

QUAESTIO

THE UNDERGRADUATE HISTORY JOURNAL

Volume 8 . 2013-2014



**A PUBLICATION OF PHI ALPHA THETA HISTORY HONOR
SOCIETY THETA UPSILON CHAPTER AT UNIVERISTY OF
CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES**

Cover Image

“Registration - Students walking through Royce Hall colonnade, 1930”
Thelner Hoover (UCLA 1930), Photographer UCLA University
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello Everyone,

It is my grand pleasure to be able to present to you the eighth edition of *Quaestio*, the annual undergraduate history journal produced by the Theta Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta National History Society at UCLA. I feel blessed this year to oversee the production of this journal, along with interacting with the many students and faculty that focused their efforts on producing the very best pieces of undergraduate history writing possible. Their endeavors have paid off and the journal you are holding in your hands is the product of their achievement.

You will also notice that the design and layout of this year's journal has changed significantly. With a change of hands in editor-in-chiefs (it is a complete honor to be taking over from the formidable Diane Bani-Esraili, who splendidly ran the journal the last two years), I have also chosen to give the journal a breath of fresh air. Nonetheless, you will still see that the new design and layout pay homage to the journal's past history (motifs such as the lines, the title format, etc.).

I would like to take this opportunity now to thank history department members Paul Padilla, Sarah Stein, and David Myers for their continuous and steady support for both Phi Alpha Theta and this journal. Hearty thanks to editors Nicole Chiang, Seth Van Horn, and Serena Wu for their sharp wit and cutthroat reviewing. And of course, congratulations to Douglas Daniels, Andrew Diachenko, Jessica Freed, Sabrina Ponce, and Valeria Rivera for their academic success. Lastly, I would like to thank the UCLA Department of History as a whole for their continued support, especially faculty members who presented their research during Phi Alpha Theta meetings.

I now ask you to enjoy this journal. Delve into its pages with an open mind and immerse yourself in this year's academic accomplishments!

Respectfully yours,
Jason Hong
Editor-in-Chief

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Logistics and Loyalism: What the Accounts of Britain's Successive Commissary Generals Tell Us About Allegiances During the American Revolution

**By: Douglas Arthur Daniels
Advisor: Craig Bryan Yirush**

Notes on Abbreviations:

PRO: The National Archives (Public Record Office), Kew, UK

T: Treasury Department

CO: Colonial Office Papers

For as long as scholars have studied the American Revolution they have been fascinated by the question, how many colonists rebelled and how many remained loyal to the crown? Indeed, even contemporaries of the revolution were prone to speculate on the political makeup of the colonies during the war. John Adams' now famous assessment that one-third of colonists were Rebels, one-third were neutral, and one-third were Loyalists, has been cited frequently.¹ It is unsurprising that Adams' assessment remains part of the discussion to this day; not only was Adams a contemporary of the Revolution, but accurate population demographics during this time period do not exist, much less accurate breakdowns of the colonies' political affiliations. Additionally, the ability to quantify allegiances during the Revolution serves a very important (albeit singular) purpose: namely, ascertaining

¹ Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy mentions Adams in his recent work, *The Men Who Lost America*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013), 190.

the legitimacy of the Revolutionary cause. Put more simply, determining the precise number of Loyalists and Patriots would mean the difference between a revolution conducted by a majority or by a minority. Although this line of questioning is as difficult as it is important to answer,² there is an equally important line of questioning that historians of the Revolution should be asking: of what consequence, both potential and actual, were the Loyalists? In other words, how *could* the Loyalists have best supported the British cause, and what substantive support were they able to lend?

Naturally, both of these lines of questioning are interconnected. After all, the greater the number of Loyalists, the greater their potential for supporting Great Britain's cause. Conversely, regions that were able to offer significant support to Britain suggest that Loyalists outnumbered Patriots in those regions. However, since no accurate census data from this time period exists, an answer to the question of how many Loyalists there were must necessarily be based on estimates. It can therefore only vaguely suggest at the legitimacy of the revolution and only roughly approximate Britain's chances for success. For a more accurate assessment we must instead ask, what kind of Loyalist support did Britain need and what kind of support did she receive? The answer to the first part of this question is threefold: Great Britain needed political, logistical, and military support from Loyalists. Whether Britain most needed political or logistical support is debatable.³ However, it is clear that Britain *least* needed military support. The British did, after all, conquer every major American city during the war,

² Paul H Smith provides us with one of the most comprehensive studies of the number of Loyalists within the thirteen colonies. Using enrollment statistics from Loyalist militias in concert with previous studies, Smith's conclusion estimates that 500,000 people remained loyal (roughly 16% of the population of the colonies): "The American Loyalists: Notes on Their Organization and Numerical Strength," *William and Mary Quarterly* Third Series, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Apr. 1968): 259-277.

³ Both were perhaps equally important. Britain desperately needed logistical support (provisions for men and forage for horses) throughout the war, and would ultimately require widespread political support in order to restore British rule.

and only suffered major defeats when they were greatly outnumbered.⁴ The focus should thus be on political and logistical support. Additionally, as historian John Shy has demonstrated, militias (both Rebel and Loyalist) were most effective as makeshift police forces. That is not to say that militias did not serve an important military function, but rather to emphasize Shy's point that militias were "the ultimate sanction of political authority in [their] own district."⁵ So, rather than viewing militias as evidence of military support, they should instead be considered manifestations of political support. Furthermore, when answering questions about potential and actual Loyalist support, concrete facts and figures may be used.⁶ Thus, by assessing both potential and actual logistical and political support, historians can answer *both* lines of questioning with a much greater degree of accuracy. This paper will focus not only on the logistical support Britain desperately needed, but also the logistical support that her forces were able to secure, and thus attempt to assess the efficacy of Loyalists during the Revolution. In order to do this, we must turn to the men most intimately acquainted with the status of the army's provisions: Britain's successive Commissary Generals, Daniel Chamier (1775 – May 1777) and Daniel Wier (May 1777 – November 1781).

The bulk of scholarship on British logistics during the American Revolution is contained in the three works of Norman Baker, R. Arthur Bowler, and John Syrett.⁷ These books analyze British successes and failures with regards to shipping supplies across the Atlantic, and justly

⁴ O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 353

⁵ John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 217-18

⁶ Since accurate numbers on Loyalist militias exist, these numbers may be used to ascertain political support. Similarly, numbers on logistical support also exist, in the form of provisions for troops and forage for horses.

⁷ Norman Baker, *Government and Contractors: The British Treasury and war Supplies 1775-1783* (London: Athlone Press, 1971); R. Arthur Bowler, *Logistics and the Failure of the British Army in America: 1775-1783* (Princeton: Princeton, 1975); David Syrett, *Shipping and the American War: 1775-83* (London: Athlone Press, 1970)

conclude that the logistical failures of the British were a significant contributing factor in their defeat. Unfortunately, these conclusions have been largely marginalized or overlooked.⁸ Additionally, the accounts detailed in their books do not address the question of Loyalism in the colonies. The accounts of Wier and Chamier are very much overlooked in this regard, even though they are an incredibly valuable resource: Wier and Chamier were in communication with the highest echelons of British authority (the Treasury Board and the Commanders in Chief), as well as the commoners who were their subordinates. By reading through the Commissary Generals' accounts with the question of Loyalists in the background, the letters of Wier and Chamier reveal a failure on the part of the British to organize Loyalist support in regions not only most sympathetic to the crown, but also in agricultural regions most capable of providing logistical support. The British largely overlooked the failures in these accounts, however. As the focus of the war shifted towards the Southern Colonies after the entry of France in 1778, British strategy was still predicated on the false assumption that Loyalists were the majority of the population. Prior to this shift south, British overestimation of Loyalists in New York and Pennsylvania was based on ample evidence and was thus plausible. However, British failures in the accounts of Wier and Chamier suggest that British expectations of Loyalism in the South weren't nearly as reasonable. Furthermore, these accounts show that the logistical support that the British did receive was woefully insufficient, and therefore suggest that Loyalists were in the minority even within regions thought to be the centers of Loyalist activity in the colonies.

Chamier was Britain's Commissary General in North America prior to the outbreak of hostilities in 1775, but this paper is only concerned with the years of conflict. It also bears mentioning that the

⁸ O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 353; his conclusion that "insufficient resources" contributed to British failure is an understatement of Britain's logistical shortcomings, and somewhat misleading. Supplies were insufficient for a variety of reasons in the early years of the war, but Britain's ability to ship supplies across the Atlantic improved exponentially when the Navy Board took over the task from the Treasury in 1779 (see p.8 of this paper).

records used for this paper have certain minor chronological limitations. Letters from Chamier to London⁹ begin on June 8th, 1776 and end on May 19th, 1777. Letters between Wier and London¹⁰ begin on January 20th, 1778 and end on December 12th, 1779. Letters from Wier to his subordinates¹¹ begin on September 9th, 1778 and end on May 17th, 1780. Although these dates do not encompass the entire duration of the conflict, they are more than sufficient to begin raising questions of the efficacy of Loyalists in the colonies.

British Bureaucracy and Loyalist Hotbeds

To understand the intimacy with which the Commissary General was acquainted with the British army's provisions, it is necessary to understand their place within the bureaucratic machinery of Britain's eighteenth century war machine. Wier, like his predecessor Chamier, received his commission from John Robinson, secretary of the Treasury Board. The Treasury initially oversaw most of what we would today call the logistics of running the war. In other words, the job of supplying the army with everything from food to clothing to medical supplies – even for German and Provincial troops – fell to the Treasury.¹² The Treasury had held similar responsibilities during the successful Seven Years' War, and although circumstances between the Seven Years' War and the American Revolution may at first glance appear to be similar in terms of geography as well as with regards to the Treasury's logistical task at hand, they were different in several crucial respects.

Perhaps most obvious was the fact that Britain was alone in her fight against France, Spain, and eventually Holland during the American Revolution, whereas during the Seven Years' War, Britain enjoyed Prussian support to distract other European powers. It is also

⁹ PRO T 64/118

¹⁰ PRO T 64/114

¹¹ *Letterbook of Daniel Wier, British Commissary General at New York, Sept. 1778 – May 1780*, Microfilm, New York Historical Society, December 1969.

¹² Bowler, *Logistics*, 14

true that the Seven Years' War was the first time that the Treasury Board's task truly expanded beyond what it had previously done, as it was faced with supporting troops not just in Europe, but in North America and India as well. However, experience gained during this time would not prove to be adequate to meet the demands of the American Revolution. This is due mostly to the fact that the Seven Years' War had afforded the British government the luxury of obtaining most of its provisions locally from colonies that were still loyal to the crown. Additionally, the method of provisioning troops that the Treasury Board employed during the Seven Years' War facilitated the use of the colonies. The Treasury Board's method was either to enter into contracts with London-based merchants who would take on the task of supplying the troops, or to empower an agent within the army (the Commissary General) to purchase requisite supplies locally. As it happened, during the Seven Years' War the vast majority of these contracts were in turn subcontracted to American merchants, who in turn supplied the British army.¹³ For obvious reasons, this was far preferable to having to ship supplies across the Atlantic.

Unfortunately for the British, this system broke down within a month of the first shots being fired at Lexington and Concord. General Gage wrote back to the Treasury on May 10th that "all the ports from whence our supplies usually came have refused suffering any provisions or necessary whatsoever to be shipped for the King's use...and all avenues for procuring provisions in this country are shut up."¹⁴ Gage would go even further a few days later on May 25th, 1775 when he wrote to Lord Dartmouth, the American Secretary at the outbreak of the war, commenting on "the refusal of all the colonies to supply the King's Troops with the Articles necessary for their support."¹⁵ However, neither the Treasury nor North's cabinet thought

¹³ R. Arthur Bowler, "Logistics and Operations" in *Reconsiderations on the Revolutionary War*, ed. Don Higginbotham (Westport & London: Greenwood Press, 1978), 63

¹⁴ Quoted from Bowler in Higginbotham, *Reconsiderations*, 63

¹⁵ PRO CO/5/92, 167

that colonial intransigence was permanent, and they would continue to form British policy based on the false assumption that the army would be able to supply itself from territories that were brought back into the fold, just as it had in the Seven Years' War. And yet, Daniel Wier wrote the treasury almost three years after Gage, saying on March 4th, 1778 that the British army had "by no means a reasonable Prospect of obtaining Supplies of any kind or in any degree from this Country, but must place our whole dependence on those sent from Europe."¹⁶ Reports were not always so grim, however, and as we will see, Chamier (and to a lesser degree, Wier) was able to send back, on occasion, positive reports on the acquisition of forage. Such sporadic optimism undoubtedly contributed to the misconception of Loyalist support in the colonies. As historian Norman Baker has pointed out, however, "grounds for such optimism were normally short-lived and disappeared with a change in military fortunes."¹⁷ Additionally, as we will see, such optimism flew in the face of reality, as more often than not, the British were unsuccessful in their attempts to acquire enough provisions to make themselves self-sufficient.

In any event, the Treasury initially was not put off by Gage's reports of the colonies' incipient refusal to supply the army. After all, the Treasury had, on several occasions, sent supply shipments from England to their forces in North America during the Seven Years' War. The Treasury's contractors were duly notified, and a large supply fleet loaded with "ample and, it has even been suggested, luxurious supplies for the troops" set sail for America.¹⁸ As is often the case in war, forces beyond human control would exact their toll on this hapless flotilla of thirty-six victuallers.¹⁹ Fierce storms would force many of them back to England and others further on to the West Indies. The few stragglers that were able to maintain their course to America fell easy prey to

¹⁶ PRO T 64/114, 20

¹⁷ Baker, *Government and Contractors*, 2

¹⁸ Bowler quoted in Higginbotham, *Reconsiderations*, 63

¹⁹ *Victuallers* refers to ships transporting provisions, as opposed to troop transports.

American privateers.²⁰ The resultant hike in shipping insurance rates made the Treasury's contractors unable to fulfill their previous obligations, as shipping costs were now higher than had been allowed for when their contracts were drawn up. As a result, the Treasury was forced to take over the herculean task of shipping millions of tons of provisions across the Atlantic.²¹

To address this new burden, the Treasury Board initiated a number of changes. To begin with, the Treasury established Cork, Ireland as the hub for the collection and shipment of provisions under the direction of Robert Gordon. It was through Cork that provisions destined for North America would pass, and it was here that, under the supervision of Gordon, provisions were to be inspected and received from contractors. Furthermore, the Treasury was compelled to set up a similar office in North America, as agents of the contractors themselves had previously been tasked with the collection and disbursement of provisions sent from Europe.²² These duties extended well beyond the purview of the Treasury's former commission, and so a new commission was issued to the incumbent commissary, Daniel Chamier, on April 12th, 1776.²³ Although Chamier was assigned six subordinates to assist in his newly expanded duties, this was not viewed as a permanent change. It was the widely held belief that as the British army wrested control of the colonies from the Rebels, they would be able to feed themselves from the conquered countryside.²⁴ Unfortunately for the British, not only did this presumption persistently influence their strategy, but they were also never able to secure a consistent source of

²⁰ Bowler quoted in Higginbotham, *Reconsiderations*, 63

²¹ The Treasury Board knew that they were getting in way over their heads, and immediately turned to the Navy Board and asked for them to take over the task of shipping. The Navy Board refused, and actually competed with the Treasury in the bidding for the hiring of vessels to ship its own supplies to North America. Not until March of 1779 did the Navy Board take over the task of shipping provisions as well. For a much more detailed explanation, see Syrett, *Shipping*

²² Bowler, *Logistics*, 29

²³ PRO T 64/118, 59

²⁴ Bowler, *Logistics*, 29

local provisions, no matter how insistent they were to the Daniel Chamier, their agent in charge of obtaining local supply.

Chamier proved woefully inadequate to the task, and was eventually replaced by the much more competent Daniel Wier.²⁵ Wier first arrived in America in the beginning of May, 1777, but did not fully assume his duties until the 25th of May, 1777, the first day that provisions were issued under his name.²⁶ This was a turbulent time in the war for independence, as the British army, led by General Howe, was in the midst of campaigning in New York and New Jersey. New York City had been in the British government's sights for a while, for a variety of reasons. Its location adjacent to the Hudson gave the British direct access to the Northern colonies, "like a highway into the heart of the Rebel country."²⁷ Additionally, not only was New York more

²⁵ Compared with Wier's reports to the Treasury, Chamier's contain a noticeable lack of returns. Chamier's letter book (PRO T/64/118) gives us a date range of 6/8/76 until 5/19/77, just before Wier takes over. In that time, Chamier offers the Treasury 24 total returns, only *nine* of which contain information pertaining to supplies remaining on hand (only one return of forage on hand) and the number of men being victualed. The rest consist of returns of victuallers and their cargo that was received. Additionally, Chamier's returns on victuallers lately arrived at New York did not always contain a list of their cargoes. Compare that to Wier, who in a similar timespan of 11 months wrote 35 returns (PRO T/64/114, 1/20/78 – 12/21/78), on topics such as supplies on hand, number of horses on hand, ships received *and* those set sail for Cork, and remaining forage on hand. Furthermore, Wier's returns on the number being victualed had separate categories for women, children and "negroes." Chamier would claim (presumably in response to complaints from the Treasury) that the state of provisions and number being victualed had always been provided as often and as accurately as the "dispersed situation of the army" would allow (PRO T/64/114, 34). This claim would arguably prove hollow, as Wier's prodigious and detailed returns were continually made even after the entry of France into the war; an event which would disperse Britain's army even further. Wier's returns detailed information on posts ranging from Canada to the West Indies and everything in between. It bears mentioning that Chamier was court-martialed on August 20th, 1777 to ascertain his role in the spoilage of supplies. He was acquitted a week later of all charges. Whether or not this influenced Wier's diligence we'll never know, but Wier's work certainly outshone his predecessor's.

²⁶ PRO T 64/114, 130

²⁷ Piers Mackesy, *War for America: 1775-1783* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1964), 42

centrally located than Boston, but it was also demonstrably more sympathetic to the Crown. The suggestion of New York as a haven for Loyalists dates back even further than Gage's advice in 1775, when he said, "I think if this Army was in New York, that we should find many friends, and be able to raise Forces in that Province on the side of Government."²⁸ As we will see, the evidence of New York's sympathies was compelling, and lends considerable credibility to British assumptions as to what they'd find there. Similarly, Southeastern Pennsylvania, namely Philadelphia and its adjacent counties, was sympathetic to the British cause. Just as crucially, Pennsylvania was the breadbasket of America for over a century, exporting "more than half of the bread and flour shipped from the colonies" at the outbreak of the Revolution. This was "twice as much as Pennsylvania's nearest rival, New York."²⁹ The British seemed very fortunate indeed to have epicenters of Loyalism located in some of the most fertile country in America. North's cabinet believed that this latent Loyalism in New York and Pennsylvania offered the British the best chance of organizing the political and logistical support they needed.

According to historian William H. Nelson, there were two centers of Loyalist strength. The first was "the thinly settled western frontier," from Georgia and South Carolina in the South up towards the newly settled Vermont country. The second, and more pertinent for us, consisted of "the maritime region of the Middle Colonies, including western Long Island and the counties of the lower Hudson Valley, southern New Jersey, the three old counties of Pennsylvania around Philadelphia, and the peninsula between Delaware and Chesapeake Bays." In fact, Nelson goes further to say that "the patchwork societies of Pennsylvania and New York" were the strongest havens for Loyalism. So much so, in fact, that Nelson feels "reasonably certain"

²⁸ Quoted in Shy, *A People Numerous*, 104

²⁹ S. W. Fletcher, "Subsistence Farming Period in Pennsylvania Agriculture, 1640-1840," *Pennsylvania History* Vol. 14, No. 3 (July 1947), 185-195; Merrill Jensen, "The American Revolution and American Agriculture," *Agricultural History* Vol. 43, No. 1 (January 1969), 107-124. Both of these articles provide a firm image of Pennsylvania and New York as fertile farmland.

that Loyalists amounted to half of New York's population, and that it is also possible that Loyalists accounted for half of the population throughout the Middle Colonies.³⁰ The majority of Loyalists tended to be concentrated within the capitals of these colonies, as well as the prosperous counties surrounding them.³¹

In Pennsylvania, for example, there was significant Loyalist activity in the three Southeastern-most counties of Bucks, Chester and Philadelphia. These counties bordered Delaware, the Delaware River and Maryland to the South, and western New Jersey in the east.³² Nelson goes so far as to say that "the fever of late loyalty burned brightest" in Pennsylvania.³³ Even Patriots had cause to despair at the inclinations of Pennsylvanians, "who are changing to whig and tory with the circumstances of every day."³⁴ In Southeastern Pennsylvania on the eve of Revolution, Chester and Bucks Counties were mostly Quaker, English, rural, and politically stable. In the early years of the war up until British withdrawal from Philadelphia in 1778, these two counties were either apathetic to the Revolutionary cause, tacit in their support of the crown, or explicitly Loyalist.³⁵ But although Pennsylvania's Loyalism would be significant enough to encourage General Howe to invade,³⁶ it still did not match the strength and activity of the Loyalist population of New York.

³⁰ William H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 87-92

³¹ William Pencak, "Afterword: Pennsylvania's Revolutions in Their Broader Context," in *Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland*, ed. John B. Frantz and William Pencak (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 197

³² John B. Frantz and William Pencak, "Introduction: Pennsylvania and its Three Revolutions," in *Beyond Philadelphia*, ed. Frantz and Pencak, *xix*

³³ Nelson, *American Tory*, 128-131

³⁴ Thomas Paine quoted in O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 105

³⁵ Rosemary S. Warden, "Chester County," in *Beyond Philadelphia*, ed. Frantz and Pencak, 1-45

³⁶ Mackesy makes mention of Philadelphia's strategic importance as the capital of the Revolution in *War for America*, 110-11 & 117; O'Shaughnessy includes Loyalist activity as a motivating factor for Howe's strategy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 105

There is ample historical evidence to not only corroborate Nelson's claims about half of New York's population being Loyalist, but also to demonstrate that the British were well aware of the political inclinations of this region. For example, towns throughout the New York area resisted the appointment of members to committees of inspection. The Continental Congress had recommended such committees in order to enforce its boycott of British goods in 1774. In Oyster Bay (east of New York on Long Island in Queens County), when Whigs tried to gather to elect a committee, "there appeared such a number of friends to our happy regular established Government, under the Crown and Parliament of *Great Britain*," [original emphasis] that the Whigs were forced to adjourn.³⁷ In the town of Jamaica and in the counties of Albany and Dutchess, various resolves and oaths were sworn to uphold their allegiance to the Crown and Parliament. In Ulster County a Loyalty Pole with an inscription of a Tory oath was set up, while in Poughkeepsie a Liberty Pole was declared a nuisance and cut down.³⁸ In Kings, Westchester, Ulster and Tryon Counties Loyalists held enough sway to ignore orders and legislation from the Continental Congress, to suppress Rebel activity, or at least to equal the number of Rebels. Orange County was "disaffected and inactive," prompting intervention by the Provincial Congress. Dutchess County was "fairly overrun with Loyalists," and Queens County was "the stronghold of Loyalism in New York," seconded by Richmond County.³⁹

All of the aforementioned activity is incredibly compelling evidence of Loyalism to us in hindsight but none of it was nearly as compelling to the British as the actions of the New York Assembly. New York's Assembly held its last session on January 13, 1775. New York Loyalists enjoyed a majority in their colony's Assembly, and were therefore able to easily vote down radical Whig measures that were proposed during this last session. These Whig measures included a

³⁷ Unknown quoted in Nelson, *American Tory*, 81

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Alexander Clarence Flick, *Loyalism in New York During the American Revolution* (New York: AMS, 1970), 39-41, 87-92

motion to approve of the proceedings of the Continental Congress, a measure to thank merchants for their adherence to the boycott of British goods, and a measure to select delegates to the second Continental Congress.⁴⁰ The Assembly then went on to draft its own petition of grievances, which also included oaths of loyalty, declaring “allegiance to George III” and promising “obedience to all acts of parliament.”⁴¹ The Assembly forwarded these petitions to the King and both houses of Parliament. Although denounced by radical Whigs and Patriots throughout the colonies, Alexander MacDougall, Sons of Liberty leader and future General in the Continental Army, acknowledged that the Assembly’s actions were adhering to the sentiments of the province they represented.⁴² Thus, when considering this mountain of evidence, O’Shaughnessy’s conclusion that “[British] overestimation of the potential for latent Loyalist support was defensible” is valid, at least with regards to New York.⁴³ Indeed, as far as New York was concerned, Flick concludes that “Britain certainly had no reason to complain of the lack of helpful activity from the Loyalists.”⁴⁴ However, following the accounts of Wier and Chamier, Britain had more than enough reason to complain about the lack of support it received in New York and Southeastern Pennsylvania. Furthermore, given the high potential for logistical support, failure to secure significant Loyalist support in these two regions should have signaled to the British that Loyalists were not in the majority and that the Revolution was more popular than they had anticipated.

Studies have been made to try and quantify not only the number of Loyalists within New York, but in all of the colonies as well, in order to paint a more detailed picture of the political makeup of the colonies. These figures are necessarily dubious, as no proper census data exists. Alexander C. Flick’s study on the numbers of New York Loyalists and

⁴⁰ Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, 40-41

⁴¹ Quoted in Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, 41

⁴² Nelson, *American Tory*, 83

⁴³ O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 355

⁴⁴ Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, 115

Paul H. Smith's study on the number of Loyalists within the thirteen colonies constitute the two of the main quantitative works on Loyalists. Although attempts at quantifying Loyalists serves mostly to determine the legitimacy of the Revolution, understanding their numerical strength (especially in New York and Pennsylvania) gives us a better understanding of the potential support they could have given. According to Flick's study (based on admittedly "inadequate records"), there were at least 15,000 New York Loyalists fighting within the British army and navy, and at least 8,500 New Yorkers fighting in Loyalist militias.⁴⁵ We will never know the exact demographics of the thirteen colonies during the Revolution, but the evidence is clear: New York and Southeastern Pennsylvania offer us the strongest examples of overt resistance to the Revolutionary cause, and thus, Britain's best chance at mustering the necessary support at the local level. Not only that, but given that these Loyalist hotbeds were also the breadbaskets of America, it is not unreasonable to expect that a significant portion of local support from New York and Pennsylvania would be logistical support.

Before presenting the evidence of Wier and Chamier, the chronology of Loyalist activity needs to be kept in mind. Most of the evidence of Loyalism in New York and Pennsylvania came to the British prior to 1778. In fact, in Flick's chapter titled "Activity of Loyalists Subsequent to the Issue of the Declaration of Independence," he mentions the dates of various Loyalist activities a total of 35 times. 60% of these dates make reference to Loyalist activity happening in 1775, 1776 or 1777. The rest occur between 1778 and 1783 (most of which occur in 1778 and 1779).⁴⁶ What this tells us is Loyalist activity peaked early on during the conflict, and so should have been most influential in informing British strategy during the early years of the war. As the war dragged on, Loyalist activity significantly declined. Additionally, the activities that Flick mentions are mostly accounts of the formation of Loyalist militias. These militias, although significant in

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 112

⁴⁶ Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, 95-115

number (some groups had as many as 2,500 men), indicate only an incipient surge of Loyalist support, as the majority of them formed in New York during the early stages of the conflict.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the accounts of Wier and Chamier demonstrate that these Loyalist militias were not effective in enforcing their political ideology, as the fertile farmland in New York and Southeastern Pennsylvania would not provide adequate supplies for the British. Both Howe and Clinton recommended at least 6-months' worth of supplies before they felt confident to take to the field. And yet, the British army only had such a 6-month reserve for 23 of the war's 79 months.⁴⁸ The following accounts of Wier and Chamier suggest that the *lack* of Loyalist activity around New York and Southeastern Pennsylvania meant that the logistical support Britain needed to win the war was not forthcoming. Yet Wier and Chamier weren't Britain's only evidence that Revolutionary sentiment was widespread and vehement.

One of the earliest harbingers of the size and scope of the Rebellion was General Thomas Gage, and one of his most damning reports that the government heard was dated November 18th, 1774. Gage wrote that support for Boston from the northern colonies was "beyond the Conception of most People, and foreseen by none. The Disease was believed to have been confined to the Town of Boston... But now it's so universal there is no knowing where to apply a Remedy."⁴⁹ Not only that, but following the fighting at Bunker Hill, Gage reported that the colonists exhibited "a conduct and spirit against us, they never showed against the French, and everybody has judged them from their former appearance and behaviour."⁵⁰ Warnings came from prominent sources across enemy lines as well. Charles Lee was a British-born general in the Continental Army who had served under British General John Burgoyne before emigrating from Britain to America. Burgoyne and Lee had maintained a close friendship, and Lee

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Bowler in Higginbotham, *Reconsiderations*, 65-66

⁴⁹ Quoted in Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed*, 97

⁵⁰ Quoted in Mackesy, *War for America*, 30

wrote to Burgoyne in June and July of 1775, after having traveled throughout the Eastern Seaboard. Lee found that “the same spirit [of Revolution] animates the whole.” He boldly predicted that any attempt to subdue the rebellion “must be ineffectual... You cannot possibly succeed.”⁵¹ Later in 1778, reports from Philadelphia were equally as dismal. For example, William John Hale, a British lieutenant, observed that “Perhaps never was a Rebellion so universal and intense as this.”⁵² It is important to acknowledge that while these reports are merely anecdotal evidence, much of the evidence counted towards defending British policy is similarly circumstantial: O’Shaughnessy describes the evidence of Loyalism presented to the British as “firsthand knowledge [of] colonial administrators and the Loyalists themselves.”⁵³ Let us concern ourselves then with only the consequential evidence of Loyalist support in America during the Revolution; namely, evidence of the efficacy of Loyalists in providing the British with desperately needed logistical support.

Forage and Loyalism

Throughout the letters examined in this study, the only complaint Wier and Chamier had that was as ubiquitous as that of a lack of provisions for the army was that of a lack of forage, specifically oats. Because of the bulk of the quantity of hay necessary to feed the army’s roughly 4,000 horses, the Treasury was unable to ship this article from Europe. Indeed, it was even reluctant to ship oats for these same reasons, but necessity dictated that oats be sent from Europe nonetheless.⁵⁴ As such, the Treasury tasked the Commissary General with obtaining as much forage locally as possible. Forage, as defined by Wier and Chamier, included hay and Indian corn obtained locally, oats from Europe, and “rough rice” from Georgia that Wier first acquired

⁵¹ Quoted in O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 136

⁵² Quoted in *Ibid.*, 211

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 355

⁵⁴ Bowler in Higginbotham, *Reconsiderations*, 67

from captured Rebel stores.⁵⁵ In order to obtain the quantities necessary to sustain Britain's forces, foraging expeditions were sent out throughout the war. However, O'Shaughnessy writes that "the [British] army suffered some of its worst setbacks mounting raids to obtain forage."⁵⁶ Forage was such a problem that twice in the span of one year the British army found itself without any forage at all. In December of 1778 the British army went "some days" without any oats.⁵⁷ In November of 1779 Wier was forced to use a surplus of pease and oatmeal as a substitute for oats, as Wier's "stores [of oats were] now exhausted."⁵⁸

Given that a steady supply of oats from Europe was rarely forthcoming, and given that a local supply of hay was undoubtedly less expensive than shipping tons of oats across the Atlantic, it was constantly in both Wier and Chamier's best interests to spare no effort in obtaining hay locally. After all, hay was absolutely critical to the success of British operations in America. Not only were Britain's 4,000 horses used for their cavalry, but horses were also necessary to pull the army's wagon trains. Without horses, the British would be unable to mount any sort of offensive operations. In fact, horses were so crucial to the British war effort that Wier wrote on March 4th, 1778, that had the preceding year's shipment of oats not arrived, the British would have been "forced to quit Philadelphia it being impossible to have subsisted our horses without [oats]."⁵⁹ Clearly forage was critical to British operations. Fortunately for the Commissaries, they were situated in some of the most fertile farmland that the colonies had to offer.

⁵⁵ PRO T 64/114, 1 & 158; Wier says that the rebels have been using rough rice as forage, and will attempt to do so himself. Wier wrote a few a couple weeks later on April 18th, 1779 (page 161), that he is sending "several small vessels" to Georgia to possibly procure Indian corn or rough rice, to be used as forage. Rough rice appears to have worked as a substitute, but no mention of any acquisition of significant quantities is ever made after his April report.

⁵⁶ O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 356

⁵⁷ PRO T 64/114, 109

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 216

⁵⁹ PRO T 64/114, 22

Certainly New York and Southeastern Pennsylvania, both incredibly productive agriculturally, would be able to aid in the subsistence of the British army. Both of these regions were, after all, the strongholds of Loyalism within the thirteen colonies. All indications pointed to an able and willing farming populace, and all Chamier and Wier had to do was to muster the Loyalists throughout New York and Pennsylvania. This would prove to be an incredibly difficult task, however. So much so, in fact, that Wier said “the difficulties [involved in obtaining hay locally] I find to be the greatest I have to encounter in the article of supplies.”⁶⁰ Nevertheless, it was part of the job of the Commissary General to obtain as many local supplies as possible, and both Chamier and Wier were encouraged by the Treasury (with the assent of the Commander in Chief) to do so.

As Britain’s Commissary General at the onset of the American Revolution, Daniel Chamier was the first British officer tasked with obtaining as many local supplies as possible. His reports concerning his effort to obtain a local supply of forage are somewhat equivocal, and this inconsistency undoubtedly contributed to Britain’s overestimation of the Loyalist population. One of Chamier’s first letters regarding the purchase of local hay is dated August 11th, 1776. Chamier wrote that “all the Hay that could be procured in this Island I have bought up.”⁶¹ Chamier’s initial pessimism with regards to forage was quickly replaced with encouraging reports regarding its successful acquisition. For example, a month and a half later, on September 24th 1776, Chamier wrote that “our supply of Forage increases as our Troops advance, & it is to be hoped we that have [*sic*] sufficiency to answer our demands, as no pains & care are Spared for that purpose.”⁶² Half a year later, in April of 1777, Chamier happily wrote that a hay fleet from the east end of Long Island is “returned safe.”⁶³ The British were not without their setbacks, however. Six months after Chamier’s August

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1

⁶¹ PRO T 64/118, 8

⁶² PRO T 64/118, 11

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 55

letter on March 31st, 1777 he informs the treasury that as the British army occupied Staten Island, the Rebels were burning forage on Long Island.⁶⁴ March is the end of the winter season in New York, and the fact that the inhabitants were burning forage in the face of the British army is indicative of three things. First, it tells us that the Rebels certainly didn't want the forage falling into British hands. Second, this tells us that they were aware of the value of forage and the important role it played for the British war effort. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, since green forage was only available "from the Middle of June to the Middle of September," the fact that the inhabitants were burning forage in March tells us that there was active resistance in the area most sympathetic to the crown.⁶⁵ Not only that, but this resistance was offered despite the allure of valuable British currency.⁶⁶

And yet, the rest of Chamier's March 1777 letter is filled with positive reports and an abundance of hay, which makes the burning of forage on Long Island seem like a fluke. In March of 1777, when Chamier first heard of the burning of hay on Long Island, he sent "to Canada, and Nova Scotia for Hay," where he was able to purchase 800 tons. Not only that, but Chamier wrote "there are also Ten Vessels and three Sloops nearly loaded at the East end of Long Island with fresh Hay." Combined with what he had on hand, this shipment will last the army until June.⁶⁷ A month later, Chamier gladly wrote of the "safe" return of "our little Fleet that went to the east end of Long Island."⁶⁸ Furthermore, Chamier's success in acquiring forage after the British occupation of New York was substantial. In July of 1776, after the British landed on Staten Island, Chamier bought up all the forage he could get his hands on. He deemed this supply inadequate, and sent subordinates to Quebec and Nova Scotia to secure more. In total, these two areas provided 2,260 tons of hay, 6,400 bushels of oats, and 5,000

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 37

⁶⁵ General Howe quoted in Edward E. Curtis, *The Organization of the British Army in the American Revolution* (New York: AMS, 1969), 176

⁶⁶ For more on British currency, see p.26 of this paper.

⁶⁷ PRO T 64/118, 37

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 55

bushels of Indian corn. However significant these numbers sound, these quantities would need to be acquired frequently in order to sustain the British army's horses. A horse can eat up to 20lbs of hay and 9lbs of oats per day. From 1776 onwards, the British army fielded, on average, 4,000 horses.⁶⁹ A bushel of oats weighs approximately 32 pounds.⁷⁰ This all means that 4,000 horses would need to eat 36 tons of hay and 1,125 bushels of oats *every day*. At that rate, 2,260 tons of hay would feed the army's horses for roughly 63 days, and 6,400 bushels of oats would feed them for a paltry six days; a far cry from the requisite six months' supply. Nevertheless, Chamier's successes in 1776 and early 1777 must have been welcome news to the Treasury. However, it would turn out to be only a glimmer of false hope, as Daniel Wier's later attempts to purchase hay locally fell far short of Chamier's initial successes. Just like the incipient surge of Loyalist militias, logistical support also peaked very early in the war and dropped dramatically as the years dragged on.

Exactly a year after Wier takes on his duties as the Commissary General, he detailed Patriot activity taking place right under the noses of the British army in Philadelphia. On March 25th, 1778, Wier tells of "[seventy casks of] Porter found at the Head of the Elk, which was of an inferior quality, brewed at Philadelphia, & said to have been transported over the Country for the use of the Rebels."⁷¹ Granted, in and of itself, the fact that 70 casks of porter were brewed for the Rebels right under the watch of Britain's main force doesn't provide much insight into the question of Loyalist sentiment. After all, we have seen that Philadelphia and its surrounding counties, although populated with a significant Loyalist population, were nowhere near as Loyalist-dominated as New York. Even so, Philadelphia and its surrounding counties were Britain's second-best hope for mustering the Loyalist support she most needed. Britain's failure to maintain a foothold in this

⁶⁹ Bowler, *Logistics*, 9

⁷⁰ "Tables for Weights and Measurement: Crops," University of Missouri, accessed April 1st 2014, <http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G4020>

⁷¹ PRO T 64/114, 33; Head of Elk is 55 miles south of Philadelphia.

region did not necessarily indicate British failure, but it should have certainly been a warning to the government that gaining and maintaining a Loyalist support network was going to be incredibly difficult, if not impossible.

Having followed Howe and the British army to Philadelphia, Wier was now in a great position to secure a local supply of forage and/or provisions for the British army. After all, he was in some of the friendliest and most fertile country in America. Wier was bound by British policy, however, which dictated that supplies be acquired lawfully and not by force.⁷² Mindful of this policy, Wier reported back to the Treasury about a recent foraging expedition in Pennsylvania. The foraging expedition sent out on January 20th, 1778 was no small venture: 9,000 men were sent to scour the “neighbourhood of Philadelphia” and returned with 600 tons of hay, which “much drained the Inhabitants.”⁷³ Given that the British were purchasing supplies lawfully, the size of this expedition demonstrates that the British were anticipating resistance, even in the Loyalist-leaning neighborhoods surrounding Philadelphia. Although Wier doesn’t define what he meant when he said the “neighbourhood of Philadelphia,” it is reasonable to assume that an expedition of 9,000 men would venture relatively far afield, at least into the adjacent counties of Bucks and Chester.⁷⁴ Wherever the British expedition went, they ventured into counties that not only had the greatest number of Loyalists in Pennsylvania, but counties that were also rural, agricultural counties. What little hay they *were* able to acquire was only achieved “with the greatest difficulty &

⁷² For example, the efforts that Wier and Chamier made trying to purchase supplies locally suggests that extortion wasn’t an option. Furthermore, O’Shaughnessy and Mackesy have both suggested that Howe’s hesitation following his victory over Washington in New York was due to his weighing coercion against conciliation. See O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 96-100 or for an even more detailed account of the campaign see Mackesy, *War for America*, 73-102.

⁷³ PRO T 64/114, 33

⁷⁴ For maps of Pennsylvania Counties, see Warden, “Chester County,” ed. Frantz & Pencak, *Beyond Philadelphia*, 3; Owen S. Ireland, “Bucks County,” ed. Frantz & Pencak, *Beyond Philadelphia*, 25

under the protection of strong covering parties.”⁷⁵ Additionally, Wier’s belief that the inhabitants had been “much drained” tells us that the British obtained what they thought was all of the surplus hay that was available. It would seem that by early 1778, Southeastern Pennsylvania was no longer dominated or even controlled by Loyalists, and would therefore be unable to provide the British with adequate logistical support.

Reading further into Wier’s accounts provides us with a slightly more dramatic picture of just how much control the Patriots had, and how little influence the Loyalists had. On the 25th of March 1778, just two months after Wier’s report on the 9,000-man expedition, a fleet of ships sent by Wier to Rhode Island to obtain hay was returning to Philadelphia. Two of these ships were “taken & burnt by the enemy near Wilmington.”⁷⁶ Wilmington, DE is a mere 30 odd miles from Philadelphia and a mere 11 miles as the crow flies from the edge of Chester County, all within Nelson’s centers of Loyalist strength and almost certainly within the area that Wier’s 9,000 men had scoured; an area that was “much drained” of hay. If the locals were as drained as the British were led to believe, why would the Rebels have burnt valuable hay? Surely two ships’ worth of hay could have been of some use to rural farmers, especially in March, three months before green forage would be available. Future accounts suggest that the Rebels did not burn cargoes that were of some value to themselves or other locals. On November 11th, 1778 and May 2nd, 1779, oat ships and two victuallers, respectively, were captured by Rebels and sailed into Boston harbor.⁷⁷ The Rebels were certainly capable of redistributing captured provisions, yet they chose to burn two cargoes of hay in an area that had, according to Wier, been drained. Were the Rebels symbolically burning hay, knowing how desperate the British were for forage? Were they perhaps burning hay to terrorize those farmers who had dealt with the British previously? Or were the inhabitants not as drained as Wier thought, and

⁷⁵ PRO T 64/114, 22

⁷⁶ PRO T 64/114, 33

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 93, 165

simply unwilling to sell the British any more hay? Whatever the reasons, the bottom line is not only that Pennsylvania, with all of its fertile and Loyalist farmland, was not as forthcoming as the British had hoped, but also that there was not enough Loyalist activity to counter the Patriots' actions.

Further evidence found in Wier's letters suggests that colonists only dealt with the British army as it crossed their paths and would not go out of their way to sell supplies to the British. For example, writing from New York after the evacuation of Philadelphia on July 7th, 1778, Wier reported that ten days' worth of fresh provisions were obtained. The provisions were immediately paid for in specie by order of General Clinton, in the hopes that "the Country [would] bring in their Cattle &c, but it had not the desired effect, as those we did get, we were obliged [*sic*] to Drive in ourselves from the Plantations near which we marched."⁷⁸ It is somewhat surprising that the offering of hard currency was unable to entice more farmers to sell. A minister in New Hampshire undoubtedly spoke for many farmers beyond New Hampshire when he said that people "have such a poor Esteem of paper Money."⁷⁹ Not only that, but the British army was headquartered in New York, which meant that supplies of hard currency were readily available, as the army's New York headquarters was where it kept most of its hard currency.⁸⁰ And yet, it would seem that only the presence of British soldiers could induce the locals to do business. But why? After all, the British weren't simply in sympathetic territory, but the most Loyalist region within the most Loyalist colony: Long Island was "populated almost exclusively by Loyalists."⁸¹ Perhaps Patriot militias were policing the countryside around New York, preventing farmers

⁷⁸ PRO T 64/114, 65

⁷⁹ Quoted in Allan Kulikoff, "The War in the Countryside," in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*, ed. Edward G. Gray and Jane Kamensky (New York: Oxford, 2013), 222

⁸⁰ Between 1770 and 1783 £17,002,598 4s 2d was supplied to the British army. For a more detailed account of British hard currency, see Baker, *Government and Contractors*, 175-183

⁸¹ Allan Kulikoff, "The War in the Countryside," *Oxford Handbook*, 228

from selling to the British? This was not the case, however, as Shy notes that “armed American Rebels around New York City were unable to intimidate their recalcitrant or apathetic neighbors.” Not only that, but “repeated British forays broke up Rebel committees, killed, captured, and dispersed their leaders.”⁸² Additionally, New York’s 8,500 Loyalists in militias should have been able to better enforce cooperation with the British. So why was it that only the daunting presence of the British army could induce locals into selling goods?⁸³

Whatever the case may be, there is further compelling evidence that Britain’s sphere of influence in the colonies extended only as far as the range of their guns. For instance, Wier’s letter to the Treasury dated September 5th, 1778 offers us a unique return. In it, Wier not only provides the Treasury with a return of hay that he has on hand, but also a return on various *potential* sources throughout the New York area. Wier was perhaps especially desperate with regards to forage at this time, as British withdrawal from Rhode Island and Philadelphia left Wier with even fewer sources of supply than before. Whatever the reason, Wier lists a number of potential sources of hay, as well as the quantity anticipated there, all based on reports from various men of unknown origin:

1. 300 Tons “remains to collect [*sic*] at Staten Island,” according to a source whose name is illegible. This quantity is in the hands of “farmers [who] refuse to deliver.”
2. 450 Tons “remains to collect [*sic*] on Long Island,” according to a Mr. Cutler.
3. 1000 Tons can be found “from Huntington to the East end of Long Island,” according to the same Mr. Cutler, who believes that a “very respectable force might [collect the hay].” [original emphasis]

⁸² Shy, *People Numerous and Armed*, 185

⁸³ Allan Kulikoff briefly explains the wartime labor problem in the colonies that may have contributed to Loyalists’ inability to offer support (“The War in the Countryside,” *Oxford Handbook*, 221), and Nelson (*American Tory*) and Flick (*Loyalism in New York*) both detail how a lack of central leadership and organization amongst the Loyalists contributed to their ineffectiveness.

4. 200 Tons “at West Chester &c,” according to a Mr. James Steward, “might be Collected...by strong Foraging Parties with proper appointed Waggon[s] [sic].”⁸⁴

Given Wier’s “anticipate[d] great distress in the want of Forage,”⁸⁵ it stands to reason that any successful attempt to collect any of the aforementioned hay would have been reported to the Treasury. None of the letters following this account make any mention of any such acquisition, nor do the letters contained in his other letter book hint at any successful acquisition.⁸⁶ Whatever their reasons, these New Yorkers were not going to part with their hay, not even for valuable British hard currency. All of the struggles the British had with regards to securing a supply of hay are indicative of an unable or unwilling population. The fact that these failures took place in the two areas most sympathetic and loyal to the crown, as well as the most fertile farmland the colonies had to offer, suggests that the crucial logistical support the British needed was not forthcoming.

But Wier’s letters also allude to an equally disastrous problem: privateering. As mentioned, there were two recorded instances from Wier of British supply ships being caught by Rebel forces and sailed into Boston harbor.⁸⁷ Unfortunately, in those cases Wier does not allude to where these ships were captured. However, in a letter dated February 15th, 1779, Wier wrote that two vessels bound from New York to the east end of Long Island were “taken in the Sound by the Rebels & carried into one of their ports.” A small Sloop had “suffered the same fate” only a few days before.⁸⁸ Which ports were the Rebels controlling? This was supposed to be a Loyalist stronghold, with Rebels scattered and unable to intimidate their neighbors, as Shy has said. The cargo of the first two ships mentioned was valuable oats (forage), and the small sloop’s cargo was provisions for the troops. Recall the

⁸⁴ PRO T 64/114, 78

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 75

⁸⁶ *Letterbook of Daniel Wier*, microfilm, dates from Sept. 1778 through May 1780.

⁸⁷ See p.25 of this paper

⁸⁸ PRO T 64/114, 137-38

burning of hay in Wilmington, near Philadelphia, in march of 1778, and on Long Island in March of 1777; Rebels were still making their presence felt in Loyalist strongholds a year later in 1779, after almost three years of continuous British occupation. These ships were captured in the Sound, an estuary on the east end of Long Island. East Long Island was supposed to be a “Loyalist hotbed.”⁸⁹ Just as in Philadelphia, Rebels capturing supplies plagued the British in the Loyalist stronghold of New York. Just as in Philadelphia, Wier was finding it almost impossible to obtain adequate supplies from New York. Just as in Philadelphia, Loyalists were unable to coerce or entice their neighbors into actively supporting the crown.

The last mention of Rebel privateers occurs near the end of the date range analyzed by this study, in August of 1779. Wier wrote that he was growing “exceedingly anxious” on account of his dwindling Rum supply, as he had only received 20,474 gallons of rum out of a total of 400,000 contracted for. He said this was “owing to the Situation of the Fleets in the West Indies, & the defenceless [*sic*] state of our Coast at this Time, having no Cruizers [*sic*] to protect the inward bound Vessels from the Rebel Privateers which come almost into our Harbour.”⁹⁰ Future research may reveal exactly how many rum vessels the Rebels took that were bound for Wier and the British. For our purposes, it is enough to recognize that Rebel activity at this time was increasingly bold, with ships harrying British supply lines all the way into New York harbor. It would seem that Loyalist strongholds – such as they were – did not extend into the waters surrounding New York. Perhaps the most revealing thing about these instances of Rebel privateering is not that they wouldn’t dare go up against the Royal Navy, but rather that there was not enough Loyalist sentiment to counter such activity, even though New York was the center of Loyalism and had the support of the British army’s headquarters. And

⁸⁹ Mark A. Peterson, “The War in the Cities,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*, ed. Edward G. Gray and Jane Kamensky (New York: Oxford, 2013), 203

⁹⁰ PRO T 64/114, 191

although Wier labeled these ships as “Rebel Privateers,” it may also be argued that these acts of piracy on the high seas were simply men looking to better their fortunes, as opposed to Patriots fighting for independence from British tyranny. But evidence in Wier’s accounts points yet again to Rebel activity as the main driving force behind the intransigence directed towards the British army. In fact, Patriot activity would be strong enough to affect a massive shift in British shipping policy.

Shipping and Patriotism

In order to feed an army of 35,000, the British had to ship 13,500 tons of food annually. Because of various delays due to loading, unloading, repairs, etc., ships were unable “to make more than two crossings of the Atlantic in a year.”⁹¹ In 1775, there were approximately 6,000 British vessels amounting to roughly 600,000 tons. Naturally, the number of ships available would be significantly reduced with the outbreak of war, as American-owned ships would no longer be counted amongst Britain’s merchant fleet. Additionally, enemy action would further reduce Britain’s shipping capabilities. One estimate suggests that “3,386 British merchant vessels were captured, 495 recaptured, 507 ransomed, and 2,384 remained in possession of the enemy.”⁹² All told, Britain required the constant employment of only about one hundred ships. As large as Britain’s maritime fleet was, the job of supplying troops in America was still daunting and unprecedented. The amount of supplies that passed through Daniel Wier’s hands during his tenure as Commissary general from May 1777 to November 1781 is breathtaking: nearly 80 million pounds of bread, flour and rice; almost 11 million pounds of salt beef and just over 38 million pounds of salt pork; 3 million pounds of fresh meat, almost 4 million pounds of butter, 7 million pounds of oatmeal, over 400,000 bushels of peas, nearly

⁹¹ Bowler, *Logistics*, 93

⁹² Syrett, *Shipping*, 77

200,000 gallons of molasses, over 130,000 gallons of vinegar, and nearly 3 million gallons of rum.⁹³

These enormous quantities in and of themselves were demanding enough for Great Britain. Yet there were other factors that further strained Britain's merchant fleet. Due to a lack of warehouses as well as the threat of sabotage, Commanders in North America were inclined use European troop transports and victuallers as floating storage depots. Orders against this practice were sent to the Commanders from both the Treasury and the Navy Board, but the practice persisted until the end of the war.⁹⁴ Daniel Wier was also certainly aware of the shipping problem, as he made repeated assurances to the Treasury Board that ships were being unloaded and sent back to England as soon as possible, but that their dispatch was always contingent upon the approval of the Commander in Chief. On January 9th, 1779, Wier assures the Treasury that "the Detention of the Victuallers give me leave to add has never been owing to me. They have been ever discharged with all possible Dispatch, & reported to the Commander in Chief, who then sent them away at the Times he thought proper."⁹⁵ Wier also wrote on several occasions that Treasury shipments were far too infrequent, and that "the Provisions of one Convoy are consumed before the arrival of another." At the end of 1778, Wier had "repeatedly urged the necessity of sending the victuallers more immediately after one another as the Interval between [shipments] as been so great, that the Provisions of one Convoy are consumed before the arrival of another, and I now fear we shall severely feel the Effects of it."⁹⁶ Recall also that Wier's post in New York was the hub through which all supplies were to be directed. Far from just supplying the army in New York, Wier had to distribute supplies throughout Britain's posts, from Nova Scotia to the West Indies. Wier mentions on several

⁹³ Bowler, *Logistics*, 9

⁹⁴ For the most detailed account of British shipping during the Revolution, see Syrett, *Shipping*

⁹⁵ PRO T 64/114, 118

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 86, 92, & 107

occasions that a lack of shipping was preventing him from adequately disbursing provisions. On April 13th, 1779, he wrote that due to “Freight being so difficult to come by,” his deputy in Nova Scotia should buy whatever rum he can locally, even though the prices were exorbitant.⁹⁷ Not only that, but Wier was just as dependent on supplies from various outposts to be sent *to* New York. On July 18th, 1779, for example, Wier wrote to his deputy in Rhode Island requesting that “the vessels already at Newport [be sent] back as soon as possible for it is only for want of Craft that prevents our sending a much larger supply at this time.” Not only that, but in the same letter, Wier said that “it will be impossible to send Transports from this [location] for the Hay, you will therefore...embrace every opportunity that may offer to send a Quantity [of hay].”⁹⁸ Not only was a lack of shipping preventing Wier from properly distributing supplies to British troops, but it was also preventing Wier from receiving shipments of precious forage.

And yet, despite all of these hindrances and demands, the Commander in Chief made a drastic shift in his policy towards shipping. On August 20th, 1779, Wier wrote the following passage:

“The crew of one of the Vessels lately employed in that service [shipping supplies from New York to various outposts], having Mutinied and risen on the Master, by which means the Vessel was taken by a Rebel Privateer, and two others attempting the same thing, the Commander in Chief intends in future to send supplies there in the Vessels in which they arrive from Europe, as they can place a greater Dependance [*sic*] on their Crews than on these which are picked up here.”⁹⁹

Unsurprisingly, this change in policy immediately affected Wier’s ability to send and receive supplies. A few weeks after Clinton issued this change in shipping policy, Wier explained the change in policy to his deputy in Rhode Island, writing that “two vessels with Provisions

⁹⁷ *Letterbook of Daniel Wier*, Microfilm, 39

⁹⁸ *Letterbook of Daniel Wier*, Microfilm, 46

⁹⁹ PRO T 64/114, 192

and Rum are now ordered to Rhode Island...this will be the last supply sent to you by the Small Craft as the General was much displeased at the loss of the Monica, and intends in future to send vessels as they arrive from Europe.”¹⁰⁰ Clinton’s change in shipping policy doesn’t speak to British failures with regards to receiving Loyalist support, but it certainly adds to the evidence that this was as universal a revolution as General Lee claimed when he wrote to Burgoyne. Indeed, the revelation that Rebel activity forced the British to rely entirely on ships originating from Europe is compelling evidence of just how accurate Lee’s assessment was. This policy shift was not a response to localized Rebel sentiment in New England, thought to be the epicenter of the Revolution, but rather a response to the sentiment all of the thirteen colonies and beyond; ships originating from as far away as the West Indies would have made the journey up the Eastern Seaboard and been within the reach of British influence and offers of employment. Clinton and Wier were effectively labeling ships of non-European origin as potential Rebels, concluding that the risk of employing anyone from America was far greater than the cost of placing further reliance on an already severely overstretched merchant fleet. Loyalists were again unable to match Rebel activity.

Although Rebel activity was powerful enough to constitute such a dramatic shift in British shipping policy, it was not strong enough to engender a shift in British perspective. In his last letter to the Treasury in his letter book on December 12th, 1779 Wier wrote, “should the intended Expedition go to the Southward we have every reason to expect that great numbers of the country would take arms & join the Royal Army in which case they must be victualed from the King’s Magazines.”¹⁰¹ It seems unthinkable that any British officer or minister who was as well informed about the failures of the British in New York and Pennsylvania as Wier was would continue to believe in the

¹⁰⁰ *Letterbook of Daniel Wier*, Microfilm, 57

¹⁰¹ PRO T 64/114, 226

possibility of finding help from the Loyalist population. Even so, the British ignored their failures in Philadelphia and New York and continued to base their strategy on mustering Loyalist forces throughout the colonies. Except now where they had failed in the Northern and Middle Colonies, the British instead turned towards the South. Even though Germain's assumptions about Loyalists were completely wrong, he was still able to understand that British success hinged on Loyalist support.¹⁰² Unfortunately, he remained woefully inaccurate with regards to that support for the duration of the war. Once the war became global with the entry of France in 1778, the British government decided to shift the focus towards the Southern Colonies. The Southern Colonies not only were expected to have significant Loyalist population lying in wait, but they were also closer to their colonies in the West Indies, which were now under threat of a French attack. The West Indies were Britain's most profitable colonies, and demanded protection from the French.¹⁰³ Protecting Britain's interests in the West Indies in and of itself made sense, but Germain's expectation of *more* Loyalist support in the South flew in the face of the reality of British failures.¹⁰⁴ Burgoyne's failed Saratoga campaign during 1777 should have been a wake-up call for the British: the Rebels overshadowed Loyalists even in New York, the largest Loyalist population in the colonies. Burgoyne's failure was the result of the underestimation of opposition and the overestimation of Loyalist support.¹⁰⁵ Even as he was marching towards defeat, Burgoyne was writing back to Germain about the lack of Loyalist support, saying "the great bulk of the country are undoubtedly with the Congress, in principle and zeal."¹⁰⁶

But it was not Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga alone that foreshadowed British defeat; far from it. It was the combination of

¹⁰² O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 187

¹⁰³ For a more detailed account of British strategy during 1779, see Mackesy, *War for America*, 249-266

¹⁰⁴ O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 190

¹⁰⁵ O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 114; for a more detailed account of British strategy and planning, see Mackesy, *War for America*, 103-120.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 162

Saratoga and British failure to find forage that signaled British defeat. Although not explicitly writing of a lack of Loyalist support, the accounts of Wier and Chamier should have been interpreted as such. Yet the evidence in their letters was completely overlooked by British policy makers. Although communication from the Commissary General's department was directed to the Secretary of the Treasury, John Robinson, there is no doubt that Chamier's and Wier's accounts reached the highest levels of government. Between 1775 and 1782, the Treasury Board held a total of 670 meetings, and with the exception of merely 23, all of these meetings were attended by the Prime Minister, Lord North.¹⁰⁷ Although much has been said about the timidity and indecisiveness of Lord North, he was neither stupid nor lazy.¹⁰⁸ Nor were British commanders incompetent aristocrats with no knowledge of military affairs.¹⁰⁹ They were capable and competent commanders who were tasked with not only conquering North America, but also with occupying it and organizing local support for the crown.

Part of the problem was not simply that British commanders were ill-equipped for long-term occupation, but also that they incorrectly assumed that Loyalists were in the majority and would thus be able to provide the necessary political and logistical support. This incorrect assumption would lead to failures in each of the thirteen colonies.¹¹⁰ New York and Pennsylvania were demonstrably Britain's best chance of mustering the political and logistical support needed to win the war. The fact that the British were forced to evacuate Philadelphia, and the fact that they were constantly short on forage and supplies despite having occupied the most fertile and friendly farmland in the colonies, should have signaled to the British government that their attempts to organize local support elsewhere would most likely

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 69

¹⁰⁸ For a more detailed account, see Mackesy, *War for America*, 20-24; or O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 47-80

¹⁰⁹ O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 6

¹¹⁰ Cornwallis' invasion of Virginia was predicated on the same strategy of rousing the support of the supposed majority Loyalist population. O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 272

fail. With the entry of France into the war, the British government rightly chose to focus on its holdings in the West Indies. Yet their assumption that the Southern colonies would offer Loyalist support flew in the face of reality. The British leadership knew that they had to “gain the hearts and subdue the minds of America” in order to win, but they abandoned their best chance at doing so when they took their focus away from Pennsylvania and New York.¹¹¹

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From Champion of the Common Man to Demonized Anti-Hero: The Transformation of Thomas Paine's Legacy in America (1776-1809)

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On a stuffy June afternoon, a carriage carrying a woman and her two sons led a quiet funeral procession along an uneven dirt path on the outskirts of a small town in rural New York. The beating sun, a distant orb of yellow haze, mocked the procession, their moist necks burned brick red in its ruthless glow. The humid, unforgiving summer air weighed heavy on the glistening backs of the horses, jet-black in the high afternoon sun. Few words were exchanged between the five men following the carriage: a Quaker (Willett Hicks), a young lawyer (Thomas Addis Emmett), a personal friend (Walter Morton), and two African-American freemen, their heels cracked like dried mud from the grueling journey.¹

The townsfolk of New Rochelle, indifferent to the procession as it passed them, mulled around with their hurried chores, restless in the cruel summer heat. The early June funeral, a short informal ceremony held under a wilted walnut tree on the deceased's farm, went mostly unnoticed by the townsfolk, as well as the nation. Less than a dozen people attended the man's funeral. There was no pomp, pageantry, or grand processions.² No politicians attended. It would seem no formal

¹ Alfred F. Young, *Liberty Tree: Ordinary People and the American Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 265.

² Robert G. Ingersoll, *The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll*, (North American Review: Dresden, August 1892) v. XI, 321.

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eulogy was given. Few major newspapers recorded the man's death and those that did lazily reused the obituary notice published in the *New York Citizen*: "He had lived long, did some good and much harm."³ The mostly unnoticed death of this individual suggests he was a man few knew; a man who held neither legacy nor significance in the larger scope of history or current affairs. Years after the arid soil was filled into the petty grave under the walnut tree; many decades after the words "Author and Reformer," crudely engraved onto the tombstone, a bleak gray slab of rock capriciously sticking out of the dirt, were ravaged by the ambivalence of time; long after a small walnut tree, desiccated by too many summers and hardened by too many winters, wilted into a mere memory; long after a young nation grew into a prideful empire; a story remained waiting to be told.

This humble gravestone on a small farm outside of New Rochelle holds a more significant story than its appearance would suggest. If a man's death and burial were any indication of his importance in a historical context, then Thomas Paine's would surely be seen as a travesty to history. Margaret de Bonneville, mother of Paine's two godsons and the only woman in attendance, later remarked that the scene was one that would "affect and wound any sensible heart."⁴ She deemed it a crime that a man of such significance and importance was committed to an "obscure grave on an open and disregarded bit of land."⁵ A man owed so much, by so many, was left with a lonely, unjust final resting place. As the dirt was filled in, Margaret instructed her elder son, Benjamin, to stand at the end of the grave as a "witness for grateful America."⁶ On a humid summer afternoon in New Rochelle, one of the most important men in American history experienced a more ignominious burial than most criminals of the time. The harsh dust of

³ Quoted in Edward Larkin, *Thomas Paine and the Literature of the Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 153.

⁴ Quoted in Alfred Owen Aldridge, *Man of Reason: The Life of Thomas Paine* (New York: The Cornwall Press, 1959), 316.

⁵ Aldridge, 316.

⁶ Ibid.

time swallowed up the shallow recesses of his ordinary grave. Besides a handful of individuals, the loss of this man went mostly unnoticed by all but the unrelenting sun.

Thomas Paine's role in American history is a topic marginalized by most history textbooks: a man whose significance, in the larger context of American history, is measured by a few sentences, a paragraph at most. The popular version of American history briefly mentions the spread and significance of *Common Sense*, and thereafter Paine quickly fades away into the historic backdrop of the Revolution and the birth of the new nation. In the epic story of America's founding and growth, Paine is portrayed as a character on the sidelines, with no overwhelming significance and little real influence on major events. Margaret's "grateful America" hardly noticed the death of such a man; his legacy, like the small walnut tree on his farm, was wilted and spoiled by the scorching bitterness of political rivalry and ideological contest. The reality of this history is a cruel one. Tarnishing this man's legacy and name took only a few years, while rebuilding it will take centuries. Traditions of the past stand resolute like stubborn boulders in a creek, constantly resisting the changing flow of history. Only time and resilience will uproot them. The force of change on tradition, like water meeting rock, causes indelible waves on history. One of the cruelest tragedies of history is when a false or biased vision of the past becomes a historical reality. Retelling the same story over and over again to countless generations allows it to acquire an undeserved aura of legitimacy and truth. The tragedies of historical study can only be rectified through the realization that our devotion to finding the truth takes precedent over our loyalty to preserving traditions and customary visions of the past. It is the intent of this project to honor the historian's duty to truth; through historical reevaluation one can attempt to rectify the tragedies of the past in tribute to a man denied his deserved place in history.

Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* is regarded as one of the most influential pamphlets not only in the American Revolution, but in the history of the written word. Published on January 10, 1776, the

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anonymous pamphlet sold over 150,000 copies in three months. Over twenty-four editions were made in the first year.⁷ John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (1767), the most popular pamphlet in the decade before *Common Sense*, sold a circulation of only about 15,000 copies.⁸ With one copy for every six colonists, it is estimated that over one million people read or heard *Common Sense* read aloud.⁹ Its success has been compared to a flood that swept across an entire nation. Politicians of the time and historians of the past three centuries have deemed it an essential force in tipping the balance of the debate in favor of American independence. It is consistently mentioned as the firebrand of the revolution, convincing hundreds of thousands of colonists of the necessity to declare their independence from England. The vastness of its readership and the power of its persuasive influence go well beyond almost any other document in human history. Aptly titled "A Citizen of the World," Paine produced sweeping developments in political and social philosophy that one can still identify in the modern era. Jack Greene, a prominent 20th century historian, declares Paine's unparalleled impact on political developments from the 18th century to the modern day: "In a fundamental sense, we are today all Paine's children. It was not the British defeat at Yorktown, but Paine and the new American conception of political society he did so much to popularize in Europe that turned the world upside down."¹⁰

Bearing in mind the historical significance of such a man, one is naturally drawn back to that humble burial underneath a lonely walnut tree on an obscure and disregarded field of dirt. How could a hero of the American Revolution, and consequently American history, die and be buried in such a forlorn way? What happened between 1776 and 1809

⁷ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 270. Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 79. Bernard Bailyn, *Faces of Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 68-69.

⁸ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 270.

⁹ E. Foner, 78-79. Young, 270-271.

¹⁰ Jack P. Greene, "Paine, America, and the 'Modernization' of Political Consciousness," *Political Science Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (1978): 92.

that caused such a tremendous change in the legacy of one man? It is clear that a dramatic change occurred in the minds of the American people in the late 18th century. Was this a natural development, stemming from the organic progression of political trends and ideals? Or was it a more systematic, intentional process based on certain agendas and political benefit?

How does the death of a man of such overwhelming significance to the American story go unnoticed by the same people whose story he influenced so much? A hero of the movement for American independence saw himself become an anti-hero in less than three centuries. It is only through powerful elements in society that a hero is turned into an anti-hero. A hero does not become a villain naturally, but rather through a calculated and systematic process in which the same individuals he has helped gradually turn on him. What can explain the drastic dichotomy between his legacies during and after the Revolution? Furthermore, what individuals and political factions stood to benefit most from such a transformation? In order to answer such questions one must focus on an understudied period in American history, the years between 1780 and 1810.

During these politically volatile years, an underlying elitist fear of radicalism by the early leaders of the new nation would slowly chip away at Paine's historical legacy. In the three decades following the revolution, the nation's political atmosphere gradually became noticeably more conservative than that of the revolutionary decade. The counter-revolution of the late-18th century aggressively diminished Thomas Paine's significance in the normative version of the American story. This understudied period in American history holds stark truths concerning exactly what the leaders of early America envisioned for the nation's future. Identifying the specific ideals and people they repressed in favor of their grand vision of America reveals precisely what they didn't want America to become. Opposition and conflict are much stronger builders of history than agreement and compatibility. What individuals don't want provides more truth than what they do want. History has shown that fear is a much stronger motivator than any other

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emotion. Thus, answering what ideals and people the early leaders of America feared, rather than favored, produces a more holistic vision of historical reality.

Throughout the reactionary period in late-18th century America, a conservative agenda led many prominent politicians to systematically diminish the radical legacy of the Revolution for present and future generations of citizens. These leaders knew that limiting the radical extent of the Revolution in the minds of citizens was essential to destroying the dangerous political precedents it had set. The prominent role that Paine played in the more radical elements of the Revolution placed him at odds with the conservative agenda of this reactionary movement. Why would Paine's legacy as an essential player in the American Revolution threaten the positions and the political visions of these early leaders of American government? Honing in on what exactly these leaders found so threatening in Paine's political ideology and agenda will reveal precisely what they did and didn't want America to become. The private motivations of the founding fathers portray the true character of the political system of the new nation, helping us better understand our political origins and prepare for the future. Through this unique lens of study, in which one man's experience reveals larger realities, the historian can relieve the American story from the haze of bias and the falsities of time-honored history. The sun's brilliance is clearest when the haze slips away and reveals the light.

The story of Thomas Paine, specifically the transformation of his legacy in the years during and after the revolution, allows for a fresh and original study of the origins of America. His story exposes the conservative limits of a period renowned as one of the most revolutionary in American history. A study of Paine's experience produces a new frame of study, from the American Revolution (1776) to Paine's death (1809), centered on an analysis of the extent of the revolutionary nature of American government and the radicalness of its leaders. Two main narratives exist concerning the predominant academic perceptions of the American Revolution and the political

institutions it produced. The more utopian historical opinion posits that the Revolution led to a complete transformation in the political, social, and economic realities of the new nation. In contrast, the other major historical opinion depicts the Revolution as a conservative event in which one group of self-interested aristocratic elites, fueled by the desire for political and economic autonomy, threw off the oppression of a distant group of foreign aristocrats and systematically transferred over British traditions of government to their own land.¹¹ Most historians agree that what actually happened in 1776, and in the following decades, more accurately resembles a synthesis of these contrasting narratives.

It is rare to discover emotional and human stories if one relies solely on a myopic vision of the larger silhouette of history. One man as a microcosm of a larger period or event in history brings more depth and new insights into the story, filling the gloomy void between years written on a page. Through an analysis of the experience of one individual, Thomas Paine, the historian can more effectively answer the question: how truly radical or revolutionary were the leaders of America in its early years? A humble graveyard in New Rochelle tells a story with powerful implications for our view of the origins of American political affairs and society. More so than dates on a page, the story of one ordinary grave under a walnut tree enveloping the remains of a forgotten man turns history into a tangible, emotional, human story. It would be a tragedy of history if this story of a man and his times were not given its moment in the light. History is a study of the told stories of our past. However, history is also a study of the untold stories of our past. The historian's greatest triumph is in revealing the stories that have been left unsaid and honoring the heroes that have been left unsung. Hopefully, history can do justice to a martyr of the American story.

The Humble Origins of the Hero of the Revolution

¹¹ John R. Howe, *The Role of Ideology in the American Revolution* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970), 1-9.

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Born in a humble market town in rural Norfolk, England on January 29, 1737, Thomas Paine experienced neither much success nor joy in his early life in England. Since his father, Joseph Pain (the “e” would not be added until Thomas immigrated to America), was a master corset maker and small farmer, Paine’s family was neither fully destitute nor comfortable.¹² Paine, through first hand experience, understood the plight of struggling lower class families. He wasn’t guaranteed more than a little formal education as a child and was destined to take over his father’s trade to avoid impoverishment. Although baptized in the Church of England, based on the wishes of his mother’s more traditional family, young Thomas took a keen interest in his father’s faith: Quakerism, also known as the Society of Friends. Attending meetings with his father, Thomas would be noticeably influenced by the more radical tenets of this faith. Quakers were known for their inherent belief that all people, regardless of race, gender, or position in society, held a piece of God’s grace inside them. God, and no other force or being on earth, deserved worship by humankind.¹³ These ideals would become engrained in the development of Paine’s views towards the treatment of the powerful and powerless in society.

Young Thomas worked a few years as an apprentice for his father, but he was an innately curious boy, with his eyes set on lands past the dreary dampness of the local thickets of Thetford. Paine’s curiosity would take him onto a sailing trip in 1757 with a British privateer, allowing him to experience the cultures and ideas of distant lands and people.¹⁴ Upon his return he achieved very little success in various professions, from teaching to working as a tobacconist. In 1760, his first wife, Mary, died during childbirth, further deepening Paine’s sorrow. His personal life was fraught with a series of unhappy marriages, immense debt, and unsuccessful attempts to rise up from a

¹² Craig Nelson, *Thomas Paine: Enlightenment, Revolution, and the Birth of Modern Nations* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2006), 14-16.

¹³ J.M. Opal, *Common Sense and Other Writings* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2012), ix.

¹⁴ Opal, ix-xi.

lowly financial post in the local government. Paine's *The Case of the Officers of Excise*, an attempt to pressure the corrupt British Parliament for better salary and conditions for excise officers, eventually led him into more debt and out of a job in the early 1770s.¹⁵ These misfortunes, a direct result of government corruption and ineptness, instilled a deep-rooted bitterness in Paine towards the British government and other inherently corrupt institutions. This passion would prove important once the opportunity to immigrate to America presented itself in 1774.

Although Paine's tragic early years left him frustrated and bitter, his exposure to the Enlightenment and his fascination with its ideals would provide a beneficial avenue for Paine to channel his passions. In the 1760s and 1770s, he attended scientific lectures in London, joined a debate team in Lewes, and associated with major intellectuals, such as Edward Gibbon and Samuel Johnson. The Enlightenment at its core stressed the "darkness and bigotry" of the past and promised to liberate people, bringing them into the light of benevolence.¹⁶ More than any other philosophy of the time, Paine, with the hardships and suffering of his early years, must have naturally gravitated and embraced this as a crucial pillar of his ideology. Paine's Quaker and artisan roots placed him in a unique position, in which he "carried the fury of Britain's underclass along with the optimism of its educated elite."¹⁷ He knew the struggles of the lower classes, as well as the ideals of intellectuals: a powerful combination. While members of the upper class would identify enlightened progress with stabilizing top-down reforms in Parliament, Paine would not adopt such an elitist perspective in the pursuit of real change. Deviating from the moderate strain of enlightened liberals, Paine would see revolution, not merely reform, as a justifiable avenue to achieve certain ideals.

The early 1770s produced more dismal memories for Paine, as he divorced his second wife, Elizabeth, and was forced to default on his

¹⁵ Nelson, *Thomas Paine*, 39-45. Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 47.

¹⁶ Opal, xiii.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, xiii.

debts after selling all his possessions in 1774.¹⁸ In pursuit of a better life, Paine's passions and desperation would crescendo at the precise moment that a chance encounter with a mutual friend provided him the opportunity to start fresh in new lands. After a series of conversations with Benjamin Franklin in the summer of 1774, Paine decided to take Franklin's advice and immigrate to Pennsylvania in November of that year.¹⁹ With a letter of recommendation from Franklin to Richard Bache, a prominent Philadelphia businessman and his son-in-law, Paine was guaranteed a chance for social advancement and self-expression in a new uncorrupted land:

The bearer Mr Thomas Pain is very well recommended to me as an ingenious worthy young man. He goes to Pennsylvania with a view of settling there. If you can put him in a way of obtaining employment as a clerk, or assistant tutor in a school, or assistant surveyor, of all of which I think him very capable, so that he may procure a subsistence at least, till he can make acquaintance and obtain a knowledge of the country, you will do well, and much oblige your affectionate father.²⁰

In the fall of 1774, Paine embarked on what he hoped to be a better, more fulfilling life; trusting that the decision, like the fresh briny air of the Atlantic, would cleanse the stained, putrid planks of his past life. On this small vessel, Paine brought onboard his resentment against the British political system and his radical political philosophy: "Like a seed transplanted from a hostile environment to friendly soil, Paine's latent radicalism, nourished by his experiences in England, would suddenly blossom in the New World."²¹

After recovering from a near deadly case of typhoid fever caused by the ship's meager water supply during the voyage, Paine was

¹⁸ E. Foner, 15.

¹⁹ Opal, xii-xiv.

²⁰ Cited in Craig Nelson, *Thomas Paine*, 49.

²¹ E. Foner, 16-17.

able to use Franklin's recommendation to acquire the editor position of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. Through his work in the magazine, Paine was able to improve his literary skills, accustom readers with his writing style and arguments, and more fully understand the plight of the colonists.²² His experience at the *Pennsylvania Magazine* allowed him to gain knowledge of colonial American politics. It also provided him the audience necessary to bring respect and weight to his words in the midst of the colonial debates concerning the abuses of the mother country. Paine's prominent position in the colonial debate brought an entirely fresh element and perspective to the discussion; one that would cause ripples in society.

The Success of *Common Sense*: The Common Sense of a Nation

As tensions quickly mounted between the colonists and the mother country in 1774 and 1775, the debate over what was to be done quickly germinated throughout the colonies. As events gradually escalated, taking on a more violent nature, colonial politicians and citizens became ideologically divided over the right course of action. In 1774, his first year in Pennsylvania, Paine watched these events unfold and began methodically crafting his own contribution to the debate. It wouldn't be until almost a year after the revolution had effectively begun at Lexington and Concord that *Common Sense* would sweep across the nation. In January 1776, there was no debate over whether or not the colonists were fighting for something. Gunshots, fired in some distant New England woods, had already been "heard round the world." The fighting was real, but the question remained: what was the fighting meant to achieve?

The essential debate, specifically amongst the leaders in the recently established Continental Congress, was over what the end result of the conflict would entail. The majority opinion in the Congress was that a military victory would result in reconciliation, not national

²² Larkin, 46-47.

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independence. Only a handful of politicians from Massachusetts, such as Benjamin Franklin, were truly convinced that independence, rather than reconciliation, would be best for the colonies. The prevailing opinion in Congress and amongst the populace was that America must force the British Parliament to grant them certain rights and redress specific grievances. At the time, the common sense of the colonies “ran counter to the notion of independence.”²³ However, there was a growing murmur of voices for independence, anxiously waiting for the best moment to speak up. This murmur would gradually gain momentum as events in the colonies rapidly escalated.

It was amid this fervent debate in the cold chaos of the winter of 1775-1776 that Thomas Paine would issue a passionate political manifesto. Like a gunshot pierces the silent embrace of the winter woods, *Common Sense* echoed out with shocking force: the fire of its words hastened the slow thaw of winter. If Lexington and Concord were the most important shots heard, the words of *Common Sense* were the most important ones read. Published anonymously on January 10, 1776, it swept across the colonies like a flood upon a parched field, its language and passion feeding the seeds of independence and revolution. As Eric Foner affirms, Paine’s work came at the critical moment of revolutionary crisis, providing the exact vision of the future that drove people to act:

Paine was precisely the right man at the right time: articulating ideas which were in the air but only dimly perceived by most of his contemporaries, helping to promote revolution by changing the very terms in which people thought about politics and society.²⁴

²³ Bernard Bailyn, *Faces of Revolution: Personalities and Themes in the Struggle for American Independence* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1990), 68-69.

²⁴ E. Foner, xvii.

Paine and *Common Sense* played an essential role in convincing an entire nation that their fight was and could only be a fight for independence.

Common Sense didn't contain any argument that hadn't been heard, nor did it introduce any ideas that hadn't been thought of already; a reality that Paine's critics make sure to not neglect mentioning. *Common Sense's* true genius and power lay in how it was written, not so much what was written. Pamphlets written prior to *Common Sense* were considerably less influential because of who wrote them and, thus, how they were written. Paine's simple language and straightforward writing style contrasted sharply with the excessive language and complex style of traditional pamphleteers.²⁵ Having derived from humble origins, Thomas Paine was not afraid to adjust literary style and language to appeal to a large audience. He intended for the pamphlet to be read by as many people as possible in order for it to have the largest possible effect on the colonies.²⁶ *Common Sense*, original in its simplicity in wording and in argumentation, was the first pamphlet of the American Revolution written to the common man rather than the privileged man.²⁷ Paine's humility as a writer, unique in the colonial age of pamphleteers, assured that *Common Sense* would achieve unprecedented success. His writing style, as well as his new political language, "broke the ice that was slowly congealing the revolutionary movement."²⁸

Common Sense introduced a new political language that regarded the citizens of a nation in an unprecedented way.²⁹ The language assumed that the majority of citizens were naturally rational

²⁵ Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 1967), 15-17.

²⁶ E. Foner, xvi.

²⁷ Richard D. Brown, *The Strength of a People: The Idea of an Informed Citizenry in America 1650-1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 64.

²⁸ Quoted in E. Foner, 87.

²⁹ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 4.

and reasonable players in the political process. They were capable of digesting political arguments and voicing their own opinions on matters of the state. Unlike political and economic elites, Paine envisioned political debate as a more inclusive and democratic process that granted the majority of citizens an equal voice in the affairs of their nation. His philosophy was heavily influenced by his belief in deism, which posited that man was perfectible, “inborn” with a sense of morals and reason, and the “fall of man” could be attributed to the corruption of tyrannical governments.³⁰ This essential element of Paine’s philosophy forged *Common Sense* with a political language that appealed to a significantly larger population than any other pamphlet. Paine’s ink mobilized an unrivaled force in society.³¹ By addressing an immense group of previously overlooked and disregarded members of colonial society, Paine guaranteed the unrivaled impact of *Common Sense*.

A writer’s literary style and language demonstrates their underlying political and social ideals. Paine’s creation of a new political language suggests that he viewed reason as a naturally inherent ability amongst all people, making all citizens of a nation equally capable of contributing to its political and social structures. For Paine, government only worked when the largest possible body of citizens could participate in its function. His pamphlet smashed the façade held up by colonial elites misrepresenting the “intellectual” opinion as the “popular” opinion.³² Unlike other pamphlets, *Common Sense*’s power stemmed not from its prominence inside intellectual circles, but rather its impact on the psyche of common individuals.

Common Sense’s impact on society seeped into every aspect of life, filling the taverns of the cities and the halls of debate in Congress. Joseph Hawley, a Massachusetts Whig, remarked in February of 1776 that, “Every sentiment [of *Common Sense*] has sunk into my well prepared heart.”³³ As fighting intensified in the winter of 1775-1776,

³⁰ E. Foner, 117.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 24-25.

³² Larkin, 6.

³³ Quoted in E. Foner, 86.

George Washington noted that military encounters in Norfolk and Falmouth merely “added to the sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning contained in the pamphlet *Common Sense*, [which] will not leave members [of Congress] at a loss to decide upon the propriety of separation.”³⁴ Its plain truths, simple words and straightforward arguments made the revolution available to the populace, which guaranteed a revolution in the minds of the American people.³⁵ Adams once said, the American Revolution was only a consequence of the real revolution, which was in the minds of the populace.³⁶ No other contemporary in the revolutionary decade realized and utilized this reality more than Thomas Paine.

Revising the Legacy of the American Revolution

A revolution in the minds of the people would send shockwaves into the American bedrock of conventional political ideology. The American Revolution’s foundational document, *The Declaration of Independence*, was an extremely radical tract, which sculpted a dangerous model for future political events. *The Declaration of Independence* deemed it not only the people’s right, but their duty, to revolt against inherently corrupt and oppressive governments.³⁷ *The Declaration* presented change in government as natural and essential to the survival of the nation and the freedom of its people. The citizens of the colonies would constantly look to this founding document and its ideals when discussing their future political and social grievances.³⁸ It was natural that the foundational basis of the American Revolution

³⁴ Quoted in E. Foner, 86.

³⁵ Larkin, 46.

³⁶ “John Adams to Jefferson,” 1815, Quoted in Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, 1. Also quoted in Larkin, 46.

³⁷ Robert Ginsburg (ed.), *A Casebook on the Declaration of Independence* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1967). Larkin, 152-153.

³⁸ Ralph B. Perry, “The Declaration of Independence,” *The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution*, ed. Earl Latham (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1956), 4-7.

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would also become an essential pillar of the nation's identity. The elite leaders that came to power after the Revolutionary War were cautious about the growth of radical ideology in the post-revolutionary period. The reactionary conservatism of the 1780s and 1790s was a direct result of leaders' fears of radical democracy. Such a "swing toward political conservatism" can even be seen as natural, as the "sentiment and emphasis which are effective for purposes of revolution are the precise opposites of those required 'to institute new Government.'"³⁹ These politicians feared the precedent of the Revolution would threaten the stability of government, as well as their role in it.

In the 1780s and early 1790s, the leading Federalists of the national government, such as Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, and James Madison, would go to extraordinary lengths to diminish the radical legacy of the same revolution that had put them into power. Congressional elites knew that the ideals they had used to justify their political revolution could become transportable to other individuals and new circumstances. The legacy of the revolution in the eyes of common American citizens was detrimental to the function of the aristocracy in political affairs. As both Edward Larkin and Alfred Young convincingly argue, leading politicians of the late 18th century considered the *Declaration* too radical, fearing it being read aloud during public celebrations.⁴⁰ From the 1780s to the 1810s the radical dimensions of the American Revolution were "more or less systematically repressed by Federalists who needed a 'safe public memory of the Revolution,' one that wouldn't threaten the legitimacy of their social status or economic and political power."⁴¹ In his study of the Massachusetts elite in the early 19th century, Harlow Sheidley denotes a similar trend:

[The elite] recognizing that the American past might well be used to legitimize democratic and egalitarian

³⁹ Perry, 7.

⁴⁰ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 152-155. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon, 1999), 111-126.

⁴¹ Larkin, 152. Direct quote from Young, *The Shoemaker*, 124.

cases rather than their own conservative ethos, exorcised its potential radical thrust so that it could reinforce deference, hierarchy and due subordination...[establishing] the interpretive framework of the American Revolution that predominated for decades and remains influential even today.⁴²

In the three decades after the Revolution, conservative elites went to great lengths to adjust the historical view of the revolution and to diminish the radical model it set for political debates in the future. Paine's prominent role as a figurehead of the radical ideology of the Revolution made him an ideological enemy of the conservative reaction movement following the Revolution.

The intriguing contradiction of John Adam's opinion, one of the most famous leaders of the American Revolution, towards Thomas Paine in the course of the late 18th century reveals a deep dichotomy in conservative ideology. In a letter in 1805, Adams writes to Benjamin Waterhouse on the incredible influence that Paine played in the previous three decades: "I know not whether any man in the world has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs for the last thirty years than Tom Paine." However, Adams concludes the same correspondence with strong remorse towards the realities of the "Age of Paine," in which a "mongrel between pig and puppy, begotten by a wild boar on a bitch wolf" unleashed an era of mischief and barbarity upon society.⁴³ Conservative rhetoric consistently remarks on the extraordinary impact that Paine had on the world, but does so with a sharp indignation that scoffs at subtlety. Dominant politicians of the early 19th century, such as

⁴² Harlow E. Sheidley, "Sectional Nationalism: The Culture and Politics of Massachusetts Conservative Elite, 1815-1836" (Ph.D. diss., University of Connecticut, 1990) [published Boston, 1998].

⁴³ "John Adams to Benjamin Waterhouse," October 29, 1805, quoted in Craig Nelson, *Thomas Paine: Enlightenment, Revolution, and the Birth of Modern Nations* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2006), 9.

Adams, were dismayed by the ways in which Paine's ideology had corrupted society into "social and moral confusion."⁴⁴ These men could not deny the overwhelming influence Paine's words and ideas had on the nation, but that did not mean they had to glorify an ideology that hurt their party and threatened their political prominence. Adams' defeat in 1801 by his ideological opponent, the prominent Democratic Republican Thomas Jefferson, became a symbol of the consequences of such radical democratic ideology, marking the "Age of Paine" as an "Age of Frivolity... Folly, Vice, Frenzy, [and] Barbarity."⁴⁵

The Post-Revolution Reactionary Government: "Celebrations of Anti-Revolution"

The reactionary Federalist leaders of the late 1780s and early 1790s, dominated by a deep-seated fear of the chaos of mob rule, structured the government with an emphasis on order and stability. Their most threatening political enemy was an idea, not a party. More than the rising Democratic Republicans, it was the radical legacy of the American Revolution that could do the most damage to their central agenda and future political success. The characteristics of public celebrations in this decade, especially those in memory of revolutionary events, demonstrate the reactionary extent of this conservative federalist government. Alfred Young's analysis of celebrations of the revolution in late-18th century Boston most vividly reveals the conservative modification of the legacy of the Revolution. Bostonian Fourth of July celebrations, rather than celebrations of the revolution, would be better described as "celebrations of anti-revolution."⁴⁶

Public celebrations, such as those held in Faneuil Hall, were controlled and politically calculated spectacles. The festivals were safe, meticulously supervised events, centered on pre-approved speeches and calculated pageantry.⁴⁷ The structure of the ceremonies, especially the

⁴⁴ Opal, *Common Sense and Other Writings*, vii.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Craig Nelson, 9.

⁴⁶ Young, *The Shoemaker*, 111, 124.

⁴⁷ Larkin, 152.

grand procession of local politicians and military, presented the audience with forceful symbols of hierarchy and order.⁴⁸ The events were intended to place the mass of onlookers in their respective place in society. Instead of events that empowered the common man, they were meant to humble the average citizen. These public events and celebrations were highly organized spectacles that emphasized a traditional version of hierarchy and order, which became fundamental to the Federalist agenda in the late 1780s and early 1790s.

These public events of the late 18th century were meant to downplay the radical principles of the Revolution as much as possible. For the most part, *The Declaration of Independence* was not even read aloud. As previously discussed, Federalists and other conservatives saw *The Declaration* as a violently radical document, which set a dangerous precedent. It contained intensely anti-British sentiments and its dominant ideals implied a much more equalitarian society. Most importantly, it justified the right to revolution in certain circumstances. Many politicians feared the potential impact of *The Declarations'* principles on the minds of average citizens.⁴⁹

The carefully controlled Fourth of July celebrations in Boston, a vivid microcosm of the larger conservative agenda, demonstrate the trend of conservatism in American politics after the Revolution. The radical undertones of the American Revolution were systematically diminished by the Federalist government of the last two decades of the 18th century. The popularity of radical public figures, similar to the public celebrations of radical events, were part of the same fabric that conservatives hoped to manipulate or diminish in achieving their larger agenda.

The Sharp Contrast of Paine's Ideology and the Conservative Narrative

Paine didn't fit into the new conservative narrative of American history that was gradually being constructed and refined in the years

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 152. Young, *The Shoemaker*, 111.

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after the Revolution. Larkin perfectly illustrates the stark reality for Paine in the late 18th century:

...the reinterpretation of the Revolution as a less radical or threatening event almost necessitated his exclusion. Paine, in other words, did not fit into the grand narrative of American history and culture constructed in the [late eighteenth century and] early nineteenth century to differentiate Americans from their European counterparts, stabilize the elites' control of national politics, and underwrite the expansionist aims of the young republic.⁵⁰

Paine's basic vision, driven by his unrelenting passion to free citizens from the oppression of corrupt and inept governments, sought to disassemble the façade of tradition that allowed certain groups and institutions to retain power.⁵¹ Fueled by this grand ideal, his general political philosophy stood on three building blocks: internationalizing the scope of the human struggle against tyranny and corruption, dismissing the legitimacy of rule based on status quo and tradition, and empowering the common man in the political process by separating politics from social status and economic position. Paine's vision and that of the prominent leaders of late 18th century America opposed one another like oil and water. Their ideological differences would put Paine's reputation at the mercy of powerful, determined leaders driven by the fear of losing their power.

Paine's radicalism had the potential to cripple the traditional conservatism of early American government. John Adams would recall his feelings in 1776 towards *Common Sense*:

The arguments in favor of independence I liked very well [but] the part relative to a form of government I considered as flowing from simple ignorance, and a mere desire to please the Democratic party in

⁵⁰ Ibid., *Thomas Paine*, 19.

⁵¹ Ibid., 6.

Philadelphia... I dreaded the effect so popular a pamphlet might have... His plan was so democratical without any restraint or even an attempt at any equilibrium or counterpoise, that it must produce confusion and every evil work.⁵²

Federalist politicians, such as John Adams, viewed Paine's radical pamphlet as a powerful tool to energize the masses with an authentic spirit of independence, coming from an author of the common people. However, they also feared the future implications of such a radical doctrine. The structure of Paine's post-revolution government was far more radical than anything any major politician in the colonies had envisioned or discussed. Paine's proposed government, an attempt to empower the average male citizen with more political influence, was treated with immense hostility by those who most benefitted from the political status quo and traditional government structure.

Paine's proposed government had the potential to cast many of the leaders of the growing nation, who came to dominate government in the late 18th century, out of power. Paine's belief in the right of every man to have an equal voice in political decisions and national debates was not taken lightly by the leaders of the post-revolution government. The dominance of elitist culture in the first few decades of the American government diminished Paine's legacy in American history. Scurrilous biographies written about Paine by his enemies and his political alienation by congressional leaders successfully turned Paine into an anti-hero in the eyes of the post-revolutionary generation of citizens.

The Process of Destroying Paine's Legacy Scathing Biographies

The influence of three major biographies, written between 1793 and 1809, successfully manipulated public opinion and proved powerful

⁵² L.H. Butterfield (ed.), *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), vol. III: 330-341.

forces in shaping the common perception of Thomas Paine. These biographies, written by Paine's political and ideological enemies, were crafted for specific, larger purposes than merely telling the story of his life. The biography became a tool for swaying public opinion, cloaking motives of self-interest behind a veneer of false tribute. Transforming the public's opinion of Paine became part of a larger agenda of influencing current political and social debates by emerging elites, who exercised an impressive control over society's perceptions of culture and history.⁵³ Paine's popular image was considered an obstruction to the political and social agenda of the authors of these biographies and their ideological contemporaries.

These biographies manipulated readers into believing defamatory statements about Paine's personal life, moral, and religious beliefs. However, their power and influence was predominately owed to the fact that Paine refused to respond to almost all of these personal attacks: "the absence of a rebuttal by Paine" gave the biographies and personal attacks an unfounded sense of authenticity.⁵⁴ Paine believed a rebuttal would distract the people from the more important ideological and political issues. Paine considered these personal attacks as merely distractions from the more substantive arguments and debates on subjects of his writings.⁵⁵ He did not wish to give attacks like these any undeserved attention by responding to them or refuting their underlying accusations. Instead of focusing the attention back to the issues, Paine's strategy "backfired" and his character, rather than his ideas, became the subject of contention.⁵⁶ This would prove an essential factor in the success of the anti-Paine campaign.

Paine's ideological opponents, unable to successfully counter the logic and impact of his arguments, resorted to attacking his character in order to diminish his influence and, by inference, the impact of his ideals and philosophy. His inability to administer control

⁵³ Young, *The Shoemaker*, 125.

⁵⁴ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 158.

⁵⁵ Larkin, 150.

⁵⁶ Larkin, 150.

over his public image further exposed his legacy to the wrath of his attackers.⁵⁷ The decision to not respond to attacks on his honor and name, meant to protect the sanctity of the political ideals in discussion, allowed his personal character to be put under immense contention and scrutiny. His lack of response to the false allegations essentially became adoptive admissions creating an aura of credence around them. Furthermore, Paine's inability to establish himself in an official government role ensured that his role as a professional writer would dominate his legacy, for better or worse.

An inherent suspicion and general mistrust surrounding professional writers dominated most social circles of the late 18th century. Even the most respected men, such as John Adams or Franklin, received immense public scrutiny and personal attacks as professional writers.⁵⁸ However, it was their positions in political offices and government institutions that secured their legacy and historical role in the American Revolution. Paine's radically democratic political philosophy, his role as an outsider of the political scene, and his supposed involvement in the violently radical French Revolution prevented him from ever achieving a major political position.⁵⁹ Paine's involvement in the French Revolution overreaches the limits of this study. However, it must be noted that his American enemies vastly exaggerated his role in the more chaotic elements of late-18th century France, connecting the image of Paine with the violence of radical democracy. In reality, Paine was imprisoned by the Jacobin revolutionary government in 1793 on charges of treason, as he began to resist their violent extremism.⁶⁰ Fear of his radicalism led many political leaders to alienate Paine from their circles when he came back to America, ostracizing him from access to almost all government positions. Paine's inability to establish himself in such a political office made the personal criticisms and attacks on his character and personal

⁵⁷ Ibid., 150-151.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 151-152.

⁵⁹ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 282.

⁶⁰ E. Foner, 244-247. Young, *Liberty Tree*, 282-285.

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morals have an unjustly large influence on public opinion towards him. This would prove to be a major barrier in Paine's consideration as a "founding father" of the nation.

The Life of Thomas Paine, The Author of Rights of Man, With a Defense of his Writings, the first major biography written about Paine, was published in 1791 in London. Although written by George Chalmers under the pseudonym Jonathon Oldys, the biography was heavily sponsored by the British government to counterbalance the popularity of Paine's radical ideology in England, especially with his very popular *Rights of Man*. The biography was based on a "skeleton of factual information" and its personal attacks ranged from insulting Paine's sexual potency to claiming he was an alcoholic wife-beater.⁶¹ Although this initial biography was not published in the American press, it garnered a façade of credibility amongst the public that constructed a foundation of falsities that would be built upon by others.

William Cobbett, an American politician and writer, would utilize this "distorted image" of Paine in his abridgements of Chalmers' *Life*, which he published in 1796 in *The Political Censor*. Even Cobbett admitted in his abridgement that Paine's "life was published in London in 1793."⁶² Cobbett later on in his life would gain an immense respect for Paine and become one of his most fervent admirers, ringing true his remarks in the 1790s: "A little thing sometimes produces a great effect, an insult offered to a man of great talent and unconquerable perseverance has in many instances produced, in the long run, most tremendous effects."⁶³ While both Chalmers' biography and Cobbett's abridgement were published during Paine's life, it was the third biography, written on the year of his death in 1809, which struck the cruelest blow to Paine's public image. Cheetham's *The Life of Thomas Paine* most aptly demonstrates the psychology of those who intended to damage Paine's public image and historical legacy.

⁶¹ Larkin, 156.

⁶² Ibid., 158.

⁶³ Moncure D. Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1892), vol. II: 58.

Cheetham's Assault on Paine's Legacy

James Cheetham was a major contributor, editor, and part owner of the *American Citizen*, a popular New York newspaper known for its republican leanings. Cheetham's tack for destroying the reputation of politicians was well known, as his scandalous writings ensured the defeat of Aaron Burr in the 1804 New York governor election. His vicious attacks included calling Burr a traitor to his party, as well as claiming he had a list of twenty prostitutes who called Burr their favorite customer. Even though Burr hired an editor and lawyer to attempt to rectify his public image, the damage had already been done and he lost the election in a landslide.⁶⁴ Cheetham utilized his prominent position in the writing industry to affect larger political processes. Five years later he would use this same talent for swaying public opinion to cripple another man's legacy based on partisan party politics and circumstance. Cheetham's assault on Burr, considered one of the first "professional political assassination[s]," was a mere rehearsal for the more vicious, calculated, and elaborate attack on Paine later in that decade.⁶⁵

Paine had been in the process of suing Cheetham for libel before his death, but nonetheless *The Life of Thomas Paine* was published in October of 1809. His scorching depiction of Paine as a hypocrite, drunkard, and "depraved individual" is framed in the larger context of the political conflicts of the early 19th century. In the dedication portion, Cheetham dedicates the work to the Federalist Vice-President George Clinton. He makes sure to include a sharp attack on Thomas Jefferson, a well-known member of the Democratic Republicans, who ideologically

⁶⁴ *The Duel*, directed by Carl Byker and Mitch Wilson (PBS: The American Experience, 2000), DVD.

⁶⁵ Lawrence M. Lasher, *James Cheetham: Journalist and Muckraker* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1965), 24-64.

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opposed the Federalists.⁶⁶ Thus, the biography itself was intended as a political agent in the larger scene of the contemporary party politics of the decade.

The biography was also a product of the scornfulness and bitterness of political rivalries in the early 18th century. Cheetham's work grew out a personal hostility with Paine, as well as the friction of his newly adopted conservative ideals with those of Paine's.⁶⁷ This powerful combination of passions and motives gave no regard for writing a factual and ethical biography on Paine. His construction of a distorted image of Paine relied on intentionally vague sources, including "persons who knew him when he was a boy," "gentlemen of the highest political standing," "notorious facts," and Chalmers' *Life of Thomas Paine*.⁶⁸

In the introduction, Cheetham reveals his fear of the violent possibilities of the increasingly popular political ideology of the Democratic Republicans. In a reference to the horrors of the French Revolution, he insinuates that Paine's political theories were part of a larger agenda of destruction: "...the tumultuous writings of Paine. To that which was his object; to commotion, to the overthrow of government, and to bloodshed in all its horrid forms."⁶⁹ Cheetham, gripped by a fear of the consequences of democratic republicanism put into practice, represents the general mindset of most Federalists of the time. He provides an acute angle into the psychology of Paine's critics and political enemies, illuminating the rationale for publically demonizing Thomas Paine.

Cheetham's work demonstrates an inherent belief in the passiveness of the reading public and the inability of common people to

⁶⁶ James Cheetham, *The Life of Thomas Paine: Author of Common Sense, The Crisis, Rights of Man* (New York: Southwick and Pelsue, 1809), iii-xvi. Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 158-159.

⁶⁷ Alfred Owen Aldridge, *Man of Reason* (Cornwall: The Cornwall Press, 1959), 10, 308-311.

⁶⁸ Cheetham, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, xx-xxi.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, xviii.

participate in government. He exhibits the prevalent elitist belief in the ignorance of the masses of citizens, who could be easily swayed and manipulated by clever writers. Throughout the work, Cheetham unabashedly reveals his lowly views toward the common people and their role in the political process. He conjectures the consequence of giving every citizen the right to vote, bearing in mind the violence of the radical French Revolution:

The people in whose hands the votes of the nation would be placed, and to whose blind direction the power of the nation would be confided, feel, but they do not think; they cannot, I mean, think as is necessary to save a nation.⁷⁰

In a discussion of the experiment of universal suffrage in New York, Cheetham posits the consequences of shoemakers being thrust into government power:

Universal suffrage has a moral aversion from talents... If in its district shoemakers, for instance, are the most numerous class, every thing being decided by vote, a shoemaker, a very honest kind of man no doubt, is transferred from his knife and last to the halls of legislation. No nation can be governed by well meaning but incapable men.⁷¹

Fear of the chaos of mob rule, in which common citizens are given too much political influence, stoked immense anxiety amongst American Federalists like Cheetham. For Cheetham, and Federalists like him, the common man was an entity to be feared and handled with caution. Through an analysis of his general philosophy, as outlined in the biography, Cheetham's desire to control the mob stood as a "crucial motivating factor in his decision to attack Paine."⁷² Such a reality

⁷⁰ Ibid., 152.

⁷¹ Cheetham, 156.

⁷² Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 160.

renders false his portrayal of the impartiality and unpartisan intent of his work: “The object of my labor is neither to please nor displease any political party” becomes a shallow lie.⁷³

An analysis of Cheetham’s critique of Paine’s work reveals much more about the author and his ideals than it does about Thomas Paine. Looking through the maze of effective personal attacks on Paine in the biography, Cheetham’s actual analysis and criticism of Paine’s literary work is neither original nor persuasive. Cheetham’s critique of *Common Sense* not only misunderstands the intent of the pamphlet, but it also reveals an elitist bias in terms of writing style and political qualification, rather than substance. Remarking on the structure, grammar, and literary elements of *Common Sense*, Cheetham declares it had “no merit” as a literary work:

Defective in arrangement, inelegant in diction, here and there a sentence excepted; with no profundity of argument, no felicity of remark, no extent of research, no classical allusion, nor comprehension of thought, it is fugitive in nature.⁷⁴

He goes even further to state that Paine, and by proxy his literary works, should not be looked at as an “authority on the subject of government.”⁷⁵ The fact that *Common Sense* was intentionally not written to the traditional target audience, the educated upper classes, was never fully comprehended by Cheetham and others. Paine’s literary style was designed to undermine the traditional hallmarks of high culture works of political philosophy: research, allusion, and high diction.⁷⁶ These literary features allowed more traditional authors to appeal to the aristocracy, with their rigid standards of content and style, which in turn excluded the less educated average readership of citizens.

⁷³ Cheetham, xxiii.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 47-48.

⁷⁵ Cheetham, 47-48.

⁷⁶ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 161.

Cheetham's biography produces a blunt perspective of the individual motives and agenda at work in the minds of those who attacked Paine. Madame Bonneville, a French emigrant whom Paine had helped, eventually succeeded in suing Cheetham for libel in court, specifically with his false accusation in the biography of an affair between her and Paine. The allegation was founded upon no evidence, besides a letter that Cheetham had illegally seized, "Mr. Carver to Thomas Paine," which the original writer had admitted to being full of falsities. The presiding judge, conveniently a Federalist, passively determined the damages owed to Bonneville, but made sure to commend Cheetham for the work, which "tended to serve the cause of religion."⁷⁷ The reaction by Democratic Republicans in the *Columbian*, claiming it "consist[s] of disgusting invective and malignant diatribe from beginning to end," demonstrates the acknowledgement by many of the gross libel of the biography.⁷⁸ In the decade following its publication, many new biographers of Paine condemned Cheetham's biography. Clio Rickman stands out as its most passionate critique:

It is an outrageous attack on Paine which bears upon the face of it, idle gossiping and gross misrepresentation...
The *Life* by Cheetham is so palpably written to distort, disfigure, mislead and vilify, and does this so blungingly, that it defeats its own purposes, and becomes entertaining from the excess of its labored and studied defamation...⁷⁹

However, it is of no relevance whether or not politicians and writers in later years pointed out such glaring truths about Cheetham's work. What is of relevance is that the myth of Paine that Cheetham created became the dominant reality in the eyes of the majority of Americans, effectively demonizing Paine in the public eye and

⁷⁷ Aldridge, *Man of Reason*, 294. Lasher, *James Cheetham*, 128.

⁷⁸ *The Columbian*, December 27, 1809. Quoted in Lasher, 8.

⁷⁹ Thomas C. Rickman, *The Life and Writings of Thomas Paine* (New York: Vincent Park and Company, 1908), 14.

diminishing his legacy in American history. Transplanting their depiction of the man of Thomas Paine with the reality became the key to destroying his legacy and the supposed legitimacy of his works and basic ideology. It was more effective for these writers to destroy the man behind the quill rather than the works themselves. Cheetham, Cobbett, Chalmers, and other writers were surprisingly successful in nearly destroying Paine's image and legacy in the new republic. The attacks on Paine were driven by an underlying fear of the consequences of his radical beliefs taking root in the minds of the masses. This fear invoked an anxious rage in the four decades following the American Revolution amongst conservative elites, driving them to go to drastic ends to ensure their individual, as well as their parties', political survival.

Loss of Historical Memory

The dominant politicians of the late 1780s and 1790s managed to almost completely destroy Paine's popular image amongst the people: his relevance in the history of the Revolution and the founding of the nation's government erased by a calculated smear campaign. The late 18th century proved so detrimental to Paine's legacy that many politicians of the early 1800s would condemn the tragic "loss of historical memory."⁸⁰ John Adams, Samuel Adams, John Hancock and other essential leaders of the revolutionary movement witnessed their legacy in the Revolution diminish in favor of more moderate figures like George Washington, a conveniently nationalistic symbol of a father of the new nation.⁸¹ Washington became the revised image of government, as a strong patriarchy with established authority. As the allegorical father of a family, government was empowered with certain privileges and powers for the preservation of order and stability in society. The need to control and limit excesses in a growingly radical society fueled leaders to develop a set of calculated symbols and figures to represent the nation. This tailored national identity, along with the

⁸⁰ Young, *The Shoemaker*, 124.

⁸¹ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 286.

loss of historical memory, created the possibility of a new narrative of American history. As an editor unemotionally deletes and inserts the lines of a submission, conservative leaders removed figures and entire events that did not conform to their larger vision, affixing new ones in their stead.

After the humiliation of being denied the right to vote in New Rochelle by Gouverneur Morris, an old and bitter political enemy, Paine remarked in frustration that the new generation that rose up after *The Declaration of Independence* knew “nothing of what the political state of the country was at the time the pamphlet *Common Sense* appeared.”⁸² The new generation’s loss of historical understanding of Paine’s importance left his reputation and legacy vulnerable. This vulnerability left him exposed to vicious attacks by those who would benefit from the demise of his legacy. The succeeding generation of citizens that came into the post-revolutionary culture failed to properly bridge the gap of historical memory with the preceding generation of citizens of the Revolution.⁸³ The passing of historical experience from generation to generation would prove very difficult at a time when education, mass communication, and historical recording were in their infancies. John Adams famously voiced frustration in 1809 with the disappointing reality of “a very extraordinary and unaccountable inattention in our countrymen to the History of their own country,” where men essential to the history of the country were being destroyed by lies in newspapers and a general ambivalence amongst the populace.⁸⁴

⁸² “Thomas Paine to Vice President George Clinton,” May 4, 1807, in *Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*, ed. Philip S. Foner (New York: Citadel, 1945), vol. II: 1487-1488.

⁸³ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 285-286.

⁸⁴ “John Adams to Joseph Ward,” June 6, 1809, *Wars Papers* (Chicago Historical Society). Reprinted in Alfred Young, Terry Fife, and Mary Janzen, *We the People: Voices and Images of the New Nation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 161.

This generational gap would leave much of past events, as well as the role of individuals in those events, open to change and reinterpretation. Consequently, politicians could use their social influence and economic position to reweave the tapestry of history in favor of their own political agenda. As in Boston, the legacies of events and people of the Revolution were exposed to the agenda of political elites in every American city and town:

Thus, given the state of the institutions that transmitted American history up to the 1820s, for knowledge of the events of the Revolution that was not based in their personal experiences or in oral tradition, ordinary Bostonians were heavily dependent on a public memory passed down in the sermons of ministers, on secular orations commemorating ceremonial occasions, and on the symbolism of annual festive events like the Fourth of July. But these were almost all carried out under the auspices of a conservative elite with a growing awareness of the uses of history. Personal memory could not compete with the elite's political need for a safe public memory of the Revolution.⁸⁵

The legacy of radical figures, events, and ideals of the Revolution in the public eye was effectively at the mercy of tenacious and powerful conservative politicians. As Paine's achievements and influence on American affairs faded from the public's memory of the past, political enemies were enabled to rewrite the story of the past, successfully tarnishing his reputation and historical legacy.

Paine's legacy experienced further devastation in light of events in the late 1790s; his supposed involvement in the radical violence of the French Revolution, his political alienation by major parties and leaders based on his controversial religious beliefs, and his infamous criticism of a major national hero (George Washington) coalesced to

⁸⁵ Young, *The Shoemaker*, 124.

further aid the efforts of his social and political enemies.⁸⁶ With his denunciation of Washington in a bitter letter in 1796, Paine had become a “poster boy for everything Americans loved to hate.”⁸⁷ In the three decades after the Revolution, Paine’s religion, personal life, and squabbles with popular American figures would gradually undermine his past popularity and success:

By the time of his death Paine’s contributions to the cause of American independence and his political radicalism had also been overshadowed by his highly visible contretemps with other American leaders (most notably George Washington), by allegations about his personal habits, and by his all too public religious beliefs. He died practically alone and still ostracized by the social and political community that had celebrated him four decades earlier.⁸⁸

Paine’s Demonization

The gradual demonization of Thomas Paine’s legacy and image centered on three main elements of the man: his religious beliefs, his radical political ideology, and his personal life and moral character.

Religious Beliefs

Paine was not secretive about his controversial beliefs on God and organized religion. Paine, a deist of the most radical form, defines in *Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason* his ardent belief that organized religion was a tool for political oppression. Paine was known for his criticism of the Bible’s factuality and his viewpoint, typical of deist philosophy, of God as merely a powerless observer over human affairs.⁸⁹ Paine’s religious beliefs drew a harsh response from the orthodox clergy in America in the 1780s and 1790s, especially after the

⁸⁶ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 282.

⁸⁷ Opal, *Common Sense*, xxxi.

⁸⁸ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 153.

⁸⁹ E. Foner, *Tom Paine*, 117-118, 246-247.

publication of his *The Age of Reason*, which openly condemned church authority. It must be noted that John Adams, and other leading politicians in America, believed in a similar form of rational religion. However, Adams' concern for the "social and political repercussions of those ideas" spreading to the masses led him to distance himself from Paine's religious activism.⁹⁰

The Federalists utilized Paine's unpopular religious beliefs as a "stalking horse," in which his religious criticism was used as a means of hurting his legacy and political ideology.⁹¹ His popular *Common Sense* was long forgotten in favor of the scandalous *The Age of Reason*, which "was denounced from every pulpit."⁹² The Second Great Awakening, a profound revival of religious sentiment in the early 1800s sparked by rejection of the anti-religious sentiments of the Enlightenment, would only further aid Paine's enemies' efforts to defame his name. His religion was pinpointed as a weakness that his political enemies could use to sabotage his honor and further their own agenda, specifically in the elections of that year. The Federalists utilized Paine as a "convenient weapon with which to attack and embarrass Jefferson" and the Democratic Republican Party as a whole.⁹³ The Second Great Awakening, which developed deep roots in the urban and rural lower classes, also alienated Paine from his political allies in the Democratic Republican Party, who relied on the support of farmers in the countryside and artisans in the cities.⁹⁴ Thus, Paine's religious beliefs became a weapon for his enemies and a warning cry for his allies.

The Age of Reason and Paine's controversial religious statements would prove the breaking point for even his political allies in the early 19th century. Many prominent Democratic Republicans were

⁹⁰ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 9. See also Bradley C. Thompson, "Young John Adams and the New Philosophic Rationalism," *William and Mary Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (1998), 262.

⁹¹ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 284.

⁹² Opal, *Common Sense*, xxxi.

⁹³ E. Foner, *Tom Paine*, 257-258.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 268.

forced to pull back from being too closely identified with Paine in the public sphere.⁹⁵ Furthermore, even Jefferson, a close friend of Paine's since the days of the Revolution, was forced by supporters to separate himself from Paine once this association became a political issue in the 1800 campaign. One of the major reasons for Jefferson's victory was his support by Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, a Democratic Republican base that became a key political tool in light of the religious revival. Thus, their votes and continued support relied heavily on the religious beliefs of those the Democratic Republicans chose to associate with.⁹⁶ Rather than being a political asset for the Democratic Republicans, Paine quickly became a public embarrassment; an illegitimate son they hoped to keep hidden from public sight.

Paine's radical religious beliefs alienated him from both major political parties of the late 18th century. During these years, church and state and politics and religion were irrevocably intertwined into the same fabric of society. Paine's courage to not let political circumstances affect his religious beliefs, though commendable, became one of sharpest daggers in the hands of his enemies. A prominent pastor in New England posited the notion in the early 1800s that the outbreak of yellow fever in New Hampshire and the earthquake in South America were punishments from God for the people in those areas who had read Paine's works.⁹⁷ Even on his deathbed, as his request to a proper burial in the Quaker graveyard was denied because of his unwillingness to recant his deist beliefs, Paine's deism alienated him from society. Larkin passionately illustrates the relevance of Paine's religious stubbornness to his overall legacy:

The interest in Paine's death and in his failure to retract his deist principles suggests the extent to which in the public's eye Paine's religious opinions and beliefs eclipsed his radical political ideas, even to the point where his crucial role in the American cause of

⁹⁵ Ibid., 256.

⁹⁶ E. Foner, 256-258.

⁹⁷ Opal, *Common Sense*, xxxi.

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independence was nearly forgotten by man of his contemporaries.⁹⁸

The double-edged sword of controversial and publicly held beliefs left Paine's public reputation and legacy at the mercy of his enemies. Whether it was courageousness or naivety, this is what makes Paine a modern man, far ahead of his time in his strength to separate religion and politics.

Radical Political Ideology

In the traditional old regime style of government of the mid-18th century, birth was the dominant factor determining one's political status. One's initial economic and social class, based on the family and circumstance they are born into, cements their relationship with government and their importance in the political sphere. When the individual experiences economic and social movement it alters their political experience. Members of the aristocracy, whose birth provided them access to wealth and educational opportunities, were the dominant political force in the colonies before and after the Revolution against Britain. Economic and social elites made up the majority of the politicians tasked with the plan and the design of the post-revolution government. Thus, the American political sphere and the foundation of American government in the late 18th century had inherently elitist undertones.

Many of the post-revolution leaders went to great lengths to cement a tradition of elitist conservatism in the political institutions of the nation. Not being a member of the traditional elites, Paine's origins and political experience would lead him to develop a drastically different political philosophy from that of the early leaders of America. His experience in England as a common man, without the benefit of being born into the wealthy, educated minority of families, would lay the seed of radicalism. From his earliest writings, Paine's abhorrence towards the tyranny of political heredity and economic elites quickly

⁹⁸ Larkin, *Thomas Paine*, 156.

became apparent. These strong passions were fueled by his experience with the inadequacies of the English monarchy. Paine's political ideology, outlined in *Common Sense* and his other major works, was violently at odds with that of the majority of those politicians charged with framing the government of the new nation. The Revolution's legacy, especially the strain of political radicalism preached by Paine, set a political precedent that endangered the future survival of the tradition of elite-dominated government. In most political circumstances in history, those who benefit under a certain tradition and philosophy of government will go to great lengths to preserve it as best serves them. Destroying the legacy and influence of Paine's political ideology would be a crucial step in preserving the elite's status quo and long-held dominance in government.

Personal Attacks: Paine's Personal Life and Morals

The combination of the scathing biographies and harsh personal attacks against Paine, alongside the generational "loss of historical memory," had a widespread and profound impact on individual Americans, bridging social and economic divides. Paine's daily experiences with common citizens in the decade before his death reveal how acutely his personal legacy was damaged in the two decades following the revolution. After a fifteen-year absence from the American political scene, Paine returned in 1802, greeted with a torrential "wave of abuse," replete with attacks on his religion and his private moral character.⁹⁹

Hostile cartoons in newspapers enforced this negative public image. The famous 1801 "Mad Tom in a Rage" cartoon, depicted him as a jealous alcoholic, supported by the devil, attempting to selfishly bring down the government of Washington and Adams, symbolized by a bell of patriotism.¹⁰⁰ The eagle of liberty screams at Paine, attempting to prevent him from destroying the American government. The devil, standing behind Paine, is depicted offering him all the help he needs to

⁹⁹ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 282.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, *Liberty Tree*, 283. Courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.

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succeed. Paine drunkenly tells the devil that with a few more drinks of brandy, he will bring down the bell. Lastly, Paine's face is intentionally drawn with bitter rage and hatred. The cartoon provides a shockingly blunt symbol of the larger conservative Federalist effort to destroy Paine's name and image in the public eye. Federalist epithets repeated these themes of Paine's immoral character, portraying him as a dishonest, sinful, and loathsome individual, who was constantly drunk.¹⁰¹ Countless attacks on Paine, in both visual and written forms, gradually cemented certain lies and accusations in society as truth and hard fact.

Personal attacks on both continents, in the form of biographies, cartoons, and epithets, proved tragically successful in swaying the minds of the common people. Washington D.C. innkeepers refused housing to Paine, forcing him to check in under an assumed name. Stagecoach drivers were known to deny Paine their service, either citing that they wouldn't want their horses suffering such a painful burden (one man noted that his horse had already been "struck by lightning" once) or that they morally could never let such a man ride on their stages. Even a New York preacher was criticized and disciplined by his Church superiors after word spread that he had briefly visited with Paine. Paine became a pariah. Most revealing of these specific experiences were what mothers in New Rochelle would tell their children about Paine. Mothers of New Rochelle would warn their children to not go near Paine, claiming he was a "bad man."¹⁰² On a family level, Paine's immoral character was ingrained in the minds of even the nation's youth. A popular nursery rhyme remarked on his unpopular and sad circumstance: "Poor Tom Paine! Where he has gone or how he fares; Nobody knows and nobody cares."¹⁰³ The campaign against Paine by political elites laid deep roots in a wide spectrum of the common people, from average workers to country youths.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 282-284.

¹⁰² Ibid., 282-285.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Paul Collins, *The Trouble with Tom: The Strange Aftermath and Times of Thomas Paine* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005).

Ironically, the same type of people whose cause Paine had fought so passionately for in *Common Sense*, and during the Revolution, were the same individuals who treated him with such hostility and contempt in the decades following the Revolution. From urban middle class workers to rural lower class families, Paine was treated with undeserved disdain and severe castigation. Consequently, the writer for the common man became the enemy of the common man in less than three decades. He had gone from hero to anti-hero in less than thirty years.¹⁰⁴ A politically convenient web of lies and attacks crafted by the conservative elite leaders of the early American government transformed Paine into an anti-hero. The successful demonization of Paine in the public sphere diminished the likelihood that his radical political ideology would gain a foothold in the American populace. Those in power were able to quell the threat of radical democracy and popular politics by deviously convincing the masses, the exact people that would have benefitted from it the most, of its inadequacies and its dangers

Paine's Funeral

On June 8, 1809, Thomas Paine died in a nation that greatly mistrusted and disregarded him, despite his role in its fight for independence. Robert Ingersoll, a famous 19th century orator and writer, wrote one of the most powerful depictions of Thomas Paine's death and burial:

Thomas Paine had passed the legendary limit of life. One by one most of his old friends and acquaintances had deserted him. Maligned on every side, execrated, shunned and abhorred – his virtues denounced as vices – his services forgotten – his character blackened, he preserved the poise and balance of his soul. He was a victim of the people, but his convictions remained unshaken. He was still a soldier in the army of freedom,

¹⁰⁴ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 282.

and still tried to enlighten and civilize those who were impatiently waiting for his death. Even those who loved their enemies hated him, their friend – the friend of the whole world – with all their hearts. On the 8th of June, 1809, death came – Death, almost his only friend. At his funeral no pomp, no pageantry, no civic procession, no military display. In a carriage, a woman and her son who had lived on the bounty of the dead – on horseback, a Quaker, the humanity of whose heart dominated the creed of his head – and, following on foot, two negroes filled with gratitude – constituted the funeral cortege of Thomas Paine.¹⁰⁵

Margaret de Bonneville, a woman whom Paine had helped escape from oppression in France under Napoleon, watched Paine's grave cruelly swallowed up by the indifferent soil. She had helped Paine before and after his unjust imprisonment in France. In return, Paine had helped Margaret, and her two young children and Paine's godsons, Benjamin and Thomas, upon their arrival in America. Margaret and her sons had traveled, along with the handful of others, who wished to pay their respect to Paine, from Greenwich Village to New Rochelle.¹⁰⁶ A few years later, Bonneville recalled the mood of the small burial, her words coarse with bitterness and heavy with sorrow:

The internment was a scene to affect and wound any sensible heart. Contemplating who it was, what man it was, that we were committing him to an obscure grave on an open and disregarded bit of land, I could not help feeling most acutely. Before the earth was thrown down around the coffin, I placing myself at the east end of the grave, said to my son Benjamin, "stand you there, at the other end, as a witness for grateful America." Looking

¹⁰⁵ Robert G. Ingersoll, *The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll* (North American Review: Dresden, 1892), vol. XI: 321.

¹⁰⁶ Young, *Liberty Tree*, 265-267.

round me, and beholding the small group of spectators, I exclaimed, as the earth was tumbled into the grave, “Oh Mr Paine! My son stands here as testimony of the gratitude of America, and I, for France.”¹⁰⁷

Paine’s humble funeral procession and simple burial stand as a testament to his tragic loss of legacy in the decades following his stirring *Common Sense*. The shoemaker emotionlessly glanced over Paine’s short obituary in the local newspaper. The farmer in New Rochelle hurriedly mulled about on his land scorning the acquaintances of an adulterous radical who passed by in the distant fields. The common citizen quickly forgot about the death of an alcoholic wretch. Tragically, these were the same individuals Paine had so adamantly fought for his entire life, constantly triumphing the cause of the common man. More so than Paine’s life, the loneliness of his death and burial most vividly demonstrates the transformation in American society and politics between 1776 and 1809, which slowly demonized Paine into an anti-hero.

A New Perspective on the Founding of America

The study of the American Revolution has produced many different bodies of contrasting historical opinion. Countless books, dissertations, tracts, articles, and other bodies of written work have presented varying perspectives and opinions on the most transformative event in American history. As the years have gone by, historians have gradually come closer to a more objective, less romantic vision of the reality of the events and people involved. The study of the founding of America is as essential today as it was two centuries ago. Far too frequently, historical studies prefer to analyze the political ideologies of the “founding fathers,” those who most perceive to be the dominant figures, in order to determine what kind of nation they hoped to create. The type of nation they envisioned gives us immense insight into the

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in Aldridge, *Man of Reason*, 316.

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underlying truths of our past, as well as foresight for the future. However, the dominant political party, leader, or ideology only represents a fraction of the entire story, leaving much of it untold.

History isn't always written by the winners, but it almost always is written about the winners, fraught with an unconscious preference and cloaked bias. A look at those people and ideologies, carelessly swept under the rug of the more popular and convenient story, provides us immense insight into our past. The role of overlooked or underappreciated figures in history must be an essential area of academic focus. The work of Nobles and Young, *Whose American Revolution Was It?*, stands as a testament to this fact:

...the questions asked by historians are often in response to significant changes in society that push them, as they do other citizens, to rethink parts of the past that have been overlooked, buried, or little appreciate... the role of ordinary people who helped shape such struggles in the past.¹⁰⁸

The study of the less mainstream elements of the past illuminates whether these crumbs under the rug were merely forgotten or if they were consciously repressed based on convenience and calculated necessity. The answer to such a question reveals transformative realities of the people, ideals, and circumstances, which transpired to form the American nation during its most crucial period of growth and change.

American politicians of the 1780s, 1790s, and 1800s, motivated by political convenience and party agenda, consciously repressed Paine's importance and influence in America's national memory. An analysis of what they found so threatening in Paine's ideology to their vision of the new nation produces a unique perspective on America's founding. Such a perspective establishes new insight on the deep

¹⁰⁸ Alfred F. Young and Gregory H. Nobles, *Whose American Revolution Was It?* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 6.

ideological divisions and political forces rooted in the formation of the American government. The three decades following the Revolution witnessed a noticeable counterrevolution of conservatism by the leaders of the nation. Inherent elitist and conservative undertones, a bedrock of the new nation, dictated much of the political and social trends in the late 18th century and well into the dawn of the new century.

Paine's Place in the Modern Era

The paradox of Paine's remarkable success and tragic demonization stands out as an insightful glimpse into an almost forgotten chapter of history. The paradoxical tale of Thomas Paine not only reveals much about 18th century American society and politics, but it also unveils significant dichotomies that lie at the root of America, providing us insight into the modern era. Seth Cotlar, in a thorough study of Paine's presence in historical imagination, poignantly remarks that Paine "offers us a uniquely articulate guide to the paradoxes inherent in America's founding principles."¹⁰⁹ As a historical figure, Paine demonstrates that the passionate clash of radical and conservative ideologies has been in existence since America's founding. This realization deepens our understanding of modern political trends and helps us to find solutions to contemporary problems. Nobles and Young begin their study of the American Revolution with a note on the influence of contemporary society and politics on historical study:

...the widespread disillusionment with national political leaders in recent decades contributed to an emphasis on the presumably superior "character" of the leaders of the Revolutionary era in the many new biographies of the famous Founders.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Seth Cotlar, "Thomas Paine in the Atlantic Historical Imagination," *Paine and Jefferson: In the Age of Revolutions*, ed. Simon Newman and Peter Onuf (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 293.

¹¹⁰ Young and Nobles, *Whose American Revolution Was It?*, 6.

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The 21st century has seen the rise of a cultish praise of our “Founding Fathers” in both intellectual circles and society, as shown by the popularity of recent tracts on Franklin, Jefferson, and Washington. There seems to be an underlying attempt to place these men on a lofty pedestal, distancing the divide between individuals and trends of the past and present. In reality, the bitter political rivalries and steep ideological divides of our modern era can be found in the early years of America. Edward Carr, in his work analyzing what constitutes history, defines great history as “written precisely when the historian’s vision of the past is illuminated by insights into the problems of the present.”¹¹¹ In a time where politics and government have become ever more divisive and partisan, the tale of Thomas Paine constructs, rather than destroys, this bridge between past and present, illuminating lessons of our past for guidance.

Through biographies, letters, pamphlets, and documentation of public events, it is clear that Thomas Paine went from hero to anti-hero between the years 1776 and 1809. His popularity in the late 1770s from *Common Sense* quickly faded in the wave of reactionary conservatism in the late 1780s and 1790s. The mid-1780s witnessed both the failure of the more radical vision of government, under *The Articles of Confederation*, to maintain order and the rise of anti-Paine sentiment amongst political leaders and citizens alike. This interesting parallel evokes the sense that Paine’s ideology, and in conjunction the ideology of the Revolution, had overstepped the moderate limits of the existing political order in the late 18th century. The story of Paine demonstrates that America, both its leaders and its citizens, was evidently not ready to allow such unrestrained democracy and uncurbed radicalism. As a consequence, the 1790s and 1800s witnessed the creation of a myth concerning the evil, adulterous, and vial figurehead of radicalism: Thomas Paine. This myth metastasized throughout the minds of citizens to the point that it transformed into reality.

¹¹¹ Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History? The George Macaulay Trevelyan Lectures Delivered in the University of Cambridge, January- March 1961* (London, 1961), 34-38.

It is impossible to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that Paine's demonization occurred through a deliberate assault by conservative leaders based on an elitist fear of his radicalism. However, particular elements, such as the libelous biographies, the harsh personal attacks, the condemnation of his religious beliefs, and his own uncompromising stubbornness, help explain the process of demonization. These various dynamics, growing naturally out of the prevalence of reactionary conservatism by American leaders, help explain how Paine died as an anti-hero. Furthermore, the limits of this study do not permit an extensive analysis of whether or not the demonization of Paine was justified. Maybe, as in France in the turn of the century, American society would have fallen into violent chaos if Paine's radical ideology had not lost popularity. The questions of circumstance echo throughout the halls of historical debate. It is apparent, however, that Paine's loss of legacy in America from 1776 to 1809 resembles a microcosm of a larger trend of reactionary conservatism by major politicians following the American Revolution.

The narrow confine of our academic lens, presenting only those documents, journals, and correspondence from the past that have survived, presents the humbling realization that uncertainty is the only certainty. Documents and events that lie on the sluggish beaches of academic analysis and discussion pale in comparison to the mysterious expanse of the ocean of historical reality. Nonetheless, students of history must keep their eyes firm on the horizon, making sure to collect the knowledge that drifts ashore to better understand the distant unknown. The peculiar story of Thomas Paine stands resolute as one substantial fragment of this greater entity for which we tirelessly strive to better see.

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The White Mines: The Mexican-American Gold Rush Experience

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Introduction

The California Gold Rush was a very different experience for the newly assumed Mexicans into the United States than the emigrating Eastern Yankees. Mexican-Americans found themselves to be excluded from the mines and not welcome to the riches of the gold filled mountains. Reasons Anglo Americans excluded native Californios included jealousy of the riches found in the early years of the Gold Rush by Mexicanos, racist ideologies that white Americans brought with them from the Eastern and Southern states, and a looming fear that the Mexicans in California had one motive of retaking the worthy California state for its precious metals. Regardless the intention, Californios faced violence, racism, and total exclusion from gold mines offering a very different California Gold Rush perspective. Rather than making their fortune off American hard work in mining country, Mexicanos faced socio-economic struggles and prejudice in their communities, leaving a lasting impact in California race relations for the following century.

Background: Alta California Preceding American Invasion

Prior to 1826 California existed as the far reaching corner of the Spanish colony of New Spain. Before Mexican independence California was ruled by the 21 Franciscan missions. This medieval and clerical society ruled with a caste system placing royalty and priests as the

highest class.¹ In New Spain a racial hierarchy also persisted emphasizing the importance of European blood and “the whiter the better” ideology existed amongst high classes. Following Mexican Independence the Catholic orders lost their power in the region of California and a formal governor took control. The biggest reform during the Mexican owned California era was secularization of the missions which cut Mexico with its last link to Spanish governance and control; upsetting class relations, altering ideology, and shifting ownership of enormous wealth, this was socially and economically revolutionary in newly transformed California.² This process took mission power away by taking their lands and property and selling much of it off. Land redistribution began. From this advancement mission lands were being sold off quickly to private individuals which was supposed to benefit the government.³ The Catholic religion remained, however the mission system lost power as a new political and social order took place.

The biggest economic factor for the people living there was the land; the economy depended on production of cattle for hide and tallow trade. Rancheros usually grazed other animals such as sheep and horses as well as growing grain crops or wine grapes.⁴ Prior to Mexican Independence California Missions dominated the economy through agricultural production and a vast control over livestock.⁵ Following secularization of the missions a rapid slaughter of mission livestock began reducing herds by 100,000.⁶ A new social order began based on the authority of rancheros, land owning ranchers, rather than *padres*, Catholic priests. Scholar Thomas Oliver Larkin created a list that claimed forty-six men in 1846 ruled California through their influence,

¹ Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: a social history of the Spanish-speaking Californians, 1846-1890* (Berkeley: University of California press, 1970), 2.

² Ibid, 8.

³ Ibid. 9.

⁴ Ibid, 12.

⁵ Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Richard J. Orsi, *Contested Eden: California before the Gold Rush* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 116.

⁶ Pitt, *Decline of the Californios* 9.

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land ownership, and political power.⁷ These men gained power over the Catholic Church due to secularization transforming California making power based on wealth rather than religious affiliation. These new political and social structures only held for a short amount of time before bigger transformations took place that brought the territory through war and immense wealth, soaring populations, and race relations leaving a enduring impact on modern California.

War and Treaty: 1846-1848

Meanwhile, in 1844 America a presidential election was taking place. The main issue surrounding the presidential debates was Texas. At this time Texas was a newly formed republic battling against leaving their former owners of Mexico. Following Texan independence the Americans here repeatedly asked for admission into the United States, this was the political debate of 1844. Candidate James Knox Polk urged for Texas' admission into the states, he promised if he was to be elected not only would Texas join the union but the wonderful wealth found in California would too join the nation. History shows Polk's victory for office, consequently before entering office the United States Congress accepted Texas as the newest territory of America. Keeping promises Polk set out to conquer California by provoking war with the Mexican nation to the south. He allowed troops to cross disputed borders causing the first shots of combat to be fired, thus a war began.

War persisted from 1846-1848 between Mexico and the United States with the United States ending victoriously taking with them half of the Mexican country. Land gained was called the Mexican cession; 525,000 square miles that included modern day states of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, California, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. In January 1848, a mere month before a ratified treaty

⁷ Thomas Oliver Larkin, "Notes on the Personal Character of the Principal Men," in *The Larkin Papers: Personal, Business, and Official Correspondence of Thomas Oliver Larkin, Merchant and United States Consul in California, 1845-1846*, ed. George P. Hammond (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953), 322.

between these two warring nations, James W. Marshall discovered gold on John A. Sutters mill in Northern California. Trying to keep this discovery quiet they failed; traveling news of the discovery caused thousands of gold seeking pioneers from the East to venture the Oregon and California trails as well as sail around Cape Horn venturing dangers to make their fortune. By late 1848 people began making their way to the golden state bring some 300,000 people to work the gold-diminishing mines.

With the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the treaty ending the Mexican American War, all the Mexican citizens living in the territories assumed by the United States had the choice to leave back to Mexican territory or stay becoming United States citizens. Article X of the treaty promised to respect Mexican land titles; however the U.S. Senate deleted this article prior to ratification therefore forcing Mexicanos to prove validity of their land.⁸ All land titles needed proof of ownership to be displayed in court causing a lengthy, expensive battle by Mexican-Americans to keep their land; often this process would leave them bankrupt losing their land nonetheless. A majority became citizens and remained in the territories, including California. Incorporating Mexicans into the United States was a progressive move for this time period, prior to the Civil War racial hierarchy was a way of life for many southern families. Southern Carolina senator John C. Calhoun on the topic of the treaty said, “We have never dreamt of incorporating into our Union any but the Caucasian race—the free and white race.”⁹ He and many like him protested this move. Great debates in congress took place regarding this huge track of land and all the people living within it when the treaty was voted to be ratified. The treaty itself was negotiated by Nicholas Trist, representative to President Polk, and a commission representing the collapsed Mexican government. Trist greatly disagreed

⁸ Kevin Starr and Richard J. Orsi, *Rooted in Barbarous Soil: People, Culture, and Community in Gold Rush California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 102.

⁹ John C Calhoun, “Speech on Incorporating Mexico, 1848,” in *Major Problems in the History of the American West*, ed. Clyde A. Milner II (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1989), 219.

with the terms Polk wanted to end the war upon. He “had seen firsthand the violence inflicted by U.S. soldiers on Mexican civilians, later calling the invasion ‘a thing for every right-minded American to be ashamed of.’”¹⁰ Because of this Trist negotiated terms of peace more favorable to the Mexicans than the United States originally aimed for. America is historically a white nation and this adoption of people vastly changed racial demographics of American citizens. The treaty was only agreed upon allowing Mexican citizens living in the territories to have the choice to stay on their lands gaining citizenship. On the floor of congress debates took place if accepting these people into the American demographic was worth the territory gained, ultimately the vote in favor of the treaty won and Californios became American Citizens.

A Wave of Invasion: Violence in the Mines

This attitude of Mexicanos being inferior to Anglo Americans was brought from the East to the West with the discovery of gold. “Most overland emigrants resisted integration into Spanish-speaking communities.”¹¹ Yankee pioneers coming into California separated themselves from the culture and settlements of the Mexican-Americans producing new white colonies. With the increasing influx of Anglo Americans they quickly outnumbered the Californio population keeping separate from them as well. With the fastest emigration the United States had ever experienced stable government was not established as vigilante justice spread throughout the gold fields. 19th century America was a dog-eat-dog world, however the American West was far more brutal as lawlessness spread with the increasing amount of pioneers. People were often killed for their gold findings. Mexicanos were often found as victims or unrightfully accused as the killers when these brutalities occurred; all a part of the race to become wealthy. The *Daily*

¹⁰ Enrique Krauze, "Border Battle," *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 6 (November 2013): 155-161, review of *A Wicked War: Polk, Clay, Lincoln, and the 1846 U.S. Invasion of Mexico*, ed. Amy S. Greenberg, (New York: Knopf, 2012).

¹¹ Joshua Paddison, *A World Transformed: Firsthand accounts of California before the Gold Rush* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1999) 259.

Alta California published a newspaper article on July 8, 1850 highlighting the violence that occurred in the mines, it publishes several disturbing and dangerous murders that occurred in the gold mines. “The Times concludes the foreign miners tax has contributed to and brought about this unhappy result.”¹² The article gives numerous examples of people, of all races and nationalities, being found dead following being shot, stabbed, and throats cut in the mines. The article also warns against a guerilla Mexican group they claim to be causing the violence.¹³ Recognizing violence upon Mexicans in the mines the newspaper writes, “Two Mexicans were shot on Tuesday at Jamestown,” however the article continues blaming the same race for the violence with, “the assassins were Mexicans.”¹⁴ This type of violence kept Mexicanos from working in the mines. The continual blaming of Mexicanos for the violence further pushed these people from the excavations, the less they appeared in the mines the less they could be victims of the blame and of the conflicts in the fields.

A Miners Life for Me

Life in the mines was a rough profession to be involved in: tent life with limited provisions all dependent on proximity to urban centers for resupplies. There were no set laws as to how incoming miners could stake their claims for mining land, however norms existed that maintained order within the mining fields.¹⁵ There were rules to when one can claim jump however often causing disputes to occur. Mining companies traveled together, they camped together, stayed in town together, and mined together. Once miners came to California they would stock up on supplies in urban centers. The city of San Francisco

¹² “Murders and Robberies” *Daily Alta California*, July 8, 1850, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=DAC18500708.2.4.2&srpos=4&dliw=none&e=-1850---1850--en--20-DAC-1--txt-txIN-Murders+and+Robberies----->.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Andrea McDowell, “Real Property, Spontaneous Order, and Norms in the Gold Mines,” in *Law and Social Inquiry Volume 29* (2004) 772.

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was described by miners as packed full of tents, saloons, gambling houses, and exorbitant prices for mining supplies.¹⁶ For the most part miners came to mine their land claims, get rich, and head back to their families in the east. Communities weren't typically created by miners for permanent inhabitation; however some settlers came to California to begin businesses in the booming urban centers while others chose to start farms or ranches.¹⁷ Mining settlements took the form of vast illegal squatting communities on private property; this was a very common problem during this time period. Miners would often come to California and stake a claim anywhere they hoped to find gold which often caused property disputes. "In 1853, in Santa Clarita Valley near EE Scorpion, northwest of Los Angeles, squatters murdered the owner of Rancho Sespe when he tried to interfere with their claims to land."¹⁸ Squatters became a huge legal issue in California because there was no set laws as to how to proceed making a land claim. Many who came simply found a piece of land, said it was theirs, and began to mine. Thus miners lived on their claimed land creating communities along the rivers that consisted completely of mining men. Living in close quarters disease spread through the water system making the mines more of a death trap. Violence persisted throughout the mining community because of jealousy of those with better land claims. These mining communities' demographics included only white men as they excluded foreign races due to racist ideologies and laws preventing other races from mining.

Ostracized from the Glittering Gold Fields: Jealousy and Racism

As thousands of Yankees traveled to the West the mines became extremely overcrowded and mining camps became exclusive to white Americans creating racist tensions and causing lawless violence. Daniel B. Woods wrote during his experiences in the mines about the overcrowded mining conditions saying, "The question arose to which of

¹⁶ Starr and Orsi, *Rooted in Barbarous Soil*. 115.

¹⁷ McDowell, "Real Property," 775.

¹⁸ Starr and Orsi, *Rooted in Barbarous Soil*, 103.

them this space belonged... they could not amicably settle the dispute.”¹⁹ Limited space caused many tensions throughout the camps while racist ideology quickly restricted non-Anglos from the mines. In the early years of the gold rush, prior to the eastern invasion, many Mexicanos took advantage of their proximity to the mines and began mining early on, many of whom gained much wealth. Don Antonio Coronel, Mexican-American, taking advantage of his nearness to the mines was one of many who became wealthy. Natives of the area, Californios pooled their resources and divided labor to make mining more efficient. Following Yankee arrivals Mexican-Americans in the mines became harder to come by. The following year Coronel at the mines was confronted with posters affirming “foreigners had no right to be there and must leave the mines at once; resistance would be met by force.”²⁰ Coronel believed the violence toward his people, although many gained their citizenship in the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, stemmed from decreasing gold supplies and white jealousy of successful Mexican miners. Don Antonio Coronel was a rich man who wielded much power within California at this time; *The Los Angeles Herald* published a newspaper article entitled “The Historical Society” in which it remarks on Coronel’s contributions to the society, state, and his own personal wealth.²¹ Despite Coronel’s high social standing, extreme wealth, citizenship, and the fact that he was living in California prior to the land cession, he was thought of as just another Mexican working the mines to steal American gold. Because of this racist mindset Californios often dealt with racial brawls and political action with the intention to have them removed.

January 12, 1849 Commander of the US Army stationed in California, General Persifor F. Smith, made a declaration stating,

¹⁹ Daniel B. Woods, “Sixteen Months at the Diggings,” *Gold Rush: A Literary Exploration* ed. Michael Kowalewski (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1997), 169.

²⁰ Pitt, *Decline of the Californios*. 50-51.

²¹ “The Historical Society” *The Los Angeles Herald*, June 18, 1889.

[http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-](http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=LAH18890618.2.20&srpos=2&ddiv=none&e=-1889---1889--en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-The+Historical+Society-----)

[bin/cdnc?a=d&d=LAH18890618.2.20&srpos=2&ddiv=none&e=-1889---1889--en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-The+Historical+Society-----](http://cdnc?bin/cdnc?a=d&d=LAH18890618.2.20&srpos=2&ddiv=none&e=-1889---1889--en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-The+Historical+Society-----).

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“Consider everyone who is not a citizen of the United States, who enters upon public land and digs for gold as a trespasser.”²² However, Incoming Americans refused to recognize differences between Mexican-American citizens, incoming Mexican foreigners, and other Latin Americans who spoke the same language and had similar cultures. In the eyes of the Yankees these people were all the same and should be excluded from gold findings. Ignorant to the rights of citizenship from the treaty, Yankee pioneers felt native Californians had no place in the mines and were only here to steal American property.

This fear was of legitimate concern thus miners began holding meetings to find ways of forcing out unwanted miners. Jealousy may have been a factor in their hatred toward native Californians; however, racism played a role as well. A meeting held on July 7, 1849 by the Miners of the Mockelumne River addressed concerns consulting deep interests and future welfare of the miners. Lectured is the concern of foreign miners here only for the purpose of making a fortune and leaving. These miners request that all foreigners from Mexico, Peru, and Chile be expelled from the mines. The meeting adjourns that “a permanent resident of this country, who wrestled it from Mexican misrule—who discovered the resources of the country and applied those resources to practical purposes”²³ should be the only men with rights to dig in the mines. They therefore end the meeting with a resolve to remove all foreigners from the diggings for their own future welfare. This meeting rightfully removed all persons taking American gold from the American mines, however stating that only those who “wrestled it from Mexican misrule” shows that an Anglo emphasis refers to rightful miners. Using the idea of Mexico being misruled, Americans legitimize their ownership of the land. An article in the *Sacramento Daily Union* also expresses American feelings toward the Mexican Cession claiming the land was “redeemed from the misrule and corruption of the Mexican

²² Pitt, *Decline of the Californios*. 55-56.

²³ “Meeting of Miners,” *Weekly Alta California*, July 26, 1849, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=WAC18490726.2.3&srpos=1&ddiv=none&e=--1849---1849--en--20-WAC-1--txt-txIN-misrule--->

Government.”²⁴ This too shows that Americans felt comfortable with the idea of taking Mexican land because they believed it was a legitimate, justifiable action; Americans believed they could better run the people in these territories. Thus by saving the Mexicans from their fraudulent government Americans made themselves the superior being limiting themselves to working gold fields. Although many Mexicans were American citizens, Yankees refused to believe so and felt they should all be removed from the mines because they didn’t need the competition while racist ideologies of 19th century America advanced in the West. The meeting clearly did not address any of the foreign European miners however much evidence shows there were many from afar who made the trip to California to find their riches.²⁵

Racialized-capitalism was the philosophy of the West and much of the reasoning behind exclusiveness in the gold mines. This racial idea believes that having Mexicans working in the mines degrades white labor. Racist ideas persisted all throughout America at this time, even the American president, Zachary Taylor, owned slaves while in office. The idea of negrophobia existed, a fear of darker colored peoples, across the country and within the United States government.²⁶ Racist attitudes were the norm during this time period and believed by most White Americans. An Anglo veteran of the Mexican American War declared, “A Mexican is pretty near a black. I hate all Mexicans.”²⁷ They were immediately forgotten as American citizens and treated as second class as the conquests for gold begun, legacy of racial attitudes still linger today. Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo was a Californio in favor of American conquest, however after his experience living through the

²⁴ “The News,” *Sacramento Daily Union*, August 2, 1852, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=SDU18520802.4.&srpos=1&ddiv=none&e=-08-1852--08-1852--en-20-SDU-1-txt-txIN-misrule>.

²⁵ “Meeting of Miners,” *Weekly Alta California*, July 26, 1849.

²⁶ Michael A. Gonzalez, “My Brothers Keeper:” Mexicans and hunt for Prosperity in California, 1848-2000,” in *Riches for All: The California Gold Rush and the World* ed. Kenneth N. Owens (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2002) 126.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 127.

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California Gold Rush he wrote, “in carrying out the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, the North Americans have treated the Californians as a conquered people and not as citizens who voluntarily joined.”²⁸ This type of attitude shows Southern Exceptionalism, idea of the south being the only Racist part of America, to be untrue. Racial ideologies of white supremacy existed all throughout the United States and were carried to the West with the influx of Eastern emigrants. An emigrants’ guide describing the Mexicans in California, written in 1845, shows the clear racist attitudes of the era. The guide tells, “Although there is a great variety, and dissimilarity among them, in reference to their complexions, yet in their beastly habits and an entire want of all moral principle, as well as a perfect destitution of all intelligence, there appears to be a perfect similarity.”²⁹ This guide compares Mexicans in America with blacks in the South, clearly trying to create a parallel between the two races and show an Anglo superiority above all. As this attitude was brought to California it definitely played a large role in racial restrictions within the gold mines.

California State Legislature passed the Foreign Miners License Tax in 1850 requiring miners that were not U.S. citizens to pay twenty dollars a month for mining American gold. This tax was not levied on Europeans, only Latin Americans and Asians were required to pay. This tax requiring a fee for the right to mine “was applied not only to foreign immigrants but also to California-born Mexicans, who had automatically become U.S. citizens under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.”³⁰ This tax met miners with much protest; quickly miners printed posters denouncing the tax while threatening collectors of this tax.³¹ Police began to prohibit supply stores from selling to

²⁸Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, “Recueros Historicos y Personales: Tocante a la Alta California,” in *Gold Rush: A Literary Exploration*. 167.

²⁹ “An Emigrants’ Guide Describes the Mexican in California, 1845,” *Major Problems*, 223.

³⁰ “A History of Mexican Americans in California: Post-Conquest California.” *National Park Service*, last modified Nov 17 2004, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/5views/5views5b.htm.

³¹ Pitt, *Decline of the Californios*, 61.

foreigners sparking a fear of war between those forced to pay the tax and local officials. War veterans were called to calm the matter and “four hundred Americans—a moving ‘engine of terror’—headed for Columbia camp...collected tax money from a few affluent foreigners and chased the rest away.”³² This tax was abolished in 1851 only after driving away south of the border thousands of miners who could not afford its excessive fee. The reasoning behind this tax was prejudice motives to whiten the mining population of California. Opposite of Southern Exceptionalism violence toward Mexicans persisted due to racist principles. Use of vigilante law as told by Manuel G. Gonzalez was often directed at minorities. Punishments typically did not fit the crime and witnesses were regularly intimidated; this was a poor form of law enforcement that typified western racism and inequalities.³³ The mines were no exception as Anglo Argonauts excluded those of color from working within the mines. Racial superiority complexes played a major role in why Anglo Americans tried to remove Mexican-Americans from the mines. Capitalism like Darwinism urges for survival of the fittest and Anglos were determined to prove that they were on top. Believing themselves to be the only persons who had rights to the mines they did everything necessary to weed out those whom they felt were inferior. This racist state of mind caused severe exclusion of Mexicanos from gold mining despite their newly earned American citizenship. A newspaper article published in San Francisco in 1851 entitled *Citizenship and Naturalization* explains the citizenship for Mexicans previously living in California territories. It highlights differences between foreign Mexicans and newly adopted Mexican Americans. This article explains, “This title “Mexicans” not only includes natives from the Mexican territories but foreigners of ever nation who have previously become Mexican citizens.”³⁴ It further

³² Ibid., 62.

³³ Manuel G. Gonzalez, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009), 86.

³⁴ “Citizenship and Naturalization” *Daily Alta California*, 6 March 6, 1851, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi->

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concludes how one is alien to the United States and the other is not, Californios have citizenship granted by constitutional law and the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Articles such as this recognized the ignorance of most miners about Mexican-American citizenship, yet did nothing to change this ignorance. No matter the political and legal differences, in the mines a Mexican was a Mexican and political and social distinctions were not typically asked. All Latin Americans were treated as foreigners regardless of earned citizenship therefore experiencing racism and exclusion.

Consternation of War: Losing Alta California

A huge fear amongst Yankee Pioneer was the idea of a Mexican Reconquista. This is the idea that Mexicans came to California to take this gold-filled land back played a huge role in exclusiveness in the mines, violence toward Mexicanos, and racial attitudes in California. Increasing fear of a Mexican conquest of California stemmed from Yankee reports of the growing Latin American populations throughout the state. Gold rush pioneers counted thousands of Mexicans in cities such as Los Angeles and Thomas Butler King reported to the secretary of state in 1850 “ten thousand Mexicans.”³⁵ This sight of many unfamiliar people helped to perpetuate the idea of a Mexican conquest and a speculation of war. Many miners believed that the Mexicans knew of the gold mines of California, this is why they were so reluctant to give up the territory. One newspaper article claims the richest man in America is a Mexican miner by the name of Perez Galvez who knew of the California gold long ago.³⁶ The article suggests an heir of jealousy while claiming the Spaniards knew of California gold mines during their occupation here. It claims many Spaniards and Mexicans gained

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³⁵ Gonzalez, “My Brothers Keeper,” 120.

³⁶ “Clippings and Comments,” *Placer Times*, May 12, 1849, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=PT18490512.2.2&srpos=1&dliiv=none&e=-05-1849--05-1849--en--20-PT-1--txt-txIN-Perez+Galvez+----->.

vast wealth from the mines, yet kept them secret. It suggests the only possible way a Mexican in California can be the richest man at the moment is because he must have known of the mines prior to Anglo invasion. This gold is motivation for reconquering California causing many fears amongst the newly arrived Eastern miners helping to propel their exclusiveness within mining. California newspaper *Placer Times* published on September 18th, 1849 an article entitled “Our Mexican Boundary.” In this article Mexicans repent the cession of Upper California to America immediately following the finding of abundant gold. The article states, “Tens of thousands of them have openly avowed their determination to reconquer it.”³⁷ In Anglo Americans eyes the permanent Mexicano population was there to retake the wealthy lands of the California mines. Increasing Mexican populations caused greater fear as the assumption that they were on the verge of another war amplified. This fear drove many of the actions that made California mines so exclusive to Mexican-Americans. Any type of protest toward Mexicano mistreatment further fueled the belief that the second Mexican-American War was to take place over California gold fields. “In 1856, during the waning years of the Gold Rush, the Spanish-speaking populace rose up to protest the lenient sentences local judges gave to Anglos accused of killing Mexicans and Californios.”³⁸ This type of rebellion, a protest to mistreatment and violence toward their people, further sparked the flame of war in American hearts. Mexicanos were typically unsuccessful in their attempts of protest while Americans reacted with further violence and injustices. Fearful of the attempt to take California back Anglo Argonauts continued to exclude Mexicanos from Gold Rush activities which propelled rebellion.

This fear of reconquest was all too familiar with the Mexican Americans living here. Just thirty years earlier Mexico experienced a revolution in which they separated from their mother nation of Spain.

³⁷ “Our Mexican Boundary,” *Placer Times*, September 8, 1849, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=PT18490908.2.2&srpos=1&dliv=none&e=-09-1849--09-1849--en--20-PT-1--txt-txIN-our+mexican+boundary+----->.

³⁸ Gonzalez, “My Brothers Keeper,” 121.

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Mexico, like the United States, was forced to accept their recent enemies into their nation allowing them to continue to live within their borders. Wealthy Spaniards continued to own much of the land and play an upper role in political affairs. Mexicans feared the Spaniards in their nation would attempt to rise again to power so they made a series of political and social reforms to keep the Spanish from ruling once again. This same fear the Americans expressed when confronted with wealthy, land-owning Mexicans. They too made political and social reforms that promoted racist values in order to keep Mexican-American citizens from achieving power in their vastly growing state of California.

Anglo Americans feared that California was going to be retaken by incoming Mexicans so in order to keep their fears from becoming reality they continued to exclude them from mines, segregate them socio-economically, and cause violence in their communities. However, astonishing evidence shows more of an Anglo conquest than a Mexicano conquest to control California. The Mexicano and incoming Latin American populations recorded by the census shows astonishingly smaller numbers than that reported by witnesses at the time. The 1850 census reveals nearly sixty-five hundred Mexicans in the state making the Americans resemble invaders rather than themselves being the overtakers of California.³⁹ Many Mexicanos in California built homes and started families in this state, Latin American women greatly outnumbered Anglo women showing more of a motivation to start a life here rather than make a fortune and leave as claimed by many Gold Rush pioneers with that very motive.⁴⁰ The proof of families and permanent residences showed motivation to settle down in communities helping to develop the state rather than re-conquer it. Anglo Americans saw this differently and viewed Mexicano settlements as the beginning of retaking of the land; to prevent this fear Mexican-Americans experienced much violence from the white population. Mexicanos did not come to California to start violence, let alone a war to take back their lost land, at least not in the camps where families were typically

³⁹ Ibid., 122.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 123.

present. In 1851 nine Mexican miners abandoned their claims to eight Americans in order to avoid a hustle. That year when Mexicano miners tried to challenge the Foreign Miners Tax the angry miners chose to leave rather than fight Anglo Americans.⁴¹ This behavior seems compliant even during extreme mistreatments in the gold mines, not typical behavior of people trying to begin a war. No matter the overwhelming evidence against a Mexican re-conquest of California Anglos continued to act in ways to segregate and keep Mexican-Americans far from the mines. No matter the reason behind it, whether it is jealousy, fear, or simply racism, white Americans left an impact on Mexican American relations for the century to come.

Conclusion: The Lasting Impact of Gold Rush Relations

The first real interactions between Mexicans and Americans began in California following the war—things started on shaky ground. Mexican treatment during the Gold Rush left a long lasting impact of rocky race relations through California. Modern day California still sees the effects of the violence, segregation, and exclusion from the job market. Racist laws and acts has been something America has always struggled to overcome, throughout much of the early 20th century Mexican-Americans continued to be treated as second class citizens. The Los Angeles Zoot Suit riots during WWII are a perfect example how violence based on race continued in California. Schools for white and Mexican children were not integrated until 1946; although the Gold Rush ended, exclusion in other aspects of society continued. When Ernesto Zedillo, president of Mexico, visited the United States in 1999 many Americans felt it was a trip that proved Mexico wished to reclaim their lost lands from 1848 still bitter that the California Gold Rush hit immediately following annexation. The lingered fear of a Mexican takeover of the wealthy gold filled lands of California continues through modern time, this fear has been used as an excuse for mistreatment and harm upon Mexican-American communities. Segregation still persists today amongst whites and Latino populations.

⁴¹ Ibid., 124.

In 2004 political scientist Samuel P. Huntington published a highly criticized and controversial book entitled *Who Are We: The Challenges to America's National Identity*. Within chapter nine he addresses what he calls “The Mexican/Hispanic Challenge,” claiming “Mexican immigration is leading toward the demographic *reconquista* of areas Americans took from Mexico by force in the 1830s and 1840s.”⁴² This lingering fear of taking back the wealthy lands of the American South West still persists in the 21st century. Huntington claims Mexican assimilation is not occurring and that Mexicans have chosen to not conform to American national identity; his solution is to cut legal Mexican immigration to 160,000 therefore dissolving any fear of reconquest allowing for easy integration.⁴³ In Los Angeles there is a clear distinction between communities of whites and Latinos not only in societies but in resource appropriations for school, roads, and civic services. Yankee hubris, a type of white pride was created out of Mexican-American experiences during the Gold Rush that exuded racist ideologies which has contributed to the long history of Mexican and American race relations.

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⁴² Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenge to America's National Identity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 221.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 243.

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The Expression and Expansion of Chivalry in Late Medieval England

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Introduction

King Arthur – his person, his origins, his realm, but most of all his Round Table – continues to fascinate scholars and the general public alike. Chris Wickham argues that a fifth-century Breton general named Ambrosius Aurelianus may have inspired the formulation of King Arthur.¹ This Ambrosius Aurelianus makes an appearance in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae* as Aurelius Ambrosius, indicating the significance of placing Arthur in history so as to connect him to future generations of British kings.² The *Historia* also specifically traces his origins away from the Anglo-Saxon kings, legitimizing those monarchs of Norman descent, such as the Angevins. Although historians have not reached a consensus on the historical identity of Arthur, the impact that this legendary king had not only on medieval literature, but also on court culture of the High and Late Middle Ages was very real. The corpus of romances, histories, and other forms of literature that he inspired had so much of an impact that they have collectively been referred to as the “Matter of Britain.”³

¹ Chris Wickham, *The Inheritance of Rome: Illuminating the Dark Ages, 400-1000* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), 151.

² Aurelius Ambrosius is Arthur’s uncle in *Historia Regum Britanniae*. For future reference, see parts four, five, and six of: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (London : Penguin Books, 1966) and “Ambrosius Aurelianus” in *The Arthurian Encyclopedia*, ed. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1986), 5.

³ Brian Stone, “Introduction” in *King Arthur’s Death* (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 7-11.

Moreover, King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table influenced the aristocratic psyche in its development and expression of chivalry. Whereas contemporary efforts have been made to locate Arthur at a specific point in British history,⁴ no such efforts were necessary in the Middle Ages because the authenticity of the sources that treated the subject of the “Matter of Britain” was never questioned by the nobility and gentry that strove to emulate the lives of the knights of the Round Table.

The world of King Arthur was admired throughout most parts of medieval Western Europe, but had particular political implications for England. A problem, however, was that there was hardly a cohesive land that could be called “England.” Another problem was the necessity of an official history that would tie the kings of England to legendary heroes emulated throughout Western Europe and thereby legitimize their rule. France had the heroic embodiment of chivalry in Roland to accompany the historical Charlemagne. England needed a similar legend that would showcase the martial virtues of the kings in its history. Geoffrey of Monmouth addresses the latter problem in his *Historia Regum Britanniae*, in which he portrays Arthur as a model of chivalry and stresses his connection to the history of Britain not only by connecting him to Aurelius Ambrosius, but also by claiming that Arthur’s deeds “were handed joyfully down in oral tradition.”⁵ The former question, however, came to a climax in the fourteenth century. Arthurian legend was as relevant then as it was during the twelfth century, particularly in the court of Edward III.

Edward III was a paragon of chivalry. Chroniclers like Jean le Bel who fought alongside him as well as those associated with his court in a different way such as Jean Froissart definitely argued thus. But he was more than an exemplary knight – or *chivaler*, as individual knights

⁴ For a survey of works debating the historical existence of Arthur, see “Scholarship, Modern Arthurian” in *The Arthurian Encyclopedia*, ed. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1986), 491-494.

⁵ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (London : Penguin Books, 1966), 51.

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are sometimes referred to in the Calendar of the Patent Rolls. He was an exemplary *English* knight – a specificity that over the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries came to mean something. It was in the context of the Hundred Years' War, partly initiated by Edward III, that the English monarchy attempted to associate itself more markedly with Arthurian legend by using it as a model for its institutions. This effort was meant to solidify the relationship between the monarchy and its peers. The process of internalizing the legend and using it as a means of strengthening the English monarchy's bonds with its aristocracy is best demonstrated by Edward's creation of the Order of the Garter, modeled on Arthur's Round Table. His foundation of this order, accompanied with its carefully crafted ceremonial, continued as a tradition well into the fifteenth century, even with civil war and turmoil. It was also during the course of the Hundred Years' War that an English identity began to emerge.

Edward III elaborated the ceremonial that defined English chivalry, with structures which subsequent kings like Richard II, the Lancastrian, and Yorkist kings inherited. However, chivalry in England was paradoxically both an exclusive concept and an inclusive one. War, both internal and external, made the political leverage of the monarchy fluctuate, as punctuated by the intermittent appeasement of the nobles and lower classes. As the relationships between the monarchy, its peers, and its non-noble subjects thus entered in this dynamic, the peers and non-nobles began to emulate chivalry and contribute to its manifestation in the nascent England.

The ultimate aim of this thesis is to examine how the English court created its own brand of chivalry based on the virtues exemplified by Arthurian legend, and how the nobility and gentry contributed to this creation at a time when England was plagued with war and inner turmoil. I also wish to examine how through these challenges and attempts to create a model of chivalry, an English identity was born. The first three parts will consist of contextual issues that must be addressed before discussing my research. These include a discussion on the definitions of chivalry and nobility as well as the historiographical

problems I encountered and a discussion on the sources available and those chosen. I will follow this section with a brief overview of the political and diplomatic context of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

After these contextual issues are addressed, I will proceed with my analysis of the chivalrous virtues and institutions espoused by the monarchy. I plan to discuss the courts of Edward III and Richard II in separate sections, and the reigns of the houses of Lancaster and York in another section. I will then look at how the nobility deployed these chivalrous ideals to establish their own niches in politics. I decided to present this aspect of my thesis in the form of case studies, examining the Percy and Neville families closely rather than several families superficially. This would allow me to provide more depth and would provide a better insight into the actual development of the creation of an English brand of chivalry.

Although the larger part of my thesis addresses the ever-changing relationship between the monarchy and the nobles, there are other parties that cannot be ignored in a discussion of English chivalry. The absence of an officially commissioned chronicle in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England allows me to look at chroniclers as parties independently contributing to the creation of English chivalry. Moreover, the increased voice of the Commons in Parliament complemented the increasing influence of cities, in which burghers, merchants, and other non-noble classes were exposed to chivalrous virtues and ceremonial. Furthermore, within my analysis, but not in a separate section, I will also look at works created independently such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Le Morte Darthur*, *Morte Arthure*, and Malory's masterpiece *Le Morte D'Arthur*.⁶ I do not intend to provide a literary analysis, but rather an interpretation as to how these works contribute to the creation of English chivalry.

⁶ These four texts are but few in the body of medieval English renditions of Arthurian legend. For examples of other texts, refer to the entry titled "English Arthurian Literature (Medieval)" in *The Arthurian Encyclopedia*, ed. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1986), 152-156.

Chivalry and Nobility

There are multiple problems and perspectives that must be considered when trying to propose a definition for the blanket term “chivalry.” Taken in a literal sense, the word refers to a *chevalier*, or a cavalry man. In various sources I encountered, there appears to be two usages of this term: one similarly used in chronicles to indicate cavalry units (e.g. “the chivalry”) and another also employed by chroniclers to distinguish exceptional individuals that adhered to a code of ethics, or at least to the chroniclers’ notion of such a code (e.g. “the flower of chivalry”). The discrepancy in the connotations of the word can be explained by the evolving nature of the concept and rules of chivalry as illustrated by Maurice Keen. Keen, in his book *Chivalry*, eloquently and elaborately argues that chivalry was much more than a technical term used to refer to the mounted and armored soldiers that medieval armies increasingly relied on after the eleventh century. He argues that martial occupation, religion, and a court culture centered on the concept of nobility intersected to produce a way of life that altogether could be called “chivalry.” A term with purely martial connotations thus expanded to encompass an inclusive culture with a literary history, court ceremonial, and set of rectifying values that could be emulated by civilians.

With the twelfth century came a renewed appreciation of ancient Greek and Roman works, which learned clerics and laymen used as source material to produce unique works that were also inspired by elements of *troubadour* poetry. Originally composed in Provençal and Occitan, languages of southern France, the *troubadours* wrote poetry and songs treating of love, among other subjects. Through these works we see initial formations of elements of courtly (and passionate) love that was a central theme in works such as epic poems and romances that took a distinctly chivalrous tone. These in turn mostly treated on what are now known as the matters of Rome, France, and Britain – the latter most relevant to us, as the collection of works written on the Matter of Britain comprise legends of Arthur and his knights of the Round Table.

Chretien de Troyes is particularly famous for his reworking of the legends of Arthur in the form of romance, choosing to focus on the prowess of his knights as opposed to those of the monarch. Of particular importance to us as we analyze how the English produced their own brand of chivalry, is that the works of *troubadours*, along with the works of others such as Chretien de Troyes, spread to England in the twelfth century. This wealth of literature imparted on its readers, among them learned laymen and secular courts, values such as *prouesse*, *loyauté*, *largesse*, *courtoisie*, and *franchise* (prowess, loyalty, generosity, courtesy, and good birth and virtue).⁷

Chivalry fostered exclusion because of the wealth needed to maintain a lavish lifestyle; however, it did so paradoxically because it was also a means of social mobility. With the development of new military techniques, Keen argues, came the need for practice and that need was fulfilled by the tournament. However, the tournament was as ceremonial as it was practical. It not only attracted knights, but also chroniclers, heralds, and entertainers seeking patronage that legitimized the tournament's place as a unifier of lower and upper nobility. There was a set of values inherent in the tournament that all knights had to adhere to. Knights had to be courteous, loyal to their lords, and had to demonstrate *largesse* – generosity that often took the form of patronage. These values – combined with the wealth that was necessary to uphold the lifestyle of a knight that periodically went to war and attended tournaments – became part of chivalry not only in England, but in Western Europe. However, they also bring us to the subject of nobility and what it meant in medieval Europe and specifically late medieval England.

Keen devotes an entire chapter to the concept of nobility. We have discussed how chivalry fostered exclusion because it necessitated wealth on the part of those knights who wanted to participate in its ceremonial and who needed to maintain the equipment necessary for a warrior. However, this would imply that anyone who could afford to live such a lifestyle could join the ranks of knighthood. The High

⁷ Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 2.

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Middle Ages witnessed the rise of cities and urban centers with the merchant classes increasingly gaining wealth.⁸ The concept of chivalry is paradoxically exclusive and inclusive in this regard because an individual wishing to participate in its ceremonial had to be wealthy, implying that non-noble knights could be included along with the upper nobility. However, what was to be done with the rising urban middle class? Many merchants certainly had the wealth to dress themselves in livery and pay the fees imposed for participating in a tournament, but seeing as how their family was not traditionally associated with the knighthood, did they have a right to enter this class? This is an issue that must be addressed when contemplating English chivalry in the Late Middle Ages and which we will see the gentry, which encompassed non-noble knights and the rising merchant class, try to answer. For purposes of this thesis, the term “nobility” will be applied only to individuals of the upper aristocracy, such as dukes, earls, and counts—but the issue of an emerging middle class taking chivalry for its own will also be addressed.

Chivalry in the Late Middle Ages was not simply an ideal, but a way of life. It was complete with a history, ceremonial, and a set of values. It was both exclusive and inclusive, but it raised some serious questions because of this very paradox. Before exploring how different courts throughout late medieval England attempted to address this paradox, a brief historical account of England beginning with the reign of Edward III and culminating with the reign of Richard III is necessary. In this way I hope to contextualize the political and social situations in which the kings, nobility, and non-nobles attempted to create an English brand of chivalry.

Historiography and Methodologies

King Arthur is such an integral character in the mythology of English chivalry that it is essential to include a brief survey of the Matter of Britain – the name given to verse and prose comprising a

⁸ Robin W. Wilks and Teofilo F. Ruiz, *Medieval Europe and the World: From Late Antiquity to Modernity, 400-1500* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 120.

collective of Arthurian legend – that was known and produced before the time period that I am looking at. The ninth-century writer Nennius included a chapter on Arthur in his *Historia Brittonum* and William of Malmesbury made the first English reference to him in his *Gesta Regum Anglorum* (c. 1125 CE). The first major work, however, that was essential in the development of the Matter of Britain was Geoffrey of Monmouth's well-known *Historia Regum Britanniae*. This work solidified Arthur's place in the pantheon of English kings from which the Angevins were supposedly descended. Approximately twenty years later, Wace translated and adapted Monmouth's work to produce *Roman de Brut*, which was the first treatment of Arthurian legend in French and also the first work to mention the Round Table. Chretien de Troyes' romances came next, followed by Layamon's *Brut*. The thirteenth century saw the development of the Vulgate Cycle (named thus because of its usage of the vernacular), whose authorship is debated, but may be of English origin.⁹

During the time period I am studying, four works were produced. Robert Mannyng of Brunne's *Chronicle of England* was written in 1338, while what is known as the alliterative *Morte Arthure* was written in the 1350s. The stanzaic *Morte Arthur* was written around the year 1400 while Sir Thomas Malory compiled *Le Morte D'Arthur* in the latter half of the fifteenth century, perhaps in the 1460s since William Caxton printed it in 1475. It is significant to note that Arthur, although English, is not a figure whose legend was exclusively capitalized on by England. Chretien de Troyes, for example, wrote under the patronage of Marie de Champagne. Furthermore, it was not until the fourteenth century that the Matter of Britain was treated in English. Before Brunne's *Chronicle*, such texts were composed either in Latin or French, but the fourteenth century witnessed a reproduction of Arthurian legend in English. The rise of the English language at this

⁹ For a discussion on the authorship of The Vulgate Cycle, see E. Jane Burns, "Introduction" to *Lancelot-Grail: The Old French Arthurian Vulgate and Post-Vulgate in Translation*, ed. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993), xx-xxii.

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time is evidenced by the works of those such as Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower, but it is significant that Arthurian legend is included as well because it is a phenomenon that is parallel to the English national identity that was growing as a result of the war against France. Arthur was therefore made more accessible to the English people and, by virtue of being one of the Nine Worthies, exemplified chivalry more lucidly to individuals who increasingly gained political and social influence to match the nobility.

I have paid particular attention to the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, the stanzaic *Morte Arthur*, and Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur* because they evidence the usages of Arthurian legend in illustrating contemporary political events. I found Chretien de Troyes' romances to be helpful in understanding the degree to which Arthur and his knights were regarded as prime examples of chivalry, whereas Monmouth's *Historia* points to the exceptional qualities of Arthur as a conqueror and king which I found to be reinforced in the alliterative *Morte Arthure*. Another literary source I found useful to gauge interpretation of contemporary political events were two volumes titled *Political Poems and Songs* edited by Thomas Wright. I also studied chronicles, with an emphasis on those written by Jean Froissart, Jean le Bel, and John Hardyng so as to understand the elements that contemporary historians considered crucial in writing a history and how those elements exemplified the ideals of chivalry as portrayed by their subjects. To obtain an objective view of the political and social events that I will then use to make a case for the creation of a distinctively English brand of chivalry, I studied several collections of official documents. Included among these are the Calendars of Patent Rolls and Close Rolls as well as Parliament Rolls.

The problems posed by my sources vary according to type. The literary sources as well as the chronicles are of course subject to bias, particularly if their authors are under the patronage of influential individuals (as is the case with Froissart and Hardyng) and if their social position changes within the time frame of their work (as with Jean le Bel). Moreover, I have had to rely on translations of some of

these works in the interest of clarity, which may have sacrificed some complexity in my understanding of these sources. The Rolls also pose problems because they were compiled in volumes only until the nineteenth century. Although some of the nuances of the language of my sources may have certainly been lost in translation, I nonetheless found them useful in recreating an image of what chivalry would have looked like and what it would have meant to fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England.

England in the Late Middle Ages

The period I will be looking at commences with the reign of Edward III and culminates with the end of the reign of Richard III. By the time Edward III took the throne in 1327, he had contributed to the deposition of Edward II, his own father, with the support of the peers that had been alienated for decades. Edward III knew, therefore, that it was important to gain the acceptance of his peers – the nobility – and to keep them well-entertained and engaged. We will look closely at how he did this, but for now it is significant to say that the nobility was not only well-entertained by tournaments, but also engaged in wars.

As one of his first matters of business, Edward attempted to force the Scots into recognition of his new authority, a campaign which proved to be harder than expected and which carried on into successive reigns. In 1337 Edward attempted to assert his rights to the throne of France, of which he argued he came in possession through his mother. This is one of the defining events of his reign, as this war was the famous Hundred Years' War which actually lasted more than one hundred years and extended into the reign of his great-great-grandson Henry VI. The war began with crucial initial English victories at Crecy and Poitiers, with the capture of Calais as a lifeline to the continent, and alliances with the Duke of Brittany and the King of Castile. The Treaty of Bretigny was signed in 1360 by which Aquitaine (much of modern-day western France) was ceded to the English and peace commenced. However, by 1370 hostilities recommenced and the English were not as fortunate as they were before. More importantly, Edward III was broke

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and in poor health so that losses pressed the monarchy and England considerably more than they would have earlier in his reign. As his rule steadily lost popularity with its subjects and lost the war in France, he expired in 1377.

Edward's reign also witnessed another event that was monumental in English history: the Black Death. Not only did this onslaught of plagues decimate the population of the country, it also further tied peasants and serfs to the lands of their lords, because many wanted to flee.¹⁰ This consequence of the Black Death, combined with the increasing taxation needed to fund the war in France created unrest among the peasants in England. Richard II, Edward's successor, thus inherited a huge debt, a losing war, and very discontent subjects at the tender age of ten years. Because the Commons retained the right to approve taxes, they increasingly gained power, which ties back to the perceived threat of non-nobles infiltrating the ranks of the nobility with their new-found power. This discontent climaxed in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, in which the peasants threatened the peace in London and the countryside, and serfs were temporarily freed before Richard gained the upper hand and repealed the charters. This is one of the notable events of Richard's reign. Another is the rebellion of the Appellant Lords in 1388, in which five peers impeached some of the King's favorites for allegedly inciting the monarchy into tyranny with their bad counsel.¹¹ Richard, however, was able to have his revenge on those nobles who had caused the execution and banishment of his favorites. He had his uncle the Duke of Gloucester imprisoned, and his cousin Henry Bolingbroke banished. This retaliation greatly upset many nobles, prompting some - especially those from northern England - to help Bolingbroke return to England in 1399 to claim his inheritance upon his father John of Gaunt's death. What commenced as a claim of

¹⁰ "Accounts of the Black Death and Its Effects: Valuation of the manor of Wood Eaton, Oxfordshire" in *Medieval England, 1000-1500: A Reader*, ed. Emilie Amt (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2001), 340.

¹¹ Sir John Froissart, *The Chronicles of England, France, and Spain*, trans. Thomas Johnes, condensed by H.P. Dunster (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc.), 403.

inheritance culminated as a claim to the throne and Richard II's deposition. Thus Henry Bolingbroke rose to the throne as Henry IV in the wake of Richard II's (forced) abdication, in circumstances similar to those that had engendered the rule of Edward III.

The main issue in Henry IV's reign was the question of legitimacy. We will look into this question and its implications for chivalry later, but if blood is central to this argument, then the Earl of March, not Henry, was indeed next in line to the throne. Moreover, Henry had to deal with rebellion in the Welsh marches, so the promises that he made to undo the damage that Richard had done were put on the back burner, also angering the nobles – particularly those who had helped him gain the throne in 1399, the Percy family. After putting down a rebellion headed by Henry “Hotspur” Percy, the king still had to deal with the threat of the earl of Northumberland and Thomas, Lord Bardolf forming an alliance to place the Earl of March on the throne.¹² After putting down this rebellion, the rest of his reign was rather peaceful, but it was when he passed on and his son took the throne in 1413 that England was restored to its former glory as in the days of Edward III. Henry V was a most apt ruler politically and militarily. He reconquered parts of France and had the trust of his subjects, both upper and lower classes. He was well-loved when his reign tragically ended in 1422 after only nine years, when he died of dysentery.

The reign of his son commenced in a minority as did that of Richard II. Also similar was the creation of factions within the council which spiraled out of control, especially because Henry VI became mentally ill later in his reign. During the minority, the council had honorably stuck together, according to Keen, because of some sense of honor and duty. However, after the king came of age and (again similarly) began to bring into confidence some favorite characters such as Thomas Beaufort, bishop of Winchester as opposed to others like Richard, Duke of York, tensions arose. So began the Wars of the Roses

¹² Maurice Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1973), 313.

in which several nobles fought each other both for influence with the king and for the rights of their respective candidates to the crown – because, of course, the legitimacy of Lancaster was thrown into doubt again. In 1460, the Yorkists gained a temporary victory and the duke's son Edward became king. Ten years later however, Henry's crown was restored to him and England did not see political stability again until 1483, with the house of Lancaster placing the earl of Richmond, Henry Tudor and his descendants on the throne, which they ruled until 1603. It is with this interchange of power between these factions during the Wars of the Roses that we see different displays and interpretations of chivalry and the increasing involvement of the urban middle classes.

Edward III and the Quest for a Legendary England

Quite a few developments took place during the fourteenth century affecting the recording of history, such as the increased production of chronicles outside of monasteries - though clerics like Jean Froissart were still prominent among those who strove to record history. The tone of these chronicles was very rosy, reminiscent of a romance. It is no wonder that the chroniclers took on this tone because Edward III very much strove to be a model of chivalry in a time when he needed all the good publicity he could obtain. We shall look at the way he created such a chivalrous representation by looking at the ceremonial he adopted, at physical and symbolic structures he put in place, and finally at personal displays of chivalry that exemplify the values previously mentioned.

Living an ideal of chivalry meant spending lavishly on ceremonial events, including tournaments (and in the monarch's case, on coronations). Unfortunately, there are no records documenting the coronation of Edward III. Moreover, the proceedings of the Court of Claims customarily held before coronations were not documented until the coronation of Richard II. However, we do know from Froissart that Edward III was crowned with "the royal diadem, in the palace of

Westminster,”¹³ although he mistakes the date for Christmas Day, 1326 when it was in fact held on February 1st, 1327. Additionally, we have information of the regalia in inventory in 1356 listing certain items used for the coronation.¹⁴ Among these items are four crowns, vestments of red samite, two pairs of spurs, and most notably a sword named Curtana. The spurs and the sword are significant in that they make the coronation ceremony resemble a knighting ceremony. Moreover, Edward’s fourth Great Seal depicts him flanked on either side by “the arms of England,” which not only show him to be a knight of great prowess, but also a specifically English conqueror.¹⁵ It is not coincidental that Edward began to use this Seal in 1340. The Hundred Years’ War began in 1337, and because he needed the support of all his peers, Edward needed to appear like a competent and impressive leader to garner their support. However, having a coronation that resembled a knighting ceremony was not the only way in which he accomplished this.

The tournament in medieval Europe, England not excepted, was an event by which individual knights could show off their prowess. They were events that had been highly celebrated by romance writers such as Chretien de Troyes, but they were also means by which a monarch could gain the support of his peers. According to an entry into the Calendar of Patent Rolls made on April 14th, 1327 – less than three months into his reign – Edward personally signed the “Appointment, till Whitsuntide [the week following Easter] of Nicholas Lumbard, the King’s serjeant-at-arms, to arrest persons holding tournaments, jousts, and the like, in contempt of the king’s prohibition.”¹⁶ Keen argues that tournaments were means by which private feuds might be pursued and

¹³ Froissart, *The Chronicles of England, France and Spain*, 12-13; Rolls of Parliament, Edward III: January 1327, Introduction

¹⁴ Leopold G. Wickham Legg, *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd., 1901), 79-80. Legg indicates that the inventory was compiled by one William de Edington, Bishop of Winchester, and late Treasurer.

¹⁵ Legg, 385.

¹⁶ *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, Edward III: Vol. I, 93.

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hostilities begin.¹⁷ Given his father's tempestuous relation with his peers, it is no wonder Edward took precautions to curb their power. However, it is perhaps for this very reason that tournaments were again allowed by 1344.¹⁸ By then, he was already engaged in the war with France and he needed his nobles to practice engaging in combat. Moreover, participation in these tournaments was not restricted to the English nobility. They drew the attention of knights and monarchs from all over Europe, making Edward's court – the English court – exemplary of chivalry and prowess.

There were policies that Edward III also put into place to compliment the events he was holding to showcase his court and his knights' prowess. Edward continuously added to the splendor of Windsor Castle, a project which involved the ambitious plan of re-creating the Round Table. Although this plan apparently did not come to fruition, renovations, commonly referred to as "the works," at Windsor did occur periodically. The first mention of "works" being done at Windsor during Edward III's reign is from a letter patent dated February 18, 1344, a little over a month after a tournament was held there in January. The letter appoints one William de Langele "to provide carriage... for the stone and timber purveyed there for the works in Windsor Castle."¹⁹ Moreover, Edward also carried on renovation projects in his castles at Carlisle.²⁰ The location of Carlisle is strategically important, as it continuously served as a point of departure, along with Berwick-upon-Tweed, for campaigns into Scotland. However, it is also significant in that it figures prominently in Arthurian legend as one of the places where King Arthur held court during feasts of Pentecost and Whitsunday. Glastonbury is similarly significant as the place where the bodies of Arthur and Guinevere were allegedly found in the twelfth century. The King personally gave one John Blome of London licence "to search under Glastonbury Abbey for the body of

¹⁷ Keen, *Chivalry*, 87.

¹⁸ *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, Edward III: Vol. VI, 196.

¹⁹ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Edward III : Volume VI, 279.

²⁰ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Edward III : Volume X, 489

Joseph of Arimathea,” a legendary figure recognized throughout Europe, who was claimed to be the man who brought the Holy Grail to England.²¹ The fact that he gave license to all these works suggests that he was trying to associate his court and his reign with a legend that was universal, making it more legitimate and praise-worthy. Moreover, John Blome was neither a peer nor a knight – he was a citizen of London. The fact that he was given the duty and privilege to search for the body signifies a willingness on the part of Edward III to share the chivalry embodied in his court with the ranks of the non-noble. These projects continued into 1350, after he created the Order of the Garter, another significant accomplishment.

Froissart tells us that Edward meant to establish the “Knights of the Blue Garter” after rebuilding Windsor Castle where King Alfred had reputedly built the Round Table.²² The knights of this company were meant to be forty in number, he continues, but Thomas Johnes indicates in his footnotes to his translation of the chronicle that there actually turned out to be only twenty-six on the first appointment.²³ Adam Murimuth, another chronicler, recalled that Edward proclaimed the establishment of a Round Table in the likeness of that established by Arthur which would seat 300 knights during the tournament held in January 1344.²⁴ Froissart further mentions the establishment of “Windsor Chapel,” which can be safely assumed to be the same “St. George’s Chapel” that is on record in the Patent Rolls. However, Froissart gives the founding year of this chapel to be the same as that of

²¹ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Edward III : Volume VI, 476* ; E. Jane Burns, “Introduction” to *Lancelot-Grail: The Old French Arthurian Vulgate and Post-Vulgate in Translation*, ed. Norris J. Lacy (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993), xvi.

²² Froissart, *The Chronicles of England, France, and Spain*, 37.

²³ Sir John Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France, and Spain and the Adjoining Countries From the Latter Part of the Reign of Edward II to the Coronation of Henry IV: Vol I*, trans. Thomas Johnes (London: The Colonial Press, 1901), 32.

²⁴ Adam Murimuth, “Continuatio Chronicarum, 231-2” in Julian Munby, Richard Barber, Richard Brown, *Edward III’s Round Table at Windsor: The House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), 184.

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the Order whereas the Patent Rolls demonstrate that the chapel was actually ordered to be built in 1348 in honor of St. Edward the Confessor, God, the Virgin Mary, and St. George.²⁵ We should not be harsh on Froissart for conflating the two events; it is in fact a good indicator of the significance of the association between the recreation of Windsor Castle and the creations of the Order of the Garter and St. George's Chapel. Froissart's chronicles indeed read more like romances than histories, so that what he ultimately does is paint a glorious portrait of chivalry in the making. A glorious portrait, specifically, of the chivalry that Edward III was creating. The St. Omer Chronicle reports that knights from various lands traveled to England to "gain renown."²⁶ Furthermore, Thomas Walsingham reports that Philip of Valois began to create a similar establishment (probably the Order of the Star) to rival that created in England.²⁷ Although Edward's Order was not the first of its kind, since Alfonso XI had already created *The Orden de la Banda* in 1327, it was nonetheless a crucial step in creating an English national identity because it promoted throughout Europe an image of England as the land of legendary chivalric heroes with opportunities for prowess.

It has been suggested that to embrace chivalry as a lifestyle, one had to have considerable wealth. However, to go back to the discussion on St. George's Chapel, we see in the Calendar of the Patent Rolls that the chapel was intended for the care of impoverished knights, not only highlighting the *largesse* of the English monarchy, but also showcasing the inclusivity of English chivalry. Had Edward III meant for only the wealthy to partake in chivalrous ceremonial, he would not have established this chapel. Edward also demonstrated his *largesse* by rewarding his allied nobles with titles and castles. He created the position of duke in England, and gave one Roger de Widerington permission to make a castle in Northumberland, for example.²⁸

²⁵ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Edward III: Volume VIII, 144.

²⁶ "St. Omer Chronicle" in *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor: The House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344*, 186.

²⁷ Thomas Walsingham, "Historia Anglicana," in *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor: The House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344*, 188.

²⁸ *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, Edward III: Vol. VII., 88.

Moreover, his *largesse* is not only shared with the knighthood – the civilian classes in England also witnessed it. According to a letter patent dated November 15th, 1349, citizens of Bristol took an acre from the prior of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem without permission during the pestilence, for which pardon was granted. *Largesse*, however, was not the only chivalric value which Edward III demonstrated. He was also known for his courage and *prouesse*.

In a poem titled “The Vows of the Heron” written in 1338, Edward, when faced with the challenge of invading France, grows angry when his courage is questioned.²⁹ In the stanzaic *Le Morte Arthur* (composed around 1400) Arthur holds a tournament because Guenevere claims his honor has “failed.” In the alliterative *Morte Arthure* (composed around 1350), Arthur shows blatant wrath when asked to pay tribute to Rome, ultimately challenging the Roman emperor’s authority by going on a campaign against him on the mainland (which echoes events in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britannie*). It also echoes Edward’s campaigns in France and quest for honor for him and his peers. It is very likely that the writer of the *Morte Arthure* had Edward in mind when creating the honor-seeking Arthur and it is equally possible that the author of *Le Morte Arthur* yearned for the days of Edward, and not the civilian Richard, by illustrating the former’s military campaigns. Moreover, these perceptions of Edward are corroborated by Jean le Bel, who participated in one of Edward’s first campaigns into Scotland. He claimed that Edward’s influence had allowed the English to know about arms, and moreover that Edward had put his life on the line alongside his knights as well as honored them according to their rank. But perhaps most significantly, he argued that “everyone said he was the second King Arthur.”³⁰ Jean le Bel claimed he was not being biased. (Indeed, there is good reason to believe he was

²⁹ “The Vows of the Heron,” in *Political Poems and Songs Relating to English History: Vol. I*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861), 6.

³⁰ Jean le Bel, *The True Chronicles of Jean le Bel: 1290-1360*, trans. Nigel Bryant (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 165.

not because despite his praise, he admonishes Edward for raping the Countess of Salisbury). However, it is significant that of all people to compare him to, he compares him to King Arthur, a legendary figure that though international, is starting to be particularly associated with England, as the increased amount of Arthurian works such as the two aforementioned poems and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* composed during the fourteenth century demonstrate. King Edward III was thus not simply a brave, generous, and popular king. He was *England's* king, following in the steps of an (increasingly) English Arthur. And he was recognized as such not only by the chroniclers that frequented the symbolic tournaments of his chivalrous campaigns, but also by the soldiers that fought alongside him in his military campaigns.

Richard II: A Monarch, not a Knight

The reign of Richard II was starkly different than the reign of Edward III. Primarily, circumstances with the war were much different. Most important for our discussion, however, Richard was simply not a warrior as his grandfather and his father Edward, The Black Prince, had been. He was very much a civilian whom chroniclers could not exalt as another, brave King Arthur. However, that is not to say that chivalry seized to find an expression during his reign. Richard elaborated court life by continuing ceremonial and leisurely activities that carried chivalrous overtones. He kept governmental structures in place that retained the elevated status of not just some of his peers, but lesser gentry. However, he centered this court culture on the idea of the monarch – a fact that, however much it fostered cultural expression in which chivalry found a place, may also have led to his downfall.

Richard certainly hosted lavish ceremonial events ranging from his coronation to processions and tournaments. The *Liber Regalis* is a sort of detailed instruction manual which Leopold G. Wickham Legg, editor of a source book titled *English Coronation Records* from which I draw my sources for information on coronations, speculates dates from Richard's reign. It describes how an English king is supposed to be crowned and anointed. Among the instructions provided is the

requirement of the king to ride bareheaded through London so that he may be seen by the people of London.³¹ Letting the citizens of London witness their future king proceed through the city indicates a degree of exclusiveness, as the *Liber* specifically indicates that the king may be *seen* and does not require any other form of contact. However, the fact that he may be seen without regalia suggests a more intimate setting and a more inclusive environment, as if the act of showing civilians that there was some separation between them and the king paradoxically included them in the coronation process itself. However, that is not the only way in which they were included in the process of crowning their king. According to the proceedings of the Court of Claims of Richard II, the mayor of London had the privilege of serving the King at dinner, along with other citizens elected for the purpose.³² The account records that the King ardently assented because he wanted to establish a good relationship with the city and its citizens like his forefathers had. Granted that this privilege was not new, the respect that this customary privilege was given nevertheless shows that the lower, civilian classes played a role in English ceremonial, which in turn demonstrates the inclusivity of chivalry as a culture that crossed social boundaries in England.

Richard II did not by any means create elaborate ceremony only for his coronation. Processions and tournaments were also inclusive events in which respect was paid to custom. Froissart relates that after his uncles made the Duke of Ireland flee the country, Richard agreed to return to London and stopped at Windsor on the way there, where the roads were covered with people wanting to see him. Moreover, he relates how there was great pomp on the part of several dukes and earls to conduct the king and renew their homage.³³ Thus although the king and the nobles would not deign to permit non-nobles to be the king's escorts, it was significant that the escort of the king be a public affair so that by the witness, and thereby implicit assent of those present, the

³¹ Legg, 113.

³² Legg, 159.

³³ Froissart, 403-405.

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renewed oath would be legitimate. However, even tournaments, which were meant to entertain, also took on this inclusive air. Froissart gives us an account of the Smithfield tournament that took place in 1390. The tournament in itself for the purposes of this thesis is not as significant as the processions that took place leading up to it. Knights, squires, and ladies all were followed by minstrels and trumpets, according to Froissart, along the Thames River until they reached Smithfield, where even squires were allowed to joust.³⁴ Moreover, the Order of the Garter was conferred on the foreign Count d'Ostrevant, which accentuates the prestige with which Richard maintained the order which his grandfather had founded.³⁵ Tournaments were thus very public affairs which many individuals from the lower classes were allowed to at least partly witness. Some were even allowed to participate, since the minstrels, trumpets, and heralds that were attracted to these events were certainly attached to noble patrons, but were not nobles themselves. However, as anxious as he was to gain the approval of his non-noble subjects, Richard also strove to keep his peers satisfied like his grandfather had.

In my perusal of the Calendar of the Patent Rolls, it was in the volumes concerning the reign of Richard II where I saw the most entries dealing with the affairs of the Court of Chivalry. This Court presided on cases in which ownership of and the rights to display certain arms were contested. Nobles such as Thomas Holland of Kent and Thomas Percy, earl of Northumberland were commissioned by the King to hear cases dealing with disputes over heraldry.³⁶ However, they were not the only ones appointed to do so, as Adam Usk was also commissioned to hear a case in 1396. Usk, although a priest and therefore not a member of the Commons in Parliament, was nevertheless not a member of the nobility and therefore represents how inclusive the lifestyle and even art (e.g. heraldry) of chivalry was. Although they were not the only individuals sought to compose the Court of Chivalry, Richard II did attempt to keep his peerage satisfied by elevating some nobles such as his uncles

³⁴ Froissart, 481-482

³⁵ Froissart, 482.

³⁶ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Richard II: Vol. IV, 337.

Thomas of Woodstock and Edmund of Langley to the dukedoms of Gloucester and York respectively. However, unfortunately like his great-grandfather before him, he too chose favorites – a policy which we already know ended with his demise.

Froissart suggests that Richard was a patron of the arts because he received a book of poetry as a personal gift from him.³⁷ Moreover, he commissioned works from writers such as John Gower and served as patron to the likes of Geoffrey Chaucer, as evidenced by protection granted to him³⁸. Furthermore, he must have been well read in works relating to chivalry, as hunts in Bristol and the use of the white hart and white falcon as blazon³⁹ harks back to what Chretien de Troyes describes as a typical leisurely activity at the court of King Arthur. Thus, Richard II's apparent love for literature and French culture disseminated knowledge of chivalrous culture and spread its visual representation to his peers and common subjects. It is ironic that such an avid admirer of chivalry seems to have encapsulated behavior quite abhorrent to it.

Mark Allen once rhetorically asked what separated Arthur from the rest of his knights who appeared to be superior to him in every possible way.⁴⁰ He concluded that there was one way in which Arthur was always going to be superior to his knights: he, not they, was king. Just so can one distinguish Richard II from his peers. This distinction may have been intentional. For one, Richard may actually have had himself painted, on what is now known as the Wilton Diptych, as being personally and exclusively received by the Virgin Mary.⁴¹ This illustrated distinction is a testimony to the elevated status that Richard

³⁷ Froissart, 525.

³⁸ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Richard II: Vol. VI, 329.

³⁹ Froissart, 396.

⁴⁰ Mark Allen, "The Image of Arthur and the idea of King," in King Arthur, ed. Harold Bloom (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004), 93.

⁴¹ For an introduction to the historiography and debate on the origins of the Wilton Diptych, see Dillian Gordon, "The Wilton Diptych: An Introduction" in *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych* ed. Dillian Gordon, Lisa Monnas, Carline Elam (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1997), 18-26.

gave himself over his peers by the mere virtue of being a monarch. However, what mainly separates him from his peers is the fact that he, to harken back to Keen's definition of chivalry, did not lead a martial lifestyle and perhaps more to his shame, did not demonstrate the same *largesse* that would have been expected of a king. The only time Froissart mentions Richard casting aside "the leopards and fleurs de luce and [bearing] the arms of St. Edward, emblazoned on all his banners," was when he landed in Ireland intent on making knights out of Irish lords.⁴² And even then did he order their education in chivalry to follow the French *and* English model. He was so enamored with French culture and so preferred peace to war that it appears his nobles conflated the one with the other and accused him of being French because he preferred peace (demonstrating a growing sense of national identity among the nobility in the process).⁴³ However, what is perhaps more an affront to chivalry is the way he behaved with the serfs of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. He had promised them their freedom and then revoked it when he gained an upper hand in negotiations, a deed in direct contrast to the mercy – albeit harsh mercy – shown by Edward III for the burghers of Calais.⁴⁴ By 1398, Richard II had thus alienated his peers as well as distanced himself from the values his lifestyle appeared to uphold.

Monarchical Chivalry in the Fifteenth Century

Edward III sought to create a national identity informed by a chivalric culture with legendary origins. Richard II utilized the foundations his predecessor had set to create a sort of personal cult centered on the monarch. Because these two kings utilized chivalry to different ends, I considered it pertinent to write my analysis of their reigns in two separate sections. The reigns of the Houses of Lancaster and York, however, must both be considered within the context of a search for legitimacy and political stability amidst internal rebellion and

⁴² Froissart, 532

⁴³ Froissart, 602.

⁴⁴ Jean le Bel, 203.

war. For that reason, I have decided to analyze the role of chivalry in that context in one section.

The fate of monarchical chivalry in the fifteenth century is inseparable from the political developments that both ended war in the continent and sparked conflict in the domestic front. The beginning of the century witnessed the establishment of the Lancastrian dynasty, with its members initially focusing their resources in securing power at home before directing their ambitions to the continent. Henry VI's minority curtailed the ability of the crown to pursue those ambitions, culminating with the end of the Hundred Years War and the commencement of the internal Wars of the Roses, which resulted in a contest between Lancastrian and Yorkist might and authority. Politics during the fifteenth century were thus ripe with political strife, but only some monarchs valued the use of chivalry for the advancement of their personal and national agendas, characterizing the development of monarchical English chivalry in this period with intermittency.

The pairing of kingship and knighthood was a concept that was highly visible at the commencement of Lancastrian rule. By the time Henry Bolingbroke – who was later to be Henry IV – returned to England to reclaim his lands and eventually take the throne, he had already proven himself a worthy knight not only in England, but also on the continent. Froissart relates that after the Merciless Parliament, the earl marshal accused Bolingbroke, who was then Earl of Derby, of treason and challenged him to a duel which he accepted.⁴⁵ The duel never occurred because Richard decided to banish Bolingbroke for ten years, whereupon it was suggested by the lords present that he visit his sisters in Castile and Portugal, for he had “already travelled to Prussia, the Holy Sepulchre, Cairo and St. Catherine’s.”⁴⁶ Bolingbroke’s

⁴⁵ Froissart, 591. Anthony Tuck argues that Henry had travelled abroad in the 1390s in search of military prowess because England and France were negotiating peace at that time. He lists a tournament at St. Inglevert as well as crusade in Prussia, Jerusalem, and even Lithuania among Henry’s destinations. See Anthony Tuck, “Henry IV and Chivalry” in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2003).

⁴⁶ Froissart, 595.

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banishment fueled the flames of baronial discontent with Richard, prompting them to aid Bolingbroke in reclaiming his inheritance after Richard seized it for the crown upon John of Gaunt's death. However, Adam of Usk in his *Chronicon* posits an "incapacity to rule" as a reason for deposing the king,⁴⁷ a vague assertion that is not clarified by the equally vague "useless, incapable, utterly incompetent and unworthy," found in the Rolls of Parliament.⁴⁸ I would venture to argue that Richard's perceived incapacity and incompetence was a result of the peerage's comparison of his civilian lifestyle to the martial prowess that Henry sought. The English nobility did not simply want a king – it wanted a warrior.

Richard II may have abdicated, but Edmund Mortimer had a superior claim to the throne that Henry Bolingbroke took for his own.⁴⁹ Much like his grandfather Edward III, Bolingbroke had to win the approval and loyalty of the barons that detested the rule of his predecessor. To do so, he had to continue being the warrior that his peers brought back from exile, observing the customs of chivalry set in place by his grandfather. He significantly claimed the throne of England in English,⁵⁰ distancing himself both from France and from Richard, who as aforementioned was perceived as being too French. With this single act, he not only contributed to the formation of an English identity, but also made himself and the ideals of kingship and chivalry which he embodied accessible to a wider audience of English subjects. He was crowned on October 13th, 1399 on the feast day of St. Edward the Confessor in a ceremony that much resembled the investiture of knighthood. Four swords were carried in the procession and Adam of Usk, offers us an explanation as to why there are specifically four:

⁴⁷ Adam of Usk, *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, ed. and trans. by C. Given-Wilson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 63.

⁴⁸ Rolls of Parliament, Henry IV: October 1399, Membrane 18, iii422, Column B, Section 52. <http://www.sd-editions.com/PROME/home.html>

⁴⁹ Maurice Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1973), 303.

⁵⁰ Rolls of Parliament, Henry IV: October 1399, Membrane 18, iii422, Column B and iii423, Column A, Section 53. <http://www.sd-editions.com/PROME/home.html>

One in its scabbard, to symbolize the advancement of military virtues, two wrapped in red and bound with golden straps, to symbolize twofold mercy, and the fourth unsheathed and without a point, to symbolize the execution of justice without rancour.⁵¹

Henry not only exalted chivalric virtues (*prouesse*, *loyauté*, and *largesse*), he did so in a symbolic and highly visual way so that these virtues were visible to a large audience. What is more, by planning the coronation to be held on the feast day of St. Edward the Confessor, he directly connected chivalry to English history, which together with the increasing use of the English language began to form an English identity. Henry continued to make public displays of chivalric culture, as exemplified by the tournament he held on Epiphany in the year 1400, and by the show of *largesse* to the chapel of St. George that continued well into Henry's reign in the year 1410.⁵² Moreover, he continued works at Windsor Park and the Tower of London.⁵³ Henry IV thus kept chivalric structures in place and connected them more explicitly with an English identity by adopting the English as opposed to the French language. Upon his death in 1413, he was succeeded by his oldest son Henry, who figured as an even larger chivalric hero in contemporary English history than his father.

Joel Burden argues that it was only during the reign of Henry V “that the Lancastrian dynasty finally managed to attract broad-based loyalty within England on its own terms.”⁵⁴ Although this may be most easily explained by the victorious renewal of the war effort against France, Henry V began to cultivate his chivalric persona immediately upon ascendancy to the throne. Considering that rebellions against his father's reign threatened the survival of his dynasty, Henry showed

⁵¹ *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, 70-71.

⁵² *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry IV, Volume IV*, 267.

⁵³ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry IV, Volume I*, 58, 97.

⁵⁴ Joel Burden, “How Do You Bury a Deposed King?” in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*, ed. Gwilym Dodd and Douglas Biggs (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2003), 36.

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quite an amount of *largesse* in pardoning the main perpetrators of rebellion. In 1415, he granted the request of Henry “Hotspur” Percy’s son for restoration of his inheritance.⁵⁵ Moreover, at his coronation banquet, he announced that all criminals who would petition for pardon would be granted it.⁵⁶ Furthermore, and perhaps most to his credit, he transferred the body of Richard II from King’s Langley to Westminster Abbey in accordance with the deceased monarch’s wishes.⁵⁷ These were words and actions of a monarch who was conscious of the virtues demanded not only from a king, but also from a knight. One of those virtues was justice. Although several Lollards were hanged when the king discovered a plot against him, still several others were tried, demonstrating a consideration of the importance of justice. Even if the casualties demonstrated that the attempt to issue a merciful justice was half-hearted, the efforts to *demonstrate* a regard for justice point to the desire to create a public image of a king that was also a just and generous knight.

To return to the most obvious portrayal of chivalric values, Henry V was a warrior that commanded the respect of not only his knights, but also his civilian subjects in England because of the quick victories he accomplished, especially at Agincourt in 1415. A contemporary poem compares him to a lion that when it roars, makes a French town become English.⁵⁸ Adam of Usk also claims that Henry “set off bravely like a lion with barely ten thousand soldiers right through the middle of the land.”⁵⁹ The repetition of this analogy demonstrates the potency of the lion as a symbol that had long been

⁵⁵ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry V, Vol. I*, 321.

⁵⁶ *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, 243.

⁵⁷ Burden, “How Do You Bury a Deposed King?” 39.

⁵⁸ This poem is “Epigram on the Battle of Azincourt,” in *Political Poems and Songs Relating to English History: Vol. II*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861), 127. The translation is taken from Anne Curry’s *The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2000), 281.

⁵⁹ *The Chronicle of Adam Usk 1377-1421*, 257.

associated with English chivalry.⁶⁰ The increasing appearance of this symbol demonstrates an increased awareness and desire to form an English identity from chivalric culture. Unfortunately, Henry V died tragically young in 1422, leaving an infant son on the throne – a misfortune that would eventually plunge England into inner turmoil.

The presence of chivalry in the court declined after the death of Henry V. To begin with, he had been able to negotiate a treaty with Charles VI before his death, which (theoretically) brought peace between England and France.⁶¹ This peace prevented Henry VI from having to be a warrior king like his father and Edward III had been, and thus reduced the visual display of chivalric culture. There are less mentions of tournaments in the Calendars of the Patent and Close Rolls during this reign, with the most chivalric occurrences being the carrying of a rod during processions⁶² and a banquet held in honor of St. George's Day at Windsor on April 24, 1431.⁶³ Although this did not mean that a general affection for chivalric culture was dwindling, it did mean the return of the familiar problem encountered by Richard II: Henry VI was not a knight that commanded the respect of the peerage or the admiration of the people. Moreover, the Duke of York's accusations of bad governance from those in the king's council quickly escalated to the re-opening of the debate on Lancastrian legitimacy.⁶⁴ With the commencement of the Wars of the Roses, the mental illness of Henry VI, and the death of the Duke of York, there arose Edward IV and this time, chivalry had a secure place in a court that needed all the popularity it could muster.

⁶⁰ Nigel Saul equates the significance of the fleur-de-lys to France to the significance of the lion to England in his book *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066-1500* (London: The Bodley Head, 2011), 94.

⁶¹ C.T. Allmand and Dorothy Styles, "The Coronations of Henry VI" in *History Today*: 32 (5), 1982.

⁶² *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry VI, Vol. I*, 60.

⁶³ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry VI, Vol. II*, 117.

⁶⁴ Maurice Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1973), 447.

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According to the *Crowland Chronicle Continuations*, Henry VI was mysteriously found dead in the Tower of London in 1471 shortly after Edward IV proved victorious over the Lancastrians at the Battle of Tewkesbury. The author refused to write anything other than a hope that the perpetrator be repentant.⁶⁵ More than ten years later intrigue characterized by bloodshed continued to pervade the court as Edward's two sons also mysteriously passed away while imprisoned in the Tower of London by their uncle Richard (III). Appearances came to matter at the Yorkist court and chivalry was used to gain personal popularity. Nigel Saul writes that Edward IV held tournaments every year and that he revived the Order of the Garter, emphasizing the chivalric qualifications such as a thirst for prowess of prospective inductees.⁶⁶ Reviving the Order of the Garter as an actual means of camaraderie and companionship within a chivalric culture as opposed to considering it a mere processional institution was the quickest way to obtain allies (specifically from the gentry or nobility) in the case of need. Given the state of political affairs at the time and the murder of Edward's father as a result, this was most likely the purpose of such an invigorated effort. However, adopting chivalric institutions was not the only requirement that Edward had to adopt to be perceived as a knightly monarch; he had to internalize the values espoused by knights. On one occasion he exacted justice when delegates to peace talks with France ran amok upon their return home so that he was both a warrior to be feared and a knight that dealt justice.⁶⁷ Furthermore, he renovated St. George's Chapel and continued granting shelter there to poor knights,⁶⁸ demonstrating not only *his* generosity, but that royal *largesse* combined with a reverence for legendary heroes had withstood the tests of time and war to become institutionalized features of an English brand of chivalry.

⁶⁵ *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations: 1459-1486*, ed. Nicholas Pronay and John Cox (London: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1986), 129.

⁶⁶ Saul, *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066-1500*, 339, 341.

⁶⁷ *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations: 1459-1486*, 137.

⁶⁸ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Edward IV, Vol. I*, 126, 441, 471.

Richard III has a notoriously bad reputation for usurping the throne and allegedly murdering his nephews. The object of this brief mention is not to argue whether he did murder them or not, but rather to point out that regardless of his motivations, he still constructed specific displays of chivalric culture to justify his rule. In 1484, he moved the body of Henry VI from its obscure location to Windsor, the center of English kingship and chivalric culture.⁶⁹ Although contemporaries who witnessed this could not avoid the fact that Richard took the crown from his nephew – the rightful heir of Edward IV – one must concede that he understood the importance of acknowledging chivalric tradition. The sentiment of respect for the deceased king may not have been genuine, as was also probably the case with the reburial of Richard II. But to recognize the importance of *largesse* – a form of which I argue these actions are – is to assign it as a hallmark of English chivalry and monarchical identity. Furthermore, as he wore his crown during Christmas festivities, Richard received word that “in spite of his royal power and splendour...his enemies would invade the kingdom,”⁷⁰ indicating that a visual symbol of elevated status – another hallmark of chivalry, especially when combined with kingship – was widely understood to impress and to command respect in England. The enemies of Richard III did invade, effectively ending the Wars of the Roses and the Middle Ages in England. The monarchs of the final medieval century in England had intermittently embraced chivalric culture and tradition until the very end, inadvertently crafting an English identity with it.

The Peerage and Chivalry: A Question of Nobility

When analyzing chivalry as expressed by the nobles, two intersecting themes must be taken into consideration. First, we must

⁶⁹ Thomas S. Freeman, “‘Ut Verus Christi Sequester’: John Blacman and the Cult of Henry VI” in *The Fifteenth Century. Of Mice and Men: Image, Belief and Regulation in Late Medieval England*, ed. Linda Clark (Rochester: The Boydell Press, 2005), 129.

⁷⁰ *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations: 1459-1486*, 173.

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return to the debate of the character of nobility and question the significance of lineage in constructing nobility. Secondly, we must also look at the English peers' evolving idea of what it meant to be a knight in service to his lord and consequently, an English baron's relationship and duty to his king. To do all this, I will look at the case of the Percies and to a lesser extent the Nevilles beginning with the reign of Richard II, since that is when these two families were elevated to the peerage.⁷¹ I will argue that a claim to hereditary privilege, though not completely eclipsing the importance of knighthood, became much more significant to the English nobility in the act of making a person noble, but that the nobles themselves were inadvertently contradicting this belief because they assisted in the overthrow of pure lineage in the English crown.

The significance allocated to hereditary privilege stems from the debate on the nature of nobility. Edward III really desired to band his nobles and his court together around an order that would prize the martial qualities of the nobility. He created the first English dukedoms of Cornwall and Lancaster, and gave them to his son Edward, the Black Prince and Henry, Earl of Derby, respectively.⁷² These two had campaigned in France with the king, so the creation of the dukedoms not only indicates Edward III's interest in structuring a peerage, but his promotion of these two individuals to that peerage indicates his esteem of martial prowess and an implied requirement of knighthood to enter into the ranks of the nobility. His successor Richard, however, was not the warrior that Edward III was and now the question was how a civilian king could satiate the thirst of a military nobility for prowess in combat.

Nigel Saul argues that "in both England and the continental polities there was growing interest in the use of chivalry as a way of strengthening royal power," which I believe is best exemplified by the court culture elaborately drawn by Richard II.⁷³ I would add,

⁷¹ J. A. Tuck, "Richard II and the Northern Magnates" in *Northern History*, 3(1), 34, 52.

⁷² Saul, *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066-1500*, 107.

⁷³ Saul, *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066-1500* p. 316.

however, that the peers also used chivalry to not only exemplify their pride in their martial accomplishments, but also to celebrate their lineage, thus bringing into discussion the characteristics of nobility and whether it was mainly defined in England by knighthood or by an elevated family history. Henry Percy, first earl of Northumberland, planned the building of Warkworth Castle after the manner of Windsor Castle, which we may recall was remodeled extensively by Edward III. Northumberland thereby connected himself and his successors to the symbolic center of chivalric and martial culture in England.⁷⁴ However, the Percies not only wanted to make clear their ties to a chivalric culture based on martial prowess. They also took pains to copy and alter pedigrees that were then kept among their records.⁷⁵ Knighthood and its martial characteristics were thus not enough to exalt the Percies as peers of the realm – the importance of detailing a family history that would outline claims to an exalted position became a component of the discussion of English nobility.

The peers were instrumental in maintaining the chivalric value of upholding justice, even if it meant changing the relationship between vassal and lord, baron and king.⁷⁶ There was a contemporary concern beginning during the reign of Richard II that chivalry was in decline and that the martial class was becoming less concerned with the value of taking up arms in the name of justice.⁷⁷ I would argue, however, that this may have been a result of Richard's personal abandonment of the martial strand of chivalry, and it unfairly critiques the same in the nobility who as a class had not forgotten the love of martial prowess. I will discuss adoptions and perceptions of chivalry by civilian classes in another section, but for now I would mention that even into the fifteenth century, noble families such as the Percies and the Nevilles were

⁷⁴ “Richard II and the Northern Magnates,” 34.

⁷⁵ Matthew Holford, “Medieval Pedigrees of the Percy Family” in *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, LII ed. Michael Jones (University of Nottingham, 2008), 171.

⁷⁶ Anthony Tuck, “The Percies and the Community of Northumberland in the Later Fourteenth Century” in *War and Border Societies in the Middle Ages*, ed. Anthony Goodman and Anthony Tuck (London: Routledge, 1992), 178.

⁷⁷ Saul, *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066-1500*, 128.

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settling questions of honor and politics on the battlefield like their predecessors had done. In correspondence leading up to Henry “Hotspur” Percy’s rebellion and the battle of Shrewsbury, his father the earl of Northumberland wrote to Henry IV, addressing himself as Henry’s humble Mattathias and Hotspur as Judas Maccabeus, Biblical figures who “liberated oppressed peoples and defended moral values.”⁷⁸ In doing so, not only is Percy continuing to portray himself as a military hero, but also asserting his intent to exact justice by virtue of this association. Moreover, Mattathias is one of the Nine Worthies, a pantheon of chivalric heroes of which Arthur and Charlemagne are also part, thus ascribing the same importance of legend and history to chivalry in England as it was in the continent.⁷⁹ As John Hardyng relates, Hotspur proceeded to meet the king, who submitted “hym unto his royall hand.”⁸⁰ Thus perhaps if the search for glory in battle may have dwindled with Richard II, it did not do so with the peers.

Generations later both the Nevilles and the Percies among others met at St. Albans and fought as partisans of warring royal factions.⁸¹ That the Nevilles supported Richard, Duke of York’s claim to the throne while King Henry VI was still alive, points to the sustained belief that a knight’s role was to defend causes he perceived to be just (or at least proclaimed to believe so, even if there may have been a selfish political interest involved). It also questioned the supposed loyalty of a peer to the king that was supposed to mirror that of a vassal to his lord. Chivalry was thus not in decline, but the center of its development alternated between the monarch, when he was an

⁷⁸ Jenni Nuttall, “‘Vostre Humble Matatyas’: Culture, Politics, and the Percys” in 15th century, 71.

⁷⁹ Keen, *Chivalry*, 121.

⁸⁰ John Hardyng, *The Chronicle of Iohn Hardyng* (London: Printed for F.C. and J. Rivington; T. Payne; Wilkie and Robinson; Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown; Cadella and Davies; J. Mawman; and R. H. Evans, 1812), 362. Interestingly enough, Hardyng also relates that the earl – the self-proclaimed Matthathias – failed his own son “foule without witte or rede” by refusing to leave Northumberland.

⁸¹ *The Chronicle of Iohn Hardyng*, 405.

exemplary warrior, and the peers, when they adopted the role of moral protectors of the realm via use of arms.

The Percies and Nevilles also had a certain amount of chivalric cultural capital at their disposal that increased the input of the peerage into English chivalric culture. The Percies apparently had a large collection of books, the items of which have been catalogued by A.S.G. Edwards.⁸² Most of the items were religious books in Latin, but there were also poems by Lydgate, a manuscript of John Hardyng's *Chronicle*, records of the grant of the earldom to the first earl, a record of the marriage of the second earl to Ralph Neville's daughter Eleanor, and a manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, this last which was acquired in the late fifteenth century. This collection emphasizes the importance of collecting chivalric literature, exemplified by the *Chronicle* which records among other events the martial deeds of the Percies in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, so as to cultivate a literary and cultural tradition to compliment the martial tradition. Heraldry also played a part in this creation. Both the Percies and the Nevilles depicted lions in their coats of arms, not only adopting chivalry through the use of heraldry, but reinforcing the marking of English chivalry with a repeated use of the lion as a symbol.⁸³ The possession of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Hardyng's *Chronicle* also points to this development of an English cultural identity through chivalry because the Percies owned works treating with chivalrous themes that mostly originated from England.

Critiques on chivalry arose during the reign of Richard II quite possibly because of the young monarch's inexperience with war and his consequent lack of rapport with his peers. I would argue, however, that these peers took on the task of elaborating chivalric culture themselves and keeping the martial strand alive, even if it meant antagonizing the

⁸² A.S.G. Edwards "Books owned by medieval Members of the Percy Family" in *Tributes to Kathleen L. Scott-English Medieval Manuscripts: Readers, Makers and Illustrators*, ed. Marlene Villalobos Hennessy, (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2009).

⁸³ Images of these arms can be found in Anthony Pollard's "Percies, Nevilles, and the Wars of the Roses" in *History Today*, 43(9).

monarch and violating the chivalric quality of *loyauté* that they originally professed.

The Expansion of Chivalry

In the Late Middle Ages Europe witnessed the rise of a bourgeois, urban class whose lifestyle, by virtue of being civilian, differentiated largely from the upper, fighting class of the nobility. In England, the gentry or “lower nobility” emerged, comprised of knights and members of the rising bourgeois class.⁸⁴ By the mid-fifteenth century, entry into knighthood was becoming less popular and thus the critique on chivalry continued.⁸⁵ Those either criticizing what appeared to be the downfall of chivalry or lamenting it, however, only associated chivalry with martial virtues and the military class. Although not as many qualified men were joining the ranks of the knighthood, I do not think this meant a decline in an interest in chivalry, but instead that chivalry became more and more civilianized as members of the gentry input their opinions on nobility, recognized the importance of a chivalric literary tradition, and adopted chivalric ceremonial.

The central question with regards to nobility is whether what ennobles an individual is an established and exalted lineage or his good virtue.⁸⁶ We have seen by the example of the Percies that although it was important to strive for military prowess, and thus chivalric virtue, lineage was perceived as equally important in ennobling not only an individual, but also a whole family. By the mid fifteenth-century, however, those attitudes began to change with members of both the peerage and the gentry. John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, took it upon himself to translate Buonaccorso de Montemagno’s *Contraversia de Nobilitate* into English with the title *Declamacion of Noblesse*, in which

⁸⁴ Saul, *For Honour and Fame*, 163-164.

⁸⁵ Saul, *For Honour and Fame*, 157.

⁸⁶ Maurice Keen’s analysis is crucial to any student observing the fifteenth-century English views on this topic, as he describes contemporary arguments on the subject and analysis them in the context of the transforming social structure with the emergence of the bourgeois class. See “The Idea of Nobility” in *Chivalry*.

one man argues that an individual's nobility is drawn from his noble family while his opponent counters that an individual's virtue is what ennobles him.⁸⁷ Anthony Woodville, a soldier related to Elizabeth Woodville, also made Christine de Pizan's *Livre du Corps de Policie* available to a larger audience by having it translated into English.⁸⁸ Pizan argued that virtue was the only basis for ruling a kingdom and specifically stated that knights should strive for virtue if they wanted to achieve greatness. Assuming that a king was noble through virtue and a knight could also be virtuous, it follows that a knight could be ennobled through this virtue. Chivalry could be ennobling. It is significant not only that the peers' views on nobility were transforming, but also that members of the gentry participated in this debate because it demonstrates the inclusivity of chivalry as a culture shared across social classes and as a means of social mobility. Moreover, Tiptoft's translated work also emphasized the importance of virtue being a source of nobility because it prompted service to the state. Thus, although Tiptoft and Woodville themselves had military roots, virtue – and thus nobility – did not necessarily have to come in the form of martial prowess, but could also be civilian.

Original English literary works also engaged in the debate on nobility. Poems such as the *Morte Arthure* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* emphasize virtue over lineage. Unlike the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the *Morte Arthure* does not delineate Arthur's ancestry, but rather illustrates his successive conquests and battles so that the focus is on Arthur's merits as a virtuous and knightly king, and not solely as a king descended from a noble line. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* also stresses the importance of virtue by demonstrating the consequences of neglecting that virtue. Through a series of trials in which his judgment and virtue are tried, Gawain succeeds in behaving honorably for most of his journey until he accepts from a woman a band of lace that will allegedly protect him from death. Gawain hides this from an opponent and that lie is deemed so unvirtuous that as

⁸⁷ Saul, *For Honour and Fame*, 337 – 338.

⁸⁸ Saul, *For Honour and Fame*, 336.

punishment, he cannot die a glorious death, but must live a life of shame by wearing the lace for Arthur's court to see.⁸⁹ Although the composition of these texts probably had the purpose of tying first Edward III and then the English nobility to legendary heroes of chivalry and thereby exalting their reputation, the texts themselves stress the importance of virtue. It should also be noted that whereas in earlier French romances such as Chretien de Troyes' the *Knight of the Cart* the idea of courtly love is admired, in English Arthurian legend, from the *Morte Arthure* to Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*, the prowess of Arthur and his companions, notably Gawain, is emphasized instead.⁹⁰ England thus developed a literary tradition to accompany its military chivalry and distinctively shaped it to honor the idea that prowess and virtue were attainable not only by members of the nobility, but also by the gentry. This cultural construct making social mobility tangible for the gentry in turn contributed to the creation of an English identity through an inclusive chivalric tradition.

Literature was not only a means by which the gentry could justify its upward gaze. Members of this group were producing the literature themselves as well. William of Worcester's *Boke of Noblesse*, a work begun in the 1450s and amended in the 1470s laments that those descended from noble blood were deciding to set aside their arms to practice civilian professions like law.⁹¹ It is strange that he wrote this in the midst of the Wars of the Roses, but this lamentation is a witness to the decreasing interest in a military lifestyle. I would not say, however, that it signaled a concurrent death of chivalry; merely that chivalry became civilianized.

I would disagree with Nigel Saul in his view that chivalry is weak as an urban phenomenon in England.⁹² A large part of the English knighthood was composed of peers and landed knights, but chivalry

⁸⁹ Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight, ed. Richard Morris (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1864).

⁹⁰ Saul, *For Honour and Fame*, 309.

⁹¹ Philip Caudrey, "William Worcester, *The Boke of Noblesse*, and Military Society in East Anglia" in *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, LII (2008), 191.

⁹² Saul, *For Honour and Fame*, 321.

was developed in England's urban sphere as well. The trade guilds, for example, established ceremonial that resembled very much that of an order of knighthood. The Mercers' Company of London, for example, withheld livery from he who disobeyed the governors of the company (referred to as "mistry") until he made amends.⁹³ In this way, a member's livery paralleled a knight's coat of arms and spurs. They both served as identification as a member of an established group and culture. All members of the mistry were also clothed in livery of the same cloth once a year at the feast celebrated on Easter.⁹⁴ That a specific feast day is chosen in which to grant livery and thereby induct a new member is reminiscent of the way momentous events, such as plenary courts and oath-giving happen on religious feast days such as Whitsuntide and Pentecost in Arthurian legend. The ceremonial of trade guilds is thus based on the same literary tradition as knighthood, indicating the existence of chivalry as a shared culture between the warrior class and the emerging urban, civilian, middle class in England. Perhaps most significant is the fact that the company rode in royal processions on occasions like St. George's Day.⁹⁵ One of the military developments that contributed to the martial element of chivalry was the invention of the stirrup, which allowed better control of a horse.⁹⁶ The presence in royal processions of the mercers mounted on horses thus puts them in a similar symbolic position as the knighthood, further indicating that chivalry was a shared culture and that the upper, warrior classes had to include the middle civilian classes in the creation of an English brand of chivalry.

Conclusions

⁹³ The Medieval Account Books of the Mercers of London: Vol. 1, ed. and trans. Lisa Jefferson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 45.

⁹⁴ The Medieval Account Books of the Mercers of London: Vol. 1, ed. and trans. Lisa Jefferson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 47.

⁹⁵ The Medieval Account Books of the Mercers of London: Vol. 1, ed. and trans. Lisa Jefferson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 963.

⁹⁶ Keen, *Chivalry*, 23.

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The image of Arthur that is best-known is perhaps that in Sir Thomas Malory's fifteenth-century work *Le Morte D'Arthur*. But Malory's Arthur is eclipsed by the *prouesse* of his peers, and his Round Table is destroyed by the defeat of his Knights, the loss of his kingdom, and his own death. One may be tempted to use this text as a metaphor for the decline of English chivalry in the fifteenth century. Edward III's renovations of Windsor Castle and establishment of the Order of the Garter increasingly tied England, and an English identity, to the values of chivalry and the legend of King Arthur that was already well-known in the continent. Richard II's use of these structures to exalt his own position as monarch with only a few favored peers may thus certainly support the pessimistic interpretation of Malory's Arthur, especially since subsequent dynastic conflict in the fifteenth century disrupted monarchical developments of chivalry.

Although the portrayal and development of English chivalry by the monarchy in the Late Middle Ages was characterized by intermittency, its values and culture were certainly not abandoned. Members of the nobility took care to associate themselves with martial prowess and chivalric heroes well-known in the continent while engaging in a debate on the nature of nobility, on *franchise*. The emerging gentry also entered into this debate on nobility and contributed literature on this topic and on chivalry in general while civilian companies adopted its ceremonial. Thus while the monarchy periodically lost its chivalrous luster, chivalry itself could not be said to have declined in late medieval England. Rather, it built on the legendary foundations of past generations and expanded from the martial into the civilian classes to produce an English brand of chivalry that was grounded in legend, tradition, and history while organically adapting to the social changes occurring in England.

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Captive on Their Own Land: Unfree Indian Labor in California's Missions, 1769- 1836

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Introduction

In 1786, the Russian trader Vasali Turkanoff recorded the unfree California Indian labor that he witnessed at Southern California's Mission San Fernando.¹ He also observed the consequences for California Indians of disobeying the Franciscan fathers' wishes. In 1797, according to Turkanoff, who at this time was a prisoner at Mission San Fernando said, "After a few days our ankles healed and the Spaniards made us work in the field with the Indios. Soldiers and some men who I found out to be priests, watched us all the time and whoever did not work to suit them was beaten." In response, some of the California Indians at Mission San Fernando ran away: "At one time some of the Indios became dissatisfied and over night they all left, but our men who were living among them. The Indios were away several days when a great number of soldiers came to the Mission and they and some of the priests went out and stayed away many, many days, and

¹ Vasali Turkanoff, *Statement of My Captivity Among the Californians*, trans. Ivan Petroff (Los Angeles: Glen Dawson, 1953), 11,15. Note: The primary document stated that Turkanoff was held captive at mission Santa Barbara but most likely after analyzing the environment he was at mission San Fernando.

when they came back they brought most of the natives.”² Foreigners experienced the brutal reality of missions. Indians were confined within the mission walls and any action against the Fathers or defiance of their wishes had repercussions. Turkanoff described the violence inflicted on the recaptured California Indians: “They were all bound with rawhide ropes and some were bleeding from wounds and some children were tied to their mother. The next day we saw some terrible things. Some of the run-away men were tied on sticks and beaten with straps.” Men, women and children all suffered for disobeying the Franciscan fathers, but some paid the ultimate price. “One chief was taken out to the open field and a young calf, which had just died, was skinned and the chief was sewed into the skin all day, but he died soon and they kept his corpse tied up. The Spaniards must have put some poison on the calfskin, which killed the man.”³

This essay will argue that unfree California Indian mission labor was routine and widespread in the California mission system led by Franciscan missionaries under Spanish and Mexican rule between the establishment of the first California mission in 1769 and the secularization of the missions in 1836. Hence, this thesis will examine California Indian labor within the twenty-one missions, coerced recruitment, corporal punishment, the leasing of California Indian labor to others and California Indian resistance to the mission system in order to prove that California Indian mission labor was unfree.

In 1769, some 310,000 Indians lived within the boundaries of what is now California. Between 1769 and 1823, Franciscan missionaries established twenty-one missions amidst the Kumeyaay, Luiseño, Kumi’vit/Gabrieleño, Chumash, Salinan, Esselen, Ohlone/Costanoan, and Coast Miwok Indians in a zone extending from San Diego to Sonoma. This region contained over 60,000 California Indian people in 1769 and they were the California Indians who

² *Ibid.*, 14.

³ Turkanoff, *Statement of My Captivity Among the Californians*, 11,15.

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experienced the most intensive interactions with the missions.⁴ However, the Franciscan missionaries and their Spanish advocates also resettled converts from other California Indian groups, including the Cahuilla, Yokuts, and Miwok, among others.⁵

Though some scholars have concluded that California mission Indians were unfree laborers, few scholars have carefully analyzed unfree California Indian mission labor. In order for the California missions to continue expanding, they required the labor of California Indians. The primary instruments of colonization in California were the missions. In the 18th century the Spanish crown considered it a religious duty to reduce heathenism and to bring as many native peoples as possible to the virtues of Catholicism. The Franciscan order was selected to establish the missions of Alta California and the first mission was founded at San Diego in 1769. Others followed to the north, the last being Sonoma Mission, established in 1823. Believing that effective Christianization could not be separated from the larger process of acculturation, the missionaries attempted to bring about a rapid and thoroughgoing transformation in all aspects of the native people's lives. They were to be Hispanicized in religion, social organization, work habits, dress, and food habits. To accomplish this, the Indians were “reduced” from their “free, undisciplined” state and concentrated at the missions, thus making it easier to control the Indians and exploit their labor.

The ongoing debate over whether Franciscan fathers truly had the best interests at heart for California Indians continues to the present day. There is an ongoing debate of whether Junípero Serra, the Franciscan father who founded the California missions, should be canonized or not. Many of those who contest Serra's canonization believe he was “instrumental in the forced labor of the Kumeyaay,

⁴ Steven W. Hackel, *Junípero Serra: California's Founding Father* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2013), 163.

⁵ Robert H. Jackson and Edward Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 8.

Tipaay and Ippay” and “contributed either directly or indirectly to the death of Native American Indians.”⁶ Others believe “Spanish missionaries like Serra were enormously important-if largely forgotten today-to the history of America.”⁷ The debate between these two opposing views, which began many years ago, has stalled Serra’s canonization.

Generations of scholars have explored the relationship between Indian laborers and the California missions during the 1769-1836 period, articulating a wide array of definitions for California Indian mission labor. Today, the nature of such labor arrangements remains contested. Yet, however one defines California Indian mission labor as not free. California missions depended on California Indians to perform a wide variety of crucial tasks. Although scholars do not agree with one another in all particulars, recent scholars have argued in favor of mission Indian salvation versus the forced labor model. However, while this interpretation is intellectually compelling, forced labor was the nature of California Mission Indian labor as a number of scholars have long contended.

Historiography

The debate over the nature of California mission Indian labor began soon after the first mission was established in 1769 and continues to this day. Twentieth century scholars and historians have provided some of the most compelling arguments defining the mission labor system. Some maintain that California Indians were engaged in an exchange relationship with Franciscan Fathers in which they provided labor in return for food, salvation or civilization. Others argue that the Franciscans treated California Indians as unfree laborers.

Franciscan fathers viewed mission labor as an exchange with Indians for salvation and civilization. Establishing religious authority to

⁶ Jeanette Henry and Rupert Costo, Eds., *Missions of California: A Legacy of Genocide* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press for the American Indian Historical Society, 1987), 161.

⁷ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, XIII.

convert Native Californians to Roman Catholic Christianity was central to Spanish colonization. As early as 1786 Father Junípero Serra stated that, “All Indians should live in settlements, so that they might be instructed and civilized” thus implying that California Indians would receive civilization and salvation in return for their physical labor.⁸

Father Maynard Geiger, O.F.M., Ph.D. was a Roman Catholic priest and clerical historian of the Franciscan Order who published *As The Padres Saw Them: California Indian Life and Customs as Reported by The Franciscan Missionaries 1813-1815*. In this 1976 book, Geiger argued that California Indian mission labor was intended to “civilize” Indians “for the benefit of the community.”⁹ Geiger believed Indians had to abandon their “idleness” and be “educated.”¹⁰ Geiger thus reiterated the explanations of the mission fathers themselves. A *Padre* from Mission San Buenaventura stated that, “At the present time the missionary fathers supply these defects in their neophytes by educating the parents and the children also by inducing them to till the soil, work as masons, carpenters, weavers, and at other necessary occupations.”¹¹ Franciscans intended work to educate mission Indians in civilization while providing them with new skills. At Mission San Diego another *Padre* described Indians as “extremely lazy when it comes to labor.” Nevertheless, “under the supervision of the missionaries they are made to apply themselves to work and mechanical trades and they learn any task easily.”¹² Ultimately by “preaching and by labor they will be giving up these abominable evils.”¹³ Geiger excused the actions of the

⁸ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 148.

⁹ Maynard Geiger, O.F.M. Ed. and Trans, *As the Padres Saw Them: California Indian Life and Customs as Reported by the Franciscan Missionaries* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Mission Archives Library, 1976), 132.

¹⁰ Geiger, *As the Padres Saw Them*, 24, 26.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹² *Ibid.*, 23.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 60.

fathers in the California missions because he strongly agreed that missionaries were helping mission Indians.

Fr. Francis F. Guest, received a Ph.D. in history and described how California mission fathers “looked upon their Indian converts as children in a mission family in which the padres themselves occupied the place of fathers.”¹⁴ Guest saw friars as successfully educating their California Indian children. He viewed the relationship between fathers and Indians as a form of paternal relationship. In 1813 Father Ramón Ólbes, at Mission Santa Barbara, wrote, “The missionary fathers supervise planting and harvesting at the proper seasons for the Indians are not capable of doing this alone for in such undertakings they are like children.”¹⁵ Guest unapologetically pronounced the dependence of Indians on mission fathers, which became appropriate under Spanish law when the Viceroy officially made “missionaries the legal guardian of their [California] Indian converts.”¹⁶

Some twentieth-century scholars have also interpreted the connection between Franciscan fathers and California Indians at the missions as an exchange relationship. Historian James Sandos argued in his 2004 *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* that missions instituted a system of “spiritual debt peonage.”¹⁷ Sandos’s notion of “spiritual debt peonage” meant the California Indian “workers were bound to their employer by advances of food, money, or goods.” Though the system of “spiritual debt peonage” sometimes allowed California Indians to leave the missions, they were not free to come and go at will. As Sandos explained, by “accepting baptism, whether they knew it or not at the time, they gave up the freedom of their former life for a new Catholic life in which the mission fathers severely constrained their freedom.” Mission fathers limited California

¹⁴ Francis F. Guest, “Junípero Serra and His Approach to the Indians.” *Southern California Quarterly* 67: 3 (Fall 1980), 227.

¹⁵ Guest, “Junípero Serra,” 227.

¹⁶ Guest, “Junípero Serra,” 227.

¹⁷ James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 107.

Indians' freedom once they were baptized: they placed restrictions on what California Indians could do. Sandos saw mission Indian labor as benefitting both parties: California Indians provided labor in exchange for spiritual salvation. As Sandos asserted, the "neophyte had voluntarily forsaken part of his freedom in return for the spiritual salvation promised by the Christian Gods."¹⁸ However, California Indians did not always understand that baptism led to servitude.

Historian Steven Hackel connected the biological and ecological revolutions as a motive for California Indians to enter missions. As devastating numbers of California Indians died, Indians sought a safe haven, which is what Franciscan fathers provided to them. Franciscans strongly believed that manual labor would facilitate the assimilation of California Indians into Hispanic culture and their conversion to Roman Catholicism and that in return California Indians would gain spiritual and cultural profit from their production. Hackel argued in 2005 that Franciscans in California missions believed that "work itself played a crucial role in converting them."¹⁹ But, Hackel argued that recruitment was largely due to local demographic and ecological revolutions. Hackel's dual revolution thesis explained, "how biological and ecological forces structured the world in which Indians and Europeans shaped their encounters and communities."²⁰ As Spanish diseases and livestock invaded the countryside and destroyed old ways of subsistence, California Indians were driven into the missions—not by Spanish soldiers, but by hunger and the collapse of their villages.²¹ Hackel defined California Indian mission laborers as a "semicaptive labor force," meaning that mission Indians were neither enslaved nor indentured but were held in place by both their own needs for food and community life and by the Franciscans' willingness to make them work

¹⁸ Sandos, *Converting California*, 108.

¹⁹ Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Frances: Indian –Spanish Relations in Colonial California 1769-1850* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 272.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 65.

²¹ Hackel, *Junipero Serra*, 238.

and force them to remain at the missions.”²²

Other historians have also identified characteristics of unfree labor performed by Indians in California missions. In 1943, Sherburne F. Cook, a physiology professor and historian of the California Indians experience, published *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization. I. The Indian Versus the Spanish Mission*. In this important, 161-page-long article he defined California mission Indian labor simply as “forced labor,” describing forced recruitment as well as the use of force to coerce and contain California mission Indians.²³ In 1978, historian Robert Archibald built upon Cook’s work to provide a nuanced argument addressing the nature of California Indian mission labor in his essay, “Indian Labor at the California Missions: Slavery or Salvation?” Archibald stated that Franciscans working in California “were not agents of intentional enslavement, but rather rapid and therefore violent social and cultural change. The results were people wrenched from home, tradition and family, subjugated to an alien culture and contradictory values.” The unwillingness of many California Indians to voluntarily enter the missions posed a major problem for the missions. California Indians were accustomed to their traditions and lifestyle, so missions and missionaries posed a threat to the only world they knew. “Predictably these people did not submit to such treatment voluntarily and force became a necessary concomitant. The result in many cases was slavery in fact although not in intent.”²⁴ In sum, Archibald argued that California Indians had to be forcibly subordinated into a position closely resembling slaves since they would not voluntarily comply with Franciscans’ orders.

In 1987, scholars Rupert and Jeanette Henry Costo added to the discussion of California Indian mission labor as unfree. In *The Missions*

²² Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 281.

²³ Sherburne F. Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization. I. The Indian Versus the Spanish Mission* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1943), 61.

²⁴ Robert Archibald, “Indian Labor at the California Missions: Slavery or Salvation?,” *The Journal of San Diego History* 24:2 (Spring 1978), 181.

of *California: A Legacy of Genocide* they defined California Indian mission labor as “forced labor,” echoing Cook’s description from forty-four years earlier.²⁵ According to the Costos, California Indian mission labor was “compelled with the threat of punishment [while] the Indians had only a little more freedom than the ante bellum black slaves in the United States.”²⁶ The Costos concluded with a powerful new definition of California mission Indian labor. They described it as “slavery without the actual sale of the individual.”²⁷

In 1995, Latin American Literature and Chicano Literature scholar Rosaura Sanchez added a further twist to the forced labor thesis. She defined California Indian mission labor as “forced communal labor” while adding that “constructs of dispossession, enslavement, and extermination of the Indians” were central to the way Franciscans made California mission Indians work.²⁸ According to Sanchez “when California was first colonized by Spain in 1769, the operating principle was no longer one defending conquest and the use of force for the sake of conversion of the natives and the extension of the Catholic monarchy, but rather a much more pragmatic and juridical one that viewed the right of dominion on the basis of occupation and international law.”²⁹ This statement lucidly described Spain’s emphasis on gaining physical control over California’s land and indigenous people.

In 2004, historian Richard Steven Street offered a different interpretation of California Indian mission labor. He argued that by far the largest number of California Indians became mission field hands through a well-developed Franciscan process known as “spiritual fishing.” According to Street, “spiritual fishing” began with padres exchanging gifts with village tribal captains and persuading them to

²⁵ Costo and Costo, *Missions of California*, 71.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 187.

²⁸ Rosaura Sanchez, *Telling Identities: The Californio Testimonios* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 55.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

enter the missions with presents of food which “sparked considerable interest and gave the native an opportunity to sample Franciscan hospitality and hear the padres exhortations.” Spiritual fishing required gaining the trust of California Indian tribal leaders, which proved difficult due to the limited amount of food that the Franciscans had on hand. However, when padres did earn California Indians’ trust, “Indians received the holy waters of baptism, [and] were [then] required to remain and work for the common good.”³⁰ As Street observed, once baptized, Indians in California missions were forced to give up their faith, traditions, and “could not leave the missions without permission.”³¹ However, this was achieved at a cost. California Indians lost their personal freedom and were bound to work in missions without the freedom to quit.

Despite arguments to the contrary, evidence indicates that California Indians indeed suffered under a mission labor regime that can only be described as unfree. The unfree nature of labor in the California missions can be verified by carefully examining the way Franciscans depended on coerced labor, coerced recruitment, corporal punishment, gender separation, and the leasing of California Indians to others. California Indian uprisings against the missions further demonstrate the effects and consequences of unfree California Indian mission labor.

Labor in California Missions

In the California missions, every day consisted of a scheduled routine for Indians directed by Franciscans. According to historian Edith B. Webb,

The mission Indians were governed for worship, for labor for meals, and for sleep by the sound of the bell.

The Indians’ day began at sunrise when the Angelus bell

³⁰ Richard Steven Street, *Beasts of the Field: A Narrative History of California Farmworkers, 1769-1913* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 25.

³¹ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 25.

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called them to prayers in the mission church. About an hour later another bell announced breakfast, whereupon each family sent to the community kitchen for its share of the food that had been prepared.

Bells at the missions marked California Indians' day-to-day schedule. The bells represented the control California Indians were under since they had to obey an object not even a father. "After breakfast another ring of the bell sent all who were old enough and able to work to their appointed tasks. In the forenoon and again in mid-afternoon, one of the Padres gathered together all the children over five years of age and instructed them in the Doctrina. Following the morning period with the children, the Padre visited the fields and shops to see that no one was absent from work." Children, women and men dispersed to their daily task that Franciscan fathers assigned them. "From twelve until two o'clock the Indians ate their mean and enjoyed the inevitable siesta. Then back to work they went until about five o'clock came the ringing of the Angelus. Supper was then served. For the remainder of the evening until Poor Souls' Bell was rung at eight o'clock, the Indians were free to do as they wished within certain limitation, of course."³²

Pablo Tac, a Luiseño Indian from the village of Quechla, now the site of Mission San Luis Rey, explained a typical day at that mission. He wrote that, "when the sun rises and the stars and the moon go down, then the old man of the house wakens everyone and begins with breakfast which is to eat *juiuis* heated and mean and tortilla, for we do not have bread."³³ Afterwards, men take "bow and arrows and leave the house with vigorous and quick step" while the "old woman staying at home makes the meal."³⁴ Jose Maria Amador, an employee of

³² Edith B. Webb, *Indian Life at the Old Missions* (Los Angeles: University of Nebraska Press, 1952), 35.

³³ Pablo Tac, Minna Hewes and Gordon Hewes, Ed., "Indian Life and Customs at Mission San Luis Rey," *The Americas* 9:1 (July 1952), 101.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 100.

Mission San José, gave a similar account of California Indians' daily routine there: "the Indians would get up around six or seven o'clock [in the morning] depending on the time of the year. Then they would have breakfast and go to church to pray in their own language; [the prayers] were conducted through an interpreter. From there, they would go to the plaza where they would receive their work assignments. I assigned some of them to build fences, others to the looms, and others went to the carpentry shops. The masons went to their work. In the end, all persons were sent to do their corresponding chores."³⁵ California mission Indians worked and lived on tightly controlled schedules. But, they were also forced to perform particular kinds of work.

According to Cook, California Indians were the only ones at California missions who were forced to perform laborious tasks and duties. Mission Indians regularly went to work "an hour or more after sunrise until close to noon and after two in the afternoon until almost sunset."³⁶ After prayers, the priest (when he did not have a foreman) would go out and make work assignments for which he had a list of Indians.³⁷ According to Amador, some Indians worked on the "tequio basis, others as *gañanes*, then of course there were those who worked in the looms, masons, and carpentry."³⁸ Indians had to obey the Franciscan's regulations. Meanwhile, "much hard work was devoted to

³⁵ Gregorio Torres-Mora, Ed./Trans., *California Voices: The Oral Memoirs of Jose Maria Amador and Lorenzo Asisara* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2005), 202-203. Translation by Author: El régimen ordinario de la misión de San José era el siguiente. Se levantaban los indios a las 6 o las 7 según la estación, almorzaban, pasaban a la iglesia a rezar en su propio idioma por conducto del interprete. De allí iban a la plaza para hacer la distribn. De los trabajos. Hacia yo las distribuciones pa. abrir valladas, otros al telar, otros a los carpintería; los albañiles a sus obras, y en fin, cada partía a su destino.

³⁶ Cook, *Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, 92.

³⁷ Torres-Mora, *California Voices*, 211.

³⁸ Torres-Mora, *California Voices*, 205. Tequio means a labor system of Meso-American that required that individuals perform work for the community. Gañanes means a day worker.

the obtaining of food, whether through fishing and hunting or by gathering acorns, nuts, and other plant material. Furthermore, the building of shelters and the manufacture of clothing, utensils, and weapons demanded much time and effort.”³⁹ Both men and women participated in the everyday chores and activities of the missions: they “labored in mission farming, ranching, building construction and maintenance, and artisan production.”⁴⁰ According to an 1825 report from Santa Cruz mission, “some 65 percent of the Indian population of Santa Cruz mission participated in communal projects: 36 percent of the labor force worked in agriculture; 20 percent in the tending of the mission herds; 7 percent in food preparation; and skilled laborers in crafts such as smithing, weaving, and other made up 43 percent of the labor force.”⁴¹

The missions were more like large working farms and factories than institutions focused on converting people from one faith to another. Mission Indians learned to be carpenters, leatherworkers, smiths, masons, farmhands, and domestics.⁴² The real purpose of missionaries is construed in different ways, which has led to the numerous scholarly definitions of California mission Indian labor. But while religious conversion was a major focus, it seems to have been secondary. Baptized Indians were to attend religious instruction daily and Mass on Sundays and on special days of obligation. They were to subject themselves to the padres’ discipline and correction, and without exception follow Catholic rules regarding marriage and sexuality.⁴³ But, most of all, they were to serve as laborers.

Spaniards and foreigners described the unfree labor and harsh conditions in which mission Indians lived. In 1781 California’s Spanish

³⁹ Cook, *Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, 99.

⁴⁰ Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Civilization*, 12.

⁴¹ Robert H. Jackson, “Population and the Economic Dimension of Colonization in Alta California: Four Mission Communities,” *Journal of the Southwest* 33:3 (Autumn, 1991), 391.

⁴² Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 25.

⁴³ Hackel, *Junipero Serra*, 200.

Governor Felipe de Neve stated emphatically “that Indian’s fate [was] worse than that of slaves.”⁴⁴ As Hackel has argued, “in the middle and late eighteenth century, men like de Neve saw Catholic missions as anachronistic holdovers from a bygone era, as institutions dominated by authoritarian padres who held Indians in a state of servitude and delayed their entry into Spanish society.”⁴⁵ Thus, it is not entirely surprising that in 1786 the French navigator, Jean Francois de La Pérouse, visited Mission San Carlos and described the treatment of California Indians there as “scarcely [differed] from that of the Negro inhabitants of our colonies, at least in those plantations which are governed with most mildness and humanity.”⁴⁶ La Pérouse thus directly compared the treatment of California mission Indians at Mission San Carlos to the French colonial enslavement of Africans. Indeed, the living conditions, treatment, tasks of California mission Indians all roughly correlated with the characteristics of slavery. Indeed, in 1828, the American Harrison Rogers wrote that Indians at mission San Gabriel “are kept in great fear; for the least offense they are corrected; they are complete slaves in every sense of the word.”⁴⁷ However, Sandos has argued that a “comparison between the treatment of Indians and slaves and between the missions and their Indian laborers fully resonates with the high-performance, socially insensitive, profit-driven plantation systems of the Caribbean and the Old South are unfair.”⁴⁸ According to Sandos, “the purpose of the mission was to organize a religious community in isolation that could nourish itself physically and spiritually.”⁴⁹ Perhaps missionaries believed that the only way to actually accomplish their goal of saving and Christianizing California Indians was to separate them from all their old traditional ways and

⁴⁴ Sandos, *Converting California*, 106.

⁴⁵ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 212.

⁴⁶ Sandos, *Converting California*, 107.

⁴⁷ Harrison Rogers, “The Journals of Harrison G. Rogers,” *American Journeys Collection* (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark company, 1918), 205.

⁴⁸ Sandos, *Converting California*, 107.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 107.

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force them to work. However, this approach did not work comprehensively because some California Indians maintained their traditions even after being isolated from the world outside the missions.

Nevertheless, Indian labor sustained California mission economies over many decades. In 1825, the guardian Fr. Francisco Lopez argued “to the effect that the missions were feeding the colony by Indian labor” and “the Indians [were] complaining bitterly at having to work [so] that soldiers may eat.”⁵⁰

Still, many observers described California Indian mission labor as a way to replenish the spirituality of California Indians. But this was only possible by limiting missions Indian’s geographic mobility. Sierra believed that Indians could not be left on their own because they would retreat from Catholicism and return to their native beliefs. Thus, he had every mission in the region require Indians to obtain permission to leave the missions, and if they were going to miss Mass, they had to attend services elsewhere and return with written proof that they had done so.⁵¹

Initially soldiers were in charge of controlling mission Indian labor through a hierarchical system: “One of the military guards also held the position of *mayordomo* (soldier in charge with no presence of Franciscan) and directed the labors of the neophytes. Under the *mayordomo* were the *caporales*, who were ‘selected from the more intelligent Indians who understood a goodly part of the Spanish language.’” Indians were selected to serve under *mayordomos*, which reinforced a hierarchy among California Indians. “These *caporales* interpreted and transmitted orders and, once they approached a state of *razon*, ‘assisted...the *mayordomo* in the policing and the work generally.’ Besides sowing, tending gardens and fruit orchards, and raising livestock, the Indians had to begin construction of the edifices that would house and train them until they could be settled into pueblos of their own.”⁵² California Indians built the missions that they resided

⁵⁰ Cook, *Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, 97-98.

⁵¹ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 165.

⁵² Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers: The Making of Mexican*

in, which essentially meant that they built their own prisons with their own hard labor.

It is difficult to discern precisely how much work the *mayordomos* and priests got out of the neophytes. According to historian Douglas Monroy, “In 1799 investigators for Governor Borica reported that the Indians worked from six to nine hours a day, depending on the season, and more at harvest time. The padres maintained that the neophytes worked only four to six hours a day, with only half of them working at any given time.”⁵³ So, clearly there is debate over the typical number of hours that California mission Indians worked. In his own study, Monroy concluded that, “Generally, the neophytes workday began about two hours after sunrise, following breakfast and the assignment of tasks. Between eleven o’clock and noon they ate, and then they rested until two o’clock. At five o’clock came worship and the end of work. The Indians worked six to eight hours a day, thirty to forty hours a week, at an easy pace that not require undue strain. The men herded the ‘half-wild’ stock,’ plowed, tended and harvested crops, and labored in the mission workshops.”⁵⁴ La Pérouse observed, “the women have no other employment than their household affairs, the care of their children, and the roasting and grinding of corn.”⁵⁵ Still, every single day was structured and the tasks assigned to California Indians revolved around labor that many California Indians were not providing of their own free will.

The missions served more than a political instrument space for the control of the Indian population and occupation of the land. They were also sites for the production and reproduction of social relations. Within the missions, Indians, known as neophytes, had “no freedom of movement” and did not have “direct access to the means of

Culture in Frontier California (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 64.

⁵³ Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, 65.

⁵⁴ Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, 66.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

production.”⁵⁶ Neophytes were not a free labor force since their production did not directly benefit them. Neophytes can be indeed compared to slaves. As Sanchez has pointed out, “they were not free to leave, and the missionaries, though not the de jure owners of the land, exerted de facto control over the extraction of surplus from the lands they occupied and the labor of the Indians.”⁵⁷ Missionaries in California had total control over what occurred in the missions, including mission Indians.

Recruitment

When the first missions, San Diego and San Carlos, were established in 1769 and 1770, some California Indians came to the missions voluntarily, drawn by food, the dazzle of Spanish goods like metal and cloth, practical knowledge and skills possessed by the Spanish, and the implied supernatural “power” that Spaniards possessed over Eurasian animals such as the horse.⁵⁸ “According to the doctrines of the Church and Spanish Crown, the conversion of native peoples to Catholicism was to be voluntary, with each individual supposedly making his or her own decision.”⁵⁹ But, as Hackel has explained, “to attract Indians to the mission, the padres had received more than four hundred strings of beads in every color.”⁶⁰ According to Webb, “The Padres became ‘fishers of men’ using as a lure gift of beads, trinkets, food, and clothing. Fr. Francisco Pangua, Guardian of the College of San Fernando, called such gifts the bait and means for spiritual fishing.”⁶¹ The missions also created new political dynamics in local villages. When an individual was upset or angry at her/his life situation, the missions beckoned. Or when a family felt its interests were being ignored, it could move to the mission.

⁵⁶ Sanchez, *Telling Identities*, 64.

⁵⁷ Sanchez, *Telling Identities*, 64.

⁵⁸ Street, *Beasts of the Fields*, 24.

⁵⁹ Cook, *Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, 73.

⁶⁰ Hackel. *Junípero Serra*, 196.

⁶¹ Webb, *Indian Life at the Old Missions*, 26.

For example, food and gifts, such as beads and cloth, drew substantial numbers of Indians to San Carlos. In the last five months of 1774, some ninety-two accepted baptism, eighty-eight of whom were children. By December roughly 100 adults were under religious instruction; nearly seventy would be baptized in the first months of 1775.⁶² The Rumsen and others at first came to the mission—and accepted baptism—for food, clothing, and trade goods and to be near family who had already done so.⁶³ Some Rumsen as other California Indians voluntarily traded labor for the supplies Franciscans gave them. Similarly to the California Indians near San Carlos, Luiseno Indian man from Mission San Luis Rey, Pablo Tac wrote, “The Fernandino father gave him [Indian Chief] gifts, and so they became friends” and further said “that was the day on which God wanted to release us from heathenism.”⁶⁴ “However, California Indians failed to realize that these missionaries would stop supplying them with sufficient food and goods.”⁶⁵

Initially some California Indians also welcomed Franciscan fathers onto their land by giving the fathers gifts. But shortly after California Indians started to settle in the missions, California Indians “saw their people drawn off to the missions or heard more and more takes of mission life, their first favorable attitude changed to one of hostility and fear. At this stage, the explorers and convert hunters began to find the villages empty, or were greeted with showers of arrows as they approached. Retaliation and ‘chastisement’ were then in order. Gentiles were carried off by force rather than persuasion.”⁶⁶ Soldiers

⁶² Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 198.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁶⁴ Lisbeth Haas, *Pablo Tac, Indigenous Scholar: Writing on Luiseño Language and Colonial History, c. 1840* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 144-145.

Translation by Author: El P. Fernandino le dio regalos, y assi se amigaron. Porque aquel era el día en que dios sacarnos de la Gentilidad quería.

⁶⁵ Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization*, 19.

⁶⁶ Robert F. Heizer and M.A. Whipple, *The California Indians: A Source*

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recruited for missions.

This first approach at recruiting Indians to come to the missions depended upon Indians coming voluntarily to the mission. So, while it is true that Catholicism required conversion to be voluntary, it is also true that the vast majority of California Indians baptized by Franciscans did not understand the sociopolitical and cultural ramifications of baptism. It seems almost certain that they did not understand that by being baptized they were surrendering their physical freedom and control over their own bodies. According to Rupert and Jeanette Costo, “there was immediate confusion... They [Indians] came [to missions], were treated to a ceremonial show of which they had no knowledge. It interested them, and they were told that no longer would they be subjected to the laws of their tribes” and now had to “abide by certain different rules and must promise to remain in the missions.”⁶⁷ Street added, “Natives often became mission field hands after watching one of the commonest of missionary conversion tactics, wherein the padres went among sick and dying children and baptized them, knowing that some would recover and that their grateful parents would likely entrust their children’s care to powerful men who seemed able to control the forces of nature.”⁶⁸ Unaware of the intentions of Franciscan fathers in California missions, Indians settled into the missions without realizing the harsh consequences that awaited them.

The padres emphasized in their writings that entrance into the Church was strictly elective, and that Indians could move in and out of the missions, prior to baptism. In an 1805 letter to governor José Joaquín de Arillaga, Father Estevan Tápis of Mission Santa Barbara wrote “I have observed that the pagans who are reduced [to mission life] gladly embrace baptism and with free choice.”⁶⁹ The scholar and

Book (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 567.

⁶⁷ Costo and Costo, *Missions of California*, 59.

⁶⁸ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 24.

⁶⁹ Francis F. Guest, “An Examination of S.F. Cook on the Forced Conversion of Indians in the California Missions.” *Southern California Quarterly* 61:1 (Spring 1979), 4.

political activist Jack D. Forbes described the missions as “centers for bringing about almost total cultural change by generally authoritarian means, and for the economic exploitation of Indians.”⁷⁰ Furthermore, “the Indians were not merely forced to observe the forms of Christian worship, they were also forced gradually to assume the entire economic support of the empire in California and even to send surpluses to Mexico.”⁷¹ Since Hispanic California never had enough non-Indian workers, the mission and Indian labor were the basis for Spanish and Mexican California’s economy.⁷² Land and labor were the keys to the mission economies. “If at times one [Indian] is employed by a *gente de razón* the wage is paid to the mission and is used as part of the common expense fund.”⁷³ Furthermore, “To them [*gente de razón*] it seems that only Indians ought to work. So it happens that even for the most necessary personal maintenance they solicit the services of the Indians for cooking, washing, working in the garden, minding a baby, etc. Generally we missionary fathers allow the Indians to work for them.”⁷⁴

The “stable supply of European-style food” would fail to attract California Indians after the first years of the established missions. According to the anthropologist Kent Lightfoot, “The strict discipline, routinized workday, lack of freedom, wretched living conditions, and chilling mortality rate must have been a substantial challenge to the recruitment efforts of the most persuasive padre.”⁷⁵ They were to be Hispanicized in religion, social organization, work habits, dress, interpersonal relations and food habits. To accomplish this, Indians

⁷⁰ Jack D. Forbes, “The Native American Experience in California,” *California Historical Quarterly* 50:3 (September, 1971), 238.

⁷¹ Forbes, “The Native American Experience in California,” 239.

⁷² Albert L. Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

⁷³ Geiger, *As the Padres Saw Them*, 132.

⁷⁴ Geiger, *As the Padres Saw Them*, 130.

⁷⁵ Kent G. Lightfoot, *Indians, Missionaries and Merchants: The Legacy of Colonial Encounters on the California Frontiers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 25.

converted from their “lazy, godless, primitive ways” and concentrated at the missions, thus making it easier to control and exploit their labor.⁷⁶ In contrast, according to Robert H. Jackson and Edward Castillo, the “collection and preparation of indigenous foods did not require the same type of sustained work required of Indian converts, and the missionaries resorted to corporal punishment and other methods of social control to discipline the work force.”⁷⁷ Thus, as unconverted Indians learned about the “forced labor and high death rate in the missions, few voluntary converts could be lured into the missions.”⁷⁸ To obtain new recruits, the Franciscans turned to force.

Cook has explained that after 1787, “Franciscans began to rely upon the military to ‘recruit’ reluctant tribesmen for conversion.”⁷⁹ Spaniards also used coercion. Often, children or women with children were forcibly removed to the missions and used as leverage, or hostages, to recruit the rest of their families. The padres insisted that baptized Indians not leave the mission’s village without their permission and routinely used physical punishments to enforce their will.⁸⁰

Coercion and Punishment

During the early modern period, corporal punishment was the norm in Spain but not among the Natives of California before colonization. The padres in California answered violations of their commands and “moral strictures with warnings” and then corporal punishments.⁸¹ In 1780 Serra himself wrote to Governor de Neve, “That spiritual fathers should punish their sons, the Indians, with blows appears to be as old as the conquest of the Americas; so general in fact

⁷⁶ Street, *Beasts of the Field*. 25.

⁷⁷ Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization*, 8-9.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁷⁹ Cook, *Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, 95.

⁸⁰ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 200.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 201.

that the saints do not seem to be any exception to the rule.”⁸² Serra’s support of corporal punishment, which governed California mission policies for decades, was connected to his own spiritual practices. Imitating St. Francis, Serra devoted himself to the Virgin Mary and the practice of self-flagellation. This ritual involved “removing the tunic from his shoulders and striking his own bare back repeatedly with a small braided whip, called a discipline (*la disciplina*) all the while deep in prayer and meditation upon Christ’s sufferings for humankind.”⁸³ Since mission fathers, including the founder of the missions, were performing self-flagellation, they did not consider this a great punishment. According to Guest, “It was self-flagellation of the missionaries that seemingly did more than anything else to induce the Indians to accept with some measure of resignation the physical punishments imposed upon them by the force of Spanish custom.”⁸⁴

Franciscans routinely used the threat of corporal punishment to drive California mission Indians to work. When moral suasion failed, “physical means became necessary.”⁸⁵ Franciscans believed the “regimented daily work schedule would provide the structure and discipline the padres believed the Indians lacked.”⁸⁶ Those who avoided work were first scolded. Then, if they did not conform, they were whipped or otherwise physically punished. Evidently, with Serra’s approval, “they were flogged, or put into the stocks, according to the gravity of their offense.”⁸⁷ Some Franciscans believed that punishment would modify the supposedly lazy character of the Indian. In 1785, according to Franciscan father, Fermín Lausén, “It is obvious that a barbarous, fierce, and ignorant country needs punishments and penalties that are different from one that is cultured and enlightened, and where

⁸² *Ibid.*, 100.

⁸³ Sandos, *Converting California*, 36

⁸⁴ Francis F. Guest, “Cultural Perspectives on California Mission Life.” *Southern California Quarterly* 65:1 (Spring 1983), 20.

⁸⁵ Guest, “Cultural Perspectives on California Mission Life,” 96.

⁸⁶ Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 280.

⁸⁷ Hackel, *Junipero Serra*, 217.

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the way of doing things is restrained and mild.”⁸⁸ But, not all Franciscan fathers supported the use of corporal punishment in California’s missions.

In 1798, Fr. Antonio de la Concepcion Horra, who had served at Mission San Miguel, explained that this system had gone too far. Risking his career, de la Concepcion, wrote, “the manner in which the Indians are treated is by far more cruel than anything I have ever read about. For any reason, even for the smallest missteps, they are severely and cruelly whipped, placed in shackles, or put in the stocks for days on end without receiving even a drop of water.”⁸⁹

Opposing De la Concepcion, Jose Maria Amador, an employee of the missions gave his account of his observations of Indians treatment. Gregorio Torres-Mora, a historian described how Amador, in 1827, “observed the missionaries use of physical punishment on the neophytes. Amador notes that flogging was a daily occurrence. Amador viewed punishment as necessary to correct the ‘natural’ laziness, immaturity, and irresponsibility of Indians.”⁹⁰ Indisputably, “he concurred with the missionaries that the Indians needed supervision, and some form of punishment on occasion to keep them on the straight path. Amador did not consider the punishment of Indians as necessarily cruel or inhumane. Most neophytes would not have shared Amador’s view.”⁹¹

California Indians vividly recalled the corporal punishments of the missions. In 1877, the Costanoan Indian, Lorenzo Asisara described the treatment of mission Indians at Mission Santa Cruz by telling the

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 217.

⁸⁹ Fray Antonio de la Concepcion Horra, O.F.M., to the viceroy, July, 12, 1798, CMD379a, Santa Barbara Mission Archives, Santa Barbara, California. Translation by Author: Asi mismo, el trato que los indios se da, es el mas cruel que en historias he leido, por cualquier cosa, aun los mas leve, se les carga de azotes, de grillos, y cepa con tanta crueldad, que los tienen dias enteros sin darles una sed de agua.

⁹⁰ Torres-Mora, *California Voices*, 18.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

story of his father, Venancio Asar. Asisara explained, “they made them work like slaves, he said of the padres, adding, we were always trembling with fear of the lash.”⁹² According to Asisara, “The Spanish priests were very cruel with the Indians: they mistreated them a lot, they kept them poorly fed, ill clothed, and they made them work like slaves.”⁹³ He recounted stories from older neophytes about how Padre Ramon Olbes “was very inclined to cruelly whip. He was never satisfied to prescribe less than 50 lashes; even to the littler children of 8-10 years he would order 25 lashes given at the hand of a strong man, either on the buttocks, or on the stomach when the whim would enter him.”⁹⁴ Julio Cesar, a mission Indian, likewise remarked on the whippings during his youth at Mission San Luis Rey. In 1878 Cesar recalled, “When I was a boy the treatment given to the Indians at the mission was not at all good. They did not pay us anything, but merely gave us our food and breechclout and blanket, the last renewed every year, besides flogging for any fault however slight. We were at the mercy of the administrator, who ordered us to be flogged whenever and however he took a notion.”⁹⁵ San Buenaventura mission field hand Fernando Librado of the Chumash tribe narrated in some detail the harsh punishments of the mission community:

In those days punishment for the Indians was performed in a jail just east of the tower of Mission San Buenaventura. In one of the rooms there were the punishment stocks. There were two kinds of stocks in that room. One was shaped of wood to cover the foot like a shoe. It was made from two pieces of wood, which opened, and the entire foot was placed into it from toe to heel. These pieces of wood were joined to a ring which

⁹² Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 56.

⁹³ Torres-Mora, *California Voices*, 95. Translation by Author: Los Padres españoles eran muy crueles con los indios. Los maltrataban mucho, los tenían mal comidos, mal vestidos, y los hacían trabajar como esclavos.

⁹⁴ Lightfoot, *Indians, Missionaries and Merchants*, 92.

⁹⁵ Lightfoot, *Indians, Missionaries and Merchants*, 93.

went about the knee, and from this ring straps were attached to a belt that went around the waist of a person. Weights were fastened to the straps. As punishment, the priests would work men and women in the fields with these weighted wooden shoes. The priests also sometimes shackled the feet of Indians, or shackled two Indians together at the same time. I remember how the Indians were treated unjustly by the order of the priests.⁹⁶

California Indian voices from multiple missions recollected corporal punishments.

Priests used corporal punishment to shape all sorts of behavior, including the performance of labor. After distributing the workforce, priests would retire to their cells and check the names of the Indians who had not presented themselves to work. For this offense “they would receive six lashes if it was one day and if it were two days and up to a week, [they would get] from fifteen to twenty-five lashes. Every day, there were ten [individuals] or fewer who were punished. The one who did not go to church or to work (unless he had permission or could prove that he was sick or if married, he had gone to get firewood) would get an unpardonable flogging.”⁹⁷ Every action in a mission had a consequence, usually some form of physical punishment.

Padres Tápis of Mission Santa Barbara “punished Indian transgressions of European mores ‘with the authority which Almighty God concedes to parents for the education of their children.’ ‘They are treated with tolerance,’ affirmed Father President Lausén in 1801, ‘or dealt with more or less firmly... while awaiting the time when they will gently submit themselves to rational restraint.’”⁹⁸ In 1817, Tápis

⁹⁶ Fernando Librado and Travis Hudson, Ed., *Breath of the Sun: Life in Early California as told by a Chumash Indian, Fernando Librado to John P. Harrington*. (Banning, California: Malki Museum Press, 1979), 17.

⁹⁷ Torres-Mora, *California Voices*, 211.

⁹⁸ Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, 45.

candidly explained

a man, boy or woman either runs away or does not return from the excursion until other neophytes are sent after him. When he is brought back to the mission, he is reproached for the transgression of not complying with the obligation of hearing hold Mass on a day of obligation. He is made to see that he has freely subjected himself to this and other Christian duties, and he is then warned that he will be chastised if he repeats the transgression. He again runs away, and is again brought back. Then he experiences the chastisement of the lash or the stocks. If this is insufficient, as is the case with some, seeing that a warning is useless, he is made to feel the shackles, which he wears for three days while he is kept at work.⁹⁹

Such punishments were entirely legal and justified in many Franciscans' worldview. The shackles, the stocks, and the lash were integral aspects of the missions as was the forcible physical division of families according to Franciscan policies.

Gender Separation

Franciscans divided California mission Indian families into three groups and housed each group separately. First, "Franciscans domiciled married couples with small children in neophyte villages, which the Padres persuaded them to erect roughly a hundred yards from the first temporary mission buildings. Second, they placed girls of about eight years and up, together with young unmarried women and widows, in a shared room, or dormitory called the *monjerio* (dormitory). In the *monjerio*, women and girls "were locked [in] at night to insure their being 'secure against any insult.'"¹⁰⁰ The residents of the *monjerio* were also confined during the day until they had accomplished the tasks

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁰⁰ Webb, *Indian Life at the Old Missions*, 28.

allotted them by their *Maestras*. They also took their meals there, verifying the contention that the *monjerio* was far more than a mere sleeping room.¹⁰¹ Finally, “The *monjerio* rooms measured about seven hundred square feet and housed fifty to one hundred women and girls. At best, then, each internee had only about fourteen square feet in the *monjerio*.”¹⁰² *Monjerios* also served as another means of labor for Indian women as “the *monjerio* also served to train the Indian women and girls in skills befitting their new life-style.”¹⁰³ The account of the *llavera*, the woman in charge of each *monjerio*, gives historians an insight into the real purpose of these *monjeros*. It was another element of the mission system meant to create labor by teaching young women to make something that could be an economic product for the mission. The *monjerio* also clearly resembled a prison.

Leasing Mission Indian Labor

Though slavery is generally defined as buying and selling human beings, Franciscans sold California mission Indian Labor when supplying the *presidios* (military garrisons) with California mission Indian contract or day laborers. Under this system, military officials requested that the mission fathers provide a specific number of Indian laborers for a period of days, weeks, or months. Yet because the military had no legal claim to Indians’ labor in colonial California, officers had to pay the mission a fixed rate per day for each mission Indian laborer it employed.¹⁰⁴ According to Street, the Franciscan father Lasuén “approved a scheme whereby padres at Santa Clara mission stopped providing field hands free of charge; rather, they began renting them out for grain, hides, and other goods necessary to the financially strapped missions.”¹⁰⁵ The missions profited from the work of these Indians without paying them anything in return. However, Hackel

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁰² Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, 62.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁰⁴ Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 297.

¹⁰⁵ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 36.

argued, “Missionaries insisted Indians were compensated, albeit indirectly, for their labor, since they gained food, housing, and an occasional change of clothing.”¹⁰⁶ Yet, they were unpaid workers without the freedom to quit. Thus, although, this system had no institutional name, it consisted of selling the labor of unfree workers.

In 1790, Governor Pedro Fages used about seventy mission Indians in Monterey over a period of six months. Franciscan fathers “loaned their charges [neophytes and gentiles] for work in the presidios as manual laborers and as domestic servants.”¹⁰⁷ Neophytes were not well treated by this system, which caused controversy among soldiers, priests, and Indians. Neophytes suffered the misfortune of being lent around by their legal guardians in return for little or nothing. All of the profit gained from their work went to others.

According to Jackson and Castillo, “Access to mission Indians gave settlers additional labor at key points in the agricultural cycle, as well as for other uses, such as building construction.” For example, “In 1807 residents of the Villa de Branciforte rented the labor of twelve Indians from Santa Cruz mission. Jose Maria Pinto had two Indians for a week, and Marcos Briones had one worker for four weeks.” Likewise, “In December of 1812, the settler Juan Pinto rented two Indians at a rate of 1.5 reales per day, which amount was entered into the account book as a debt to the mission. In the same year, Serafin Pinto paid 30 reales for Indian laborers.” And, “In January of 1813, Joaquin Castro owed the Franciscans at Santa Cruz mission 40 reales for the services of one Indian laborers beginning on December 16 of the previous year.”¹⁰⁸ Franciscan fathers gained a profit from the labor of California Indians. This was typical in most California missions.

Escape

Discontented with mission life, many California mission Indians escaped. This was a prevalent form of resistance. Perhaps 4,060 escaped

¹⁰⁶ Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 281.

¹⁰⁷ Cook, *Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, 96.

¹⁰⁸ Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization*, 29.

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from missions in 1817 alone.¹⁰⁹ Many fled “what they saw as an oppressive institution.”¹¹⁰ Dislike for “mission work and discipline, resentment at forced incorporation and conversion forced many Indians to flee the missions.”¹¹¹ If caught, they suffered particularly intense corporal punishment and sometimes death, as noted earlier by the Russian captive Turkanoff.

Serra himself advocated whipping recaptured mission escapees. In 1775, nine of Serra’s mission Indian wards were returned to mission San Carlos. Serra sent four of them (Carlos, Geronimino, Crisotbal, and Ildfonso) to a presidio to suffer punishment. He kept their wives at the mission, probably under lock and key. Serra “wanted all of them locked up at the presidio and to receive ‘two or three portions of whippings on separate days.’”¹¹² Why? Because Serra believed that these punishments would serve “as a warning” and “may be of spiritual benefit to all.”¹¹³ Others also recorded the regularity of corporal punishments inflicted on recaptured California mission Indian runaways.

Describing his 1786 visit, the Frenchman La Pérouse wrote that, “the moment an Indian is baptized, the effect is the same as if he had pronounced a vow for life. If he escapes to reside with his relations in the independent villages, he is summoned three times to return; if he refuses, the missionaries apply to the governor, who sends soldiers to seize him in the midst of his family and conduct him to the mission, where he is condemned to receive a certain number of lashes with the whip.”¹¹⁴ California Indians who repeatedly ran away suffered a harsher

¹⁰⁹ Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, 96.

¹¹⁰ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 239.

¹¹¹ George Hardwood Phillips, *Chiefs and Challengers: Indian Resistance and Cooperation in Southern California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 33.

¹¹² Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 201.

¹¹³ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 201.

¹¹⁴ Jean Francois de la Perouse, *Monterey in 1786: Life in a California Mission* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1989), 82.

punishment each time they were recaptured. Increasing the number lashes an individual received was believed to discourage California Indians from running away.

In 1795, a senior Christian Indian named Ortrou recounted the lethal force sometimes used in attempts to recapture escaped mission Indians. Ortrou explained that, “Five older Christian Indians from mission San Francisco left the mission. Two alcaldes Pasqual and Rogerio with nine new Christians from the Rancherias from the other estero with permission from missionary Antonio Danti went to bring back all the Christians who fled.”¹¹⁵ Ortrou continued, “Once they arrived [at the location of the escaped Indians] men came out with bows and arrows. Indians immediately started firing arrows stating ‘these are our enemies.’ Seeing the alcaldes generated violence even though the alcaldes wanted to convince them [Indians] that they had no intention of fighting or hurting them but without paying attention Indians continued aiming arrows until seven Indians who escaped and six of the new Christina Indians were killed.”¹¹⁶ This act of defiance against the alcaldes resembled a small uprising and was but one of many larger acts of violent California Indian resistance to the missions.

¹¹⁵ 1795. CMD 226, Santa Barbara Mission Archives, Santa Barbara, California, Page 1. Translation by Author: Que salieron de la mission de San Francisco cinco Indios Cristianos viejos incluso los dos alcaldes Pasqual y Rogerio junto con otros nueve Cristianos nuevos de las Rancheria de la otra band del Estero con orden del P. misionero Anotni Danti de traer todos los Cristianos que andaban huidos.”

¹¹⁶ 1795. CMD 226, Santa Barbara Mission Archives, Santa Barbara, California, Page 1.

Translation by Author: Que a ser arrivo fueron saliendo hombres armados de arechos y flechas de un gernase grande con tanta preciptaacion que lo hicieron pedazos; pezando desde luego a tirarles jaras, diciendo estos son nuestros enemigos: Que viendo los alcaldes esta violencia quisieron persuadirlos que no iban a pelear ni a hacer daño alguno, peros sin hacerles caso continuaron jarean hasta que mataron siete habiendo huido desde el primer de la accion seis de los nuevos cristianos por haverse asi mandado los alcaldes,.

Indian Uprisings

Franciscans controlled what California mission Indians did, forced them to work, used violence to control them, separated families, rented them to others, forcibly recaptured runaways, and took their ancestral lands. Thus, it is not surprising that California Indians staged multiple uprisings at the missions. Forbes, explained, “No matter what means were used to entice Indians into a mission, force had to be used to keep them there and to coerce them into abandoning their native customs.”¹¹⁷ Thus when “they discovered what the mission system meant, then there was dismay, followed by unrest, followed by fugitivism, and if it was found possible, it was followed by revolt.”¹¹⁸

The first California mission uprising began on the night of November 5, 1775, when Kumeyaay warriors attacked the lightly defended Mission San Diego. They burned the mission to the ground, killing Father Luis Jayme and a blacksmith and mortally wounding the mission’s carpenter.¹¹⁹ The Kumeyaay resented the intrusion into their lands and 600 of them surrounded the mission, pillaged the church, and torched the mission’s buildings.¹²⁰ Given over six years of tension between the struggling Spanish and the Kumeyaay, the 1775 uprising was not surprising. Whippings may have been especially humiliating and infuriating for Kumeyaay people. According to one scholar, Southern California Indians reserved flogging for murders and rapists. The offender, after being stretched out on a rock and whipped, was considered an out-cast, unable to marry or participate fully in community life. Most Southern California Indians apparently committed suicide after the flogging. What appeared to the Spanish to be a painful but nonlethal flogging could seem to the Kumeyaay like a grievous and irreparable assault on one’s body and reputation.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Costo and Costo, *Missions of California*, 59.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹¹⁹ Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 207.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹²¹ Florence C. Shipek. “California Indian Reactions to the Franciscans.” *The Americas* 41:4 (April 1985), 480-492.

The Kumeyaay were not the only California Indians to rise up against the Franciscan missions. In 1781, the Yumas and Quechans destroyed two new missions along the Colorado River and killed their missionaries and colonists. The violence erupted when Fernando Rivera y Moncada, the commanding officer escorting a party of one hundred colonists and their 961 horses, mules, and cows to Santa Barbara, overstayed his welcome at the recently constructed mission along the strategic Lower Colorado River. “The settlers arrived late in the season, brought no gifts, and had to be fed and supported by the Yumas. They took over the best Yuma land for the missions and their own cultivation. When the Yumas objected to this, and to working for the Spanish, they were whipped, put in stocks, or otherwise severely punished.”¹²² Working conditions and the punishment that followed if orders were not obeyed ignited the 1781 uprising. It signified an important change in California mission Indians’ lives because they fought against the conditions they lived under. The Yuma and Quechan Indians “who initially welcomed Tarabel and the Spanish, attacked and wiped out both Colorado River outposts, killing almost one hundred soldiers and several padres, including Padre Garces, and possibly Tarabal.”¹²³

In February 1824, Chumash neophytes began an uprising against the soldiers of missions Santa Ines, La Purisima, and Santa Barbara. Violent beatings were common in the lives of Indians who worked in missions but on the afternoon of February 21, “Valentin Cota, the corporal of the guard at Santa Ines mission, brutally flogged a native from La Purisimia.”¹²⁴ This ignited the “discontent among an Indian population already fed up with living and working conditions and resentful of idle and inconsiderate soldiers.”¹²⁵ The victim’s

¹²²Granvill W. Hough and N.C. Hough, Ed., *Spain’s California Patriots in its 1779-1783 War With England During the American Revolution Part 1* (G.W. & N.C. Hough, 1998), 40.

¹²³ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 60; Hough, *Spain’s California Patriots*, 41.

¹²⁴ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 60.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

companions attacked the soldiers and padres, and while the soldiers defended themselves and the ministers, the “neophytes burned missions buildings.”¹²⁶ Natives armed themselves with bows and arrows, seized control of Santa Ines mission, attacked the soldiers, and burned their quarters.¹²⁷ The uprising quickly spread to the Chumash at Santa Barbara and La Purisima. It “involved such large number of natives that there seems little doubt that field hands were among the ranks of those battling the soldiers” and when the “uprising spread to Santa Barbara mission, field hands certainly participated.”¹²⁸ The role field hands played in these uprisings indicated how great their discontent was with their working conditions. Three months after witnessing the uprising, Padre Antonio Ripoll of Santa Barbara mission reported “field hands, vineyardists, gardeners, and horticulturalists” involved in the uprising.¹²⁹ According to Street, they were “fed up with growing their food and being treated like slaves.”¹³⁰ The Chumash Uprising was the largest organized resistance movement to occur during the Spanish and Mexican periods in California.¹³¹

Secularization

Meanwhile, in 1821, Mexico threw off Spanish rule, and California became part of the new independent nation. By the time Mexican authorities secularized the missions in the early 1830s, more than 80,000 Indians had been baptized between San Diego and Sonoma, but almost 60,000 had been buried, nearly 25,000 of whom were children under the age of ten.¹³² Some scholars, like Manuel Patricio

¹²⁶ Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, 94.

¹²⁷ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 60.

¹²⁸ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 60.

¹²⁹ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 60.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹³¹ Rose Marie Beebe and Senkewicz, Robert M. Ed., *Lands of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California, 1535 – 1846* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2001), 272.

¹³² Hackel, *Junípero Serra*, 239-240.

Servin, have described secularization as the liberation of the California mission Indians from “virtual enslavement.”¹³³ Spanish Franciscan friar Fray Narciso Duran admitted the “necessity of utilizing civil and military authority to keep the Indians under control.”¹³⁴ So too did some contemporary observers. For example, in January 1833 California’s Mexican Governor Jose Figueroa wrote that the missions epitomized a “monastic despotism.”¹³⁵

With secularization most Indians left the missions for the countryside, the pueblos of San Jose, Los Angeles, and Monterey, or the expanding ranchos. According to Jackson and Castillo, “In concrete terms one of the most immediate changes brought about by emancipation was the right to refuse to labor on communal projects in the missions and not to be subjected to whippings and other forms of corporal punishment and imprisonment on the orders of the missionaries.”¹³⁶ When secularization came for California mission Indians, many experienced real freedom for the first time. The Chumash man Fernando Librado recollected, “When all the Mission Indians heard the cry of freedom, they said, ‘Now they no longer keep us here by force.’”¹³⁷ Captain Pablo de la Portilla at mission San Luis Rey was an official in charge of secularization. He reported that field hands everywhere claimed, “We Are Free! We do not want to obey! We do not want to work.”¹³⁸ These accounts highlight the coercion imposed upon California mission Indians.

Indeed, emancipation undermined a system built upon unfree labor. As the Roman Catholic priest Zephyrin Engelhardt explained, “At many of the other missions, the immediate result of the 1833

¹³³ Manuel Patricio Servin, “The Secularization of the California Missions: A Reappraisal,” *Southern California Quarterly* 47:2 (June 1965), 133.

¹³⁴ Michael C. Neri, “Narciso Duran and the Secularization of the California Missions,” *The Americas* 33: 3 (January 1977), 415.

¹³⁵ Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, 123.

¹³⁶ Jackson and Castillo, *Indians, Franciscans and Spanish Colonization*, 91.

¹³⁷ Street, *Beasts of the Field*, 85.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 85.

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emancipation decree was to reduce the labor force available to the missionaries, since most of the newly liberated converts refused to work under the same coercive mission labor system.” For example, “the Franciscans stationed at San Luis Rey mission reported, in June of 1833, that most of the recently emancipated converts refused to work on communal mission projects. The Franciscans bitterly complained about the breakdown of the social controls that were necessary for the smooth functioning of the mission economies.”¹³⁹

Mexican soldiers, rancheros, and farmers coveted the rich coastal lands that the missions controlled and soon after independence they began calling for the privatization of church property. Thus, between 1834 and 1836, the Mexican government confiscated California mission properties and exiled the Franciscan friars. The missions were secularized and broken up, their property sold or given to private citizens. Secularization was supposed to return the land to the Indians.¹⁴⁰ The 1834 plan for secularization assigned one half the mission lands and property to neophytes in grants of thirty-three acres of arable land along with land “in common” sufficient “to pasture their stock.” In addition, one half of the mission herds were to be divided proportionately among the neophyte families. In actuality, however, most Indians were put to work on ranchos or went to live among Indians in the interior. Some former mission Indians congregated in local rancherías dwelling areas on the perimeter of a hacienda where an indigenous Spanish and mestizo culture developed.¹⁴¹ Californian Indians were often swindled out of the land or simply never told that they owned land; subsequently, many drifted away, strangers in their own ancestral homelands.

Conclusion

¹³⁹ Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt, *The Missions and Missionaries of California: Vol. 1, Lower California* (Santa Barbara: Mission Santa Barbara, 1929), 4:17.

¹⁴⁰ Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 389.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 415.

California Indians' day-to-day lives changed dramatically when they became captives in California missions. By imposing an unfree labor regime on them, Franciscans created a system that used California Indians' labor for the development and prosperity of the missions. California Indians were restricted on what they could do and their daily lives were dictated to them. Indians were the heart of the California missions as they slaved away to ensure that their daily assigned tasks were completed. From sunrise to sunset every California Indian, men, children, and women, were assigned a task: doing household chores, working in the fields, toiling as carpenters or blacksmiths, or working at other jobs. If they did not complete the tasks assigned to them by the Franciscans fathers, they suffered physical consequences.

It is true that initially some California Indians entered the missions voluntarily. But, they soon realized that their freedom had been taken. Beginning in 1787, coercion played a role in the relocation of California Indians to the missions. For example, Spaniards brought children and women to the missions to serve as leverage over parents. In effect, Spaniards used women and children as hostages for recruiting men. This became a common tactic for recruiting California Indians.

California mission Indians experienced the whip that struck their bodies, being placed in stocks, and sleeping in locked dormitories where they were kept as prisoners. Any institution allowing these forms of punishment and containment surely reflected the underlying motive of the California missions' Franciscans fathers, which was to use corporal punishments to compel mission Indians to work while dissuading them from escaping.

Eventually California Indians grew tired of these unfree labor conditions and the punishments they received for not obeying the Franciscan fathers. California missions Indians were punished for being late to work, not meeting the work standards that Franciscan fathers requested of them or simply for not working fast enough. Punishment became Franciscan fathers reliable source in civilizing California Indians. However, California Indians did not view their punishment this way, but rather they regarded Franciscan fathers as cruel and unjust. They enacted diverse tactics and social actions to cope with the

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repressive and structured regime of the Franciscans. Some social actions involved strategies of active resistance, including escape, assassinations, and uprisings. Many California mission Indians were so unsatisfied with the conditions and treatment in the missions that they escaped missions. Most commonly these same Indians were recaptured multiple times. The fact that they were captured more than once is an indication of the unfree labor system that ruled their lives. Recaptured escapees suffered physical punishments such as whipping and sometimes even death. Escaping was just one reason for Franciscan fathers to punish California mission Indians. The negative sentiment of California Indians against the repressive system of California missions also clearly shows in the various uprisings that occurred such as the 1775 San Diego Uprising, the 1781 Colorado River Uprising, and the 1824 Chumash Uprising.

California mission Indians as well as multiple non-Indians gave accounts illustrating the unfree nature of Indian labor within California missions. Scholars such as Archibald, Costo and Costo, and Sanchez called it forced labor. Men like Pérouse and De Neve viewed California Indian mission labor as unfree as did De La Concepcion Horra, Amador, Tac, and Asisara. Mission Indians' lives resembled the lives of slaves. Despite the fact that the Franciscans were not motivated by the desire for personal economic gain, the missions nevertheless made unfree laborers out of the tens of thousands of those people that had been sent to save.

Mission histories tend to fall into one of two camps. On the one hand some scholars argue that the Franciscan fathers in California never meant to reduce California Indians to unfree laborers and that the relationship between the Franciscans and California mission Indians was one of exchange. According to this school, Franciscan fathers' goal was to promote Roman Catholic Christianity and Hispanic civilization. Thus, California mission Indians received spiritual salvation and material gifts from the Franciscans in exchange for labor. In contrast, other scholars argue that California Indian mission labor was fundamentally unfree and that unfree labor dominated California

missions.

This essay has demonstrated the severe restrictions placed upon California mission Indian freedom, the coerced nature of California Indian mission work, and the violence used to control California mission Indian workers. California Indians became captives on their own land.

With Mexico's secularization of California's missions in the early 1830s, most California mission Indians sought freedom from oppressive Franciscan authority. Indeed, many fled the missions during or soon after secularization. Indians regained their freedom from the despotic system that had controlled their everyday lives. They fled a system that had held them essentially as slaves. Without captive California Indian labor, many California missions did not survive.

In twenty-first century California, missions generally do not discuss the unfree Indian labor that built them. Nor do they discuss how the majority of Indians entered the missions. Unfree California Indian labor has been overshadowed by the story of exchange in which Indians traded labor for salvation and civilization. Our understanding of California Indian mission labor is changing. In reality, California Indian mission labor was unfree labor.

Although the nature of California Indian mission labor remains contested, this essay has demonstrated that an unfree labor regime controlled California mission Indians. The reality is that Franciscan fathers were not the "Godly" figures that California's public elementary schools and California missions depict them to be. California Indians became slaves on their own land. Society today has to recognize and acknowledge that these once independent and self-sustaining California Indian people became the unfree laborers who served as the backbone of California's missions.

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About the Authors

Douglas Daniels was born in Hamburg, Germany to American parents. He graduated from Clark Magnet High School in La Crescenta, CA in 2003 and within a few months began working in the film industry. He spent the next seven years working jobs as varied from Production Assistant to Control Room Operator to Vault Manager. After finding pre-, post-, and production-related work, he went back to school for his bachelor's at Glendale Community College in 2010. Doug transferred to UCLA in Fall of 2012, and has since studied and researched abroad in Germany and England. While attending UCLA he has found work for Powell Library's Helpdesk department, supporting all UCLA libraries with first-tier technical support response. While working towards his degree, Doug discovered a passion for Colonial and Revolutionary American History while under the tutelage of Professor Craig B. Yirush, who also advised his thesis work. After earning his Bachelor's degree in June of 2015 from UCLA with a dual-major focus in History and German, Doug hopes to pursue a doctoral degree in Revolutionary American History.

Andrew Diachenko, a member of the Class of 2014, graduated with College and Departmental Honors with a Bachelors Degree in History. Upon his graduation, he will be taking a year off to travel to Europe, Kauai, and other undetermined exotic locations. Andrew plans on attending law school in the Fall of 2015. The process of writing an honors thesis taught him just as much about the past as it taught him about himself. The true power of history is that it is constantly changing and evolving based on new perspectives that challenge the mainstream perception of the past. The historian must not be afraid to go against the grain of historical study in the search for truth. The study of Thomas Paine's diminishing legacy in America from 1776 to 1809 allows one to reevaluate the radicalness of early America and better understand its

leaders. Andrew would like to thank his sponsoring professor, Teofilo Ruiz, for all of his wisdom and guidance. He would also like to thank the UCLA History Department for the opportunity, the *Quaestio* Journal for the selection, and his family and friends for their unwavering support. He hopes you enjoy reading his thesis.

Jessica Freed is a third year history major planning on pursuing a higher degree in 19th century United States history. She is an involved member of PAT honor society and my sorority, Delta Delta Delta. Jessica chose to write this research paper following my internship working at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic State Park. She has interests in both social and cultural history. Southern California continues to be culturally diverse yet legacies of segregation and discrimination persist. She chose to study the beginnings of contact between two cultures, the Mexicano and the Yankee which she found to be the California Gold rush. Jessica had grown up learning about the California Gold Rush but never from the perspective of the people originally living here. This piece tells their story; the rush for gold was a very different experience for the Mexican-American.

Sabrina Ponce is in her fourth and final year of study with the History Department at UCLA. She did not complete a minor, but rather took several courses in French, German and Latin in preparation for graduate work in medieval history. Her thesis explores the concept of chivalry in fourteenth and fifteenth century England and its expansion from a military and monarchical concept to a civilian one that helped shape an English identity. Her interest in this topic originates from a profound love for the literature of the era and its contribution to the English language and identity. After graduating in June, Sabrina will be participating in an internship with the Getty Research Institute, after which she will spend time working and applying to post-baccalaureate programs to become proficient in Latin. Her ultimate goal is to continue studying medieval English history with the aim of obtaining a PhD and becoming a post-secondary educator.

Valeria Rivera is a fourth year History major and Pre-medicine. She was motivated to write a senior thesis under the direction of UCLA assistant professor Benjamin Madley on unfree California Indian labor in California missions. Above all, Valeria was inspired to write about this topic because of the fourth grade requirement in elementary schools to build a mission. She focused specifically on the labor aspect in California missions because there is little to no research arguing that California Indians were basically slaves and lost their freedom once they entered the missions. In the near future, she will be applying to medical school with a specialty in Ophthalmology and begin researching diseases that led to the declining numbers of California Indians. In this way she can focus on both interests: the medical and historical aspects of Indian populations. Aside from her thesis, she has been involved in the Los Angeles community as well as communities in Mexico to maintain a healthier and sustainable environment.

