

# Janus: The Undergraduate History Journal

Fall 2017

University of Maryland: Department of History <https://www.umdjanus.com>



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**“I’m Opposed to Fighting Indians Anyhow”  
An Account of the Seminole Wars through the Eyes of Nathaniel Wyche Hunter**

**By Clay Capra**

The United States during the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a nation defined by two struggles, one between the opposing cultures of the North and the South, and the second between the opposing cultures of the white settler and the Native Americans. Although many of the wars fought in the latter of these struggles have been forgotten, they played an incredibly important part in shaping American history and the American psyche. Nathaniel Wyche Hunter, a graduate of West Point and captain in the prestigious Second Dragoons, served in one of these wars, the Second Seminole War, and left a record filled with accounts of his own annoyances, disillusionments, and reservations about the conflict and his involvement in it. Compelled by his oath and the requirements of his profession, Hunter fought in one of a series of wars motivated by racial tensions, manifest destiny, and white supremacy, in which the United States constructed a practice of ethnic cleansing towards Native Americans enshrined in the highest offices of government and buried deep into the American psyche, and committed what may have been its greatest military failure to date, other than the Battle of Wabash, in which Native American forces entirely destroyed an American army on the Wabash River in 1791.

Contemporary to the Seminole Wars, the United States began to construct its main policy towards Native Americans: ethnic cleansing. Although practices of ethnic cleansing had occurred before, particularly during the British Imperial period and the early national period, other practices had been used as well. The government often attempted to assimilate Native American tribes into American society, as it did with the Cherokee, but during this period those other practices mostly came to an end. The United States would no longer tolerate any significant Native tribal presence east of the Mississippi River, and as it expanded west it used the strategies that it developed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in order to deal with the tribes of the Great Plains and the Southwest. The Muskogee Wars, the Cherokee Trail of Tears, and the Seminole Wars all occurred during this final consolidation for the country in the East.

The Seminole Wars played a large part in setting the policies that defined the United States’ particular methodology for removal, containment, and subjugation of Native American populations. These practices began in the First Seminole War, when Andrew Jackson invaded Florida in order to clear out a perceived national security threat presented by the Seminoles and groups of escaped African slaves. Many of these mixed communities, armed by the British and safe in territory where hapless Spanish bureaucrats proved unable to control them, raided into American territory in order to free more slaves or simply to steal. Additionally, many Southern slaveholders wished their slaves to be returned and Jackson hoped to gain their support by doing so. Throughout the First Seminole War, Jackson targeted villages, burning them and often killing the civilian inhabitants. Later he was elected President based on his record as a war hero, owing to his success in the First Seminole War. This concluded with the Adams-Onis Treaty, in which Spain ceded Florida to the United States, enabling him to move decisively to implement the government’s Indian policy against the Seminoles and the other Southern tribes.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States* (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2014), 100.

Efforts to force the Seminoles from their Florida homes provoked the Second Seminole War, the longest of the three wars fought between the Seminoles and the United States. This war – the one in which Hunter served – devolved from a policy of removal to one of ethnic cleansing when General Zachary Taylor issued an order for the execution of all captured Seminole Warriors.<sup>2</sup> Many officers simply refused to follow this order, Taylor’s willingness to give it displays a special callousness and contempt for Native American lives that appears throughout the higher command of the military during The Seminole War. Taylor’s campaigns in Florida and his extermination order began his upward mobility toward war hero status, solidified in the Mexican-American War, and demonstrated that practices of ethnic cleansing embodied a solid strategy for military advancement. The United States army justified such orders by describing events like the Dade Massacre, which opened the war, as atrocities. A former slave who witnessed that battle, however, dispelled the myths spread by the American government about the battle and proved it a fair fight, a fight the United States lost.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the high command’s willingness to embrace a policy of ethnic cleansing, the United States government never actually removed all Seminoles from Florida. Although the Americans managed to move groups to Oklahoma, and exterminate many others, Seminoles still live within Florida. Some of these groups eventually made treaties with the government and formed formal reservations, but others, like the Traditionalist Seminole, never treated with the US government at all. Although the United States did succeed through forced removal in opening large portions of Florida for white settlement, it failed in its main goal: the complete removal of the Seminole from Florida.<sup>4</sup>

The government had another major goal in the Seminole Wars, the return of escaped slaves to their owners in Southern states. For most of American history, slaves saw Florida as an escape route from slavery, either to freedom or to a far less burdensome slavery under Seminole masters. The Spanish simply lacked the resources to round up slaves, especially in the northern and central parts of the territory. Many of these former slaves integrated into Seminole society and fought as warriors. The idea of armed African-Americans so close to the border of slave-holding states caused planters to worry that these armed, escaped slaves might raid over the border and free others. These fears were mostly centered on a singular object: the Negro Fort, a formidable structure well-armed with artillery.<sup>5</sup> The British built the fort for the Seminoles during the War of 1812, and left it stocked with thousands of muskets as well as powder and shot. These slaves felt no desire to return to American territory to raid, as doing so greatly increased their chances of being caught and returned to slavery.

Though other raids from Seminole tribes did occur, the South’s fears of a grand slave insurrection or the freeing of large numbers of slaves by black raiders came into existence due to paranoia and not factual evidence. Many became annoyed at the simple economic issue of losing

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<sup>2</sup> Reynold M. Wik, “Captain Nathaniel Wyche Hunter and the Florida Indian Campaigns 1837-1841,” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (Jul 1960): 13.

<sup>3</sup> The Dade Massacre Newspaper Clippings, Savannah Volunteer Guards Reminiscences, William Starr Basinger Collection, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

<sup>4</sup> Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States*, 102.

<sup>5</sup> John Missall and Mary Lou Missall, *The Seminole Wars, America’s Longest Indian Conflict* (Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2004), 26

expensive property. Due to intermarriage between Seminoles and African-Americans, as well as claims of ownership of many slaves by the Seminoles, the army ultimately returned very few escaped slaves to their white owners. Logistical challenges of returning specific escaped slaves to specific owners further discouraged the army from undertaking the effort with any regularity. The army also came to recognize that any attempt to disrupt Seminole familial arrangements by returning escaped slaves threatened to prolong the war. General Tomas Jessup acknowledged this reality when he issued an order for blacks residing among the Seminole – both slave and free – to be removed to the West along with the balance of the Seminoles. In the same order, he banned all slave-catchers from Florida.<sup>6</sup> In making this decision, Jessup effectively abandoned an original goal of the war and ended the hopes of Southern slaveholders for the recovery of their slaves. This decision, however, seems to be one of logistical reality rather than humanitarianism, as Jessup famously said of the Seminoles, “The country can be rid of them only by exterminating them.”<sup>7</sup> Because of this decision, many black Seminoles still reside on Seminole reservations. After the war, the government signed treaties with the Seminoles that recognized all African-Americans in Florida as property of the Seminole tribe, nullifying the claims of their former owners indefinitely.<sup>8</sup>

The military did succeed in one thing, although it countered their own interests in the conduct of the Seminole Wars: they transformed a disparate group of tribes, escaped slaves, and refugees from other Indian Wars into a singular, coherent, confederated organization that had the strength to effectively fight against the United States government. The Seminoles were no more natives of Florida than the American soldiers whom they fought. War, European diseases, and enslavement had eradicated the native peoples of Florida by the eighteenth century.<sup>9</sup> The peoples that moved in to occupy these lost lands came not as a single group, but rather as waves of refugees from internal disputes within the Muskogee Creek tribes. Escaped African slaves blended with these groups. These enclaves of refugees proved as likely to fight each other as anyone else. It required an aggressive policy of Indian removal and the presence of an invading army to forge a singular identity among the Seminoles through battle against a shared enemy. United against a single force trying to take their land and force them to give up their way of life, the Seminoles gained a cultural identity through necessity, making them far more difficult to fight than disparate groups of tribes.

The soldiers fighting in the Seminole Wars noticed the failures of the government and military in effectively handling the war. They quickly became disillusioned due to the almost-constant feeling that they were accomplishing nothing, fighting in an uninhabitable state against an enemy that appeared impossible to defeat. Following his assignment to Florida, Captain Nathaniel Wyche Hunter quickly adopted this negative view of the campaign. He spent as much time trying to get out of the war as he did fighting it. He concocted schemes that ranged from using his family’s influence in Congress to secure a transfer to Maryland or Washington D.C. or getting medical leave for four months.<sup>10</sup> Others in Hunter’s company hatched their own schemes to escape the war. Private Boram, one of the men stationed at Fort Hunter, deserted, stealing a boat, a slave,

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<sup>6</sup> Missall, *The Seminole Wars*, 133.

<sup>7</sup> Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States*, 97.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Nathaniel Wyche Hunter Correspondence, Hitchcock-Coit Collection, F. W. Olins Library, Mills College, Oakland, California (Hereafter: Hunter Correspondence.)

and four hundred dollars.<sup>11</sup> Hunter also spoke of soldiers seeking escape from active duty who purposely inflicted wounds upon themselves.<sup>12</sup> Such acts represented an incredible commitment to getting out of Florida's seemingly endless, droning war. Rumors constantly circulated that the war might end soon, all accompanied by the hopeful murmurings of tired soldiers. John Kingly, writing a letter to his major, expressed hope that the use of Cherokee mediators in negotiations with the Seminole might hasten the arrival of peace and an end to the war.<sup>13</sup> Hunter reported on similar rumors about the war ending by winter that same year, but with his own distinctive pessimism – or possibly realism – he acerbically voiced doubts about the hope rumors despite conceding that, “the Gen'l is sanguine in this belief and he is not swift to overrate appearances.”<sup>14</sup>

The United States government and military, befuddled in how to conduct the war, failed to properly equip its soldiers, establish a sustainable system of supply, and manage a conflict it never expected to prove large, long, or costly. Although these failures extended beyond government mismanagement, some resulted from the general issues of conducting a war of this sort at such a distance from the capital in the first half of the nineteenth century. Communications from Washington could reach Europe before they reached the front lines at Florida throughout the war.<sup>15</sup> Without the ability to send communications quickly and easily, the United States military responded slowly to the lightning-fast Seminole attacks, contributing to their utter inability to conduct the war in a timely manner. Terrain, climate, and disease complicated the challenge of command and control. The constant humidity and exposure to the elements undermined the health of the troops even as it added to the hours spent maintaining the army's system of fortifications. Hunter mentioned how often horses died from insects, heat, and overwork while in Florida.<sup>16</sup> He also commented on how many of the men under his command became sick, leaving so few soldiers healthy that he lacked the manpower to conduct daily scouting operations, lamenting, “No scout sent out – what shall I scout with? Twenty worn out laborers, the remaining fragment of the company?”<sup>17</sup> John B. Lamar referred to Florida as, “surely a greater desert than any part of Arabia can produce.”<sup>18</sup> Lamar also mentioned how, soldiers often marched with their legs halfway submerged in the water of the swamp.<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, Lamar seems to have enjoyed the war to a certain extent, making his complaints about the conditions especially poignant.

While it proved impossible for the army to avoid the difficulties of fighting in the Florida swamps, the army's cumbersome and incompetent command structure exacerbated the suffering of the men in the field. Hunter, who spent most of the war afflicted by the same illnesses as the men under his command, blamed the sickness on the failures of the army commanders to

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<sup>11</sup> Nathaniel Wyche Hunter Diary, 21, Hitchcock-Coit Collection, F. W. Olins Library, Mills College, Oakland, California (Hereafter: Hunter Diary).

<sup>12</sup> Wik, “Captain Nathaniel Wyche Hunter,” 73.

<sup>13</sup> John Kingly to Major ?, Dec. 17 1839, Seminole War Collection, Felix Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia (Hereafter: Seminole War Collection).

<sup>14</sup> Nathaniel Wyche Hunter to Arch Hunter, July 15 1839, Hunter Correspondence.

<sup>15</sup> Wik, “Captain Nathaniel Wyche Hunter,” 13.

<sup>16</sup> Hunter Diary, 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>18</sup> John B. Lamar to Mary Ann Lamar, March 16, 1836, Howell Cobb Papers, Felix Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia (Hereafter: HCP).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

effectively supply soldiers with the equipment needed to make conditions more sanitary.<sup>20</sup> Even worse, none of the government's strategies to hasten the war succeeded. Indeed, some command innovations lurched toward parody. The decision to import Cuban bloodhounds for use in hunting down and capturing Seminoles provoked an excessive storm of protest in the echo chambers of Congress but actually captured few if any Seminoles. Hunter denounced this failed, half-witted attempt to end the war as "a chimera – a humbug – a hoax."<sup>21</sup> Although the military required forts to conduct frequent scouting parties into the swamps to find Indians, these patrols also produced no meaningful successes, as they rarely discovered any Indians anyway. When they did, the small skirmishes that resulted lacked either strategic or tactical value. The phrase, "no sign of Indians," or others much like it, appeared in almost every entry in Hunter's journal.<sup>22</sup> Although the army did occasionally capture one or two Seminoles, these small victories failed to improve the morale of the troops as they only managed to capture the very young or very old. All other Seminoles proved sufficiently agile to avoid capture by the government forces.<sup>23</sup> The Seminoles compounded the failures of the military's already flawed strategies by using guerilla warfare tactics. Hunter commented on the Seminole tactic of attacking in small groups and noted that soldiers faced great danger "anytime [they] go out alone, which is frequently."<sup>24</sup> Terry Turner, another soldier fighting in the war, described the Seminole's basic strategy: "they work by stratagem, firing two, or three volleys [sic], and then run."<sup>25</sup>

During the Seminole Wars, soldiers in camp sang songs that best described how they felt about the constant, endless conflict fought in the swamps and pine deserts of Florida.

*Ever since creation,  
The best calculation,  
The Florida War has been raging;  
  
And 'tis our expectation,  
That the last conflagration  
Will find us this same contest waging.*<sup>26</sup>

Many soldiers, understandably, became frustrated with the generals, commanders, and other higher-ups in the army, and complained that their commanders failed to understand the true nature of the war in Florida. Hunter's descriptions of and complaints about the Quartermaster Corps presented one of the best examples of discontent and unhappiness with the chain of command. His issues with the corps began almost immediately; one of his first diary entries deals explicitly with the quartermaster's failure to issue him the materials necessary to operate effectively in Florida. Denied such items as a map, guide, and tarpaulin, Hunter complained that the quartermaster's failure left him "wholly ignorant of the country in which [he was] expected to operate."<sup>27</sup> Although

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<sup>20</sup> Wik, "Captain Nathaniel Wyche Hunter," 10.

<sup>21</sup> Hunter Diary, 20.

<sup>22</sup> Hunter Diary.

<sup>23</sup> Wik, "Captain Nathaniel Wyche Hunter," 9.

<sup>24</sup> Nathaniel Wyche Hunter to Arch Hunter, May 17 1839, Hunter Correspondence.

<sup>25</sup> Terry Turner to his sister, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1837, Felix Hargrett Collection, Felix Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

<sup>26</sup> Robbins, *Last in Their Class*, 49.

<sup>27</sup> Hunter Diary, 1.

a boat arrived the next day with a tarpaulin, it brought none of the other necessities he requested.<sup>28</sup> Later, he groused that the quartermasters failed even to send him boards for flooring the buildings in his fort and refused to supply the flooring unless they received an order from the commanding general authorizing the delivery.<sup>29</sup> This refusal suggests either an extreme lack of resources on the part of the military in general or an extreme excess of regulation on the part of the quartermasters, neither of which suggested anything good for the army's management. After requesting hammers and nails, Hunter received a package from the quartermasters containing only nails but no hammers with which to drive them. He noted, concisely and angrily, "I'm most essentially disgusted."<sup>30</sup> Not long after this event, Hunter bitterly complained that quartermasters now declined to transport materials to Fort Hunter at all. Instead, he raged, they dropped two bags of flour at Fort Brown, requiring him to, "send an escort of 10 men with a wagon to escort [the flour] to its destination."<sup>31</sup> He bitterly commented, "I'll die first."<sup>32</sup> Operating in the middle of the swamp, forced to build fortifications without proper equipment, and constantly dealing with sick soldiers, Hunter complained that the United States government and the quartermaster corps treated the soldiers like common laborers.<sup>33</sup> Time and time again, he voiced disappointment and disgust with the quartermasters, whom he described as incompetent, self-serving, or, most worrisome, both. In a rant against the quartermasters, he claimed, "the first official act of the Q. Master is to make himself comfortable – the second more comfortable – the third most comfortable – and the last to make everybody else as uncomfortable, as the licensences (sic) of service will permit."<sup>34</sup>

While Hunter's hatred of the quartermasters may be emblematic of soldiers' feelings towards commanders and administrators in all the Seminole Wars, it cannot fully show how much the soldiers fighting in Florida distrusted the high command on its own. Referring to the excuses that quartermasters, generals, and other members of the high command structure used to justify their actions, Hunter blistered, "I hate the hackneyed phrases – coined to cloak the acts of hypocrites, or afford a refuge to those sticklers for rules and regulations, who have not the independence to take the responsibility of their own acts."<sup>35</sup> These criticisms proved valid, as the command often gave contradictory orders. John B. Lamar, an officer in the Georgia Volunteer Regiment, complained in a letter home that his company had received no concrete orders, despite the impending initiation of a new campaign.<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless, he asserted his company intended to move out even if it received no orders to do so.<sup>37</sup> He voiced this determination to move out, even as he acknowledged that an earlier decision by the generals to take away the company's wagons left the unit incapable of carrying supplies with them.<sup>38</sup> The issues faced by Lamar's company displays a serious disconnect between the high command's perception of the state of the war and its reality, as well as one between the command and the soldiers. Sometimes, as in Hunter's case,

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>36</sup> John B. Lamar to Mary Ann Lamar, March 16, 1836, [HCP.]

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*



lower-level officers and soldiers found the orders of their superiors so ludicrous that they simply refused to follow them. Despite orders from the high command that required Hunter to send out daily scouting parties in his region in order to locate Seminole warriors, he eventually came to the conclusion that they were pointless. Using a lack of capable soldiers as an excuse, he stopped sending out the scouting parties<sup>39</sup> This disregard for orders revealed the level of frustration that the soldiers fighting the war on the ground felt with the army's high command. More importantly, the fact that soldiers disobeyed orders compounded the issue created by distance between the command center and the frontlines, as soldiers reacted even more slowly. Even worse, the absence of accurate maps doomed these scouting missions to failure from the start. Hunter denounced the maps supplied to him by Captain McClellan's, as entirely useless and claimed that, "I could get some Negro guide (Titus for instance) to mark out a better one in the sand."<sup>40</sup>

As the war dragged on, soldiers and civilians alike began to question the morality of the efforts to force Seminoles from their homeland. These sentiments grew stronger when General Jessup seized the Seminole leader Osceola while negotiating under a flag of truce. Confined at Fort Moutrie outside Charleston, South Carolina, Osceola soon died of fever. The fate of the Seminole war chief convinced many that the military had gone too far by using a flag of truce as bait to capture enemy combatants.<sup>41</sup> Realizing that the Seminoles could not be defeated through conventional warfare, the military decided to adopt some of the strategies the Seminoles had used against them to conquer the Native Americans in Florida. However, many civilians denounced these tactics as immoral, savage, and beneath the United States government.<sup>42</sup> The aforementioned decision to import bloodhounds for pursuing the Seminoles failed as a military tactic and proved a public relations disaster as the war's opponents damned the decision as inhumane and claimed the army wanted the dogs to kill fleeing Seminoles. Finally, the military explicitly targeted, killed, and captured civilians, destroyed food supplies, and began a practice of executing any captured Seminole warriors on the spot.<sup>43</sup> These strategies further undermined the public's support of the war.

Some went further than moral uncertainty, and recognized that they were on the wrong side of history. The government's ruthless actions, they deplored, violated the stated ideals of the United States. In a letter home to his father, Hunter referred to the Seminoles as, "a great people."<sup>44</sup> Colonel Zachary Taylor, after taking command of the war effort in Florida, issued an order of execution for all Seminole Warriors taken prisoner by the army, prompting Hunter to declare, triumphantly and with a self-assurance rarely found in his journals, "I would humbly asservate (sic), that no Indian prisoner while under my command shall suffer a premeditated death – I should be proud of an opportunity of showing my utter disrespect for such an order."<sup>45</sup> By sending down orders like this one, the high command pushed Hunter further to a conclusion that he already had come close to before. He recognized that his role in the Seminole Wars on the side of the United States constituted a crime that he could never fully be absolved of, declaring, "I acknowledge the

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<sup>39</sup> Hunter Diary, 16.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 24.

<sup>41</sup> Missall, *The Seminole Wars*, 137.

<sup>42</sup> Robbins, *Last in Their Class*, 50.

<sup>43</sup> Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*, 102.

<sup>44</sup> Nathaniel Wyche Hunter to Arch Hunter, May 17, 1839, Hunter Correspondence.

<sup>45</sup> Hunter Diary, 26-27.

corn and cry out ‘O! My offense is rank, it smells to heaven.’<sup>46</sup> After trying long and hard to find a justification for his involvement in the war, and the war in general, he came to realize that claims made about the Seminoles by the United States government that painted the Native Americans as barbarous savages inclined to the murder of women and children were entirely false.<sup>47</sup> He called the treaty that the United States hoped to enforce on the Seminoles through the Second Seminole War as, “a compact begot in fraud and brought forth in the blackest villainy and now in process of condemnation aided by the vilest machinations man or demon could invent.”<sup>48</sup> He realized that any extravagant or cruel acts that the Seminoles committed constituted a desperate attempt at saving their civilians and their homeland against a power that aimed to wipe them completely from the face of the earth.<sup>49</sup> Although Hunter’s offered a powerful condemnation of the Seminole Wars, his critique did not stand in isolation. Other soldiers offered similar denunciations of the war and its nature. One Captain Hitchcock praised the Seminoles for, “nobly defend[ing] their country against our attempt to enforce a fraudulent treaty.”<sup>50</sup> John T. Sprague, another soldier in the war, said of the Seminoles that, “their sin is patriotism, as true as ever burned in the hearts of the most civilized.”<sup>51</sup> Others compared the Seminoles to the Founding Fathers, as they, like the American patriots of the Revolutionary War, fought for their rights and nation.<sup>52</sup>

When the end of the Second Seminole War finally came, the beleaguered captain of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons “likened the sight of the ship coming to take him from Florida to the vista of the Promised Land when the Children of Israel first gazed upon it.”<sup>53</sup> Hunter, however, never truly managed to forget the criminal nature of the war in which he took part. He declared that if “one drop of Indian blood should soil your hands like Lady MacBeth you may cry to all eternity, ‘Out damned spot.’”<sup>54</sup> Sadly, unlike Hunter, most Americans failed to make the assertion, “I’m opposed to fighting Indians anyhow.”<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 28. “I acknowledge the corn,” means that the person is recognizing a charge levied against them to be true, as in a court trial.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>50</sup> Robbins, *Last in Their Class*, 49- 50.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, 50.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, 53.

<sup>54</sup> Hunter Diary, 28.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*.

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## **Jewish Resistance to Roman Colonialism**

### **By Aaron Gladstone**

The political history of the Kingdom of Judea is one of conquest and liberation. Before 140 BCE, various Near Eastern empires conquered and reconquered the territory, the last of which was the Macedonian successor state, Seleucid Empire. However, in 140 BCE Jewish revolutionaries successfully overthrew Seleucid rule and gained political recognition by the Roman Senate a year later.<sup>56</sup> This revolution led to the establishment of the politically independent Hasmonean dynasty, an independence which lasted until Roman invasion. During the interim, Judea and Rome engaged in bilateral diplomatic relations, in which the Judeans requested Roman assistance in fending off further Seleucid invasions.<sup>57</sup> However, internally, the Hasmonean dynasty was chaotic, with various factions vying for political power. This chaos threatened the political stability of both Judea and the surrounding region, which allowed for Roman annexation in 63 BCE.<sup>58</sup>

After annexation, the Jewish people in Judea retained some political autonomy, but the invasion of the greater Mesopotamian territory by the Parthians precipitated the establishment of King Herod as a client king of Rome around the years 40-37 BCE.<sup>59</sup> The establishment of King Herod marked the end of any political autonomy of Judea; it had become a non-sovereign territory of Rome. After the death of Herod in 4 BCE, Rome established a military governor who commanded a significant detachment of Roman soldiers, thus cementing Judea's status as a formal Roman colony.<sup>60</sup>

Even before the complete obliteration of a nominally independent Judean government, Jews did not peacefully submit to Roman dominion. This tension largely precipitated the stages of Roman colonialism, from autonomy to Herod to formal colonization, as Jewish struggle would result in stronger and more direct Roman rule.<sup>61</sup> As such, the Roman colonization and domination of Jews was a time of struggle, culminating in the Bar Kokhba War between 132-136 CE. Roman rule did not limit itself to political domination, as Jewish resistance approached the Bar Kokhba War, and in its aftermath, Rome implemented severe restrictions on Jewish life ranging from bans on conversions, to the destruction of the Jewish Temple – the holiest site in Judaism – to the dejudaisation of the entire Judean territory.<sup>62</sup> This mix of political and cultural colonization is not unique to Rome and similarly the methods of resistance undertaken by the Jews echo throughout various decolonization and revolutionary movements.

The cultural restriction implemented by Romans ended traditional Jewish practices, but also initiated a cultural renaissance within Judaism. This renaissance saw the creation of new religious and cultural ideas that centered around anti-Roman and – as a function of Roman

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<sup>56</sup> Doran, Robert. 2006. "The Revolt of the Maccabees." *The National Interest* 99-103. Page 103

<sup>57</sup> Hall, John F. 1996. "The Roman Province of Judea: A Historical Overview." *Brigham Young University Studies* 319-336. Page 320-321

<sup>58</sup> Hall, "The Roman Province of Judea: A Historical Overview." 1996, Page 321

<sup>59</sup> Hall, "The Roman Province of Judea: A Historical Overview." 1996, Page 323

<sup>60</sup> Hall, "The Roman Province of Judea: A Historical Overview." 1996, Page 327-328

<sup>61</sup> Mor, Menahem. 2016. *The Second Jewish Revolt*. Leiden: Brill. Page 12

<sup>62</sup> Aberbach, David. 2000. "The Roman-Jewish wars and Hebrew cultural nationalism." *Nations and Nationalism* 347-362. Page 355

omnipresence – anti-Hellenist sentiments.<sup>63</sup> These ideas sort themselves into three separate categories: resistance through the revitalization of existing mythology and history, novel intellectual resistance, and physical resistance. Contextually, the revitalization of existing mythology and history refers to Jews placing themselves in continuity with previous Jewish resistance movements, namely the Maccabean revolt and the Biblical story of Exodus. Novel intellectual resistance refers to the generation of new religious texts, such as the Mishnah and the Talmuds, authored by the Tannaim and Amoraim (respectively) during this period.<sup>64</sup> Lastly, physical resistance refers to direct armed revolt, namely the revolts of 66, 115, and 132 CE.

The first category, the revitalization of existing mythology and history, is both the groundwork of the other categories and a form of colonial resistance. Up until the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, Jewish theological authority was divided into three camps, two of which are important to anti-colonial resistance. The three camps were the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Essenes. The Essenes were a pietist offshoot of the other two that isolated themselves from the world and thus did not participate in anti-Roman activities. The other two groups, the Sadducees and the Pharisees, however, did interact with the Romans.

The Sadducees were the hereditary priestly class. They held important positions within the Second Temple and wielded social and cultural power independent of the political leader, be they Herod or a Roman governor. This existing position of power complicated their relationship with the Romans. Rome often developed relationships with provincial elites to gain and maintain control, and the Sadducees were no exception.<sup>65</sup> Thus, their detractors – namely the Pharisees, but other contemporary historians as well – accused them of collaborating with Romans against the indigenous Jewish populace.<sup>66</sup> However, a more charitable and less politically biased characterization of the Sadducees understands them as local leaders caught between a dissatisfied local populace and an overwhelmingly powerful outside force.<sup>67</sup>

Despite the historical murkiness of the Sadducees' political leanings, they subscribed to a centralized, iconographic, non-interpretative vision of religion, centered on the Second Temple. In this regard they stifled religiously based anti-colonial movements because they felt that such movements threatened their existing power. However, the class could not remain in power long after Rome destroyed the physical source of their power: the Second Temple. Nevertheless, their influence remained as images and symbols – especially that of the Second Temple – and became common rallying calls by anti-colonialists.

In opposition to the Sadducees were the Pharisees. The Pharisees were a group of non-hereditary scholars who preached an interpretive form of Judaism. This means that the Pharisees believed that the Jewish people had the power and authority to interpret the Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible) in novel ways. Through these interpretations, the Pharisees sought to develop an anti-Roman ideology. Their main tool was their belief and espousal of the Oral Law, which was an

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<sup>63</sup> Aberbach, "The Roman-Jewish wars and Hebrew cultural nationalism." 2000. Page 355

<sup>64</sup> The Tannaim are the first generations of rabbis after the destruction of the Temple

<sup>65</sup> Botha, Pieter JJ. 1996. "History and point of view: understanding the Sadducees." *Neotestamentica* 235-280. Page 258

<sup>66</sup> Botha, "History and point of view: understanding the Sadducees." 1996, Page 258

<sup>67</sup> Botha, "History and point of view: understanding the Sadducees." 1996, Page 259

oral tradition that served as a companion to the written Tanakh.<sup>68</sup> Thus, when the Pharisees protested Sadducean centralization and domination, they also indirectly criticized Roman rule. This is because their liberalized notion of Judaism – which they irrevocably tied to governance – rejected central authority and rule by divine right, rather they wanted a meritocracy wherein community leaders gained authority by demonstrating knowledge of the values of the local community.

The new rabbinical class furthered this strategy. The Rabbis were a class of Jewish scholars, community leaders, and spiritual guides that emerged after the destruction of the Temple. However, the Rabbis preserved theological legitimacy by connecting themselves to the Pharisaic tradition. By developing new interpretations, the Pharisees, and more significantly the Rabbis, could draw on existing Jewish stories and refocus them on Rome. The Jewish populace readily received this idea because the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans had weakened the foundations of Judaism.<sup>69</sup> As a result, the Jewish people were in want of a new ideology that reaffirmed their faith and targeted Rome.

Three distinct revivals emerged in the aftermath of the destruction of the Temple. The first revival was a new tradition surrounding the Passover holiday. The Passover holiday celebrates the Jewish liberation from Egypt and thus it is easy to draw parallels between Passover and Rome. Before the destruction of the Second Temple and Roman rule, the celebration centered around the sacrifice in the Temple. After the destruction, the holiday refocused around the liberation from Egypt and the custom developed to retell the entire story, with emphasis on the plagues God inflicted on their imperial overlords. The holiday prayer book – the Haggadah – memorializes this, wherein a group of highly influential Tannaim reflect on the nature of the service. The passage is strange because one of the Tannaim states that he does not understand why the Exodus story is told during the evening service.<sup>70</sup> It may seem surprising that an old, wise Rabbi would not know why the service is structured the way it is, but the question he poses serves as a subtle nod to changing notions of Passover and the destruction of the Temple. When the Rabbi was a child – i.e. before the Temple's destruction – the story of Exodus was not told in the evening service; the Rabbis moved its retelling when liberation became the focus of the holiday. In fact, the entire Haggadah is littered with references to the communal strength of the Jewish people, the promise of liberation, and the supremacy of God.<sup>71</sup> Each of these notions would be strange during the time of the Temple and before Roman rule, but would have resonated with the Jewish people after 70 CE.

The second revival was the emergence of Hannukah as a formal holiday. The historical event on which Hannukah is based is the successful Jewish revolt against the Seleucids.<sup>72</sup> As with Passover, it is easy to understand why this event drew the attention of the Tannaim – and to some extent, the Pharisees. Again, the Tannaim cautiously nuanced the holiday's celebration. Rather than create an overt celebration of the rededication of the Temple, which the Romans would not

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<sup>68</sup> Rudich, Vasily. 2015. *Religious Dissent in the Roman Empire*. New York: Routledge, Taylor, and Francis Group. Page 21

<sup>69</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 27

<sup>70</sup> Goldberg, Nathan. 1949. *Passover Haggadah*. Hoboken: Ktav Publishing House, Inc. Page 10

<sup>71</sup> Goldberg, *Passover Haggadah*, 1949

<sup>72</sup> Zeitlin, Solomon. 1938. "Hanukkah: Its Origin and Its Significance." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 1-36. Page 3

have received well, they modeled the celebration after the festival of Sukkot (Tabernacles).<sup>73</sup> As such, Hannukah and Sukkot share the same number of days, the theme of spiritual purification, and the presence of ritual fire.<sup>74</sup> As a result, the Jews living under Roman rule learned to associate the two holidays. Therefore, during the Bar Kokhba Revolt of the 130s, when coins issued by the rebels contained images of symbols associated with Sukkot, the Romans – who continuously remained ignorant of Jewish custom – could not have been aware of the hidden meaning.<sup>75</sup>

The third revival was the belief in messianism. Messianism has an uneven status in ancient Jewish theology. The Jewish belief in messianism likely originated within the context of the Babylonian exile. This understanding arises from the Book of Isaiah, which contains strong allusions to a future leader, a descendant from King David who will restore the kingdom of God.<sup>76</sup> However, it is not clear that during the Second Temple period, either the Jewish people or the Jewish beliefs clung to such a strong notion.<sup>77</sup> In fact, neither the Sadducees' nor Pharisees' position on the messiah is known.<sup>78</sup> However, it is abundantly clear that after the destruction of the Temple and the ascension of the Rabbis, attitudes towards messianism changed greatly. In the decades after the destruction of the Temple (70-130 CE), Jewish writings reflecting a "messianic hope" and predicting a savior that will restore the Kingdom of Israel emerged throughout the Jewish theological-intellectual community.<sup>79</sup> These ideas came to fruition during the Bar Kokhba revolt when Rabbi Akiba – whom the Talmud refers to as the Chief of all Sages – himself, proclaimed Bar Kokhba the "King Messiah".<sup>80</sup>

In these cases, it seems that Roman rule, with which accompanied cultural dominance,<sup>81</sup> precipitated the revitalization of these three historical ideas. Before direct Roman rule, the Pharisees began to push back against the religious authority of the Sadducees by espousing an interpretative Oral Law. As Roman domination increased, the Pharisees and Rabbis reintroduced and modified older religious ideas back into the mainstream. They shifted Passover from sacrifice to liberation, codified Hannukah with other holidays, and reintroduced messianism into normative Judaism. It should be noted that while the other two notions survive to modern times, the idea of messianism that Rabbi Akiba preached and Bar Kokhba embodied, largely dissipated after the collapse of the rebellion.<sup>82</sup>

The idea of revitalizing one's past as a method of colonial resistance is not unique to Jews in Judea between 60 BCE – 130 CE. The idea exists, with varied specifics, in many decolonizing movements. One analogous movement is the religious and philosophical efforts of Kwasi Wiredu and the Akan people in Africa. Wiredu contends that the Akan people, as well as other Africans, should reject the philosophy of their Western colonizers in favor of pursuing their own philosophic

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<sup>73</sup> Zeitlin, "Hanukkah: Its Origin and Its Significance." 1938, Page 19

<sup>74</sup> Zeitlin, "Hanukkah: Its Origin and Its Significance." 1938, Page 20-21

<sup>75</sup> Wacks, Mel. 2012. *The Second Revolt*. <http://www.amuseum.org/book/page19.html>.

<sup>76</sup> Isaiah 11:1-11:10

<sup>77</sup> Schiffman, Lawrence H. 2016. "The Concept of the Messiah in Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature." *Review & Expositor* 235-246. Page 239

<sup>78</sup> Schiffman, . "The Concept of the Messiah in Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature." 2016, Page 240

<sup>79</sup> Schiffman, . "The Concept of the Messiah in Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature." 2016, Page 240

<sup>80</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 439

<sup>81</sup> Aberbach, "'The Roman-Jewish wars and Hebrew cultural nationalism." 2000. Page 355

<sup>82</sup> Schiffman, . "The Concept of the Messiah in Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature." 2016, Page 242

and religious histories in order to liberate themselves from Western dominance.<sup>83</sup> Similar to the Rabbis who used interpretation to distinguish themselves from and to rebuke the Romans, Wiredu argues that African religious philosophers must view their religion as being either opposed or wholly separate from the religion of their conquerors.<sup>84</sup> In both instances, religious authorities turn to pre-conquest ideas in order to distinguish the colonized from their colonizers.

The second method of anti-colonialism undertaken by the Jews during this period was the generation of new religious and philosophical traditions. Two seminal texts contain much of these new ideas. They are the Mishnah and the Talmud. Traditionally, the Mishnah is identified as the codification of the Oral Law of the Rabbis. The Mishnah remained an oral text until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, when Judah ha-Nasi authorized its writing. It contains both the Oral Law as well as the Tannaitic interpretations of those laws. The Mishnah is structured into six sections, with *Pirkei Avot*, which contains the ethical teachings of the Tannaim necessitating special note, as it is in this section that the Tannaim most notably rebuke Rome. The other text, the Talmud, refers to two separate Talmuds, one authored in Babylon and the other in Jerusalem. While the Jerusalem was formalized in 450 CE, the Babylonian was formalized around 600 CE. These books contain commentary, written by Amoraim, later Rabbis, on the Mishnah.<sup>85</sup> The Talmud treats itself as conversing with the Mishnah and often interacts with specific verses and responds to them. In fact, some scholars suggest that these texts stem from “a local provincial movement within its Roman imperial setting.”<sup>86</sup>

The most important theme regarding Rome in the Mishnah is the destruction of the Temple. This importance is evident because the destruction hangs like a specter over the entire book; the Tannaim were the first generation of Rabbis after the destruction. As a result, the destruction is felt in two ways. The first is direct theological debates about the state of Judaism in a post-Temple world, while the other is strict avoidance of the topic in favor of developing a Judaism that did not need a Temple.<sup>87</sup> In each case, different authors are responding to Roman rule.

Mishnaic discussion of the destruction of the Temple does not wallow in self-pity or unproductive anger, rather it reclaims the destruction of the Temple as a way to evolve. One of the most important Tannaim, Rabbi Eliezer, states the at the destruction of the temple permitted the Rabbis “to become like Bible teachers,” which in turn would allow the Torah, and Judaism, to spread farther than it had during Temple times.<sup>88</sup> This spread connects to the earlier Pharisaic notion of decentralizing religion. Rabbi Eliezer then suggests that Jews can only rely on God, rather than earthly governments, for protection and salvation.<sup>89</sup> This suggestion is an implicit rebuke of several Roman practices. Rome had pursued aggressive anti-Jewish policies that forbade

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<sup>83</sup> Wiredu, Kwasi. 1998. "Toward Decolonizing African Philosophy and Religion." *African Studies Quarterly* 17-46. Page 27-28

<sup>84</sup> Wiredu, "Toward Decolonizing African Philosophy and Religion." 1998, Page 37-38

<sup>85</sup> Note: The dates for these texts vary widely because much of these texts were oral long before they were written. However, the ideas and quotes within them – for this paper – will generally be centered around the period between 60 BCE and 300 CE.

<sup>86</sup> Lapin, Hayim. 2012. *Rabbis as Romans: The Rabbinic Movement in Palestine, 100-400 CE*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>87</sup> Hodkin, Bernie. 2014. "Theologies of Resistance: A Reexamination of Rabbinic Traditions About Rome." In *Reactions to Empire*, by John A Dunne and Dan Batovici, 161-174. Tübingen : Mohr Siebeck. Page 164-165

<sup>88</sup> Hodkin, "Theologies of Resistance: A Reexamination of Rabbinic Traditions About Rome." Page 165

<sup>89</sup> Hodkin, "Theologies of Resistance: A Reexamination of Rabbinic Traditions About Rome." Page 165



the study of Torah.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, Roman government existed as a theocracy. Thus, when Rabbi Eliezer praises the spreading of Torah he is strongly rejecting both Roman colonizing policies and the entire Roman structure of society.

There is also a rabbinical discussion of Divine retribution as a result of the sacking of Jerusalem. The story is constructed across texts and rabbinical sources, but it also records a conversation in which the Rabbis discuss the punishment of “Titus the Wicked,” the Roman general and future emperor that destroyed Jerusalem. The Rabbis say that God personally punished him, in Rome, by causing a gnat to eat away at his brain until he ordered his soldiers to cut open his head, thus killing him.<sup>91</sup> Again, the polemic against Rome is two-fold. The first, God kills Titus in Rome, far away from Judea and the seat of the Empire. The second is that God punishes a man who thought he was god-like with something as insignificant as a gnat.<sup>92</sup> These stories percolated down from their rabbinical origins into common parlance and thus constitute novel religious beliefs developing in reaction and against Roman rule.

Among the portions of the Mishnah, Talmud, and other contemporary sources, that choose to not directly address the destruction of the Temple, there are two types that act as religious innovations against Roman rule. The first is *Pirkei Avot* – the ethical teachings of the Tannaim – and the stories of the martyrs. These two types served as interesting responses to Roman cultural dominance. Rome presented itself to the world as a morally superior empire that could civilize the barbarians. However, colonization on the ground was characterized by economic extraction, plunder, and pillaging.<sup>93</sup> The two innovations exploited this dichotomy.

*Pirkei Avot*, as previously stated, is filled with ethical teachings. Generally, they espouse a moral life filled with Jewish learning. As an example, here is an excerpt from Chapter 3 of *Pirkei Avot*:

“R. Chananiah, the son of Teradion, said, 'If two sit together and interchange no words of Torah, they are a meeting of scorners, concerning whom it is said, 'The godly man sitteth not in the seat of the scorners'; but if two sit together and interchange words of Torah, the Divine Presence abides among them; as it is said, 'Then they that feared the Lord spake one with the other; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.' Now the Scripture enables me to draw this inference in respect to two persons; whence can it be deduced that if even one person sedulously occupies himself with the Torah, the Holy One, blessed be He, appoints unto him a reward? Because it is said, 'though he sit alone, and meditate in stillness, yet he taketh it (the reward) upon him.'”

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<sup>90</sup> Kalmin, Richard. 2006. *Jewish Babylonia Between Persia and Roman Palestine*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Page 23

<sup>91</sup> Hodkin, “Theologies of Resistance: A Reexamination of Rabbinic Traditions About Rome.” Page 170

<sup>92</sup> Hodkin, “Theologies of Resistance: A Reexamination of Rabbinic Traditions About Rome.” Page 172

<sup>93</sup> Hodkin, “Theologies of Resistance: A Reexamination of Rabbinic Traditions About Rome.” Page 163

In this moral lesson, the Rabbi espouses quiet, studious, lifestyle instead of callously invading other territory and imposing one's moral system elsewhere. This is a harsh, but subtle rebuke of Roman imperialism.

An even harsher rebuke of the Roman presence in Judea was the near-canonization of ten Tannaim that the Romans brutally executed for crimes concerning the practice of Judaism. Judaism rejects the notion of sainthood; the closest notion is the Pharisaic and later Rabbinic concept of angels. Nevertheless, the Talmud records the names of ten specific Tannaim that future Rabbis commanded that Jews, throughout the Diaspora, remember their names and how they died every year on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish year.<sup>94</sup> This preservation of the memory of brutal executions, which include the flaying of the skin of Rabbi Akiba and the burning of others, directly refutes the idea of Roman moral superiority. By formalizing the memory of their executions, the Rabbis of the Talmud – which were alive during Roman rule – changed Judaism.

Once again, innovating new cultural, religious, or philosophic responses against imperial colonizers is not unique to the Tannaim. One analog is Aimé Césaire's work *Discourses on Colonialism*. This literary work, in a form that blurs poetry and prose, navigates the complex effects and legacy of colonialism. Césaire suggests that each individual instance of colonial aggression and oppression, such as continued raping, murder, and mutilation across the colonized world, desensitizes the European world to such a point that the only violence they could recognize was the overwhelming barbarity of Nazism.<sup>95</sup> This desensitization robbed the Europeans of their morality the way that the Rabbis argued that Rome's barbarity stripped them of any moral superiority. In fact, it is likely that Césaire would contend that white Western Europe inherited this legacy from Rome.

The third method of colonial resistance utilized by the Jews was direct rebellion. The Jews resisted and resented Roman rule since its inception in 63 BCE. As a result, the government, until after the Second Revolt concluded 200 years later, did not have firm political control over the region. Roman rule was continuously challenged by a radical group of Jewish zealots, called the *sicarii*, that frequently assassinated Roman officials.<sup>96</sup> Consequently, the Jews revolted several times between 63 BCE and 136 CE. Of these revolts, two stand out, known as the First and Second Jewish Revolt.

The First Revolt actually began as a riot between the Greeks and the Jews living in Jerusalem in 60 CE. However, the violence spilled over into the rest of the city, leading to cessation of business and religious affairs, yet the Roman governor did not intervene. Instead, he forced his way into the Temple to collect taxes with a group of soldiers. This desecration sparked another protest, but the governor bloodily quashed it, even crucifying Jewish Roman citizens.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Singer, Isidore, and Broydé Isaac. 2002. *The Ten Martyrs*. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/10447-martyrs-the-ten>.

<sup>95</sup> Césaire, Aimé. 1972. *Discourses on Colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press. Page 36

<sup>96</sup> Telushkin, Joseph. 1991. "The Great Revolt." *Jewish Virtual Library*. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-great-revolt-66-70-ce>.

<sup>97</sup> Josephus, Flavius. 2009. "The Wars of the Jews or the History of the Destruction of Jerusalem." *The Project Gutenberg*. January 10. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2850/2850-h/2850-h.htm#link22HCH0014>. Bk2:Chp14

However, this only caused further violence, forcing the client king to flee the city of Jerusalem for the Galilee, which was a hotbed of radicalized Jewish radicalized activity.<sup>98</sup>

The success of these opening battles served as a great recruitment motivator for the rebels, as the idea of overthrowing Rome radicalized many cautious moderates. Unfortunately, the Jewish successes also attracted the attention of the Roman army. When the Romans received reinforcements, they forced the Jews out of the Galilee and back to Jerusalem. Once they were trapped in Jerusalem, a civil war broke out between the radicals and moderates. Thus, when Rome arrived, the Jews could not mount a defense, which led to a total Roman victory, the destruction of the Temple, and the burning of the city, all by the summer of 70 CE.<sup>99</sup>

The destruction of the Temple ensured continuous tensions between the Jews and the Romans. Thus, between the two revolts, the two groups frequently skirmished with each other.<sup>100</sup> This constant violence and chaos, along with the presence of an occupying army, served to radicalize Jews who avoided involvement in the First Jewish Revolt.<sup>101</sup> During the interwar period, anti-colonial movements emerged among the Jews and an anti-Jewish emperor, Hadrian, ascended to the throne.<sup>102</sup> Hadrian's anti-Jewish policies set the stage for the next rebellion.<sup>103</sup>

Thus, when a charismatic Jewish leader arose in Judea, the spark of rebellion followed soon after. This leader was Simeon bar Kokhba. Though the primary motivations of bar Kokhba remain unknown, by the eve of the revolt he was known as prince and called for a free Israel.<sup>104</sup> His commitment to Israel, Judaism, and his cause attracted the support of Rabbi Akiba, who proclaimed him the Messiah, thus strengthening his appeal to Jews.<sup>105</sup> Initially, bar Kokhba enjoyed success, he successfully liberated large regions of Judea and even engaged Rome in the Mediterranean.<sup>106</sup> However, as with the First Revolt, once Rome's main force engaged the rebels, the revolt crumbled. At the last battle, the Romans took no mercy, killing every rebel.<sup>107</sup>

The Jews did not enjoy lasting success when rebelling against Rome. After the collapse of the bar Kokhba, Hadrian implemented even stronger anti-Jewish policies, precipitating the martyrdom of the ten Tannaim as well as countless other religious Jews. Nevertheless, the fact that the Jews revolted is important part of their decolonizing history. Frantz Fanon, in *Concerning Violence*, writes that revolting, even if it leads to death, preserves the zeal needed for liberation.<sup>108</sup> Fanon argues that the fallen rebel provides an example and a blueprint for future generations of

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<sup>98</sup> Telushkin, "The Great Revolt," 1991

<sup>99</sup> Telushkin, "The Great Revolt," 1991

<sup>100</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 31

<sup>101</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 32

<sup>102</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 111

<sup>103</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 145

<sup>104</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 421

<sup>105</sup> Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt*, 2016, Page 439

<sup>106</sup> Jewish Virtual Library. n.d. "Ancient Jewish History: The Bar-Kokhba Revolt."

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-bar-kokhba-revolt-132-135-ce>.

<sup>107</sup> JVL, "Ancient Jewish History: The Bar-Kokhba Revolt"

<sup>108</sup> Fanon, Frantz. 1961. "Concerning Violence." *The Wretched of the Earth*. Accessed March 29, 2017.

<http://www.openanthropology.org/fanonviolence.htm>. Page 69

resistors.<sup>109</sup> In this sense, one can identify bar Kokhba with the other colonial revolutionaries, both successful and unsuccessful, throughout history.

The history of Rome in Judea is not that different than the histories of other colonizers and colonized peoples. When faced with Roman domination, the Jews of Judea responded with cultural revival, the genesis of new religious ideas, and outright rebellion. Their actions impacted Judaism into the modern era. While they ultimately could not liberate themselves from Roman colonization, their actions serve as an inspiration to all colonized peoples struggling against an indomitable foreign power. By connecting their actions, beliefs, and motivations, one can trace the process and struggle of decolonization across centuries, continents, and ideologies.

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<sup>109</sup> Fanon "Concerning Violence." 1961, Page 69

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**Reimagining the Maccabees, Reimagining Bar Kokhba, Early Zionists and Their Flirtation  
with Antiquity**  
**By David Malamud**

In early Zionist ideology, echoes of the past permeated as powerful persuasive techniques to inspire and recruit Zionists. Early Zionism was a new form of Judaism, reinventing and manipulating Jewish holidays, memories, and traditions to support the varying and controversial goals of the nascent movement. No holiday was as sacrosanct to the Zionists as Hanukkah, a holiday that carried little religious obligation and significance in traditional Judaism, but one which they imbued with themes of self-defense and national renewal.<sup>110</sup> For early Zionists, the heroes of Hanukkah — the Maccabee family also known as the Hasmonaeans — became heroes of Zionism, lending their family name to countless Zionist organizations and papers.<sup>111</sup> The Jewish holiday was transformed into a Zionist holiday, particularly in the Land of Israel, and as such, religious rites became Zionist rites, supplemented with new practices: public parades, torch bearers, marathons, pilgrimages to Modi'in (the home of the Hasmonaeans), and countless choreographed school plays retelling the story.<sup>112</sup> Some even argued that Hanukkah was no longer an appropriate name for the holiday, which should be renamed Festival of the Hasmonaeans.<sup>113</sup> Similarly charged with defiant self-defense and national renewal, the later hero, Bar Kokhba, and his eponymous revolt against Rome in 132-135 CE, served, albeit to a lesser extent, to motivate certain early Zionists.<sup>114</sup>

While the connection between early Zionists and ancient heroes is well established, there is limited scholarship exploring this phenomenon in depth. In their book, Jacob Shavit and Shoshanna Sitton demonstrate how Hanukkah became a Zionist holiday in the Land of Israel.<sup>115</sup> The work of Eliezer Don-Yehiya attests to the importance of Hanukkah and why it appealed so strongly to Zionists.<sup>116</sup> Michael Stanislawski describes, situates, and compares Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, Ephraim Moses Lilien, and Vladimir Jabotinsky's embrace of Zionism in the context

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<sup>110</sup> Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Hanukkah and the Myth of the Maccabees in Ideology and Society," in *Israeli Judaism: The Sociology of Religion in Israel*, ed. by Shlomo A. Deshen, Charles Seymour Liebman, Moshe Shokeid (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1995), p. 303.

<sup>111</sup> The Maccabees lent their name to many organizations, such as many local Jewish sports clubs, the umbrella "Young Maccabi" organization, the Maccabiah Jewish Games (a Zionist Olympics) and periodicals like *The Maccabean, A Monthly Magazine*. See, Rony Dror, "Brief History," *Maccabi World Union*, <http://www.maccabi.org/brief-history>.

<sup>112</sup> Don-Yehiya, "Hanukkah and the Myth of the Maccabees in Ideology and Society," p. 314; Jacob Shavit and Shoshana Sitton, *Staging and Stagers in Modern Jewish Palestine: The Creation of Festive Lore in a New Culture. 1882-1948*, trans. by Chaya Naor (Detroit : Wayne State University Press, 2004), pp. 66-71.

<sup>113</sup> Don-Yehiya, "Hanukkah and the Myth of the Maccabees in Ideology and Society," p. 315.

<sup>114</sup> Dror, "Brief History," *Maccabi World Union*, <http://www.maccabi.org/brief-history>.

<sup>115</sup> Shavit and Sitton, *Staging and Stagers in Modern Jewish Palestine*.

<sup>116</sup> Don-Yehiya, "Hanukkah and the Myth of the Maccabees in Ideology and Society."

of their Jewish, European, fin de siècle setting,<sup>117</sup> exploring Nordau and Jabotinsky's relationship to and glorification of ancient Jewish figures like the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba. This paper seeks to explore the whole pantheon of early Zionists, not just Herzl, Nordau, Lilien, and Jabotinsky.

From the modern roots of Zionism to the culmination of its aspirations, Zionists had utilized and sought to embody this new pantheon of national heroes from antiquity and live up to their heroic ancestry. Zionists conflated the Maccabees with Bar Kokhba, both militant heroes who defended the Jewish people against a foreign civilization that posed an existential threat to Judaism. The Zionists did not care that the Maccabean revolt succeeded and established a century-long dynasty, while the Bar Kokhba revolt failed and Bar Kokhba was executed by the Romans; the heroic defiance and assertions of Jewish nationality trumped these drastically different consequences. But the Zionists' ultimate messages evolved significantly over time in the following ways. For most, the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba were merely figurative models of a modern peaceful national renewal, but for some they were literal models of a militaristic national renewal.

Predating the modern Zionist movement by twenty years, Moses Hess was a German Jewish philosopher and socialist. In his 1862 treatise, *Rome and Jerusalem*, Hess claimed that through “the living development of oral law... great Jewish heroes arose, who fought so bravely against the Greek and Roman enemies of their nation.”<sup>118</sup> While not explicitly mentioning the Maccabees, the “great Jewish heroes” who fought against Greek enemies must refer to the Maccabees who rebelled against the Hellenistic Seleucid Dynasty. Likewise, the “heroes” who fought the Romans must also indirectly refer to Bar Kokhba. Furthermore, Hess states that the Jewish people will also owe its “future national regeneration” to the oral law, another ancient religious phenomenon, foreshadowing how he will later use the Maccabees as a figurative model for national renewal.<sup>119</sup>

In claiming the nation power of the Jewish people, Hess states that “twice it rose to new spiritual life and fought long and successfully against the mightiest as well as the most civilized peoples of antiquity — the Greeks and the Romans.”<sup>120</sup> Again alluding to the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba through their foes, the Greeks and Romans (respectively), Hess suggests that these figures will imbue the Jewish people with “new spiritual life.” Hess concludes with the claim that all Jews will be united when they “recognize themselves as the descendants of those heroes who fought the mightiest and the most civilized nations of antiquity: the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks and Romans, and succeeded in carrying on their struggle to the very end of the ancient world, which they alone survived.”<sup>121</sup> Hess asserted that modern Jews, heirs to heroes of antiquity like the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba, will be inspired to strive for their own modern national renewal. For

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<sup>117</sup> Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle, Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>118</sup> Moses Hess, *Rome and Jerusalem*, trans. Meyer Waxman (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1918), p. 104.

<sup>119</sup> While blending these historic Jewish revolts are rhetorically useful, his claim that they were all inspired by Oral Law is historically inaccurate since the emergence and primacy of an oral tradition is earliest attested by the Pharisees of the century after the Hasmonaean revolt. Moses Hess, *Rome and Jerusalem*, p. 104.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.



Hess, the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba number among the many heroes of the Jewish past who defiantly defended their nation.

Even the name of the treatise evokes antiquity. While also a reference to contemporary Italian nationalism and *Risorgimento*, a model of national regeneration that Hess cites as inspiration for modern Jews, Rome was not the center of the modern nationalist movement and indeed was not yet part of the new Italian state when Hess published his book.<sup>122</sup> Rome was the final ancient empire and civilization against which the Jews rebelled, led by Zionist heroes like Bar Kokhba. *Rome and Jerusalem* therefore both evoked the present national movement in Italy and the past struggle of Jews for national renewal against a respectable, but foreign and threatening power: Rome. Hess was one of the first modern Jewish nationalists to seek figurative models of national renewal in ancient Jewish heroes and their struggles. After Hess, two decades passed before Zionism became a popular movement of committed ideologues.

Among these committed early ideologues, the Russian Jew Leon Pinsker was an influential early Zionist, founding Hovevei Zion (The Lovers of Zion), and was the first Zionist to directly refer to the Maccabees. In his 1882 classical Zionist treatise, *Auto-Emancipation*, after describing the “pitiable figure” of current Jewish life, Pinsker noted, “What a miserable role for a nation which descends from the Maccabees!”<sup>123</sup> Later in the treatise, Pinsker discussed the national renewal of the Jewish people, highlighting the Maccabees as a model of national renewal. As one of the first early Zionists and author of a treatise that became popular among later Zionists, Pinsker’s powerful, if brief, reference to the Maccabees was quickly mimicked by his contemporaries and heirs.

While fellow Russian Jewish intellectual Moshe Leib Lilienblum changed his attitude to Judaism throughout his life, like Pinsker, he quickly embraced the nascent Zionist movement, albeit favoring the socialist Labor branch.<sup>124</sup> In his 1883 essay, “The Future of Our People,” Lilienblum wrote, “When Antiochus condemned the Jewish people to death, its salvation did not come from Jerusalem, but from the Hasmonean village of Modin. The wealthy assimilationists of that capital, together with proud Sadducees, submitted shamefully to the insolence of the Greek hangmen. It took the true sons of the people, the unbelievably courageous Hasmonean priests, to rescue Israel, and only afterward did Jerusalem, too, join with them.”<sup>125</sup> Lilienblum praised the Maccabees for standing defiant to Antiochus, the Seleucid emperor, and saving the Jewish people. Through an in-depth description of the Hasmonaeen revolt, especially in comparison to Pinsker’s passing mention, Lilienblum suggested that the Maccabees were an inspiration for a figurative modern Jewish renewal to help preserve the Jewish people.

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. 36, 76.

<sup>123</sup> Leon Pinsker, *Auto-Emancipation*, trans. Dr. D. S. Blondheim, (New York: Federation of American Zionists, 1916), p. 8.

<sup>124</sup> “Moshe Leib Lilienblum,” in *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*, ed. by Arthur Hertzberg (New York: Atheneum, 1981), p. 177.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

Lilienblum later outlined three paths for the Jewish people, implying that the ideal was the third and final one: “to initiate our efforts for the renaissance of Israel in the land of its forefathers, where the next few generations may attain, to the fullest extent, a normal national life.”<sup>126</sup> While Lilienblum’s earlier reference to the Maccabees, “the true sons of the people,” glorifies their courage, perhaps even with a militaristic reverence, this later path suggests that his reference to the Maccabees was not a call to arm. Instead, Lilienblum transformed the Maccabees, like many later Zionists, from local priestly elites to representatives of the people, branding them as proto-Labor Zionists and bold figurative examples of popular national renewal. Contemporary with and in the decade after Lilienblum, foundational figures in Zionism reshaped their message, incorporating these heroic ancient heroes in new and more nuanced ways.

One of these foundational figures, Theodor Herzl, was the father of Political Zionism who featured the Maccabees prominently in his writing as a model of Jewish national renewal. In his 1896 *The Jewish State*, and in a summary of the treatise, entitled “The Solution of the Jewish Question,” published in the same year in English in the *London Jewish Chronicle*, Herzl concluded: “And what glory awaits the selfless fighters for the cause! For this reason I believe that a generation of marvelous Jews will spring into existence. The Maccabees will rise again!”<sup>127</sup> To Herzl, the Maccabees provided a clear model for modern Zionists since they risked everything for their cause, a national renewal of the Jewish people. While this fleeting reference in the conclusion to the Maccabees lacks the historical context that his predecessor Moshe Lilienblum provided, feeling more Leon Pinsker’s brief mention, Herzl clearly understands that the name carries a symbolic power as a figurative rallying call for Jewish national renewal.

Unsurprisingly, in his speeches at Hanukkah parties and Maccabean Club meetings, Herzl also referred to the Maccabees, using them as figurative models of national renewal. In a speech given at a Hanukkah party held by the “Jewish-National” student fraternity in Vienna in 1896, “At the Maccabean Celebration,” Herzl mentioned, “you know that Judah the Maccabee did battle on two fronts — against the enemy without and against the enemy within.”<sup>128</sup> Explaining later that the enemy within, “indifference,” must be attacked first, Herzl used Judah Maccabee as a figurative model of national renewal that he urged the fraternity members to emulate.

In a later speech, “Address Before the Maccabean Club,” to a group of upper middle class British Jews in 1901 London, Herzl stated, “Nowadays there is no longer a question of raising an army of warrior Maccabeans; nay, only Maccabeans of labor, of intellectual and physical labor!”<sup>129</sup> Completely dismissing the Maccabees as a literal militaristic model of self-defense, Herzl pays homage to the namesake of the organization and uses the Maccabees as a model of spiritual renewal. Among the many speeches given in his career, only these two referred to the Maccabees

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Theodor Herzl, “The Solution of the Jewish Question,” in *Zionist Writings: Essays and Addresses: Volume One January, 1896 – June, 1898*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Herzl Press, 1973), p. 33; Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, trans. Sylvie D'Avigdor (New York: Scopus Publishing Company, 1988), p. 157.

<sup>128</sup> Herzl, “At the Maccabean Celebration,” in *Zionist Writings: Essays and Addresses: Volume One*, p. 60.

<sup>129</sup> Herzl, “Address Before the Maccabean Club,” in *Zionist Writings: Essays and Addresses: Volume Two, August, 1898 – May, 1904*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Herzl Press, 1975), p. 165.

and are delivered in settings that have direct connections to the Maccabees, demonstrating Herzl's awareness of the rhetorical power of the Maccabees as a figurative symbol of national renewal.

Earlier in December of 1897, Herzl wrote an article, "The Menorah," that used Hanukkah and the courageous Maccabees as a figurative model of national renewal. The article is a third person narrative of "how Herzl found his way back to Judaism" in which he noted:

In previous years he had let the festival which for centuries had illuminated the marvel of the Maccabees with the glow of candles pass by unobserved. Now, however, he used it as an occasion to provide his children with a beautiful memory for the future. An attachment to the ancient nation was to be instilled early in these young souls. A Menorah was acquired, and when he held this nine-branched candelabrum in his hands for the first time, a strange mood came over him. In his remote youth, in his father's house, such little light had burned and there was something intimate and homelike about the holiday. This tradition did not seem chill or dead. The custom of kindling one light with another had been passed on through the ages.<sup>130</sup>

While in Herzl's other writings the Maccabees seem like an afterthought, in this piece centered on the Menorah and Hanukkah, both Hanukkah and the Maccabees speak profoundly to him. As a father, he sought to instill in his children "a beautiful memory for the future. An attachment to the ancient nation," and the Maccabees enabled him to do so. Compounded with the reflection on his childhood celebration, and "the custom of kindling one light with another," Herzl used the Maccabees and Hanukkah as a subtle symbol of figurative renewal, the older Maccabean flame passed through the ages igniting the new Zionist flame. Herzl described that as: "the first candle was lit and the origin of the holiday was retold: the miracle of the little lamp which had burned so much longer than expected, as well as the story of the return from the Babylonian exile, of the Second Temple, of the Maccabees... it was not much but for them [his children] it was enough."<sup>131</sup> Hanukkah provided Herzl the setting to teach his children a basic lesson in ancient Jewish history, highlighting moments of ancient Jewish national pride including the return from exile and the Maccabees who demanded self-governance. While Zionists were often wary to invoke the religious and supernatural elements of Hanukkah, Herzl mentioned the miracle of the oil in the context of these moments to convey how ancient Jews defied all odds once while also implying modern Zionists should follow their example.

After Herzl returned to Judaism, "the Menorah with its growing brilliance was indeed a thing of beauty, and inspired lofty thoughts," so he made "a free adaption of the motif... he did not consider himself bound by the rigid traditional form." While here Herzl is describing making a Hanukkiah, the menorah specifically used for the celebration of Hanukkah, he might as well be describing his Zionism, an adaption of traditional Judaism, inspired by the holiday. Herzl concluded:

For our friend, the occasion became a parable for the enkindling of a whole nation. First one candle; it is still dark and the solitary light looks gloomy. Then it finds a companion,

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<sup>130</sup> Herzl, "The Menorah," in *Zionist Writings: Essays and Addresses: Volume One*, pp. 204-205.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

then another, and yet another. The darkness must retreat. The young and the poor are the first to see the light; then the other join in, all those who love justice, truth, liberty progress, humanity and beauty. When all the candles are ablaze everyone must stop in amazement and rejoice at what has been wrought. And no office more blessed than that of a servant of light.<sup>132</sup>

Finally, the thinly veiled metaphor gives way; Herzl is spiritually renewed, drawn back to and inspired by Judaism, while the Jewish people will be nationally renewed. Herzl moreover seems himself as “a servant of light,” dedicated to rekindling the spirit of the Jewish people, first through the young and poor, and then through all. Regardless of whether Hanukkah brought Herzl back to Judaism, the article, unlike his other works, acknowledged and embraced the powerful figurative model of national renewal the Maccabees and holiday of Hanukkah provided his Zionist enterprise.

His contemporary, Ahad Ha'am, the leader of the Cultural Zionism movement, was the only other Zionist that compares with Herzl in terms of influence and legacy. Unlike most Herzlian Political Zionists, Ahad Ha'am challenged the necessity of a political Jewish state, preferring a new spiritual center of Jewish life in Palestine, a sentiment reflected in his unusually negative references to the Hasmonaean and other Second Temple period revolts. For instance, in his 1890 essay, “Many Inventions,” Ahad Ha'am notes that after “mighty empires” asserted their dominance over the land of Israel, “time after time the Jews tried to throw off the yoke, but in vain; and at last they gave up the struggle in despair,” giving up the “external struggle” for “internal spiritual life.”<sup>133</sup> In this oblique reference to the Hasmonaean and later revolutionaries like Bar Kokhba, Ahad Ha'am claimed that in antiquity, the Jewish people lost the “healthy” nationalism of the prophetic era and became shackled with a “spiritual disease” that he succinctly described as finding “its happiness in misfortune.”<sup>134</sup> By viewing these Hasmonaean and other revolts ultimately as failure (perhaps a more close and accurate reading of history) and not sources of inspiration, Ahad Ha'am proved himself unique once again among the early Zionist intelligentsia.

Similarly, in an 1893 essay, “Imitation and Assimilation,” Ahad Ha'am treated the Second Temple period as a period of cultural decay. Ahad Ha'am noted that if Plato had been translated into Hebrew for Palestinian Jews as the Bible was translated into Greek for Egyptian Jews, “there would have been no ‘traitorous enemies of the covenant’ among our people, and perhaps there would have been no need of the Maccabees and all the spiritual history which had its ultimate cause in that period.”<sup>135</sup> Because of both his traditional Jewish religious education and opposition to a Jewish state, reminiscent of the ancient one the Maccabees reestablished, Ahad Ha'am continued to view the Maccabees negatively. While noting that this period resulted in the troubled spiritual history of the Jewish nation, Ahad Ha'am's direct reference to the Maccabees is more neutral, blaming the spiritual disease not on their failed rebellion, but on their predecessors' failed

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>133</sup> Ahad Ha'am, “Many Inventions,” in *Selected Essays by Ahad Ha'am*, trans. by Leon Simon (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1912), p. 167.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p. 167-168.

<sup>135</sup> Ahad Ha'am, “Imitation and Assimilation,” in *Selected Essays by Ahad Ha'am*, p. 119.

competition with Greek culture. While not yet glorifying the Maccabees, in this essay Ahad Ha'am viewed their rebellion as the obvious result of a pre-existing cultural deficiency.

However, in his later 1901 essay, "A New Savior," Ahad Ha'am embraced the Maccabees as a model of Jewish national renewal in his vehement defense of Eastern European Jews who were the subject of Western European Jewish ridicule. Refuting an unnamed Frenchman who claimed that Jews died rather than violate the Sabbath, Ahad Ha'am pointed out that "Mattathias, the father of the Hasmoneans, allowed his men to defend themselves against the enemy on the Sabbath."<sup>136</sup> Ahad Ha'am noted that "this proves self-preservation is the first of all laws"<sup>137</sup> and therefore Jews could put their national good before religious observance.<sup>138</sup> Instead of treating the Maccabees as powerless in the face of spiritual decay in Judaism, Ahad Ha'am completely reversed his attitude to the Hasmonaeans, not only using them as positive proof in his argument, but even elevating them as exemplars of Jewish patriots who could balance religion and national self-preservation. Later in his charged rebuke, he intoned:

Remember Matthias the Priest, that national hero who turned his back in scorn and loathing on the Syrian officer, with his promises of life and wealth and glory, and sacrificed himself and his family for the honors of his people and religion. Remember that passionate cry of his, 'Our holy things, our pride and glory, have been laid to waste; why then should we live?'<sup>139</sup> *This* (italics original) is the hero whom our French savior brings in evidence that it is our duty to abolish the Sabbath, because "a man must live"! Our Member of the Academy does not understand that if Matthias allowed fighting on the Sabbath, he only did so in order to preserve the whole nation, in order that the Jews might be able to remain separate from other nations in inner life, and develop in their own way as a distinct and individual people. That is to say, his purpose was exactly the reverse of that with which our distinguished friend now suggests the abolition of the Sabbath. If Matthias had heard our friend putting him to this use, and then adding that 'in our day the Jews are no longer a nation,' I fear that he might have treated him as he treated the first Jew who went up to the Syrian altar.<sup>140</sup>

In a charged attack on his French adversary, Ahad Ha'am reclaimed the Hasmonaeans as a figurative model of Jewish national renewal. Through quoting I Maccabees 2:12-13, Ahad Ha'am demonstrates that Matthias was motivated by his piety, unwilling to reject the religious obligations of his faith unless forced to do so. Ahad Ha'am repeatedly asserted that Matthias is a "national hero," who only "allowed fighting on the Sabbath... to preserve the whole nation," thereby elevating him to a model of Jewish national renewal. Not content with merely claiming Matthias

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<sup>136</sup> Ahad Ha'am, "A New Savior," in *Selected Essays by Ahad Ha'am*, p. 247.

<sup>137</sup> A historically accurate statement regarding the Maccabees and the surviving strains of Judaism, albeit one that ignores the Hasmonaeans' pietistic allies, the Hasidim, who died rather than fight on the Sabbath.

<sup>138</sup> Ahad Ha'am, "A New Savior," p. 247.

<sup>139</sup> From I Maccabees 2:12-13.

<sup>140</sup> Ahad Ha'am, "A New Savior," p., 250.

as a Jewish national hero, he attacks his opponent personally, suggesting that Matthias would slay him as he did “the first Jew who went up to the Syrian altar.” In his impassioned defense of the Eastern European Jews, Ahad Ha’am eviscerates his French opponent, implying that the religious, but poor Eastern European Jews are the Maccabees who will “emancipate” the assimilated Western European Jews from “inner slavery,” akin to the despicable Hellenizers.<sup>141</sup> While previously ignoring antiquity, treating it as a time of spiritual decay of the Jewish people, the ludicrous and ahistorical claims of this Frenchmen galvanized Ahad Ha’am to focus on the Maccabees whom he elevated as figurative models of Jewish national renewal. Zionists in the following decades continued to use the Maccabees as figurative models of Jewish national renewal.

Following in the footsteps of both Herzl and Ahad Ha’am, American Zionist Louis Brandeis also utilized the Maccabees as a figurative model of spiritual and national renewal. In his speech to a Hanukkah party 1915, “The Victory of the Maccabees,” Brandeis explained his conception of the holiday and its heroes as spiritual models and explicitly not as military models.<sup>142</sup> Brandeis argued that Hanukkah was joyous because it was “not a military victory only; but a victory also of the spirit over things material,” suggesting that the military victory was secondary to this spiritual victory.<sup>143</sup> Echoing Lilienblum’s understanding of the Maccabees as the “true sons of the people,” Brandeis defined this “spiritual victory” as “a victory also over more dangerous internal enemies... a victory of democracy over aristocracy,” revealing that he associated and retrojected his American values of democracy onto the Hasmonaen revolutionary past.<sup>144</sup> By stating that “as part of the eternal world-wide struggle for democracy, the struggle of the Maccabees is of eternal world-wide interest,” for Jews and non-Jews, for America and Palestine, Brandeis suggested the heroism that the Maccabees expressed was their fight for democracy.<sup>145</sup> Brandeis universalized the Maccabees and transformed their struggle against Hellenism into a struggle for national self-determination, touting them as a model of national renewal.

Towards the end of the speech, Brandeis explained, “For the Zionists the day [Hanukkah] has special significance. The Maccabees’ victory proved that the Jews, then already an old people, possessed the secret of eternal youth, the ability to rejuvenate itself through the courage, hope, enthusiasm, devotion, and self-sacrifice of the plain people.” The Maccabees reflect the struggle for “democracy” since they were “plain people” who fought for their people’s good.<sup>146</sup> More importantly, this powerful statement reveals to Brandeis that the Maccabees were a symbol of spiritual renewal. Brandeis concluded, “in that distant past the plain people achieved a rebirth.

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., pp. 251-252.

<sup>142</sup> Louis Dembitz Brandeis, “The Victory of the Maccabees,” in *Brandeis On Zionism*, ed. by Zionist Organist of America, (Washington, D.C.: Zionist Organization of America, 1942), po. 82-83.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>145</sup> This is an anachronistic claim since the Hasmonaeans merely replaced the Hellenized priesthood and aristocracy with their own family and later even ruled as kings.

<sup>146</sup> The Maccabees were no “plain people,” although they were lower class local priests and therefore plainer in comparison to the contemporaneous Hellenized priestly elites in Jerusalem. Brandeis, “The Victory of the Maccabees,” pp. 82-83.

They will bring again a Jewish resistance.” He then reaffirmed his use of the Maccabees and imbued them with modern agency in the future of Zionism. In a democratic understanding of the Maccabean revolt, in the vein of his predecessor Moshe Lilienblum, Brandeis identified the Maccabees as a figurative symbol of national renewal.

Not only was it Zionist politicians, but also Zionist poets who used these ancient heroes as figurative models of national renewal. Saul Tschernichowsky, “the pagan Zionist,” for example, was a Russian-born Hebrew poet entranced by Hellenism and more generally classical antiquity. In his 1899 poem, “Before a Statue of Apollo,” the narrator addresses the Greek deity of light, medicine, and archery, identifying himself as “the Jew: your adversary of old!”<sup>147</sup> Without explicitly mentioning the Maccabees, the narrator exclaims that: “heaven itself and the ample plains could not, stretching, annihilate the abyss dividing the Torah of my fathers from your adorer’s cult,” an oblique reference to the religious tension between Hellenism and Judaism that inspired the Maccabees to revolt.

In a 1923 poem titled, “Omrin Yeshna Eretz,” now popularized in arrangements by Israeli singers like Naomi Shemer and Shlomo Artzi, Tschernichowsky describes a land “where shall come to pass/what every man had hoped for,” even as “strength is fading.”<sup>148</sup> In this land, everyone who enters asks Rabbi Akiva, “Where are the holy ones?/Where is the Maccabee?” Rabbi Akiva responds that “All of Israel is holy,/you are the Maccabee!”<sup>149</sup> Instead of oblique references to ancient conflicts and figures from antiquity, Tschernichowsky directly mentions both the Maccabees and Rabbi Akiva, who was killed by the Romans for endorsing and supporting Bar Kokhba and his messianic claim during the revolt against Rome. However, in Tschernichowsky’s poem, Bar Kokhba is not the messiah. Instead the people of Israel are the holy ones, the Maccabees, who could attain this mythical land. Through the combination of these revolutionary figures and the hopeful language of the poem, Tschernichowsky suggested Rabbi Akiva and the Maccabees were models of spiritual and national renewal for the Jewish people.

Although the many early Zionists only used the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba as figurative models of national renewal, a handful of early Zionists used them as literal models of national renewal, emphasizing their militaristic resistance, not merely the courage of their struggle for the Jewish nation. Max Nordau was a turn of the century assimilated Hungarian Jew, one of Herzl’s first, and perhaps most prized, converts to Zionism because of his high social status in Western European intellectual circles.<sup>150</sup> Unlike Herzl or even Tschernichowsky, Nordau was the first to see these ancient heroes as literal models of national renewal. In his “Address at the Second Zionist Congress,” in Basel, Switzerland, on August 28, 1898, Nordau noted that until recently, the “Bar Kokhba struggle” was the last time Jews had “an inclination to show to themselves, and to the

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<sup>147</sup> Saul Tschernichowsky, “Before a Statue of Apollo,” in *Saul Tschernichowsky; poet of revolt*, ed. and trans. by Eisig Silberschlag, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), p. 97.

<sup>148</sup> Saul Tschernichowsky, “Omrin Yeshna Eretz,” *Youtube*, trans. Ido Reif with my edits, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSINskcBJsY>.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, p. 64.

show to the world, how much vitality they still possess.”<sup>151</sup> Instead of using the Hasmonaeans, Nordau chose Bar Kokhba as an admirable figure of Jewish self-defense. Within Zionist discourse, these ancient figures became interchangeable since both stood up against foreign civilizations that posed an existential threat to the Jewish people. Regardless of the failure of his revolt, especially in comparison to the Hasmonaean revolt, Bar Kokhba was the *last* Jew who was courageous and strong enough to stand up for the Jewish nation. As early as the Second Zionist Congress, Nordau therefore turned towards Jewish heroes of antiquity as a literal inspiration for the physical renewal of the Jewish people.

Critical to understanding Max Nordau’s Zionism is his concept of “Muscular Judaism,” first introduced in his 1901 speech, “Address at the Fifth Zionist Congress,” at Basel. Nordau diagnosed Jews as a “physically deteriorated” nation that could be improved through health regimens and gymnastics.<sup>152</sup> For Nordau, national renewal could only be achieved through a “physical elevation,” immediately separating him from other Zionists who believed that national renewal only required courage and political organization. Nordau believed that Jews must first transform themselves into a physically fit people like other European, casting off their “diaspora-weakness,” to achieve national renewal and their state. Later, in a 1905 essay, “Survey of Zionism,” Nordau further explained under the heading, “National Self-Consciousness of the Jews,” that “the enthusiasm of modern educated Jews for their history and martyrology, out of the awakened consciousness of their racial fitness, out of their ambition to preserve the ancient stock to as distant a future as possible and to follow up the worthy deeds of ancestors with worthy deeds of descendants” had inspired Zionism.<sup>153</sup> Nordau explicitly acknowledged that he and his contemporaries were inspired by their heroic ancestors who served as literal models for modern Zionists and their quest for the national renewal of the Jewish people

Later in July 27, 1905, at the Seventh Zionist Congress in Basel, Nordau confirmed that national renewal could only be achieved through historical Jews in his eulogy of Herzl. In the speech, “Tribute to the Late Dr. Herzl,” he noted that Herzl did not have a connection “to the real, living Judaism,” except for certain historical Jewish figures, “Judas Maccabaeus, a Bar Kokhba, a Yehuda Halevy, a Spinoza, a Heine,” that helped inspire Herzl and his Zionism.<sup>154</sup> Many of these people, particularly Heine, were Nordau’s Jewish idols as well, beloved figures to the assimilated Jewish intelligentsia of the period.<sup>155</sup> While Nordau was perhaps most attracted to Bar Kokhba,

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<sup>151</sup> Max Nordau, “Address at the Second Zionist Congress,” in *Max Nordau to his People* (New York: Scopus Publishing Company, 1941), p. 88.

<sup>152</sup> Max Nordau, “Address at the Fifth Zionist Congress,” in *Max Nordau to his People*, pp. 135-137.

<sup>153</sup> Max Nordau, “Survey on Zionism,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, trans. by the Zionist British Society, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/survey-of-zionism-max-nordau>.

<sup>154</sup> Max Nordau, “Address at the Seventh Zionist Congress,” in *Max Nordau to his People*, p. 154.

<sup>155</sup> See: Max Nordau, “Address at the Second Zionist Congress,” in *Max Nordau to his People*, pp. 89, 90; *Der lign fun religyon* (London: Frayhart, 1901), as quoted in Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, pp. 19-20; for a mention of Heine and Spinoza, Letter 252, Oct 11, 1895, “Novsikova Correspondence, MS 30,” as quoted in Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, 63; “Nachtrag, zu Heinrich Heine’s Deutschland, Ein Mintermärchen,” *Zionistische Schriften* (Cologne: Jüdischer Verlag, 1909), p. 399-402; more generally, Stanislawski, “Nordau’s Zionism: From Heine to Bar Kochba,” *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, pp. 74-97; Mark H. Gelber, “Heine, Herzl,



the last symbol of Jewish self-defense, he clearly was also inspired by Judah Maccabee and chose to list him as a source of inspiration for Herzl and his Zionism. Furthermore, Nordau's eulogy demonstrates that the Zionists viewed Judah Maccabee as interchangeable with Bar Kokhba, both literal models of Muscular Judaism and his answer to the question of how to achieve the national renewal of the Jewish people.

Nordau's philosophy of Muscular Judaism and its reliance on ancient heroism is best elucidated in his June 1903 speech "Muscular Judaism." In his speech, Nordau explained that a gymnastics society in Berlin was named after Bar Kokhba because "Bar Kokhba was a hero who refused to know defeat. When in the end victory eluded him, he knew how to die. Bar Kokhba was the last embodiment in world history of a bellicose, militant Jewry."<sup>156</sup> Nordau admired Bar Kokhba, despite his defeat and death, because he demonstrated his physical courage and militaristic resistance to those who would deprive the Jewish people of their national independence. Echoing and developing the sentiment he stated five years earlier at the World Zionist Congress, Nordau painted Bar Kokhba as the ideal model of a Muscular Jew, endorsing literal militant self-defense.

While Nordau did not advocate immediate armed resistance, he argued, "To evoke Bar Kokhba's name is an unmistakable sign of ambition. But ambition is well suited to gymnasts striving for perfection." For Nordau, gymnastics was key to the physical renewal of the Jewish people, giving them the physical strength to follow in Bar Kokhba's footsteps. Nordau reinforced this connection through his physical-fitness filled conclusion, "Our new muscle-Jews [*Muskeljuden*] have not yet regained the heroism of our forefathers, who in large numbers eagerly entered the sports arenas in order to take part in competitions and to pit themselves the highly-trained Hellenistic athletes and the powerful Nordic Barbarians. But morally new muscle-Jews surpass their ancestors, for the ancient Jewish circus-fighters were ashamed of their Judaism and tried surgically to conceal the sign of the Covenants by means of a surgical operation,... (ellipsis original) while the members of the 'Bar Kokhba [Association]' loudly and freely profess their nationality."<sup>157</sup> Nordau simultaneously applauded these ancient Hellenizing Jews for their commitment to physical fitness and for competing with Hellenistic athletes, but condemns them for being embarrassed and concealing their Judaism. This allusion to the Hellenistic period, immediately preceding the Hasmonaean revolt, implies that the Maccabees were also models of Muscular Judaism since, like modern Zionists, they did not hide their Judaism, but were physically fit like the ancient gymnasts. Nordau's use of these ancient figures as physical and literal models of national renewal reflects his commitment to a courageous "Muscular Judaism," a model that gained increasing traction among other early Zionists in the twentieth century.

After the devastating Kishinev pogrom in 1903, Hebrew poet Chaim Nachman Bialik also invoked the Hasmonaean to inspire a physical and militant national renewal in his poem, "In the City of Slaughter." In this frantic, grotesque manipulation of scripture and the martyrological

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and Nordau: Aspects of the Early Zionist Reception," in Mark H. Gelber, ed., *The Jewish Reception of Heinrich Heine* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1992), pp. 139-151.

<sup>156</sup> Max Nordau, "Muscular Judaism," trans. by J. Hessing, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, ed. by Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, Jehuda Reinharz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 547.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

tradition a Divine narrator condemns the victims of the massacre to a “Son of man.”<sup>158</sup> Describing the victims, Bialik’s narrator exclaims, “Come, now, and I will bring thee to their lairs/The privies, jakes and piggins where the heirs/Of Hasmoneans lay, with trembling knees,/Concealed and cowering,—the sons of the Maccabees!/The seed of saints, the scions of the lions!/Who, crammed by scores in all the sanctuaries of their shame,/So sanctified My name!”<sup>159</sup> Bialik is hostile to Jewish passivity and shames the victims of the pogrom, descended from the mighty Maccabees, who betray their heroic and holy ancestry and do not defend themselves, who hide in shameful places. The lion, not only a reference to the general “lion of Judah,” is a reference to Judah the Maccabee from I Maccabees 3:4, that says “He was like a lion in his deeds, like a lion's cub roaring for prey.” Without putting up a flight, “it was the flight of mice they fled,/The scurrying of roaches was their flight;/They died like dogs, and they were dead!”<sup>160</sup> Instead of acting like the true descendants of lions, this symbol of Judah the Maccabee, they fled like cowardly vermin, “mice” and “roaches,” and died like domesticated animals who have long lost their feral streak, “dogs.” Therefore, Bialik argued, the Jews must not remain passive, but rise up and defend themselves, invoking the Maccabees as a literal model of national renewal.

Bialik’s poem is perhaps most powerful at subverting prayer and scripture to mock passive, weak Jews and their Judaism. He manipulates the language of *Lamentations*, mockingly noting that after the pogrom, descendants of the Maccabees “crammed by scores in all the sanctuaries of their shame,/So sanctified My name” and that priests ask their rabbis if they could be with their raped wives.<sup>161</sup> The divine narrator rebukes the Jews for such powerless and pathetic responses. As the victims intone “*We have sinned! and Sinned have we!*,” Bialik’s Divine narrator asks damningly, “Are they not real, their bruises? Why is their prayer false?” charging the victims instead to “Let them against me raise the outraged hand, — /Let them demand!/Demand the retribution for the shamed/Of all the centuries and every age!/Let fists be flung like stone/Against the heavens and the heavenly throne!”<sup>162</sup> Bialik’s poem is not subtle: God himself, through allusions to their heroic past and direct statements, charges the Jewish people to rebel against him, filled with righteous indignation, and he implies that they should take up arms to defend themselves instead of cowering behind insincere faith in the face of tragedy. Bialik implies that it is not through traditional Judaism, but rather through Zionism that Jews can defy God and their history of persecution to demand and fight for their own protection and national renewal.

Addressing the Jewish people, Bialik concluded, “so will you conjure up the pity of the nations,/And so their sympathy implore./For you are now as you have been of yore/And as you stretched your hand/So will you stretch it,/And as you have been wretched/So are you wretched!”<sup>163</sup> The narrator knowingly and pessimistically concludes that the Jewish people will

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<sup>158</sup> Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, pp. 187, 196.

<sup>159</sup> Hayyim Nahman Bialik, “Be’ir Hahareigah” / The City of Slaughter,” trans. by A. M. Klein, *Prooftexts* 25, no. 1&2 (Winter/Spring 2005): 15.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

not change, will not rise up against God and their gentile oppressors. Bialik's powerful poem does not use the Hasmonaeans merely as a symbol of national renewal, but as a symbol of physical self-defense. Stanislawski argues that Bialik did not intend for his poem to be merely a call to arms, although his contemporaries and later historians of repute, such as historian of Zionism Walter Lacquer and Israeli historian Shmuel Ettinger, quickly saw it as such.<sup>164</sup> While by no means is the poem only a call to arms, extrapolating a call to arms from the poem does not seem far-fetched, as a Divine narrator mocks the Jewish people for their useless and cowardly prayers instead of feeling and act upon their deserved righteous indignation. By invoking their Hasmonaeon heroic lineage as a literal model of national renewal, Bialik implies that Jews must not passively accept their fate, but rise up. His poem therefore constituted a militant call to arms. Bialik's Zionism, perhaps more so even than Nordau's, is centered upon militaristic action to both defend and renew the Jewish people.

Bialik's poem and his militaristic message were amplified Vladimir Jabotinsky, a militaristic secular Zionist who later founded Revisionist Zionism. Stanislawski identifies Jabotinsky and his Russian translation and introduction to the poem as responsible for the militant interpretation of Bialik's poem. Bialik's Hebrew, scripturally charged, would have been hard to understand without a proper religious education, and so I. L. Peretz and Jabotinsky quickly set to work translating it into more widely understood languages, Yiddish and Russian, languages more accessible to unlearned Jews (both men and women) and the Russian Jewish assimilated intellegensia (respectively).<sup>165</sup> Jabotinsky's biographer Joseph B. Schechtman (a revisionist Zionist himself) claims that Jabotinsky "put into this translation all the deep feelings of his own soul, all the fire of his indignation, and all the intensity of his pride" to the extent his translation "came to be regarded as an original poem of Jabotinsky."<sup>166</sup> Jabotinsky's highly influential translation of the poem stripped it of challenging nuance, turning this poem into a rallying call for a militaristic Zionism.

Almost two years before his translation appeared, Jabotinsky released a poetic introduction to the poem, "H. N. Bialik: March 1904, before Passover" that invoked his "ancient ancestor(s)" in a militaristic positivist conception of Jewish history and Nordau/muscular Judaism inspired call to arms, best encapsulated by the refrain, "Together, brothers, forward march."<sup>167</sup> Jabotinsky viewed Bialik as a proponent of this militarized muscular Judaism, stating that "Bialik revolts, and becomes a singer of triumphant, invincible, rebellious Manhood... a rebel, but on a deeper level. His hammer was waged at... the Jewish people," the hammer is a reference to those Hasmonaeon

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<sup>164</sup> Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, p. 187; Walter Lacquer, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), p. 123; H. H. Ben-Sasson et al., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 933.

<sup>165</sup> Alan Mintz, "Kishinev and the Twentieth Century: Introduction," *Prooftexts* 25, no. 1&2 (Winter/Spring 2005): pp. 4-5: Ibid., 184.

<sup>166</sup> Joseph B. Schechtman, *Rebel and Statesman: The Vladimir Jabotinsky Story* (New York: Yoseloff, 1961), p. 78.

<sup>167</sup> Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Kh. N. Bialik: Mart 1904. Pered Paskhoi," *Evreiskaia zhizn'* 11 (1904): 160-162, quoted in Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, pp. 188-189.

heroes whose name, Maccabee, means hammer.<sup>168</sup> Jabotinsky's understanding of Bialik and his corresponding translation of the poem used the Maccabees as a literal model of physical defense and a more blatant militant call to arms than the original. While Bialik was focused on condemning Jewish passiveness and weakness, hinting at the need for military action, Jabotinsky was focused on transforming this anger into physical resistance to renew the Jewish people.

A generation later, another Hebrew poet invoked the Maccabees as a literal model of national renewal like Bialik and Jabotinsky, the Hungarian Jew Hannah Senesh. Senesh wrote the following poem entitled, "Hanukkah:"

It is Hanukkah, and the candle flames flare,  
And all the Jewish hearts beat, throb, bare.  
We recall the image of heroes  
The disappeared ancient peoples.  
The period of Pharaohs, the Greek oppression  
Neither could break our will for expression.  
We took the Torah, took it with us  
We drew faith from it into all of us.  
We walked through the plains hungry and thirsty,  
But God was with us, so we were never lonely.  
And we who stem from such ancestry  
Should not despair, but continue to fight  
As we are reassured by the candle light;  
Do not quail Israel, there is still hope.<sup>169</sup>

Inspired by the holiday like Herzl, Senesh drew on the imagery of the candle light of Hanukkah as a symbol of national renewal. However, like Nordau, Senesh refers to the heroic ancestry of the Jewish people, but she also specifically dwells on those who resisted "the Greek oppression," a concealed reference to the Maccabees, to inspire Israel to "continue to fight." Through a fusion of both the imagery of candle light as national renewal and the heroic (and Hasmonaean) ancestry as a model militaristic defense, Senesh's poem functions as a call to arms for the Jewish nation.

While Zionists like Hess, Lilienblum, Herzl, Ahad Ha'am, Brandeis, and Tschernichowsky only conceived of the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba as figurative symbols of national renewal, Nordau, Bialik, Jabotinsky, and Senesh used them as literal symbols of national renewal and militaristic defense. Israeli historian Anita Shapira astutely comments, "in particular those with a spotty knowledge of their people's past were often the ones who cited the Maccabees as an

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<sup>168</sup> *Chaim Nachman Bialik, Poems from the Hebrew*, ed L. N. Snowman with an introduction by Vladimir Jabotinsky (London: Hasefer, 1924), xii-xiv, quoted in Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, p. 194; Introduction to Bialik, *Pesni I poemy*, p. 30, quoted in Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, p. 194.

<sup>169</sup> Hannah Senesh, "Hanukah," on "Fire of My Heart: The Story of Hannah Senesh," *Museum of Jewish Heritage*, trans. George (Gyorgy) Greskovitz and Lou Levine, <http://www.mjhnyc.org/hannah/poetry.html>.

example of Jewish bravery and prowess.”<sup>170</sup> With the exception of Ahad Ha’am because of his critical understanding of the Maccabees and careful rhetorical usage, Shapira’s statement can still apply to Zionists, especially those born into assimilated families.<sup>171</sup> Through the idealization of the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba, figures once disliked and insignificant in comparison to prophets and rabbis (the bread and butter of the traditional Jewish heroic pantheon) as role models for Zionism, early Zionists yet again reconstructed Judaism and Jewish memory to reflect their philosophy, the national renewal of the Jewish people.

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<sup>170</sup> Anita Shapira, *Land and Power: the Zionist Resort to Force, 1881-1948* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 13.

<sup>171</sup> Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, pp. 4-95.

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**Different Fingers on the Same Hand: Analyzing Religious Tolerance as a Form of State-Building in the Mongol Empire**  
**By Charlotte Racioppo**

The known world during the era of Mongol dominance was not an open-minded one. Europe was enduring the aftermath of a dramatic schism within the Christian faith, the Jin and Song Empires in China were waging war against one another, and the First Crusade was being fought between Christian and Muslim forces in the Middle East. In Central Asia, however, Chinggis Khan, then Temujin, was building power and rapidly gaining enough political and military authority to unite the nomads of the steppe and form the first Mongol Empire, a nation comprised of an incredibly diverse population across a similarly expansive geographic distance. One of the major characteristics of this new nation was its toleration of preexisting religion, with legal and cultural allowances for worship to an extent unseen in the empires of their contemporaries. The Mongols' native religion, a form of shamanism in which aspects of nature are associated with divinity, was such that many other religions could easily be incorporated into a preexisting concept of divinity, providing many Mongols with a predisposition to accept, or at least allow, differing theologies. This predisposition also led many prominent Khans to convert to or adopt aspects from non-shamanistic religions, making the rulers appeal to their native and similarly minded Mongol population as well as the heterogeneous peoples of conquered territories. In the words of the fourth Great Khan, Mongke, regarding the simultaneous belief of various religions, "just as God gave different fingers to the hand so has He given different ways to men."<sup>172</sup> This open-mindedness not only assisted the Mongols in establishing their empire but contributed to its longevity and effectiveness in the long term. I will be defining the Mongol Empire as the unified period of Mongol rule from the ascendancy of Chinggis Khan until the decidedly more fragmented reign of his grandson Mongke, after which division and political struggles outweighed the practice of religious tolerance and eventually resulted in the empire's dissolution. During the era of Mongol unity the practice of religious tolerance, whether utilized for political means or as a function of the inclusiveness of their native religion, was vital to the Mongols' attempts at unifying and maintaining a diverse group of people under a foreign power.

**Tengri and a Predisposition for Inclusion**

The primary religion within the Mongol steppe during the ascendancy of Chinggis Khan (r.1206-1227) was shamanism, a polytheistic theology in which aspects of nature, such as the sky (Tengri) or the earth (Etugen), are considered divine beings. Unlike major universalizing religions like Christianity and Islam, shamanism lacks a textual tradition and a priesthood, instead incorporating religious figures called shamans to act as the bridge between reality and the spirit world.<sup>173</sup> Rather than explaining the will of Tengri, the primary god of Mongol shamanism, in the way Christian priests may attempt to explain the will of God, shamans serve to assist spirits and act as guides, as well as healers, for the living. This role is especially important as Mongolian shamanism heavily features ancestor worship and the veneration of deceased family members who, after death, reside in the spirit world, fell under the jurisdiction of shamans.<sup>174</sup> Supreme above all, however, is the god Tengri, considered the creator of the universe who ordains all things; despite

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<sup>172</sup> Christopher Atwood, "Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty: Religious Toleration as Political Theology in the Mongol World Empire of the Thirteenth Century," *The International History Review*, 26, 2, 2004, p. 252.

<sup>173</sup> Tim May, *Mongol Empire* (unpublished manuscript, 2015), chapter one, p. 10.

<sup>174</sup> David Morgan, *The Mongols*, 2nd ed., Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007, p.38.



multitudes of different spirits existing within shamanistic doctrine, the existence of a single omnipotent god is emphasized and reflects a monotheistic bent shared by Christianity, Islam, and Judaism (and, as the Mongols saw it, Buddhism and Daoism).<sup>175</sup> Thus when persuaded to embrace another religious doctrine, the Mongols were already equipped with a monotheistic foundation from which to view foreign ideologies.

As pastoral nomads, the Mongols' religious system focused heavily on pragmatic benefits, with Tengri often being associated with aspects of survival. By this method of understanding, as the Mongols continued to persevere in the harsh conditions of the steppe Tengri appeared to favor them more; one's success in the material world was suggestive of divine approval.<sup>176</sup> When applied on a grander scale, Mongolian success in terms of world conquest indicated to them that god was on their side, in a way similar to the Chinese concept of the Mandate of Heaven.<sup>177</sup> Chinggis Khan's rise to power and establishment of the Mongol state was so effective and seemingly unlikely that, from their perspective, Tengri must be mandating them to continue their conquests and create a truly universal empire. This divine support caused confusion among other religions, whose deity (or deities) the Mongols were already convinced ruled in their favor; when told by the Pope that he had provoked God's divine wrath through his conquests, the third Great Khan Guyuk said "From the rising of the sun to its setting, all the lands have been made subject to me. Who could do this contrary to the command of God?"<sup>178</sup> If the deity worshipped in foreign religion was different from the Mongol's Tengri, He was surely on the Mongols side, or those now subordinate to the Mongols would not have been conquered – therefore attempts at converting the khan became confusing, with the khan having already adopted all or some aspects of the religion, or believing already to be in His good graces.

Being confident in the approval of God did not mean the Mongols were certain that shamanism was the only correct interpretation of an omnipotent creator. This openness to the existence of a different all-powerful deity was the final facilitator to Mongol acceptance of foreign religion. The doctrines of other faiths, while differing in some ways to shamanism, could still be correct in conjunction with it. The emphasis on success during one's lifetime, and the lack of heavy focus on the afterlife, meant that adopting a variety of different religions was almost a method of ensuring one's spiritual safety. That is, according to David Morgan, "The Mongols believed in taking out as much celestial insurance as possible."<sup>179</sup> Rather than bet on Tengri being the sole Creator, the Khan would rather people of all religious denominations pray for him in an attempt to remain in God's favor, and as such would frequently request those of various theologies to bless him whenever possible.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Klaus Hesse, "On the History of Mongolian Shamanism in Anthropological Perspective," *Anthropos*, (1987) p. 405

<sup>176</sup> Ruth Dunnell, *Library of World Biography: Chinggis Khan: World Conqueror*, P. N. Stearns Ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Longman, 2010, p. 58.

<sup>177</sup> Anatoly M. Khazanov, "Muhammad and Jenghiz Khan Compared: The Religious Factor in World Empire Building," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 35, 3, 1993, p. 465.

<sup>178</sup> Christopher Dawson, Ed., *Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching: Mission to Asia* (Reprint 1966 ed.). Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto, 2008, p. 86.

<sup>179</sup> Morgan, *The Mongols*, p. 40.

<sup>180</sup> Dawson, *Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching: Mission to Asia*, pp. 117, 154.

## The Logic of Tolerance

From this foundation of inclusivity, the Mongol Empire followed a policy of religious tolerance, perhaps best exemplified by the second Great Khan, Chinggis' third son Ogodei. In part as a result of the pragmatism inherent in shamanism, the Mongols realized the consequences of any conflicts that would arise from religious persecution far outweighed any inconveniences or incongruities between shamanism and a conquered peoples' theologies. With the eventual development of a Muslim majority in the Il-khanate and the Chagatai Khanate, heavy Christian and Muslim influence in the Golden Horde and parts of the steppe, and Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian sects prevalent in Yuan China, the backlash from marginalizing any one of these religions would disrupt a balance carefully maintained through extensive administration and religious tolerance. Ogodei in particular understood the benefits conferred with a policy of general indifference to foreign theology, allowing the construction of religious buildings, continuing Chinggis Khan's policy of tax exemptions for religious groups, and most importantly compromising various Mongol laws as written in the *yasa*<sup>181</sup> (the Mongol law code) to better coexist with other religious restrictions.<sup>182</sup> Although his brother and keeper of the *yasa* Chaghatai disagreed with Ogodei's lax religious policies, and did not wish to sacrifice Mongol law out of consideration for foreign customs (the Muslim practice of preparing food in halal style, for example, which conflicted with the Mongol practice of animal slaughter), the importance of maintaining balance among the various conquered peoples won out. The Mongol *yasa* could be fairly applied to native Mongols, but Ogodei recognized that its mandate on the lives of foreigners would cause more conflict than solidarity.<sup>183</sup> So long as a religion or religious custom did not interfere with Mongol governance, tolerance made far more sense, and caused fewer problems, than persecution.

## Religious Encouragement

Not only did the Mongols refrain from enforcing their legal doctrine on those of other religions, but often actively promoted religiosity, whether in the form of public debate, personal devotion or patronage, or active incorporation into the empire.<sup>184</sup> A common tactic of the Khans was to schedule forensic forums during which representatives of different faiths would put forward their theology and argue, often without definite conclusion, why that particular ideology was supreme. This strategy was helpful on a variety of levels: spiritually, the khans were often philosophically inclined and used these debates as a platform for missionaries and religious officials to convince him which religion he should truly follow. Politically, the forums were an effective way to solve conflict among religious groups in a non-violent fashion, and often left each speaker with the impression that he had converted the khan,<sup>185</sup> or at least beaten his opponent, both litmus tests seemingly proving that religion's supremacy and diffusing tensions that might have been caused as a result of theological competition.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter five, p. 5.

<sup>182</sup> Atwood, "Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty..." p. 242.

<sup>183</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter five, pp. 5-6.

<sup>184</sup> Ata-Malik Juvaini, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conqueror*. Trans. and ed. J.A. Boyle, Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1958, 1997.

<sup>185</sup> Dawson, *Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching: Mission to Asia*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>186</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter six, p. 5.

Even as the Mongol khans allowed religious diversity, many of them were practicing Christians, Muslims, or Buddhists, adopting various customs from their conquered peoples' ideologies in a show of religious tolerance that garnered respect and established balance among the empire's population. Multiple reports of Mongke's ascendancy to the position of great khan, recorded by the devotees of a number of faiths, claim he was baptized, had recited the Muslim profession of faith, had declared the supremacy of Buddhism over all other religions – in the words of Anatoly Khazanov, “Great Khan Mongke was regarded by followers of each of the world religions as one of their number.”<sup>187</sup> While emperor of the Yuan Dynasty, Qubilai Khan retained the practice of religious tolerance while being known for his heavy patronage of Buddhism, and especially his favoritism towards the eminent lama Phagspa.<sup>188</sup> Chinggis Khan established early in his empire tax exemptions for religious officials and institutions that carried through for much of the empire's history (although adjusted in times of corruption within the administration and especially when the yam system<sup>189</sup> was being exploited).<sup>190</sup> The systems that serviced religious individuals within the empire, regardless of which religion provided them, were rewarded for providing that service. The Mongols understood the importance of maintaining happiness within the population and preventing outright conflicts on the basis of religious repression or underrepresentation, and by allowing the various theologies to retain significant financial privileges they encouraged the maintenance of a peaceful empire.

While shamanism remained the foundation from which many Mongols derived their worldview, they were not opposed to assimilating those of various other faiths into the empire, often as administrators or government officials. Just as historian Tim May posits that “Chinggis Khan and his successors developed a keen eye for recognizing what was useful among the conquered and adapting it to their own use,” those adaptations often included the conquered peoples themselves.<sup>191</sup> While ethnic Mongols held a significant number of the positions of highest authority, the incorporation and employment of foreign scholars and experts as administrators and advisors was an extremely common practice that often resulted in the khan being advised closest by those of different faiths – prominent foreigners in various Mongol governments included Rashid al-Din, a Muslim convert of Jewish origin; Marco Polo, a Christian from Venice, Italy; and Yelu Chucai, a Confucian of Khitan origin. The Mongols were not above relying or drawing upon competent foreigners, whether in politics, science, art, war, medicine, or even religion.<sup>192</sup>

### **Regional Assimilation and Political Struggle**

As the empire gradually fragmented, the unified state established by Chinggis Khan started to break apart and evolve into four distinct, and often autonomous, regions: the Golden Horde in Russia and parts of Transcaucasia; the Ilkhanate in the Middle East; the Chaghatai Khanate in Central Asia north of the Himalayas; and the Yuan Dynasty in China. These political divides - caused in large part by ambiguous lines of succession as well as territorial disputes – brought with

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<sup>187</sup> Khazanov, “Muhammad and Jenghiz Khan Compared...” p. 468.

<sup>188</sup> Morris Rossabi, *Norton Documents Reader: The Mongols and Global History*, New York, NY, W. W. Norton & Company, 2011, pp. 144-146.

<sup>189</sup> The yam system was a series of way-stations that functioned as a postal service and expressway for transporting goods and traveling throughout the empire.

<sup>190</sup> Atwood, “Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty...” pp. 238-239.

<sup>191</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter three, p. 16.

<sup>192</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter four, p. 3.

them a gradual move away from religious tolerance as the Mongols of each ulus began to assimilate with the conquered peoples.<sup>193</sup> The most prominent example of this occurred in the Il-khanate, as Mongol Il-khans increasingly converted to Islam and rejected the practice of religious toleration that kept the peoples of the unified empire fairly represented, and therefore kept religious aggression in check. Not only this, but the Il-khanate eventually transformed into an Islamic state, persecuting non-Muslims and destroying much of the infrastructure devoted to Christian or Buddhist worship.<sup>194</sup> Although he largely maintained a policy of religious inclusion, Qubilai Khan began to place more importance on adapting to the native population within Yuan China, providing his son and chosen successor Jingim with Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian educations to help his son understand the inherent ideology of the Chinese people living under Yuan rule.<sup>195</sup> After his death, Qubilai's successors focused more on power struggles within the imperial administration than on the stability of the population and so forwent even the China-centric religious outlook Qubilai wished to instill in his son.<sup>196</sup> The leaders of the Golden Horde also began to more actively patronize Islam, as the Khans (such as Berke and Ozbeg) converted to the religion with some frequency. Preexisting territorial disputes with the Il-khanate over areas of Transcaucasia as well as Berke's extreme disapproval of his cousin Hulegu's execution of the Abbasid Caliph eventually led to the Golden Horde engaging in civil war with the Il-khanate, at which point both uluses effectively gave up religious tolerance in exchange for increased political tension and outright military conflict. Religious tolerance simply was not a high priority once the Mongol leadership began to assimilate to their new regions of domination.<sup>197</sup> Muslim conversion in the Chaghataid ulus became a point of contention rather than inclusion, and leaders such as Tarmashirin were overthrown for their perceived abandonment of Mongol ways. Religious differences also developed into a geographical division, with the Muslim population becoming largely separate from the Buddhist and pagan portion of the ulus.<sup>198</sup> Without some semblance of Mongol solidarity as a political body and an emphasis on maintaining that unity, the various uluses of Chinggis Khan's descendants adapted to the peoples in their area of control, resulting in the abandonment of religious tolerance and the eventual division of the Mongol Empire.

Yet despite waging war on nations whose religious compositions varied dramatically, the Mongols did not attack others on religious grounds. Rather, they felt they were destined with the support of Tengri to conquer the world, and often that goal involved engaging in military struggles with major religious figures. Thus events such as the execution of the Abbasid Caliph, and the tension between Guyuk Khan and the Pope, should not be taken as religious persecution or an attempt at exterminating a certain theology. The subjugation of a political body did not, in Mongol eyes, equate to a religious war, and therefore did not result in the active repression of religious expression. Politically speaking, such an attack on personal spirituality would foster unnecessary resentment among conquered peoples and, even at an ideological level, was not in the Mongols' interest. The Mongols' various military conquests were almost exclusively spurred on by a need to protect and provide for the empire, a systematic elimination of threat and acquiring of resources rather than resentment for a particular worldview. Eventually political motivation was overshadowed by religious affiliation and the Mongol uluses became further polarized. This

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<sup>193</sup> An ulus is the region inherited by Chinggis Khan's four sons.

<sup>194</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter nine, p. 1.

<sup>195</sup> Rossabi, *Norton Documents Reader: The Mongols and Global History*, p. 144.

<sup>196</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter eight, p. 6.

<sup>197</sup> Morgan, *The Mongols*, p. 127.

<sup>198</sup> May, *Mongol Empire*, chapter ten, p. 12.

change inherently undermines the efforts at religious tolerance that assisted in constructing a unified state out of a heterogeneous population, as Mongol Khans became more loyal to their respective uluses than the idea of a single empire. With a preexisting religious inclination and the framework with which to incorporate the beliefs of the conquered people, the Mongols could instead adapt to the ideologies of their population, bend rather than break the theologies that, for many, were the backbone of their lives. Without that ability to compromise and maintain a flexible religious policy, the empire would not have lasted long enough to fragment. The population was simply too diverse to be ruled successfully by a wholly partisan leader, and it was in great part the allowance for a variety of preexisting customs and belief systems that allowed the Mongols to rule as well as they did, for as long a time.

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## Gender and Orientalism in Russian Literature By AJ Robinson

The story of Russian history is characterized by the crippling question: who are the Russians? Are they Europeans, or not? Of the many historical attempts to answer this question, Russian Orientalism produced great volumes of literature that often, and debatably, either wholly separated Russia from its 'orient' that was the southern Russian Empire or blurred the ethnic and cultural lines between them. The Russian Orientalist outlook pits East against West. Modern scholars have analyzed how the aforementioned works support or oppose the classic orientalist mindset, and in some cases, suggest an intermediate identity. While this analysis is historically accurate, it is not complete. The cavernous gender divide in these works has been left primarily unexplored, taking secondary importance to the East/West conflict. Women in the works have been given thorough attention, but only as characters. This paper will link several women through four major pieces of Orientalist literature, and display broader themes that the women can be classified by.

Beginning at least during the 1820s, a brutal and extremely drawn-out conflict began between Russia and many of the Caucasian native peoples, particularly those who fought with the Imam Shamil. Along with this conflict came a great number of artistic works about the region. These works created the 'Orient': an ambiguous mesh of the peoples and cultures of Crimea, the Caucasus and Central Asia.<sup>199</sup> Orientalism was a major facet of Russian literary culture, and evolved into the state-sponsored science known as Oriental studies which studied, as Robert Crews enumerates, "the languages, literatures, history, and philosophy of the East."<sup>200</sup> Under Alexander I, Kazan University became the first to partake in these studies.<sup>201</sup> Later, Mirza Alexander Kazambek, who was an academic at Kazan University, became a leading figure in these studies as he led the effort to reform the way that Muslims were governed in the Russian Empire.<sup>202</sup> There a clear divide existed between the 'Orient' and Russia that precipitated into the literature of the time. Many scholars analyzed the popular works according to this binary of 'East' and 'West.' However, while one ought not negate this debate, this paper will suggest that within another binary, a masculine and feminine gender binary, women are the party who are Orientalized. By acknowledging this set of binaries in fiction, social roles in Russia and perhaps its Orient may be better understood in later studies of memoirs, diaries, and laws.

Perhaps the most famous Russian author, Alexander Pushkin, wrote his fair share of Orientalist literature. While his poem, "The Prisoner of the Caucasus," explores the East/West question, it also brings gender into the spotlight with the complex relationship between the nameless couple. That the Circassian woman was in love is not up for question, as the narrator explicitly tells us "it was the first time the innocent young girl had known the joy of being in love."<sup>203</sup> Love is her ultimate motivator: she seeks to find it in order to find meaning in life. She fears staying because her family will "sell me to someone I don't love in another village."<sup>204</sup> Even

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<sup>199</sup> Orlando Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia* (New York: Metropolitan Book, 2002), 384.

<sup>200</sup> Robert Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar* (London: Harvard University Press, 2006), 178.

<sup>201</sup> Susan Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire* (New York: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1994), 76.

<sup>202</sup> Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar*, 178-182.

<sup>203</sup> Alexander Pushkin, "The Prisoner of the Caucasus," Adobe PDF eBook, 4.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

without the Russian prisoner in the picture, she wished to find love and to not be given away as a gift. This makes two things clear: that the Circassian woman exists only to find and give love to some man ('Western' or 'Eastern', it matters not in this case), and that she has no other choice but to be this overtly sexual and/or loving figure.

The Circassian woman has unknowingly placed herself outside of the accepted boundaries of her own society by pursuing love and thinks she has moved into the Russian sphere, but she unfortunately finds herself stuck somewhere in between, not being accepted by either. Stephanie Sandler describes the woman, saying that "once she can no longer give herself in love, she has no reason to live."<sup>205</sup> The Circassian woman is guided and forced to be dependent on men as an object – "an entity that the men in her culture can exchange."<sup>206</sup> Here the gendered Orientalism begins to emerge; a distinct divide between the culture of men and women, where there are clearly defined roles for each to fill. Susan Layton notes that "identification with brutal, "Asian" domination of women was even more evident in "The Prisoner of the Caucasus..."<sup>207</sup> However, rather than just a conflict between "unrestrained Circassian eros" and "cold 'European' reserve" as Layton describes, it is a conflict of the intense passion of women and the (just as cold) desperate resistance of men clinging to authority that they grant themselves. This is not the only case in Pushkin's poetry where the gender divide is evidenced.

Through Zemfira, the female protagonist of "The Gypsies," the gender divide is also evident. In her tale love is empowering. It allows Zemfira to seek "freedom," as she expressly states her desire to do so (and that, ironically, Aleko's love has gotten in the way of her love for another man).<sup>208</sup> Rather than a secular, male, or even a religious authority, Zemfira is guided by her own search for love and freedom. This allows her to find, and eventually leave, her estranged lover. The power of women to choose who and when to love is a major conflict for two men in this story (Aleko and the old man). Sandler, however, suggests that "Zemfira's freedom is still circumscribed by the power of a man."<sup>209</sup> The old man's account of his own heartbreak (where he refused to revenge himself on his beloved, contrary to Aleko) reveals to us that it is the woman who holds the power in the relationship, contrary to Sandler's claim. Love allows Zemfira to control her life. Aleko is with the gypsies entirely on the good will of Zemfira, and seems to have little control in their relationship, as he does not find a way to persuade Zemfira to stay with him. It is not Zemfira's freedom that is restricted, it is Aleko's. Ironically, as a fleeing criminal, Aleko refuses to give up the rights of the society he has forsaken (and that has forsaken him), saying "No foe deprives me of my rights – ah no!"<sup>210</sup> Aleko is controlled by the culture he has fled and tries to impose that onto Zemfira, who resists. Earlier in the poem, he expressed dissatisfaction with his new life, as the poem reads "The reason for his melancholy he dared not fathom or explain."<sup>211</sup> Sandler writes of the implications of Aleko on the themes of individualism and the conflict between two societies: one "civilized" and one "wild."<sup>212</sup> Rather than deriving pleasure from love, we see that Aleko derives pleasure from violent revenge as he says:

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<sup>205</sup> Stephanie Sandler, *Distant Pleasures* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 149.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid*, 157.

<sup>207</sup> Layton, *Russian Literature*, 100.

<sup>208</sup> Antony Wood, *Alexander Pushkin: The Gypsies & Other Narrative Poems* (Jaffrey: David R. Godine, 2006), 17.

<sup>209</sup> Sandler, *Distant Pleasures*, 192.

<sup>210</sup> Wood, *The Gypsies & Other Narrative Poems*, 22.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>212</sup> Sandler, *Distant Pleasures*, 183-197.



“My foot would send the criminal  
Over the cliff and down to the surf;  
His sudden terror in the fall  
Would fill me with unholy mirth –  
How I should laugh to hear him howl!”<sup>213</sup>

In this “lesson about good and evil,” Zemfira’s love is the force that has kept Aleko in line throughout the whole poem and for the two years with the gypsies.<sup>214</sup> Without her love, Aleko is only a criminal – we see this at the beginning and the end of the poem. Zemfira is more than just “a powerful and passionate woman,” she is a driving moral force for most of the story who uses love for defense, offense and for guidance.<sup>215</sup> Yet still, Aleko is associated with Russia and Zemfira with the gypsies. Aleko’s reversion to Russian “rights” is perhaps the most telling thing of this gendered Orientalism: for Russia, the ‘civilized’ men must be the authority of the ‘savage’ women. This idea is most explicitly expanded upon in another of Pushkin’s poems, “The Fountain of Bakhchisaray.”

In “The Fountain of Bakhchisaray”, Zarema is the chief paramour of the Khan Giray. However, she loses favor with the Khan once he captures the Polish princess Maria and becomes enamored with the new arrival. Both women were prizes of war, in the same position of the nameless Circassian woman: an object to taken at the will of men.-This pair of women has the least agency in all the works discussed because they are so thoroughly controlled by, as Sandler describes it, “the omnipresence of male authority.”<sup>216</sup> Studies on this work have attributed to Zarema and Maria a pair of contradictory characteristics: that of passion (for Zarema) and of spirituality (for Maria).<sup>217</sup> Indeed, they are subordinates of the Khan; but they also have some degree of power over him. Maria is perhaps the most outstanding female character, as she chooses a path that none of the others do: she does not love any man. Instead, she chooses her to love her religion, which is seen at the scene of her death:

How would Maria with delight  
This world of wretchedness resign;  
Vanished of youth her visions bright,  
Abandoned she to fates malign!  
Sinless she to the world was given,  
And so remains, thus pure and fair,  
Her soul is called again to heaven,  
And angel joys await it there!<sup>218</sup>

In the end, Maria is greatly empowered by this love in stark contrast to the Circassian woman and Zarema who are left at the mercy of their loved ones. While Maria and Zarema have similarities and differences, they are both clearly figures of love; one for religion; and one for passion. Despite being both physically out of place from their vastly different native homes, they are the same in

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<sup>213</sup> Wood, *The Gypsies & Other Narrative Poems*, 22.

<sup>214</sup> Sandler, *Distant Pleasures*, 188.

<sup>215</sup> Sandler, *Distant Pleasures*, 191.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, 167.

<sup>217</sup> See Monika Greenleaf, *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 125-138 and Stephanie Sandler, *Distant Pleasures* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 165-183 for examples of this.

<sup>218</sup> Alexander Pushkin, “The Fountain of Bakhchisaray,” translated by William D. Lewis (Philadelphia: 1849), accessed April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Project Gutenberg.

the sense that they are the oriental woman (who are subjugated by the oriental man): secluded, loving, passionate, and dangerous.

The Oriental woman appears also in Mikhail Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time*. The Oriental woman appears, in parallel to the women of Pushkin's poetry, as the three women Pechorin attempts to seduce: Vera, Princess Mary, and Bela. Vera acts much like the Circassian woman and Zarema, while Princess Mary is closest to Zemfira, and Bela is similar to Maria. All three of these women are the epitome of the Oriental woman.

Scholars typically analyzed Bela's love for Pechorin as being genuine. Jane Costlow describes Bela as being "easily won over by Pechorin's gifts and grandstanding" (Bagby, 91). If she does indeed love him, it is curious how conscientious she is of her position. She says to Maksim: "If he does not love me, then who prevents him sending me home? I am not putting any constraint on him, but, if things go on like this, I will go away myself—I am not a slave, I am a prince's daughter!"<sup>219</sup> Elizabeth Allen describes the grim reality of Bela's position, "Bela has no other resources to draw upon...she actually has nowhere to go, nothing to live for."<sup>220</sup> Indeed, she is completely dependent on Pechorin's interest in her and is poignantly aware of the consequences. Without Pechorin, Bela's life has practically been taken away from her: she has no choice but to love him. But, on her deathbed, she is able to love her religion. She does not completely give into the impulses of the society that abducted her, deciding that "she would die in the faith in which she had been born."<sup>221</sup> Bela, it seems, exists to love one man or the other, or to turn to her religion in devotion: two defining characteristics of the Oriental woman. Layton describes the chapter in the novel as "a parody of plots about chivalrous Christian soldiers intent on delivering Muslim women from barbarism."<sup>222</sup> It is a parody, but one about noble men rescuing distressed damsels, with an oriental twist where the men are taking rather than rescuing.

Vera and Princess Mary, the other women that Pechorin has relations with, present issues for him unlike Bela. Vera is the only woman who loves Pechorin and is able to reconcile him with the world he tries to stand so far from. Vissarion Belinsky dismisses her as "elusive and vague," and "more probably a satire of a woman than a woman."<sup>223</sup> Her relationship with Pechorin, however, is complex. Costlow suggests that "Vera, in particular, challenges his philosophy of nihilism and endless motion with the actuality of the heart, of love and knowledge paradoxically joined."<sup>224</sup> This is the core of their relationship: Vera's intense love of Pechorin. She says to him:

"You know that I am your slave: I have never been able to resist you... and I shall be punished for it, you will cease to love me! At least, I want to preserve my reputation... not for myself—that you know very well!... Oh! I beseech you: do not torture me, as before, with idle doubts and feigned coldness! It may be that I shall die soon; I feel that I am growing weaker from day to day... And, yet, I cannot think of the future life, I think only of you... You men do not understand the delights of a glance, of a pressure of the hand..."

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<sup>219</sup> Mikhail Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book I chap. 8, translated by J.H. Wisdom and Marr Murray, accessed April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Project Gutenberg.

<sup>220</sup> Elizabeth Cheresch Allen, *A Fallen Idol is Still a God: Lermontov and the Quandaries of Cultural Transition* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 182.

<sup>221</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book I chap. XI.

<sup>222</sup> Layton, *Russian Literature*, 216.

<sup>223</sup> Lewis Bagsby, *Lermontov's A Hero of Our Time: A Critical Companion* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 41.

<sup>224</sup> Bagsby, *A Critical Companion*, 101.

but as for me, I swear to you that, when I listen to your voice, I feel such a deep, strange bliss that the most passionate kisses could not take its place.”<sup>225</sup>

It is quite clear to both the audience and Pechorin that Vera feels deep affections for the man despite his attributes. This speech exaggerates their differences drastically, showing a great divide between the man and the woman in a romantic relationship. She is the slave, and Pechorin is the slave-owner – they are not a pair of adults with a mutual feeling of romantic affection. As time passes in the Caucasus, it becomes clear that Vera will have to leave – the adulterous pair will have to separate. She sends a farewell letter that begins with: “We are parting forever; you may be sure that I shall never love another”: upon receiving Vera’s farewell letter, Pechorin sets off “like a madman” in order “again to see her for one minute.”<sup>226</sup> Some scholars suggest that he wants to “evade” the loss, that his rationalization of his actions reveals that he – as two scholars say – “wills blindness.”<sup>227</sup> This can be substantiated further in terms of gender. While, reflecting upon the death of his horse, Pechorin reverts to rationalization. The moments leading up to this were some of the only emotional and irrational moments that Pechorin has shared in his diary. Indeed, he has trouble answering his own motivations at this point, but makes an important admittance: “No, nothing could explain my anxiety, my despair!... Now that it seemed possible that I might be about to lose her for ever, Vera became dearer to me than aught in the world—dearer than life, honour happiness!”<sup>228</sup> Later, he attempts to dismiss these feelings just as he dismisses so many other things. What he makes clear, however, is that – if only for a moment – he was capable of loving Vera. Pechorin is trying to repress the very feelings that Vera has to retain his own civilized composure. Being feminine, for Pechorin, means losing himself: femininity is a threat to his identity as a male. When he finds himself subjected to the authority of Vera’s love, there is a clash of gender identity.

Pechorin expresses confusion to his own motivations when he considers his intentionally futile ‘courting’ of Princess Mary. “I often ask myself why am I so obstinately endeavouring to win the love of a young girl whom I do not wish to deceive, and whom I will never marry,” and the answer he finds is that “my chief pleasure is to make everything that surrounds me subject to my will.”<sup>229</sup> Costlow describes Pechorin as some sort of “vampire” who “draws sustenance from the nourishment of women.”<sup>230</sup> Mary is a victim in Pechorin’s sadistic plot, guided there by weeks of falsehoods. She renounces her love for Pechorin at the end, much like Zemfira does of Aleko, although she does not die. It is the result of Pechorin’s want to dominate the world around him, “to arouse the feelings of love, devotion and awe towards oneself” that Mary says “I hate you” and is thus separated from Pechorin and his world of virility.<sup>231</sup> In these works, love – both romantic and sexual – is a major stimulus for the plot as a force driving the actions of the women. At times, it can be pervasive, and at other times illusive, yet it still remains throughout as a divisive force

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<sup>225</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book V chap. VI.

<sup>226</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book V chap. XXI.

<sup>227</sup> See Jane Costlow’s essay in Lewis Bagnall, *Lermontov’s A Hero of Our Time: A Critical Companion* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 85-102. Also see Andrew Barratt and A.D.P Briggs, *A Wicked Irony: The Rhetoric of Lermontov’s A Hero of Our Time* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1989), 94-103. Both of these describe Pechorin’s voluntary blindness to the consequences of his action.

<sup>228</sup> Lermontov, book V chap. XXI.

<sup>229</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book V chap. VIII.

<sup>230</sup> Bagnall, *A Critical Companion*, 86.

<sup>231</sup> Lermontov, book V chap. VIII and book V chap. XXII.

between the worlds of men and women. That, however, does not relegate women to a passive position and is often seen as a lingering weapon that women hold over men.

Women in Russian Orientalist literature are often the bearers of passionate love. It defines them. However, it is not always a positive thing for the men involved. Scholars discussed the threats that some of these women have discussed. For Pechorin, the clearest feminine threat he faces is the undine:

It was she—my Undine. Softly and without saying a word she sat down opposite to me and fixed her eyes upon me. Her glance seemed wondrously tender, I know not why; it reminded me of one of those glances which, in years gone by, so despotically played with my life... suddenly, springing up, she threw her arms around my neck, and I felt her moist, fiery lips pressed upon mine. Darkness came before my eyes, my head began to swim. I embraced her with the whole strength of youthful passion. But, like a snake, she glided from between my arms, whispering in my ear as she did so:

“To-night, when everyone is asleep, go out to the shore.”<sup>232</sup>

The undine is the very image of mystical, and fatal, femininity. Pechorin’s term for describing her, “undine,” is – as Barratt and Briggs describe her – “A nymph personifying the watery element, she too is associated with death.”<sup>233</sup> Pechorin is made nearly senseless by her kiss alone. Just before she attempts to kill Pechorin, she exclaims: “it means that I love you!”<sup>234</sup> The undine has used her femininity as a weapon and nearly succeeds in killing the estranged protagonist. In this, Costlow correctly asserts that “the Undine evokes a drama almost banal in its familiarity: the attribution to women of sexual power over men and their use of sex as a ‘weapon’ to unman them.”<sup>235</sup> “Banal” as it may be, it is important to make the distinction that sex is not just a passive attribute: it is also a threatening one, one that empowers women to threaten men in specific. Barratt and Briggs also suggest that in his involvement with Mary, “Pechorin’s real intention is to guard himself against the imagined danger of this fantasy figure.”<sup>236</sup> Indeed, he says to us “I must confess that, in fact, I do not love women who possess strength of character. What business have they with such a thing?”<sup>237</sup> There is a clear and defined problem for Pechorin with women, and there is no doubt that they threaten him. When Bela begins to question him in a confrontation, he writes that “there was something terrible in the determination of her glance and voice.”<sup>238</sup> Mary and the Undine disrupt Pechorin’s desire for power, by acting outside of his prescribed future, and so he despises them both. He says that “Now my only wish is to be loved...[,]” but this does not imply that he will love someone back.<sup>239</sup> When faced with that threat, we are left with the Pechorin who “slept the sleep of Napoleon after Waterloo.”<sup>240</sup> That metaphor implies the disastrous consequences that women’s passion can supposedly have on men, further cementing the world of civilized Russia and the Oriental south as a clash of man versus woman.

We see this same threat occur in “The Fountain of Bakhchisaray” in Zarema. The harem is a sacred place, constantly surveilled and guarded by a eunuch, described below:

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<sup>232</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book III.

<sup>233</sup> Andrew Barratt and A.D.P Briggs, *A Wicked Irony: The Rhetoric of Lermontov’s A Hero of Our Time* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1989), 55.

<sup>234</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book III.

<sup>235</sup> Bagsby, *A Critical Companion*, 93.

<sup>236</sup> Barratt and Briggs, *A Wicked Irony*, 92.

<sup>237</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book V chap III.

<sup>238</sup> Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, book V chap XXV.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, book V chap III.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid, book V chap XXI.

He ruled the harem, order reigned  
 Eternal there; the trusted treasure  
 He watched with loyalty unfeigned,  
 His only law his chieftain's pleasure,  
 Which as the Koran he maintained.  
 His soul love's gentle flame derides,  
 And like a statue he abides  
 Hatred, contempt, reproaches, jests,  
 Nor prayers relax his temper rigid,  
 Nor timid sighs from tender breasts,  
 To all alike the wretch is frigid.  
 He knows how woman's sighs can melt,  
 Freeman and bondman he had felt  
 Her art in days when he was younger;  
 Her silent tear, her suppliant look,  
 Which once his heart confiding shook,  
 Now move not,--he believes no longer!<sup>241</sup>

The question becomes: why are the women guarded so? Have they done something to deserve this? Both women were prizes of Giray's conquests, but treasure does not need to be oppressed to be safe. The answer is perhaps something more insidious: women, at least, are perceived to threaten society. Greenleaf writes that "the ferocity of Zarema's physical desire essentially justifies the structures devised to contain it, to seal off the man's world of thought and action from the woman's world of 'mad sensuality.'"<sup>242</sup> To accept that is also to accept that the women represent a threat to the "man's world" and indeed that there are separate spheres of existence attributable to each gender. Zarema's threat to Maria, "But listen! the sad prey to scorn / If I must live, Princess, have care, / A dagger still doth Zarem wear, - / I near the Caucasus was born!" confirms this thought that she threatens the male world.<sup>243</sup> By threatening Maria, she also threatens Giray's happiness – and once his happiness is harmed (by Maria's suicide), he goes to war "for mad despair hath nerved his arm."<sup>244</sup> Although Giray is portrayed as the most powerful, authoritative figure in this poem, even he succumbs to the grave threat of woman's passion, much like Pechorin does, which speaks of the grand measure of power women can have. Both Giray and Pechorin resort to violence to reach some kind of catharsis. This societal threat that women pose is something that is subtly pointed to in "The Gypsies" as well.

As previously discussed, Aleko refuses Zemfira's departure because he does not want to give up his civilized rights. Sandler asserts that "*The Gypsies* include[s] the old man's disapproval as an indication that Aleko's 'rights' are not right."<sup>245</sup> This analysis helps define the difference between the parallel societies. Zemfira acts against Aleko's virile status quo of restricted monogamy, and so is a threat to Aleko's values. He describes her as both "bold" and "cold" once he has fully realized that she does not love him anymore, and this implies that he sees her as dead already because of her actions.<sup>246</sup> What he embraces in killing his adulterous lover is, ironically, the "civilized" way of life. Katya Hokanson suggests that, in the comparison to Ovid – a Roman exile whose story is told amongst the gypsies – "Aleko is a representative (as the captive had been)

<sup>241</sup> Alexander Pushkin, "The Fountain of Bakhchisaray," translated by William D. Lewis, accessed April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Project Gutenberg.

<sup>242</sup> Monika Greenleaf, *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 130.

<sup>243</sup> Pushkin, "The Fountain of Bakhchisaray."

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Sandler, *Distant Pleasures*, 188.

<sup>246</sup> Wood, *A Fallen Idol*, 20.

of the encroaching power of the Russian empire... Ovid is the civilized man fighting off the barbarians, whereas it is Aleko's 'barbarians' who are the civilized ones, and he is ultimately one of them."<sup>247</sup> How can this be? Aleko, to be sure, is an exile, but acts contrary to the gypsies, rejects their way of life, and is rejected by them at the end:

"Then the old man stood up, came near,  
And spoke: "Proud man, be gone from here!  
We are untamed, we have now laws –  
We do not torture, execute,  
We have no need of groans and blood –  
But cannot live with murderers...  
Not for freedom were you born,  
You want it for yourself alone;  
Your voice is dreadful to our ears:  
We are shy and good at heart,  
You, bold and evil – so depart,  
Farewell to you, may you find peace."<sup>248</sup>

If Aleko embraced the way of life of the gypsies, he would not have killed Zemfira (just as the old man had not sought vengeance against the love he had similarly lost). Indeed, he would perhaps have been more feminine, like the old man. That Zemfira was capable to and had the authority to choose her lover freely, within the bounds of society, contradicts everything Aleko understands about life. By killing her, thus validating the threat she posed to his image of women, he chose to return to that society of men.

What to say, then, about the women of these works? It is clear that some kind of romantic love is a defining characteristic of their existence, as is their submission to a male authority. But it is also clear that they are able to act outside of societal norms, while not completely breaking with the expectations of the audience. It is a strange duality then, that love is both a tool for women's oppression and for their empowerment – but it is one that allows us to see the women in Russian literature as more than property or dainty dolls. This contradictory identity comes out of the Orientalist literature and asserts that the world of men and women are different, and in most cases, are fatally intertwined.

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<sup>247</sup> Katya Hokanson, *Writing at Russia's Border* (Toronto: Toronto Press Incorporated, 2008), 106.

<sup>248</sup> Wood, *A Fallen Idol*, 28-29.

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## Memory from Mourning:

## Using Ford's Theatre as a National Coping Mechanism By James Santos

Nighttime. Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1865. Ford's Theatre in Washington D.C. The stage was set for John Wilkes Booth to assassinate the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln. That night, the impeccable career of the Great Emancipator would be cut short by a racist and bloodthirsty southern sympathizer. Booth's actions would set the precedent for the future assassinations of Presidents James Garfield, William McKinley, and John F. Kennedy. Thanks to Booth, the President of the United States was no longer seen as an invincible figure. They were mortal. From this tragedy came a haunting sorrow that pervaded the fractured country: buildings dressed in black, streets lined with people, and confusion on the mind. The unprecedented nature of Lincoln's assassination left questions Americans would face for the first time. How could they emotionally recover from this tragedy? What would become of Lincoln's legacy? And what would happen to Ford's Theatre? From a historical and psychological perspective, the haunting sorrow that came after the night of April 14<sup>th</sup> led the country to fall into a mourning state. Both public emotional sentiment and government policy laid the framework for the country to mourn President Lincoln, and it was the pervasiveness of this culture that would affect how Lincoln was remembered and how Ford's Theatre was continuously transformed. After that fated night, Ford's Theatre, and the legacy of Abraham Lincoln, was repeatedly used and manipulated to fit the needs of the American public.

Ford's Theatre originally served as the First Baptist Church of Washington beginning in 1834 until John T. Ford rented, bought, and renovated the building in 1862, renaming it Ford's Athenaeum.<sup>249</sup> A variety of performances were held, from Shakespeare to comedy, attracting people from all walks of life. Future assassin, John Wilkes Booth, was a regular actor here. His theatrical savvy and knowledge of Ford's Theatre was instrumental in his plot. President Lincoln arrived late for the showing of *Our American Cousin* and by the time the second act of the play had started, Booth made his way towards the presidential box. A guard had blocked his entry, but waived the famous actor through. He silently wedged the door shut with a wooden stand, and waited. Now was Booth's time. By assassinating Lincoln, he would avenge the south. He would protest the emancipation of slaves. Booth's name would be even more renowned. Lincoln sat next to Mary Todd, with guests Clara Harris and Major Henry Rathbone.<sup>250</sup> Relaxed, he paid attention to the comedic events of *Our American Cousin*. Asa Trenchard, the lead actor, said, "[...] you sockdologizing old man-trap."<sup>251</sup> Booth knew that this nonsensical statement would cause an uproar of laughter; that was his cue. A gunshot rang through the theatre. Booth jumped to the stage. "Sic Semper Tyrannis!" Confusion. Panic. Horror. Despair. At least Lincoln might have died laughing.

The country was not prepared for this emotional whiplash. On April, 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:22 AM, President Lincoln succumbed to his wound.<sup>252</sup> News and rumors of his death and John Wilkes Booth's deed spread quickly across the country. From New York City to Grand Rapids,

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<sup>249</sup> "History of Ford's Theatre," *Google Cultural Institute*, accessed September 20, 2016, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/9AKyuvsjPdT2Kw>.

<sup>250</sup> Edward Steers. *Lincoln's Assassination*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2014), 42.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-55.

<sup>252</sup> *The Weekly Reporter, Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/628>.



Michigan, headlines immediately ran, saying, “Our Loss. The Great National Calamity. Death of the President,”<sup>253</sup> or, “Was a Day of Great Sorrow.”<sup>254</sup> Less than a week previous on April 9<sup>th</sup>, General Robert E. Lee announced the Confederacy’s surrender at the Appomattox Courthouse. The important news of the ending of an awful, divisive, bloody war became overshadowed the even greater news of Lincoln’s assassination. Dr. Moses Gage from Bethel, New York reflected in his diary, saying, “[...] at the time when we were all congratulating our selves that the slaveholders rebellion was nearly over, and when hope pointed to the bright future, when the glory of this republic was about to be revealed, the man who had did more than all the other was stricken down by the hand of the Assassin.”<sup>255</sup>

Letters written immediately after Lincoln’s assassination conveyed the pervasive sorrow and confusion that afflicted the country. Founder of the Red Cross, Clara Barton, was present in Washington D. C., three blocks away from Ford’s Theatre.<sup>256</sup> Barton wrote in her diary, “[...] the whole city in gloom, no one knows what to do.”<sup>257</sup> Presidential assassination was unprecedented, adding to the country’s hysteria. This panic was not only shared regionally, but also socially and racially. In Philadelphia, Emilie Davis, a freed slave, recounted the emotion felt by the people after the assassination, writing, “very sad newes was received this morning of the murder of the President the city is in deep mourning.”<sup>258</sup> In Iowa, Native American prisoner of the United States – Dakota War, Moses Many Lightning Face, had heard rumors of the Lincoln assassination and wrote, “They have said that the President [Abraham Lincoln] was killed. [...] The President has compassion for us, as so far we are still alive, but now they told us he was killed, and we are saddened.”<sup>259</sup> Even people of the Confederacy detested the actions of John Wilkes Booth. An article in the *Mobile Daily News* in Mobile, Alabama stated, “[...] All differences of political opinion were, for the nonce buried, and with one accord the people denounced in unmeasured terms the murderer – the dastardly assassin, of the President of the United States.”<sup>260</sup> As for those citizens who applauded the actions of Booth, there were triple the number of citizens who would physically suppress those voices. Cleveland architect, J. J. Husband, stated that the death of the President was, “no great loss.”<sup>261</sup> Overhearing the statement, a mob of people chased him angrily, forcing him to take refuge in his office, and eventually flee the city. His name was then chiseled out from the side of the city courthouse,

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<sup>253</sup> James Gordon Bennett, “The New York Herald, April 16, 1865,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 19, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/633>

<sup>254</sup> Grand Rapids Herald, “Grand Rapids Herald Articles,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/859>

<sup>255</sup> Moses Gage, “Dr. Moses Gage Diary,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 18, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/695>

<sup>256</sup> Clara Barton, “Clara Barton’s Diary,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/997>

<sup>257</sup> Ibid

<sup>258</sup> Emilie Davis, “Emilie Davis Diary,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/549>

<sup>259</sup> Moses Many Lightning Dace and Clifford Canku, “Letter from Moses Many Lightning Face to S. R. Riggs from Davenport, Iowa,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/300>

<sup>260</sup> Mobile Daily News, “Citizens’ Meeting at Odd Fellows’ Hall,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/205>

<sup>261</sup> Western Reserve Historical Society, “Cornerstone of Third County Courthouse, Cuyahoga County, Cleveland, Ohio,” *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 19, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/224>

hoping that his name would be erased from Cleveland's history.<sup>262</sup> The people loved Lincoln, and they would protect his legacy as a national hero.

Government policy furthered the prevalence of mourning. With reluctant permission from Mary Todd Lincoln, Lincoln's body was transported by train from Washington to his hometown in Springfield, Illinois from April 18<sup>th</sup> to May 3<sup>rd</sup>, stopping along various cities for public viewing. With physical access to Lincoln's body, people had more of an opportunity to connect with him and other Americans around him than just through letters. People were brought together in solidarity in mourning Lincoln. In assessing the sheer number of people that came to witness the funeral train, firsthand accounts reveal much more detail. E. Rothesay Miller was in Philadelphia when the train passed through, and in describing the event to an acquaintance, he stated, "They were on the corner for an hour – then concluded that they might as well give up. The crowd was so dense that the crystal of my brother's watch was broken (a heavy hunting case). He said every once in a while some woman would faint – she would be passed out over the heads of the crowd [...]."<sup>263</sup> And in preparation for these crystal-breaking crowds, people wore mourning ribbons, city buildings were draped in black cloth, and the utmost respect was paid towards the deceased president. The federal government mandated shutdowns of its own departments during Lincoln's funeral. Issued by the War Department's Adjutant General, General Orders, No. 69 required that on April 18<sup>th</sup>, in Washington, the War Department and all supplemental departments would be closed for the President's funeral, with flags flying at half-mast.<sup>264</sup> For more local authority, police could also affect the closures of various businesses in the city. Days following Lincoln's death, D.C. Police Superintendent Almarin C. Richards ordered the closure of all stores that sold liquor.<sup>265</sup> So, it was not only the citizens of the United States that perpetuated this sorrowful culture, but also the government. It was one's obligation and duty as an American to partaking in mourning the assassinated president; and the government had the power to encourage that reality.

As the site of the tragedy, Ford's Theatre became a contested location to the public. On April 15, 1865, the superintendent of the Washington police, A. C. Richards, sent a telegram to John T. Ford stating that, "Col. Ingraham will detail a military guard of twenty men to protect your theatre tonight at my request."<sup>266</sup> It was clear to the American government that Ford's Theatre could no longer act as a cultural institution; the assassination had tainted the space. The government took possession of Ford's Theatre a day later, April 16, 1865.<sup>267</sup> Numerous actors and members of the stage crew of *Our American Cousin* were arrested out of suspicion of having associated with John Wilkes Booth.<sup>268</sup> Owner John T. Ford and his brothers, H. Clay Ford and

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Edward Rothesay Miller, "Letter of E. Rothesay Miller, "The Monastery" Princeton, to Free [Theodore Free Gale], May 4, 1865," *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/311>.

<sup>264</sup> W. A. Nichols, "General Orders, No. 69, War Department, Adjutant General's Office, Washington, April 17, 1865," *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/324>

<sup>265</sup> *Daily Morning Chronicle*. "Important order by A. C. Richards, Superintendent of the Metropolitan Police". *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed November 14, 2016. <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/489>

<sup>266</sup> A. C. Richards, letter to John T. Ford, April 15, 1865.

<sup>267</sup> "Memorandums," July, 1865. From Library of Congress, *John Thompson Ford Papers*.

<sup>268</sup> Thomas A. Bogar, *Backstage at the Lincoln Assassination: The Untold Story of the Actors and Stagehands at Ford's Theatre*, (Washington, DC: Regnery History), 123.

James R. Ford, were each arrested on the 18<sup>th</sup>, the 17<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> of April, respectfully.<sup>269</sup> The theatrical institution was falling apart. The desire to shut down Ford's Theatre was not just governmental, however. The public was often the most vocal in ensuring its closure. Hours after Lincoln had been carried across 10<sup>th</sup> Street to the Petersen House, an angry mob of people appeared outside Ford's Theatre.<sup>270</sup> With Lincoln's assassination fresh in their minds, they shouted, "Burn it down! Burn the damned place down!"<sup>271</sup> When Lincoln died, they wanted the place he had been assassinated to die with him.

John T. Ford, the owner and proprietor of Ford's Theatre, ignored the dissenting opinions and wanted to reopen his theatre. After his release from the Carroll Prison in Washington on May 27, 1865,<sup>272</sup> he called upon his friends, William H. Schley and Henry Winter Davis for legal advice in overturning new President Andrew Johnson's decision in seizing Ford's Theatre. In a letter to Secretary of State, Edwin M. Stanton, they argue, "We think he is entitled by law to open [Ford's] as a theatre. It is a lawful business and he is duly qualified to pursue it by licenses obtained from the U.S. and from the Municipal authorities."<sup>273</sup> Yet, even through logical legal counsel, Ford's Theatre remained closed by order of President Johnson.<sup>274</sup>

The popular opinion, however, was for John T. Ford to receive compensation for the seizure of his property and rebuild a new theatre. To the public, Ford's business antics were not the problem, rather, using Ford's Theatre was the issue. Ford received this anonymous letter during his deliberations:

Sir: You must not think of  
Opening tomorrow night – I can assure you  
That it will not be tolerated. [...]  
But do not attempt to open it again-  
One of many deter-  
Mined to prevent it<sup>275</sup>

The cryptic and threatening rhetoric of this letter (one of many) was enough to sway Ford. Ever the businessman, Ford issued a statement that, "[...] from the 10<sup>th</sup> of July/65 to the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1866, I value the use of property known as Ford's Theatre [...] at ten thousand dollars for the space of time named [...] or purchased by the Government of the United States for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars."<sup>276</sup> In 1866, his request was answered by the government and Ford's property was sold to the War Department for \$88,000.<sup>277</sup> John T. Ford finally let go of his prized theatre.

After the sale, the War Department made an entire renovation to Ford's Theatre. John T. Ford's property was no longer a space of culture, but instead became a three-story office building, housing the Office of Records and Pensions.<sup>278</sup> The assassination of President Lincoln

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<sup>269</sup> "Memorandums."

<sup>270</sup> Bogar, *Backstage at the Lincoln Assassination*, 118.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid, 118.

<sup>272</sup> "Memorandums."

<sup>273</sup> H. Winter Davis, letter to Hon. E. M. Stanton, July 18, 1865.

<sup>274</sup> Edwin M. Stanton, letter to William Schley and H. Winter Davis, July 19, 1865.

<sup>275</sup> "One of many determined to prevent it," letter to John T. Ford, July 9, 1865.

<sup>276</sup> John T. Ford, "A Statement from Jno T. Ford," July 21, 1865.

<sup>277</sup> "History of Ford's Theatre"

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

destroyed the cultural output once created through performance. Instead of producing laughter and emotion, the space now produced a dry and unexciting outpouring of documentation. In some ways, however, the legacy of Lincoln was preserved on the third floor of the new office building in 1867. The Army Medical Museum was placed here, showing the darkest parts of the assassination (i.e. part of John Wilkes Booth's spine).<sup>279</sup> This display was a direct result of the mourning state created by the citizens of the country. Two years was not nearly enough to forget about the tragedy of Lincoln's assassination. And, in a more macabre sense, the spirit of the deceased President felt the same. In 1893, the three floors of the renovated office building collapsed on each other, killing 22 workers inside.<sup>280</sup>

The theatrical world was affected in a wider range than just Ford's Theatre. According to historian Tom Bogar, "The entire theatrical profession suffered, not just from revenue lost during the mourning period, but from loss of reputation for the murderer having been of their own."<sup>281</sup> Clara Morris, an actress present during the night of Lincoln's assassination, was performing in Columbus, Ohio, when a violent mob attacked the theatre in protest of her presence.<sup>282</sup> Laura Keane, the prominent actress present at Lincoln's assassination, was deeply affected; her career on the stage virtually ended that night. In acting companies touring across the country in 1867, her name drew in smaller crowds and her association with the assassination brought violence to the theatre.<sup>283</sup> What happened to Ford's Theatre and those associated with the Lincoln assassination was an immediate effect of the mourning state, uniting Americans against theatre. The art form became a grim reminder of the tragedy that struck after assassination.

With cities and towns across the country draped in black, sorrow paralyzed the country. Lincoln's assassination was unprecedented, catching the attention of Americans of all backgrounds. Someone they looked up to, someone they trusted and revered, had been murdered. Mourning this man they had undoubtedly loved would be a countrywide affair, creating the mourning state. Akin to war mobilization, the mourning state called for the attention of all, but instead of *against* an enemy, they called for action *for* a cause. Whether it was going to church to pray, facing the crowds during his funeral parades, enforcing policy to mourn, physically rebuking positive emotion from others, or making one's own black mourning ribbons, everyone played a part in remembering Lincoln.

Psychologically, sadness and mourning do much more than cause someone to cry. When a person feels negative emotional affect (in this case, sorrow), other people perceive it as a need for assistance.<sup>284</sup> Anecdotally, this makes sense; when a loved one or even a stranger exhibits sadness, a human reaction is to comfort the other, creating a cycle of prosocial behavior (helping, comforting) and sympathy. In the eve of the mourning state, take the actions of mobs against those happy about the assassination; anger is used to protect those mourning. Reverends worked daily to help others grieve.<sup>285</sup> With evidence from diary entries, newspaper headlines, sermons,

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., 133.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., 258.

<sup>284</sup> C. D. Baston, & L. L. Shaw, "Evidence for altruism: Toward a pluralism of prosocial motives," *Psychological Inquiry*, 107–122.

<sup>285</sup> Leonard Francis Smith, "Reverend Leonard Francis Smith," *Remembering Lincoln*, accessed November 10, 2017, <http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/node/851>

and with the black mourning visuals, the mourning state created a homogenous group of solidarity. Sociologically, this solidarity in thinking is crucial in that it created a collective memory of Lincoln's legacy. Tight-knit groups like the ones formed after Lincoln's assassination, "[...] provide the materials for memory and prod the individual into recalling particular events and into forgetting others [and] can even produce memories in individuals of events that they never experienced in any direct sense."<sup>286</sup> Essentially, in a Darwinian sense, only the strongest, most suitable memories accepted by those in the mourning state will survive. Mass sorrow created a powerful group ideology; they were going to protect their memory of Lincoln in the positive manner that they wanted.

What happened to Ford's Theatre following the Lincoln assassination was an immediate effect of the mourning state. To the public (especially those close to Washington and the east coast), not just Ford's Theatre, but theatre as a cultural institution was a grim reminder of the tragedy that struck after Abraham Lincoln's assassination. After the internal collapse and deaths of the 22 workers in 1893, Ford's Theatre remained closed and untouched until 1924. The once lively and central hub of cultural expression in Washington was now literally an empty shell. The hatred and rejection of theatre expressed by the citizens of the United States flowed through the open space. For the 31 years in between 1893 and 1924, Ford's Theatre and, consequently, the memory of Abraham Lincoln, was left to be forgotten by the American public. However, this is not to say that his entire presidency was forgotten. Immediately after Lincoln's assassination, citizens in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln's birthplace, took immediate action in preserving Lincoln's legacy. The National Lincoln Monument Association was formed on April 24, 1865, set on collection donations from people in mourning across the country for construction funding.<sup>287</sup> Memorialization became a competition of sorts, with the city with the most memorials or grandest memorial as the protector of Lincoln's legacy. On April 15, 1868, 3 years after Lincoln's death, Irish immigrant Lot Flannery revealed his marble depiction of the deceased president.<sup>288</sup> Placed in front of the Court of Appeals in Judiciary Square, Flannery's interpretation of Lincoln features him upright, with his hand on a fasces, the unifying symbol of the Union. In 1866, Congress commissioned 18-year-old Vinnie Ream - the first female artist to create artwork for the government of the United States - to create a memorial statue of President Lincoln.<sup>289</sup> Her statue was unveiled in 1871, in the Capitol Rotunda in the United States Capitol. The Lincoln Memorial, originally planned to be built two years after his assassination in 1867, opened in 1922.<sup>290</sup> Easily the largest and most iconic memorialization of Abraham Lincoln to the public today, the memorial featured a 19-foot-tall, 175-ton statue of the president within a Greek-temple styled chamber featuring quotes from his Second Inaugural Address and Gettysburg Address lining the walls. 87 statues of President Lincoln were created between 1865 to 1952, with fourteen erected between 1866 and 1899 and the next seventy-three statues from 1900 to

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<sup>286</sup> Jeffrey K. Olick, "Collective Memory," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, accessed November 01, 2017, <https://sociology.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.virginia.edu/files/galecm.pdf>

<sup>287</sup> Richard Wightman Fox, *Lincoln's Body: A Cultural History*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015.), 149.

<sup>288</sup> "Flannery Statue in Washington, D.C." *Abraham Lincoln Online*. Accessed November 30, 2016. <http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/art/judiciary.htm>

<sup>289</sup> "Abraham Lincoln Statue." *Architect of the Capitol*. Accessed November 30, 2016, <https://www.aoc.gov/art/other-statues/abraham-lincoln-statue>

<sup>290</sup> "Lincoln Memorial." *National Park Service*. Accessed November 30, 2016, <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/wash/dc71.htm>

1949.<sup>291</sup> Americans preserved Lincoln's legacy with physical reincarnations. When the people lost their president, they made 87 more.

What these memorials lack, however, is a sense of place. The site of tragedy for Lincoln's assassination is Ford's Theatre. While the memorials of Lincoln represent his legacy, their individual locations lack the environmental context needed for his legacy's holistic representation. While Lincoln was shot in the theatre, he died across the street in what is known today as the Peterson House. Memorial Association of Washington transformed this space into the Lincoln Museum in 1893, coincidentally the same year as the collapse of the office renovations at Ford's Theatre.<sup>292</sup> And to fill this museum, the Association called upon Osborn Oldroyd, a Civil War veteran who had collected over 3,000 items of Lincoln memorabilia, for a contribution. Coincidentally, Oldroyd needed a place to stay and store his collection; he was living in Lincoln's childhood home in Springfield, Illinois and in the process of eviction. The Memorial Association leased the Petersen House to Oldroyd where he would display his Lincoln memorabilia to the public. However, the space itself was not a complete representation of President Lincoln's memory. While signs advertised the Peterson House as "The Place Where Lincoln Died," inside, there was no reference to the assassination. The Peterson House was a fully functioning museum, as all aspects of the boarding house were removed. To the public, the space has been recognized as the site of Abraham Lincoln's death. However, the house memorializes his life, but does not actively confront his assassination.

The outcome of Ford's Theatre posed a different challenge. While the people of the United States created their own representations of Lincoln, any action regarding his actual site of assassination was seemingly ignored. The only interaction with the theatre space was the destruction of the actual cultural institution for a place of production, of course, until its destruction in 1893. Memorials were erected, the funeral train made its way across the east coast, and people mourned, yet no action was taken for Ford's Theatre. President James Garfield and President William McKinley, both assassinated, had their sites of tragedy dedicated (1881 and 1901 respectively) before anyone had legislatively recognized Ford's Theatre as the site of Lincoln's assassination.<sup>293</sup> Why was this the case? What made Ford's Theatre taboo?

1924 was the year that Ford's Theatre was revisited as a place to memorialize President Lincoln. In a bout of preservation, U. S. Representative Henry Riggs Rathbone, son of Major Henry Rathbone and Clara Harris (who sat next to the Lincolns the night of the President's assassination), officially recognized Ford's Theatre as the site of Lincoln's assassination.<sup>294</sup> It was no longer hidden from the public eye. Yet, it was still empty, so Rathbone purchased Osborn Oldroyd's collection across the street in the Petersen House to place in Ford's Theatre. The transfer was ultimately completed in February 1932.<sup>295</sup> This action was well liked by the public, as written in a Washington Post Article,

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<sup>291</sup> Fox, *Lincoln's Body*, 152.

<sup>292</sup> David McKenzie, "Dedicating the Petersen House as the Lincoln Museum." *Ford's Theatre*. Accessed November 30, 2016, <https://blog.fords.org/2016/02/19/dedicating-the-petersen-house/>

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Sarah Jencks, "Photos from the Archives: Tourism, Tragedy and Obsession!" *Ford's Theatre*. Accessed November 30, 2016, <https://blog.fords.org/2014/07/16/tourism-tragedy-obsession/>

<sup>295</sup> "Lincoln Museum Will Open Friday in Ford's Theatre." *The Washington Post*. (Washington, District of Columbia), Feb. 7, 1932.

The objection that the selection of the of Ford Theater Building for [reconstruction] is inappropriate because it might “seem to sanctify the place of the act of a madman,” is so far-fetched as to deserve no consideration. In a sense, the building has become hallowed by this tragedy. It should be preserved and in it should be placed all the Lincoln relics.<sup>296</sup>

Ford’s Theatre, unused 39 years, finally had visitors. But it is important to note that the theatre space itself was not used during that time. 36 years later in 1965, lobbyist Frankie Childers Hewitt, advocated for live performances in the renovated Ford’s Theatre, fearing that its absence would make the space more closely linked to John Wilkes Booth rather than President Lincoln.<sup>297</sup> So she created Ford’s Theatre Society in collaboration with the National Parks service, charged with the task to produce live theatre. So, 103 years after President Lincoln’s assassination and the cultural shutdown and rejection of Ford’s Theatre, on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1968, the theatre was once again a center of culture.

But it is not the “how” of the Ford’s Theatre reconstruction that is of note, it is the “when.” What is significant of the dates involved in the revival of Ford’s Theatre? U. S. Representative Henry Riggs Rathbone was the first to recognize Ford’s Theatre as the site of the Lincoln assassination, placing a plaque on the front of the theatre in April 1924. During that time in the country, the cultural revolution of the Roaring 20s was in full, lavish effect. From a political standpoint, however, it was a different story. Author David Goldberg stated, “The 1920s involved a time of confronting (or sometimes, ignoring) profound social problems, fears, and anxieties that had nagged on the social consciousness for decades.”<sup>298</sup> For the United States, one of the problems at hand was the new postwar society. After only a year in Europe, World War I had ended. In total, approximately 10 million lives were lost and approximately \$300 billion was spent.<sup>299</sup> The world was deeply affected. The United States rejected President Woodrow Wilson’s League of Nations, an anti-immigrant sentiment began to emerge, and the country became the center of global affairs, acting as the world’s watchdog.<sup>300</sup> Fear filled the country. But, as Goldberg stated, the people of the United States were ready to confront that fear. Representative Henry Riggs Rathbone was among the galvanized citizens. As the son of Major Henry Rathbone, witness of President Lincoln’s assassination, he used his sorrowful past as a coping mechanism for the political strife of the 1920s. Representative Rathbone was fond of Lincoln’s ideals. In a speech to the House of Representatives on February 12, 1924, he stated, “Better than all treaties and covenants would his spirit be to heal the wounds of war, banish hatred, make men clasp hands in friendship and recreate the new and better world on the ruins of the old.”<sup>301</sup> During the 1920s, a sort of ‘Lincoln-revival’ took place: The Lincoln Memorial was created in 1922 and the American government finally recognized Ford’s Theatre as Lincoln’s assassination site in 1924. With this, a comparison can be made to Lincoln in 1865.

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<sup>296</sup> “The Lincoln Museum.” *The Washington Post*. (Washington, District of Columbia), Mar. 22, 1930.

<sup>297</sup> Anna Snyder, “Photos from the Archives: The Revival of Theatre at Ford’s Theatre.” *Ford’s Theatre*. Accessed November 30, 2016, <https://blog.fords.org/2014/11/12/revival-of-theatre/>

<sup>298</sup> David J. Goldberg, *Discontented America: The United States in the 1920s*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), ix.

<sup>299</sup> Henry Riggs Rathbone, *Abraham Lincoln/ speech of Henry R. Rathbone*. (Washington: U. S. Govt. Print, 1924), 5.

<sup>300</sup> Goldberg, *Discontented America*, 20.

<sup>301</sup> Rathbone, *Abraham Lincoln*, 5.

Until the American involvement in WWI in 1917, the country had not fought in a war of that magnitude since the Civil War in the 1860s. After the Civil War ended in 1865 with the surrender of Confederate General Robert E. Lee, it was expected that President Lincoln would handle Reconstruction. After all, it was under his leadership that the Union was preserved. That expectation, however, was cut short by the hand of John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln on April 14, 1865. Vice President Andrew Johnson would lead Reconstruction in his place.

What happened with the revival of Lincoln in the 1920s is a result of his assassination. People like Henry Riggs Rathbone called upon Lincoln's political legacy by establishing physical manifestations of the deceased president. Due to the 1920s being a postwar era, it mirrored the postwar era of the Civil War: there was uncertainty and xenophobia. Wilson's plans for reconstruction after WWI were rejected, and the people were now looking to Abraham Lincoln, the Savior of the Union, as a figure that could lead the country out of this turmoil. By establishing the Lincoln Memorial and, more importantly, recognizing Ford's Theatre as his assassination site, the country once again recognized the importance of his legacy; Lincoln was thus able to partake in the reconstruction of the country, a duty he was stripped of in 1865 because of his assassination.

Nonetheless, in 1924 Ford's Theatre was only recognized as a historical space and was not used as a public space. This was the case until February 13, 1932, Lincoln's birthday, when the Lincoln Museum opened on the first floor of the renovated Ford's Theatre.<sup>302</sup> The Stock Market Crash of 1929 fell to its lowest point in 1932, creating the Great Depression.<sup>303</sup> Approximately 15,000,000 people were unemployed, banks shut down, and American production was cut in half.<sup>304</sup> President Herbert Hoover, a strict believer of the government's hands-off policy with the US economy, was unable to handle the cries of help from the American people. 'Depression' seemed to be the proper holistic description. The period between the Stock Market Crash in 1929 up until Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal in 1935 was a time of sorrow, panic, and uncertainty. Sociologist Barry Schwartz examined the use of Lincoln's memory during the Great Depression, saying,

[Lincoln was presented] as a means for seeing the world's disappointments, for making its sufferings not so much explicable as meaningful, an aspect of a larger scheme of which one's personal experience was a part. Abraham Lincoln, more urgently than ever before, was "good for thinking," a guide for living in the troubled world.<sup>305</sup>

The development of the Lincoln Museum in 1932 was an act of hero worship. The American public needed a strong, inspirational figure in this desperate time of need. What the museum offered to the public was a deeper look into the history of the beloved president; a painting by Carl Bersch, the cradle of Lincoln's children, Lincoln's desk, and his stove were among the items in the museum that commemorated his legacy.<sup>306</sup> Artifacts like these reminded the

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<sup>302</sup> "Lincoln Museum Will Open Friday in Ford's Theater." *The Washington Post*. (Washington, District of Columbia), Feb. 7, 1932.

<sup>303</sup> "Today in History – July 8." *Library of Congress*. Accessed December 8, 2016, <https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/july-08>.

<sup>304</sup> "The Great Depression." *History*. Accessed December 8, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/great-depression>

<sup>305</sup> Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in the Late Twentieth-Century America*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 24.

<sup>306</sup> "Lincoln Museum Will Open Friday in Ford's Theater." *The Washington Post*. (Washington, District of Columbia), Feb. 7, 1932.



American public of his memory, giving them hope for a better future. The opening of the Lincoln Museum during the Great Depression seemed to be a calculated strategy by Representative Rathbone and Osborn Oldroyd, revitalizing Ford's Theatre as a space to remember the hope Abraham Lincoln brought the country during his time as president.

Lastly, Ford's Theatre, with the help of the Ford's Theatre Society, once again produced live theatre in 1968. Why did it take this long to fully reconstruct the theatre? Up until January 30, 1968, Ford's Theatre was not used as a theatre, but instead as a museum space. While the museum was a profitable addition to the Ford's Theatre site, Ford's Theatre was not a museum space in the 1860s. Cultural production died at Ford's Theatre the same night Abraham Lincoln died. Why is theatrical revival in 1968 significant?

The 1960s in the United States were marked by protests and calls for equality amongst a growing population. Cesar Chavez united Mexican Americans with the National Farm Workers Association in 1965, Betty Friedan listed the inequalities against women in *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, and civil rights activists like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Stokely Carmichael assisted in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ending segregation.<sup>307</sup> These fights for equality and representation were at the heart of Lincoln's role as the Great Emancipator, and civil rights activists were not shy in using that image of Lincoln to their benefit. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream Speech" in 1963, was delivered in front of the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, on August 28, 1963, 100 years after Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.<sup>308</sup> In comparison, while Ford's Theatre evokes Lincoln's legacy, it does so in a static and non-active way. The Lincoln Memorial acted as a platform for social change while Ford's Theatre did not. Frankie Hewitt, founder of the Ford's Theatre Society, viewed that sentiment in a similar light. Hewitt was afraid that if Ford's Theatre remained a museum, then Lincoln's Legacy in the theatre would not be preserved.<sup>309</sup> Instead, John Wilkes Booth's legacy would remain. Without performance, Booth would not only have assassinated President Lincoln, but also would have killed theatre. To Hewitt, there would be no more silence in Ford's Theatre. Now, there was an activeness involved with the preservation of Lincoln in the theatre, mirroring the activism brought forth in front of the Lincoln Memorial. Reporter Emily Genauer saw a show at Ford's Theatre on April 7, 1968 and recalled her emotional connection with Lincoln, stating,

Sitting in that beautiful small theater in which Lincoln is so poignantly and tragically omnipresent, I thought I'd rather see modern plays dealing with the principles he fought for, with the civil rights movement today, for instance, or with other aspects of the American struggle for freedom. With no reference to Lincoln or the Civil War at all, they'd still take on special meaning from his spiritual presence.<sup>310</sup>

With live performance, Ford's Theatre became a truly unique institution. Both the museum and performance spaces memorialized Lincoln in different ways. As per Genauer's perspective, the

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<sup>307</sup> James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 642-643.

<sup>308</sup> "Lincoln as the Great Emancipator." *Ford's Theatre*. Accessed December 8, 2016, <https://www.fords.org/lincolns-assassination/>.

<sup>309</sup> Kenneth Jones, "Frankie Hewitt, Instrumental in Relighting Ford's Theatre for Shows, Dead at 71." *Playbill*. Accessed December 8, 2016, <http://www.playbill.com/article/frankie-hewitt-instrumental-in-relighting-fords-theatre-for-shows-dead-at-71-com-111841>

<sup>310</sup> Emily Genauer, "Unseen Presence at Ford's Theater." *Los Angeles Times*. (Los Angeles, CA), Apr. 17, 1968.

plot of the play did not have to reflect any notion of Lincoln whatsoever. The mere fact that Ford's Theatre was once again being used as it originally was in 1865 was enough to evoke the memory and legacy of Abraham Lincoln. And during the time of the 1960s, it was an effective time for repurposing.

What is seen from the reuses of Ford's Theatre in 1924, 1932, and 1968, is a manipulation of space and memory to reflect the needs of the American public. The revitalization of Lincoln's legacy in the United States is not solely intellectual. It is also physical, seen through the lens of the re-establishment of Ford's Theatre. After his assassination in 1865, while Lincoln was never truly forgotten, the entirety of his legacy was often ignored, as was the case with Ford's Theatre. But what is seen in the years following his assassination is the timely selectiveness of what the American public needed Abraham Lincoln to represent. To them, solving an issue or gathering inspiration was a matter of finding what memorialization of Lincoln they could use. The mourning state that affected the country after his assassination allowed for his many memorializations. From an interdisciplinary approach, Geoffrey Cubitt stated,

[...] psychologists and historians working on memory have generally, in recent decades, had one important thing in common: adherence to a reconstructivist conception of remembering. That memory is to be understood not as a mental survival or quasi-photographic representation of past reality, but as a reconstructive process, in which our impressions of that reality are continually reconfigured and reinterpreted in ways that are influenced by our present attitudes and positioning [...]<sup>311</sup>

While memorials often demand a level of respect from those visiting, it important in modern times to understand the purpose of the memorial itself. These dedicated statues and historic sites are not hastily produced without thought, but certainly have historical and psychological reasoning behind them. Are they created with the intent to promote propaganda? Do they promote the memory of groups in power and denounce the legacy of the marginalized?

In an era of positive sentiment towards Lincoln's legacy, the nation picked and chose the many parts of Lincoln's lifetime they wanted to remember: Savior of the Union, the Great Emancipator, fearless leader, Civil Rights Activist, lover of the arts. These titles were placed into our collective memory, but would only be recalled when the country's social climate called for one. The final step in reconstructing Ford's Theatre and transforming it into a memorialized institution was completed in 1968 when live theatre was reintroduced. From then, Lincoln's legacy was no longer hidden by silence, but instead exhibited and expressed through ritual. But it wasn't the theatrical content that memorialized Lincoln, it was the ultimate use of the ritual space. What was once a hollow building ruined by the hands of John Wilkes Booth was now a booming cultural institution that honored the legacy of President Abraham Lincoln. At this stage, the final step in dealing with mourning was acceptance. Ford's Theatre was no longer a place of horror and shame. Instead, it became a memorial, and renovated into a space of reverence and culture once again.

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<sup>311</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, "History, psychology and social memory," in *Psychology and History: Interdisciplinary Explorations*.

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