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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

My first experience with the undergraduate academic journal was as a freshman History major. The scholarship in the Journal established a realistic standard for academic excellence in my mind. Publishing a piece of scholarship in the MSU Undergraduate Historian was from then on a goal of my collegiate career. Unfortunately, the journal did not continue after the publication of Volume 5 in Spring 2010. As a young, aspiring historian I joined the history club, HAMS, and listened to upper classmen discuss the potential for a future production of the academic journal. This task was not accomplished until the Journal returned from a long hiatus and Volume 6 of the Michigan State Journal of History was published in May 2014. I had the pleasure to serve as an editor and help return the Journal to a functioning state. Since the return of the undergraduate journal there has been a great deal of interest and the academic spirit of undergraduate historians has strengthened and grown at Michigan State University. It is with the upmost joy that I present Volume 7 of the Michigan State Journal of History.

Volume 7 represents the continued 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 five exceptional works to help grow journal's reputation in the academic community. The showcased research touches on a variety of subjects and geographic areas from disputes over political rights, to Italy and Japan. Without question, it is the creativity of these authors that has made serving on the editorial board an experience worthwhile.

A special thank you to the editors and their continuous aid and assistance. 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, Kolt Ewing and Nathan Medd, I express my most sincere gratitude. Without you, this project never would have been completed.

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. Emily Tabuteau, Dr. Emily Conroy-Krux, Dr. Walter Hawthorne, and Dr. David Bailey. 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. Her 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 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 8 will bring. Thank you, please enjoy Volume 7.

Kevin M Cunningham
Editor-in-Chief
Michigan State Journal of History

The Death of an Army, the Birth of a Legion

Author: Connor McLeod

The early American west was a land of great uncertainty and change. The American Revolution was over and the United States had acquired a vast swath of territory from Great Britain in the 1783 Treaty of Paris. As the United States expanded westward, it met resistance from native populations living on the lands. Inevitably, there were clashes on the battlefield between the United States Army and Indian forces. Over time, tension built up from numerous skirmishes that finally came to a head. When the United States crossed over into Indian homelands in General Arthur St. Clair's 1791 expedition, it engaged in heavy combat with Indian tribes. The United States was not prepared for a war of this scale, and the magnitude of the ensuing defeat ultimately led to support for a professional standing army under General Anthony Wayne.

Leading up to St. Clair's defeat, there were further interactions after the Treaty of Paris between the United States and Indian tribes in the lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. Through treaties like the Treaty of Stanwix and the Fort MacIntosh Treaty, the United States intimidated Indian tribes to claim the rights to their lands in exchange for trifling goods.¹

The Treaty of Stanwix was signed in October 1784 near present-day Rome, New York. It was intended to be a treaty between the United States and the Six Nations, based on the peace terms listed in the Treaty of Paris. It stated that the King of Britain left the Indian tribes to "seek

¹ Wiley Sword, *President Washington's Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 27-28.

for peace with the United States upon such terms as the United States shall think just and fit.”² In response to Six Nations hostility toward the United States during the Revolutionary War, the United States claimed lands west of New York and Pennsylvania. Their reasoning was that America’s warriors “must be provided for...[and] compensations must be made for the blood and treasures which they had expended in the war.”³ Under such intense pressure from the Americans, the visiting chiefs had no choice but to sign the treaty.

Two months later in December 1784, American delegates traveled to the mouth of Beaver Creek, 30 miles northwest of Pittsburgh for the Fort MacIntosh Treaty. The Americans did not bother to use the official meeting place of Cuyahoga, due to their repeated success in negotiations. The delegates brought along large quantities of rum to entice their Indian counterparts. The conditions of the treaty dictated that the Indians would be confined to reservations in northern Ohio, and in exchange the Americans would send them goods such as clothing, tools, and spoiled gunpowder. Predictably, the negotiations “paralleled those of the Fort Stanwix Treaty, adding impetus to the declaration that the Six Nations had surrendered.”⁴ Both of these treaties lacked legitimacy, because the signing tribes were strong-armed into submission. Giving these tribes a raw deal would come back to hurt the Americans, because the treaties represented deep-cutting injustices which would unite the Indians into a strong union.

Ultimately, the “Ordinance of ’87”—the Northwest Ordinance of 1787—established the Northwest Territory and officially opened settlement beyond the Ohio River. Fuelled by Revolutionary War veteran incentives and tales of a “settler’s paradise” with blessings such as

² Ibid., 24.

³ Ibid., 25.

⁴ Ibid., 28.

fertile soil and abundant wildlife, scores of settlers pushed across the banks to stake their claims.⁵ Officially, Article III of the ordinance “assured the Indians that they would not be deprived of their lands without consent, nor would their rights be invaded ‘unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress’”.⁶ Of course, things did not go as planned. There were constant violations of this article, and tribes such as the Delaware and Shawnee were ready to take action. They had fought alongside the English in the Revolutionary War, and they were also dependent on Britain for much of their livelihood.⁷ American colonization was a direct threat to their way of life, and it became evident that the endangered tribes must band together to resist American trespassing. The end result was the Miami Confederacy, led by Joseph Brant, a charismatic Mohawk chieftain. Under his leadership, a powerful alliance between most of the tribes in the Northwest Territory threatened to derail any further American treaties or expansion with military action.⁸

Not all territorial matters were resolved through lengthy treaty negotiations and diplomacy. At times, both sides resorted to violence to deal with disputes. The back-and-forth battles paved the cataclysmic road to the decisive defeat of St. Clair in 1791. The number of Indian attacks along the Ohio River in Kentucky had been on the rise for years, and by 1786 many residents of Jefferson County believed the attacks would never stop without a counterattack into the Indian heartland. Pleas to the federal government for assistance went unanswered. Residents of the area decided to take the matter into their own hands by launching preemptive strikes to “disrupt the...Indian raids [and] to avenge the recent wrongs suffered at the

⁵ John Brooke, “Anthony Wayne: His Campaign against the Indians” (*The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 19, no. 3 (1985)): 388-389.

⁶ Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare, 1675-1815* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 139.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 137-139.

⁸ Richard H. Kohn, *Eagle and Sword* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), 92-93.

hands of marauding ‘savages’”.⁹ Volunteers came from all around to be led by the legendary General George Rogers Clark. General Clark set his objective in the Wabash country, against the Weas, Piankashaws and Miami. Additionally, Clark dispatched a raiding party under frontiersman Benjamin Logan to assault Shawnees in the village of Mackachack to the north in retaliation for Shawnee attacks on American settlements. Mackachack, one of the most peaceful Shawnee villages, put up no resistance when Logan’s force entered the village. The undisciplined Kentucky troops attacked and killed over a dozen Indians, including the chief Moluntha, in cold blood and took dozens of captives. The attack soured American-Indian relations to an irreparable level, permanently cementing the strength of the Miami Confederacy.¹⁰

Three years later, Northwest Territory Governor Arthur St. Clair attempted to hold a council with a number of tribal representatives concerning disputed territory and boundaries, and the exchange of prisoners. St. Clair intended to gain a “better understanding between the native tribes...and the white Americans claiming a valid title to the same lands from the British.”¹¹ However, a group of western tribes strongly united and led by Joseph Brant after Logan’s Raid refused to send delegates to the negotiations alongside the rest of the tribes in the region. Brant and his supporters wanted the Ohio River to be the final border, and would defend themselves accordingly. The present delegates signed the treaty, despite Brant’s furious protests. His exclusion made the legitimacy of the treaty questionable, alienating those who opposed American settlement without providing them a role in the negotiation.¹² In a short time, Brant’s

⁹ Sword, *President Washington’s Indian War*, 31.

¹⁰ Ibid., 31-41.

¹¹ Frazer Ells Wilson, *Arthur St. Clair: Rugged Ruler of the Old Northwest* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie Publishers, 1944), 65.

¹² Ibid., 65-66.

warriors were raiding settlements up and down the Ohio River; capturing and killing white women and children.¹³ Despite Washington's adamant insistence to avoid war with the Indians, his administration finally convinced him to take military action.¹⁴

General Josiah Harmar was tasked with leading an army to destroy Wabash tribes responsible for attacks. The United States Army was small in October 1789, no more than 600 soldiers, and it required infusions of over 1,000 militiamen to bring itself to adequate fighting strength. Despite initial success, Harmar's army was hit by multiple ambushes along the return route. In Harmar's haste to escape a massed Indian attack, he "quickly headed south...leaving his dead unseen and unburied on the battlefield—the surest sign of defeat."¹⁵ Harmar claimed victory upon his return to Fort Washington, though President Washington and Secretary of War Knox both knew that Harmar had not claimed victory, but instead situation that would fare far worse in the near future than in the fall of 1789.¹⁶

President Washington drew upon his experience in the French and Indian War and declared that the current practice of establishing fixed garrisons and using them to defend the frontier was useless. He advocated for the creation of an expeditionary force that was powerful enough to take the fight to the Indians head-on in their territory and destroy them once and for all.¹⁷

In the aftermath of Harmar's defeat, Congress authorized the establishment of another infantry regiment, and the planned enlistment of 2,000 soldiers on a short-term basis. The

¹³ Brooke, "Anthony Wayne: His Campaign against the Indians", 390.

¹⁴ Charles H. Ambler, *George Washington and the West* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1936), 199.

¹⁵ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 106.

¹⁶ Ibid., 95-107.

¹⁷ James Thomas Flexner, *George Washington and the New Nation: 1783-1793* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1969), 299.

soldiers were placed under federal control to promote proper federal military discipline.¹⁸ St. Clair was brought back into the army at the rank of major general with responsibility over military affairs in the Northwest Territory.¹⁹ In March 1791, General St. Clair received command of the newly established expeditionary force and orders to “establish a strong military presence in Miami and Shawnee country [so that] Indian activity could be monitored and...the area made safe for settlement.”²⁰ In order to reach Indian country, St. Clair would have to cut his own road through dense forests for 150 miles, and set up outposts along the way. He had only six months to plan and train his troops.²¹

St. Clair’s manpower and supply situation at Fort Washington was dire. None of Congress’s recruiting quotas were met, and St. Clair’s regulars were not even at 50% strength. The regulars present did not draw favorable reviews. One veteran officer described them as “urban riffraff...totally unfamiliar with army methods and frontier life.”²² Despite their proven record in battle, no elite Rangers were recruited into St. Clair’s force. Studies by Henry Knox’s War Department showed that a 600-man unit of regulars cost the treasury \$12,240, while a more highly trained 500-man unit of Rangers cost almost \$50,000. Even when the cost would justify the reward, Congress chose to recruit regulars. As a consequence, General St. Clair’s force would be marching into battle with inferior troops, because the treasury did not want to spend the extra money that could have saved lives.²³ St. Clair made up for the deficit by drafting a number of militiamen, many of whom failed to report or provide any quality to the force. In camp, St.

¹⁸ Sword, *President Washington’s War*, 145-147.

¹⁹ Wilson, *Arthur St. Clair*, 67.

²⁰ Jerry Keenan, *Encyclopedia of American Indian Wars* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1997), 221.

²¹ Wilson, *Arthur St. Clair*, 67-68.

²² Sword, *President Washington’s War*, 147-148.

²³ John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 198.

Clair's troops did not have adequate supplies. This was due to the fact that the principal supply contractor for the army, William Duer, took \$75,000 of federal funding and used most of it in land speculation. Thus, Duer's subcontractors at the forts had no money to pay merchants, and the flow of supplies stopped immediately.²⁴

When St. Clair set out on his campaign in the Wabash Valley on 4 October 1791, his force consisted of 600 regulars, 800 levies, and 600 militiamen, as well as numerous support and rear-echelon units. His plan of march emulated Colonel Bouquet's campaign in 1764. Riflemen were placed ahead of the army to locate and fix Indian forces, while the main army followed behind, led by backwoodsmen and pioneers cutting the road. Regulars would be placed on the flanks to provide security, and backwoodsmen comprised the rear guard. The formation was intended to ensure unit security in every direction during the march in order to prevent panic and disorganization in the event of an Indian surprise attack.²⁵ Before leaving Fort Washington, St. Clair jeopardized the safety of his troops. He informed British envoys of his intent, as well as promises that his troops would not attack British forts. This move was necessary due to strained diplomatic relations with the British²⁶, and the British dominance of the Great Lakes forts of Detroit and Michilimackinac. Those forts controlled entry points into the Great Lakes, and allowed the British to essentially control Indian lands through the trade by "drawing Indians from hundreds of miles around to trade their furs, buy trade goods and provisions...[and to exploit] the advantages that European goods gave them."²⁷ St. Clair's warning gave the British a key piece of intelligence for their Indian allies in the continuing proxy war between the United

²⁴ Sword, *President Washington's War*, 148-150.

²⁵ Wilson, *Arthur St. Clair*, 68-69.

²⁶ Flexner, *George Washington and the New Nation*, 299.

²⁷ Daniel Ingram, *Indians and British Outposts in Eighteenth-Century America* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), 89.

States and Great Britain. It assured that every Indian, from the highest chief to the lowest tribal member, would be well prepared for when the American arrival.²⁸

Progress was slow as the army slogged through the wilderness. The army stopped twice to construct Forts Hamilton and Jefferson. Each of these projects sapped the army for time, and exacerbated the already perilous supply situation. Morale was poor, and strict discipline had to be enforced to prevent desertion. To reinforce authority and discipline, St. Clair went so far as to hang three men.

In late October, St. Clair's second-in-command, Major General Richard Butler, proposed taking 1,000 soldiers of the 1st Regiment to the Maumee to speed up progress of the expedition and establish a fort for the winter. St. Clair vehemently refused the proposal, which caused a fatal rift between the two generals. Instead, St. Clair sent most of his veteran 1st Regiment back toward the rear of the column to search for deserters. Although crucial to send troops after deserters, St. Clair should not have sent his most experienced unit, especially considering their movement toward a decisive battle.²⁹

The remainder of the army, the newly formed 2nd Regiment and attached militia, continued the march and by 3 November it had advanced 100 miles from Fort Jefferson. St. Clair ordered his army to halt and set up camp on a small piece of high ground near the headwaters of the Wabash River, though at the time he believed it to be the St. Mary's River.³⁰ St. Clair placed his militia 400 yards across the river to provide space for his regulars to establish their positions, as well as to provide a way to ensure the regulars could still fight if the militia broke ranks in

²⁸ Flexner, *George Washington and the New Nation*, 299.

²⁹ Wilson, *Arthur St. Clair*, 69-71.

³⁰ W. Page Yarnelle et al., *St. Clair's Defeat* (Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne and Allen County Public Library, 1954), 1.

battle and fell back through the regulars' lines.³¹ Advance scouts on the march noticed hints of Indian activity along the way, but oddly, St. Clair did not order his soldiers to construct defensive positions. The only force protection measure taken by the Americans was the typical posting of sentries, though no extra men than the norm were posted, despite the fact that enemy forces had been spotted in the area.³² St. Clair sent out no patrols once he halted, a common practice in military tactics. He was so tired and ill that he skipped these precautions and tried to rest rather than care for his force.³³

While St. Clair neglected the defense of his position, his Indian counterpart, Little Turtle, had split his army of approximately 1,400 warriors into small groups of 20 men each. It allowed him to maneuver his men into their fighting positions stealthily under the cover of darkness. The handful of American sentries had no idea that they were slowly being surrounded.³⁴ Little Turtle's warriors were shaped into a half-moon, a common tactic for hunting animals and Americans alike.³⁵

A night patrol was sent out from the American position at 10 o'clock and reported that there was a large force of Indians in the immediate area. The patrol leader quickly notified both the commander of the militia facing the Indians and Major General Butler. Butler did not pass on this information to St. Clair, quite possibly out of spite over their past disagreement about the distribution of troops back in October. With this information, St. Clair could have readied his

³¹ Leroy V. Eid, "American Indian Military Leadership: St. Clair's 1791 Defeat" (*The Journal of Military History* 57, no. 1 (1993)): 75.

³² Harvey Lewis Carter, *The Life and Times of Little Turtle* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 105-106.

³³ Theodore Roosevelt, "Saint Clair's Defeat" (*Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 92, no. 549 (1896)): 395-396.

³⁴ Harvey Lewis Carter, *The Life and Times of Little Turtle* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 105-106.

³⁵ Leroy V. Eid, "Their Rules of War: The Validity of James Smith's Summary of Indian Woodland War" (*The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 86, no. 1 (1988)): 9-10.

forces and stepped up security in the hours before dawn, however, his force remained at its previous defensive posture, with only nervous sentries on watch, firing at shadows.

At dawn, the entire army mustered for formation and morning reveille, then was dismissed for breakfast. At this moment, the army was at its weakest. Excluding sentries, soldiers were not at their positions, instead the regulars headed to breakfast. The militia was just starting to return to their positions across the river, separated from the main body by a long stretch of open ground.³⁶ This was the perfect time for the Indians to attack. Little Turtle unleashed his whooping warriors on the green militiamen.³⁷

Early in the fight, the commander of the militia, Colonel William Oldham was killed. Such a loss threw the nervous troops into confusion.³⁸ The militia forces immediately broke and ran back toward the regulars' positions across the river, causing confusion in the camp. While the regulars reacted to the attack, the militia spent most of their time looting from the regulars' possessions.³⁹ St. Clair's artillery, one crucial advantage the American military had, could not return fire on the Indians because their fields of fire were obstructed due to the hundreds of militiamen running about in front of them. Regular infantrymen's capabilities were also limited due to the militia's flight. The lack of return fire allowed Indian assault groups to move within close range under the cover of musket smoke.⁴⁰ Indian sharpshooters used their superior Kentucky rifles and marksmanship skills to target the American artillerymen and officers almost

³⁶ Fairfax Downey, *Indian Wars of the U.S. Army, 1776-1865* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1962), 55-56.

³⁷ Arda Bates Rorison, *Major-General Arthur St. Clair: A Brief Sketch* (New York: Yale University Library, 1910), 26.

³⁸ Paul D. Nelson, "General Charles Scott, the Kentucky Mounted Volunteers, and the Northwest Indian Wars, 1784-1794" (*Journal of the Early Republic* 6, no. 3 (1986)): 234.

³⁹ Eid, "American Indian Military Leadership: St. Clair's 1791 Defeat": 73.

⁴⁰ Downey, *Indian Wars of the U.S. Army*, 56.

unseen from the trees.⁴¹ Indian fire from three sides denied the Americans any cover, and made it difficult to form fighting lines facing in any one direction, because they would receive enfilade fire from their flanks.⁴²

Quickly, Little Turtle moved his forces into a half-moon shape to envelop the Americans on their flanks and cut off avenues of retreat. All the while, the warriors stayed inside the tree line surrounding St. Clair's camp, using cover and concealment to avoid inaccurate artillery fire⁴³ and to stay out of the 100-yard effective range of the Americans' muskets.⁴⁴ During the chaos, General St. Clair twice attempted to mount a horse to lead the defense, but they were both shot out from under him. Finally, he acquired a horse on his third attempt. He rode towards the fighting, shouting to his troops to organize their battle lines. Many say the only reason Indian marksmen did not target him was because he was wearing pajamas rather than his full uniform, which would have given away his rank and position. Under his leadership, St. Clair's men managed to form lines and charge the Indians with fixed bayonets. A few of the charges came close, but the Indians swiftly fell back to the woods and made short work of the advancing troops with accurately placed fire.

Simultaneously, miles away, the 1st Regiment, which had been searching for deserters, heard the battle and changed their mission to come to the aid of St. Clair. En route to the battle, the regiment ran into fleeing soldiers who told stories of the total annihilation of St. Clair's army. Citing caution and the fact that his troops could not reach the battle until sundown, the

⁴¹ Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare*, 21.

⁴² Carter, *The Life and Times of Little Turtle*, 107.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴⁴ James E. Hicks "United States Military Shoulder Arms, 1795-1935" (*The Journal of the American Military History Foundation* 2, no. 1 (1938)): 42.

regimental commander made the decision to move his men back to Fort Jefferson to prepare defenses in anticipation of a follow-on attack.

The 2nd Regiment stood strong in their positions, but the battle was already lost. The army had taken too many casualties to their senior officers and noncommissioned officers to maintain adequate command and control. There was no way for the Americans to stop the long-range rifle fire from fixing them in place while the Indians rapidly completed their encirclement. Within three hours of the first assault on the militia positions, St. Clair's men were completely surrounded. St. Clair rode around the entire perimeter, threatening to shoot any soldier who would not fight. In such a dire situation, a soldier had no choice but to pick up his weapon and fight to his last breath.

Despite the spirited defensive efforts, Indian warriors broke through the lines and killed and scalped wounded soldiers. At approximately nine o'clock, St. Clair ordered his troops to withdraw. In the process, he abandoned severely wounded soldiers and his heavy equipment to the Indians. His remaining troops were formed into one final bayonet charge that forced a gap in the Indian pincer along the road to the south. The retreating troops made flight twenty-nine miles back to Fort Jefferson, and Little Turtle's warriors harassed them for the first several miles. Soldiers who fell out of the retreat were quickly snatched and killed by the Indians while their frightened comrades looked on.

Those unfortunate enough to be left on the battlefield were subjected to "every species of cruelty that savage ingenuity could devise".⁴⁵ Prisoners were burned at the stake, disemboweled and mutilated. Some of the civilians caught on the battlefield were hacked to pieces and left to rot in the open. In all, over 600 officers and men were killed in action, and 250 more were

⁴⁵ Downey, *Indian Wars of the U.S. Army*, 58.

wounded. Casualties of that magnitude had not been seen since Braddock's defeat. General St. Clair immediately resigned his commission upon return to Fort Washington, and the United States Army entered an era of rebirth.⁴⁶

The defeat of St. Clair's army created panic in the government as many in the east criticized Congress for sending troops into Indian country, and the mismanagement of the campaign. A conference on 19 December between Washington and St. Clair's aide Ebenezer Denny confirmed to the president that the performance of the levies and militia had contributed heavily to the defeat. Their short enlistments were found to have limited the scope of training for the army, and forced the army to cut back on instruction in order to make the timeline for the campaign. The conference also highlighted the need to abandon old-style Revolutionary War tactics of forming lines in the open and using volley fire. The ultimate conclusion was that the only way to avoid a repeat of the humiliating defeat was a large force of long-term enlisted regular troops.⁴⁷

General St. Clair arrived in Washington in January 1792, and requested retention of his rank until an investigation, however President Washington demanded his immediate resignation. A court martial was also out of the question, because there were no officers of a high enough rank to compose a court. In the spring of 1792, the House of Representatives launched an investigation into the battle. Washington did not want the hearings to go public and embarrass the administration, so the first meeting was held with only his cabinet. That group then handed over documents to Congress, withholding papers that could "injure the public."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid., 56-60.

⁴⁷ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 117-120.

⁴⁸ Sword, *President Washington's War*, 202.

President Washington and Henry Knox submitted plans for expansion of the military and a campaign back into Indian territory. Knox explicitly stated that he wanted “four regiments of regular infantry, one of riflemen, and a battalion each of artillery, and cavalry, a total in excess of 5,000 rank and file,”⁴⁹ at the cost of nearly \$1 million, three times that of the previous defense budget.⁵⁰ He justified this radical plan by saying that the government had a duty to protect its citizens, the Indian coalition had all the momentum in the world, and the increased budget would allow recruitment of qualified officers and men through higher pay.⁵¹ President Washington wrote a memo in December 1791 in which he stated, “We are involved in actual war...Defensive [policies] are not only impracticable...but the expense attending them would be ruinous.”⁵² Washington believed the failure was partly due to a lack of American commitment, and with his new attitude, it would not happen again. He emphasized that the army would bide its time in training and tactics would reflect the manner of woodland combat. The determined presentation of these requests inspired the House of Representatives to pass the bill 34 to 18, and the Senate approved it intact shortly after. Washington had ensured that the United States would fully commit itself in future conflicts, supported by a Congress that “reflected the mood of the public”.⁵³ President Washington generated funding for the new military by imposing strict taxes on the sale of liquor, which was unpopular and controversial, though the current security situation took priority.

The army was reorganized as the Legion of the United States. The odd renaming of the U.S. Army was spurred on by the American propensity to draw parallels between their young

⁴⁹ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 120.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 120.

⁵¹ Ibid., 120-122.

⁵² Sword, *President Washington's War*, 203.

⁵³ Ibid., 204.

republic and Ancient Rome. The unit organization mirrored the present-day concept of combined arms. Each sub-legion would consist of two infantry battalions, one battalion of riflemen, a company of dragoons (cavalry), and an artillery battery. This allowed maximum firepower and flexibility on the battlefield, while also giving the commander freedom of maneuver to accomplish his mission.⁵⁴

In order to raise popular support for the military, narratives written by soldiers and participants in battles in the west were published early and often. One of the most widely distributed was *Adventures of Jackson Johonnet: A Soldier Under General Harmar And General St. Clair, Containing An Account of His Captivity, Sufferings, and Escape From The Kickapoo Indians*. Johonnet was a soldier in St. Clair's army and he escaped Kickapoo captivity only to return in time to fight in the defeat on the Wabash. He managed to survive the battle only by sheer luck.⁵⁵ His violent descriptions of his captivity and the slaughter of his friends in battle served to memorialize the hundreds of men lost, and raise a call to America's young men to "kindle a flame of heroism in the breast of many an American youth [to]...exert [themselves]...to defend the worthy inhabitants on the frontiers from the depredations of savages...whose faith is by no means to be depended on."⁵⁶

Both the sentimental allusions to the glory of Ancient Rome and the literary infusion of martial magnetism filled the Legion to its prescribed manpower strength in a short time. President Washington named General "Mad Anthony" Wayne commander of the Legion in April 1792. Wayne was a seasoned combat veteran who was famous for his nighttime bayonet capture

⁵⁴ Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), 92.

⁵⁵ Jackson Johonnet, *Adventures of Jackson Johonnet: A Soldier Under General Harmar And General St. Clair, Containing An Account of His Captivity, Sufferings, and Escape From The Kickapoo Indians* (Providence, 1791), 3-14.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

of Stony Point in 1781. Washington's advisors questioned his decision to appoint Wayne, because he was an alcoholic who was quick to fight rashly. Nonetheless, his bravery was admired, and his Revolutionary War rank of Brigadier General would facilitate retention of serving officers of a lower rank, who would only take orders from a man who outranked them in the Revolutionary War.⁵⁷

Wayne took forceful control of his Legion and moved its training to a desolate area west of Pittsburgh. The men were drilled endlessly in company-level tactics, and for the first time ever individual marksmanship was made a critical skill. Extensive instruction in fortifications was emphasized to foster protection of the force in the wilderness. Wayne took the harsh lessons learned by St. Clair and developed a counter for all of them.⁵⁸ General Wayne was a true believer of the words of Thucydides, that the man who is best is trained in the severest school.

After two years of preparations, Wayne's men were ready for action. In late July 1794, his army left Fort Greenville to head north into Indian territory. On 20 August, the Legion came close to their objective; a group of hostile Indian camps near Fort Miami. The American troops slowly moved forward for three miles into the thick woods before they made contact with over 1,000 Indians and a company of Canadian troops advising them.⁵⁹ Initially, the Americans took heavy losses due to enemy fire, but their years of training took over. The infantry formed into lines and assaulted across the broken ground, imploring the Indians to retreat in the face of bayonets. The Battle of Fallen Timbers, as it came to be known, lasted less than two hours, and

⁵⁷ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 125-126.

⁵⁸ Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 93.

⁵⁹ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 156-157.

damaged the Indian command structure through the deaths of several prominent chiefs in battle.⁶⁰

St. Clair's defeat in November 1791 was a crucial point for the United States and its military. It highlighted the fact that the United States could not rely on its militia forces to fight protracted campaigns, and that national defense should not take a back seat, especially when America's western border was almost completely undefended. The high death toll and embarrassment of the battle encouraged American policymakers to build a force of hardened, well-trained dedicated professionals who would take the fight to enemies of the United States no matter where that might be. The United States Army bounced back in 1794 with a formidable trained force, and easily defeated the Indians who threatened the western border. From then on, the trend has been the same, and the United States military that is the most formidable today is the direct result of the chaos and destruction that occurred on a small piece of land on the banks of the Wabash River 223 years ago.

⁶⁰ Downey, *Indian Wars of the U.S. Army*, 66-69.

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The Reds and the Wobs: Radical Organization and Identity in the United States, 1910-1930

Author: Duncan Tarr

During the first few decades of the 20th century the upheavals across the globe and the economic transformation happening in the United States fostered the growth of myriad revolutionary organizations. The two that left the biggest mark on the era, and indeed on the collective consciousness of radical America, were the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) and the Communists. To the uncritical eye, these organizations may seem to be merely two different names for the same group. And of course the organizations shared many important goals, including an end to capitalism and a commitment to industrial unionism. However, the shared characteristics of the organizations only extend so far; upon a closer examination the distinct character of both organizations becomes apparent and important. Indeed, the differences between the I.W.W. and the Communists eventually led to a split between the organizations at the international level. But the disagreements penetrated deeper than mere quarrels among the leadership: rank and file I.W.W. members (often called Wobblies) and Communists also spurned each others' comradeship.

This paper will examine the development of the relationship of the Industrial Workers of the World and the Communists as organizations. The early cooperation between the groups will be examined as well as the context and causes for the split. Finally, for all their similar aims and shared tactics, the two organizations had very real and very serious differences. The workers of the United States were often, but not universally, aware of these differences. If workers were aware of these differences, their subsequent interactions with the two organizations reflected the acceptance of one platform over the (sometimes violent) rejection of the other. The decisions of workers to support one organization or the other depended on a variety of factors. These include their perception of an "American" radicalism, bore-from-within unionism versus dual-unionism, the concept of "freedom", the debate between political and economic action, the legitimacy given to an organization that had already "won" in another country, and the expectation of the organizations to solve the "bread and butter" issues of the workers.

The subjects examined are restricted to the years leading up to, and then immediately following the October Revolution in Russia, or the time period roughly corresponding to 1910-1930. This time period also covers the height of the I.W.W. success in the United States (with

the Lawrence textile strike of 1912 and the Patterson silk strike of 1913) and the destructive split between I.W.W. leadership that occurred in 1924. Additionally, the Communist Party USA was founded in 1919. For these reasons, these two decades mark the formative years of these two organizations and give a good sample for the relationship between the two as well as the choices made by rank and file workers.

In the days after the October Revolution, the I.W.W. was caught up in the “red fever” that swept through the American left. Even in 1919 at the Eleventh Convention of the I.W.W., the delegates passed a declaration hailing “the rising workers’ republic in Russia”.¹ I.W.W. dock hands in Seattle and Portland during the days of the Russian Civil War refused to service ships that were going to deliver ammunition and explosives to Kolchak and the White Army.² This time period also witnessed the defection of hundreds of Wobbly leaders (including Harrison George, George Mink, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, John Reed, Harold Harvey, George Hardy, Charles Ashleigh, Ray Brown, Earl Browder, and eventually Bill Haywood) and thousand of Wobbly rank-and-filers to the Communists and Communist organizations.³ Within a few years the I.W.W. and the Communist International, (including the Red International of Labor Unions), were bitterly opposed to one another. On top of that, Communists in the U.S. were actually trying to bore from within the I.W.W. to take control of the organization. When control seemed beyond reach, Communists sought to destroy strong I.W.W. locals. By the end of the decade, the revolutionary labor movement in America had totally split. The ideological and historical differences between the two organizations had been sharpened to a point that precluded any cooperation. Indeed, an appeal to the I.W.W. by Communist (and ex-Wobbly!) James P. Cannon posits that, “The conflict in the camp of militant labor, which goes to the point of preventing solidarity and unity in the class struggle, serves the capitalists and them alone.”⁴ Serving the capitalists was certainly not something either the I.W.W. or the Communists desired, yet the split seemed to warrant this claim. The question this paper grapples with is why and how this relationship developed.

¹ Mary E. Marcy. “The IWW Convention.” *The Liberator*, July 1919.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1919/07/v2n07-w17-jul-1919-liberator.pdf>

² Irving Hanson. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Pages 106-107.

³ InternationalReview. “The IWW and the failure of revolutionary syndicalism in the USA, part ii.” May 1, 2006. http://en.internationalism.org/ir/125-iww#_ftn5

⁴ James P. Cannon. “The IWW and the Red International of Labor Unions.” *The Worker*, December 1st, 1923. in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/cannon/works/1923/iwwrilu.htm>

Industrial Unionism

Both organizations were theoretically united in their formula of society based upon industrial unionism. In an interview in *The Liberator* in 1919, Lenin basically codifies the Bolshevik state in I.W.W. terms, saying, that the Wobbly Daniel De Leon “first formulated the idea of a Soviet government, which grew up in Russia on his idea...Industrial Unionism is the basic state”.⁵

According to Robert Minor, anarchist, I.W.W.-supporter, and the author of the article, Lenin’s statement was merely false propaganda meant to rally the I.W.W. behind the Bolsheviks. Minor explains the new Soviet government in a different light, saying, “There is no more industrial unionism in Lenin’s highly centralized institutions than in the United States Post Office. What he calls industrial unionism is nothing but nationalized industry in the highest degree of centralization.”⁶ This criticism of the centralization of the Soviet state was prevalent in the literature of the I.W.W. as well.

Despite Minor’s criticism, the role that the I.W.W. and Communists played in fostering industrial unionism in the United States was much more cooperative. Many claim the I.W.W. had “sown the seeds” for the later industrial unionism of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.⁷ Tom Scribner, a one-time Industrial Worker of the World, explains that he joined the Communist Party for a simple reason- the I.W.W. had already accomplished its task of creating industrial unions.⁸ Subsequently the Communists were very active in the organization of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.⁹

“American” or “Foreign” Radicalism?

The I.W.W. saw itself as in the tradition of American radicalism, albeit modified for the industrialized 20th century. This home-grown background led some Wobblies to distrust what was perceived as the “foreign” radicalism of the Communists.

⁵ Bob Minor. “Bob Minor and the Bolsheviks”, *The Liberator* Issue number 13, March 1919. Page 6.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Patrick Renshaw. *The Wobblies: The Story of Syndicalism in the United States*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1967. Page 159.

⁸ Tom Scribner. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Page 212.

⁹ Robin D.G. Kelley. *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression*. Chapel Hill and London: the University of North Carolina Press, 1990. Page 139.

In 1920 Industrial Worker of the World Ralph Chaplin attended a meeting of the United Communist Party in upstate New York. There he apparently became “fed up with foreign accents and feverish sectional rivalries.” Additionally, he noted that, “The feeling of being entangled in a web of international intrigue was far from pleasant”. He found solace only in talking to the one other Wobbly in attendance.¹⁰

Fred Beal of the I.W.W. seems to have shared this proclivity for American-grown radicalism, saying in his memoir:

The radicalism of my youth was not the radicalism of Moscow. It was American, growing out of American conditions and suited to the American temperament...[the I.W.W.] were interested in direct benefits to the workers of the United States, not in world revolution. I had the feeling that an organization founded on these principle could still be successful...¹¹

Certainly “the American temperament” is left open to interpretation, and it clearly was not an ideal hegemonic enough to deter the thousands of Wobblies who became Communists. However, the sentiment reflected in Beal’s statement can be found in the writings of others as well.

At the height of the Red Russia craze in the American revolutionary left in the year 1919, the I.W.W. was written about romantically as being noble and separate from the Bolsheviks, as being “‘American’ at its best- what the word meant when it still meant something”.¹² Again, the idea of ‘American’ is left unclear. But this rhetoric was extremely common in the dialogue of the revolutionary unionists. The “American-ness” of the I.W.W. was praised in opposition to whatever the Bolsheviks stood for.

Herein lies a great irony: the I.W.W. had almost all of its successes organizing immigrants, in some industries predominantly immigrants from Russia and Eastern Europe. Yet the leadership of the I.W.W. was able to simultaneously reject international Communism as a peculiar kind of “foreign”, while accepting and organizing Russian immigrants enthusiastically. To some Wobblies, it was not the Russians, but the Russian ideology that was harmful to the interests of the American working class.

¹⁰ Ralph Chaplin. *Wobbly: The Rough-and-Tumble Story of An American Radical*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948. Pages 298-305.

¹¹ Fred Erwin Beal. *Proletarian Journey: New England, Gastonia, Moscow*. New York: Hillman-Curl, 1937. Page 84.

¹² Floyd Bell. “The Invincible I.W.W.” *The Liberator*, May 1919.
<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1919/05/v2n05-may-1919-liberator-hr.pdf>

The memoir of a Russian-born Wobbly describes this pattern from the other direction. He writes a biting indictment of the “American worker” in which they are too easily satisfied. According to this description, American workers forget the I.W.W. once they have earned a little and bought a house. He goes on to say that when organizing, “unless there was a big foreign element, the going was rough”.¹³ Again, the power of the I.W.W. was coming from overseas, yet the ideology coming from the same place was described negatively as foreign.

Although the above sentiment was very prevalent within the ranks of the I.W.W., it was not hegemonic. As early as 1919 an article in *The Liberator* describes the delegates of the Eleventh I.W.W. convention as “all gathered together, precisely as men and women are today gathered everywhere in Russia”, defining the Wobblies as compared to *Russia*, instead of what had usually been the reverse comparison, of the Bolsheviks to the Wobblies.¹⁴

Wobbly Freedom or Communist Freedom?

Both organizations proclaimed the goal of “emancipation of the working class”. Yet the Communists and the Wobblies had divergent ideas on what that freedom meant, and how it would be realized in the organizing process itself.

The I.W.W. had always prided itself on not only its image of the future society, but also the image of the organizers doing the work towards building that society. In a more recent characterization, the I.W.W. organizer was portrayed as “a rugged, itinerant revolutionary, who hops freight trains and hoboed from town to town, propagandizing and agitating for the One Big Union – a proletarian knight in shining armor.”¹⁵ This image of the Wobbly could be understood as the individual manifestation of the I.W.W. tactic of constructing the new society within the shell of the old. With this understanding, one can characterize the ideals of I.W.W. freedom more generally.

The vague romanticism of I.W.W. freedom was prevalent in 1919 as well. An article in *The Liberator* describes how “the I.W.W. taught the lumberjacks- as it has taught others- to want to be free human beings”.¹⁶ The author was making the point that the I.W.W. not only made the

¹³ George Hodin. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Page 167.

¹⁴ Marcy. “The IWW Convention.”

¹⁵ InternationalReview. “The IWW and the failure of revolutionary syndicalism in the USA, part ii.”

¹⁶ Bell. “The Invincible I.W.W.”

lumberjacks “free” by winning them blankets that were not infested with bugs, but also “free” from their prior downtrodden consciousness: free to dream of winning.

Some Wobblies had a less grand concept of I.W.W. freedom. One worker who joined in the mid 1910s shares that, “It was easy for me to join the I.W.W. because there was no regimentation”.¹⁷ This love of the autonomy of the I.W.W. remains with the Wobblies and played a role in their subsequent distaste with the “party line” of the Communists. This same worker explains that “I was not attracted to the Communist Party at all... the rigidity and authoritarianism.... there was no self-expression”.¹⁸

Other Wobblies criticism of the Communists relied on their perception of the Communists’ lack of respect for civil liberties, a concept near and dear to the Wobblies’ heart.¹⁹ George Hodin expressed serious worry in the fact that “secret police” were institutionalized immediately after the consolidation of power in Russia.²⁰ Others expressed disdain for the Bolsheviks based on their executions, claiming that the “Communist Party of Russia” were not “fellow workers” but only “hangmen”. Other Wobblies dismissed these claims as being merely hearsay.²¹

For others, the I.W.W. was valued not only because “We got results” but just as much because “we had fun”.²² Some liked the I.W.W. for seemingly petty reasons. Wobbly Joseph Murphy alleges that the Communist Party had no sense of humor, while taking pride in the I.W.W. for being extremely funny.²³ Wobbly bard T-Bone Slim plays upon the different images of Wobbly and Communist, writing in one poem that “‘Russia to sell Czarist Crowns’- I wonder if there’s any chance to buy his shoes. I’d like to get a pair of ‘em- mine are dropping off”.²⁴ This was playing upon the same hobo-revolutionary ideal of the I.W.W., an ideal that was juxtaposed against the perceived opposite ideals of Communist organizers.

¹⁷ Hodin. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 165.

¹⁸ Hodin. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 169.

¹⁹ Roger Baldwin. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*, edited Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer, Lake View Press, Chicago, 1985. Page 147.

²⁰ Hodin. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 169.

²¹ *Industrial Worker* September 5th and 11th, 1923. Renshaw. *The Wobblies*. Page 256.

²² Scribner. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 212.

²³ Joseph Murphy. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Page 46.

²⁴ T-Bone Slim. *Juice Is Stranger than Friction: Selected Writings of T-Bone Slim*. Edited by Franklin Rosemont. Chicago: C.H. Kerr Publishing, 1992. Page 95.

For some Wobblies this more relaxed organizing style meant a great deal. Ralph Chaplin shares his distaste for becoming a Party member, saying he was avoiding the event because it meant “accepting party discipline and taking orders like any other Communist.” Luckily for him, the “matter of probation and discipline would be waived for the time being.” This lent Chaplin enough slack that he was able to take out the card needed to attend the Communist conference with the intention of securing bail money for out-on-bond Wobblies (including himself and Bill Haywood).²⁵

These characterizations of the I.W.W. came under much criticism from Communists and those sympathetic to them. One anarchist sympathetic to the Bolsheviks describes the anarchists in Russia (and implicitly in the United States) as not “more revolutionary” but merely “more romantic”.²⁶ In this way, the Communists tried to be seen as more practical while criticizing the I.W.W. as mere dreamers.

Karl Radek of the Communist International described the “revolutionary romanticism of the I.W.W.” in exactly this manner: to discredit I.W.W. ideals in favor of the more practical Communist revolutionary practices.²⁷ Romanticized freedom was dismissed as impractical.

The first description of the stereotypical I.W.W. organizer referenced above is followed by a harsh criticism of that stereotype, saying, “This model of the revolutionary as an exemplary individual figure, so appealing to the anarchist temperament, is of no interest to the proletariat. The class struggle is not waged by isolated, heroic individuals, but by the collective effort of the working class”.²⁸ This passage echoes the claims of the Communists from the 1920s: the freedom of the I.W.W. sounds nice but does not accomplish as much as the Communists “practical” organizing towards emancipation.

Some Communists were able to bridge the gap between practicality and romance quite easily however. Communist Mike Gold explains how, “

The revolution is this highest poetry of the human race. But to be mystic about it means admitting it is only a dream, and can never be realized. A revolutionist ought never lose sight of the wonderful goal (Anarchism, so Lenin stated it) -- but he is a traitor, a

²⁵ Chaplin. *Wobbly*. Pages 298-305.

²⁶ Bob Minor. “I Changed My Mind a Little.” *The Liberator*, October 1920.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1920/10/v3n10-w31-oct-1920-liberator.pdf>

²⁷ Max Eastman. “Foster.” *The Liberator*, April 1921. Page 6.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1921/04/v04n04-w37-apr-1921-liberator.pdf>

²⁸ InternationalReview. “The IWW and the failure of revolutionary syndicalism in the USA, part ii.”

misleader and a source of dangerous confusion if for even a moment he neglects the daily class struggle, the links in the revolutionary chain.

In this way, one can be romantic about revolution *and* practical about winning it- the Communist way.²⁹

Bob Minor also came to value Communism over the I.W.W. for the better analysis of revolution and freedom that the Communists had. He says that, “after the great flash of light from Lenin’s booklet- the scientifically proven possibility of a free society without State and with no man tied to a locality- the [Wobbly] notion of ‘locally autonomous’ is pitiful in comparison”.³⁰ This in fact seems to be the I.W.W. concept of freedom taken to its extreme. Minor therefore values the Communists for beating the Wobblies at their own game.

Bore-from-Within or Dual-Unionism?

With all of their differences, the leadership of the I.W.W. and the Communists were still able to agree on common enemies. Both organizations fiercely despised Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of Labor. Representative of the positions of the organizations as a whole are the positions of their most well-known leaders. Bill Haywood wrote that, “the AFL is nothing but a board of officials which strangles every sign of revolutionary life in the American labor movement”.³¹ William Z. Foster, the Wobbly-turned-Communist and lead figure in left labor movement during this period, partially agreed, calling the “American trade union bureaucracy... stupid and venal beyond compare.”³²

The positions of the organizations, however, differ a great deal about how to deal with the reactionary nature of the A.F.L. Haywood, while still in the I.W.W., held that the A.F.L. has no revolutionary potential now and will never have any in the future.³³ From this standpoint follows the strategy of dual unionism, an ideal enshrined in the I.W.W. since its’ founding. Dual Unionism is the practice of organizing an I.W.W. local in an industry that is already organized by another union with the intention of having members of the first union defect to the I.W.W.

²⁹ Mike Gold. “Why I Am A Communist.” *New Masses*, September 1932.

³⁰ Minor. “I Changed My Mind a Little.”

³¹ Eastman. “Foster.”

³² William Z. Foster. “The Next Task of the Left Wing.” *The Labour Herald*, September 1924.

³³ Jacob Zumoff. *The Communist International and US Communism 1919-1929*. Brill Academic Publishers, Inc., 2014. Page 91.

This was the strategy that the I.W.W. took with the A.F.L. The rank and file Wobblies shared the leadership's distrust of the A.F.L. as well.³⁴

The Communists, on the other hand, thought that the strategy of dual unionism alienates the "militant minority" from the labor struggle as a whole. Despite their dislike of the A.F.L., they saw the duty of revolutionaries as joining the moderate unions with the intent of "boring from within" and radicalizing the leadership of these unions. Foster was one of the strongest proponents for the bore-from-within strategy. Ironically, he came to support this strategy after seeing it used successfully by the syndicalists of Europe while he was there on commission for the I.W.W.'s *Industrial Worker* beginning in 1911.³⁵ Foster's syndicalist strategy was laid out in his 1913 pamphlet called "Syndicalism". As early as the publication of this pamphlet he criticized the I.W.W. for its rejection of boring-from-within as well as its' rejection of Foster's "militant minority" theory.³⁶

This debate existed within revolutionary unions even before the advent of the Communists. This strategy was in vogue with the European syndicalists during this time period. Even in the I.W.W. in the early 1910s a strong faction was pushing for boring-from-within the A.F.L. These included William E. Trautmann, James Conolly, and Tom Mann.³⁷

This controversy between pursuing a strategy of bore-from-within unionism or dual unionism was perhaps the most divisive issue between the Communists and the I.W.W. Indeed, it was this particular point that alienated William Z. Foster from the I.W.W. and realigned him with Communism after the Communist International adopted bore-from-within tactics as its preferred strategy across the board.³⁸ It was also this issue above all others that irritated the I.W.W. delegate to the First Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions. Because the concept of dual-unionism was so intimately bound up with the identity of the I.W.W. itself, the I.W.W. took the RILU's official rejection of dual unionism as a direct attack on the I.W.W.³⁹

³⁴ Nels Peterson. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Page 120.

³⁵ Zumoff. *The Communist International and US Communism*. Page 98.; David J. Saposs. *Left Wing Unionism: A Study of Radical Policies and Tactics*. New York: International Publishers, 1926. Page 48.

³⁶ William Z. Foster. "Syndicalism." Chicago: William Foster, 1913. <https://archive.org/details/Syndicalism>

³⁷ Renshaw. *The Wobblies*. Pages 166-167.

³⁸ Ibid. Pages 251-252.

³⁹ G.H. Williams. "The First Congress of the Red Trade Union International at Moscow, 1921." Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1922.

Ben Fletcher, the Wobbly longshoreman from Philadelphia, was extremely anti-communist based upon his personal experience with Communists and boring-from-within. Communists resigned themselves to the fact that they were unable to bore from within his Local 8, leading them to attack it instead. Fletcher believes that it was Communist agitation both in Philadelphia and in the General Headquarters of the I.W.W. that led to the Philadelphia Controversy and subsequent decline of Local 8. I.W.W. historians Fred Thompson and Patrick Renshaw assert this claim in their respective research on the I.W.W. Renshaw documents how the Communists were the faction that claimed that Local 8 was loading munitions for White Army forces, thereby instigating the controversy (And Thompson agrees with Fletcher that Local 8 was indeed *not* loading weapons for the White Army.).⁴⁰ The Wobbly Fred Beal also makes the claim of Communist boring-from-within I.W.W. locals in his memoir, although he does not reference Local 8 specifically.⁴¹

Boring-from-within the I.W.W. was not limited to only particular locals however. Harrison George published an article in *The Liberator* in 1924 attacking the leadership of the I.W.W. for hindering Communist attempts to bore from within the national organization.⁴² Other rank and file Wobblies also recognized these attempts, pointing out that when the I.W.W. refused to walk Moscow's line, the Communists "did their best to break us".⁴³ This strategy was met quite violently by some Wobblies who organized "breaker gangs" to beat up Communists in the I.W.W.⁴⁴

Some of the other controversy which fostered distrust of the Communists had to do with the A.F.L. in particular. Foster may have overlooked an important detail when he chose to organize with the A.F.L. Even though boring-from-within the A.F.L. was billed as "joining" the organized masses, in practice Foster was leaving out a huge chunk of the working-class: Black

⁴⁰ Peter Cole. *Ben Fletcher: The Life and Times of a Wobbly*. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 2007. Page 26.; Fred Thompson and Patrick Murfin. *The I.W.W., Its First Seventy Years, 1905-1975: The History of an Effort to Organize the Working Class : A Corrected Facsimile of the 1955 Volume, the I.W.W., Its First Fifty Years*. Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1976. Page 136-137.; Renshaw. *The Wobblies*. Page 183, 249.

⁴¹ Beal. *Proletarian Journey*. Page 84.

⁴² Harrison George. "Will The I.W.W. Fight Decadence?" *The Liberator*, August 1924.
<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1924/08/v7n08-w76-aug-1924-liberator.pdf>

⁴³ Frank Cedarvall. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Page 174.

⁴⁴ Renshaw. *The Wobblies*. Page 57.

Americans. The A.F.L. treated Black workers as only “second-class unionists”.⁴⁵ It was for this reason that some Black Americans were drawn to and remained in the I.W.W., despite the influence of the Communists. The I.W.W. was wholeheartedly supportive of racial equality in the here-and-now. Indeed, the I.W.W. even sponsored anti-racist social events in Philadelphia to foster solidarity among dock workers.⁴⁶ Black workers distrusted Foster because of his affiliation with the A.F.L.⁴⁷ However, this distrust perhaps had much more to do with the rejection of the A.F.L. rather than Communism as a whole. In Alabama during this time the Party became intimately fused with Black American traditions.⁴⁸

Political or Economic Action?

One of the key divergent points between the Communists and the I.W.W. was the debate between political and economic action. The I.W.W. asserted that it had always been an organization based upon economic action and would not participate in political action. The Communists, on the other hand, argued that the working class must be organized economically *and* politically. These two different revolutionary strategies correspond roughly to the goals of the organizations. The Wobblies organized industrially to build Industrial Democracy. The Communists organized politically with the aim of seizing power with the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. This distinction played out both in the dialogue between the organizations and in the experience of individuals.

In a 1920 I.W.W. pamphlet this concept is codified along with a fairly harsh criticism of the state of the Bolshevik revolution. The pamphlet explains how

Russia affords a striking example of what occurs when ‘forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old’ has been neglected.... They accomplished a political revolution, but in the absence of a sound industrial underpinning, the communist state collapsed and Russia has slipped back into capitalism.

According to the Wobblies, the focus on *political* action by the Bolsheviks led to the failure of the Revolution and lent credence to the I.W.W. calls for economic action as the basis for revolution. The pamphlet continues saying, “The Russian experience supports the I. W. W.

⁴⁵ Cole. *Ben Fletcher*. Page 9.

⁴⁶ Industrial Workers of the World. “Ben Fletcher.” <http://www.iww.org/history/biography/BenFletcher/1>

⁴⁷ Zumoff. *The Communist International and US Communism*. Page 102.

⁴⁸ Kelley. *Hammer and Hoe*. Pages 92-116.

theory. By organizing industrially—not politically or militarily—the workers ‘are building the structure of the new society within the shell of the old’”.⁴⁹

Of course, “slipping back into capitalism” was a much-exaggerated depiction of the transitions that the Soviet Union was going through at this time. But this criticism from the mouths of the Wobblies of the political and military nature of the Bolshevik’s revolution is a criticism that will remain with it for the duration of the existence of the U.S.S.R.

Former Wobbly Fred Beal shared this skepticism of a political focus. He began working with the Communists to support strikes along the East Coast. At first this coalition was uneasy and he complained about how when a strike began the Communists sent in too many folks to do “political work” instead of union organizers. He attributed this to the Communist tendency “to think when a strike takes place, that it is the first step of a revolution,” an idea that he claims has been “rebuffed time and again”.⁵⁰

In G.H. Williams’s official account of the First Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions for the I.W.W. leadership, the Communists’ political focus was something that rubbed him the wrong way and was one of his principal reasons for advocating non-affiliation.⁵¹ Beal too was bothered by the strategy of the Communists. He laments that the Communists seemed interested in only “making a good impression on Moscow”, rather than winning better working conditions for the American toilers.⁵² T-Bone Slim shares this sentiment, claiming that the Communists do not in fact trust the American working class but instead “*they* have confidence *not* in the working class, but in leadership”.⁵³

But perhaps the I.W.W. distinction of economic versus political action was more like the Communists than they wished to think. The similarities can be found in a speech (and later a pamphlet) delivered by Bill Haywood in 1911, far before any Bolshevik excitement touched the American Left. He begins with classic I.W.W. characterization, saying “The Industrial Workers of the World is an economic organization without affiliation with any political party”. This is aligned with Wobbly claims of 9 years later. The interesting part comes later, when Haywood explains that, “You must not be content to come to the ballot box... erected by the capitalist

⁴⁹ Industrial Workers of the World. “THE I.W.W.: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT.” Chicago, Illinois: Industrial Workers of the World, 1920. <http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/unions/iww/1920/whatitis.htm>

⁵⁰ Beal. *Proletarian Journey*. Page 137.

⁵¹ Williams. “The First Congress of the Red Trade Union International at Moscow.”

⁵² Beal. *Proletarian Journey*. Page 155.

⁵³ T-Bone Slim. *Juice Is Stranger than Friction*. Page 77.

class, guarded by capitalist henchmen...You must protect your ballot with an organization that will enforce the mandates of your class. I want political action that counts. I want a working class that can hold an election every day if they want to".⁵⁴

There was some debate and confusion on what exactly Haywood's view on politics was. Of course, by the time he became a Bolshevik in Russia this question does not bear analysis. Haywood includes in his autobiography a conversation he had with Lenin upon arrival in Russia where he asked Lenin if the industries "are run and administered by the workers" to which Lenin responded, "Yes, Comrade Haywood, that is Communism".⁵⁵ However, Haywood-the-Wobbly seems to be remembered in different lights by different people. Historian Patrick Renshaw assigns Haywood the role of leader of the anti-political wing of the I.W.W., while the memoirs of other Wobblies remember Haywood talking about the "two arms" of labor struggles-economic *and political*.⁵⁶

This description by the I.W.W. leadership sounds more like the Communist International's idea of politics than the Wobblies might have wished. In Zinoviev's appeal to the I.W.W. from Comintern, he claims that the I.W.W. had in fact used politics in the past to push their economic organization. He cites I.W.W. appeals to Congressman Victor Berger in 1912, Wobbly leaders testifying before the Industrial Relations Commission, and then using their trial in 1918 to propagate I.W.W. ideas. He also plays upon the I.W.W. glorification of the General Strike, saying (in all capital letters), "SOVIET RUSSIA IS ON STRIKE AGAINST THE WHOLE CAPITALIST WORLD... THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IS THE STRIKE COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION."⁵⁷ Zinoviev's appeal to the loyalty of the Wobblies points out the contradictions and vagueness prevalent in the I.W.W. anti-political philosophy.

⁵⁴ Bill Haywood. "The General Strike." Speech at Meeting Held for the Benefit of the Buccafori Defense, at Progress Assembly Rooms. New York, March 16, 1911. <http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/bisbee/docs/022.html>

⁵⁵ Bill Haywood. *Bill Haywood's Book: the Autobiography of William D. Haywood*. New York: International Publishers, 1929. Page 362.

⁵⁶ Art Shields. *Excerpt from Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Page 194.; Patrick Renshaw. *The Wobblies: The Story of Syndicalism in the United States*. Page 89.

⁵⁷ Grigory Zinoviev. "The Communist Internationale to the I.W.W. An Appeal to the Executive Committee of the Third International at Moscow." January, 1920. <http://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sections/australia/iww/open-letter.htm>

With the vagueness surrounding the facts of the I.W.W. and political action, there are a few theories about why the Wobblies actually broke with the Communists on this point. Historian Patrick Renshaw suggests that perhaps one of the reasons that the I.W.W. adopted such a hostile attitude towards the Communists and eventually chose to disaffiliate with them entirely is the fact that the I.W.W. “centralizers”, and those that had talked favorably of affiliating with international Communist organizations, were the I.W.W.’s who were jailed in the infamous 1918 Chicago trial. Their imprisonment meant there their influence within the organization was much less meaningful than it would have been had they been not in Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary.⁵⁸

Despite the government repression restricting freedom of debate within the organization, the I.W.W.’s true stance, both at that time and historically, regarding political action was ambiguous. The controversy with the Communists on this point seems to have been more of a war of words than a war of praxis.

Examples of the deliberate misuse of I.W.W. language to bolster the legitimacy of Communist political strategies came from both organizations. In 1921 even Bill Haywood was using Wobbly language to push Communist strategies. In an interview in *The Liberator*, he claims that “We [the I.W.W.] used to talk about the dictatorship of the proletariat in the I.W.W. even before the war... they sang it in songs like “Putting the Boss in Overalls”... there must of necessity be a certain control of things political”.⁵⁹ Haywood’s words here, however, must be read with the understanding that he was then in Moscow for political asylum. Nevertheless, his reference to old I.W.W. songs to explain the need for political action demonstrates that, at the very least, the differences between the strategies of political action and economic action were overblown.

A Revolution that had Already “Won”

For some, the Communists were favored over the I.W.W. for the simple fact that the Bolsheviks had successfully seized power in Russia. The Communist international emphasized this point in their appeals to the I.W.W. In the early 1920s they explained that, “the experience of two years of workers’ government in Russia is naturally of the greatest importance, and should

⁵⁸ Renshaw. *The Wobblies*. Page 246.

⁵⁹ Lewis Gannet. “Bill Haywood in Moscow.” *The Liberator*, September 1921.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1921/09/v04n09-w42-sep-1921-liberator.pdf>

be closely studied by the workers of other countries.”⁶⁰ The Communists harped on this factor to legitimize their organizations and strategies in the United States.

Individual workers were also impressed by the Bolsheviks successful seizure of power. William Z. Foster was drawn to the Bolsheviks not because of a commitment to Marxism-Leninism as an ideology, but because they had successfully created a “Worker’s State.”⁶¹

Wobbly rank and filers recognized this trend as well.⁶² In the period directly after the Bolshevik Revolution, it was common in logging camps in Oregon for rabid debates to occur during I.W.W. meetings. One Wobbly remembers the “revolution that was won” argument carried a powerful influence when presented by the leader of the meeting who claims that “The Russkies beat us to it and we’ve got to re-examine what we’re doing”.⁶³

In 1920 Bill Haywood advocated for the I.W.W. supporting the Bolsheviks, saying that “the world revolution is bigger than the I.W.W.”.⁶⁴ For many Wobblies, the ideological differences between the organizations seemed petty when the world revolution was seemingly already under way. Haywood later elaborates upon his admiration for the Bolsheviks saying, “the I.W.W. reached out and... tried to grab the whole world, and a part of the world has jumped ahead of it.”⁶⁵ The concept that the I.W.W. must follow the lead of the Bolsheviks because they had succeeded in their revolutionary aims before the I.W.W. was very persuasive for the Wobblies who were not specifically attached to the I.W.W. but instead were attached to worker’s revolution more generally.

This concept was not universally accepted among the Wobblies however. One Industrial Worker of the World shared that other workers thought, “the revolution was right, but the wrong people were getting hold of it”.⁶⁶ In most other sources, however, Wobblies who referenced the success of the Bolsheviks in their immediate goals did so with admiration. If they were critical of other things, they did not reference the actual successful seizure of power.

⁶⁰ Zinoviev. “The Communist Internationale to the I.W.W.”

⁶¹ Zumoff. *The Communist International and US Communism*. Page 102.

⁶² Cedarvall. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 173-174.

⁶³ Scribner. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 210.

⁶⁴ Ralph Chaplin. “The Comintern and IWW: Bail Reimbursement.” 1921.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/unions/iww/1921/0102-chaplin-cominternandiwwbail.pdf>

⁶⁵ Max Eastman. “Bill Haywood, Communist.” *The Liberator*, April 1921.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1921/04/v04n04-w37-apr-1921-liberator.pdf>

⁶⁶ Peterson. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 121.

The Communist Call for “Unity” Within the Left Labor Movement

The Communists tried to woo the I.W.W. by calling for unity between their organizations. These appeals claimed that winning the revolution should be the most important goal of both organizations, and that this was possible only by uniting.

In an appeal to the I.W.W. penned by Zinoviev in 1920 on behalf of the Communist International the concept of “unity” is stressed above all. In a less-than-subtle manner, he painstakingly lays out the Communist program emphasizing the vocabulary used by the I.W.W. According to Zinoviev, Communists also use Direct Action; they also value the General Strike; the future worker’s state will in actuality look much like the General Executive Board of the I.W.W. He ends this call for unity by saying, “This is no time to quibble about a name, or minor questions of organization. The essential task is to draw together all workers capable of revolutionary mass action in time of crisis.”⁶⁷

James Cannon’s 1923 appeal to the I.W.W. to work with the Red International is filled with calls for “unity”. At one point he even calls the revolutionary nature of the I.W.W. into question, saying “If we are serious revolutionists who put the interests of the working class above everything, we have to say this united front is a necessity.”⁶⁸

Articles in *The Liberator* echoed and popularized this call from the Comintern and the Red International. In Michael Gold’s particularly stinging article on the stance of the I.W.W., he argued that “anyone who is against such harmony is either not fully class-conscious, or he is a partisan bigot.”⁶⁹

This concept of equating “true revolutionaries” with those willing to work with the Communists who were coming off the back of a successful revolution in Russia certainly had appeal to some Wobblies. Others, however, saw the Soviet call for unity as merely a buzzword designed to destroy the autonomy of the I.W.W. Ralph Chaplin did not trust the Communists, saying that they were “just another bunch of politicians”, seeking to co-opt the I.W.W. for their own ends and without the best interest of the working class truly at heart.⁷⁰ Other Wobblies shared the conviction that the Communists were merely politicians “trying to ride to power on

⁶⁷ Zinoviev. “The Communist Internationale to the I.W.W.”

⁶⁸ Cannon. “The IWW and the Red International of Labor Unions.”

⁶⁹ Michael Gold. “Hope for America.” *The Liberator*, December 1921.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1921/12/v4n12-w45-dec-1921-liberator.pdf>

⁷⁰ Chaplin. *Wobbly*. Page 298.

the back of the workers”.⁷¹ Other workers were more brutal in the condemnation of the newcomers to the American Left. Wobbly Frank Cedervall said he “lays the collapse of the Left in America to the influence of the so-called ‘Leninists’”.⁷² And historian Fred Thompson cites the Bolshevik crushing of the Kronstadt rebellion, a rebellion that many Wobblies were sympathetic towards, as a reason for the I.W.W. skepticism of “unity”.⁷³

Some workers, however, condemned the I.W.W. actions as being “destructive”. They expressed concern that the I.W.W. shunning of unity with the Bolsheviks turned a lot of people away from the general cause of socialism.⁷⁴

The Communist call for unity appears to be, at least partially, honest and based upon the experience of the revolution in Russia. For example, the head of the police force in Moscow was an *anarchist*, and in an interview in 1920 while he was still head of police he admitted that he does not like “any state” or even “to work”. But he *still* was fully supportive of the Bolshevik revolution.⁷⁵ Bob Minor later referred to this dissonance saying “it is the screaming irony of revolutionary history that the Revolution in its biggest city had to depend upon an Anarchist as chief of police”.⁷⁶

There is more than just irony in this strange relationship however. It is perhaps such instances as this police chief in Moscow that influenced the Bolsheviks’ call for unity. If they took such experiences seriously, then the conversion of American anarchists or syndicalists or Industrial Unionists to the Communist cause was not only possible, but also made strategic sense.

“Bread and Butter” Issues

Even with the battle of words and ideology taking place within the leadership of international Communism and the Industrial Workers of the World, sometimes the rank and file were drawn to one organization or another with an eye towards only *immediate material goals* and were totally disinterested in the competing theories of revolution. Wobbly George Hodin

⁷¹ C.E. Payne to Vern Smith. October 14th, 1923, in Renshaw, Patrick. *The Wobblies: The Story of Syndicalism in the United States*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1967. Page 254.

⁷² Cedervall. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 174.

⁷³ Thompson and Murfin. *The I.W.W., Its First Seventy Years, 1905-1975*. Page 137.

⁷⁴ Shields. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 194.

⁷⁵ Griffin Barry. “Anarchists and Others In Russia.” *The Liberator*, August 1920.

<http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1920/08/v3n08-w29-aug-1920-liberator.pdf>

⁷⁶ Minor. “I Changed My Mind a Little.”

explains how during the debates between Leninists, Trotskyists, and Anarchists, he felt that all sides “didn’t apply much to the real life I found in the [worker’s] camps”.⁷⁷ For workers starving or in terrible working conditions, ideological or debates about strategy did not matter.

Irving Hanson, a Wobbly organizing loggers during this time, explains that “our basic approach was not to talk about revolution too much. We talked about immediate gains, union gains. That was the main pitch when you went into a lousy old camp”.⁷⁸ This is the same sentiment expressed by Ben Fletcher at the Eighth Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World. Fletcher, of the I.W.W. Marine Transport Workers Industrial Union Local 8 in Philadelphia, shared the opinion that “the prime reason why the working class joins the I.W.W. is first because of the fact that they are seeking more wages and shorter hours.”⁷⁹ The idea these workers share is that the working class must first win better conditions, even if eventually they are to learn that there is a “world to win”.

Wobblies in the Pacific Northwest lumber industry also pointed to the primacy of working condition improvement, remembering a conversation in which a logger said “The only time [a worker] will follow you is when his stomach is empty. The minute you fill his stomach, you can’t talk nothing to him”. The I.W.W. organizer eventually came to agree with this sentiment.⁸⁰ For others, the I.W.W. was not about “bread and butter”, but about “ham and eggs”. Some others point to the difference between the “city” I.W.W. who wanted the abolition of wage slavery, and the “jungle” I.W.W. for whom it was more of a “belly philosophy”.⁸¹

The conquest of bread was a call picked up by the Communists too. In a leaflet targeting rural sharecroppers in Alabama, the Communists wrote that the sharecroppers must “join hands with the unemployed workers of the towns and with their organizations which are fighting the same battle for bread”.⁸²

Another interesting parallel exists in the decisions made by rank and file workers on which organization to join. In a March 1913 article in the I.W.W. paper *Solidarity*, Ben Fletcher wrote that the only choice that the textile workers of Massachusetts were faced with is “Revolt or

⁷⁷ Hodin. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 165.

⁷⁸ Hanson. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 107.

⁷⁹ Ben Fletcher. Minutes from the IWW Eighth Convention, 1913. In Cole, Peter. *Ben Fletcher: The Life and Times of a Wobbly*. Page 27.

⁸⁰ Hodin. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 168.

⁸¹ Fania Steelink. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*. Edited by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakas, Deborah Shaffer. Chicago: Lake View Press, 1985. Page 172.

⁸² Kelley. *Hammer and Hoe*. Page 38

Starve”. This is almost the exact same phrase that lead to Black Alabaman Angelo Herndon to join the Communist Party 17 years later; he saw a handbill on the ground that read “Would you rather fight or starve?”⁸³

Some Wobblies questioned the Communists’ commitment to the material interests of the workers. Fred Beal, while organizing for the Communists, relates how he felt like he was “shuffled around like pieces on a chess-board by the dictators in New York who were indeed making a political game of what to the people [striking] in Gastonia was a struggle for existence”.⁸⁴ This criticism, though largely unfounded, was characteristic of the way some Wobblies talked about the structure of the Communist organizations.

A lumber company-backed paper from 1922 published an anonymous biography from a Wobbly to give insight into the way they think. The author basically describes his draw to the I.W.W. in Marxist terms.⁸⁵ There is no mention in the account of the debates that were ravaging the leadership at that time; the account is merely focused on the author’s dream of a better workplace and world. For many workers the debates between unionism strategies were at least second place to getting enough to eat. Whichever organization offered that service first or more adequately was the one that drew in the worker.

Geography of the Labor Movement

For other workers, it was not the ideology of the organization that drew them in; it was the existence of that organization in the absence of any other. Communist organizations and the I.W.W. often existed in different and distinct locations across the country, and a worker’s exposure to the organizations was sometimes based upon geography more than ideology.

For example, the I.W.W. was the pre-eminent organization in the lumber industry of the Pacific Northwest and the agricultural workers of the Midwest.⁸⁶ This is admitted even by Cannon in his call for unity with the Red International of Labor Unions.⁸⁷ In one memoir of a Wobbly named Henry McGuckin in the Pacific Northwest that extends through World War One,

⁸³ Peter. *Ben Fletcher*. Page 25; Angelo Herndon. *Let Me Live*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007. Page 73.

⁸⁴ Beal. *Proletarian Journey*. Page 155.

⁸⁵ Joyce L. Kornbluh. edited. *Rebel Voices: An I.W.W. Anthology*. Anonymous article in the “4 L Bulletin” Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen. October 1922.

⁸⁶ Shields. Excerpt from *Solidarity Forever*. Page 196.

⁸⁷ Cannon. “The IWW and the Red International of Labor Unions.”

there is not a single mention of Communists or Bolsheviks.⁸⁸ Likewise, Angelo Herndon is drawn to the Communist Party because it was the best-organized and most influential radical organization in Alabama in 1930. He describes the Communism that he encountered through the Unemployed Councils as not *one* revolutionary program but “the *only* emancipating force for the workers” (emphasis added).⁸⁹ Although both Herndon and McGuckin came to develop a better understanding of their specific revolutionary program as time went on, their initial introduction to both organizations was not by preference but by geography.

Similarly, Fred Beal joined the I.W.W. during the Lawrence textile mill strike. He likewise joined this organization because it was the only one fighting on the side of the workers. Additionally, the influential presence of Bill Haywood was felt by the impressionable Beal, as he relates that only “vaguely I understood the I.W.W. principles of the class struggle and of direct action but chiefly all that mattered to me at that time was that I had enrolled as a member in Big Bill Haywood’s union.”⁹⁰ Ironically, Beal’s later interest in the Communist Party began when he is branded a Bolshevik by a non-understanding public after Beal defended the Lawrence strikers in a speech.⁹¹ Regardless of his later affiliation, Beal is initially drawn to the I.W.W. because they existed in Lawrence, and the Communists did not.

Conclusion

The relationship between the Industrial Workers of the World and the Communists during this time was based upon both important and exaggerated differences. The debates over whether political action was legitimate or not were largely unfounded and concerned with small details. The preference for boring-from-within, however, was an existential threat to the I.W.W. Additionally, each organization had distinct characteristics to which individuals might be drawn. The I.W.W. had a thoroughly American history and had constructed a romantic image of hobo-revolutionary that was appealing to the radical American consciousness. The Communists had successfully won a revolution in Russia and had a large and seemingly practical international presence. Despite the influence that these traits had upon the American worker and the identity

⁸⁸ Henry E. McGuckin and Henry McGuckin. *Memoirs of a Wobbly: With an Article by the Author from the International Socialist Review, August 1914*. Chicago: C.H. Kerr Pub., 1987.

⁸⁹ Herndon. *Let Me Live*. Page 86.

⁹⁰ Beal. *Proletarian Journey*. Page 54.

⁹¹ Ibid. Page 68.

decisions they may have made, some workers chose an organization merely because they had to eat, and that organization promised them food.

Even with the important differences that existed between the organizations, some of the disagreements seemed to actually be struggles for autonomy: the I.W.W. wanted to retain its grasp on the revolutionary labor movement in the U.S. During this period, the I.W.W. faced a two-edged sword because of this decision: it bore some of the brunt of anti-Communist state repression, yet because of its shunning of international Communism it was unable to leverage the financial and political weight that international Communism was able to offer the Communists. Faced with this severe repression, could the I.W.W. not have given up a bit of its autonomy for the sake of a strong continued existence? Clearly, many workers cared little for the squabble between leadership- they merely wanted food and better working conditions. What if the leadership of the I.W.W. had honored this desire? The pride in American radicalism and romanticized freedom seems to be outweighed by the need for a strong organization. But faced with the decision to compromise, the I.W.W. leadership spurned the desires of many of the U.S. workers, the Comintern, and indeed many ex-Wobblies.

Examining the decision made by rank-and-file workers during this time period serves two purposes. The first reason is historical; this analysis provides some insight into the values and desires of ordinary workers during this time period. The second reason is contemporary: with the rise of the “new new left”, quotes from Marx and past revolutionaries once again are being chanted in the street. If the people are going to turn today’s mass mobilizations into mass organizations with a long-term revolutionary strategy, we must examine the questions asked in this paper. What do ordinary workers and people value in revolutionary organizations? And, perhaps more importantly, should petty squabbles about variations on strategy preclude cooperation between revolutionaries and their organizations? If we are ever to indeed “put the boss in overalls,” today’s revolutionaries must understand the radical identities and organizations from the past in order to make careful decisions about cooperation in the present.

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French Africa and the Second World War: Race, Class, and Colonialism

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Within Europe and North America, the view of the Second World War and the Holocaust is more or less in accordance. It is difficult, and rightfully so, to make any sort of argument or justification for the atrocities committed by the Nazis. Mass killings, cruelty and genocide, coupled with an ideology of racial superiority, is a major reason for our condemnation of the Nazis of World War II. However, there is less accordance in European and North American views when it comes to our own nations' history of imperialism. Contestation exists as to whether or not European colonialism of Africa, Asia, and the Americas was immoral and whether or not it was harmful to the people and societies of these areas. This is in spite of the presence of mass killings, cruelty, genocide, and a narrative of racial inequality in our imperialism. Europe and North America remember World War II as an heroic fight between two sides, one obviously good and the other obviously evil, but how did the colonized world view and experience the war?

Mark Mazower's book, *Dark Continent, Europe's Twentieth Century*, examines Nazi expansionism as German colonialism of the rest of Europe. Hitler's vision for Europe paralleled and, indeed, was inspired by European and U.S. American colonialism and imperialism. The Nazis had plans to make the Ukraine "a California of Europe", to use Europe to economically support Germany, and compared their claim on Europe to the United States' claim on the Americas as articulated in the Monroe Doctrine. Germany used the natural resources of nations it invaded during the war for its own benefit and implemented other colonial economic policies during the war. They planned to assimilate specific groups of people into German culture, mentioned plans for the emigration of the Jewish people of Europe to an African colony (a "solution" proposed for the so-called "Negro Problem" of the

United States that was attempted in Liberia), and Nazi anti-guerrilla policies were studied by Europeans and Americans.¹

It is hard to miss the irony of France calling upon her colonies to help fight German aggression. African soldiers asked to defend the empire were essentially fighting the colonization of France by Germany. In other words, they were fighting to stop the colonization of the very nation that colonized and continued to occupy their own lands. This paper attempts to understand the role, experiences, and viewpoints of African soldiers fighting for France during World War II, including before and during the German invasion of France and during German occupation under both the Vichy Regime and the Free French. It will look at the importance of Africa in WWII, the makeup of African soldiers, French and German treatment of them, the viewpoints of African soldiers and how fighting in the war affected these views. Examining Nazi expansionism and occupation from this perspective can lead to a deeper understanding of empire, its relationship with its subjects, and postwar independence movements.

Role of Africa in the War

An article was published in the *Journal of the Royal African Society* in 1940 detailing the importance of the French imperial holdings and the role they might play in the European conflict. The article's first sentence is the strong assertion "that the importance of the French Empire at the present crisis is so obvious as to need little insistence."² There is not much dispute, both at the time of the war and now, of the importance of African colonies to Vichy France, the Free French, and the other actors of WWII.

Africa was significant in the Second World War for a variety of reasons. First of all, its location was strategically important. The Allies and the Axis fought for control of Africa, especially North Africa, and many major battles were fought there. This resulted in

¹ Mark Mazower, *Dark continent, Europe's Twentieth Century*, (Vintage, 1998), 138-181.

² H.R. Tate, "The French Colonial Empire." *Journal of the Royal African Society* 39.157 (1940), 322.

destruction of towns and cities, including economic resources that were sometimes destroyed by retreating armies. French North Africa was even caught up in battles between Free French and Vichy France.³ From Africa, the Allies could send troops and supplies to the various fronts of the war. The entire continent was vital to the Allies who had lost much of Europe to the Axis Powers.⁴ It was starting in Africa that Free French and Allied forces were able to enter into Italy towards the end of the war.⁵ Benito Mussolini also had particular interest in North Africa because he had a dream to rebuild the Roman Empire.⁶

Africa was especially vital to the Free French. The soon-to-be governor-general of French Equatorial Africa, Félix Adolphe Éboué (a black African), officially supported de Gaulle. The Free French were also supported in British West African colonies. From these locations, they were able to spread propaganda into Vichy controlled Africa encouraging Africans to revolt against Vichy and the Nazis and to join the Free French.⁷ Later, Charles de Gaulle set up a parliament in Algiers in June of 1943 allowing the Free French to connect with the territories and resources of most of the French Empire. This was an important development for the Free French and resulted in increased confidence in its ability to take back France. This, in turn, led to more people joining the Résistance within France and also to increased support from the United States.⁸

Besides its location, Africa was vital to Europe during the war because of its natural resources. African colonies provided raw materials that were used in European factories to produce products for the war. Africa also provided a significant portion of the labor to extract these resources and to manufacture them in both African and European factories. Africans

³ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War: report and papers of the symposium*, 10 (1985), 33.

⁴ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 71.

⁵ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 33.

⁶ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 56.

⁷ Ruth Ginio, "Marshal Petain Spoke to School Children: Vichy Propaganda in French West Africa, 1940-1943." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 33, no. 2 (2000), 294-95.

⁸ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 71-72.

were conscripted into this labor in the colonies and sent to France to work. Germans also forced African prisoners of war into labor during occupation.⁹

In addition to labor, Africans provided manpower to European nations in the form of military service. Colonials provided a significant percentage of the soldiers in French forces before the armistice between France and Germany.¹⁰ For example, nine percent of the French Army, 120,000 soldiers, was from French West and Equatorial Africa.¹¹ African soldiers were often stationed on the front lines¹² and were even said to have been better and braver fighters than their French counterparts.¹³ These soldiers, called *Tirailleurs*, were a mixture of conscripts and volunteers. The French had systems of conscription for military service and labor in its colonies. The most recent ones had been in place since the First World War and many of these had stayed active during times of peace.¹⁴ A number of other Africans joined the fight against Germany, and in defense of France, enthusiastically and willingly. Frantz Fanon, for example, voluntarily enlisted in the Free French forces in 1944 because he saw it as a universal fight for “human dignity and freedom.”¹⁵ Although Fanon’s view later changed as a result of his experiences during the war,¹⁶ other African veterans did not change their belief that they had fought for a just cause.¹⁷ In addition to the aforementioned reasons, there were soldiers who were motivated to enlist by the personal benefits a job as a soldier could offer, such as pay.¹⁸

⁹ Martin C. Thomas, "The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War, 1940-1944," *French Historical Studies* 25, no. 4 (Autumn 2002), 662-1.

¹⁰ Martin Thomas, "At the Heart of Things? French Imperial Defense Planning in the Late 1930s," *French Historical Studies* 21, no. 2 (Spring 1998), 16.

¹¹ Tony Chafer, "Forgotten Soldiers. African troops and the Liberation of France in the Second World War," *History Today* 58, no. 11 (November 2008), 1.

¹² Myron Echenberg, "'Morts Pour la France': The African Soldier in France During the Second World War," *The Journal of African History* 26, no. 4 (1985), 363.

¹³ John H. Morrow Jr., "Black Africans in World War II: The Soldiers' Stories," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 632 (November 2010), 15.

¹⁴ Thomas, "At the Heart of Things?," 332.

¹⁵ Jordan L. Cohen, "Cold War Nationalisms: Metropolitan Encounters, WWII, and the Politics of Frantz Fanon and Ho Chi Minh," *Yale Review of International Studies*, http://yris.yira.org/essays/658#_ftn42.

¹⁶ Cohen, "Cold War Nationalisms."

¹⁷ Echenberg, "'Morts Pour la France'," 379.

¹⁸ Echenberg, "'Morts Pour la France'," 365.

Having standing colonial armies was necessary for France as a consequence of the way its military was set up. The French metropolitan army was meant to serve in France and Europe alone while colonials made up most of the military in the colonies. The exception was Frenchmen who served at high ranking positions and were sent to serve mostly non-permanently as an act of service. While colonial armies could and were often sent to France and Europe to provide reinforcements to France's metropolitan army, the metropolitan army was not meant to be sent to the colonies to provide reinforcements for the defense of the colonies.¹⁹

Free France was reliant on soldiers from all of the French colonies (it was very popular in most of the colonies and many colonials volunteered to fight in the Free French Forces) but especially important were African colonial soldiers.²⁰ In his article *'Morts Pour la France': The African Soldier in France During the Second World War*, Myron Echenberg writes that "without the rank-and-file Black African Soldier, [The Free French] victories would have been impossible."²¹ The colonies not only provided significant resources and territory but also manpower to the Free French.

Besides the aforementioned reasons, African colonies were of particular importance to Vichy France because of what they symbolized for the defeated nation. France had managed to keep control of its colonies in the armistice agreement but in return, it had to reduce the size of its colonial armies and promise that the colonies would remain neutral.²² France's foreign lands were not only considered one of the few strategic and economic aspects France had left after its defeat at the hands of the Germans but it was also a source of consolation for

¹⁹ Thomas, "At the Heart of Things?", 332-333.

²⁰ Chafer, "Forgotten Soldiers," 1.

²¹ Echenberg, "Morts Pour la France," 379.

²² Ginio, "Marshal Petain Spoke to School Children," 292.

its wounded pride. France was occupied, but it had not lost its empire. The Vichy Regime had plans to use the colonies to rebuild France's prestige and power after the war.²³

Makeup of Africa and the Africa Soldier

To understand the experiences of Africans during the Second World War and how they were treated by Europeans, one must understand that race was, quite literally, not black and white. While the colonizer-colonized grouping was the most pronounced, within these two groups were hierarchal subcategories. French Africa was essentially split up into three regions: North Africa, West Africa, and South and Central Africa (including French Equatorial Africa). There was also the French colonies in the Caribbean which had significant numbers of blacks who had been brought there as slaves from the African continent.

At the top of the French colonial hierarchy were the *anciennes colonies*. This was a group of France's oldest colonies, mainly islands, which included Guadeloupe, Martinique, Réunion, French Guiana, and the *quatre communes* of Senegal. These colonies were considered more assimilated to French culture and, therefore, more advanced and civilized than the other colonies.²⁴ This hierarchy was adapted into the psyche of African colonials themselves. In his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon recalls how blacks from the Antilles identified more with white Europeans than they did with Black Africans. Fanon states, "when in school he [an Antillean child] has to read stories of savages told by white men, he always thinks of the Senegalese."²⁵ Fanon writes that this is "because the Antillean does not think of himself as a black man; he thinks of himself as an Antillean. The Negro lives in Africa."²⁶ African colonials adapted the racial stratifications that were imposed upon and taught to them by the French Empire into their own psyches.

²³ Ginio, "Marshal Petain Spoke to School Children," 293.

²⁴ Ruth Ginio, "Vichy Rule in French West Africa: Prelude to Decolonization?" *French Colonial History* 4 (2003), 220.

²⁵ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, New York: Grove Press, 1967, 114.

²⁶ Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 114.

North Africans were next in this hierarchy. They tended to be Arab and have lighter skin than other Africans. In his article for Unesco's "Africa and the Second World War" report, C.-R. Ageron writes that "North Africa was considered by the French and most Europeans as an extension of France and the jewel of her Empire."²⁷ Algeria was unique in that it was legally not a colony (and not considered as such by French people), but a part of France.²⁸ It was valuable territory, especially during the Second World War. Vichy, the Free French, and even the Nazis competed for its support. Also, North Africa held stronger and more organized independence sentiments than the other colonies. The Maghrib Arabs, located primarily in Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria, had distinct cultural pride and unity perhaps due to their following of Islam and use of the Arabic language, and the Germans recognized this.²⁹ They criticized French secularism and used the Arabic language for propaganda in an attempt to win over North African prisoners of war.³⁰

North Africans felt separate from, and superior to, other Africans since before colonialism. For example, West African adaptations of Islam involved incorporating local traditional religions into their practices. This was seen as barbaric by North Africans who tended to be more strict observers. These sentiments are evident in the way that Ibn Battuta writes about West Africa in his travel journals from the mid-1300s.³¹

West Africans and South and Central Africans were darker skinned and tended to be less likely to adapt European culture. West Africans were perhaps considered higher up than those of South and Central Africa because of their greater importance in the war due to their location and soldier contributions. Early French West African colonies, such as Senegal, did

²⁷ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 37.

²⁸ David Scott Bell, *Presidential Power in Fifth Republic France*, Berg Publishers, 2000, p. 36.

²⁹ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 37-49.

³⁰ Thomas, "The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War," 670-674.

³¹ Bartel, Nick. "Ibn Battuta's Trip: Chapter 12 Journey to West Africa 1351 - 1353." U. C. Berkeley. <http://ibnbattuta.berkeley.edu/12westafrica.html>

hold a more prestigious position but, as Fanon indicates, were still considered below Caribbean and North African colonies.

Within each French colony, the people were further split up into an upper and lower class. People of the upper class were wealthy, urban, and European educated. They spoke French, wore French clothes, and practiced other aspects of French culture. These Africans were called *évolués*, meaning “evolved.” Some elite Africans were granted French citizenship and lived and worked in France. The lower class tended to be rural farmers who had little access to education and maintained much of their own culture and language.³²

European Treatment of Africans

Under the Vichy Regime, Africans experienced noticeably more discrimination than they experienced under the Third Republic from both the government and French citizens. In her article “Vichy Rule in French West Africa: Prelude to Decolonization?”, Ruth Ginio characterizes the change in treatment of Africans under Vichy when she describes a situation in which a beach that had previously been understood to be only for whites was officially marked as “a whites only beach.” The Vichy Regime, Ginio says, “did not invent racism; it just put a sign on it.”³³ Whereas the French Third Republic had used language of assimilation, brotherhood, and unity in empire while actually practicing discrimination and inequality, the Vichy Regime continued the same practices but changed its language and articulated values. Vichy France was overtly and unapologetically racist. They made laws regulating black and white interactions, and expressed a disbelief in assimilation and in granting citizenship to Africans. They also treated upper class, more culturally French Africans the same as other Africans. Social stratification came to be based solely on only a person’s skin color rather than their perceived French-ness or African-ness. During the war,

³²Thomas, “The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War,” 684.

³³ Ginio, “Vichy Rule in French West Africa,” 217-218.

Africans in France and in Africa experienced shortages and economic hardship that were made worse by French policies granting Europeans higher rations of food and other goods.³⁴

Under the Vichy Regime individual citizens also felt freer to express overt racial discrimination than they did under the Third Republic due to the changed social dynamics created by the Vichy government and Nazi occupation. However, not all French adapted the new regime's attitude and many still expressed belief in the Third Republic's attitude of assimilation, unity, and brotherhood within the French Empire.³⁵

African soldiers felt abandoned and betrayed by France after it fell to Germany. The Vichy administration did little to help or support African POWs and noticeably prioritized French POWs. Policies, such as one that stated soldiers with larger families were to be released first, were only applied to French soldiers. In July of 1941 the government negotiated for the release of "white race" POWs.³⁶ While the Vichy government did try to appease North African POWs more by giving out Korans and Muslim calendars, North Africans were grouped in with other Africans when it came to racial policies such as the aforementioned prisoner releases. Vichy attempts to win over North Africans reflected a fear of the radicalization and politicization of this group of soldiers rather than any kind of favored feeling towards them. The Vichy administration mistrusted African soldiers and their loyalty to France, as was demonstrated by French surveillance of African POWs.³⁷ In the end, the Vichy government resorted to force and tight control in its dealings with African soldiers.³⁸

The Nazis also attempted to win the loyalty of North Africans and North African POWs. As previously mentioned, they appealed to the religion of North Africans and criticized French secularism. Nazi propaganda in prisons included newspapers and radio

³⁴ Ginio, "Vichy Rule in French West Africa," 218.

³⁵ Ginio, "Vichy Rule in French West Africa," 215-218.

³⁶ Thomas, "The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War," 666.

³⁷ Thomas, "The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War," 666-669.

³⁸ Thomas, "The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War."

broadcasts that were written and recorded in Arabic and which combined Nazi propaganda with things that were thought to be appealing to the prisoners, such as Koran passages. The Germans also criticized the French for favoring European soldiers and not grouping North Africans with white French soldiers. Germans exploited other grievances of POWs, including POWs' feelings of abandonment by the French as well as French and British imperialism. They mocked the attempts of African colonials from other regions to assimilate and integrate into the French Empire (as mentioned above, North Africans were less likely to adapt French culture). German and Vichy favoring of North African POWs lead to racial divisions and animosity among the POWs. Other African and Indochinese POWs resented North African POWs because of their favored treatment. However, only a small number of POWs actually collaborated with the Nazis.³⁹

Nazi attempts to win over North African POWs were most successful among Algerians and Tunisians. The majority of Tunisian POWs had been drafted into service. Furthermore, there were active independence movements in Tunisia in the years immediately before the outbreak of WWII. These movements had been violently suppressed by the French. The defeat of France was celebrated by Tunisians who saw it as the fall of their enemy and a chance for independence. Nazi propaganda was accepted within Tunisia as well as among Tunisian POWs. When German-Italian authorities occupied Tunisia, they released leaders of national movements who had recently been sentenced to imprisonment by French authorities. While one Tunisian leader warned of the foolishness of thinking that independence would come from Italians or Germans, arguing for the support of the Allies who were most likely to be victorious, the majority of Tunisians supported the Axis simply because they were the enemy of France.⁴⁰

³⁹ Thomas, "The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War," 670-674.

⁴⁰ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 38-39.

Germany was also popular in Algeria. Algerians were not very concerned with assimilation into French culture and the French Empire. They had strong desires for independence and German defeat of France brought hope that Germany would free Algeria from colonialism. These ideas were encouraged by Nazi propaganda. Algerians used this time of weakness in the French Empire to challenge the authority of the French colonizers and to push for rights, power, and freedom.⁴¹

On the other hand, independence sentiments were not very common in Morocco before or during the war.⁴² Also, Moroccan soldiers were often career soldiers of the Armée d'Afrique. They were loyal to the French army and had been fighting as a part of it for years. Therefore, Moroccan soldiers responded to German propaganda and Nazi attempts to recruit them with hostility.⁴³

An interesting point about Vichy and German propaganda is that, while anti-Semitic laws were enforced in the colonies and anti-Semitic propaganda was spread in Arab, northern Africa, it was deliberately left out of propaganda meant for Africans of other regions. For example, Nazi anti-Semitic films were banned in West Africa. German and French officials were worried that Africans would not be able to tell the difference between two groups of whites. They feared that any assertion of the inferiority of one white group would be understood by black Africans to be the inferiority of the entire white race.⁴⁴ The Allies used the extreme racism of Nazism to try to win Africans to their side. For example, they used excerpts from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* that expressed racist views towards blacks to try to convince Africans to support the Allies and fight the Germans.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 45-47.

⁴² Unesco, *Africa and the Second World War*, 40-41.

⁴³ Thomas, "The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War," 671.

⁴⁴ Ginio, "Marshal Petain Spoke to School Children," 304.

⁴⁵ Ginio, "Marshal Petain Spoke to School Children," 308.

Africans were often sent to the front lines during the initial German invasion. They said they felt like they had been “cannon fodder” for the French army.⁴⁶ Both Vichy France and the Free French had to be forced by protests and veteran unrest to give owed pensions and recognition to African veterans.⁴⁷ The French did experiment with integrated forces in WWII.⁴⁸ In his aforementioned article, Echenberg found that writings of French soldiers who fought alongside Africans were more or less free of racial hatred towards the colonial soldiers. French soldiers expressed curiosity towards African soldiers. Though the soldiers expressed disapproval of the integration of forces, their anger tended to be directed at the army administration rather than the African soldiers.⁴⁹ This does not, however, mean that African soldiers were treated as equals by the French soldiers. The French soldiers could have still viewed Africans as inferior, and even subhuman, without feeling hatred towards them.

French defense planning before the war was focused on mainland France. Defense planning for the colonies was poorly organized, poorly funded, and largely ignored. The pre-war French government did not give the administrators responsible for colonial defense planning enough funding or authority for them to be effective. Government planners did not want to stretch already scarce French military supplies and men with colonial protection. Colonial defense was also rejected simply because the French government was scrambling to fortify itself against European enemies and did not have time to consider its colonies before the war began.⁵⁰

As mentioned earlier, African soldiers were known for their brave fighting and unwillingness to give up. This is attributed to their desire to prove themselves and their race as equal to Europeans and loyal to the French Empire. However, it was also because African

⁴⁶ Thomas, “The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War,” 668.

⁴⁷ Chafer, “Forgotten Soldiers.”

⁴⁸ Echenberg, “Morts Pour la France!,” 368.

⁴⁹ Echenberg, “Morts Pour la France!,” 368.

⁵⁰ Thomas, “At the Heart of Things?”

soldiers knew that if they were caught by the Nazis, they were likely to be treated brutally and killed. Germans treated black African soldiers more harshly than European and Arab Africans. There are numerous cases of black soldiers being casually shot or entire groups of survivors being executed after capture. Germans despised the use of African soldiers by the French. They thought that the European war should be fought by Europeans and that Africans had no place in it. African soldiers were characterized as brutal and barbaric. Germans were bitter that the Africans were so hard to defeat and that it cost them so much to subdue African units. When African soldiers were stationed in Germany at the end of the World War I, the Germans saw this as a terrible insult. Rumors were spread saying that the African soldiers were cruel and were even sexually assaulting German women. Although there was no evidence of this, the French had to remove African soldiers from Germany because the protest from the German population was so strong.⁵¹

Despite the vital role Africans had played in the success of the Free French, General De Gaulle, with the support of the Allies, decided to relieve all African soldiers of their duty and replace them with white French soldiers just before the liberation of France. De Gaulle wanted the forces that liberated France to be Frenchmen. This would provide increased morale for the French people whose pride had been hurt by German defeat. Due to limited resources, he could only add more French soldiers by removing African ones first. This process was called *blanchissement* or “whitening.” DeGaulle justified this action with the claim that Africans were not accustomed to the European winter and so should be relieved from the front like they were during World War I. However, the soldiers who were removed without warning had been fighting in the Free French army for years, including during the winters. De Gaulle denied them a role in the victory even though they had been carrying the

⁵¹ Echenberg, “‘Morts Pour la France’,” 368-371.

Free French forces throughout most of the war.⁵² Also in line with this thinking, De Gaulle downplayed the role the colonies played in the liberation and exaggerated the significance of the Resistance within France after the war had ended.⁵³

African soldiers relieved of their duty and released or escaped soldiers from POW camps were largely left on their own in France. Officials provided little support to ex-soldiers stuck in occupied France. At the end of the war, African soldiers were encouraged to leave and large groups of them were kept in camps while they waited to be sent back to their home countries. Africans kept in these camps lived in poor conditions and had little access to supplies. Administrators treated them in an authoritarian manner and with mistrust. The soldiers were kept in the camps for long periods of time because space on ships was difficult to procure. However, as the soldiers pointed out, there was no problem finding ships to take African soldiers to France before and during the war, just to bring them home after it had ended.⁵⁴ Some soldiers escaped this when they were housed and cared for by French families they had befriended.⁵⁵ The conditions of these camps, along with other grievances of the African soldiers at the hands of the French, resulted in soldier rebellions, which were harshly put down. An example of this is the uprising near Dakar at the Thiaroye barracks where thirty-five African soldiers were killed, around thirty-five severely wounded, and hundreds of others suffered from various injuries. People all over West Africa heard about, and were angered by, the events at Thiaroye. The Thiaroye massacre is one of the more extreme cases but it reflects the French authority's mistrust, fear, and disregard of African soldiers.⁵⁶

African Perspectives and How These Perspectives Were Affected by WWII

The ways in which Africans reacted to these circumstances and structures was diverse. Some believed in the French Empire and its ideals, motivating them to fight and help

⁵² Echenberg, "Morts Pour la France," 373-374.

⁵³ Echenberg, "Morts Pour la France," 379.

⁵⁴ Echenberg, "Morts Pour la France," 373-375.

⁵⁵ Echenberg, "Morts Pour la France," 377.

⁵⁶ Echenberg, "Morts Pour la France," 376-77.

protect France from German aggression. Although they may have suffered disillusionment from the Vichy Regime's policies, they believed it was an outcome of German occupation and the wartime regime, not the French Empire showing its true character in a time of difficulty. Many African veterans of World War II continued to believe in the French Empire throughout, and after the war, especially after pension and recognition disputes were resolved.

Others, such as Frantz Fanon, were disillusioned by their wartime experiences. They joined the fight in order to protect a government and society they felt was their own. However, when the war brought them into closer contact with that society, they realized that it would never fully accept them because of the color of their skin. The irony that African soldiers had fought to protect and to free an empire from the very grievances that same empire was inflicting on them and their people was not lost on African societies. This was especially bitter when African soldiers returned home to colonial rule that was largely unchanged. Soldiers had thought that proving their loyalty to France and their equality to white Frenchmen through valiant fighting would result in France treating them with equality and respect. The war left many African soldiers feeling disconnected from and abused by the French Empire. Contrary to feeling like they had defended freedom and humanity, many felt they had suffered through a European war that had little to do with them.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's popular novel *Weep Not, Child* expresses many of these disillusioned sentiments. Although Thiong'o is a Kenyan author and his novel is about British controlled, post-WWII Kenya, it explores many questions that were universal to the African colonies after the war. Thiong'o shows what life was like for many repatriated soldiers in colonial Africa. One of his characters is a veteran of the war who is bitter about the sacrifices he made, and the brother he lost, fighting for the very Europeans that continue to mistreat him and his family. He joins the Land and Freedom Army, a peasant uprising against colonial

rule. Thiong'o writes that this character "drank a lot and he was always sad and withdrawn. He never talked much about his war experiences except when he was drunk or when he was in a mood of resentment against the government and settlers. 'We fought for them, we fought to save them from the hands of their white brothers.'"⁵⁷ This shows the circumstances and mindset of colonial veterans that contributed to many of them being involved in resistance to colonialism in the postwar years.

Other Africans did not need the war to realize the separation between French and African society. Many Africans viewed the fall of France as the fall of their oppressors, not as a victory for fascism or a loss for democracy. A simplistic view of the war was less applicable to colonized peoples who would have no democracy regardless of who won. Thiong'o expresses this view in his book when one rural woman shows disconnection from the war and its contending sides when reflecting on the death of her son who was killed in combat. Thiong'o writes "why should he have died in a white man's war? She did not want to sacrifice what was hers to other people."⁵⁸ This expresses how some Africans did not feel attachment or responsibility for the "world" war. They saw it as a European war, not a universal war.

Weep Not, Child includes the complex gender dynamics of colonialism. European dominance of African society and, in turn, European men threatened African men's role in society as the protector and provider. Colonial emasculation was even harder for African men to accept after they had proven themselves and their masculinity during the war. The father character of the novel is judged by his son, who fought in WWII, for not doing more to resist colonialism and protect his family from arrests and harassment. The father's authority is undermined by colonial domination.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Weep Not, Child*. New York: Penguin Books, 2012, 21.

⁵⁸ Thiong'o, *Weep Not, Child*, 16.

⁵⁹ Thiong'o, *Weep Not, Child*.

Africans struggled with race and gender during this time period. The vast majority of Africans living in France were men. Therefore, most of these transplants had white wives and children of mixed race. This created conflict and confusion within circles that embraced *Négritude*. Ideally, a black man should have a black wife and a black family. He should think that black women are beautiful and should preserve his blackness, not try to be white by having a white family. However, Léopold Senghor, the founder of *Négritude*, had a white wife.⁶⁰ Fanon dedicates two chapters of his book *Black Skin White Masks* to the topic of interracial sexual relations; “The Woman of Color and the White Man” and “The Man of Color and the White Woman.” Fanon states that a black man having sexual relations with a white woman is a way for him to “grasp white civilization and dignity and make them [his].” Fanon argues that a black man seeks out a white woman in order to make himself white. It is an attempt to escape the degradation that colonialism had attached to blackness.⁶¹ Fanon’s theory, however, is more simplistic than the complex situations and relationships of people. A black man in France often did not marry a black woman simply because there were very few black women in France.

World War II not only changed African views of Empire but also of race. During the war, many Africans had closer contact with Europeans than they had ever had before. Soldiers fighting in Europe alongside white Europeans realized that Europeans were not superior to the Africans. They saw the diversity of Europeans, making Europeans more human. They saw Europeans feel fear, pain, sadness, and horror. African soldiers befriended white men, fought with white men, saved white men, killed white men, and slept with white women.

Meanwhile, there was an increase of French soldiers in the Antilles. These Frenchmen treated the Antillean people as inferiors. This disappointed the elite of the islands who had

⁶⁰ Jennifer Boittin, “Black in France: The Language and Politics of Race in the Late Third Republic,” *French Politics, Culture & Society* 27, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 33-34.

⁶¹ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 41-82.

considered themselves more or less equal to white Frenchmen.⁶² Elites all over the French Empire came to realize that acceptance via assimilation was impossible and they would always be considered inferior because of their skin color.⁶³ As a result, Africans embraced their African heritage and appearances which ultimately led to the creation of movements such as *Négritude*, that asserted the worth of, and pride in, blackness, Africa, and African culture.⁶⁴ Although these ideas were in existence independently of, and prior to, the war, the war had a significant role in uprooting internalized feelings of racial inferiority that was felt by many Africans.

The discriminatory treatment Africans received at the hands of the French government, despite the sacrifices they made for France, also contributed to African disillusionment. In the end, many Africans gave up hope not only of assimilation but also of political equality within the empire. The war convinced Africans that the only answer to their grievances was complete severance from imperial rule. This change in attitude is succinctly expressed by Thing'o's novel when a child says about the Land and Freedom Army, "I too would like to fight. I would love to carry a big gun like my father used to do in the big war when he fought for the British. Now I would be fighting for the black folk"⁶⁵ which is answered to by other boys with "hurrah and victory for the black folk!"⁶⁶ Many independence movements occurred in the postwar years and WWII veterans, utilizing the military training and experience they had gained, were major leaders and participants.

World War II exposed a hypocrisy and inconsistency in republican Europe's democratic principles. One of the grievances against the Nazis was their infringement on other nation's sovereignty. It was hard for European colonial powers to justify their own imperialism when they had spent the war condemning Germany for its infringement on other

⁶²Cohen, "Cold War Nationalisms."

⁶³ Cohen, "Cold War Nationalisms."

⁶⁴ Boittin, "Black in France," 23-46.

⁶⁵ Thiong'o, *Weep Not Child*, 80.

⁶⁶ Thiong'o, *Weep Not Child*, 80.

nations' sovereignty. The third clause of the Atlantic Charter, signed by the U.S. and Britain, specifically articulates a support of democracy stating that the signers "Respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."⁶⁷

This is what led the French colonies to adopt a more paternalistic state. Schools, besides some set up earlier by missionaries, and development projects in Africa were all put in place after the Second World War in an attempt to justify continued European occupation. French colonials wanted to rebrand their own colonialism as humanitarian aid in order to separate it from the image of German expansionism. Many Africans saw through these attempts. Development projects were created and carried out by European officials who had little understanding of local needs. This often resulted in projects being useless, or even harmful, to local communities. Fanon wrote in *The Wretched of the Earth* his belief that because France and other imperial nations were not willing to be charitable to the impoverished of their own nations, they would not help the people of their colonies. He states that:

There is no use in wasting time repeating that hunger with dignity is preferable to bread eaten in slavery. On the contrary, we must become convinced that colonialism is incapable of procuring for the colonized peoples the material conditions which might make them forget their concern for dignity.⁶⁸

Fanon states that European powers had been shown to resort to the brute force, characteristic of prewar colonialism, when humanitarian propaganda failed to pacify their colonies.⁶⁹

African exposure to white European racism towards other white Europeans was also significant. France, again, looked hypocritical when they condemned Nazi racist ideology because France had asserted their own superiority over black and brown people. Many

⁶⁷ The Avalon Project of Yale Law School, "Atlantic Charter," <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp>.

⁶⁸ Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York: Grove Press, 207-208

⁶⁹ Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York: Grove Press, 207-208.

Africans saw parallels between Nazi racism and Nazi treatment of Jewish people and their own treatment at the hands of the French. Jean-Paul Satre, a French writer, acknowledges the hypocrisy of his own people in his preface to *Wretched of the Earth*. Satre writes “chatter, chatter: liberty, equality, fraternity, love, honor, patriotism, and what have you. All this did not prevent us from making anti-racial speeches about dirty niggers, dirty Jews, and dirty Arabs.”⁷⁰

Aimé Césaire, a writer and politician from Martinique, wrote in his book, *Decolonizing the Mind*, that Nazism was essentially Western colonialism only Europeans were colonized this time instead of non-European peoples. He argues that French justification of their own colonies is what allowed Hitler and the Nazi party to carry out, what he saw as, an extreme version of the racial ideology of France, Britain and other imperialist European nations.⁷¹ Fanon agrees with Césaire and quotes Césaire in *Black Skin, White Masks*:

When I turn on my radio, when I hear that Negroes have been lynched in America, I say that we have been lied to: Hitler is not dead; when I turn on my radio, when I learn that Jews have been insulted, mistreated, persecuted, I say that we have been lied to: Hitler is not dead; when, finally, I turn on my radio and hear that in Africa forced labor has been inaugurated and legalized, I say that we have certainly been lied to: Hitler is not dead.

This quotation also shows how Africans began to see themselves and other oppressed people in the same light. Léopold Senghor accredited his time in German POW camps as a major factor in his development of *Négritude* ideology which saw all blacks as brothers. Thomas, however, notes that the records of conflicts between POWs based on race and class lines shows that not every African felt this way.⁷² Also, many of the same soldiers who fought in World War II volunteered to fight for the French in postwar decolonization conflicts in Algeria and Indochina but the reasons and motives for this would be relevant to examine.⁷³

For example, did African men enlist for need of a job instead of on principle? It is hard to tell

⁷⁰ Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 26

⁷¹ Cohen, “Cold War Nationalisms.”

⁷² Thomas, “The Vichy Government and French Colonial Prisoners of War,” 684.

⁷³ Chafer, “Forgotten Soldiers.”

how many Africans were disillusioned with the French by wartime experiences. There are few firsthand accounts from Africans partly due to illiteracy. That being said, the popularity of figures such as Fanon and Césaire in Africa as writers and politicians could be indicative of their resonance with the greater population.

Conclusion

The people of African colonies had their own interests and agendas during the war. Discontent with colonialism influenced how Africans reacted to France's fall to Germany. Some people welcomed Germany as liberators because they thought that Germany would free them from colonialism. Others supported France with the hope that proving themselves loyal and able members of the French Empire would result in France giving colonized people equal status within the empire. Still others saw the war as a European conflict that did not and should not concern them.

African soldiers also had varied experiences. Most soldiers were conscripted but many enlisted. They felt loyalty and love for France and/or believed in the Allied cause and wanted to stop the Axis powers. Some soldiers continued to believe in the French Empire after the war and some even voluntarily fought for France in Algerian and Indochina wars for independence. Disillusionment, nonetheless, was common in soldiers by the end of the war and many WWII veterans played influential roles in postwar independence movements.

The African experience of the Second World War varied greatly according to factors such as the region and class a person was from. A racial and economic hierarchy existed within the African colonies and this hierarchy was enforced by both Europeans and Africans. That being said, the increased interactions between French and Africans during the war altered the consciousness of colonized people as a whole when these interactions exposed the unyielding nature of the Empire's black-white dichotomy. French Africans found that no matter how light their skin was, what colony they were from, or how loyally they stood

behind France during the war, they were still treated as inferiors by the French Government. The Second World War weakened the French Empire not only militarily and economically, but also ideologically. Nazi expansionism bared uneasy similarities to European imperialism, and Ally condemnation of Germany exposed the hypocrisy of these nations. This lead to France attempting to distance its colonialism from Nazi expansionism by reshaping it as development aid. However, the development projects largely failed, discontent with colonial rule continued, and France eventually had to give into colonial demands for independence.

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Bleeding Kansas: The Fight for Political Rights

Author: Kevin Cunningham

In October 1855, James H. Lane, a native Indiana Democrat who converted to the Free Soil Party, gave a speech at Franklin, Kansas. Lane compared the free-state resistance to the territorial government to the patriot's struggle against the British Crown. During his declaration, Lane drew on his great disgust for the desecration of the ballot box and forging of votes by Missourians during the 1855 territorial legislative election. He called for the election of delegates to a new, free-state constitutional convention that would be held in Topeka, Kansas to protect the republican beliefs of free land and free labor for the inhabitants of the territory. However, Lane only envisioned these rights for whites.¹ During the summer of 1856, when a black man endeavored to join his guerrilla army, Lane commanded him to return back to his master, asserting, "We were not fighting to free black men but to free white men."² Many of Lane's contemporaries agreed with him. One of the first settlers to inhabit the newly opened territory, Charles Robinson, a physician from Massachusetts, delivered a speech on July 4, 1855. In front of a large crowd, Robinson soberly denounced the territorial government, "We must not only see black slavery...planted in our midst, and against our wishes, but we must become slaves ourselves."³

Charles Robinson and James Lane both felt that their own political rights had been violated. This set of tried and true fighting words shows that both men abhorred the thought of slavery and saw the institution as a threat to their own freedoms. Thus, the northern free-state men in the Kansas Territory looked to protect their own republican rights to the land and sought

¹ *New York Times*, October 22, 1855

² Nichole Etcheson, "James H. Lane: Radical Conservative, Conservative Radical", *John Brown to Bob Dole: Movers and Shakers in Kansas History*, ed. Virgil Dean (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 41.

³ (Lawrence) *Herald of Freedom*, July 7, 1855.

to expel the institution of slavery from the area to ensure their rights were protected. Ironically, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 wanted to expand the political liberties of the white men within the territory by giving them the authority at the local level to speak on the most quarrelsome issue of the time, black slavery. Popular sovereignty, the principle of the Kansas Bill, sought to expand the personal freedom of people living within the Kansas Territory by permitting them to vote on the existence of slavery in the territory—the contradictory ideas of freedom and slavery met in the Kansas Theater.

The American people of the antebellum period called the summer of 1856 Bleeding Kansas as a civil war erupted in Kansas. The conflict began with the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 and progressed into the bloody border wars of the national Civil War. Many historical analyses of Bleeding Kansas have focused predominantly on black slavery. These accounts have asserted that the inhabitants of Kansas were deeply rooted in the institution of black slavery, whether the settlers were a supporter or foe. Many accounts on the 1850s have treated Kansas as one of the numerous slavery-related issues that deepened the gap between North and South and brought on the Civil War. On the other hand, other works have stressed the absence of slaves in the territory shedding very little light on the racial feelings of the settlers; instead, they have claimed that the real concern of the settlers during the period were economic. More recent works have looked to address the frontier people's ideology of republicanism and show that what many of the white northerners were fighting for their right to represent themselves at the ballot box and protect their republican rights through the democratic process of voting.⁴

⁴ Alice Nichols, *Bleeding Kansas* (New York, 1954) emphasizes the quarrel over slavery and has been the standard explanation of events in Kansas. James A. Rawley, *Race and Politics: "Bleeding Kansas" and the Coming of the Civil War* (Lincoln, 1969), focuses on race and argues that race was the central issue in the debates over Kansas. Rawley declares that blacks were not wanted in the Kansas Territory whether they were free or slave. Paul Wallace Gates, *Fifty Million Acres: Conflicts over Kansas Land Policy, 1854-1900* (Ithaca, 1954), insists that disputes over land, rather than slavery or race, were essential to the problems in the territory of Kansas.

This essay focuses on Robinson and Lane's major concern, the political liberties of whites, as a critical component to understanding the meaning of Bleeding Kansas. Unlike Nicole Etchenson, who states in her book, *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era*, that free-state northerners were fighting to protect the ballot box and their right to vote, I will argue that the men in the Kansas Territory sought to protect their rights to land claims and their ability to freely work the earth. What Etchenson argues is an issue which does not arise until the fraudulent elections of 1855; therefore, I believe that the men in the Kansas Territory were fighting for the control of the land and the ability to successfully till it so that they could claim it as their own.

Each group, the free-state North and the proslavery South, based their beliefs on the Revolutionary principles of *liberty* and *freedom*. These terms have been used extensively throughout the history of the United States, and have been subject to a wide-range of definitions that are not always universally applicable.⁵ Bleeding Kansas shows that northerners and southerners drew drastically different interpretations about the significance of the Revolution, and about the nature of U.S. nationalism. The North and South had imagined different societies

The political problems of the Democratic Party in Kansas are the main focus of David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis 1848-1861* (New York, 1976). Roy Nichols, *The Disruption of American Democracy* (New York, 1948); and William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852-1856* (New York, 1987) examine political realignments of the period through the breakdown of the second party system and the rise of the third. Eric Foner, *Free Labor, Free Soil, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York, 1970); and his other book, *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), credit a northern belief in the superiority of a free labor economy and society with motivating northern opposition to the expansion of slavery into new territories. Michael Morison, *American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) examines the political language of the antebellum period and focuses on the term liberty. Nicole Etchenson, *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era* (Topeka: University Press of Kansas, 2004) addresses the political ideologies of both the Northern free state party and Southern pro-slave members and discusses their thoughts of liberty and freedom. Through her explanation, Etcheson focuses on the ballot box as the distinguishing feature that allows both sides to seek freedom and ultimately brings bloodshed within the territory.

⁵ Harry V. Jaffa, *Equality and Liberty: Theory and Practice in American Politics* (New York, 1965), 47; Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge, 1988), 14; Etchenson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 4.

based on Revolutionary republican principles. The conflict in Kansas served to make clear the differences between those communities, and disputed the meaning of liberty in a slave-holding republic. Free-staters imagined a republic of white men while proslavery men envisioned a republic of slave owners.

If free-state northerners felt little compassion for the woe of black slaves, why were they so passionately opposed to the expansion of slavery? Free-staters viewed the proslavery party as part of the Slave Power which sought to remove all Americans of their political liberties in order to expand slavery; southerners saw the free-state movement as part of the advancing masses of abolitionists. Thus, the free-state northerners felt that their rights were violated by any region that slavery occupied or sought to expand into and looked to protect their right to freely work the land as free men.⁶ Free-state men, then, collaborated with abolitionists to protect the Kansas Territory from the expansion of slavery to ensure the rights of all white men to work their land and expand the yeoman economy. The two opposing views of the North and the South led to land speculation, land squatting, threats to remove others from their land and ultimately worsened into violence. To show this, I will first give a further explanation of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and how it came to be. After, I will look at the initial settling of Kansas and why settlers came to the land. Finally, I will examine how the violence within the Kansas Territory erupted and caused what is now known as ‘Bleeding Kansas’.

Stephen Douglas and His Bill

⁶ When addressing the term “free men” or “free labor” I am referring to the early Jeffersonian principle of a man being able to work their own land, educate themselves on their labors and be seen as a free man due to the labor and work that they have done on their plot of land. For more on the yeoman and the virtues of the republican idealism see for example, Drew R. McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, northern cities began to grow exponentially due to manufacturing production and southern planters sought new and innovative ways to transport their cash crop, cotton. Locomotive designer and builder, Asa Whitney, suggested building a railway from Chicago to California: “[the railroad line] would bring all our immensely wide-spread population together as one vast city; the moral and social effects of which must harmonize all together as one family, which but one interest—the general good of all.”⁷ Other, more southern, routes were also recommended. In 1853, President Franklin Pierce sent South Carolinian and railroad executive James Gadsden to survey a southern route. On his venture, Gadsden acquired a 55,000 square mile piece of land from the Mexican government for 15 million U.S. dollars for the construction of a southern railroad route.⁸ The Gadsden Purchase was signed in December 1853 and was sent to Washington for discussion. Free-soil and Whig senators immediately opposed the treaty because of their fear of purchasing more land that supported the institution of slavery. Both Whitney and Gadsden proposed plausible routes for a transcontinental railroad; the problem was that either route would face disputes due to geographical location. The idea of building a transcontinental railroad was well-received in Washington—the problem was finding a line that would appease both southern slaveholders and northern free-soilers.

One northern Democrat, Stephen A. Douglas, a powerful Senator from Illinois who helped organize the Compromise of 1850, desired to have the transcontinental Railroad line link Chicago to the Pacific. Douglas became frustrated since vast stretches of land between Chicago and California remained unorganized. Thus, to legally be able to construct the railroad on this property, Douglas needed to create a bill that deemed the unorganized region a territory so that it

⁷ Paul Calore, *Causes of The Civil War: The Political, Cultural, Economic and Territorial Disputes Between North and South* (Jefferson N.C.: McFarland & Company, inc., 2008), 207.

⁸ Ibid, 213.

could legally be under the control of the United States Congress.⁹ An even greater challenge that Douglas faced in order to achieve his goal of having a northern railway was: how was he going to receive the support of southern Senators to enact this plan? The territory was above the 36 30' line and fell under the jurisdiction of the Compromise of 1820 which prohibited slavery within the Louisiana Territory. In other words, slavery was “forever prohibited” above this line.

Then, in 1854, Douglas presented a bill that would be appetizing to the South and called for the citizens of the new territory to decide the question of slavery within the region—popular sovereignty. The inherent principles of popular sovereignty would allow people, rather than federal government officials, to dictate the slavery question within the Nebraska Territory. He famously claimed to “care not” if the settlers in the new territories voted for or against slavery as long as “the tide of immigration and civilization” continued to roll onward.¹⁰ The bill explicitly stated that this decision would not be carried out until *after* territorial stage. In other words, the slavery question would not be solved in the territory until the area applied for statehood and stated in a written constitution if the region supported or abolished slavery. Southerners found popular sovereignty easy to accept. The inclusion of popular sovereignty in the Kansas bill opened lands that had been formerly closed to slavery and gave southerners hope that slavery might be able to expand farther westward.¹¹

⁹ To legally construct a railway on this property, Douglas had to create a bill that would put the land under the control of the government. Since Congress oversees all United States territories, Douglas had to create a bill that would organize this land and establish property rights for settlers. Thus, this bill not only created an organized territory, but it removed all previous claims of the land from Indians and other settlers in an endeavor to construct a railroad. Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 155; Foner, *Politics and Ideology*, 45-49; Calore, *The Causes of the Civil War*, 212-215; For more on property rights see for example, Thomas Skidmore, *Rights of Man to Property* (New York, 1829).

¹⁰ Jonathan Earle, “John Brown of Osawatomie” in *John Brown to Bob Dole: Movers and Shakers in Kansas History*, ed. Virgil Dean (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2006), 27; Michael Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1997); Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 21.

¹¹ Alexander H. Stephens to W.W. Burwell, May 7, 1854

Popular sovereignty had precedents. Douglas saw the success that the idea had in the territories of Utah and New Mexico and looked to once again establish it in the Kansas Territory. However, Douglas had his own agenda as he looked to appease both his own state as well as southern Democrats to help his cause for the Presidential nomination in the upcoming 1856 election. He believed that producing a bill that promoted the choice for the citizens of the Kansas Territory to decide the existence of slavery within the territory and promote the economic growth of his home state of Illinois.¹²

Douglas added another piece to this bill that interested both sides. The bill split the entire Nebraska Territory into two territories, the Kansas Territory and a Nebraska Territory. Douglas was naive when he remarked to a close friend that he did not believe that slavery would manifest in either of the new territories because of their soil quality. Other politicians began to see the possible outcome, Kansas as a slave state and Nebraska would remain free.¹³ However, the rural space of the Kansas Territory could not be decided by the government; instead, it would be decided by the settlers who sought to impose order.

After months of deliberation within both the House of Representatives and the Senate, Franklin Pierce signed the Kansas-Nebraska Act into law on May 30, 1854. The bill nullified the Missouri Compromise and allowed for the expansion of slavery beyond the 36 30' parallel and within the Louisiana Territory. The "Act to Organize the Territories of Nebraska and Kansas" further fractured the Democratic Party, dismembered the Whigs, and initiated the new beginnings of a new national party, the Republican Party.¹⁴

¹² Gerald M Capers, *Stephen A. Douglas: Defender of the Union* (Boston, 1959) 87-95; Wunder and Ross, *Nebraska Act of 1854*, 138-139.

¹³ Dean, *John Brown to Bob Dole*, "Introduction", 3.

¹⁴ Carole, *Causes of the Civil War*, 217-219.

The new national party was against the bill and saw it as a means of prevention to the dignity and opportunities of the laboring man. The dynamic, expanding capitalist society, gathered around the new party. As Carl Schurz said in Philadelphia in 1865, “The great idea and basis of the Republican party, as I understand it, is free labor.”¹⁵ The dignity of the laboring class in the North became a major theme of the time as Republicans looked to expand westward and allow more men the ability to own land and perform dignified labor on this land. They expressed a coherent social outlook of a good society and saw their system as the superiority of the North—a dynamic, expanding capitalist society without social hierarchy, whose achievements and destiny were wholly the result of the dignity and endeavors of the average laboring man. Likewise, the new national party saw the process of a man working his own land to be dignifying and educational—this educational experience could be passed down and taught to other men. Conservative Republicans were able to unite with Radical abolitionists on the belief that slavery was wrong. Conservative Republicans believed that the institution was crude and presented an uneducated workforce while the abolitionists believed that the institution was morally wrong. Slavery no longer met a shortage of labor; it was now an uneducated workforce that many free-state northerners believed could not perform complicated tasks such as lumbering, manufacturing, or mining. Thus, the new found national party saw an economic superiority to slave labor and looked to allow all men the ability to freely work the soil and freely own land. Together, these groups of northerners traveled toward the West to the Kansas Territory, united to make it a free state.¹⁶

To Kansas We Go

¹⁵ Carl Schurz, *Speeches of Carl Schurz* (Philadelphia, 1865); John Ashworth, *“Agrarians” and “Aristocrats”: Party Political Ideology in the United States, 1837-1844* (London, 1987); William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852-1856* (New York, 1987); Foner, *Politics and Ideology*.

¹⁶ Foner, *Free Soil, Free labor, Free Men*, 11-13, 43-46.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act excited people of the possibility West of the Mississippi River. Before the bill passed in 1854, fewer than 800 white settlers inhabited the Kansas-Nebraska Territory. After the territory opened, the number of settlers increased tenfold. During the next two years 8,000 whites and 192 slaves emigrated from all parts of the United States. Settlers came by the thousands from surrounding states such as Iowa and Missouri while as much as one-third of the emigrants came from Midwestern and Mid-Atlantic States.¹⁷ Frederick Starr, a northern minister living in Missouri, witnessed town promoters depicting nonexistent settlements, from which prosperous and bustling metropolises were supposed to grow. After witnessing the potential of Kansas, Starr exclaimed, “Hurrah for the future Emporium of Kansas!”¹⁸ These settlers were drawn to the region by the economic promise as the emigrants anticipated great prosperity for themselves and their families by settling or speculating lands in Kansas. Horace Greely, a staunch Republican and Editor & Chief of the *New York Tribune*, urged northerners to move to Kansas to have the possibility of owning a piece of this territory.¹⁹

Northerners embraced the words of Greely and sought to acquire their own land in the far West for a new opportunity, a chance to own their own land, and the ability to work for themselves. Many of the men wanted to leave the growing and more crowded cities to re-establish their Jeffersonian roots as an agrarian citizen and own land that they were able to work and labor. Men began to move West in search of wealth—Kansas was not the bucolic ideal of a pre-capitalist world; instead, it was another means of economic advancement.²⁰ Land seekers registered numerous claims to territorial land, paying fifty cents to join associations or coalitions

¹⁷ *The New York Times*, June 27, 1854; Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 28-29.

¹⁸ *Three Years on the Kansas Border by a Clergyman of the Episcopal Church* (New York, 1856), 22-24.

¹⁹ Calore, *Causes of Civil War*, 231.

²⁰ Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 14-20.

to protect them. Starr himself submitted to the land fever and joined a squatter association.²¹ The migration from the free states would shock Missourians, who expected to dominate the land, into fearing for their property rights in the Kansas Territory, and even at home. The state of affairs would, ultimately, politicize the economic aspirations of migrating peoples.

Many northerners viewed the “settled” question of slavery in the Kansas Territory as something they could not tolerate, and they started to assemble groups to contest the area. One of the groups that promoted the migration of northerners to Kansas Territory was the New England Emigrant Aid Company. Eli Thayer, A Massachusetts Republican representative, founded the Emigrant Aid Company after the establishment of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. It was a joint-stock enterprise and the first organization to promote northern free-state men to move to the territory of Kansas. The first organized band of New Englanders arrived to the territory in July of 1854. They soon established the city of Lawrence, named after NEEAC benefactor Amos Lawrence, making it a central location for abolitionist activity. Among the first to settle at this location, under the aegis of the New England Emigration Aid, were Massachusetts natives Charles Robinson and his wife Sarah Robinson, and Clarina I.H. Nichols. One emigrant, William Goodnow, could not understand any opposition from northerners to migrate as “it would place you in a condition to be above want and care which is now the chief burden of your life.” Goodnow concluded, “if any pioneers deserve prosperity it is the Kansas emigrants that left good homes, kind friends and very desirable religious and social privilege, to establish the same to all the inhabitants of this rich land.”²²

The NEEAC supplied resources for non-slaveholders to thrive in Kansas. They financed newspapers, built mills, made peace with the Delaware Indians, built hotels and shelters, and lent

²¹ Fredrick to Father, Aug. 1, 1854.

²² William E. Goodnow to wife, June 10, 1855; William to wife, June 17, 1855; Paul Wallace Gates, *Fifty Million Acres: Conflicts over Kansas Land Policy 1854-1890* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1954), 1-10, 57-60.

money to a steamboat line for transportation.²³ As Massachusetts Representative, Mark Trafton, stated, “The free territories of this country, by Constitutional right, belong not to the slavacracy, but to the free men and the free women of the country, it is their birthright and they claim it.”²⁴ Thayer’s organization soon inspired others. Southern observers found it difficult to distinguish each group from the original NEEAC; therefore, they lumped all of the societies together as “emigrant aid societies”.²⁵

The closely located Missourians quickly inhabited the Kansas Territory and as one Missourian asserted, Kansas “was intended for a Slave State, and will be so unless the South sleeps on its rights, and neglects its duties.”²⁶ However, these southerners recognized that the migration from Free States would be a menace and would disrupt their ability to implement the institution of slavery within the Territory. The mass migration from Free States shocked southerners, and many asked, “If Kansas be settled by Abolitionists, can Missouri remain a slave state?” many thought not.²⁷ The continued health of slavery in Missouri depended on its extension to Kansas. B.F. Stringfellow, a middle-aged Missourian lawyer, formed the Platte County Self-Defensive Association. His organization expressed hostility toward free blacks and saw all men with any type of antislavery sentiment as abolitionists.²⁸ Stringfellow and his followers believed the removal of slavery within the territory would lead to the extinction of slavery within Missouri and, ultimately, threaten their upward economic growth. Many

²³ Samuel A. Johnson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom: The New England Emigrant Aid Company in the Kansas Crusade* (Westport, Connecticut, 1977), 169-172; Eli Thayer, *A History of the Kansas Crusade, its Friends and its Foes* (New York, 1889), 108.

²⁴ Mark Trafton, *Kansas Contested Election* to the House of Representatives, March 12, 1856.

²⁵ Virgil Dean, “Introduction” in *John Brown to Bob Dole: Movers and Shakers in Kansas History*, ed. Virgil Dean (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2006), 3-4; Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 35-41.

²⁶ Ed. M. Dobson to Brother, *New York Times*, October 25, 1854.

²⁷ Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 58; See, Locke Hardeman to Gen. G.R. Smith, June 10, 1855, Smith Collection.

²⁸ Etchenon, *Bleeding Kansas*, 33; William e. Parrish, *David Rice Atchinson of Missouri: Border Politician* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1961), 161-164; *Squatter Sovereign*, Feb. 3, 1855.

Missourians agreed with Stringfellow's ideas—businessmen and politicians must either adhere to the proslavery position, conceal their doubts, or suffer for them.

Many men did suffer for their position on slavery. Starr was charged by the Self-Defensives for educating blacks and he fled back to New York to escape southern mobs. William Phillips, a northern lawyer who had stridently opposed proslavery forces, recounted on his own personal accounts of being attacked by Missouri mobs. He stated that, "Are you 'sound on the Goose Question?' may be a query at which an eastern or northern man would smile, but it has a fearful significance applied in Western Missouri."²⁹ William H. Russell, a railroad tycoon and a proslavery southerner, settled in Leavenworth, Kansas in 1855. He was a prominent slaveholder and joined David R. Atchison, a southern Democrat, to make Kansas a slave state. Like Stringfellow, Russell looked to protect the political and land rights of slave owners. During his time in Kansas, from 1854-1857, Russell helped remove one-third of the free-state population of Leavenworth. The clearest evidence of his active participation in the Kansas conflict was in 1856. On August 31 and September 1 Russell and other proslavery forces rounded up a large number of free staters and forced them to leave town. During the process, the proslavery forces murdered William Phillips and shot and maimed his brother.³⁰

As the Kansas Territory filled and prepared for the first elections, free-soil and proslavery emigrants did more than establish their distinct communities, they refined the meaning of popular sovereignty. Missourians believed that their close proximity to the Kansas Territory legitimized and ensured their political dominance. Missourians such as Russell saw the acceptance of slavery as a vital aspect of the economic well-being of slaveholders and non-slaveholders. These men did not define democracy or freedom as including the right to denounce

²⁹ Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 34; Dean, *John Brown to Bob Doyle*, 51.

³⁰ U.S. Congress, *House Report 104*, 36 Cong., 2 sess. (1860), "The Testimony of John J. Luce," 510.

or question slavery. Therefore, these men considered the voters from the East as temporary residents, and stated that the members of the NEEAC lacked the same long-term interests of many local southerners. Free-state emigrants did not acknowledge the opposing southern political rights in the territory. While some northern emigrants linked their migration to a fight for liberty for black slavery, only a small minority of northern settlers came to Kansas with a strong position against slavery; most sought their own land and better homes in the West. Thus, when proslavery forces sought to defend slavery, free soil settlers felt forced to define what they meant by liberty and to protect their own political rights.

Over the next few years, popular sovereignty would fail and cause the outbreak of violence within the Kansas Territory. Fredrick Starr called the delegate election of 1854 “the greatest outrage on the ballot box ever perpetrated on American Soil.” Star reported, “Some 1200 or 1400 Missourians armed with bowie knives and revolvers took the polls and more than 40 free soilers were unable to come to the polls at all.”³¹ Missourians justified their actions by asserting that the threat to Missouri was so grave that it rationalized measures that violated the democratic process.³² Soon, northern men became fed up with the actions occurring within the political sphere of the territorial legislation and migrations to Kansas became significantly below normal. As Charles Robinson wrote, “The invasion of their own civil and political rights” became the issue, not slavery. Free land in the West provided an insurance of the continuing mobility in the North—thus, slavery was an artificial controversy that arose because of the desire for both sides to spread their own political rights and each sides desire to develop the West.³³

³¹ Frederick Starr to —, Dec. 1, 1854.

³² *The New York Times*, May 4, 1855; David Grimsted, *American Mobbing, 1828-1860: Toward Civil War* (New York, 1998), 246-65.

³³ Charles Robinson, *The Kansas Conflict* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1898), 169; Foner, *Free Soil, Free Land, Free Men*, 52-55.

From October 23 to November 11, 1855 thirty-seven free-state delegates joined together at the constitutional convention in Topeka. Led by James H. Lane, the Topeka constitution echoed the language of Thomas Jefferson and granted the rights of “life, liberty, property, and the free pursuits of happiness” to the people.³⁴ This group broke the bonds established by the territorial government and formed their own state government. These men sought their own territorial rights. Therefore, Charles Robinson began to declare himself as the Governor of the State of Kansas, and was later arrested for treason against the territory of Kansas for being an abolitionist. Although the Topeka Constitution was not legitimized by the territorial people, it showed the United States conflict that there was a heavy influence of free-state men within the Kansas Territory.

After several months of conflict and northern frustration at the ballot box, John Brown and his sons invaded a settlement just outside of Davidson, Kansas and murdered a renowned slave owner, Doyle and his two sons. John Brown Jr. stated that he and his family murdered these men to protect their own political rights, he stated, “We need them more than we do bread.”³⁵ The Pottawatomie killings destroyed the peace within the Kansas Territory and initiated a guerrilla war. Many of the leading free-state men, such as Charles Robinson, were in jail and they were unable to hold back radicals such as James Lane and John Brown. Free-staters such as D.R. Anthony stated that Missourian Border Ruffians “should be shot as mad dogs,” while others hoped for the defeat of the federal troops, “so that [free-staters] may have a chance at the Ruffians.”³⁶ Violence was the continuation of the political struggle for both sides to receive their claims to a land that they believed was theirs. In the confusion of Bleeding Kansas,

³⁴ Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 74-76.

³⁵ Evan Carton, *Patriotic Treason, John Brown and the Soul of America* (New York, 2006), 162-167.

³⁶ D.R. Anthony to Wm. Barnes, June 6, 1856, William Barnes Collection, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka; John Harland to Phil Bulkley, June 7, 1856, Bulkley Family Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis; Etchenson, *Bleeding Kansas*, 113-114.

free staters sought to protect their use of revolutionary violence to preserve their liberties. Again, Missourians took up arms against the free-state rebels who murdered, committed arson, and stole slaves in an endeavor to protect their rights.

Heightened violence by both sides caused the national government to look for a way to expedite the process of Kansas writing a state constitution that would be accepted. The Lecompton Constitution, a document favoring slavery, was drafted by the territorial legislature. Again, free-state men encountered troubles at the ballot box. Likewise, there were a number of votes deemed to be fraudulent by Thomas Ewing, a noted Kansas free-state politician and lawyer, who helped oversee the election. On January 4, 1858, Kansas voters altogether rejected the Lecompton proposal. Though peacefully defeated, the debate over the proposed constitution had ripped apart the national Democratic Party due to a conflict over individual rights and the question of slavery. The Lecompton Constitution showed that if the two contradictory ideas—slavery and freedom—remained in the territory, Kansas would not be able to agree on the question of slavery due to the opposing views of republican rights.³⁷

Conclusion

The Missouri reaction to the eastern migrants exposes the complex relationship between economic and political motives for settlement. Both proslavery and free-soil migrants saw the territory as opening economic opportunity, but they were wary of the other sides' motives for migration. As Virgil W. Dean stated in his book, *John Brown to Bob Dole: Movers and Shakers in Kansas History*, "The struggle that ensued in the Kansas Territory was, above all, a contest to control land."³⁸ Both the proslavery south and the free-state northern settlers viewed land as an essential piece of their identity. The settling and the development of the West were important to

³⁷ Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 152-157; Etchenson, *'Bleeding Kansas'*, 139-145; Carton, *Patriotic Treason*, 225-231.

³⁸ Dean, *John Brown to Bob Dole*, 4.

the economic development of both parties. However, these two contradictory ideas created a powder keg that, ultimately, exploded during the summer of 1856 and caused what is now known as 'Bleeding Kansas'. The events were directly caused due to a difference of interpretations of the significance of the terms *freedom* and *liberty* and a dispute of how to control the land. Steven Douglas sought to let the people chose what rights would be observed in this region; however his idea of popular sovereignty was dubiously applied and the anxieties of Missourians looking to preserve their prized institution of slavery caused it to fail. In closing, 'Bleeding Kansas' shows that both sides were willing to fight to protect and defend their own political rights and preserve their republican ideas as a means to better the nation as a whole.

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The Meiji Restoration : A Transition into a Modern Japan

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The Meiji Restoration was a period of great change in Japan's history. Prior to the Meiji Restoration, Japan had a two-part government with one part featuring warriors (the Tokugawa shogunate) and another part with an emperor. Even though the government was divided, the majority of the power was held by the bakufu with the emperor being a figurehead. A Japanese emperor seeing his country go in a direction he did not like had little power to change it during the Tokugawa Era. The Meiji Restoration changed this by overthrowing the warriors and returning power to the emperor and his court. After establishing supreme power, the new imperial government worked to modernize Japan and slowly develop it into a society that all people could play a part in. The Meiji Restoration resulted in changes to Japan's tax system, domains, education, military, infrastructure, and economy. To truly understand Japan's modern history, it is imperative to understand what caused the Meiji Restoration. While some historians believe the Meiji Restoration occurred solely because of domestic issues and others solely because of a foreign threat, the two are in fact equally important causes of the Meiji Restoration.¹ Through national discontent due to a threatening foreign presence and weak leadership, Choshu and Satsuma domains overthrew the Tokugawa shogunate and caused a change in a government resulting in major political, social, and economical changes as well as a more unified Japan that could be as powerful as the strongest Western countries.

¹ Chang discusses the theories of Isao, Ryoen, and Sakata who believe the Meiji Restoration occurred solely as a result of a foreign threat and the theories of Marxists who believe it occurred solely as a result of Japanese domestic troubles in a review of Sakata's book which includes many essays by different authors stating why they believe the Meiji Restoration occurred. Richard T. Chang, Rev. of "Problems in the History of the Meiji Restoration." by Sakata Yoshio. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (May, 1963), pp. 331-332.

A major source of the negativity that was associated with the bakufu came from their inability to deal with foreigners who forced Japan to end its period of partial-isolationism.² American Matthew Perry wanted for Japan to open up for the benefit of the United States. He extensively studied reports of past missions to Japan from the Dutch to learn how to negotiate with and scare Japan in submitting to him.³ He demanded Japan open its borders to the United States and allow for the western country to have a partnership with Japan. This opened the gates to an influx of foreigners living and working in Japan. The Bakufu simply was not strong enough to repel Perry. Due to Japan's weak state now becoming common knowledge, more and more Western countries sought one-sided trading deals with the country. Activists saw an opportunity to take action with national unrest growing rapidly and the Emperor himself angered by the Shogun, thus they began the *sonno joi* campaign. *Sonno joi*, a slogan meaning "revere the emperor, expel the barbarians," became the battlecry of a strong anti-foreigner, pro-emperor movement involving two of the biggest domains in Japan at the time, Satsuma and Choshu.

Choshu and Satsuma were two very powerful domains during the Tokugawa shogunate and the leaders of the Meiji Restoration. Choshu domain had been anti-Tokugawa from the start, fighting against them during the critical Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, the battle that resulted in the Tokugawa coming to power. As a result of being on the losing side, the Tokugawa shogunate punished Choshu domain by taking away much of its land. The domain was host to many Samurai and commoners that disliked the Tokugawa shogunate and was eager for rebellion throughout the Tokugawa era. Satsuma domain, on the other hand, was a fairly independent domain due to its distance from the capital and great wealth. As a result of its independence, the

² Japan was closed off to most of the world, but allowed some into its land, notably the Dutch.

³ Perry, Matthew C, Francis L. Hawks, George Jones, and A O. P. Nicholson. "Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, Performed in the Years 1852, 1853 and 1854, Under the Command of Commodore M.c. Perry, United States Navy." Washington, D.C: A.O.P. Nicholson, printer, 1856. pp. 50-58.

domain was not fearful of the shogunate. It was able to negotiate much from the shogunate, including sole access to the Ryukyu Kingdom, and have great influence in the government. Satsuma control over Ryukyu Kingdom, a land with Chinese relations, was a means of trade with foreign countries isolated from the nation. Both domains were extremely displeased with the foreigners in their lands, but at first had different approaches. Choshu domain was a part of the *sonno joi* movement, while the other wanted to unify the country against the foreigners through national support of the Shogun. A big part of this decision goes back to Satsuma having large influence in the shogunate. When the Choshu started revolting, Satsuma domain was a part of force that dealt with them. Were the shogunate to lose this support, it would be a great blow to their efforts to maintain power.⁴

With forces all over the country fighting against the foreigners, Western countries began demanding Japan agree to even more unequal trade deals in reparation.⁵ The Tokugawa shogunate could not drive them back and therefore had to agree to these deals. The shogunate concluded that it could not simply rely on the domains as their military force and had to have a more unified, modern army. This decision, along with the losing fight the shogunate was fighting, threatened the power of the domains and gave Satsuma more reason to join Choshu in their fight against the shogunate. With mediation from Sakamoto Ryoma, the two domains joined forces to bring down the Tokugawa shogunate and maintain their power.⁶ Together they proved a formidable force, with large numbers and foreign weapons coming from the Ryukyu

⁴ For a more detailed account of the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate as well as Satsuma and Choshu reasoning see Marius B. Jansen *The Making of Modern Japan*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000. pp. 294-312

⁵ The foreign countries did not blame the rebelling domains who committed the acts, but all of Japan itself. As a result, the shogunate was held responsible

⁶ Marius B. Jansen, *Sakamoto Ryoma and the Meiji Restoration*. Princeton: University press, 1961. pp. 2-6

Kingdom.⁷ Around the same time the Shogun passed away without any male kin and his successor was a weak leader who put the shogunate in a very vulnerable state. Eventually the revolting domains were able to take over the Imperial capital and get the Shogun to give over his power to the Emperor. The era of Emperor Meiji had begun, and with it, came a new Japan.⁸ While it is clear that the foreign presence played a large role in cause of the Meiji Restoration, it is simply not fair to say it is *the* cause as some historians do. Through the history and actions of Satsuma and Choshu domains during the Tokugawa era it is evident that domestic issues, such as the Tokugawa threatening the power of the domains, also played an important role and those issues combined with a foreign threat were the cause of the Meiji Restoration.

It might seem confusing to some that the Meiji Restoration was a movement that wanted to keep Japan isolated and traditional, but resulted in the modernization and westernization of the country. To clarify this, people must understand the change in the minds of the leaders of the restoration. Government leaders were very selective on who they allowed to enter Japan during the Tokugawa era, but Perry forced the bakufu to realize the strength of the West and made them allow the United States and other western nations to enter Japan. While Satsuma and Choshu were fighting the barbarians to rid them from their land, they realized the strength of the west and changed their ideal that Japan must stay closed. The domains concluded that Japan must reform and learn from the foreigners to keep up with the rest of the world but to keep the people's support and end the Tokugawa shogunate, they had to stick with their anti-foreigner sentiment even though they knew that it would not work in the long run. Keeping the people's support was very important because if Japan wanted to establish itself as a modern world power,

⁷ Thomas Nelson, "Japan in the Life of Early Ryukyu" *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Summer, 2006), p. 371.

⁸ Alistair Swale, *The Meiji Restoration: Monarchism, Mass Communication and Conservative Revolution*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. pp 57-62

it needed a unified nation. If they lost the commoners' support many of their goals would be very difficult to achieve. This change in methodology was only known to those leaders of the *sonno joi* as revealed by the continued battles Samurai fought for the same thing they thought they were fighting against. After learning about this change in the minds of the leaders of the rebellion, it becomes much more apparent why Japan modernized. It clears up a very common misconception that the leaders of the Meiji Restoration wanted to keep Japan isolated and failed on their promise.⁹ Nearing the end of the Tokugawa Era, the two sides were not fighting over isolation and foreigners, but rather over who will lead the country to modernization.

Getting rid of the Han system, which had been in place for many centuries, was one of the first actions the Meiji government took.¹⁰ The decision to rid of it was not well received by the Samurai class and showcased the modern and westernized direction that the new government was taking.¹¹ Another major decision detrimental to the Samurai made by the new government was the abolishment of the class system. People of all classes were now able to pursue other jobs, which had a major positive effect on Japan's economy because positions were now being filled by those best qualified for them, not by class and rank. These decisions ended the Samurai, as they lost their superior class, and left many Samurai without anything to do. Samurai now received an inadequate amount of money via bonds and were forced to integrate into society if they wanted to continue living. Samurai even ended up losing their right to wield swords, angering them even more. While the government gave stipends to the Samurai to try and help them reestablish themselves, it was not very much and as a result some Samurai, such as Abei

⁹ Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*. p. 27

¹⁰ The Han system, which was Japan's version of feudalism, allowed for the Daimyos to independently rule over territories. It provided a great amount of power and wealth to not only the Daimyo, but the Samurai under them. Alistair Swale, *The Meiji Restoration: Monarchism, Mass Communication and Conservative Revolution*. pp 65-70

¹¹ It should be noted that while this severely impacted the Samurai, some Daimyo were able to easily transition out of the Han system as they were made governors. Other Daimyo kept their Samurai tradition and protested this transition. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*. p. 345

Iwane, even felt disrespected by it.¹² Many samurai ended up impoverished when the governments stipends started becoming worse because they were not able to integrate into society in time.¹³

With not many options left, many Samurai were left with the choice to fight for the ability to live as Samurai or integrate into society. While the majority of Samurai ended up integrating in society becoming government officials, policemen, farmers, priests, or businessmen, some Samurai tried to fight back to preserve their tradition. Many of these Samurai who did fight back were to same people who fought to make the Meiji Restoration a success, such as Saigo Takamori, who led the Samurai rebellion.¹⁴ Takamori felt the same way as Iwane, disrespected by the weak stipend system and political reforms which left the Samurai poor and without political power. To these Samurai, there was no other option but to fight.¹⁵ Their Satsuma Rebellion failed miserably and many of these Samurai who resisted ended up dying in poor conditions either failing or refusing to integrate into society.¹⁶ With the decisions the Meiji government made, the warrior Samurai effectively died out and was forced to integrate into the new Japanese society to survive.

Politically, there was drastic change in Japan after the Meiji Restoration. Japan went from a divided land under a military leader to a unifying land under an emperor. The new imperial government changed many things at all levels of government. They wanted to make it clear to the world that Japan was run by a completely different government and to be treated as an equal

¹² This source talks about Abei Iwane, a samurai who wrote a lengthy letter to his governor complaining about the poor rehabilitation of Samurai post-Meiji Restoration. George Akita and Sakeda Masatoshi, "The Samurai Disestablished. Abei Iwane and His Stipend." *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Autumn, 1986), pp. 299-306.

¹³ Harry D. Harootunian, *Toward Restoration: The Growth of Political Consciousness in Tokugawa Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970. p. 423.

¹⁴ The Rebellion was called the Seinan senso, meaning War of the Southwest.

¹⁵ Mark Ravina. *The Last Samurai: The Life and Battles of Saigo Takamori*. New York: Wiley, 2003. pp. 20-23.

¹⁶ George Akita and Sakeda Masatoshi, "The Samurai Disestablished. Abei Iwane and His Stipend." pp. 300-306.

to Western nations. To do this they issued the Charter Oath, which contained the changes to Japan the new government would implement. Things like how they would abolish the old customs and evils of the past, lessen the influences of classes, and the implementation of public discussion in the government were the major changes.¹⁷ Not only did this show the direction Japan wanted to go in to the rest of the world, it gave Japanese people hope that Japan would improve from the end of the Tokugawa era. It was a significant step in the further unification of a previously divided country. Eventually the Meiji government wanted to further develop their government and looked to the West for insight.

The Meiji government sent Ito Hirobumi to many western countries to study their politics. When he came back he decided a constitution that included a representative parliament and still established the supreme power of the emperor was necessary.¹⁸ He was met with resistance by some people who argued that he would undermine the power of the emperor, but Ito argued that if Japan wanted to keep up with the West it needed a constitutional government, as that was the essence of many powerful western nations.¹⁹ Even with his critics, the Meiji government respected Ito's opinions enough to allow him to draft the majority of the Meiji constitution. By making a constitution directly influenced by the West, Japan made another large step towards its goal of showing the world that it was serious about becoming a world power and not just another Asian country that would be taken advantage of by the West.

To keep up with the western world and avoid situations like the one with Commodore Perry, Japan had to make drastic changes to its military. Japan felt that if it had a powerful military, it could be respected by the western world, avoid conflict, and eliminate any potential

¹⁷ Alistair Swale, *The Meiji Restoration: Monarchism, Mass Communication and Conservative Revolution*. p. 63.

¹⁸ The Parliament was called the National Diet.

¹⁹ Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*. p. 394

threats. Led by Yamagata Aritomo, Japan was faced with the challenge of building a new military comparable to the western militaries. Scholar Marius B. Jansen argued that the fact Japan had to build their military from the ground up was an advantage. Japan was able to study other militaries, use the newest technologies, learn from the mistakes European militaries made during their recent wars, and embrace the spirit of a new era.²⁰ This heavy influence of western militaries, mainly French and Prussian, is evident with how many foreign advisors the government hired to give consul in all areas of government, including military.²¹ It is made clear by a Kawakami Soroku memo how serious Japan was about military.

Nations maintain an army for two reasons. First, to defend themselves against enemy attack or to preserve their independence. The armies of most second-class European nations are of this kind. Second, to display the nation's power, resorting to arms when necessary to execute national policy, as in the case of first-class European powers. Japan's aim in maintaining armed forces is not that of second-class nations but that of first-class powers.²²

Here a very drastic change that occurred in Japan because of the Meiji Restoration becomes clear. Tokugawa Japan was a land of isolation that did not care much about the outside world and as a result did not strengthen its military accordingly. The new Meiji Japan wanted a military so strong that it could achieve honors greater than simply defending itself. Japan's intent to assert itself in the world is made clear. In order to do this, Japan implemented national conscription, sent officers abroad to study foreign militaries, and invested heavily in military industry.²³ As a result of Japan wanting a stronger military it had to make major changes to its economy, industry, and system of education. The drive to have a powerful military was one of the biggest

²⁰ Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*. p. 396

²¹ Masako Kobayashi Ikeda, "French Legal Advisor in Meiji Japan (1873-1895)." *Gustave Emile Boissonade De Fontarabie*. Order No. 9713954 University of Hawai'i, 1996. Ann Arbor: ProQuest.

²² Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*. p. 400

²³ Ibid. p. 397

reasons for the large amounts of change Japan underwent in all parts of society during the Meiji era.

Japan's goal in sending so many people over to West was to learn about the best about each world power and implement it in Japan to make a first-class nation. Mori Arinori was tasked with learning about education and traveled the world to do so. He was then appointed as Japan's first Minister of Education and had the task of creating an education system on the same level as the western countries. The overarching goal of Japan's new education system was to produce literate citizens who were loyal to the country and revered the emperor. Japan took from America a tiered education system and the idea of no class barriers on access to education. People of many different economic statuses were allowed to attend school and be educated with the common goal of the betterment of the nation. This resulted in the lessening of class differences which the Charter Oath set out to do. With French influence, Japan implemented a national system of setting up everyone for success, and then offering government jobs based on ability. This again, took away from the class system and resulted in the government having the most brilliant Japanese minds working for it. With this new system, Japan had set up a system for success in every region and class. This allowed for a stronger economy to be on the same level as the powerful western nations as Japan's most brilliant minds were being utilized to develop the country. The change in education showed another drastic change that came as a result of the Meiji Restoration. In the Tokugawa Era, higher education was mainly reserved for male Samurais. Whereas in the Meiji Era, people of all classes and of both sexes had access to higher education. Japan's goal in this new system of education was to unify the country and reduce class gaps which is a stark difference from the Tokugawa era. The new education system

was a major reason why Japan had become so unified during the Meiji era compared to previous centuries.²⁴

One of the biggest concerns of the Japanese government was the economy. To implement all the changes it envisioned, the Meiji Government had to develop a very strong economy and become industrialized. At the start of the Meiji era, Japan's economy was in very bad shape because of the removal of the Samurai class and the Daimyo. The government had taken all the Daimyo's debts and had to pay the Samurai their stipends. It was not making enough money to support its vision nor did it have the industry it needed to create its military.²⁵ Japan created a slogan that stated what it wanted to do with its economy, *fukoku kyohei*, or rich country, strong army. The new education system was a strong start to recovery because it allowed those previously uneducated Japanese to work in new industries and stimulate economic growth. The most important decision the government made in regards to its economy, however, was the appointment of Matsukata Masayoshi as the minister of finance. Matsukata's decisions regarding Japan's economy laid the groundwork for the development of Japan as a modern and powerful country. Japan had a very large agricultural industry during the Tokugawa Era and Matsukata saw this as an opportunity for great revenue. His land tax reform changed farmers paying their taxes in rice to cash and also implemented a system of land ownership. This was very successful at its onset with farmers getting more worth from their land and the value of their crops going up as well as Japan not having to rely on foreign investors as over half of their revenue now came from agricultural taxes.

The success of this program did not last as Japan eventually pushed the farmers to their limits. The government changed the land tax system to fixed rates and caused the farmers to

²⁴ Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*. pp. 402-411

²⁵ Ibid. p. 373

become desperate when the price of rice was low. Smaller farmers had to start taking loans from large landlords to pay their taxes and eventually being a small farmer in Japan simply was not sustainable. What resulted was large scale riots with tens of thousands of small farmers causing Japan to lower its tax rate.²⁶ Even though Matsukata's reforms may not have been ideal for some individuals, they still brought in large amounts of money and set up Japan with a system that allowed for continuous growth and new industries. These new industries allowed Japan to satisfy its goal of developing a strong army so it could be respected by western countries. Ultimately, Japan was closer to fukoku kyohei²⁷ and that was what mattered most to the government.

For Japan, a combination of foreign threats and domestic issues during the Tokugawa era meant change was needed. Choshu and Satsuma domains took the initiative and what resulted was the end of one era and the beginning of another, the Meiji era. The new rulers renovated Japan after the world's best to have a stable country domestically as well as the ability to eliminate any possibility of more foreign threats. While Japan wanted to rid itself of foreign presence, it ended up having to seek foreign advice to achieve its goal. Politically, Japan's change from a divided warrior government to a unified imperial government showed the rest of the world it was serious in becoming a world power. This new government had an ideal of having a world class military and to achieve that, it needed a very strong economy. To improve the economy Japan made changes to two very important parts of its society: agriculture and education. This stronger economy and subsequent industrialization allowed Japan to create the strong military it had been aiming for. As a result of all these changes, the Meiji Restoration, with the end of the Samurai, marked the end of Japan's medieval history and with the opening of

²⁶ Dimitri Vanoverbeke, *Community and State in the Japanese Farm Village: Farm Tenancy Conciliation (1924-1938)*. Leuven: Leuven Univ. Press, 2004. p. 34-39

²⁷ This means "rich country, strong army"

Japan's borders and western influence in society, marked the beginning of Japan's modern history.

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