by the Party and hailing from the Red Army suddenly found themselves at the head of detachments being filled with “untrained, seemingly apathetic peasants, women, non-Slavic ethn nationalities, and former traitors” that appeared to be nothing more than opportunists looking for an excuse to be spared Soviet retribution.<sup>198</sup> This rift between the authorities in Moscow and the partisan unit commanders would only become more apparent as the Central Staff continued to encourage partisan units to welcome back redefectors to the Soviet side, actions which created tension within the units and limited combat effectiveness<sup>199</sup>. As the flood of recruits for the guerrilla war reached its zenith, the Slavic Red Army men who led the movement began to question the loyalty of these latecomers who seemed so different from their predecessors of 1941 and 1942.

In particular, the identification of women and non-Slavic ethnicities with collaboration is a striking indication of the negative attitudes many partisans harbored toward those minorities, attitudes which would help dictate social relations in the postwar Soviet Union. Women, as previously mentioned, had certainly played a role in the partisan struggle; given the opportunity to “prove their worth” both to their male comrades and their country, many fought valiantly for the partisans from 1941 onward and knew some semblance of acceptance within individual partisan units through combat valor. The Central Staff encouraged female participation within the movement from NKO Order 189 onward; yet, the reality of social relations on the ground meant that women simply did not possess the same authority as men. Women in substantial leadership roles in the partisan movement were nearly unheard of, and the predominant attitude of male partisans toward their female counterparts began to reflect a more misogynistic mindset as the tide of the war began to turn; while males would be incorporated into the Red Army and

---

<sup>197</sup> Christian Streit. “Partisans-Resistance-Prisoners of War,” *Soviet Union / Union Sovietique* 18, 1-3, 1991. This attitude is confirmed by many interviews from “I Remember”, such as Kizant Danilovich’s, which are generally positive about the initial role of the partisan groups, and tend to emphasize the experiences of 1941-42 more than 1943-44.

<sup>198</sup> *Stalin’s Guerrillas*, p. 187

<sup>199</sup> Kenneth Slepian. “Why They Fought: Motivation, Legitimacy and the Soviet Partisan Movement”. Transylvania University, 2003

commended for their service, women “were told to hand in [their] arms and go find [themselves] jobs.”<sup>200</sup> Women and other marginalized minorities participating in the partisan war provided exceptionally good propaganda for the professed egalitarian society of the Soviet Union, but when the social structure and general masculinity of the partisan movement was perceived to be threatened by association with such elements, the partisan commanders themselves balked.

This created a tenuous situation for the veterans of the movement. In representing the diversity of the Soviet Union in the guerrilla war, they could provide evidence that everyone in the Soviet Union supported the regime; however, incorporating those who had previously opposed that regime in the partisan movement showed the Soviet leadership that the partisan movement itself could not be trusted. After the war, the stigma of having lived on occupied territory could only be remedied by what Amir Weiner terms “indisputable evidence of combat valor”, a verification of “rank-and-file Communists” who would otherwise be held under suspicion for their passivity during the war.<sup>201</sup> The addition of “unstable elements” into the war effort could change the perception of the partisan movement as a whole, particularly when many of those latecomers were unable to fight, or were viewed as inferior. Kenneth Slepyan, in *Stalin’s Guerrillas*, makes a strong argument that the existence of “internal and external threats”, crucial to the Stalinist worldview, was confirmed in the partisan struggle more than in any other aspect of the war.<sup>202</sup> Verification of commitment to the cause then became of paramount importance in the postwar Soviet Union. For some who had participated in this “all people’s movement”, including many minorities such as Jews and Ukrainians, such verification would prove to be increasingly difficult. The partisan struggle essentially became the ultimate test for loyalty to the Party and the Soviet state. From a movement that had been conceptualized as an all-encompassing struggle of the people emerged an ideal of Communist purity, a final culmination of the Revolution and a justification for the Soviet system in general<sup>203</sup>.

Any attempt to summarize the partisan movement in the Great Patriotic War in a single statement is ultimately futile. The conflict was too complicated for that. In a sense, it echoed the Russian Civil War; in another, it called to mind the Stalinist purges of the 1930s. In a broader sense, it was simply a necessity. Those who fought often had little choice but to resort to resistance. This does not, however, detract from their accomplishments. Many, particularly the Red Army and Communist Party partisans, fought with a genuine patriotism that we have no reason to doubt. In doing so, they preserved a semblance of the Soviet system in occupied territory and established the legitimacy of Soviet authority throughout the area that would be liberated from the Germans, a task which would have important political ramifications in the postwar Soviet Union. These could even be seen by 1944, when the diversification of the partisan movement hit its zenith; in the divisions between veteran partisans and new recruits was a microcosm of the postwar divisions in formerly occupied territory, tensions that would give cause for a purification drive and a desire to cleanse the last anti-Soviet elements from the area. The partisan movement not only contributed directly to the defeat of the Germans and the restructuring of occupied territory, it brought these issues to the forefront of public

---

<sup>200</sup> Cited in: Svetlana Alexievich, *War’s Unwomanly Face* (Moscow: Progress, 1988) p. 45

<sup>201</sup> *Making Sense of War*, p. 84

<sup>202</sup> *Stalin’s Guerrillas*, p. 281

<sup>203</sup> The idea of the war as a “final culmination of the Bolshevik Revolution” stems from the work of Amir Weiner, whose *Making Sense of War* highlights the links between the Revolution and the Second World War and the resulting implications on the postwar Soviet Union.

consciousness, and would leave a lasting effect on politics and society in the western reaches of the Soviet Union for decades after the war's official conclusion.



## Bibliography

### Primary

- Alexandrovich, Emilin George. Interview. "I Remember". <http://iremember.ru/>
- Danilovich, Kizant Robert. Interview. "I Remember". <http://iremember.ru/>
- Fedorov, A. F. *The Underground Committee Carries on*. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952.
- Grossman, Vasiliĭ Semenovich., Antony Beevor, and Luba Vinogradova. *A Writer at War: Vasily Grossman with the Red Army, 1941-1945*. New York: Pantheon, 2005.
- Izvestiia*, 17 July 1942, p. 2: cited in Slepian, Kenneth. *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II*. Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas, 2006.
- Krasnaia zvezda*, 5 November 1942, p. 2: cited in Slepian, Kenneth. *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II*. Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas, 2006.
- Lazarevich, Degen Ion. Interview. *I Remember*. <http://iremember.ru/>
- Translation of Document UK-81. Source: Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression. Volume VIII. USGPO, Washington, 1946/pp.572-582
- Obryn'ba, Nikolaĭ. *Red Partisan: The Memoir of a Soviet Resistance Fighter on the Eastern Front*. Washington, D.C.: Potomac, 2007
- Pravda*, 9 January 1942, p. 3, 26 August 1942, p. 2, 23 November 1942, p. 2: cited in Slepian, Kenneth. *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II*. Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas, 2006.
- Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI)
- Yukhnovich, Victor Kupriyanovich, Interview. "I Remember".

### Secondary

- Aleksievich, Svetlana. *War's Unwomanly Face*. Moscow: Progress, 1988.
- Armstrong, John Alexander. *Soviet Partisans in World War II*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1964
- Bartov, Omer. *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich*. New York: Oxford UP, 1991
- Berkhoff, Karel Cornelis, "Hitler's Clean Slate : Everyday Life in the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, 1941-1944" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1998)
- Boiarskiĭ, V. I. *Partizany I Armia: Istoriia Uteriannykh Vozmozhnostei*. Minsk: Kharvest, 2001
- Dean, Martin. *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-44*. New York: St. Martin's, 2000,
- Evans, Richard J. *The Third Reich at War*. New York: Penguin, 2009.
- Glantz, David M. *Colossus Reborn: The Red Army at War : 1941-1943*. Kansas: University of Kansas, 2005.
- Higgins, Trumbull. *Hitler and Russia: The Third Reich in a Two-front War, 1937-1943*. New York: Macmillan, 1966
- Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation (JPEF), <http://www.jewishpartisans.org/>
- Kruchok, R. R. *Vsenarodnoe Partizanskoe Dvizhenie v Belorussii v Gody Velikoĭ Otechestvennoĭ Voĭny (iiun' 1941-iiul' 1944). Dokumenty I Materialy. V 3-kh T.* Minsk: "Belarus'", 1967
- Lucas, James Sidney. *War on the Eastern Front: The German Soldier in Russia, 1941-1945*. London: Greenhill, 1998.

Manfred Messerschmidt. "Harte Suhne am Judentum. Befehlslage und Wissen in der deutschen Wehrmacht." In *Niemand War Dabei Und Keiner Hat's Gewusst: Die Deutsche Öffentlichkeit Und Die Judenverfolgung 1933-45*. München: Piper, 1989.

Merridale, Catherine. *Ivan's War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945*. New York: Metropolitan, 2006.

Müller, Rolf-Dieter, and Gerd R. Ueberschär. *Hitler's War in the East, 1941-1945: A Critical Assessment*. Providence, RI: Berghahn, 1997

Mulligan, Timothy. "Reckoning the Cost of People's War : The German Experience in the Central USSR," *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, vol. 9, pt. I (1982)

Overy, Richard James. *Russia's War*. New York: Penguin, 1998.

Schüler, Klaus A. Friedrich. *Logistik Im Russlandfeldzug: Die Rolle Der Eisenbahn Bei Planung, Vorbereitung Und Durchführung Des Deutschen Angriffs Auf Die Sowjetunion Bis Zur Krise Vor Moskau Im Winter 1941/42*. Frankfurt Am Main: P. Lang, 1987

Schulte, Theo J. *The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia*. Oxford, England: Berg, 1989

Shirer, William L. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011.

Slepyan, Kenneth. "Why They Fought: Motivation, Legitimacy and the Soviet Partisan Movement". Transylvania University, 2003

Slepyan, Kenneth. *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II*. Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas, 2006

Smolar, Hersh. *The Minsk Ghetto: Soviet-Jewish Partisans against the Nazis*. New York: Holocaust Library, 1989.

Stepashin, S. V., and V. P. Īampol'skiĭ. *Organy Gosudarstvennoĭ Bezopasnosti SSSR v Velikoĭ Otechestvennoĭ Voĭne: Sbornik Dokumentov*. Moskva: Kniga I Biznes, 1995

Streit, Christian. "Partisans-Resistance-Prisoners of War," *Soviet Union / Union Sovietique* 18, 1-3, 1991

Tec, Nechama. *Defiance: The Bielski Partisans*. New York: Oxford UP, 1993

Weiner, Amir. *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001.

# **Influences of Socialism and the Socialist Workers Party on the Detroit Gay Community During the 1970's**

Sean Wolski

This paper explores to what extent the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) influenced the gay community and gay rights activism in Detroit during the 1970s. In addition, how this influence changed over the course of the decade will also be assessed. The goal of this essay is to show that the SWP and socialist ideals played an important role in forming the gay community of Detroit during the early 1970s. However in studying historical documents from both Detroit's gay community and the SWP, socialist influence on the Detroit gay community waned during the latter part of the decade.

The 1970s were a dynamic time for the gay community of metro-Detroit. In previous decades, the community lived under the suspicion of communism, discrimination in public and private sectors, and the threat of arrests from city vice officers. Yet, beginning with the Stonewall riots of 1969 in New York City, the gay community of metro-Detroit began an effort to form a single voice to represent the community, and to mobilize in mass for the first time in the city's history. This was the beginning of the Detroit Gay Liberation Front (GLF), a radical gay civil rights organization based on the restructuring of capitalist society in order to gain recognition and greater civil rights for homosexual citizens.

Nonetheless, socialist organizations such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) also held sway within the city and other leftist movements such as the gay civil rights movement during this period. It was during the beginning of this decade that the gay community of Detroit and the SWP began a relationship to advance the agenda of both organizations. However, as the decade progressed, this relationship began to break down and the SWP's influence on the gay community of Detroit waned. In researching the topics related to these questions, during the early 1970s, many voices in the gay community of Detroit such as the GLF held a greater sway with the larger Detroit gay community. This organization fostered an attitude that was more radical, that held the belief that capitalism and the business oriented American society was the main cause of homosexual oppression. It was this idea that allowed for an environment in which socialist sentiment could grow within the gay community of Detroit. Yet, in the latter part of the 70s, a more accepting atmosphere coupled with residual anger from discriminatory SWP policies weakened the hold of socialist influence on the gay community of the city. This diminished influence ultimately led to a gay community focused on changing attitudes about homosexuals, and fighting for civil rights within the context of current American society.

## *Early Socialism and Gay Organization*

In early August of 1922, federal agents arrested an immigrant named Joseph Kowalski in New York City on charges of violating his deportation agreement and accused him of spying for the Soviet intelligence agency known as the Cheka. In 1919, Kowalski had left the Polish Socialist party and was a key member in forming an American communist party in that same year. He was deported in 1921 as an undesirable, and upon returning to his home in the Soviet Union, was greeted as a hero and was made a member of the International Communists (IC). He was sent back to America in 1922 by the IC to infiltrate American industry and was under orders

to build communist support among industrial workers, with the target being the industrial capital of the U.S., Detroit, Michigan.<sup>204</sup>

After serving 18 months in an Atlanta penitentiary, Kowalski moved to Detroit where quickly he began to organize discontent and unrest among workers in the auto capital. In 1926, he and other communist leaders began to sabotage the heart of the American auto industry machine, the assembly line. Production was slowed at many major auto plants and the resulting layoffs, coupled with the start of the Great Depression, were more than enough for Kowalski to build sizable support for the communist party in the city. In 1932, Kowalski, along with communist leaders in other cities, organized a mass march in Washington bringing attention to the growing communist movement. The later 1930's brought greater opportunities for Kowalski as the depression deepened. He organized more sabotage campaigns against major automobile suppliers and to place many communist friendly officials in local city and county governments. In the end, Kowalski was able to maintain a great amount of influence in the Detroit region for almost 30 years, until the threat of deportation loomed once again and finally he left the city.<sup>205</sup>

Even though he was a major influence, Kowalski was no pioneer of Socialist and worker oriented sentiments in America. Early in American history religious communities such as the Quakers began small religious conclaves first planted the ideas of a worker-oriented society.<sup>206</sup> In these religious communities, though the practice of socialism was not the focus, inadvertently their way of life was similar to the socialist way of life. All members of the community worked for each other and cared for each other's well being. Eventually it came to the fact that these religious and worker-oriented communities outlasted the actual communist movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. As time passed, these socialist and communist like ideas began to spread and evolve and by the start of the industrial revolution; these leftist movements would gain a strong foothold in a new industrialized society.<sup>207</sup>

In a way, "[m]odern Socialism...is the product of full grown capitalism."<sup>208</sup> With the rise of industry also came a rise of a new larger working class and a new class of the wealthy industrialists. By 1905, the national wealth had "reached \$95 million, and more than one half was concentrated in the hands of 40,000 families, or .25% of the population."<sup>209</sup> With the growing wealth disparity between workers and the ruling class, a socialist message became much easier to perforate through the nation. In addition to a large number of socialists and socialist leaning people emigrated from Europe, on the heels of the 1917 Russian Revolution and beginnings of labor organization in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century also were conducive to an environment ripe for socialist thought to take root.<sup>210</sup> The collapse of the stock market in 1929, along with the Great Depression during the 1930s, with mass unemployment and discontent among workers provided an ideal socialist and Marxists ideas to spread. The 1930s "offered (radical activists) a multitude of possible roles"<sup>211</sup> and an increase in the amount of Marxist and other leftist literature, as well as an increased presence within American society.

---

<sup>204</sup> "Alien sentenced for returning here ." *New York Times*, November 7, 1922.

<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=FA0812F8345D1A7A93C5A9178AD95F468285F9>

<sup>205</sup> Jacob Spolanski, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951.

<sup>206</sup> Mott Hillquit, *History of Socialism in the United States*, (New York: Russel & Russel, 1965), 29-31.

<sup>207</sup> Hillquit, *History of Socialism*

<sup>208</sup> Hillquit, *History of Socialism*, 136

<sup>209</sup> Hillquit, *History of Socialism*, 138

<sup>210</sup> Paul Buhle, *Marxism in the United States*, (New York: Verso, 2013), 158.

<sup>211</sup> Buhle , *Marxism in the United States*, 20

With the end of WWII and the start of the Cold War, the Red Scare and McCarthy politics gripped the nation, casting a shadow on many far left and communist organizations. In the 1950's, one of the main communist groups in the U.S. called the Trotskyists, split into two socialist groups. One called the Sachtmanists was a more conservative socialist organization, joining the socialist party and becoming an organization rooted in suspicion of communism.<sup>212</sup> The second group formed from the split was the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Though it was the smaller of the two, it held a great deal of influence in organizing and supporting other new left movements during the 50s and 60s. McCarthy-ist politics caused many communist groups during the 50s to lose much of their influence. However, this directed McCarthy and the public's gaze away from the socialist parties and allowed socialists time to grow in influence. By the 1960s and 70s, these socialist parties were major players in the New Left Movement.<sup>213</sup> In the early 1970s, The Socialist Workers Party grew in influence by reason of its leadership in the anti-war movement and the collapse of the separate Socialist Party in 1972.<sup>214</sup> From here, the SWP was a major influence on many of the new civil rights and anti-war movements, including women's liberation, black civil rights and racism, and the start of the modern gay rights movement.

For around the first 100 years, the term "homosexuality" or its place as a sexual identity did not exist in American society. Even "Heterosexuality remained undefined, since it was literally the only way of life."<sup>215</sup> Through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, most homosexual acts were random and scarce, and for those who occasionally participated in homosexual behavior still lived a heterosexual way of life.<sup>216</sup> It was not until the Industrial Revolution that a homosexual identity began to develop in American society. America's new industrial economy brought millions of Americans up and out of the home environment and to life in the cities and other population centers where persons with same sex desires could interact en masse and form a homosexual identity. Growing cities of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century could provide social interaction for the gay community and allow for gays of that time to finally share their experiences with others of their community.<sup>217</sup> By the 1920's, the gay community had already established its own culture with "meeting places...institutions such as bars and friendship networks..."<sup>218</sup> For the first time in American history a "homosexual identity" and people to identify as such became a part of American life.

With the onset of WWII, much of the male population of the U.S. was drafted to fight overseas leaving millions of women to fill in the roles men had left behind. Women left their domestic, stereotypical "female" lifestyles at home to go work in factories and other typically male-dominated professions. Women began to interact much more than had been possible in past decades, and provide opportunism for lesbian women to move away from oppressive hometowns to more progressive cities such as New York or San Francisco.<sup>219</sup> With new wage earning abilities, women were able to provide for themselves and give them the freedom to explore and

<sup>212</sup> Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretative History*, (Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan , 2005), 25.

<sup>213</sup> Gosse , *Rethinking the New Left*, 194

<sup>214</sup> Gosse , *Rethinking the New Left*, 25

<sup>215</sup> John. D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* , (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 10.

<sup>216</sup> D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 10

<sup>217</sup> D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 14

<sup>218</sup> D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 12

<sup>219</sup> D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 23-40

discover new parts of American society. Homosexual males also benefited from this upheaval of American society. Many gay soldiers that had been discharged from the armed forces were able to congregate in many cities across America to open bars and social clubs that attracted hundreds of homosexual men. With places to meet, homosexuals were able to find a support network and a shared experience, and a place that fostered political action later in the century.

With the end of the war, many of the freedoms homosexuals had gained were lost to a return to conservative social values. The 1950s brought waves of panic and suspicion by the government and society over the “red menace” and the presence of homosexuals in government positions. These “sexual perverts” were considered threats to the American way of life and were subject to a massive purging from all government posts. As homosexuality was an offense that led to immediate termination, homosexuals could be blackmailed to keep their homosexuality from the government, making gays a potential target to communists looking for government secrets.<sup>220</sup> At its peak, homosexuals were being fired at a rate of 40 per month from various government positions and arrests skyrocketed through most of the 50s. Though underground homophile movements existed during this time, it was not until the Stonewall riots in New York in 1969 that the gay community finally began the push for vocalization and organization.<sup>221</sup>

### *Socialism and Detroit Gay Liberation*

On February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1971, a man named Michael Fylstra, an open homosexual who had participated in Gay Liberation movements in Detroit, was arrested under Detroit’s Accosting and Solicitation (A&S) laws under the suspicions that Fylstra had been eliciting an “immoral act”. Fylstra had been walking home down Woodward Ave by himself when two plain-clothed officers invited him into their car, where they promptly arrested him.<sup>222</sup> The trial garnered the attention of a national gay oriented newspaper called *The Advocate*. The trial became a test case for A&S laws in the city and throughout the nation with Fylstra’s defense arguing that A&S laws were a violation of the due process clause, claiming that these laws unfairly targeted homosexuals. Ultimately while Fylstra was released, Detroit’s A&S laws were upheld.<sup>223</sup>

Such entrapment cases had been used time and time again to arrest and convict numerous homosexuals, or suspected homosexuals, in the Detroit area, as well as the rest of the country. However, during the early 1970s a group known as the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) had taken root in many cities across the country. The Detroit chapter of the GLF made the Fylstra case, along with the issue of entrapment and discrimination, a top priority in its goal to support the gay community of the Detroit area.<sup>224</sup>

The formation of the GLF marked a significant change in the direction of the gay movement, not only in Detroit, but also throughout the country. The GLF had been, from the start, a new radical left movement, with calls for the abolition of current social institutions, and a declaration of “Revolution”.<sup>225</sup> The GLF was more radical in its anti-capitalist sentiment and anti-sexism goals, as well as its opposition to the war in Vietnam. The organization had debated the GLF’s relation to other new left movements such as the socialist movement. Massive anti-

---

<sup>220</sup> D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 41-53

<sup>221</sup> D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 224-240

<sup>222</sup> John Morris, “Anti-gay law challenged.” *The Gay Liberator*, September 1971.

<sup>223</sup> “Gay cleared but Detroit law still stands.” *The Advocate*, January 1972.

<sup>224</sup> “Ready Detroit.” *The Gay Liberator*, September 1971.

<sup>225</sup> Gosse, *Rethinking the new left*, 171

war rallies held in the early 1970s provided rallying points for gay activists, and showed that the burgeoning gay rights movement was a major player in the New Left political agenda.<sup>226</sup> The focus of the new GLF and gay movement at large was to work towards New Left political and social goals, and to support other organizations of the New Left movement.

After the original Detroit chapter of the GLF collapsed in 1971, new and former members joined to together to re-create the organization in that same year with the publication of *The Gay Liberator*.<sup>227</sup> This organization had the same principles of gay liberation and believed capitalism was the main player in oppression of the homosexual community. The new GLF, like the original chapter, was politically charged and socialist oriented, and was only gay news reporting service in the city of Detroit. For the early part of the 1970s, due to its status as the only gay media outlet in the city, the organization quickly became a voice and an influence for homosexuals within Detroit. However, since the new liberation front began in Detroit, its motives, like the gay liberation movement at large was not strictly for the support of the gay community. The desire to work with other leftist groups and political action for equality for other oppressed peoples were issues that the national GLF and the GLF chapter in Detroit worked to advance. These basic principles outlined in its first issue of the original *Detroit Liberator* in 1970.<sup>228</sup> The Women's Liberation Front was a major leftist organization that the new GLF had closely allied with, and the GLF of Detroit would continue to support women's right causes throughout the life of the organization. However, another leftist group the Detroit chapter of the GLF had come to support over its seven-year life span was the leftist organization known as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

When Detroit's GLF began in 1970, the Socialist Worker Party (SWP) had a rocky relationship with the gay community. In the early 1960s, the SWP began the unofficial purging of gay members from its ranks, due to security concerns that blackmailed homosexuals, would give away valuable party secrets, similar to the official purging of homosexuals from government positions. However, beginning with Stonewall and the subsequent rise of the modern gay rights movement, the SWP would come to find this unofficial policy a hindrance to their recruiting endeavors across college campuses.<sup>229</sup>

Finally, in the fall of 1970, the party decided to reverse its policy of excluding homosexuals from its organization and brought forth a period of shared struggle and sentiment for the Gay Liberation movement and the SWP. Overnight, SWP activities and members openly began the push for gay rights and coordination with the gay liberation movement. Through its paper *The Militant*, the SWP began a push for gay rights activists support in the 1972 presidential elections for their candidates Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley.<sup>230</sup> *Militant* articles throughout 1970 and 1971 called attention to Gay Liberation in numerous cities across America, and even reported on anti-gay discrimination bills in play across the U.S.<sup>231</sup>

With the national SWP, at least for the early 1970s, in support of gay liberation and rights at the national level, the Detroit chapter of the SWP followed suit. In their 1974 election campaign, the SWP of Detroit nominated openly gay, Rachele Fruit, for the Detroit City

---

<sup>226</sup> Gosse, *Rethinking the new left*, 177-178

<sup>227</sup> "We're Back." *The Gay Liberator*, September 1971.

<sup>228</sup> Sunny King, "Liberation is coming." *The Detroit Liberator*, April 1970.

<sup>229</sup> David. Thorstad, "Gays vs. The SWP." *Gay Liberator*, December-January 1974-1975.

<sup>230</sup> "SWP campaign wants 5,000 endorsers." *The Militant*, November 5, 1971.

<sup>231</sup> Kate Millet, "Kate Millet on gay liberation." *The Militant*, April 2, 1971.

Common Council, and a hetero-sexual pro-gay rights candidate for mayor, Maceo Dixon.<sup>232</sup> In their campaign flyers and ads, the SWP of Detroit put gay rights as a major campaign issue in its larger platform of a more equal and worker- oriented society, free from the two “capitalist parties”. Detroit’s SWP touted many issues as part of their larger scheme for remaking the city and the nation including gay child adoption, police entrapment and the “repeal (of) all laws...which discriminate against gays”<sup>233</sup> (Candidate Rachele Fruit was a participant in Gay Liberation events in the city, had been an active member for other SWP chapters in other cities. She had also contributed articles to *The Gay Liberator* in Detroit.<sup>234</sup> She was as *The Gay Liberator* described “the first candidate ever to approach the local gay community with a serious, non-insulting campaign.”<sup>235</sup> Candidate Maceo Dixon’s campaign was even more publically pro-gay, with Dixon himself participating in a Detroit GLF protest outside a traffic courthouse where *Liberator* contributor Bob Holmes was being held under A&S charges. The paper in turn described him as, “the only non-gay candidate to have so clearly and publically identified himself with the struggle for gay rights.”<sup>236</sup>

The running of these two pro-gay candidates was a major change for the SWP in Detroit, as their previous Common Council election campaign for 1968 made no mention of gay liberation or indicated that gay civil rights was part of the SWP platform. This would support the conclusion the SWP in Detroit likely shared the same policies as the national level towards homosexuals in the 1960s. However, along with the national party, Detroit’s SWP drastically changed its attitude and support for the homosexual community in the early 1970s. With this support, the SWP was able to provide the gay community of Detroit a chance at homosexual representation, and a step forward in the fight for civil rights.

The GLF’s support for the SWP of Detroit and socialist ideals was not a random occurrence. Though few individuals founded the GLF of Detroit, it had always had a degree of socialist influence in its leadership or in its membership.<sup>237</sup> Frequent contributors to the *Gay Liberator* run by the GLF of Detroit such as Wayne Pierce and James Mott who both came into the organization as members of the International Socialists, a socialist organization headquartered within the city of Detroit.<sup>238</sup> In addition to socialist members within the organization, the distrust of Democratic and Republican parties also fueled support for the SWP and its socialist candidates. The GLF had stated from its beginning that change would not come from the major parties. According the James Mott, writer for *The Gay Liberator* and member of the Detroit chapter of the GLF, “The future of gay liberation rests upon the future of the worker’s movement!”<sup>239</sup> Through *The Gay Liberator*, Detroit’s GLF reaffirmed this sentiment with messages of suspicion and stories of gay liberation being shunned by major political candidates.

One cause of this suspicion came during February of 1972, when Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern made a statement in support of gay rights, giving hope to the national gay rights movement that a major party candidate would run on a platform that supported the gay community and other minority rights. However, James Coleman, writing for

<sup>232</sup> "Meet the candy dates." *The Gay Liberator* , August 1973.

<sup>233</sup> *The Socialist Alternative for Michigan*. (1974).

<sup>234</sup> Rachele Fruit, "Red, proud and gay." *The Gay Liberator* , August 1973.

<sup>235</sup> "Meet the candy dates." *The Gay Liberator* , August 1973.

<sup>236</sup> "Meet the candy dates." *The Gay Liberator* , August 1973.

<sup>237</sup> "On red-baiting ." *The Gay Liberator* , August 1973.

<sup>238</sup> Alexander R , "Schisms and unifications in the old american left," *Labor History* , 14, no. 4 (1973): 545

<sup>239</sup> James Mott, "Revolution and gay liberation part 2." *The Gay Liberator* , April-May 1973.



the *Gay Liberator*, portrayed McGovern as betraying the gay rights movement and as Coleman wrote, “as McGovern moved nearer to the top, he toned down the radical sounding proposals.”<sup>240</sup> McGovern’s backing down on the gay rights agenda gave credence to a proposal set forth by the GLF of Detroit after the Democratic conference in Chicago in which Detroit’s GLF put forth a strategy in which the gay rights movement should be opposed to “both the Democratic and Republican parties”. Instead the GLF of Detroit supported “independent candidacies for gay rights.”<sup>241</sup> With McGovern and the Democrat’s reversing their position on the gay rights platform, the GLF of Detroit had gained influence within the national gay community and for the time was proven right about the need for a third party candidate. In its 1972 presidential election recommendations, though not giving explicit support for the SWP, and citing numerous issues with the SWP’s platform particularly its past banning of homosexuals from its party, in the end *The Gay Liberator* urged voters to call “for the end of the two capitalist parties” and vote in the SWP’s column.

Unfortunately for the SWP, Linda Jenness, their candidate for the 1972 elections did not win.<sup>242</sup> However, the 1972 general election showcased the cooperation between the Gay Liberation Front of Detroit and the Socialist Workers Party and highlighted the influence of socialism and the SWP had on the Detroit gay movement in the early 1970s. Both of these organizations worked for the liberation of women, African Americans and other minorities, and recognized that change was needed in America at that time. They worked for a dismantling of both major parties and both shared the belief capitalism was the main force behind discrimination in America and throughout the world. In Detroit, the message of socialism was especially prevalent in comparison to other cities. For the early part of the decade, *Militant* subscriptions in the city outpaced other mid-west cities such as Chicago and Cleveland, reaching to over 1,000 per month in 1971.<sup>243</sup> In addition to, Joseph Kowalski’s story confirms that socialist activities had a sizable presence in the city since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the heart of the auto industry and a considerable blue-collar workforce, together with uneasy race relations of the 1970s, Detroit made a prime environment for an equal, worker-oriented message to take hold. It is plausible to conclude that with a socialist foothold already established in the city, that new radical social groups in the city such as the GLF would come to harbor a degree of socialist influence. Nonetheless, this period of shared beliefs and cooperation would come to an end later in the decade with the start of a more effective and stronger gay civil rights movement.

### *Independent Detroit Gay Organization*

In the spring of 1976, Bob Stanton, member of the GLF of Detroit and writer for its newspaper *The Gay Liberator*, described due to the fact that “many people, probably the majority, don’t like radicals and radical politics”<sup>244</sup> had spelled the end for *The Gay Liberator* and the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) that had produced it. The paper and organization itself ushered in an era of radical and socialist influence of the gay rights movement in Detroit. Over its six years, the GLF of Detroit through *The Gay Liberator* advocated for the end of the capitalist system and sought cautious cooperation of socialist groups such as the Socialist

---

<sup>240</sup> James Colman, “One thousand percent of nothing.” *The Gay Liberator*, September 1972.

<sup>241</sup> Colman, “One thousand percent of nothing”

<sup>242</sup> Leip, D. “1972 presidential election results.” Last modified 2012. Accessed January 30, 2014.

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1972&minper=0&f=0&of&elect=0>.

<sup>243</sup> *The Militant*, 1970-1971.

<sup>244</sup> Bob Stanton, “Miscellaneous ramblings.” *The Gay Liberator*, Spring 1976.

Workers Party (SWP). It was a staple of the gay community of Detroit, but with the death of *The Gay Liberator* and the GLF, it allowed for a new type of gay rights movement to take hold.

Radical left groups and influence had been on decline through the mid part of the 70s due to a new recession that dried up the money and “revolutionary euphoria” that had allowed for the New Left and the GLF to come about earlier in the decade. The end of the Vietnam War, which provided a rallying point for many New Left groups such as the GLF and the SWP, also diminished support and enthusiasm for more New Left actives. With the New Left diminishing and radical groups losing their power to influence American society, the gay movement in America began to adjust itself to appeal to a broader range of the public. This change similarly took place within the Detroit gay movement, with the death of the GLF leaving a vacuum for more moderate voices to be heard.<sup>245</sup>

The environment for homosexuals in Detroit had changed significantly in the six years since the birth of the GLF. By 1976, the gay community had over a dozen homosexual organizations, churches, media outlets, and a dramatic increase in the number of social spaces. These included institutions such as bars and parks that homosexuals could congregate and socialize with each other. In addition, a new city charter adopted in 1974 had given the homosexual community protection against employment discrimination.<sup>246</sup> With more and more opportunities for gays to be open with themselves, the community, and for the opportunity for more communication between homosexuals, pro-gay groups in the city also began large collaboration efforts to address issues the gay community in Detroit faced as a whole.<sup>247</sup> It was this collaboration of various groups that filled the void left by the death of *The Gay Liberator*, the only gay newspaper in the city with the new pro-gay newspaper the *Metro Gay News* (MGN).

Homosexual activism had taken a new more moderate tone with the publication of the MGN. With its opening editorial, the paper declared its only purpose was “to provide an exchange of information” and to build an “even larger sense of community within metropolitan Detroit.”<sup>248</sup> The paper took aim at the “flaming” and “diesel dike” stereotypes that existed about the homosexual community and was dedicated to changing the views about homosexual community. Through its two-year life span, the paper included gay civil rights issues, but also included sports, pro-gay events around the city and country, movie reviews, and advertising for many gay bars and other gathering places differentiated the MGN from its predecessor *The Gay Liberator*.<sup>249</sup> With the MGN’s reporting not just only on gay civil rights issues, but also on community events and “average” everyday things, the paper brought a broader view of the Detroit homosexual community as a whole. Coverage of socialist and radical leftist stories and events that the previous *Liberator* had used to differentiate the homosexual community from the straight ceased. The goal now was to show that the Detroit gay community was just as “normal” as everyone else, a community that had little SWP influence or any other socialist influence.

One major example of this push for normalcy was the MGN’s coverage in 1978 of a male homosexual couple in the Minneapolis region. John Baker and Michael McConnell were a typical homosexual couple that gained the attention of national gay media as they were suing for a marriage license they applied for at the beginning of the decade. In its coverage of their story,

---

<sup>245</sup> Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretative History*, 187

<sup>246</sup> “Elections over-charter passed. Now what?.” *The Gay Liberator*, November 1974.

<sup>247</sup> “Detroit comes out.” *The Metro Gay News*, August 1976.

<sup>248</sup> “A gay paper for michigan.” *The Metro Gay News*, August 1976.

<sup>249</sup> “Sports .” *The Metro Gay News*, November 1976.

the MGN portrayed the couple as “They live on a quiet little suburban street in a rented two bedroom house where one year has stretched into several as they lead busy lives and save for the time when they can buy a place of their own...”<sup>250</sup> It was a description of not a radical homosexual couple displaying homosexual, “flaming” stereotypes, but of an average couple trying to find their way in the world. It was an image of self-betterment and the “white picket fence” American dream that would resonate with the average citizen in Detroit and the rest of the nation. It was an image essential to the new focus of the MGN’s message of a gay community that was just another “normal” American community.

This shift to a more conservative image not only occurred in the Detroit area but throughout Michigan and the rest of the country. In its founding message of affirmation, the new Michigan Organization for Human Rights (MOHR), a new gay rights group made up of homosexual rights activists from various cities across the state, outlined its goals to “protect the basic legal and human rights” of the gay community of Michigan. It was a message similar to the founding GLF message, except without mention of a social “Revolution” that the GLF advocated for American society. In fact the opening resolution of MOHR advocated the education of the general public as a basis of change, not liberationist, based on a radical change in society. This organization being state wide, the absence of a radical message would carry a sizable influence in individual gay rights organization in cities across Michigan. In turn as this more moderate message spread to local organizations, their efforts would continue to reflect this moderate shift and carry a more modest message to their communities, changing public views of the gay community.<sup>251</sup>

In addition to distinguishing itself from *The Gay Liberator* in the social realm, the MGN used its influence to persuade gay voters towards a different political track. For the 1976 election year, the MGN set itself apart from its predecessor by siding with the Democratic party, a party that only four years before had been vilified by *The Gay Liberator*. No mention of the SWP or socialism, causes in which *The Gay Liberator* in the earlier 70s endorsed ever made it into the MGN’s election coverage. It had been for some time that the SWP had been on rocky ground with gay supporters. The party had banned participation of homosexuals during the 50s and 60s before deciding in 1970 to allow openly gay members. However, in 1973 during a party meeting, the SWP published a memorandum taking issues to the gay liberation movement and that “the party...should not take a stand on the nature of homosexuality.”<sup>252</sup> This stance angered many of the pro-socialism gays in the early party of the 70s, and drove away their support. Though the MGN choose to refrain from making endorsements, it reported that throughout the country, including the state of Michigan, how Democratic candidates were seeking gay support and endorsing civil rights for homosexual citizens. James (Jimmy) Carter, the Democratic nominee for president, had declared his full support for gay civil rights, a support that stuck through Election Day.<sup>253</sup> With the Democratic Party giving is definite support for gay rights for this election, the Democrats represented a more supportive choice than the SWP.

With the Democratic Party now on board with a pro gay rights platform, the gay community of Detroit finally had a major party candidate with sizable support. The Democrats also had a greater chance of winning than a third party candidate such as the SWP candidate Peter Camejo. However, the MGN made one mention to a third party, the Libertarian Party. The

---

<sup>250</sup> Larry Lee, "Seven Years Later ." *The Metro Gay News*, February 1978.

<sup>251</sup> David. Krumroy, "New groups offers state political sophistication ." *The Metro Gay News*, November 1977.

<sup>252</sup> Thorstad. "Gays vs. the SWP ." *The Gay Liberator* , December-January 1974-1975.

<sup>253</sup> "Election '76 ." *The Gay Liberator* , November 1976.

Libertarians were opposed to the government regulation of private business and individuals, and believed in an individualistic oriented society. This put the Libertarians at odds with socialist thought as they opposed a collectivist workers society and many other economic regulations of the socialist parties. However, what gave this party the mention of the MGN and gay community support was its opposition to the criminalization of private sex acts that had been used to jail homosexuals in Detroit and throughout the country.<sup>10</sup> Though the party did not support banning discrimination against homosexuals in private business, it still garnered the attention of the MGN and the gay community. This attention given to the Democratic and Libertarian parties illustrates the shift from radical leftist support to more moderate views within the Detroit gay community. No longer was the election year message one of oppressive capitalism in which the SWP and the GLF believed was discriminating against the gay and other minority communities. Rather it was a message restricted to the support for candidates who advocated homosexual civil rights within the context of current American society. It was a more politically mainstream message that contributed to the moderation of previously radical views in the Detroit gay community.

With the modern LGBT rights movements making strides into anti-workplace discrimination and marriage equality for the LGBT community, it can be easily argued that the gay movement did itself a favor by shifting away from radical socialist attitudes in favor of a more assimilationist attitude. Within the state of Michigan support for gay marriage, something that had not even been mentioned even in radical groups such as the GLF during the 70s, now stands over 50% and over 15 of local municipalities have passed anti discrimination codes for sexual and gender orientation.<sup>254, 255</sup> Yet, even with these advancements, basic discrimination based on gender expression and sexual orientation still exists within American society. One main argument against the expansion of LGBT civil rights, particularly in workplace discrimination, is the cost of extending protection to LGBT workers. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), outlawing discrimination for sexual orientation and gender identity, first introduced to congress in 1994 and voted on in 1996, 2007 and recently in 2013, has been blocked by opponents claiming that this legislation would “increase frivolous litigation and cost American jobs, especially small business jobs.”<sup>256</sup> It is an argument that is based on a fundamental capitalist principle of cost and its interaction with the health of business. It is an argument, under the beliefs of the GLF, which would be irrelevant as they advocated a society based on the need of workers, not on the cost to companies. In addition to, the beliefs held by the GLF and early 70s gay movement held that the homosexual and other sexual minorities should be more vocal and more demanding of civil rights. Such workplace discrimination if dealt with the radical socialist society proposed by the GLF and SWP would be irrelevant.

With the conclusion of the decade, the Detroit gay community had evolved into an independent movement, one more moderate than it had been in the early 70s. Early in the 70s, the SWP and gay organizations in Detroit such as the GLF shared a mutual belief that a capitalist society was the cause of homosexual oppression. However, by the end of the decade, Socialist Worker Party and other socialist influence had faded dramatically as a more accepting atmosphere towards homosexuals in the political and social realm took hold in America. In

---

<sup>254</sup> Jenson, T. Public Policy Polling, "Support for gay marriage climbing in Michigan." Last modified June 1, 2012. <http://www.publicpolicypolling.com/main/2012/06/support-for-gay-marriage-climbing-in-michigan.html>.

<sup>255</sup> Kate Lambert, The Huffington Post, "Flint Equal Housing Rights Ordinance Passed After 2-Year Effort From LGBT Groups." Last modified March 5, 2012. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/05/equal-housing-rights-ordinance-flint-michael-brown-lgbt\\_n\\_1322440.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/05/equal-housing-rights-ordinance-flint-michael-brown-lgbt_n_1322440.html).

<sup>256</sup> The Huffington Post, "John Boehner Opposes ENDA, Dealing Blow To Bill's Chances." Last modified November 4, 2013. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/04/john-boehner-enda\\_n\\_4212250.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/04/john-boehner-enda_n_4212250.html).

addition to, residual anger towards the SWP for its barring of homosexuals from its ranks in the 1950s and 60s and the party's refusal to apologize also contributed to the diminishing of SWP influence. Ultimately it was this diminished influence and a more accepting environment that allowed for the Detroit gay community to moderate its radical socialist views, and to form a modern gay movement committed to the struggle for gay civil rights.

## Bibliography

### Primary

- (1970-1976). *Detroit Liberator*  
(1976-1978). *Metro Gay News*  
(1969-1972). *The Militant*.  
(1967-present). *The Advocate*  
(1968-1976). Various Detroit SWP documents. MSU Libraries Special Collections  
(1974). *The Socialist Alternative for Michigan*  
(November 7, 1922). *The New York Times*

### Secondary

- Alexander, Robert *International Trotskyism: a documented analysis of the world movement* Durham, Duke University Press 1991 pp.901, 903  
Buhle , Paul *Marxism in the United States*, (New York: Verso, 2013),  
D'Emilio, John. (1983). *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
Goose, Van. (2005). *Rethinking the New Left an Interpretative History*  
Hillquit, Mott *History of Socialism in the United States*, (New York: Russel & Russel, 1965),  
Jenson , T. Public Policy Polling , "Support for gay marriage climbing in Michigan." Last modified June 1, 2012.  
<http://www.publicpolicypolling.com/main/2012/06/support-for-gay-marriage-climbing-in-michigan.html>.  
Lambertz , Kate. The Huffington Post , "Flint Equal Housing Rights Ordinance Passed After 2-Year Effort From LGBT Groups." Last modified March 5, 2012.  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/05/equal-housing-rights-ordinance-flint-michael-brown-lgbt\\_n\\_1322440.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/05/equal-housing-rights-ordinance-flint-michael-brown-lgbt_n_1322440.html).  
Leip, D. (2012). *1972 presidential general election results*. Retrieved from <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1972&minper=0&f=0&of f=0&elect=0>  
Spolansky, Jacob. *Communist Trail in America*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951.

# Development of Episcopal Elections in the Early Twelfth Century

Trevor Mattis II

This essay examines the volatile nature of episcopal elections leading up to the twelfth century and subsequent reforms. Episcopal elections in medieval Europe were lucrative and rarely adhered to canon law, warranting the statement volatile. Elections were plagued by secular coercion as secular powers, I argue, sought to exploit episcopal elections for personal gain limiting the influence of the Church in the process. Reforms in the early twelfth century were thus crucial to the greater development of medieval Europe in ensuing centuries.

Episcopal elections and abbatial appointments were at many times controversial leading up to the First Lateran Council in 1123, in that many elections did not abide by the canons and laws designated for such elections.<sup>257</sup> The First Lateran Council advanced the development of elections; instituting changes to where elections were held, who participated in elections, and how certain individuals participated in elections. Rights of secular powers, including the King, were greatly restricted; however, secular authorities managed to keep minor influences, particularly in Germany. Ecclesia held great sway over medieval communities; and whoever occupied ecclesiastic positions directly shaped their surrounding region. Changes implemented to elections starting with the decrees of the First Lateran Council thus began a chain reaction throughout medieval Europe. The development of episcopal elections beginning in 1123 was therefore very important to the evolution of both the church, and European society as a whole during the twelfth century and on.

In order to analyze the changes that occurred to episcopal elections in the twelfth century, it is important to first look at how elections were canonically supposed to run during the centuries prior. In the period directly following the fall of the Roman Empire, leaders of the Christian church began creating new laws and canons to build up the church's strength, and create a unified institution. The rules developed by early leaders and Popes the laws that would theoretically be followed and enforced up until the twelfth century. Specifically in dealing with episcopal elections, it was Gregory the Great's ideas which were used as guidelines until the time of the investiture controversy. Gregory the Great's decrees involving episcopal elections are seen in his many letters. One such letter was written to an individual named Benenatus, a fellow bishop, who was visiting the city of Cumae in March of 592 C.E. where their bishop had recently died.<sup>258</sup> Benenatus wrote to Gregory asking the procedure for filling the empty position, in response Gregory responded saying, "we want you to advise the clergy and the people with one and the same consensus, seek out a priest to be appointed over them."<sup>259</sup> Gregory then continued to describe the character the prelate should possess stating, "He must be found worthy of such an important ministry, and must in no way be rejected by venerable church canons."<sup>260</sup> Gregory concluded his letter by instructing that once those steps had been taken to send the bishop elect

---

<sup>257</sup> Norman P. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1990), 190.

<sup>258</sup> Gregory and John R. C. Martyn, "2.22" *The Letters of Gregory the Great* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2004), 206-7.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid, Gregory to Benenatus, March, 592 C.E.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

to Rome in order to be consecrated.<sup>261</sup> The process laid out in Gregory's letter was the dominant process which would be followed for episcopal elections until the late eleventh century.

On a broad scale, Gregory the Great's guidelines for episcopal elections can be seen as the best possible course, but in reality elections were conducted much differently. First, an elected official was to be chosen by both the clergy and the people, with both groups playing a part in the election. The clergy generally consisted of bishops from neighboring regions that travelled to the city with the vacant See to participate in an election.<sup>262</sup> This is different from later medieval times in that a closed group of electors, such as the cardinals, did not solely have the power to elect an official; instead a candidate was chosen by all individuals and clergy present at the election.<sup>263</sup> The collaboration of both the people and the clergy was a crucial part of the election process because consent was required from both parties in order to make an election legitimate. On the other hand, that also meant that the consent of laity was required since they fit into the category of the people. Lay opinions however, generally held more weight than those of the lower clergy and peasantry. A *Dictum* of Celestine I expressed that particular process of electoral theory stating, "A bishop should not be given to those who are unwilling to receive him. The consent and wishes of the clergy, the people, and the nobility are required."<sup>264</sup> The approval of laity and nobles was therefore, generally required in order to make a new bishop's election legitimate. The function of secular powers in episcopal elections would become very controversial in the eleventh century.

Episcopal elections before 1123 were plagued by interference from laity, causing many problems for the church. First and foremost, lay involvement in episcopal elections allowed secular powers to exercise control and power over the church itself. This was especially true in regards to smaller benefices and churches that often did not possess much power. Secular authorities were able to exercise control over the church for a couple of reasons. First, lay approval was required in order to legitimize a candidate's election to an ecclesiastic office. Since canon law dictated that approval of all persons was required to make a prelate's election valid, laity were legally granted the right to participate in elections. Secular powers interfered primarily, by having candidates of their choice elected to important positions so they could then exercise their will through them. Secular powers were able to accomplish such actions unhindered for the simple reason that they had the most power in their individual regions. A large rise in comital power occurred in the tenth and eleventh centuries as Counts, Dukes, and private castellans gained more power, and the influence of the King began to diminish.<sup>265</sup> The more power an individual wielded, the more influence they possessed in an election. This was especially prominent in Francia, in areas such as Aquitaine and Normandy, where the King was more or less a ceremonial figure.<sup>266</sup> In Normandy during the eleventh century for example, Duke William (The Conqueror) exercised undisputed control over the church.<sup>267</sup> William himself,

---

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Robert L. Benson, *The Bishop-Elect: A Study in Medieval Ecclesiastical Office* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), 24.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 25.

<sup>265</sup> Andre Debord, "The Castellan Revolution and the Peace of God in Aquitaine." *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response Around the Year 1000*. Ed. Thomas F. Head and Richard A. Landes (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992), 135-64.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> Z. N. Brooke, "The Issue of Law: Conflict of Churches." *The Investiture Controversy: Issues, Ideals, and Results*. Ed. Karl F. Morrison (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 8.



appointed candidates to all episcopal positions, and his approval was required before any ecclesiastic decree was to be issued anywhere in Normandy.<sup>268</sup> William's power in Normandy represented an extreme case, but such actions occurred everywhere in Europe during the eleventh century and became a big problem for the church because the church was losing control of its own institutions. Many times, individuals appointed to episcopal positions by laity put secular interests before those of the church; thereby placing control of their institution in the hands of secular powers and not of the church. The Roman Church was thus unable to complete its mission.

The second problem that stemmed from the process of episcopal elections before the First Lateran Council was laity's control over church properties; which also coincided with secular control of episcopal elections. Many churches' lands were given to them by nobles or the King as benefices or fiefs. The layman who granted the land therefore felt he had the right to administer that land as he pleased. Laity then exploited the church's wealth and lands through puppet bishops which they had previously appointed. This problem occurred everywhere across Carolingian Europe, and again was extreme in Normandy where lay patrons held tithes through the church for their own benefit and freely distributed church lands how they pleased.<sup>269</sup> Along the same lines, another way secular powers controlled elections was through a system of proprietary churches.<sup>270</sup> Kings generally benefitted the most from proprietary church systems since they owned the most churches and bishoprics, as well as their properties. The Kings ownership of church lands gave the King a sense of entitlement to that institution's wealth, land, and people.<sup>271</sup> The King was able to thus use his control over church property to control episcopal elections; further limiting the Roman Catholic Church's influence and power. An example of such occurred in Tuscany during the ninth century not by a King, but by a noble named Boniface who was the Count of Lucca.<sup>272</sup> Boniface and his heirs were able to expand their rule over the rich lands of Tuscany through contracts and exchanges by exploiting the lands that had been given to the churches in the area by imperial favor.<sup>273</sup> By manipulating those contracts, Boniface himself was able to gain control of those properties, and thus he was able to exploit their resources. Election processes before the First Lateran Council in 1123 were plagued with interference, but in the late eleventh century reforms began that were essential to the development of episcopal elections that lead up to 1123.

The first large step in the development of episcopal elections occurred in the mid-eleventh century upon Pope Clement II's election to Pope following the papal schism.<sup>274</sup> The schism was solved when King Henry III stepped in and facilitated the election of Pope Clement II after a synod held at Sutri in December of 1046.<sup>275</sup> With the election of Clement II, the reform movement of the church began in full. Reformers such as Peter Damian, Clement II, as well as the later reformer Popes like Leo IX, sought to restore and renew religious life throughout

---

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Brooke, *The Issue of Law*, 8.

<sup>270</sup> Paul Joachimson, "The Issue of Government: Conflict of Church and Empire." *The Investiture Controversy : Issues, Ideals, and Results*. Ed. Karl F. Morrison (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 13.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid, 26.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 57.

<sup>275</sup> Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy*, 57.

Europe.<sup>276</sup> It was Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) however, who contributed the most to the development of elections in that period, during the investiture controversy. Gregory was upset with the corruption of the Church, specifically with lay investiture and the problems it brought concerning elected ecclesia and property.<sup>277</sup> The controversy however, was the main catalyst for instituting reforms to episcopal elections in the early twelfth century. During the investiture conflict, synods were held in both 1078 and 1080, which began the process of permanent alteration to episcopal elections.<sup>278</sup>

It was declared at the synods of 1078 and 1080 that from that point on, no clergy were to receive the investiture of a bishopric, abbey, or church from the hand of any layperson; if any man did, they and the noble who had invested them would both be excommunicated.<sup>279</sup> Ecclesia stated investiture had in their minds, “caused many disturbances in the church by which the Christian religion is trodden under foot,” and so their decree was justified.<sup>280</sup> Thus, lay investiture was formally banned. A great uproar arose from secular powers, and another great schism occurred; this time between the church and state. Eventually, multiple negotiations between King Henry V and Pope Paschal II failed around 1110, prompting Henry to pursue violent action.<sup>281</sup> Paschal, having no other option, was thus forced to concede rights of investiture back to Henry in 1111.<sup>282</sup> By 1122 however, political opposition and pressure forced Henry V to again renegotiate with Pope Callixtus II, and the agreement made initiated the great transformation of episcopal elections.<sup>283</sup>

The agreement created was called the Concordat of Worms of 1122.<sup>284</sup> The Concordat did not completely and decisively end the problem of investiture, but it did change the rules surrounding episcopal elections. Within the Concordat of Worms, both Henry V and Callixtus II made concessions in an attempt to reunite church and state. Callixtus II’s concessions began first, stating that from then on all elections of bishops and abbots within the German Kingdom, or that pertained to the German Kingdom, were to take place in the presence of the King without simony or violence.<sup>285</sup> The King was also granted the right to appoint candidates in disputed elections, but only after first seeking counsel from the present ecclesia.<sup>286</sup> Lastly, Callixtus granted Henry the right to invest elected candidates with the regalia by means of the scepter, both within and outside of Germany.<sup>287</sup> With that change, Henry V was also granted the right to invest a chosen individual prior to his consecration.<sup>288</sup> King Henry V’s concessions to the Roman Church began first by remitting all investiture rights by ring and staff, thus giving up his right to invest candidates with their spiritual powers.<sup>289</sup> Henry next agreed that within the Kingdom of

---

<sup>276</sup> Ibid, 64.

<sup>277</sup> Maureen C. Miller, *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2005), 83-87.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid, 104-5.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Stanley A. Chodorow, "Ecclesiastical Politics and the Ending of the Investiture Contest: The Papal Election of 1119 and the Negotiations of Mouzon." *Speculum* 46.4 (1971), 613-40.

<sup>282</sup> Chodorow, "Ecclesiastical Politics and the Ending of the Investiture Contest", 613-40.

<sup>283</sup> Miller, *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict*, 120.

<sup>284</sup> Benson. *The Bishop-Elect*, 228.

<sup>285</sup> Miller, *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict*, 121.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 231.

<sup>289</sup> Miller, *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict*, 120.

Germany there would be canonical election and free consecration in all churches.<sup>290</sup> Lastly, all regalia and possessions of the church which had been taken from the beginning of the investiture conflict until 1122 were to be returned to the Roman Church, and those properties which had been destroyed would receive aid in restoration.<sup>291</sup> The Concordat of Worms was greatly important to the development of episcopal elections, changing many of the procedures dominant in pre-1122 elections, but its overall vagueness left many of its stipulations up for interpretation. Issues over varied interpretations of the agreement led the Roman Catholic Church to try and legally solve all problems the next year at the First Lateran Council.

The First Lateran Council of 1123 was crucial to the development of episcopal elections. Ecclesia present sought end all problems concerning interpretations of the Concordat by transcribing its decrees into canon law. The First Lateran Council did not simply solidify the exact agreement at Worms, but rather constructed new canons for the grey areas. Decree three first stipulated that no one was to consecrate as a bishop, an individual who had not been canonically elected.<sup>292</sup> This law formally ended the appointment of non-qualified individuals, and also placed emphasis on the idea that only individuals canonically elect could be validly consecrated. Decree eighteen of the First Lateran Council next stipulated that priests were to be appointed to churches by bishops themselves, and that nobody was to receive tithes and churches from any lay person without the consent of the bishops first.<sup>293</sup> Decree eighteen formally confirmed that no layman was, from that point on, allowed to invest an individual without the consent of the bishops first.<sup>294</sup> These stipulations did not apply to the King however, but rather his rights involving investiture were made clear by the agreement at Worms and did not need to be addressed. The last decree of the First Lateran Council concerning episcopal elections was decree eight. Decree eight dealt with problems that arose, once again, over property and dealings with the regalia. Decree eight stipulated that no laity had the power to dispose of any ecclesiastical business or property, and warned, “if any prince or other lay person should arrogate to himself the disposition or donation of ecclesiastical possessions, let him be regarded as sacrilegious.”<sup>295</sup> Property issues would become a large problem between the church and state in the decades immediately following the First Lateran Council. Disputes surrounding property interfered many times with episcopal elections themselves, as it had in the centuries preceding 1123. The legal and theoretical changes made to the processes of episcopal elections in both 1122 and 1123 advanced elections for the better though, affecting medieval society as a whole.

Following 1123, the kingdoms of Francia, Italy, and Germany experienced great changes, Francia and Italy more so than Germany; however, the Roman Catholic Church as a whole benefitted from the overall transition. After the First Lateran Council, individual churches and bishoprics across much of Europe no longer dealt with frequent lay interference, especially outside of Germany. Nobles were restricted from directly appointing candidates but were still allowed, and sometimes even required, to give their consent of elected individuals. Lack of direct secular presence in elections however, allowed the church to regain control of its institutions and its elections; with cathedral chapters becoming the primary electoral body.<sup>296</sup> Such reforms were

---

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Miller, *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict*, 120.

<sup>292</sup> Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 190.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid, 194.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 191.

<sup>296</sup> Jörg H. Peltzer, *Canon Law, Careers and Conquest: Episcopal Elections in Normandy and Greater Anjou, C.1140-C.1230* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 26.

in stark contrast in areas like Normandy where before 1123 secular authorities controlled all church action and elections.<sup>297</sup> Bishops and other ecclesia alike were able to then freely elect their own officials; ensuring that chosen candidates were morally acceptable for the position and had the interests of the church in mind. The Roman Catholic Church gained much power from this development and was able to therefore transfer its focus away from internal problems, which were diminishing, to Christianity's mission of educating and serving the peoples of the world. Again, the church's success in this regard was primarily outside of Germany, since within Germany secular powers still held minor influences in episcopal elections. The church's increased control of its own institutions and elections also made it far easier to facilitate reforms started back in the mid-eleventh century with Pope Clement II, such as the abolition of simony.

The evolution of episcopal elections following the First Lateran Council benefitted the church greatly, but the development of elections after 1123 also created a small divide between the church and the state, especially outside of Germany. Within Germany, such a divide was not apparent, and episcopal processes were more complicated than in Francia and Italy due to the King's rights. In Francia and Italy though, the church was able to create a more definite political distinction between themselves and secular powers. Since nobles or Kings could no longer invest elected candidates with both temporal and spiritual powers, the functions of the Pope and primarily of the other high clergy to invest spiritual rights and to consecrate became far more prominent. The Pope himself gained more power and further legitimized his position as a direct result, which in turn created a larger divide between the church and the state.<sup>298</sup> The distinction created was not definitive, bishops and other clergy still occupied both temporal and spiritual jurisdictions, especially as judges, but overall the evolution of episcopal elections after 1123 initiated the split of church and state which would expand in ensuing centuries.<sup>299</sup>

In Germany, the church and state remained intertwined and processes for episcopal elections were far more complex due to the continued influence of the King. To start, episcopal elections following the First Lateran Council were legally designated to occur in the presence of the King himself, or within his court. Such was a new development since before 1123, and even in Francia and Italy after 1123, episcopal elections generally occurred in a church without the direct presence of the King. In Germany however, the King was guaranteed the right to attend any and all elections, if he pleased. Although lower laity had lost their ability to directly influence elections, the King's presence at elections had greatly increased. Elections within the King's court benefitted secular powers immensely because they were able to retain a portion of influence through intimidation and sheer presence. On the other hand though, the church was promised free and canonical elections by the Concordat of Worms, and thus secular interference was still limited. As was the case outside of Germany, the ability of ecclesiastics to conduct free and canonical episcopal elections within Germany allowed the Roman Catholic Church to advance in their goals; it was not as easy as it was in Francia and Italy though.

With the agreement at Worms in particular, the King, Henry V at the time, was given two specific abilities which allowed secular powers to continue interference in episcopal elections. First, the King was granted the ability to appoint a candidate in the case of a disputed election, as stated previously. The ability of the King to appoint candidates directly thus continued from previous centuries, although the guidelines for how and when the King could appoint an

---

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Kathleen G. Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005), 86.

<sup>299</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 307.

individual had changed. Second, the King retained the right to invest temporal powers by means of the scepter. Nobles in Germany, Francia, and Italy, had lost their rights to investiture, but the King still retained partial abilities. The church had decided that only ecclesiastics should exercise the right to consecrate and invest spiritual powers. The King was thus left only with the right to invest an elected official with the regalia and the power to administer it.<sup>300</sup> That right however, was substantial enough to complicate elections further, giving the King a definitive way to still interfere in elections. Many churches both within and outside of Germany had acquired or been given regalia before the First Lateran Council, therefore candidates elected to such churches needed the investiture of the King in order to administer their lands.<sup>301</sup> The King influenced elections by refusing the investiture of a candidate whom he deemed unfavorable, which would then in turn leave that individual unable to administer his church or bishopric.<sup>302</sup> As was the case leading up to the investiture conflict, the abuse of such investiture rights created many complications for the church and hindered its progress.

In the decade directly following the First Lateran Council, elections mostly proceeded accordingly; however, episcopal elections soon evolved again. The first additional development occurred following Henry V's death in 1125, with his replacement by Lothar III as King of Germany.<sup>303</sup> Lothar felt Henry V's concessions in the Concordat of Worms hurt his position as King since he was unable to directly invest candidates and was thus unable to prevent the election of candidates who were hostile towards the throne.<sup>304</sup> Lothar also disliked that bishops, like the Archbishop of Trier and Bishop of Regensburg, had seized the regalia before receiving his investiture.<sup>305</sup> Lothar felt his royal right of investiture was being undermined, so he confronted Pope Innocent II and a new Concordat was issued in 1133 to solve the problem.<sup>306</sup>

The new Concordat created in 1133 added a new element to episcopal elections, particularly to churches that administered regalia. The Concordat declared, "no one elevated to episcopal or abbatial office in Germany should dare to usurp or to seize the regalia before having requested them from Lothar himself", thus appeasing Lothar's problem.<sup>307</sup> The new Concordat was originally written solely for Lothar, but subsequent Kings made use of it as well. The Concordat guaranteed that all elected officials who administered churches with regalia needed to gain Lothar's investiture before they could take office. Again, this provided procedure for secular interference in elections by using the investiture of regalia as a means for choosing candidates. Lothar promptly took advantage of such powers. Shortly after 1133, during an episcopal election in Basel, a prominent Duke, Duke Henry the Proud, felt his power and influence over the region were weakened by the strength of the elected candidate, so he asked Lothar to refuse investiture to the candidate; Lothar obliged.<sup>308</sup> The elected candidate was thereby unable to administer his church, and thus a new candidate had to be elected. Lothar's actions clearly illustrate how secular authorities still found ways to interfere in episcopal elections after 1123. Two prominent figures in the Roman Catholic Church at the time, Conrad

---

<sup>300</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 252.

<sup>301</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 253.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, 252.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, 255.

<sup>307</sup> Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 199.

<sup>308</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 259.

of Salzburg and Adalbert of Mainz, looked at Lothar's intervention with distain.<sup>309</sup> Conrad described the incidence stating, "This scandal is the new presumption of the advocates, who ascribe themselves unheard-of rights in the elections of bishops, as though a bishop could not be elected unless they consent."<sup>310</sup> Conrad felt laity still had too much control in the church, and that ecclesiastics alone should elect their own officials. Adalbert of Mainz shared a similar opinion as Conrad, calling Lothar's intervention, "the destruction of ecclesiastical liberty", illustrating the views of many ecclesia regarding the actions of the King and the reforms made by the Concordat of 1133.<sup>311</sup> The last important addition to the development of episcopal elections in the early twelfth century came from the canonist Gratian around 1140.<sup>312</sup>

Gratian, in his text the *Decretum*, clearly defined the role of secular powers; stopping their interference in episcopal elections. Specifically, *Distincio 63* of the *Decretum* that defined secular roles. In *Distincio 63*, it is declared first and foremost that laymen should not take part in the elections of bishops.<sup>313</sup> Gratian states that laymen should not be excluded from elections, nor that princes should be barred from filling offices, but that those individuals only need be summoned to elections to give their consent of elected candidates.<sup>314</sup> Gratian goes on to say, "in the election of a bishop, the people must be present" and also that, "clergy and people should take part in the election of a bishop."<sup>315</sup> Such was simply a confirmation of what was accepted in the fifth century under Pope Leo the Great, but had since been neglected.<sup>316</sup> The clergy and common people had a right to participate in the election of their own officials, and very few felt otherwise. *Distincio 63* lastly stated, "he who attains the episcopal eminence by royal appointment should not be accepted", thereby definitively excluding secular authorities, except the King, from appointing candidates.<sup>317</sup> Gratian justified the *Decretum* by arguing that what had been blameless in one period may be dangerous in another, and so it must be destroyed.<sup>318</sup> Gratian's *Decretum* was used throughout Europe as guidelines governing proper episcopal elections. Specifically defining the role of laity in episcopal elections was imperative to abolishing many of the problems surrounding episcopal elections in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Thus, the *Decretum* had a large impact on medieval society and the development of episcopal elections after 1140.

Different aspects of episcopal election evolution in the early twelfth century elicited a variety of opinions from many prominent figures within the church. Differing views among ecclesia showed that the changes made were not always seen as correct, but they were still widely practiced and accepted. Norbert, Archbishop of Magdeburg (1080-1134), felt certain aspects of episcopal elections, like the seemingly required consent of laymen, were completely acceptable following past ideas from primarily Leo the Great's doctrine which supported required consent from the King and the *Honorati*, or nobles, in episcopal elections.<sup>319</sup> Others like Gerhoh of Reichersburg (1093-1169) avidly believed the ownership of property, as well as the

---

<sup>309</sup> Ibid, 266-7.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 28.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> Benson, *The Bishop-Elect*, 266.

involvement of secular powers in episcopal affairs, were a critical problem for the church at large.<sup>320</sup> Gerhoh described his views stating, “the regalia and the ecclesiastica are so mingled that a bishop would now seem to rob the monarchy if he wanted to refuse the church’s properties to knights.”<sup>321</sup> Still others, like individuals from the Bolognese and French Schools, such as canonist Stephen of Tournai (1128-1203), accepted lay participation in elections after 1123, and felt they were a necessity in order to stop machinations.<sup>322</sup> The alteration of episcopal elections in the early twelfth century thus acquired many opinions, but overall the evolution of elections helped shaped medieval development and church influence in the centuries following 1123.

The developments of episcopal elections centered on the legislation of the Concordat of Worms and the First Lateran Council were very important to the progression of medieval Europe in the twelfth century. Many aspects of elections changed, such as the roles of the King and nobles, while other aspects did not, like the participation of the clergy and common people in elections. The evolution of episcopal elections after the reforms of the First Lateran Council and Concordat of Worms allowed the Roman Catholic Church to grow and flourish, and to begin to separate itself from the entity of the state. Medieval society as a whole thus began to change as a direct result of the development to episcopal elections in the early twelfth century. Even the smallest addition, like the holding of elections in the presence of the King, instituted a large scale change on all of medieval Europe for the agenda of the elected directly correlated with the policies implemented and enforced at the basic level of society. Those slight changes to important processes, such as episcopal elections, can therefore have the largest impact on the development of a society, thus making that evolutionary process worth examination.

---

<sup>320</sup> Ibid, 307.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid, 309.

<sup>322</sup> Peltzer, *Canon Law, Careers and Conquest*, 31.

## Bibliography

### Primary

- Gregory, and John R. C. Martyn. "2.22" *The Letters of Gregory the Great*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2004.
- Miller, Maureen C. *Power and the Holy in the Age of the Investiture Conflict: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2005.
- Tanner, Norman P. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. London: Sheed & Ward, 1990.

### Secondary

- Benson, Robert L. *The Bishop-Elect: A Study in Medieval Ecclesiastical Office*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Blumenthal, Uta-Renate. *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988.
- Brooke, Z. N. "The Issue of Law: Conflict of Churches." *The Investiture Controversy : Issues, Ideals, and Results*. Ed. Karl F. Morrison. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.
- Chodorow, Stanley A. "Ecclesiastical Politics and the Ending of the Investiture Contest: The Papal Election of 1119 and the Negotiations of Mouzon." *Speculum* 46.4 (1971).
- Cushing, Kathleen G. *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005.
- Debord, Andre. "The Castellan Revolution and the Peace of God in Aquitaine." *The Peace of God: Social Violence and Religious Response Around the Year 1000*. Ed. Thomas F. Head and Richard A. Landes. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992.
- Joachimson, Paul. "The Issue of Government: Conflict of Church and Empire." *The Investiture Controversy : Issues, Ideals, and Results*. Ed. Karl F. Morrison. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.
- Peltzer, Jörg H. *Canon Law, Careers and Conquest: Episcopal Elections in Normandy and Greater Anjou, C.1140-C.1230*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Winroth, Anders. *The Making of Gratian's Decretum*. Cambridge [England: University of Cambridge, 2000.



# **The Folly of Manifest Destiny: Filibustering in Antebellum America**

Kevin M Cunningham

This paper explores the adventures of the American filibuster during the antebellum period. Filibusters were seen as both privateers and heroes during an age of racial and political tension. These men looked to conquer lands in the name of America and saw land acquisition as a sign of power and prestige. These men embraced the ideology of continentalism and embraced the phrase coined by John L. O'Sullivan, "Manifest Destiny." This paper then intends to explore these men on their escapades and how the American publican and government handled their actions.

On July 23, 1848 a sun-beaten, dark-eyed, and mustached Narciso López disembarked from an American vessel barely escaping arrest in Cuba during Spain's crackdown that month on revolutionary activity. The Venezuelan native arrived in Rhode Island with the intention to overthrow the Spanish rule in Cuba. Being a prominent supporter of slavery, López realized the advantages for the South if Cuba became independent and perhaps a stronger partner of slavery and joined the Union as a slave state, like Texas. In May 1850, with the financial backing of southern lawmakers such as Mississippi Governor John Quitman and former senator John Henderson, Narciso López and six hundred Americans traveled to Cuba. López and his force arrived in the town of Cárdenas where he expected the local support of Cubans; however, many of the local population joined the Spanish against the American force. Consequently, López and his troops were forced to hastily retreat back to the United States where he disbanded the expedition. Again in July of 1851, López and an army of several hundred men departed for Cuba. To his dismay, López was surrounded and outnumbered by Spanish forces, and was forced to surrender. The Spanish executed Narciso López and many of his men during his second endeavor to overthrow the Spanish rule in Cuba.<sup>323</sup>

Narciso López's private attack on a foreign country was the first of many filibusters that occurred after the Mexican American War. López's failed endeavor caused outrage throughout the United States, and was a watershed to future attacks in Latin America. The successors of Narciso López were inspired by his failed expedition and began to filibuster other Latin American countries throughout the 1850s. Throughout the antebellum period Americans from both northern and southern states conducted filibustering attacks throughout the world.<sup>324</sup>

The term "filibuster" carried a far different connotation before the Civil War than it does today. During the 1840s and 1850s, the word commonly referred to American adventurers that participated in private military forces that either invaded or planned to invade foreign countries

---

<sup>323</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press: 2002, 22-32; Robert E. May, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, 154-156.

<sup>324</sup> Throughout this paper I use the term "antebellum" to refer to decades prior to the Civil War, specifically focusing on the 1840s and the 1850s.

while the United States was at peace.<sup>325</sup> Derived from the Old Dutch word for freebooter *vrijbouter*, contemporary politicians, lawmakers, journalists and citizens condemned filibusterers.<sup>326</sup> These acts violated the United States Neutrality Act of 1818 and disrupted foreign relations as one Costa Rican official in Washington D.C. asserted that filibustering was America's "social cancer."<sup>327</sup> These men were damned as pirates but also worshiped as heroes by masses of people. Thousands of Americans either joined regimes such as the one led by Narciso López or provided them with material and financial support as part of a movement that crossed American ethnic, regional and class lines. In light of these adventurers and their ambitions to invade foreign countries, why did Americans partake in the illegal and dangerous activity of filibustering during the antebellum period? How did the intellectual discourse of Manifest Destiny affect the American ideology of expansion during the years following the Mexican American War? More importantly, how were the ideas of democratic expansionists reflected in the filibusters of the time? These men were motivated by financial gain, political ideology, in the case of Narciso López, regional benefits, or the thrill of adventure. The combination of the Jacksonian romantic language and emphasis on boundlessness and expansion of the country, the growing role of the United States in the world, and the movement of Americans to new and far reaching areas in the continent all gave impetus to the many varied interpretations of Manifest Destiny. The Mexican American War epitomizes the dogma of an event being conducted in the name of Providence and the political ideology of Manifest Destiny. This event both inhibited filibustering and guaranteed its revival.<sup>328</sup> Like the democratic expansionists, such as John Quincy Adams, Stephen A. Douglas and John L. O'Sullivan, filibusters were engrossed by the political ideology of Continentalism. Although filibustering was not condoned by the American government, the men that partook in the activity looked to expand the domain of American power or the republican ideology to swarthy and racially inferior races that were vulnerable.

This essay, consequently, contends to shed light on a topic that has so often been overlooked in American history.<sup>329</sup> Filibustering after the Mexican American War has often been overshadowed by the regional tensions and the debate over the peculiar institution of slavery that ultimately led to the first shots of the bloody and gruesome Civil War in 1860. In turn, this essay looks to examine the actions of the filibusters during the antebellum period and how the romantic language of Manifest Destiny led to the illegal and violent nature of privateering in the 1850s.

<sup>325</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America*, xi.

<sup>326</sup> C.T. Onions, ed., *The Oxford English Dictionary of English Etymology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966, 355; *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 5, 906; Mitford M. Matthews, *A Dictionary of Americanisms on Historical Principles*, 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951, vol. 1, 604-605. Cited in Robert E. May, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, 149.

<sup>327</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 59.

<sup>328</sup> Following historian Robert W. Johannsen, I understand that Manifest Destiny was not a political discourse, instead it was an intellectual ideology created by journalists to romantically depict the growth of the United States during the 1840s and 1850s. See Johannsen, "The Meaning of Manifest Destiny," 7-10. See also, Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995, xi-xxii.

<sup>329</sup> For literature on filibustering see, for example, Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2002; Robert E. May, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997; Norman A. Graebner, *Manifest Destiny*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968; Anders Stephanson, "Destinies and Destinations 1820-1865," in *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995, 55-72.

The intellectual ideology of Manifest Destiny and the failed plans of filibusters to expand the United States into Central and South America emerge as one to enrich our understanding of the American foreign relations during the antebellum period.

With an eye toward acknowledging the complex state of intellectual discourse between the Mexican American War and the Civil War, part one of this essay outlines the contours of the intellectual ideology that came to be known as Manifest Destiny, paying close attention to how the multilayered interpretation of democratic expansionism and the actions conducted in the name of Providence led to Americans partaking in the illegal acts of privateering. This brief survey of the term that came to define American expansionism from the mid-1840s to the start of the Civil War underscores the state of geopolitical relations between America and its neighbors during the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>330</sup> The second section examines more closely the episodes of filibustering that occurred after the Mexican American War, focusing primarily on the attacks conducted in Latin American countries, but also outlines the recruitment of the men that partook in these activities and the actions that the government took to prevent these measures. This outline of campaigns conducted during the 1850s highlights the way that privateers were perceived by both the public and the government. The third section concludes by briefly speculating the implications that filibustering had on both the foreign relations of the United States and how the phrase impacted the interpretation of the word and altered the American lifestyle within the United States.

#### *Manifest Destiny: John L. O'Sullivan's Empire*

During the summer of 1844, a New York journalist of Irish decent named John Louis O'Sullivan penned the words "Manifest Destiny" for the first time. O'Sullivan was an outspoken champion of the Romantic language of Jacksonian Democracy; like so many other men of his generation, he saw the "hand of Providence in the workings and will of the majority."<sup>331</sup> He first penned the phrase in the pages of the *Democratic Review* in an article titled, "Annexation," justifying the annexation of Texas. Nations such as Great Britain and France, he charged, had sought to impede and frustrate the process of annexation, and had intruded

in a spirit of hostile interference against us, for the avowed object of thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfilment of our

---

<sup>330</sup> The best study of Manifest Destiny is still that of Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935. For other studies on Manifest Destiny see, for example, Robert W. Johannsen, "The Meaning of Manifest Destiny," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, 7-18; Thomas R. Hietala, "This Splendid Juggernaut," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, 48-67; Norman A. Graebner, *Manifest Destiny*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968. For literature on Manifest Destiny and the impacts of Anglophobia see, for example, Sam W. Haynes, "Anglophobia and the Annexation of Texas: The Quest for National Security," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, 115-145; Alber K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1935, 383-392 & 417-420; Howard Jones and Donald A. Rakesraw, *Prologue to Manifest Destiny: Anglo-American Relations in the 1840s*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1997.

<sup>331</sup> Anders Stephanson, "Destinies and Destinations 1820-1865," in *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995, 40.

manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.<sup>332</sup>

To O'Sullivan, America was sanctioned by Providence to obtain Texas and spread farther across the continent to shelter the millions of Americans and spread its racial superiority. However, the presence of the phrase "Manifest Destiny" did not create a lasting impact at this time. This was partially because the voters in Texas approved annexation at the same time the article had been published.<sup>333</sup> Texas was admitted to the Union under John Tyler's presidency in December 1845.

Almost six months later, O'Sullivan used the phrase again. In the New York *Morning News* on February 27, 1845, in what has been called "the most famous editorial of the decade," the phrase Manifest Destiny provoked a quite different response.<sup>334</sup> Since Texas had been admitted to the Union, public attention had shifted to the Oregon boundary dispute with Great Britain. Like other expansionists of the time, O'Sullivan insisted that all of Oregon, from the forty-second parallel to 54 degrees 40 minutes north latitude, was rightfully American. O'Sullivan believed that "our claim to Oregon" is "by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us."<sup>335</sup> In this belligerent address John L. O'Sullivan captures the romantic language of the Jacksonian political ideology and addresses the highly touted ideology of Continentalism. The reply from the American public was immediate. The phrase "Manifest Destiny" quickly caught fire and found its way into the congressional debates, where it gave added fervor to the romantic oratory of the expansionists and the new intensity to the nation's territorial aspirations.

After the Mexican American War, John L. O'Sullivan's original belief that Manifest Destiny had continental limitations began to be questioned. He originally thought, our national birth was the beginning of a new history, the formation and progress of an untried political system, which separates us from the past and connects us with the future only; and so far as regards the entire development of the natural rights of man, in moral, political, and national life, we may confidently assume that our country is destined to be the *great nation* of futurity.<sup>336</sup>

This belief, consequently, contended to spread democratic and republican ideals across the continent and permitted the American government to add to the American lexicon in the name of Providence. During this time, the purchase of land and treaties were the preferred and morally correct American way of expansion.<sup>337</sup> However, men such as the highly noted Democrat, Stephen A. Douglas, believed that expansionism had no limitations. Douglas delivered a speech to the Senate in 1853 with regards to limitations to expansion and asserted, "Why the necessity of pledging your faith that you will never annex any more of Mexico? Do you not know that you

---

<sup>332</sup> John L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation," *Democratic Review* 17 (July and August, 1845): 5-10, quotation, 5. Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny*. Xi.

<sup>333</sup> Norman A. Graebner, *Manifest Destiny*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968, 136; see also Robert W. Johannsen, "The Meaning of Manifest Destiny," in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, 8-11.

<sup>334</sup> Robert W. Johannsen, "The Meaning of Manifest Destiny," 8.

<sup>335</sup> John L. O'Sullivan, New York *Morning News*, December 27, 1845.

<sup>336</sup> John L. O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity," *Democratic Review*, 1839 in Norman A. Graebner, *Manifest Destiny*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968, 15-16.

<sup>337</sup> Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny*, 23; For treaties and purchases that expanded American domain within the North American continent see Louisiana Purchase, Adams-Onís Treaty, Annexation of Texas, Ashburn-Webster Treaty, Oregon Treaty, and the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.

will be compelled to do it; that you cannot help it; that your treaty will not prevent it, and that the only effect it will have will be to enable European Powers to accuse us of bad faith when the act is done...”<sup>338</sup> Congressmen Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts believed “the United States’ rise to national greatness, prosperity, freedom and stability could be explained in one word: Land.” “Land was the throne of our empire.”<sup>339</sup> Filibusters were inspired by John L. O’Sullivan’s call upon Americans to share their institutions of representative government with other peoples and extend culture and share democracy. More importantly, Manifest Destiny gave filibusters a chauvinistic and missionary justification for their conquests and attempted overthrow of native peoples. Filibustering commanders explained that filibustering would bring “American civilization” and capitalist development into contact with populations of inferior people who had already endured too many years of misgovernment, economic stagnation, and civil war.<sup>340</sup> Thus, the American public’s view of geographical predestination extended its reach and looked toward Central America and South America.

John L. O’Sullivan’s legacy was distinctive; he provided a catchphrase for a concept that was as old as the nation itself.<sup>341</sup> His new slogan for expansionism derived from nationalism and patriotism, and fueled the American people’s desire to acquire new and foreign lands. As Albert Weinberg states in his book *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, “the law of natural right contributed to the ideals of this new national belief of expansion”—to the nation’s growing needs. The ideals and needs of the American people concurrently obscured the conflict between the original principles and entrance upon the path of empire.<sup>342</sup> Throughout the next decade, the phrase that the New York journalist exerted to influence the expansion of the United States began to be twisted and turned to fit so many circumstances, that it assumed a life of its own, and much of its original meaning and intent was lost.

### *The Predecessors of Narciso López*

Southward filibustering climaxed between the Mexican American War and the Civil War—the years immediately following Narciso López’s attack on Cuba and the coining of Manifest Destiny. During this era, private expeditions to foreign lands became a national epidemic. There was not a lull during this time when Americans were planning or partaking in a campaign; often there were several campaigns in progress at one time.<sup>343</sup> War veterans, U.S. army officers stuck in low ranks, immigrants, unskilled workers, doctors, convicts, and men of all other walks of life took up the call of filibustering to escape their socioeconomic status in the new and growing urban economy and have a chance to enter new markets and seaports, gain large monetary sums, governmental positions and other incentives. Other men joined these expeditions to distance themselves from dysfunctional marriages, romantic failures, or in some

<sup>338</sup> Stephen A. Douglas, “Do not ‘Prescribe Limits’ to the Area of Expansion,” in Norman A. Graebner, *Manifest Destiny*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968, 316.

<sup>339</sup> John M. Belohlavek, “Race, Progress, Destiny,” in *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, 24.

<sup>340</sup> Robert E. May, “Manifest Destiny’s Filibusters,” 162-164.

<sup>341</sup> “Meaning of Manifest Destiny” p 9 see also Anders Stephanson, “Destinies and Destinations 1820-1865,” in *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995, 40-45.

<sup>342</sup> Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1935, 11-12, 41-42.

<sup>343</sup> Robert E. May, “Manifest Destiny’s Filibusters,” 153-154.

cases to impress a woman.<sup>344</sup> Likewise, many young Americans signed up as filibusters genuinely believing that they would better their fellow man by following the design of Providence and oust tropical poverty with American prosperity.

The spur-of-the-moment nature of many filibuster enlistments suggests the movement's romantic impulses as volunteers became engulfed in the excitement of filibustering and let their emotions rule their minds. This phenomenon attracted the aggressive and adventurous type. In many instances Mexican American War military veterans seized the opportunity to join these campaigns. This can be explained in part by what so many young American males experienced during this time, finding work and adjusting to a new urban economy.<sup>345</sup> Moreover, the close quarters of filibustering campaigns offered veterans nostalgic wartime associations and camaraderie. During this time many of the men that partook in filibustering campaigns became repeat offenders.

The reports of filibustering expeditions during the Civil War were so common that many Americans assumed that filibustering, as a Connecticut paper put it, "a new trait" in the "national character."<sup>346</sup> Americans became increasingly interested in filibustering; they participated in balls, serenades, parades, rallies and welcoming ceremonies in honor of the young men who filibustered. Citizens swarmed onto the docks to welcome home filibusterers. In December 1856, a crowd of New Yorkers walked under a sign that read "Enlarge the Bounds of Freedom" to enter a rally raising money for William Walker.<sup>347</sup> Ironically it became difficult for the government to suppress demonstrations raising money for filibustering campaigns since civilians were protected by freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. The government often resorted to military force to stop filibustering campaigns and put these men on trial. Narciso López sought to conduct a campaign in 1849 against Cuba, but was stopped by U.S. naval vessels that blocked him and his five hundred volunteers who had gathered at Round Island off of Mississippi's coast. López and a majority of his men were put on trial; however, they were unable to be indicted. During trials such as López's, court rooms were jammed to watch the trials, and filibustering warped into a spectator sport. Correspondents covering cases such as López's constantly resorted to phrases such as "packed," "densely crowded," "large concourse of citizens," and "numerous crowd of spectators" to describe the onlookers who appeared to hear the sentencing.<sup>348</sup>

The Narciso López invasions of Cuba and the William Walker expeditions to Mexico and Nicaragua attracted more headlines than any other filibusters of the day. William Walker, a Tennessee native, nicknamed the "grey-eyed man of Destiny,"<sup>349</sup> was bar none the most notable filibuster of the antebellum period. He became known as the "model filibuster" and in 1853 he invaded and occupied the peninsula of Lower California because its "indolent and half civilized people" had failed to utilize the area's "mineral and pastoral wealth" and because the Mexican government neglected providing the Lower Californians with protection from robbers or with means of communication to the outside world.<sup>350</sup> During this time he successfully captured La Paz, the capital of Baja California, and went on to announce that he had created a sovereign state

---

<sup>344</sup> Charles Henry Brown, *Agents of Manifest Destiny: the lives and times of the filibusters*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1980, 216-218; Also see Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 103.

<sup>345</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 83.

<sup>346</sup> *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 14, 1851.

<sup>347</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 74-75.

<sup>348</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 74-76.

<sup>349</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, p xiii.

<sup>350</sup> Robert E. May, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," 153-154; see also May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 174-175.

that he named the “Republic of Sonora” with Lower California and Sonora as its two states.<sup>351</sup> Due to a lack of supplies and strong resistance from both the Mexican government and Mexican natives, William Walker was lucky to escape with his life at the end of 1854. He returned to California where he was put on trial for conducting illegal war and violating the neutrality act of 1818. However, in the era of Manifest Destiny, his filibustering project was popular in the southern and western United States and the jury took eight minutes to acquit him.<sup>352</sup>

By November of the following year, Walker had assembled fifty-six men and was ready to conduct another filibustering expedition. William Walker and his followers journeyed to Nicaragua in the spring of 1855 to conduct an expedition to connect the Pacific Ocean with the Atlantic Ocean by creating a canal. Within months, he controlled the military establishment and held virtually all the power within the government. Walker staged his own inauguration as the president of Nicaragua and became of beacon of inspiration for American men. Inspired by his success, eventually over two thousand daring American males poured into Nicaragua to serve in the ranks of Walker’s army. Walker severed as the President of Nicaragua from 1856 until May, 1857 when he was expelled from Central America. Walker attempted a series of successive expeditions but never was able to regain his title as president. Similar to Narciso López, William Walker died on his final expedition at the hands of a Honduran firing squad in September 1860.

The above summary of both men by no means depletes the filibustering stories conducted in the name of Manifest Destiny. Americans enlisted and died in the hope of political and monetary gain, and the belief that they were helping the subservient people of foreign countries.

### *Bleeding Kansas and the Consequences of Filibustering*

Manifest Destiny provided a set of common beliefs that allowed filibusters to unite and conduct private enterprises and endeavor to spread democracy and republicanism across the world to the swarthy and what Americans believed to be subservient people. Young American males were eager to scratch at what the *New York Times* called their country’s “great filibustering flea.”<sup>353</sup> During the antebellum period newspapers, the American public, and the filibusters themselves believed they were spreading democracy and republican ideals throughout the world. The *Democratic Review* believed, for instance, that filibusters would pave the way for new acquisitions for the United States by drawing the attention of Americans to the “vast riches” of the tropics.<sup>354</sup> However, filibustering was a failed offspring of Manifest Destiny. In many lands that either heard of rumored campaigns or suffered privatized campaigns, filibustering undermined the likelihood that these nations would join the United States. American filibustering angered and frightened the peoples and governments of invaded nations, and threatened other countries, that it helped eliminate whatever hopes existed of future annexations of these countries.

In 1854, the President of Mexico, Santa Anna, signed and agreed to the Gadsden Purchase and ceded 45,000 square miles to the United States. When James Gadsden negotiated the only U.S. territorial acquisition from a foreign power during the interval between the Mexican American War and the Civil War, he believed the filibusters of Lower California and Mexico conducted by William Walker hindered him from obtaining more land. He thought that

---

<sup>351</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny’s Filibusters*,” 155.

<sup>352</sup> William O. Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers: The Story of William Walker and his Associates*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916, 65.

<sup>353</sup> *New York Times* October 5, 1859.

<sup>354</sup> Robert E. May, “Manifest Destiny’s Filibusters,” 166.

he might have received Baja California from Mexico had it not been for Walker's private expedition in Mexico.<sup>355</sup> Expeditions such as Walker's gave Mexican conservatives an excuse to rally public opinion against further expansion of American institutions and within the treaty of 1854, Gadsden had to agree to an anti-filibustering provision. Gadsden saw the act of filibustering as an obstruction to Manifest Destiny and believed that the American system did not need to resort to auxiliaries who would debase and abuse democratic principles.<sup>356</sup>

Similar to the sundered relations with Mexico, filibusters disrupted and inflamed relations with other Latin American countries and European countries such as Spain since Americans had invaded their periphery of Cuba. The López filibusters, and other rumored expeditions against Cuba, irritated U.S. relations with Spain and reduced the likelihood that Spain might sell Cuba, as a large portion of Americans might have hoped.<sup>357</sup> López's campaigns caused dissemination of animosity throughout Cuba and Spain. As noted in May's "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," an American consul in Cuba noted how López's first expedition cause a "strong animosity...in the minds of the old Spaniards against our Government, and indeed everything American." Likewise the U.S. minister to Spain, Daniel M. Barringer observed after López's fatal invasion in 1851 that the Spanish government was threatening to wage war against the United States and even the most moderate newspapers in Spain condemned "our government and people."<sup>358</sup> Rather than intimidate foreign countries into territorial concessions to the United States, filibustering tended to coalesce other powers in brief alliances to hinder such annexations. Spain and Mexico asked for the aid of European powers such as Great Britain and France to protect and aid them. Similarly, Central American and South American countries signed a never-implemented Continental Treaty, containing several anti-filibustering clauses, in response to Walker's campaign in Nicaragua. Countries such as Guatemala and Costa Rica maintained a much larger military force, after Walker's expulsion, than they had before his arrival.<sup>359</sup> Thus filibustering abroad unified foreign people and granted them nationalism and patriotism, the exact opposite of what the filibusters intended to do.

Similar to the implications abroad, filibustering impacted and infiltrated antebellum American culture. In accordance with Robert E. May, "the most telling testimony to filibustering's infiltration of antebellum American culture is its impact on language."<sup>360</sup> The American populations made it apparent that filibustering had a grasp on their subliminal thought when they held parades for the men that partook in these activities, newspapers frantically wrote and approved of these activities, and abolitionists grew weary of the possibility of slavery expanding to these exotic and distant locations.

Americans began to use the term *filibustering* to connote whatever type of political behavior they deemed aggressive and offensive. The term was corrupted and when Americans applied the term, they often used it to describe behavior that had nothing to do with the invasion of foreign countries. In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Act was issued, opening new lands under the

---

<sup>355</sup> Paul N. Garber, *The Gadsden Treaty*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1923, 91-92. Gadsden's negotiating instructions, suggested six possible boundary lines as terms, the most coveted of which envisioned Mexico ceding all of Lower California and other areas not included in the final settlement for \$50 million—considerably more than the sum Gadsden paid of 10 million.

<sup>356</sup> Robert E. May, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," 167.

<sup>357</sup> For an example of the United States desiring to buy Cuba see for example the Onsted Manifesto.

<sup>358</sup> Robert E. May, "Manifest Destiny's Filibusters," 166-168.

<sup>359</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 294.

<sup>360</sup> Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld*, 77.



political idealism of popular sovereignty.<sup>361</sup> The altered logic of filibustering was applied to this bloody instruction over slavery as the *Springfield Republican* alluded to “Missouri Filibusters in Kansas” and the *New-York Tribune* denounced the “Kansas filibusters.”<sup>362</sup> To the American public, filibustering no longer signaled an activity abroad, but encompassed all activities on the home-front as well. The *Harrisburg Morning Herald* frequently used the term *filibuster* to berate local Whig politicians who nominated their own candidate for public office rather than joining the American Party in a common battle against the Democratic Party. Others such as Henry W. Bellows denounced proslavery southerners through his acts of moral filibustering.<sup>363</sup>

This new interpretation of the word paved the way for modern usage of the word as a legislative obstructionism. Through this understanding of the word, *filibustering*, the meaning of the word drastically changed from defining the young American men who conducted or planned attacks on foreign domains for personal gain, capitalism, and democratic beliefs, to defining the lawmaking obstructions that are used as preventative measure to stall a piece of legislature from being passed or discussed.

During the antebellum period, the intellectual discourse of Manifest Destiny presented by John L. O’Sullivan altered and changed throughout this interval. The term that once expressed continental limitations became a beacon for young, eager and adventurous men looking to escape the urban socioeconomic sphere. These men were despised and praised by masses of people and thousands of Americans from all walks of life joined in the cause of filibustering. The American government endeavored to end American filibustering during this time, but they were unsuccessful to halt the efforts of filibusters due to the popularity amongst the American public. This movement crossed American ethnic, regional and class lines as all these men sought economic prosperity, new and adventurous opportunities and nostalgic memories for army veterans. As shown throughout this essay, however, the men that partook in filibustering campaigns failed to expand the domain of American democracy. Instead, these men disrupted foreign relations, prompted foreign peoples to promote patriotism and nationalism for their country, and form alliances with one another to hinder the progress of American expansionism. Consequently, this large group of daring young men changed the antebellum American culture and created a new connotation and meaning for the word *filibuster*.

---

<sup>361</sup> Popular Sovereignty was a political ideology fathered by Stephen A. Douglas. The belief behind this ideology, in this instance, was that the men living within the region were able to decide whether the state foster slavery or ban the peculiar institution.

<sup>362</sup> *Springfield (Mass.) Daily Republican*, May 21, 1856; *New-York Daily Tribune*, July 18, 1857.

<sup>363</sup> See *Harrisburg Morning Herald*, September 10, 11, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, 1855; Cited in May, *Manifest Destiny’s Underworld*, 74.

## Bibliography

Graebner, Norman A., *Manifest Destiny*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968

May, Robert E., *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press: 2002.

Johannsen Robert W., John M. Belohlavek, Thomas R. Hietala, Samuel J. Watson, Sam W. Haynes, and Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997.

Jones, Howard and Donald A. Rakesraw, *Prologue to Manifest Destiny: Anglo-American Relations in the 1840s*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1997.

Stephanson, Anders, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995.

Weinberg, Albert K., *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935.

## **A Note on our Review Process**

All essays submitted to the Michigan State Journal of History for consideration are reviewed anonymously, identified only by an identification number assigned to each submission. Each essay is read and reviewed by three undergraduate students that serve on the editorial board. Essays that stand out are identified and sent to professors and graduate students for review. Professors and upper level graduate students review essays within the area of their specialization in order to ensure the factual accuracy of the information presented and the originality of the author's argument. Throughout this process the author's identity remains unknown to those reviewing the essay, including the identity of the faculty evaluators, to ensure the impartiality of our selection process.

## Essay Submission Policy

The Michigan State Journal of History gladly accepts submissions of essays written by Michigan State undergraduates of any major. Submissions can be of interest in a wide range of areas, but all should relate to history or historiography. Submissions that are accepted will be expected to be of professional standard and are expected to make a significant statement or interpretation to the academic debate surrounding the topic. Submissions that have been published previously or that are being considered for publication elsewhere will not be considered by this organization.

All students are encouraged to submit their research to:  
MichiganStateJournalofHistory@gmail.com. Students are welcome to submit papers from previous semesters. Requirements minimally include:

- Chicago Style format
- Footnotes
- A highly recommended page limit of 10-20 pages
- A bibliography with primary and secondary sources separated
- 12 point, Times New Roman font
- Doubled spaced
- 1 inch margins
- No identifying marks to ensure confidentiality
- Pagination on the bottom right corner
- Submitted as a Word document
- Abstract of 100 words or less

Authors are also required to include the class and professor the work was written for (if applicable) and any other faculty members or graduate students that may have a conflict of interest in reviewing the work. Additional requirements and exact deadlines for submissions will be announced in Fall 2014.