

URBANFEST

A Collection of Writings in Honor of William L. Urban

Edited by

Thomas J. Sienkewicz

and

Jeff Rankin

**Monmouth, Illinois
2026**

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William L. Urban

Biography of William L. Urban

William Lawrence Urban was born on December 31, 1939, in Louisiana and spent portions of his childhood in Oklahoma and in his beloved Lucas, Kansas. He graduated from Shawnee High School in Shawnee, OK, in 1957 and attended Baylor University for two years before transferring to the University of Texas at Austin from which he earned a BA in 1961, an MA in 1963 and a Ph.D. in history in 1967. At UT he studied under Archibald “Archie” Ross Lewis and wrote a dissertation entitled *The Baltic Crusade of the Thirteenth Century*. The Baltic and the region’s crusades have remained for him a life-long research interest, as demonstrated by the twenty books on this topic which appear on his lists of publications. In Austin he also met Jacquelyn Juvenal whom he married on March 28, 1965, in Hamburg, Germany, while he was studying at the Universität Hamburg.

Following a year as a visiting assistant professor at the University of Kansas in Lawrence in 1965–1966, Urban moved to Monmouth College where he taught for the next 49 years and where he and Jackie raised their three children.¹ His initial teaching duties at Monmouth were five sections of western civilization, along with courses in Greek history, Roman history, and Medieval history, with more than 300 students each year. Over the years, he added many other courses to his repertoire, including Family History, “War and Peace,” and “The New Individual.”

Urban was also involved in many extracurricular activities at Monmouth. He rarely missed a home football, basketball or soccer game. He coached the men’s soccer team from 1968 to 1981 and his players helped start the local YMCA youth soccer program. He served as advisor to a women’s club in 1992 and 1993 and helped the college start the women’s NCAA soccer team in 1994. In addition, he was the founding advisor of the Monmouth chapter of the men’s Zeta Beta Tau fraternity from 1968 to 1974 and received a certificate of merit from the fraternity in 1971.

Urban traveled widely and often during his career, especially in Europe and North America, many times with students. He directed Associated Colleges of the Midwest programs in Florence, Italy, in 1974–1975, in Yugoslavia in 1986, and in the Czech Republic in 1994. He also taught one summer in Tallinn, Estonia, and for several summers accompanied art students across Europe for Eastern Michigan University.

Urban has been the recipient of numerous research grants, including Fulbright-Hays senior research grants in 1964–1965 and 1974–1975 and a *Deutscher Akademische Austauschdienst* (DAAD) grant in 1983. He has participated frequently in academic workshops and summer programs, including: National Endowment for the Humanities summer seminars in 1977, 1981, and 1988; a Global Awareness program in Russia in 2002; and the United States Military Academy’s Military History Workshop in 1985. From 1989 to 1994 he was editor of *the Journal of Baltic Studies*.

¹ For Urban’s reflections on his arrival in Monmouth in 1966, see “Arriving in Monmouth,” *Monmouth Review Atlas* January 4, 2022, accessed September 22, 2025, <https://www.reviewatlas.com/story/opinion/columns/2022/01/04/william-urban-arriving-monmouth-1966/9082211002/>.

His many academic awards and honors include: the Dr. Arthur Puksow Foundation Award for original Research in 1983;² the Illinois State Historical Society Harry E. Pratt Memorial Award in 1998 for the best article on Illinois history during the preceding year;³ the Vitols Prize of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies for the best article published in the *Journal of Baltic Studies* in 1998;⁴ the first Burlington Northern Foundation Faculty Achievement Award for Teaching Excellence at Monmouth College in 1985; and the Hatch Distinguished Scholarship and Research Award. Monmouth College in 2007. In 1994 he was named Monmouth College's Lee L. Morgan Professor of History and International Studies.

Over the years Urban served not only as Chair of the History Department but also, occasionally, as acting Chair of the Classics Department. As he prepared to retire in the spring of 2015, Urban gave a speech at the college entitled "People I Have Known"⁵ in which he talked about some of the memorable people he worked with at Monmouth over the years, including: philosopher Sam Thompson; pianist Gracie Peterson; English professor Eva Cleland; professor of history Mary Crow;⁶ the Monmouth College President's secretary Eileen Loya;⁷ and Latin professor Bernice Fox. In 2016 he gave the 31st annual Bernice L Fox Classics lecture, entitled "America A New Rome?: Reflections on Decline and Fall."⁸

Following his retirement, Urban and his wife chose to remain in Monmouth, where he has continued writing and has enjoyed traveling, gardening and spending time with family and friends.

² Awarded for *The Livonian Crusade* and "The Nationality of Balthasar Russow," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 12/2 (1981), 160–172.

³ Awarded for "The People versus Nicholas P. Earp," *Illinois Historical Review*, 90 (Fall 1997), 173–190.

⁴ Awarded for "Victims of the Baltic Crusade," *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 29/3 (Fall 1998), 195–212.

⁵ Available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9J3I9Ik17kw>.

⁶ Urban, William (2022) "Remembering Mary Crow," *Monmouth Review Atlas* August 24, 2022, Accessed September 22, 2025, <https://www.reviewatlas.com/story/opinion/columns/2022/08/24/william-urban-remembering-mary-crow-at-monmouth-college/65415921007/>.

⁷ Urban, William (2013) "Remembering a Fabulous Person," *Monmouth Review Atlas* June 20, 2013, Accessed September 22, 2025, <https://www.reviewatlas.com/story/opinion/columns/2013/06/20/urban-remembering-fabulous-person/44351110007/>.

⁸ For more information about this lecture, including a program and abstract, see <https://www.tomsienkewicz.com/classics/Department/FoxLecture/FoxLecture2016.htm>.

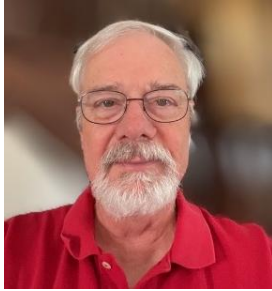
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Notes on Contributors

For bibliographic information on books mentioned here, see the bibliography at the end of the Introduction.



THOMAS BEST, raised in Iowa, is a 1981 graduate of the University of Northern Iowa with a degree in history. He came to Monmouth to teach 7th grade Social Studies in 1983 at Central Junior High. He continued teaching and coaching until the time of his retirement in 2016. In the meantime, he also earned his Masters in History at Western Illinois University. He was honored during this time as one of the finalists for teacher of the year in the state of Illinois. He also participated in a number of travel grants through the “Teaching American History” program with other Illinois educators. From these excursions he created dozens of lessons relating to historical sites ranging from Boston’s Freedom Trail to the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas. He happily created a “History Club” which served hundreds of students over the years in the study of local history. From studies of local cemeteries to architectural styles found in Monmouth, his 7th graders learned an appreciation for local history and culture. His educational interests extended to teaching in the Monmouth College Education Department and History Department for over 25 years. He taught courses in the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, and the use of primary sources in the classroom. Since retirement he has continued being involved in community affairs and events at the Jamieson Center, Buchanan Center for the Arts, Kiwanis, the Warren County Museum, and his Faith United Presbyterian Church.



JAMES E. BETTS grew up in Collinsville, IL. He received the Bachelor of Music degree from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, the Master of Music degree from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, the Master of Science degree from Western Illinois University, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Iowa. He has been internationally active as performer, conductor, composer, and educator, and taught in the Music Department and other academic disciplines of Monmouth College from 1989 to 2017. Among his academic activities, he served as an editor for the *Journal of Baltic Studies* in collaboration with William Urban and gave the Bernice L. Fox Classics Lecture in 2022. Jim met Vicki Wine in 1989 at a Fox Classics Lecture at Monmouth College organized by Thomas Sienkewicz. They married four years later and live in a 120-year-old farmhouse in Mercer County, Illinois.



MARY HANFORD BRUCE taught American literature, composition, and creative writing in the English Department at Monmouth College for twenty-nine years. Three Fulbright awards and two Global Partners Grants enabled her to teach in Cameroon, Kenya and Russia. In addition, she co-directed two student abroad programs: Monmouth College's "Reading and Writing in Reading," in Reading, England and the Associated Colleges of the Midwest Program in Zimbabwe, East Africa. These experiences inspired a poetry collection, a novel and a memoir as well as over seventy-five poems. Dr. Bruce credits Professor Bill Urban for her success. His strong principles and mentorship encouraged her to spread her wings.



BRIAN CHABOWSKI is a Professor of Marketing at King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals but has also held the same position at the University of Tulsa. Brian graduated from Monmouth College in 1995 with a triple majored B.A. in History, Spanish, and International Studies with honors in History. As a part of his at Monmouth, he participated on semester-long study abroad programs to Costa Rica (Fall 1993) and the Czech Republic (Fall 1994), but was also Promotion Manager at the student-run radio station, WMCR, participated on stage in productions by the college's thespian ensemble, Crimson Masque, and wrote timely commentaries in the student newspaper, *The Oracle*. In addition to benefiting from Dr. Urban's leadership on the Czech Republic program in Olomouc, Brian also took many courses from him while on campus, ranging from Western Civilization and the History of Rome to the Wild West and US History. It was through studying Czech and spending time in Olomouc that Brian met his wife, Tiffany.

After Monmouth, Chabowski joined the United States Peace Corps and was a volunteer for three years serving the roles as a teacher of English and small enterprise development specialist in Lithuania. Then, after spending a semester studying business in Estonia and, after that, working in the transportation and technology industries in Seattle, Washington, he graduated from Indiana University with an MBA, possessing majors in Marketing and Strategic Management Consulting and a minor in Finance. He subsequently worked toward and was granted his PhD in Marketing (major) and International Business (minor) from Michigan State University. While publishing several articles in *Financial Times* 50 academic journals such as the *Journal of International Business Studies* and the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* on a variety of international marketing topics, Chabowski has spent significant amounts of time with his family in places such as China and elsewhere. Together, they spent one year in Finland as he received a Fulbright scholarship to research social, environmental, and economic sustainability at the University of Vaasa. Most recently, Brian has been in Saudi Arabia for over one year with his wife and family.



TIFFANY RAMSEY CHABOWSKI is currently a finance and internal auditing business line risk professional at a large *Fortune Global 500* multinational corporation. Tiffany graduated from Monmouth College in 1995 with a B.A. in Accounting with honors. In addition to participating in the Honors Program at Monmouth, she served as Assistant Treasurer and then Treasurer of the Kappa Delta sorority. While studying in the Czech Republic during the fall semester of 1994 with Dr. Urban, Tiffany met her future husband, Brian.

After graduation, Chabowski joined the United States Peace Corps and for two years served as a small enterprise development specialist in Estonia. She then transitioned to her career in the accounting and finance industry, first becoming an auditor with Coopers & Lybrand in Tallinn, Estonia, taking part in the merger with Price Waterhouse, and then becoming a senior auditor with the newly formed PricewaterhouseCoopers in Seattle, Washington. During this time, Tiffany gained her certifications as both a licensed Certified Public Accountant (CPA) as well as a part of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). She graduated from Indiana University's MBA program with majors in Finance, Marketing, and Strategic Management Consulting and a minor in Operations. During her MBA studies, she benefited from an internship in which she examined the financial and production implications of maternity and infant customer usage patterns in Mexico.

Chabowski became a senior research and development financial analyst and principal technical operations financial analyst at a *Fortune 500* pharmaceutical multinational company and then worked on planning and forecasting software implementation and financial reporting at a private aerospace company. While serving as a Manager of Finance and Integration at a large manufacturing firm supporting the traditional energy industry, Tiffany earned her White Belt Six Sigma Certification. Subsequently, she became a Financial Controller at a commodities software consulting and implementation company and then was Global Controller for a firm specializing in digital catalog development.



SIMON CORDERY taught history at Monmouth College from 1994 through 2012 and served as women's soccer coach at the college from 1994 through 2000. He chaired the History Department at Western Illinois University from 2012 through 2016 and is now in his tenth year as chair of the History Department at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. He is the author of four books and co-editor of *Building Positive Peace* (2023). His latest book is *Gilded Age Entrepreneur: The Curious Life of American Financier and Railroader Albert Benton Pullman* (2025), a biography of the influential,

flamboyant but little-known elder brother of sleeping-car magnate George Pullman. His previous monograph, *The Iron Road in the Prairie State: The Story of Illinois Railroading* (2016), earned the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society's George W. and Constance M. Hilton Book Award for an outstanding work of lasting value to the interpretation of North America's railroading history. He is married to former Monmouth College History professor Stacy A. Cordery.



STACY A. CORDERY is the author of five books, including her most recent, *Becoming Elizabeth Arden: The Woman Behind the Global Beauty Empire* (Viking, 2024), and biographies of Alice Roosevelt Longworth and Juliette Gordon Low. An award-winning teacher, Cordery is currently completing her tenth and final year as a professor of History at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Cordery previously taught for 22 years at Monmouth College, where she served as History Department chair and director of the Women's Studies Program. She is the president of the Society of Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (SHGAPE), a board member of the First Ladies Association for Research and Education (FLARE), and an advisor to the Theodore Roosevelt Center and the Theodore Roosevelt Association. A sought-after speaker, Cordery has also appeared on a wide array of popular news shows and podcasts, including NPR's Weekend Edition, the History Channel, Smithsonian TV, the Diane Rehm Show, CNN, and "60 Minutes Overtime." For more information, please see www.stacycordery.com.



DANIEL COTTER is a Member at Aronberg Goldgehn. Dan's practice encompasses a range of roles, including a pivotal tenure as general counsel for a major life insurance company and extensive private practice experience. His clientele spans insurance firms, financial institutions, IT/consulting enterprises, and nonprofits. Dan graduated from Monmouth College in 1988 with a B.A. in Accounting, *magna cum laude*. His liberal arts education at Monmouth has led him to a lifetime pursuit of learning and curiosity.

At Monmouth, Cotter started on the football team and, as the player who, in the opinion of his peers, had contributed the most to the team in the current season, was the recipient of the James K. McClintock III Award. He was recognized as an academic and athletic all American in 1987 and received a National Football Foundation and Hall of Fame Scholar-Athlete award. He was President of Mortar Board, a head resident and named Blue Key's Senior Man of the Year.

After graduating from Monmouth in 1988, he worked as an accountant and attended law school at night. In 1995 he graduated *summa cum laude* and number one in his class from the John Marshall School of Law and has practiced law for 30 years. He is the author of *The Chief Justices: The Seventeen Men of the Center Seat, Their Courts, and Their Times* (2019) and is frequently consulted as an expert on the Supreme Court. In 2002 he was named a member of the Fighting Scots Athletic Hall of Fame. He has served as a trustee of the college since 2009, but his best achievement at the college was meeting his wife, Ann Marie, who was a history major and took numerous classes from Professor Urban. He is a co-founder and co-sponsor of the annual moot court competition at Monmouth.



NEIL DAHLSTROM is the Manager of Archives and Museums at John Deere. He graduated from Monmouth College in 1998 with degrees in History and Classics and received his masters in Historical Administration from Eastern Illinois University. Besides teaching several of Neil's classes, Dr. Urban was his independent study advisor, which culminated in the publication of the article "Rock Island Prison, 1863-1865: Andersonville of the North Dispelled" in the *Journal of Illinois History*. Neil has been a frequent speaker at Monmouth College since his graduation and has served on the Alumni Board. Dr. Urban taught Neil that "the book you need is next to the book you are looking for," advice that has led to a career of curiosity and research.

Dahlstrom serves on the boards of Visit Quad Cities, The Figge Art Museum, and Renew Moline, and is on the agricultural advisory board at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. He is the former chair of the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board, a former Illinois Roads Scholar. Neil is the author of three books and dozens of articles, and has appeared on the History Channel, National Geographic, PBS, and more. His latest book, *Tractor Wars: John Deere, Henry Ford, International Harvester and the Birth of Modern Agriculture*, was published in 2022. It was an Amazon Bestseller and won the American Bookfest award for Best History and the Henry Ford Heritage Association Book of the Year. *Tractor Wars*, a documentary based on the book, debuted on PBS in 2024.

VIV EDWARDS is Professor Emerita of Language and Education at the University of Reading, UK. She was previously Director of the National Centre for Language and Literacy which, on a number



of occasions, received Monmouth College students as part of the college's "Reading in Reading" off-campus program. She was editor in chief of the journal *Language and Education* for over 20 years and has researched and published in many areas where bi/multilingualism is a feature, including International Education, Higher Education and Educational Policy. Born and brought up in Wales, she has a longstanding interest in the Welsh language.



RICHARD HARROD received a PhD in history at Washington University in St. Louis in 2026. His research focuses broadly on the social and political history of the nineteenth and twentieth-century Middle East and Indian Ocean, with special concentration on the Arab World. Within these larger contours, he concentrates on the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf, particularly the regions that are present-day Yemen and Oman.

Harrod graduated from Monmouth College in 2007 with a B.A. in history and classics. At Monmouth, he was involved in student government, residence life, Zeta Beta Tau, and the Monmouth College Chorale. He was a member of Mortar Board, Eta Sigma Phi, and the Student Chaplains. He had many memorable classes with

Professor Urban and especially cherishes the historiography class he took with him. However, his favorite part of his Monmouth College experience was meeting his wife, Mollie.

Harrod earned an M.A. in Middle East Studies from the University of Chicago, and an A.M. in history from Washington University in St. Louis. His education and research have given him the opportunity to live in Jordan and Oman, and he has been fortunate to visit Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, and many other places along the way. He is author of “The Sultān’s Treatise: Development and Contending Visions of Oman’s Future in the Late-Nineteen Sixties” in *The Journal of Arabian Studies* and “The Making of the Durū’ Working Class: Empire, Oil, and Resistance in Fahūd, Oman from the 1950s to the 1970s” in *Middle East Critique*.

He is a zealous believer in the importance of the humanities, especially history, for teaching students the critical thinking skills, emotional intelligence, and cultural literacy necessary to improve communities, the nation, and the world.



FRED KELLER served as assistant professor of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Monmouth College from 1988 to 2001. Following those halcyon days of teaching in a competitive liberal arts environment along with superb mentors and colleagues, he assumed a new challenge in academic administration as Associate Dean for Communications and Humanities at Broward College with all the joys and headaches thereto appertaining. After retiring, he established Academic Translation Services and participated in translating textbooks, manuals, and academic materials with European publishers. He and his wife (along with a posse of cats) live in Tamarac, FL, have resumed frequent travel and endeavor to support non- profit organizations and international projects in education in Eastern Europe and Nepal.



KENNETH G. MCMILLAN, a native of Bushnell, IL, graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Agricultural Science in 1967. At Illinois he also earned a Masters and did ABD doctoral work in Agricultural Economics and Public Policy. Over the years he has served in a wide variety of leadership and political positions, including: National President of Future Farmers of America; Chief Speechwriter for the US Secretary of Agriculture; a two-term Illinois State Senator; twice Candidate for US Congress; Founding President and 25-year Board Member for the Illinois Agricultural Leadership Foundation; Assistant to the President and the Corporate Secretary for the Illinois Farm Bureau and Country Financial; Vice President of the National Suffolk Sheep Association; Trustee for The Wesley Foundation of the United Methodist Church, University of Illinois; and thirty-year member of Rotary International in Bushnell and Monmouth. For twenty years, he delivered the Annual State of the Economy address for Monmouth Rotary. He was a respected lecturer on the dynamics of professional leadership for 50 years.

McMillan taught economics at Monmouth College for 25 years, His Monmouth College career focused on teaching basic economics, international trade and finance, the economics of

government and taxation, comparative economic systems, and civic leadership. Faculty leadership included serving as Chair of the Faculty and Institutional Development, Curriculum, and Student Affairs Committees. He was Faculty Secretary and Parliamentarian for a decade. He retired in 2019 with the title of Pattee Professor Emeritus of Political Economy and Commerce. In retirement he enjoys growing a wide variety of day lilies.



BRADLEY NAHRSTADT spent thirty years defending insurance companies and corporations in high stakes personal injury cases in state and federal courts around the country. During the course of his career he served as the president of three different legal organizations: the Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel, the Primerus Defense Institute and the Chicago Lincoln Inn of Court. He retired from the practice of law in 2019.

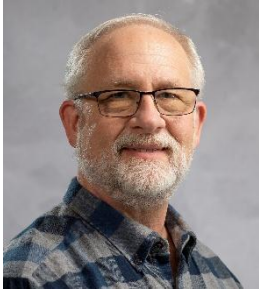
Nahrstadt graduated *summa cum laude* from Monmouth College in 1989 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English literature and political science and graduated with departmental honors in both of his major fields of study. He was one of the first four graduates of the Monmouth College Distinction Program. He was an active member of the Illinois Gamma Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon. He served as a member of the Interfraternity Council and was part of the IFC Presidents' Council. In his senior year Brad was selected as the Blue Key Senior Man of the Year and as the outstanding member of the Monmouth College fraternity system and was elected to the Order of Omega.

Nahrstadt is the author of three books: *Alton B. Parker: The Man Who Challenged Roosevelt*, *Pre-trial Litigation: A Practitioner's Approach* and *The Democrats in Turmoil: The Bitter Fights to Select a Presidential Nominee, 1896-1924*. He has served as a trustee of the college since 2002 and currently serves as the chair of the Student Affairs Committee and as Vice-Chair of the Nominations Committee. He is a co-founder and co-sponsor of the Monmouth College Moot Court Competition and has been invited to be the 2026 Commencement Speaker at the college.



JOSEPH R. O'NEILL, a native of Davenport, IA, graduated from Monmouth College in 2001 with a double major in History and Classics. He was an active member of the Monmouth College Pipe Band, serving as its pipe major for two years. O'Neill holds an MA in Medieval History from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Ph.D. in Classics from the University of Southern California, where he wrote his dissertation on Tacitus' depiction of the emperor Claudius. O'Neill is an Associate Teaching Professor at Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State

University where he teaches humanities and Classics courses and writes on aspects of Roman history and literature. He is also a skilled piper.



JEFF RANKIN is the retired Director of Communications, Editor and Historian at Monmouth College, where he worked for 30 years. A native of Monmouth, he graduated with a degree in English from St. Lawrence University in Canton, N.Y., in 1979.

Prior to joining the staff at Monmouth College in 1992, Rankin worked in marketing and communications for the National Bank of Monmouth and Carl Sandburg College. A local historian, he formerly produced a weekly history column for the Monmouth *Review Atlas* and a weekly local history program for Prairie Radio Communications. He was also the editor and co-author of the 1981 Monmouth, Ill., sesquicentennial history, *Born of the Prairie*, and the Monmouth College 2003 sesquicentennial history, *A Thousand Hearts Devotion*.

Rankin is married to Terri Rankin, a retired director of alumni and development records at Monmouth College. The Rankins have two grown children, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Jeff is a board member of the Warren County History Museum and a freelance graphic designer.

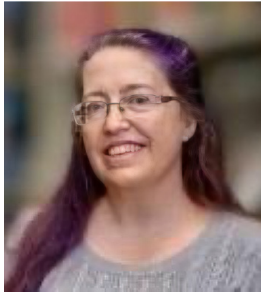


J. RICHARD SAYRE (Rick) retired from Monmouth College in 2018 after 20 years as director of Hewes Library. He received his BA in History from Phillips University, in Enid, Oklahoma, and his Master's in Library Science from the University of Oklahoma. Prior to Monmouth College, Sayre served 16 years as library director of his alma mater, Phillips University. He also served five years as Reference & Instruction librarian at Indiana University Libraries in Bloomington, Indiana, and assistant librarian at the Oklahoma College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

In 1986, 1988 & 1990 Sayre was a member and co-director of three Indochina Reconciliation delegation visits to Vietnam & Cambodia sponsored by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). From 1994-1998 he served as the first president of the Rural Health Projects Medfax Network providing NLM grant-funded health-related information and training to hospitals and clinics in northwest and north-central Oklahoma. He has co-authored two published bibliographies with Indiana University's Robert U. Goehert: *U.S. Congress: A Bibliography* (Free Press, 1982) and *Members of Congress: A Bibliography* (Congressional Quarterly, 1996).

Sayre lives in Galesburg with his wife, Mary Phillips, who was a professor of studio art and art history at Phillips University and most recently served as the curator of Monmouth College's Art Collections. He has enjoyed singing with the Buchanan Community Chorus since 1998. In retirement Sayre devotes much of his time serving the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association in Galesburg as board member, treasurer, webmaster and museum store manager. He also served as editor of *Sandburg's Hometown: A Selected Anthology*, by Barbara Schock (2024).



SYLVIA SHULTS is a 1990 graduate of Monmouth College where she took several courses with Bill Urban to fulfill her Classics major and participated in the ACM London-Florence Program. She is a librarian at Fondulac District Library in East Peoria, Illinois, and is the award-winning author of, among others, three books about the Peoria State Hospital. Her asylum books are *Fractured Spirits: Hauntings at the Peoria State Hospital*; *Fractured Souls*; and *44 Years in Darkness: A True Story of Madness, Tragedy, and Shattered Love*. She is also the author of several books of paranormal nonfiction, including the multi-award-winning *Gone on Vacation: Haunted Zoos, Museums, and Amusement Parks*; *Days of the Dead: A Year of True Ghost Stories*; and *Grave Deeds And Dead Plots*. She sits in dark, spooky, haunted places so you don't have to. She has spent the last twenty-eight years working at a public library, slowly smuggling out enough words in her pockets week after week to build a book of her own. She lives a short, ten-minute motorcycle ride away from the haunted asylum that features in so many of her books. She considers it the highest privilege to share the incredible, compassionate history of the Peoria State Hospital.



JULIA SIENKEWICZ is the Joanne Leonhardt Cassullo Associate Professor of Art History at Roanoke College. She grew up in Monmouth IL. She earned a BA in Art History at Mt. Holyoke College in 2001 and a Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 2009 with a dissertation entitled *Citizenship by Design: Art and Identity in the Early Republic*. She is the author of *Epic Landscapes: Benjamin Henry Latrobe and the Art of Watercolor* and *Modelling Civilization: Transnational Sculpture and the United States Capitol, 1836-1865* (in manuscript). Her research has been supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend in 2022.



THOMAS J. SIENKEWICZ was the Minnie Billings Capron Professor of Classics at Monmouth College from 1985 until his retirement in 2017 and credits much of his success at Monmouth to the wise advice, counsel and help of his friend and colleague, Bill Urban. Tom was born and raised in Hoboken, NJ. He graduated from The College of the Holy Cross in 1971 and earned a Ph.D. in Classics from the Johns Hopkins University in 1975, with a dissertation on Euripides' *Trojan Women*. He taught Classics at Howard University in Washington DC from 1975 to 1984, when he moved to Monmouth. At Monmouth College he taught a wide range of courses in Classics, Latin and Greek and served for a time as Coordinator of Off-Campus Study. He was a visiting faculty member of the ACM Programs in Florence in 1992–1993 and again in 2011. Over the years he led many short student trips, especially to Italy and Greece. He has had a career-long interest in the *Sunjata* epic. In 1987 he received an NEH summer fellowship to study the epic in West Africa. His publications on the epic include “The Greeks Are Too Like the Others: The *Sunjata* epic of West Africa” in *Myth and Polis*, edited by John

Wickersham and Dora Pozzi and *Oral Cultures Past and Present: Rappin' and Homer* with Viv Edwards. He retired from teaching in 2017 and spends his time writing, gardening and enjoying his grandchildren.



JANET GOODHUE SMITH graduated from Harvard University in 1964 with a B.A. in English literature. She then moved to Yale University, where she at first studied American architectural history, but eventually earned an M.A. in English. Her interest then moved to the Italian Renaissance and in 1967, with the support of an Italian government grant, began research in Florence on 15th-century Italian military architecture. Although she passed her Ph.D. orals in New Haven in 1969, she returned to Italy and never finished her Ph.D. Her

first job was working for Rodolfo Siviero in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome. He was the Italian secret service agent in charge of recuperating works of art stolen by the Germans during World War II. In 1970 she received a grant from CRIA, the Committee to Rescue Italian Art to work on the catalogue of architectural drawings in the Uffizi. In 1972 she was one of the six fellows of the newly established Roberto Longhi Foundation. Her first teaching job was with the Lake Forest College program in Florence in 1973. In 1974 she taught in the Dickinson College program in Bologna before moving, in the fall of 1974, to the Associated Colleges of the Midwest Program in Florence to teach art history. Bill Urban was program director that year. Over the years she took on an administrative role, in addition to teaching, and eventually became the resident director of the program. She retired in 2010 and now amuses herself doing research on late medieval civic architecture.



VICKI A. WINE grew up in Rochelle, IL. She received the Bachelor of Arts degree from North Central College, and Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Northwestern University. She taught at several colleges in Illinois and Iowa, including teaching in the Classics Department at Monmouth College from 2002 to 2019. She has been an active member of the Illinois Classical Conference, has served as its vice president and president, and received its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2024. Vicki met Jim Betts in 1989 at a Fox Classics Lecture at Monmouth College organized

by Thomas Sienkewicz. They married four years later and live in a 120-year-old farmhouse in Mercer County, Illinois.

Introduction

Thomas J. Sienkewicz and Jeff Rankin

Bill Urban wrote a doctoral dissertation entitled *The Baltic Crusade of the Thirteenth Century*.¹ If he had been hired out of graduate school by a major research university (R1) like the University of Michigan, his entire career as a teacher and scholar would probably have been focused on that Baltic Crusade and he would rarely, if ever, have had the opportunity to teach courses outside the narrow field of medieval history. But he was not hired by an R1. He was hired by Monmouth College, a small liberal arts college with Presbyterian roots located out in the corn and soy fields of western Illinois, where he taught for 49 years, from 1966 to 2015.

At Monmouth, Urban was not just a medieval historian. At Monmouth, he was not only encouraged but also expected to teach a wide range of history courses, including Western Civilization and American history surveys, Roman history, Greek history, the local history of Monmouth, Illinois, and a family history course in which students learned how to gather stories and genealogical information about their relatives. He also taught specialized courses in Monmouth's general education program, including Freshman Seminar and two Issues and Ideas courses for seniors which he designed himself: "War and Peace" (in which students reenacted the Nuremburg Trial) and "The New Individual: Narcissus and the Faceless Man," on individualism and conformity. He even taught Elementary Italian more than once.

Urban was not only a teacher at Monmouth but also served as advisor for the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity and coached first the men's soccer team from 1968 to 1981 and then a new women's club soccer team. He served as director of three different off-campus programs run by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM): the Arts of Florence in 1974–1975; a program in Yugoslavia in 1986; and a program in the Czech Republic in 1994. He also led many student trips to Europe, both for Monmouth College and for the University of Michigan.

Urban's publications² reflect this diversity. In addition to twenty books about the Baltic Crusades, the Teutonic Knights and other topics on the medieval Baltic region, he has written: two textbooks for his course on the New Individual; a history of Monmouth College; a biography of Monmouth's famous son, Wyatt Earp; and a five-volume mystery series entitled *The Dean is Dead*. Urban is certainly one of Monmouth College's more prolific scholars, if not the most prolific one.

The twenty-one contributions to this *Festschrift*, written by William Urban's students, colleagues and friends, are both a reflection on, as well as a tribute to, his outstanding career as both teacher and scholar. The papers are organized around seven mostly geographically themed parts which illustrate Urban's lifelong interests: Monmouth College; the City of Monmouth; Illinois and the Midwest; the United States; the Roman Empire, then and now; the World; and Literature.

Stacy Cordery's contribution, entitled "What Bill Urban Taught Me," appropriately opens this volume. Stacy Cordery was hired by Urban in 1994 for a tenure-track position in American history and they served together as historians for twenty-two years, until 2016 when Stacy

¹ Urban 1967.

² See pages xvii–xviii in this volume.

followed her husband, Simon, to Iowa State University. She is the author of biographies of Alice Roosevelt Longworth (2007) and Elizabeth Arden (2024). In this essay Stacy reflects on those years working with Bill Urban and the many valuable lessons Bill taught her, including patience, kindness, forgiveness, hospitality, helpfulness, and, perhaps most important, the possibility of pursuing a research agenda while dealing with the many obligations expected at a small liberal arts college. Stacy not only reflects on what it was like to work with Bill Urban but also, in the process, paints a valuable picture of what it was like to teach at Monmouth College in the decades closing the twentieth century and beginning the twenty-first.

Stacy's contribution is followed by one by her husband, Simon, who currently serves as chair of the Department of History at Iowa State University. He is the author of three books: *The Iron Road in the Prairie State: The Story of Illinois Railroading* (2016) and biographies of Mother Jones (2010) and Albert Benton Pullman (2025). He is also co-editor of *Building Positive Peace* (2023). In "Coaching the Monmouth College Women's Soccer Team" Simon shares some of his experiences serving as an athletic coach at Monmouth College. At Bill Urban's recommendation, Simon was hired in 1994 to coach the college's women's soccer team in its first NCAA season. Previously the women's team, coached by Bill Urban, had had only club status. Simon offers a detailed and often amusing history of the team's wins and losses during the seven seasons he served as coach until 2000, when he resigned as coach to focus more on teaching history at Monmouth, as well as his own research. Like Stacy's reflection on her classroom experiences at Monmouth, Simon's provides a detailed picture of what it was like to be an athletic coach at the college.

The third essay focusing on Monmouth College is "The Continuing Saga of Monmouth College's Storied Stone, OR That's How the Canopus Crumbles" by J. Richard Sayre, retired Director of the Hewes Library at Monmouth College. Sayre has co-authored two bibliographies dealing with the U.S. Congress³ and is the editor of *Sandburg's Hometown: A Selected Anthology* by Barbara Schock (2024). In his contribution to this Festschrift, Sayre tells the fascinating story of an important artifact of college history housed in the library. The college's "Canopus Stone" is actually a plaster copy of a stone found in Tanis, Egypt, in 1866, and more accurately called the Tanis Stone (or Stele). Because the text of the Decree of Canopus, made by Ptolemy III of Egypt in 238 B.C., was inscribed on this stone in three languages—ancient Greek, Egyptian hieroglyphics and Egyptian demotic—the Tanis Stone, as Sayre notes, was second in importance only to the Rosetta Stone in the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Sayre explains how the college acquired a copy of this stone shortly after it was discovered, its unfortunate loss in the fire which destroyed Old Main in 1907, the rediscovery of fragments of the copy in a storage room in 1954, and the reconstruction of the stone from these fragments by Monmouth College Religious Studies Professor Charles Speel and Classics Professor Harold Ralston. From 1954 until 1997 the stone was displayed in a Wallace Hall classroom and then moved to the second floor of Hewes Library, where it can be seen today. In his modesty, Sayre does not mention that he has become the college expert on the history of this stone, on which he has given many presentations, not only to Monmouth College Classics students but also to outside groups, including delegates to a Convention of Eta Sigma Phi, the national undergraduate Classics honorary society, and to members of the Illinois Classical Conference.

³Goeheert and Sayre 1982 and 1996.

The two papers in Part 2 expand the view from Monmouth College to the city of Monmouth. Tom Best, who taught history to Junior High students from Monmouth and Roseville, Illinois, for 33 years as well as, occasionally, an evening course on the U.S. Civil War at Monmouth College, offers a paper entitled “Reliving the Past with Monmouth’s Dearly Departed: What We Can Learn Through a Cemetery Tour.” In this paper Best describes the planning for and dramatic skits about deceased Monmouthians presented during a walking tour of Monmouth Cemetery on October 9, 2024. Best includes some brief background on the individuals portrayed in the tour, accompanied by photographs of the event.

Unfortunately, Monmouth’s most famous native, Wyatt Earp, is buried in Colma, California, not Monmouth, Illinois, so he could not be included in Best’s tour. Nor could Warren Bunkerr, the subject of a contribution entitled “Warren Bunkerr: Monmouth’s Celebrated 19th-Century Drag Queen” by Jeff Rankin, who served as director of Communications and as Historian at Monmouth College for more than 30 years. As Rankin notes, Bunkerr (1864–1937), who adopted the stage names Zelldo the Circassian prince and Prince Zelldo Wonderful Snake Charmer, also worked at various points in his life, as a man milliner, fire and serpentine dancer, clairvoyant, palm reader, costume designer and vaudeville impresario. He took his performances as a drag queen and snake charmer around the world, including Paris, South Africa, Canada, China, Japan, Manila, the Philippines, Australia, and Java, as well as many places in the United States. He met royalty, celebrities, and Hollywood stars, including Edward Prince of Wales, Rudolph Valentino and Mark Twain. In his travels he even crossed paths, in Hong Kong, with another famous Monmouthian, the magician Will “The Great Nicola” Nicol. Later, back in the United States, Bunkerr even joined Nicol’s show for a time as a mind reader. Bunkerr’s varied career was remarkable, especially for someone raised in Warren County, Illinois, and offers readers of this *Festschrift* opportunities to smile and even, occasionally, to laugh out loud.

The two papers in Part 3 expand the geographic focus to include the state of Illinois and the Midwest. Here Sylvia Shults MC’90 offers a paper about the Peoria State Hospital in Bartonville. Shults took courses from Bill Urban at Monmouth College where she was a Classics major and participated in the ACM London-Florence Program. She has a special fascination with the paranormal, on which she has published extensively, and is an award-winning author.⁴ Her contribution to this volume, “Befriending the Bereft: The Compassionate Legacy of Dr. George Zeller and the Peoria State Hospital,” springs from this interest. While the Peoria State Hospital, which served for many years as an institution for the insane, has been associated over the years with many bizarre occurrences and circumstances, as Shults has shown elsewhere,⁵ the paranormal is not actually the focus of this paper. Instead Shults offers an overview of the impressive career of Dr. George Zeller (1858–1938), who served as the superintendent of the hospital from 1921 to 1935. A man in many ways ahead of his times, Dr. Zeller rejected the idea that the insane should be kept behind locked doors and barred windows and did not approve of the use of chains and straitjackets. Rather, he treated his patients with patience and kindness—especially women suffering from what is now called postpartum depression and veterans

⁴ Shults’s books include: paranormal non-fiction such as *Gone on Vacations: Haunted Zoos, Museums and Amusement Parks* (2023), for which she received the First Place BookFest Award in 2024; horror novels such as *The Dark at the Heart of the Diamond* (2012); and romance novels such as *Double Double Love and Trouble* (2013a). For a full list of her publications, see the bibliography at the end of this introduction or <https://sylviashults.wordpress.com/>.

⁵ Shults 2013b, 2016 and 2019.

suffering from what is now called “post-traumatic stress disorder” (PTSD). In employing these methods, Zeller proved himself to be not a custodian or warden for his patients but rather a humane and loving physician. Shults is to be commended for helping to keep alive the memory of this outstanding son of Illinois.

The second paper in Part 3 is by Neil Dahlstrom MC '98, who took several courses from Bill Urban at Monmouth College where he majored in both History and Classics. He currently serves as the archivist at Deere and Company in Moline, Illinois. His contribution to this volume, entitled “After the Tractor Wars: Farm Equipment Manufacturers in 1929,” is a sequel to his book *Tractor Wars: John Deere, Henry Ford, International Harvester, and the Birth of Modern Agriculture* (2022), which focuses on the introduction of the tractor to American farms between 1908 and 1928.⁶ In this paper Dahlstrom describes how tractor companies, including Deere, fared in the years following the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and argues that the boom-and-bust cycle which the farm equipment industry regularly experienced prepared companies like Deere to be financially cautious but also innovative and efficient during the Great Depression. Particularly noteworthy during this period, Dahlstrom observes, were several significant innovations, including the general-purpose tractor, such as Deere's GP tractor introduced in 1928, and the invention of reliable pneumatic tractor tires.

There are four papers in Part 4, which deals with the United States. The first paper is by Daniel Cotter MC '88 who, as an accounting major at Monmouth, did not have an opportunity to take a course from Urban. He has, however, come to know and admire Urban over the years. His paper, entitled “The Supreme Court: Originalism and Textualism,” reflects the author's legal background and interest in the history of the court about which he has written *The Chief Justices: The Seventeen Men of the Center Seat, Their Courts, and Their Times* (2019). Noting the court's increasing interest in originalism and textualism in the last forty years, Cotter does not offer an historical explanation for the court's turn in this direction. Instead, he considers how an historian like Bill Urban might respond to these issues. Citing the use of textualism and originalism in the statements of various justices regarding the Second Amendment in *Heller v. District of Columbia* (2008),⁷ Cotter cautiously expresses doubt that the way that these tools were used to decide that case would be acceptable to a professional historian like Urban.

The second paper in this part broadens the issues raised by Cotter to encompass many other aspects of society. “Flawed Leadership—the Coffin Nail of Grand Ventures in Economics, Education, Business, and Politics,” is by Kenneth G. McMillan, who taught Business courses at Monmouth College for 25 years. He also served for several years on the staff of U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle. McMillan offers here a definition of leadership (“the ability to move identifiable followers to accomplish things they would not otherwise do”) and ten ways that skilled leaders are able to persuade others to act. These include: assembling a competent and committed staff; making sure that these staff members are both responsive and responsible; using open communication to identify problems and their solutions early; and avoiding uninformed statements or the support of controversial issues prematurely or without careful consideration. In McMillan's opinion, few individuals in leadership positions in business, education, politics, or any other organizational context meet his definition of leadership.

⁶ Dahlstrom is also the author of *The John Deere Story: A Biography of Plowmakers John and Charles Deere* (2005).

⁷ *Heller v. District of Columbia*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008).

The third paper in Part 4 turns to the U.S. Presidency. Bradley C. Nahrstadt is a 1989 graduate of Monmouth College where he majored in English and joined the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. Nahrstadt's contribution to this volume, "How William Jennings Bryan Captured the 1896 Democratic Nomination for President," is based upon his recent book, *The Democrats in Turmoil: The Bitter Fights to Select a Presidential Nominee, 1896–1924* (2015).⁸ Nahrstadt begins with the observation that, as the 1896 Democratic Convention approached, there were seven likely contenders for the presidential nomination and Bryan was not one of them. He then offers a brief biography of Bryan followed by a detailed account of the convention proceedings leading up to Bryan's famous "Cross of Gold" speech and his formal nomination as the Democratic candidate for president. Unfortunately for Bryan, Nahrstadt notes, the party was left after the convention so divided by the debate between a gold or silver standard that Bryan's loss to the Republican candidate, William McKinley, in the November general election was all but inevitable.

The last contribution in Part 4, entitled "Pressing the Case: Case Studies in the Use of Poetry in Sculptural Competition in Washington, D.C." by Julia A. Sienkewicz, shows how poetry was used to support artistic proposals in 19th-century Washington, D.C. Sienkewicz grew up in Monmouth and came to know Bill Urban affectionately as "Uncle Urban." She is the author of *Epic Landscapes: Benjamin Henry Latrobe and the Art of Watercolor* (2019). Her *Festschrift* contribution, based upon her research for a book tentatively titled *Modelling Civilization: Transnational Sculpture and the United States Capitol, 1825–1865*, considers three poems published in Washington D.C. periodicals between 1834 and 1842, each celebrating the work of a different artist: Luigi Persico (1781–1860), Ferdinand Pettrich (1798–1872), and Horatio Greenough (1805–1852). All three of these artists had competed in 1834–1835 for a commission from the U.S. government to produce sculpture for the U.S. Capitol, a commission which is central to *Modelling Civilization*. In her essay Sienkewicz analyzes the way the artist and/or his work is praised in each poem and discusses how poetry could be an especially important medium in which to promote an artist's work for several reasons: the rarity of using poetry for such promotion; the prestige a poem could bring to its subject; and even the visual prominence of a poem published in a generally prose-based medium such as a newspaper.

Part 5 consists of two papers dealing with the Roman Empire, then and now. The first is by Joseph R. O'Neill, a 2001 graduate of Monmouth College with a double major in History and Classics. With Adam Rigoni, O'Neill is the editor of *The Aeneid and the Modern World* (2021). At Monmouth, O'Neill took several courses from Bill Urban, including Roman History, for which Urban assigned reading from Suetonius' *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*. It was most appropriate, then, that O'Neill chose as his contribution to this *Festschrift* a paper on one of the emperors found in Suetonius. In "The Censorship of the Emperor Claudius," O'Neill focuses on the emperor's restoration of the censorship as part of a policy of reestablishing Rome's ancient Republican institutions and practices, a practice he inherited from his imperial ancestor Augustus. Claudius revived the censorship in 47 A.D., the sixth year of his reign, a year which coincided, O'Neill notes, with the emperor's expansion of the *pomerium*, the sacred boundary of the city on the 800th anniversary of the founding of Rome. In this way, O'Neill argues, Claudius reenforced his imperial powers by projecting himself, like Augustus, as a refounder of Rome. Despite the importance of Claudius' censorship, however, there is no comprehensive discussion

⁸ Nahrstadt is also the author of several other books, for which see the bibliography at the end of this introduction.

of his actions as censor in the ancient sources which generally refer to Claudius' censorship only in negative terms. O'Neill therefore provides an overview of Claudius' achievements as censor and demonstrates how these actions emphasize the emperor's role as refounder of Rome. As censor Claudius not only conducted a census of Roman citizens, but also and more important, a *lustrum*—a ritual purification of the citizenry, which O'Neill describes as a form of refounding. Another traditional role of censor was *cura morum*, the policing of public morality. Despite ancient criticism of Claudius for his failure to address infringements of morality in his own family, O'Neill notes that there are numerous instances of Claudius appropriately protecting public morality and punishing misbehavior. The same is true for other traditional responsibilities of the censor which Claudius is said to have taken seriously, including: *lectio senatus*, the determination of the membership of the Roman Senate and ensuring the appropriate behavior of individual senators; collecting certain taxes; and overseeing the contracts of tax collectors.

O'Neill also argues that Claudius can perhaps be seen to have imitated the career of another illustrious censor, Appius Claudius Caecus, who held office in 312–307 B.C. As Appius Claudius was remembered for his supervision of public works, especially roads and aqueducts, so Claudius is said to have dedicated two aqueducts. In addition, the emperor may have been imitating Appius Claudius in his addition of three letters to the Roman alphabet. Regulating orthography appears to have been associated with the censor's maintenance of the senatorial rolls. In this capacity, Appius Claudius was known to have made the spelling of Roman names more phonetic. A third area in which Claudius imitated Appius Claudius was the restoration of lapsed religious practices. Appius Claudius had reorganized the cult of Hercules at the Ara Maxima and the emperor Claudius organized the *haruspices* (religious diviners) into a priestly college.

In all these ways, Claudius' censorship, O'Neill argues, was designed to renew the Roman state in ways which associated the emperor with two highly respected Romans of the past: Augustus and Appius Claudius.

O'Neill's paper is followed by "Cruising on the Danube with the Romans" by Vicki A. Wine and James E. Betts. The husband-and-wife authors were teaching colleagues of Bill Urban at Monmouth College, where Vicki taught a variety of courses in the Classics Department and James was a music professor. Over the years, they became good friends of Bill and Jackie Urban and in 2019 they decided to take a Viking River Cruise along the Danube River together. Wine and Betts' paper is a result of that cruise. They provide a general overview of the cruise, the amenities on the boat and an itinerary. Their narrative is filled with references to good food, wine and beer tasting and even an organ concert. In particular, however, they focus on ways that they replaced some of Viking's town tours with their own itinerary of visits to Roman sites. So, for example, instead of touring Passau, Germany, the first stop on the cruise, they sought out the Roman museum at Kastell Boiotro. At the stop in Krems, Austria, they visited the Roman museum at nearby Mautern. Instead of visiting the Roman sites and museum in Vienna they took a train to nearby Petronell to tour the site of ancient Carnuntum. In Budapest, Wine and Betts visited ancient Aquincum, while the Urbans took a city tour. For all of these Roman sites, Wine and Betts provide descriptive tours and useful historical background. Anyone interested in learning about Roman sites along the Danube would find this paper a valuable reference.

The five papers in Part 6 deal with topics ranging from Baltic studies, to language education in Wales, to diplomatic relations between Yemen and the United States in the period following the Second World War, and to grain storage in medieval Florence.

Brian Chabowski MC'95 and Tiffany R. Chabowski MC '95 have contributed two papers on the Baltic countries. Their interest in eastern Europe dates from 1994, when both authors participated as Monmouth College students in the Czech Program run by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest. Bill Urban was director of the program that year. Since then, their careers have taken them to Lithuania (1995--1998), Estonia (1995--1998), Mexico (2002), China (2018), Finland (2021--2022), and Saudi Arabia (2023 to the present) and both of their contributions reflect their broad international experience.

In "A Journey Through Seven Countries Over Three Decades: The Relevance of 1990s Central Europe to the Middle East of the 2020" the Chabowskis begin by arguing that the so-called "American Dream" is actually the aspiration not only of Americans but also of almost every living person. They then provide economic data for the seven countries in which they have lived or worked (Czech Republic, Lithuania, Estonia, Mexico, China, Finland and United States) and compare this data with that from six countries in the Persian Gulf (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). This data, they argue, demonstrates the vitality and viability of capitalist economic systems over socialized ones. The Chabowskis then compare the following cultural values among the first group of countries: Embeddedness, Affective Autonomy, Intellectual Autonomy, Mastery, Harmony, Hierarchy, Egalitarianism, Individualism/Collectivism, Power Distance, Masculinity/Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-Term Orientation, and Indulgence/Restraint. In the end, the Chabowskis emphasize the need to stress similarities across countries rather than differences.

In their second contribution to the *Festschrift*, entitled "The Intellectual Structure of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*: A Longitudinal Evaluation as a Foundation for Future Research Possibilities," the Chabowskis offer a bibliometric examination of Baltic studies research in the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, which Bill Urban edited from 1991 through 1994. This bibliometric examination of articles published in the journal from 1981 through 2024 demonstrates that the topics dealing with linguistics and with the political/cultural transition from communism to independence have become more complex over time. Two other important themes revealed by their bibliometric examination were Baltic, Germanic and Russian influences on the history, culture, politics, and commerce of the region, as well as attempts to Russify the local populations of the Baltic states.

Several topics for future research emerge from this study: First, the Chabowskis suggest that it would be worthwhile to study the relationship between the national cultural memory of individual countries and the capitalist diversity of the region. Also needed are studies which examine Soviet postcolonial cultural and socioeconomic structure in the modern Baltic nations and their Russian-speaking populations, in particular. A third area of study might be a consideration of the international integration of the Baltic states in the post-Cold War period and a general lack of interest in traditional ethnic cultures, along with attempts to preserve and develop these traditions. A fourth area of interest is the effect which the transition from a socialist to a capitalist economic system had had on the Russian-speaking populations in the Baltic States. Finally, the Chabowskis suggest the need for studies comparing a Baltic country's nationalism with the history of its capital city.

While the Chabowkis offered sweeping comparisons of a number of nations, in “Between Washington and Cairo: *Imamate* Yemen’s Foreign Relations with the United States in the Post-World War II Period” Richard Harrod MC ‘07 focuses more narrowly on the diplomatic history of the United State and Yemen following World War II. Harrod took a number of courses from Bill Urban at Monmouth College from which he graduated with a double major in History and Classics. He is now a Ph.D. candidate in history at Washington University in St. Louis. In his contribution to this volume Harrod uses a variety of documents, especially U.S. State Department correspondence, to explain why the relationship between the United States and the Kingdom of Yemen deteriorated from 1942 to 1962. Harrod explains how Yemen’s drift away from the United States was caused, at least in part, by a scandalous incident involving an American explorer and by the U.S. failure to provide to Yemen any significant economic support of either a public or private nature. As a result, by the end of the 1950s Yemen had definitively moved away politically from the U.S. towards the government of Nasser in Egypt and towards the Communist Bloc.

The fourth paper in Part 6 is “Small Wars: The Case of Language and Education in Wales” by Viv Edwards, a British linguist who befriended Bill Urban during several professional visits to Monmouth. Edwards is especially interested in multilingualism and international education. Her publications include: *Multilingualism in the English-speaking World: Pedigree of Nations* (2004); *Learning to be Literate* (2009); *The West Indian Language Issue in British Schools: Challenges and Responses* (2017); *At Home in School* (2017), with A. Redfern; and *Oral Cultures Past and Present* (1990), with Thomas J. Sienkewicz. As Edwards notes in her introduction, the inspiration for this paper was Urban’s reference in *Small Wars and their Influence on Nation States: 1500 to the Present* to the “long and unforgiving sense of history” of the Celtic peoples.⁹ Acknowledging the validity of this statement, in particular, for the Welsh people, Edwards, herself of Welsh ancestry, notes the important role which language and education have played in the long history of the relationship between the English and Welsh peoples. In her paper Edwards traces efforts by the British government to suppress the use of the Welsh language in favor of English, efforts which have led to a significant decrease in the number of speakers of Welsh as a first language. She concludes by suggesting some lessons that other small nations can learn from the Welsh experience.

Focus turns from Wales to medieval Florence in the last paper in Part 6, entitled “Orsanmichele: An Anonymous Grain Loft” by Janet Smith. In 1975, while Bill Urban was the visiting program director, Smith was hired as an instructor in the Associated Colleges of the Midwest programs in Florence, of which she eventually became director. During her long, 34-year association with the ACM, Smith intersected with several contributors to this *Festschrift*, including Sylvia Shults, who was enrolled in the program in 1989 and Tom Sienkewicz who served as Visiting Professor in 1992–1993. She has also served as a valuable mentor for Julia Sienkewicz as she pursued a career in art history.

In her paper Smith focuses on the 14th-century structure known today as the church of Orsanmichele in Florence. While most Florentines would describe Orsanmichele as a place of worship and most tourists visit the building for its artistic importance, Smith here emphasizes the original purpose of the building as a grain market. Smith shows how the structure of the building was originally designed specifically for the storage of grain and how it became a church. In the

⁹ Urban 2016: 140.

process she provides a history not only of Orsanmichele but also of 14th-century Florence as well as of grain markets in medieval Tuscany, especially in Florence.

The final part of this *Festschrift* is devoted broadly to literary topics, beginning with Mary Hanford Bruce's contribution of nine poems. Bruce taught creative writing at Monmouth College for 29 years until her retirement in 2014 and is the author of several books including *Dr. Sally's Voodoo Man* (2011) and *Swimming at Villa Hugel* (2014). In their retirement she and Bill Urban have remained good friends.

"Cervantes' *Quijote* as a Model and Key to Unamuno's *Niebla*" by Fred Keller is the second literature paper in Part 7. From 1988 to 2001 Keller taught Spanish at Monmouth College, where he was Bill's colleague, and the two, sharing a love for Keller's native German, have remained good friends ever since. In his paper Keller provides an overview of both Cervantes' *Quijote* (1605 and 1615) and Miguel de Unamuno's 1914 novel *Niebla* (also known in English translation as *Fog* or *Mist*) and the lives of both authors. Unamuno, a major scholar and author of early 20th-century Spain, was fascinated and even obsessed by Cervantes' novel and in 1904 published *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho*, in which he retold Cervantes' often farcical tale with the seriousness and nobility Unamuno believed it deserved.¹⁰ While Unamuno would, nevertheless, have probably denied Cervantes' influence on *Niebla*, Keller demonstrates the many strong thematic and structural similarities between the two literary works including: a meandering protagonist infatuated with an unapproachable love; the author as a character in the novel; the use of multiple narrators; short stories interspersed in the main narrative; and a tension between reality and fiction in the plot.

The final paper on a literary topic is "A Tale of Two Epics: Homer's *Odyssey* and the West African *Sunjata*" by Thomas J. Sienkewicz, whom Bill Urban was instrumental in bringing to Monmouth College in 1984 to revitalize a tired Classics program and to serve as the college's new Minne Billings Capron Professor of Classics. Bill was very supportive of Classics and regularly taught History of Greece and History of Rome (cross-listed in both History and Classics) in alternate years. Over the years, Tom and Bill became good friends as well as regular daily swimming companions, first in the pool in the college's old Waid Gymnasium and later in the Pepper Natatorium in the college's new Huff Athletic Center. Sienkewicz's publications include: *Encyclopedia of the Ancient Greek World* (2007); with Kenneth Kitchell, *Disce! An Introductory Latin Course* (2007); with Jinyu Liu, *Ovid in China: Reception, Translation and Comparison* (2022); with LeaAnn Osburn, *Vergil: A LEGAMUS Transitional Reader* (2004); and with Viv Edwards, *Oral Cultures Past and Present* (1990). His contribution to this volume is a revised version of a convocation talk given primarily to Monmouth College freshmen in the fall of 1991. In that year these students were reading both Homer's *Odyssey* and the West African epic *Sunjata* in what was then called Freshman Seminar, the required introductory course in the college's four-year General Education Program. Sienkewicz was tasked with providing the students with some background on epic poetry in general and on features shared by these two epics. In particular, Sienkewicz focuses on the oral nature of both the *Odyssey* and *Sunjata*, both of which were

¹⁰ For Unamuno's novel in Spanish, see Unamuno 1987. For an English translation of *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho*, see Earle's translation (Unamuno, 2023)

composed in performance by traditional singers called rhapsodes in Greece and griots in West Africa.¹¹

It is with great pleasure that the contributors to this *Festschrift* present these papers to Bill Urban in grateful recognition of his long teaching career, his significant scholarship and the many other ways he has devoted his time and energy to his students and fellow colleagues at Monmouth College and beyond.

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¹¹ See Sienkewicz 1991 and Edwards and Sienkewicz 1990 for further discussion of the Sunjata epic by Sienkewicz.

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Part 1: MONMOUTH COLLEGE

CHAPTER 1

What Bill Urban Taught Me

Stacy Cordery

Imagine a hyperactive puppy suddenly saved from the pound. That was me upon learning I had been chosen for the tenure-track assistant professor position in history at Monmouth College in 1994. The early 1990s were grim times for newly minted PhDs and for Monmouth College, too. But things were looking up, for me and for the college. When my husband, Simon, and I arrived in Monmouth, we brought with us profound gratitude for the opportunity, boundless enthusiasm, the desire to do the best job possible, and a deep willingness to learn how. Luckily, we had a patient instructor in the person of Bill Urban. He taught me many invaluable lessons which helped to form me into a productive member of a small, liberal arts college and which remain foundational to my now three-decades-long career as a teacher-scholar.

Whether or not he knew it, Bill was a powerful model of the virtue of patience. I moved then, as I do now, at a rapid pace. Bill does not. His background as a Quaker (I assume) inclines him to an ease with thoughtful silence which I did not share. His habit is to listen to others without interrupting. What follows is silence, as he considers what he has heard. Then further silence as he contemplates his response. As his new colleague, I rushed in—time and time again—to fill the space, offer suggestions, or prompt him to reply. It took years before I realized that my helpfulness was instead rudeness dressed up in selfish rationalization. Once that painful thought occurred to me, I schooled myself to wait. Our conversations stretched out as I listened to the silences. It took longer, but I finally began to understand that Bill's full consideration of what was being said to him honored the speaker. And the wisdom of pausing to reply until I had marshalled my thoughts proved better for everyone. Do I apply this lesson perfectly? No, I do not. But I regret every time I fail to concentrate fully and every instance when I discover that I am assembling a reply in my mind before the person in front of me has ceased speaking. Patience is a virtue indeed, and silence burnishes every colloquy with respect.

Bill also taught me, over and over, that kindness was the best glue to hold together a community. You will never agree with everyone, including, he emphasized, your friends. Academic life is long, and Monmouth is small, he cautioned. Bridges burned in an instant can take years to rebuild. Bill firmly believed that airing differences—in private, at faculty meetings, in writing—was essential to the right functioning of the campus, in part because good ideas often arose from civil disagreements that could strengthen the whole. This is one reason he always encouraged me, even as an assistant professor, to speak up. Further, Bill felt that if done with a maximum of tolerance, a minimum of drama, and a regard for the facts, disputes were usually more productive than not. Thus, I should wade in bravely, but not wantonly, and always speak less than I listened. Chiefly, I should employ kindness in battle so that afterwards, all combatants could lay down their arms and enjoy a drink together.

Closely related to Bill's commitment to kindness was the fact that I never saw him hold a grudge against a colleague. He could remember what he considered a poor decision, and like most historians he used the past as a touchstone, but Bill never had noticeably frosty relations

with anyone. The worst I ever saw—and this was a lesson in and of itself—was a sort of grave distance, but one that never lacked a fundamental recognition of the other’s humanity. The Bill Urban who taught me was never cruel and took no pleasure in mean-spiritedness. Bill sometimes mulled over the decisions of others which he considered ill-advised, but he never indulged in ad hominem attacks, at least never in front of me as his junior colleague. This admirable forbearance was another valuable standard he set in his understated way, laying out for me a helpful behavioral boundary for living in community.

To foster that community, Bill and Jackie opened their home to countless gatherings. Students, staff, faculty, neighbors—the Urbans welcomed us all. I admired this extravagantly. Bill and Jackie were surely as introverted as Simon and I, and yet they hosted parties, Phi Alpha Theta gatherings, end-of-day drinks for job candidates, end-of-term picnics for the History Department, and festivities of all kinds. We could never put aside the manifold fears that kept our front door mostly shut. What to serve? How much? What if no one came? What if the house wasn’t clean enough? What if, what if, what if? Like the Sienkewiczes, the Urbans were beacons of welcome and their homes a respite from daily worries—at least for us, their guests. I know from my own academic specialty the critical importance of the community building that happens away from the workplace, but I could not bring myself to be a third site of good fellowship there on South Tenth Street. I treasured it at their houses, though, and Simon and I miss the camaraderie that grew and deepened over croquet and brownies. Such amazing kindness!

Another lesson Bill drove home to me (taught, as usual, mostly by being himself) was that helpfulness also goes far to knit people together. Semester after semester, Bill selflessly sacrificed his favorite teaching period—8:00 a.m.—and awarded it to me. Picture our shared joy when we discovered that that early morning slot was *not* my favorite! Simon and I went to England for several weeks of research the summer after we bought our first house. When we returned, the yard looked better than it had when we left. Bill had taken it upon himself to mow our yard. He never said a word. More to his credit, he never made fun of us for failing to consider that grass keeps growing even when we aren’t there to observe it. At least we never made that mistake again!

I announced, with significant trepidation, that I was pregnant, but Bill’s response was instantly celebratory and immediately helpful. Once Gareth was born, Bill arranged a teaching schedule for Simon and for me that meant that our son would not have to go to day care. And Bill fiercely guarded that schedule for all the years of Gareth’s childhood. It was priceless beyond measure to us. Bill fought to find research and writing time for us, too, and he oversaw the creation of the 1.5 position that increased our loyalty to Monmouth College, our gratitude to him, and our publication output.

It was not just the three of us Bill helped. I knew that he assisted students and had done so for years. Most of his generosity was *sub rosa* and took many forms. I learned from him to listen closely for the exigencies that could arise in a student’s life, and to lend a hand when needed, even when to do so would not necessarily fit the traditional professorial role. His selflessness made me want to emulate him, and it gave me the courage to do so.

Bill helped the institution, too. Monmouth College operated on a shoestring. This was never more apparent than after we moved to Iowa State University. But that shoestring, for better or worse—and I do think it was for better—was composed in large measure of community members just doing what needed to be done. When I was a new hire, Bill was my earliest example

of how Monmouth folks just said “yes.” We volunteered for task forces, for election to Faculty Senate, for recruitment trips. We climbed on roofs to assess their soundness and we launched a research journal. We attended or took part in plays, concerts, sporting events, fraternity philanthropies, homecoming, alumni events, and funerals. We pitched in at the holiday party in the Stockdale Center, staged poetry readings, led study-abroad programs, brought in guest speakers, and sat on hiring committees, grievance committees, and inaugural committees. We rewrote the Monmouth College Hymn and led worship services. So much of the daily work at Monmouth College got done because faculty like Bill believed in the place and believed in the mission. When everyone has skin in the game, then everyone takes pride in the resultant success. Were there hard times? Of course there were. But by watching Bill, it was clear to me that the response was not to give up, pout, demand payment, or disparage. Am I writing through rose-colored glasses? Only a very little.

Despite the teaching load, the committee work, and the volunteer labor, Bill taught me another important lesson: research and writing are still possible. His own publication list is long, and he wrote books by dint of concentration and sustained labor. Simon and I utilized his method, but we had the added benefit of that 1.5 position, so one of us had every other spring semester off (without pay) which gave us more time than Bill ever had. Plus, Bill took joy in the writing—witness the fact that he wrote novels for fun as well as important scholarship to contribute to his field.

As a chair and a coworker, Bill was a lot to live up to. Happily, his lessons were delivered by action more than by word. He was a consistent role model of quiet, kind, thoughtful, helpful efficiency. Despite our own disagreements, which in some cases are wide, Bill was the very best kind of introduction to the collegiality of academic life. I remain profoundly grateful.

CHAPTER 2

Coaching the Monmouth College Women's Soccer Team

Simon Cordery

Prologue

On Saturday, September 7, 2024, Monmouth College celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of its women's soccer team. Like many commemorations, the timing lacked exactitude because Bill Urban had coached a women's soccer club for three years before the first NCAA season of 1994. It was Bill who learned from my wife, Stacy Cordery, about my soccer career and recommended me to the Athletic Department, hoping employment for me would help us stay. It did, for twenty-two years in Stacy's case! This essay offers a personal account of the program Bill bequeathed to me, the first varsity head coach, a bequest for which I will always be grateful.

Contexts

In 1994 Stacy got the golden ring of academia, a tenure-track position teaching at a small four-year residential college in west-central Illinois. That meant moving from her two-year position at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. I tagged along, and we learned from her new boss, History Department chair Bill Urban, that the college needed a head coach for a first-year NCAA women's soccer program. I had three basic qualifications: I was not the local sports equipment supplier, who wanted to sell the team his uniforms; I knew something about soccer; and I had a valid driver's license. That last was vital, as I would drive the van to practices and matches. And so we loaded up a U-Haul, crossed the Alleghenies, and found ourselves in Monmouth, Illinois, population 9,500, sixty miles northwest of Peoria, forty miles south of the Quad Cities, and 170 miles west of Chicago, the quintessential Midwestern small town complete with a round square of shops, insurance agencies, and banks.

That was a good time to land at Monmouth College. Founded by Scots Presbyterians in 1853, the place was on an upward trajectory thanks to some clever financial packages for students and excellent marketing based around the slogan, "What College Was Meant to Be." Recovering from a low of 650 students—virtually the death knell for a liberal arts college—enrollments were approaching 750 by the time we arrived. There was a new president, plans for new buildings and renovations to old ones, and a good buzz. Though the town itself looked a little down in the mouth, the people were friendly, there was a fine Catholic elementary school, the high school had a good reputation, and we could afford to buy a house.

My focus that first year in Monmouth had to be on the soccer program. Bill Urban coached a club team and famously stopped at the Amana Colonies on at least one away trip to share a bit of history with his players. This was emblematic of the relaxed atmosphere they enjoyed and many of them did not want to engage in intercollegiate competition. They intuitively understood how the travel, the fast-food meals, the higher-level competition, and the time commitment would impinge on the quality of their student lives. I was essentially starting from scratch, working

with a very energetic and committed Chicago-area recruiter by the name of Peter Pitts, who saw the program as a Godsend in his efforts to convince high school students to attend Monmouth. He helped stock the team with some excellent players over the next few years, but the squad was thin for that inaugural season.

This was also a time when Monmouth College, like so many institutions of higher education, was trying to meet Title IX requirements. Requiring equal access to educational opportunities, including intercollegiate competition, this 1972 federal law initiated contentious struggles in athletic departments across the country. One big obstacle was the fact that American football teams often had a hundred or more players on the squad, often greater than the total number of women athletes on campus. The new women's soccer program was part of Monmouth's compliance plan. A cynic might argue that my hiring as the first women's soccer coach was symptomatic of the commitment to Title IX. I was conveniently arriving with my spouse and I had the appropriate accent to sound like a soccer coach. The college avoided putting out a job ad and bringing candidates to campus, and the athletic director, Dr. Terry Glasgow, could point to a successful hire. And I had that driver's license.

If that was all true, I did not think about it at the time and threw myself into the job. Bill stood on the sidelines of every match, an uncritical supporter and steadfast friend. I did get a lot of help from the men's coach, Rue Carthew, a Mancunian who had played semi-professional football for Macclesfield Town before emigrating to the States. Rue taught me about the many duties of a soccer coach at Monmouth College, from inflating balls to putting up nets to making hotel reservations and booking buses when both teams travelled together. Only the referees were acquired by the Athletics Office, and, even then, we had to remember to pick up the checks for the officials before each home game. Rue was a bit reserved at first, aware that I was finishing my doctoral degree and that he did not have any academic qualifications. But he loosened up as it quickly became clear he had played at a higher level than I had and he knew more about the game than I did.

For that first season, in Fall, 1994, we had a squad of sixteen players. We competed in the Midwest Conference South. The five other Colleges, each of which we played home and away, had been fielding teams for several years before we joined, Grinnell since 1987!¹ The top two finishers in the division would enter the playoffs against their counterparts from the North Division, which boasted several strong programs and seemed to always win the conference championship. Worse, whoever had devised our schedule had not paid attention to the obvious need to begin with non-conference games, so four of our first five matches were against conference foes. To add to the overall challenge, not all of the players were exactly, shall we say, veterans of the sport. My assumption that they knew about and understood soccer was quickly demolished when, in the van on the way to our first practice, one of them piped up from the back, "Coach, how many players are on the field at one time?" Oh dear.

We had to use a van because our daily practices took place on a city field three miles from campus. That rough patch of green was lined for us by Monmouth athletics legend Roger Sander. I had first seen Roger in the grocery store soon after we moved to Monmouth. He was massive, a bulky figure in a Bears T-shirt and the shorts he wore year-round. I assumed, until I met him on

¹ The other four institutions in the six-team Midwest Conference South at the time were Coe College, Cornell College, Illinois College, and Knox College.

campus, that he must have been a retired Chicago Bears football player. Roger grew up in the northwest suburbs of Chicago and attended Monmouth to play baseball. He never left, becoming a fixture in the Athletics Department. He was a big help all around, serving as equipment manager, assistant football and basketball coach, and head baseball coach. That's how small schools operated: you do everything, and when they ask, "Would you do this?" you answer, "Yes, of course."

Saying "yes" was the secret to my success at Monmouth. First, yes, sure, I'll coach your new women's soccer team. Then, yes, certainly, I'd love to teach a section of Western Civ that your happily rising enrollments require. I immediately found myself caught between two often warring camps, academics and athletics. The money was laughable: a four-month contract worth a total of \$2,400 for the *de facto* year-round position of head women's soccer coach. For that diminutive salary I was expected to engage in hour upon frustrating hour of recruiting players, which of course I did. I also, thanks to Bill, earned \$3,500 for teaching the Western Civ course. Hardly a king's ransom but I could walk to work and my foot was firmly in the door. What I did not know at the time was how low that rate of payment was in comparison to both the amount of work required and the possibilities for more money elsewhere.

Let me acknowledge from the outset that I did not compile a winning record. The first two seasons were in fact completely winless, though improvement could certainly be tracked from the first to the second. In both seasons we played and lost fourteen matches. Our very first contest, at home to Illinois College, started brilliantly. Chantel de la Torre, a tall, deliberate forward from Prophetstown, scored a delightful goal after just five minutes. I remember thinking to myself, well, this is going to be easier than I thought. Fool. IC awoke from their road-induced slumber and scored eight unanswered goals. How bad can it get? I thought to myself afterwards. Badder, it transpired. The next match took us to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to play Coe College, an athletics powerhouse. They put thirteen goals (I'm writing that in letters so it doesn't jump from the page) past us, showing exactly no mercy, their coach urging his players on. After that we entertained Cornell, the Iowa college known for its one-course-at-a-time curriculum and our best result of the season, a two-nil loss. Most teams took it easy on us, notably Grinnell, whose coach, Marti Kingsley, could be heard sportingly instructing her players to pass laterally and not to shoot once they reached nine goals.

We did have some good players on that inaugural team. Jeani Randall, from nearby Galesburg, was our best player, a junior who had competed on the Monmouth club team and was an all-conference pick at the end of the season. Our midfield anchor was Valeria Orozco, a determined and forthright sophomore who kept everyone around her alternately entertained and on their toes. One student watched us practice and declared "I can do better than that," so I invited her to walk on, which she did, becoming our leading scorer that year. We ended the season by scoring in each of our last three matches, giving us hope for the next year. My job between then and August was to recruit heavily, to strengthen the squad and bring in enough players to scrimmage two full teams of eleven in practice. One weakness had been the lack of depth, with only sixteen players and some of those injured for part of the season. Peter Pitts was rubbing his hands with glee.

That second season, Fall 1995, did contain promise even if it also ended with no victories. Thanks to Peter we added a fair number of good players, many from Chicagoland. Tisha Kimoto, Jessica Donnelly, and Malinda Springer had enjoyed impressive high school careers while relative

newcomers to the sport like Cindy Larson made rapid and extraordinary progress in improving and refining their game. From downstate we got Julie Kahl and Jill Heneghan, the latter a brilliant forward who brought with her a soccer heritage that included her brother playing on the Monmouth men's team. Many of the better players had burned out from playing club and high school soccer year-round from the age of five. They just wanted to enjoy the sport. At a D3 school, with no scholarships, a no-cut policy, and no chance of a pro contract in the future, the pressure was off.

We began again against Illinois College and managed to score two goals, though they plundered four. Better than the year before, so progress. In the next few matches solid defense kept our opponents to lower tallies than in 1994: Grinnell only got seven, Clarke University just one, and we took Cornell to double overtime before losing 2-1. That narrow loss was something of a moral victory. Apart from Coe (again), every other match was close. We scored a total of seven goals, Tish leading us with four. By the end of the season, we seemed to be on the verge of a breakthrough, or at least of actually winning a match, though injuries had slowed us down again. In addition to the usual complement of bruises, strains, and pulls we would, through the years, accumulate players who suffered from debilitating migraines, including our best sweeper, and a goalkeeper who was subject to (fortunately rare) seizures.

The elusive first victory came in the second match of our third season. In early September 1996, we drove up to Lisle, a Chicago suburb, to play Benedictine University. The omens were not good. We had already lost our opening match 7-0 to Judson College, another Chicago-area institution. Judson was an unusual opponent, one of the rare schools without an American football program. Soccer was their passion and we were never really in the match. Why we played them is a mystery to me; I understood teams were queuing up to play us, expecting a victory, but we should not have been scheduling matches against such strong programs. Okay, hands up. I should not have been scheduling them. The coaches made the schedule, starting at the conference meeting following the conclusion of the Fall sports season. Those meetings were held in Beloit, Wisconsin, with the coaches driving up together. Well, all except Kelly Kane, the football coach, who usually did his own thing. Roger Sander piloted us from Monmouth to Beloit, a portable television perched on the dashboard in an attempt to get a signal over the airwaves to watch his beloved Chicago Bears. We added non-conference foes afterwards, but it was difficult in those pre-internet days to get a real sense of what other programs were like.

Back to that third season. The drive up to Lisle took about three hours. We arrived at Benedictine to find a dedicated soccer field, not the American football stadium in which most of our adversaries played. Banners around the field proclaimed, "NCAA Championships Site." The pitch was immaculate and the changing rooms spotless. As the two teams walked out for warmups, I thought the other side looked quite small in stature, but they seemed to have more than adequate skills as they worked through their pre-match drills. By now our assistant coach was Jeani Randall, and she expressed herself as confident that this would be our day. On what grounds I did not know, but they proved well founded. The match was relatively straightforward, we took a two-nil lead into half time, they scored shortly afterwards, but we grabbed another goal and comfortably saw the contest out. Afterwards: emptiness. At last, a victory. But it had taken two years and one match to get there. I found a payphone, shared the good news with Stacy, and chatted with Jeani as the players changed.

Perhaps the emptiness came from my fear that the win was not a turning point. Indeed, we lost four out of our next five matches, a tie against Beloit in the middle of that run. We did beat Illinois College twice later in the season, lifting us off the bottom of the division for the first time. Grinnell scored a total of only five goals against us, their new coach, Jenny Wood, very kindly commending me in their college newspaper. And we took local rival Knox to overtime before falling 3–2. For the season, seventeen goals scored and a record of 3 wins, twelve losses, and one tie. Not bad, but hardly earthshaking, though it did set us up nicely for the 1997 season.

That fourth season we made a run at the top four, finishing with eight wins and seven losses overall, boasting a conference record of five wins and four losses, just one win away from the playoffs. We started well, beating Knox 2–1 in Galesburg. The players were over the moon, joyfully exclaiming their happiness, the substitutes rushing onto the field at full time, (i.e., at the end of the match) and Stacy walking across the pitch to offer a congratulatory hug. A bigger surprise came when the Knox athletic director, Harley Knosher, stuck out his hand and said, “I can see this means a lot to your players. Congratulations!” Fair play to you, Harley! We have just beaten your team on your pitch, and you are congratulating me. That moment exemplified sportsmanship for me.

For the players, however, the celebrations had just begun. We lived four blocks from campus and could hear them marching through town chanting, “We Beat Knox!” They TP’d our house, which in practical terms meant throwing rolls of toilet paper over the hedge and onto low-hanging branches of the trees in our front yard. This was supposed to have been done in secret but they were making so much noise it was hard to miss them. We did not want to spoil their fun so we stayed in the house, lights off, vicariously enjoying their sheer joy while keeping the dogs from barking. Stacy and I had foolishly promised to dye our hair red if we beat the Prairie Fire, and so it came to pass, to the great amusement of all and sundry.

The season gave us a veritable rollercoaster ride. After Knox we lost to eventual champions Lake Forest in double overtime. As the game wound down, Melinda Springer, who had been enjoying a running battle with their left-sided midfielder, was hauled to the ground and kicked out. The ref showed her a yellow and gave the Forester a red. Down to ten players, they still managed to score with barely a minute left to take the victory. T. R. Bell, their coach, told me afterwards he expected to see us in the playoffs. I shared this sentiment with the players in an effort to lift their mood, and we did win the next two matches, travelling into southern Illinois to beat Greenville 9–0 and then taking Beloit 3–0. Grinnell rained on our parade as usual, and then we had a crucial road trip up north, travelling with the men’s team. We got past previously unbeaten Ripon in double overtime but lost to a not-very-good Carroll team. That was a disaster. I had a good sense of which of our remaining games we could win, and it would not be enough to finish in the top four of the, by-then, ten team, single-division league. Coe and Cornell had abandoned the Midwest Conference for the Iowa Conference, which they claimed was superior athletically and certainly had looser rules about recruiting prospective players. I did not miss either of them.

That 1997 season was the high point of my college-coaching career. The next year we enjoyed a .500 record, but we were inconsistent, winning three and then losing three, winning four but following that up with another three-match losing streak. Two key players chose academics over athletics when their major required them to take afternoon classes, ruling them out of the team. Our leading scorer, Tisha Kimoto, had her best season, ending with twelve goals,

one more than her tally for 1997. Those first four years were simultaneously difficult and enjoyable. We had fun despite all the losses, and many of my best memories come from those years.

Things started to go wrong after we--after I--tasted that winning season in 1997. I began recruiting less on the basis of fit to the college and the team and more on the grounds of athletic ability, real or imagined. Alas, a few bad apples spoiled what had been a good program and the chemistry stank. I began to prioritize winning, by playing players who shirked off in practice because they had good skills or chronic injuries, and by alienating those who worked hard and deserved to play but did not because, all of a sudden, I thought I was Sir Alex Bloody Ferguson. I began to think also of making coaching my full-time career, of applying for jobs at D2 and D1 schools. Fortunately, my father talked some sense into me; also, just as sensibly, Stacy let me imagine that potential future and sighed with relief when it evaporated. And of course, with my record, there is no way anyone other than an incredibly desperate program would have taken a punt on me.

Over the next two seasons, which turned into my final years of college coaching, we won just eight matches and lost twenty-two. There were definitely some highlights, including a weekend double-header of victories over Ripon and Carroll in 1999 (if only we had achieved that in 1997 and made the playoffs; I would have been even more insufferable than I already was!). We had a terrific recruiting year after that 1999 season, bringing in a number of good players and one natural striker, Kim Olson, who scored hat tricks in each of our first three matches as we beat Marian College, Marycrest, and Blackburn by a combined score of 18 to 4. Those three consecutive hat tricks to start a college career are still an NCAA Division III record. She was fast, strong, and hungry. Her will to win was the most dominant of any player I had ever coached. She would have thrived at North Carolina, where Anson Dorrance was teaching women that it was acceptable to be ferociously competitive. At the time I thought we had a great chance to better that magical 1997 season.

After the three wins, though, came four defeats. The first was particularly devastating, a seven-nil drubbing by Aurora University, a loss all too reminiscent of the early years of the program: outplayed comprehensively by a faster, better team, with us showing too little desire on the pitch. The drive to Aurora had been long, not helped by a late start and an arrival with barely enough time to change and warm up. Olson stood out, however, by her determination against a superior team. After that match I overheard the Aurora coach telling her she should transfer to his school; this happened more than once that season.

Three more losses followed that metaphorical kick in the teeth, including a home defeat to Illinois College, a team we had owned, having beaten them five times in a row over the previous three seasons. Then came a 9 – 0 loss to Grinnell and a 7 – 2 defeat by Carroll. Though we recovered to beat Knox—my job was safe!—and Ripon, that was it for wins in 2000. As the season drew to a close, I realized I had had enough. Though my pay had grown to \$3,195, up a third over seven years, the time it all took and the energy I burned through each season had worn me down. To be fair, some of the players had performed exceptionally well in that season, including the ever-unselfish Jessica Adams, whose fourteen assists in 2000 meant she had registered an assist every two games over her four-year career, an impressive tally and one of the best ever in the Midwest Conference. Kim Olson of course dominated the headlines, scoring fifteen goals, easily the highest number by any Scots women's team member to that point. But I felt I had reached

my limit with losses and, with our son now toddling about the place, a diminutive blond-haired mascot, I felt the time had come to step aside.

Reflections

Coaching takes a lot of time, even when done badly. Stacy had been a firm supporter of me as coach and of the team, coming to every home match and driving to Knox to watch us whenever her schedule permitted. She was our biggest fan, and the players appreciated seeing us together, a happily married couple enjoying a fulfilling lifestyle. But she was a busy professor and our son, born in July 1998, needed two parents at home on a predictable basis. By then I was on the tenure track, thanks in large measure to Bill's support. Stacy and I coordinated our teaching schedules, also thanks to Bill's humane chairing of the Department, so one of us was at home in the mornings and the other in the afternoons. Even so, that was not an infallible form of childcare because of the multiple pressures of being a professor and a coach. Before our final match of the 2000 season, away to St. Norbert, I told the players of my plan to resign. They were stunned but I think they understood. They also played with an incredible intensity, surprising one of the best teams in the conference and holding them to only three goals.

Looking back over those seven seasons, it is clear that a large portion of the satisfaction in coaching comes from unforgettable events on and off the field. Road trips often bring a staple diet of anecdotes, few as memorable as the time Terry Glasgow drove the second van to an away match. This was a unique event, necessitated by the absence of alternative drivers. Normally the assistant coach drove the other vehicle, but she had a class she could not miss. So, TG it was. We were destined for Clarke College, in Dubuque, Iowa, a two-hour haul due north through the Quad Cities. Terry drove a beaten-up old van while I had a fairly new one. We stopped on the way up for a quick lunch. The players ate their boxed sandwiches—those who hadn't devoured them before leaving Monmouth—and they went off to find a restroom. The next thing I knew, TG came rushing out of the building, complaining that a large group of the women had swarmed the men's room! He quickly calmed down, relieved to have been washing his hands when they stormed in and telling me he was impressed by the fact the players had the guts to do it, recommending that in future they make sure no one is in there before doing so.

TG kept his cool in the face of invading women soccer players, but his van did not. As soon as we arrived at Clarke it overheated, steam pouring from the hood. We went off to prepare for the match and TG drove slowly to a gas station for repairs. He got back to the field in time for the drive home, the van to be retired upon its return to Monmouth. Except, in fact, it was sold locally and could still be seen moving lugubriously around town years later, the red-and-white Monmouth College color scheme fading into oblivion. As for the match itself, we played well, only lost two-nil, and enjoyed a raucous ride home, the overheated van leading the way and travelling just below the speed limit.

One aspect of coaching at Monmouth I did not fully appreciate until I worked at a larger institution was the sheer amount of family support we got for home and road matches. Some parents came to every match while others made every home game. In the Chicago area, from where so many of our players had been recruited, we got tremendous support, regardless of our record or prospects. No parent ever berated me for losing, and many congratulated all of us after our wins. For the student athletes, having parents, friends, and other relatives watch them play

was a morale boost, and Stacy always tried to make me aware of who had friends or family in the crowd in order to make sure they got in, even if only for half an hour. These players also tended to climb into the van loaded down with extras: food from home, winter clothes, the occasional lamp or teddy bear. As long as it all fit there was no problem. And the support was as t for our opponents as it was for us. It was always great to see the hugs and the happy reunions at the conclusion of every match, a solid reminder of the power of connection and the ultimate meaninglessness of results.

In Monmouth, the soccer programs also got a lot of support from the local media and, eventually, from the College media-relations staff. Two people in particular were responsible for that. The first was Dan Nolan. Dan was the sports reporter for the local radio station, broadcasting from the town square, with a morning show enlivened by counts of cars during the “rush minute.” For as long as he worked in radio, he interviewed Rue and me before every season, giving us a chance to discuss new players, returning stars, and our expectations for the year ahead, and to enjoy a bit of give-and-take. He was an excellent interviewer, allowing us to do the bulk of the talking. I’m sure the combination of my received English with a growing trans-Atlantic tinge and Rue’s slightly diluted Mancunian must have made for an odd listen in rural Illinois. When the radio station was bought out Dan took a job at the College as sports information director, at which he excelled.

The other person who helped get the word out about Monmouth College soccer was Barry McNamara, who loved the sport and eventually became a very successful head coach after I stepped down. Barry worked in College Relations and interviewed Rue and me several times for the college website, writing some incisive articles about our teams. One, in particular, was perhaps a bit too penetrating: we had chatted about formations and switching from a 4-4-2 to a 4-3-3 as squad circumstances and the opposition dictated, which he wrote up in great detail for public consumption. I like to think that it tipped off keen-eyed opposition coaches, but probably not.

The athletic facilities at Monmouth College when we arrived in 1994 were, like most of the place, in need of renovation. That would certainly happen over the following seven years, including a magnificent new fieldhouse and, in time for my final season of coaching, a dedicated soccer and baseball complex on the edge of town. The latter was a gift from college trustee Safford Peacock. This was a prime example of the power of a single donation to a small school. Before then, soccer was the poor stepchild of the Athletics Department. We practiced wherever we could find a patch of grass large enough, usually on city-owned land. Our matches were contested on Bobby Woll Field, the football stadium named for a legendary but still very much alive former coach. Bobby himself was an occasional presence when we played, watching more of our matches than TG. Indeed, one season, after we had won a match, our athletic director congratulated us on the victory. As he walked away, one of the players turned to me and asked, “Who was that?”

Sharing the field with the football program was a challenge in and of itself. Quite reasonably, the head coach and, for all I knew, the players did not want to. Playing on a field designed for American football also meant we had a narrow pitch with an unusually steep angle down to the sideline for drainage. To add to the general sense of being on an inappropriate surface the area at the edge of the field where the football squad and coaches stood during games would be torn up by their cleats over the course of the three hours it took to play sixty gridiron

minutes. In my first year the football coach promised not to practice the day before a home match against Knox. Rain had made it even muddier than usual, and of course he had his team out there, worrying for his own record. We lost, and I blamed the football coach.

Monmouth College not only survived having a struggling women's soccer program but thrived in spite of it. One of the principal reasons for that was a man by the name of Dick Giese, who became president of the College in 1997. Giese believed in a beautiful campus, a friendly faculty and staff, and the power of intercollegiate athletics. He knew "curb appeal" gave Monmouth a competitive advantage over other schools, especially but not only in declining cities like Decatur or Rock Island. Even Knox College looked down in the mouth compared to Monmouth. He had been a college coach himself, and he recognized that if four hundred or so of your one thousand students engaged in intercollegiate athletics, then you need to pay attention to that significant constituency. His vision and fundraising ability brought us the new baseball and soccer complex, Peacock Field, which we inaugurated in August 2000 by trouncing Marycrest International University from Davenport, Iowa, by a score of 7 – 1. Scheduling a weak opponent for the ceremonial opening of a new field is one thing I did right, though I had no idea just how weak Marycrest was: the university closed down two years after we beat them, a case, as far as I know, of correlation not causation.

The Peacock Field ceremonial opening featured speeches from Safford Peacock, us soccer coaches, and the team captains. The complex had two full-size soccer pitches next to the baseball diamond. We had electronic scoreboards and a bathroom, though no changing facilities, which meant vanning it out in full battle armor. The field was connected to a nature preserve used by various Monmouth science classes and open to anyone who wanted to take a nice quiet walk. With new fields in a lovely area surrounded by trees, it reminded me of the setup at Ripon College in rural Wisconsin. The whole thing felt as if Monmouth College had finally given the soccer teams the recognition we deserved.

If Monmouth College soccer deserved recognition, it was in large measure because of Rue Carthew. Rue was hired to coach the men's team following a run of eight part-time coaches, none of whom had done anything spectacular in the way of accumulating wins. The best of the lot was Lyman Williams, who won 5 and lost 13 over two seasons separated by three years. The longest serving had been Bill Urban, a pinch hitter who coached for two consecutive years on three different occasions. Fluent in seven languages, the gaps in his coaching resume represent years in which he and his family lived abroad. His teams won eleven of the fifty-five games under his control, including our first-ever conference wins. But Rue had a professional career under his belt and a deep knowledge of the game, so Terry Glasgow hired him in 1991. Rue stayed until 2005, compiling by the far the best record of any Monmouth College men's soccer coach, including a conference championship and a trip to the NCAA tournament.

If Rue had an Achilles heel it was discipline. Or, more exactly, lack of discipline. His players had a reputation for partying and he sometimes joined in. Rumor had it that they inducted him as an honorary member of the fraternity to which many of them had pledged and in whose frat house he could occasionally be found after matches. Having pledged, it seemed he could not punish them for violating rules against drinking. Adding a women's team to the mix made things interesting for everyone, especially when we travelled together on away weekends. The charter buses usually had a video player on board and we once let the men choose the film. After about twenty minutes of *Clerks*, which is not appropriate to a mixed audience of impressionable young

people, we learned we had made a tactical error. We stuck to soccer highlights from England after that one.

Presumably, that's what American football teams do, watch lots of film. They also do a lot of lifting weights, unlike soccer players. The latter did, however, want to stay fit over the winter, and that task became easier when, through the combined efforts of President Giese, TG, and the College's development office, we got a new fieldhouse. Sooner than anyone anticipated, \$22 million was in the bank and building commenced. Small houses adjacent to campus were purchased and pulled down, a street was closed, and an old dorm, nicknamed the Holiday Inn because of its exterior doors, was demolished. Make way for progress! And progress it was. The design was brilliant, creatively incorporating the gyms, old and new, into a vast structure with a huge open track-and-field area easily divisible into small spaces using mesh curtains. It was ideal for indoor soccer, which quickly became an evening mainstay. There was also a new weight room, an Olympic-size swimming pool, intramural facilities, offices for coaches and staff, and a general feeling of prosperity. Talk about curb appeal: the Huff Athletic Center had it in spades and helped recruit students and athletes.

Before The Huff, as the students quickly dubbed it, visiting players and coaches justifiably complained about our facilities. But then coaches complain a lot, and my fellow women's soccer coaches were no different. They were an interesting bunch. In addition to trying to steal our best player, they were mostly interested in beating us. When I coached, the majority of coaches in our conference were men, and they definitely wanted to win, though the women were just as competitive. Women were, however, a little less openly ambitious. Two of the men against whom I coached told me they were building programs with the express aim of winning a national championship, something none of the women did. But women coaches took losing just as badly as their male counterparts. One of my clearest memories from the 1997 season comes from the aftermath of our 1 – 0 overtime defeat of Lawrence University. Their coach, in her first and only year there, could be heard muttering "one fucking goal; one fucking goal!" as she took in the enormity of losing to Monmouth College. I later learned that she packed in coaching at the end of the season and went to work for the NCAA in Indianapolis. The Grinnell team seemed to specialize in trying to intimidate opponents, wearing black practice shirts with a logo that looked like a World War One German military cross and the word "foosball."

Sportsmanship, as we used to call it, was in short supply, but the Cornell College coaches were especially bereft of that particular quality. When lightning forced the referee to abandon a match against them, he told us head coaches—Cornell had two, the Robertson brothers, little and large—that the match would be thus obliterated from the records. Lo and behold, the Cornell women's soccer record for that season, 1997, showed a 2–1 victory over us, the score when the match was abandoned. The lively Robertson brothers also featured in the only time I swore at an official. This came on our home pitch, when a clearly unfit ref, complete with knee braces and thick spectacles, missed a massive foul in the Cornell area that should have been a penalty for us and, a few seconds later, failed to notice one of the Cornell forwards barreling into and knocking our keeper flat on her back. As I was leaping off the bench effing and jeffing I could see in my peripheral vision the Cornell coaches helpfully telling the ref I had it all wrong and my players were at fault. The ref stayed well away from me after that, patrolling the far side of the pitch and no handshakes were proffered at the conclusion of the match. Stacy told me afterwards that the

stands fell silent and one of our professorial colleagues turned to her and said, *sotto voce*, "I didn't know he knew such words."

When it became clear that I was not going to be a one-season wonder, I entertained the idea of actually learning how to coach. In addition to the books I read I joined the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and attended a coaching clinic held at the University of Notre Dame. There were sessions on fitness, on training routines, on throw ins, and on set plays. The star turn was the University of North Carolina's longtime women's soccer coach, Anson Dorrance, who holds the record for Division I championships. He coached a full complement of U.S. women's national team players and won a FIFA Women's World Cup as the first U.S. national-team coach. He was open about being competitive, fostering competition among the players at UNC. I expected to hear a torrent of tactical tips, each one more useful than the last, but instead got anecdotes. One of those made the audience gasp. He told us that his all-world forward, Mia Hamm, would rather go shopping than play soccer, though he seems to have encouraged that habit by sending her out with his credit card to buy him "some stylish clothes."² It seemed to be playing on a stereotype about women, but he assured us that was in fact what his players preferred to do.

Anson Dorrance represented a deeply ugly strain in athletics. His solution to the puzzle of creating the desire to win at all costs, to instill hunger and to cultivate ambition in women soccer players of the highest caliber, was troubling to me. His motto appeared to be: hurt, harm, belittle. To win, he thought he needed to bring anger and ferocity out of his players, reflecting his own approach to the game as a college player, an approach I did not share. He was an unparalleled winner and most of his players apparently remained loyal to him, but that cut-throat ideology seemed inappropriate to a D3 school with players who competed for fun and not for a scholarship. I was disappointed that his way to win was so psychologically, emotionally, and physically violent.

Trying to bring the ideas of Anson Dorrance and the other top coaches who spoke at the Notre Dame workshop to Monmouth College proved something of a challenge. Whether or not my players thought about going shopping every time they stepped onto the field seems unlikely, and I was not about to take a survey. Nutrition had been the subject of one panel, but we could not expect student-athletes to eat well on our allowance of \$3 for breakfast, \$4 for lunch, and \$5 for dinner, which basically meant stopping at fast food restaurants and trying to convince them to go easy on the French fries. And as for film analysis, Monmouth College soccer was not exactly overendowed with technology. Only once did we have a match video, taken by business professor Dick Johnston. He stood on top of the press box at Bobby Woll field filming on VHS but, sadly, when it came time to give me the finished product, he discovered it had been accidentally recorded over by his daughter Mary, who had a seemingly insatiable appetite for business programs.

Despite the obstacles, we had some record-setting players in my seven years as head coach. I've already mentioned Kim Olson's three consecutive hat tricks to open a collegiate career. Jessica Adams scored three goals and had two assists for eight points against Blackburn College in 1998, still the second highest single-game tally in the program's history. Jessica was a fabulous player, short and quick, and almost completely silent for four years. She spoke with her right foot, scoring twenty-six goals and combining brilliantly for her first two years with Tisha Kimoto, who

² Crothers 2006: 232.

scored thirty-two times in her college career. We had some very fine goalkeepers as well. Colleen Shaughnessy made 139 saves in a single season, second only to Lauren Bentrup's remarkable record of 246 saves in the season following my departure from the sidelines. That averages over seventeen saves a match in a season when the team only scored three goals, one fewer than my first year as coach. Those are both records unlikely to be broken any time soon. I coached, and Stacy and I got to know, a lot of wonderful young women in those seven years.

Bill watched our games from the sidelines whenever he could, offering his quiet, welcome support. Rue was also a constant, offering advice, support, and occasional critiques. He was certainly a hard worker. He earned his real money laboring, usually second shift, on the production line at Gates Rubber Company in Galesburg. He loved soccer, and he enjoyed the coaching, but he always felt a little uneasy not having a college degree. We talked about him enrolling in an undergraduate program, most likely at Monmouth, but he never had the time. Also, like many working-class Brits, he lacked the self-confidence and perhaps a little bit of the cultural capital to imagine himself as a college student. It cost him his job ultimately because the college made the coaching staff full-time members of the admissions office and required college degrees, though his squad's lack of discipline did not help matters. I learned a lot from Rue and remain grateful to him for being what we would now call my mentor, though at the time we were just two English geezers talking football.

Conclusion

When we met to reminisce on that lovely September afternoon in Fall 2024, Bill Urban was fittingly present and appropriately feted. Recognized as the father of soccer at Monmouth College, Bill watched the current team with us, stood in all the photos, and joined us for dinner afterwards. That we could celebrate thirty years of the women's soccer program is down in no small measure to his willingness to say "yes" when asked to coach a women's soccer club.

From all of us, Thank You, Bill.



Figure 2.1: Celebrating 30 Years of Monmouth College Women's Soccer. Alumnae and current students gathered with coaches past and present in 2024 to celebrate the sport's 30th anniversary at Monmouth College. Pictured are Bill Urban (central row, far right); Simon Cordery (back row, third from right); and Barry McNamara (back row, second from right). Photo by Kent Kriegshauser.

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Crothers, Tim (2006) *The Man Watching: Anson Dorrance and the University of North Carolina Women's Soccer Dynasty*, New York: Thomas Dunne Books.

CHAPTER 3

The Continuing Saga of Monmouth College's Storied Stone, OR That's How the Canopus Crumbles

J. Richard Sayre

How many small colleges have items in their collections that connect them to the 19th century Presbyterian missions in Egypt, decipherment of Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, Egypt's Ptolemaic Dynasties, the Rosetta Stone, and the first written record of what we know as the leap year two centuries before its introduction and adoption in the Julian Calendar of the Roman Empire, not to mention its early connections with the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.? In this article I chronicle the discovery and fascinating saga of Monmouth College's Canopus (or Tanis) Stone, which links the college with all the events listed in the previous sentence.¹

On April 15, 1866, a German archaeologist, Professor Karl Richard Lepsius, was leading a Prussian expedition in Tanis (San) of lower Egypt, where they found a large stone protruding from the sand near a number of fallen obelisks. It had been noticed earlier, but ignored, by an engineer working on the excavation of the historic hydrologic engineering feat, the Suez Canal. The canal was to become a new passageway from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea via the Nile River allowing ships to avoid the long and treacherous voyages around the African continent. The discovered stone, or stele (fig. 3.1), was quite impressive in its size: 7'-4" (h), 28" (w), and 13-½" (d). It was inscribed with a decree containing hieroglyphics followed by the Greek script of the same text. It was identified as the Decree of Canopus attributed to Ptolemy III, ruler of Egypt, from 238 BC.

Two years later, while working on the Canopus Stone in Cairo's Museum of Egyptian Antiquity, German Egyptologist Heinrich Brugsch discovered scratches on the side of the stone that followed line for line with the Greek inscriptions on the front face of the stone. Brugsch was also a scholar of the



Figure: 3.1: Front View of the Canopus Stone. From facsimile foldout in Budge (1904): opp35. Fine Limestone slab, 7'4" (h), 2'8" (w), 13.5" (d). Decorative Lunette at top followed by 37 lines of Hieroglyphics, and 76 lines of Greek.

¹ The official name is the "Tanis Stone" or "Tanis Stele". However, it was referred to as the "Canopus Stone" during much of its early history. The author of this article has elected to refer to the stele as the "Canopus Stone" in deference to the name used throughout most of Monmouth College's history.

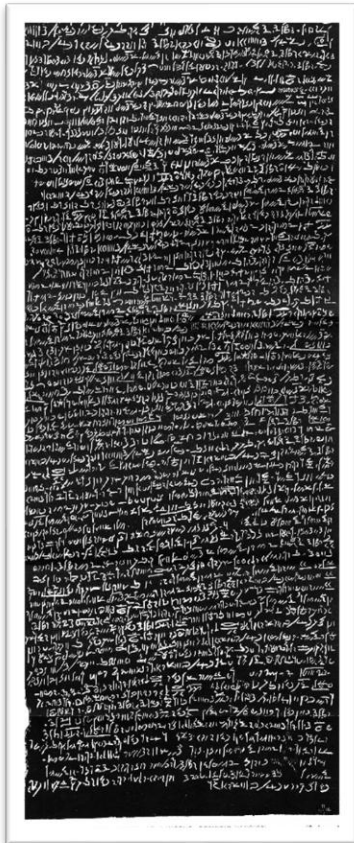


Figure 3.2: Left view of Canopus Stone (13-1/2" d) with the Egyptian Demotic script. From Facsimile foldout in Budge (1904): opp115.

Egyptian demotic script and recognized the scratches to be to be demotic script (fig. 3.2). The significance of this discovery was that the Canopus Stone was now clearly a "trilingual"² artifact with three scripts, Hieroglyphics, Greek and Egyptian Demotic, like the Rosetta Stone, discovered by Napoleon's army and accompanying scholars in their brief conquest of Egypt in 1799.³

It was the discovery of the trilingual Rosetta Stone (fig. 3.3) that set off a century of Egyptomania worldwide and a race for scholars to crack the code behind the translation of hieroglyphics. The ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics had not been used by Egyptians since 400 AD and scholars ever since had struggled with the translation of this long-forgotten script. Was it a pictographic script similar to Chinese, or were there elements of phonetics within it?

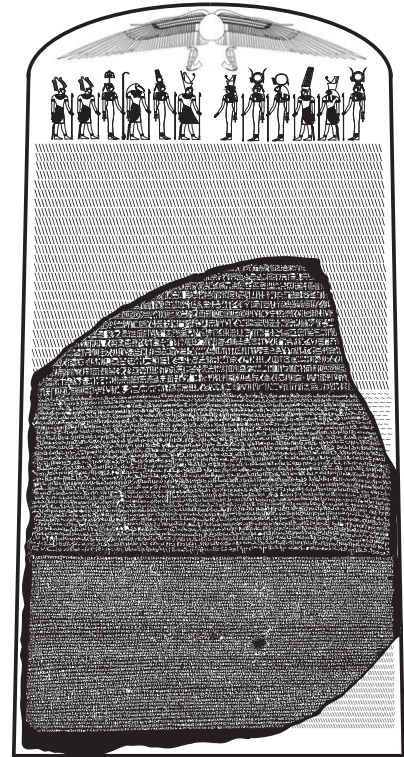


Figure 3.3: Reconstruction of the stele of which the Rosetta Stone was originally a part. Size: 45" (h) x 28.5" (w). British-Museum. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RosettaStoneAsPartOfOriginalStele_revised.svg [A. Parrot, Wikimedia Commons].

The most significant challenge for translating hieroglyphics of the Rosetta Stone was that it was not complete. The hieroglyphic portion of the stone was the most damaged, only revealing about one-third of the hieroglyphics section. Much smaller portions of the demotic and the Greek scripts were missing.

Yet the Rosetta Stone still provided a source of comparison for the three scripts and aided young scholars in the early nineteenth-century like the English polymath, Thomas Young (1773–1849), as well as the talented French linguist, Jean-François Champollion (1790–1832) who is ultimately credited with deciphering hieroglyphics in 1822.⁴

The Canopus Stone, discovered some 67 years after the Rosetta Stone, was virtually complete and would enable Professor Karl Lepsius to corroborate and to improve upon the

² "Trilingual" is used loosely here as the Ptolemaic decrees consist of only two "languages" (Egyptian and Greek), but three scripts: Hieroglyphics and Demotic are both Egyptian language scripts.

³ "The Tanis Stele." (Inset photo & description), Dodson 2001: 127.

⁴ There are many books on both Young and Champollion and the race to decipher hieroglyphics, but two very enjoyable accounts are Robinson 2006 and Robinson 2012.

translations from Champollion's work on hieroglyphics. Thus, the Canopus Stone was considered second in importance to the Rosetta Stone in deciphering hieroglyphics.

Because the Canopus Stone was a significant discovery and could be of service to other scholars, the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities in Cairo initially decided it would be appropriate to make two copies that could be shared with other important museums in the world. The enormous stele was divided into three plaster casts for shipping purposes, the face of the stele into two equal slabs and the third slab including the demotic script from the left side of the stele. The top slab included the decorative lunette and all but the two final lines of the hieroglyphics. The bottom slab included the last two lines of the hieroglyphics followed by the complete Greek inscription.

Three copies of the stone were eventually cast and prepared for shipping to the following institutions:

- 1) The British Museum (London),
- 2) The Royal History Museum (Berlin), and
- 3) Monmouth College, Monmouth, Illinois!



Figure 3.4: Rev. Gulian Lansing with his wife, Maria. Photo courtesy of the Presbyterian Historical Society Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

The two eminent European museums were natural homes for these important copies; however, Monmouth College, a fledgling co-educational college on the prairies of western Illinois, was a bit confounding. The College had been founded just a few years earlier by the Presbyterian church in 1853, and in 1871 had an enrollment of 124 students and 14 faculty, including its president.

As it happens, there was a Presbyterian mission in Cairo that was headed by Reverend Gulian Lansing (fig. 3.4). Lansing was originally from New York and spent much of his missionary career in Syria and Egypt. In 1865 Lansing authored a book on his experiences entitled *Egypt's Princes: A Narrative of Missionary Labor in the Valley of the Nile* that was published by New York's Robert Carter and Bros. It was a chronicle of the joys and heartbreaks of working with the local Egyptian community. Over the years Lansing's work educating the *fellahin* or peasants had come to the attention of the Khedive or Viceroy of Egypt, Isma'il Pasha. Egypt was then a part of the Ottoman Empire. At the time most Egyptians believed the *fellahin* to be uneducable, yet Lansing's missionary school in Assiut had become well-known for its success in doing so, and Lansing became a consultant to the Egypt's new ministry

of public education and a good friend of the Viceroy.

Sadly, in 1865 a deadly cholera epidemic in Egypt killed many, including Lansing's wife, Maria. Lansing suffered seriously from cholera as well but survived. A year later, in 1866, Lansing remarried one of his associate missionaries, Sarah Dales. The Canopus Stone was discovered that same year. A few years later, as copies of the Canopus Stone were beginning to be made, Lansing,

through an intermediary, prevailed upon the Khedive to make a third copy for Monmouth College in western Illinois, which the Khedive agreed to do.

But why Monmouth College? Lansing was from New York and had likely never been to Illinois. What connection with Monmouth College, other than its Presbyterian affiliation could have precipitated this request? A lengthy biography of Lansing in the *Dictionary of American Biography* (1928–1936) revealed no connection with Monmouth.

In 2010 Hewes Library had copies of the college catalogs digitized. A keyword search of these catalogs revealed that Monmouth College had awarded Rev. Gulian Lansing an honorary degree in 1865, most likely for his significant work with the Presbyterian missions in Egypt as chronicled in his book, *Egypt's Princes*, published that same year. A search of the minutes of the Monmouth College Board of Trustees from June 27, 1865, found in the Monmouth College Archives, revealed that Lansing was nominated for the “honorary degree of D.D.” by Reverend Dales of Philadelphia (fig. 3.5 and 3.6). Dales was the brother of Sarah Dales, who in 1866 became Lansing’s second wife.⁵

Lansing nominated for Honorary Degree by MC Faculty
MC Board of Trustees Minutes, June 27, 1865

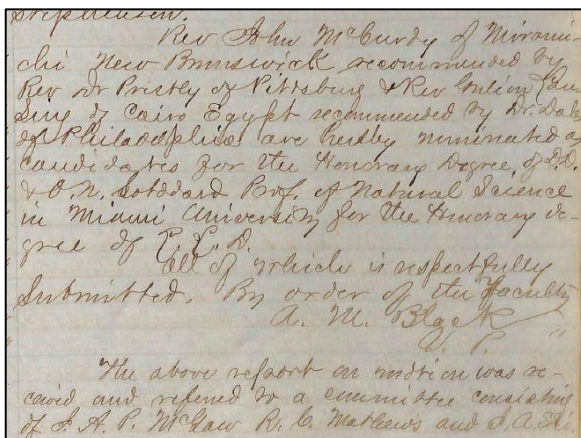


Figure 3.5: Nomination by the Monmouth College Faculty of Rev. Gulian Lansing for an Honorary Degree. Scanned from the Minutes of the Monmouth College Board of Trustees, June 27, 1865.

Rev John McCurdy of Miramichi, New Brunswick recommended by Rev Dr Priestly of Pittsburg & **Rev Gulian Lansing of Cairo Egypt recommended by Dr. Dales of Philadelphia are hereby nominated as candidates for the Honorary Degree of D.D. & O.N. Goddard, Prof. of Natural Science in Miami University for the Honorary degree of P.C.D.(?)**

All of which is respectfully Submitted, By order of the Faculty.

A.M. Black
U.P.??

Figure 3.6: Transcription of the excerpt scanned in Figure 3.5 from the Minutes of the Monmouth College Board of Trustees, June 27, 1865.

While no documentation has been found to corroborate this, it is the contention of the author that Rev. Lansing was incredibly grateful for the honorary degree that had been bestowed upon him. In 1865 he was unable to make the arduous journey to Illinois to accept the honorary degree. Lansing was grieving the loss of his wife and was still recovering from the effects of cholera on his own health. When Lansing learned that plaster copies were to be made of the newly discovered Canopus Stone, he saw his opportunity to repay the kindness afforded by Monmouth College and used his influence with the Khedive, Isma'il Pasha, to have a third copy made for the College.

⁵ Rankin 2019: 7.

Smithsonian Institution Interest

By the early 1870s reports that a copy of the Canopus Stone was headed to Monmouth College made it across the Atlantic. The Smithsonian Institution, founded in 1846, with the goal of becoming the center of scientific research in the United States, was following this with particular interest. Monmouth College's President David Wallace received a letter of congratulations and an unusual request from the Smithsonian. They were seeking permission from the college to have the copy of the Canopus Stone shipped first to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., where their archaeological staff would make their own "matrix" of Monmouth's plaster copy of the Canopus Stone. The Smithsonian's matrix copy would be used to make copies for other institutions. Monmouth's copy would then be re-crated and shipped directly to the college. President Wallace graciously agreed, and arrangements were made.

A report of the arrival of the Canopus Stone at the Smithsonian is found on p.34 of the *1871 Annual Report to the Board of Trustees of the Smithsonian Institution*:

One of the most interesting additions to the department of ethnology is the cast of the Tanis stone, on which is a trilingual inscription recently obtained from some excavations near Tanis. . . . This stone occupies a position in Egyptology similar to that of the "Rosetta Stone," except that it is much more perfect, and will probably aid much in deciphering the hieroglyphic. The cast was taken by the instrumentality of Dr. Lansing for presentation to Monmouth College, Illinois, at his request and that of Mr. S. H. Scudder and by permission of the authorities of the college, it was sent to the institution to be copied. Unfortunately, it was very much broken in transit and required patient labor on the part of a skillful modeler to restore it to anything like its original condition. When this is accomplished, a mold and casts will be taken and the original sent to the college.

Very much broken"!! Surely the news that the Canopus Stone was broken in transit was disappointing. But Monmouth College certainly benefitted from the Smithsonian Institution's receiving the shipment first and were able to have the restoration handled by one of the Smithsonian's skilled modelers.

By the time the Canopus Stone arrived at the Smithsonian, the discovery of the stone had begun to appear in newspapers and magazines across the Atlantic. There were articles in the *Scientific American*, *The Chicago Tribune*, and in other major newspapers and magazines. Edwin John Davis authored a particularly detailed article simply entitled, "The Canopus Stone" in the August 1873 issue of *Scribner's Magazine*, one of the most popular magazines of this period. A footnote on pg. 415 mentioned Monmouth College as one of the recipients of a cast (fig. 3.7). The College certainly must have appreciated the nationwide publicity.

The Canopus Stone Arrives at Monmouth College

By 1872 the Canopus Stone arrived on campus.⁶ According to the 1872 *Monmouth College Catalog*, the stone was added to the college's growing College Cabinet of various artifacts stored on the third floor of the college's only building, Old Main. The Rev. Dr. Lansing, of Cairo, Egypt is credited with the contribution "of the famous Tanis Stone."⁷

There are no existing campus newspapers from the time of the Canopus Stone's arrival, but there are lengthy articles found in a September 1876 *College Courier* and in the 1882 edition of *The Monmouth Collegian*. The author reprinted most of Edwin John Davis's 1873 article from *Scribner's Magazine* (fig. 3.7). The student body was clearly just as proud of their unique artifact.

For the next 35 years the third floor of Old Main became the Canopus Stone's home. Unfortunately, however, on the morning of November 14, 1907, tragedy struck the campus when a defective chimney in the attic of Old Main started a fire in the rafters that first broke through the ceiling of the third-floor biology lecture room.⁸ When the timbers supporting the third floor finally gave way, the roof, the walls and the floors crashed through to the basement along with the famous Canopus Stone...and once again "was very much broken."

Time passed and thoughts of the famous Canopus Stone soon faded from the memories of students, faculty and administrators. There was no mention of the fate of the Canopus Stone in any of the college publications. Then in 1954, 47 years after the devastating loss of Old Main, a custodian working in East Hall⁹ was working around several boxes stored under the basement stairway. His curiosity was piqued. After removing some of the brooms and mops stored atop the boxes, he decided to take a closer look. Upon opening the boxes, he found shards of broken plaster with inscriptions that he did not recognize. He decided that Dr. Charles Speel, Monmouth College's professor of religion, might find it interesting. Dr. Speel recognized the inscriptions in Greek and recruited students to move the boxes of these shards to Room 108 of Wallace Hall.

Here they pieced the remains together as best they could, thus forming a fairly complete block of at least two lines of hieroglyphics at the top followed by 79 lines of Greek. Speel translated the Greek and conferred with Professor of Classics Harold Ralston on the two remaining lines of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Their research carried them to the library where they eventually found an article written by Professor John Calvin Hutchison in the February 11, 1882 edition of the *Monmouth Collegian*. Hutchison's article led them to Edwin John Davis's extensive

* Through the kindness of the Viceroy, Ismail Pasha, three casts of the stone have been taken: one for the Royal Museum of Berlin, one for the British Museum, and one for Monmouth College, Illinois. The College has arranged to permit a model to be taken and kept by the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.

Figure 3.7: Footnote on page 415 of an article entitled "The Canopus Stone" by Edwin John Davis in the August 1873 issue of *Scribner's Magazine*.

⁶ The "Tanis Stone" is first mentioned as part of the College Cabinet in the *Monmouth College Catalog* 20 June 1872: 34. <https://newspaperarchive.com/monmouth-college-catalog-jun-20-1872-p-34/> accessed 8/19/2024.

⁷ *Monmouth College Catalog* 20 June 1872: 34.

⁸ Davenport 1953: 73–74.

⁹ East Hall was the former Sunnyside dormitory for women erected shortly after World War I on North 9th Street. It was renamed Austin Hall and currently houses the Music faculty offices and classrooms.

account of the Canopus Stone in his 1873 article from *Scribner's Magazine* in the library's collection.¹⁰

Where the remains of the lower slab of the Canopus Stone resided over the years, finally ending up in East Hall, is still something of a mystery. When the remains were "discovered" under the staircase, the superintendent of campus buildings, Mr. Kenn Craig, a 32-year employee of the college gave this account to the Monmouth College Oracle reporter, Jerry Allin:

[Craig] believes that the stone arrived between 1920 and 1930. He tells us that for many years the stone was stored in the library in its original case before being taken over to the basement of Sunnyside where it is now kept. Mr. Craig tells us that the plaster-of-paris cast of the stone was broken in moving.¹¹

Obviously, Craig's speculation on the arrival date of the stone was corrected by Professors Speel's and Ralston's research. Also, Craig was clearly not aware of the stone's connection with the fire in Old Main where the breakage more likely occurred. However, it is interesting to note that the recovered portions of the Canopus Stone were first stored in the basement of the new Carnegie library building that was in its final phase of construction when Old Main burned, before eventually being moved to the basement of Sunnyside women's dormitory (AKA East Hall, now Austin Hall).



Figure 3.8: Dr. Charles Speel stands proudly with the recovered portion of Monmouth College's Canopus Stone in its protective display case in 1995. Photo courtesy Jeff Rankin.

The newly recovered lower slab of the college's Canopus Stone, as reconstructed by Professors Speel and Ralston, was occasionally put on display in Room 108 of Wallace Hall. It would also be stored in various closets between those displays. Nevertheless, it was unprotected from the elements, the books, the coats, cups and other items that often rested on it. Frustrated by his fruitless attempts to protect and preserve the cast, Dr. Speel approached Dean St. Ledger, then managing the campus buildings and grounds, about building a case with a protective glass to preserve the rescued artifact (fig. 3.8).

In November 1970, a student group known as "The Non-Current Events Club" sent a letter to the editor of the *Monmouth College Courier* in which they expressed their concern for the stone's preservation (fig. 3.9).

¹⁰ Speel 1995: 18–19.

¹¹ Allin 1954: 8

Monmouth College Courier Nov. 12, 1970 page 6
Non-Current Events Intelligence

The Greek portion of the Canopus Stone, which was found in Egypt in the early 1800s, is now under the protection of the Non-Current Events Club. Currently this stone is resting uncomfortably in room 108 of Wallace Hall, where it could easily be totally destroyed.

We believe that this rare stone should be guarded and yet made available for public viewing. We are proposing that it be placed in a glass case and displayed in our new library. Under Dr. Speel's guidance we have procured

Mr. Hauge's permission to use the library for this purpose.

The Non-Current Events Club is presently soliciting funds to cover the cost of a glass case, for the Canopus Stone, through the local historical society, school and the campus at large. This weekend we shall be selling hot coffee at the St. Olaf football game to help realize this goal.

Next week more about the Canopus stone itself.

Paul Titus
 Beth Tanner
 Melinda Triner

Figure 3.9:
 Transcript of a letter
 to the editor of the
*Monmouth College
 Courier* by a student
 group known as
 "The Non-Current
 Events Club."

There are no updates to this letter to the editor, but perhaps it had its intended effect. The library had a descriptive statement provided with the Canopus Stone display case written by Professor William Urban. It states that Professors Speel and his young colleague, William Urban, approached President DeBow Freed and persuaded him that the Canopus Stone was too important to the College's history and traditions to be lost. Despite the financial troubles of his administration, President Freed authorized building a proper display case for the stone and placing it in the classroom traditionally associated with Religious Studies.¹²

It was another 27 years, until 1997, before the display case was moved to Hewes Library as requested by the Non-Current Events Club in their November 1970 letter to the editor published in the *Monmouth College Courier*. The case was moved from Wallace Hall and was initially displayed on the main level of the library near the Pi Phi Lounge. Following the renovation of Hewes Library in 2001–2002, the Canopus Stone made a permanent move to the library's upper level.

I was appointed Library Director in 1998. We were in the midst of planning for an extensive renovation of Hewes Library. For the first few years, I relied solely on the description provided by Professor Urban when asked about the Canopus Stone. I was curious but was fully consumed with library renovation plans and facing the challenges of my new position.

It wasn't until 2001 that I began searching for more information on the Canopus Stone and ordered a used out-of-print reprint edition of E. A. Wallis Budge's three-volume set entitled *The Decrees of Memphis and Canopus* (1904, reprint 1976). Upon receiving the copy, I opened volume 3 which revealed a very thorough account of the discovery of the Canopus or Tanis Stone and a full description and three line-for-line translations of the Decree of Canopus from the Hieroglyphics, the Demotic and Greek. And then facing p.35 I discovered a wonderful foldout facsimile image of the face of the Canopus Stone. It was the first time I had any idea of what it looked like when it was first discovered. It was stunning. When I first viewed the facsimile, it still

¹² Urban, William. "The Canopus Stone" (unpublished descriptive statement on the current display case).

struck me that I was only seeing two “languages” and I wondered why it was considered to be such an important “trilingual” find.¹³ All three scripts were present on the face of the Rosetta Stone. Where was the third script on the Canopus Stone?

As I continued to page through volume 3, I discovered a second foldout facsimile image (opp.114) showing the elusive third demotic script that was discovered on the side of the original Canopus Stone. It was a much darker quality image, as well. I was elated to finally see the third script of the decree. As I began studying the image, there were markings that looked familiar to me in the upper right portion. At the time I did not know that demotic was read right to left, so I didn't realize this was the first few characters of the first line of the demotic. Nevertheless, the characters looked familiar.

In March 2021 Monmouth College hosted the annual conference of Eta Sigma Phi, the National Classics Honorary Society for students of Latin and/or Greek. Our major library renovation was to start at the end of the spring Semester. The College Art collections was also housed in the library and the library itself had a number of artifacts in various places. There were also artifacts stashed away on our upper level which, over the decades, had become something of the campus's attic space. There was also the library's significant collection of government publications and topographic maps. Professors Sienkewicz and Urban wanted to have out on display for the Classics conference as many of items of interest as possible. As we began gathering these artifacts, we realized that, while most included attached descriptions, there were a few that did not. In particular, there was one piece that was in our “attic” space that would have made for a nice display, but we had no information on it. Professors Sienkewicz and Urban were both uncertain as to its origin. I went ahead and displayed it, though, along with a sign asking for any budding archaeologists to help us identify it! There were no offers of help. After the conference concluded we placed the artifact in the College Art Collections storage.

I soon realized that the portion of the facsimile foldout of the demotic script from the Canopus Stone looked much like what I was remembering from the unidentified artifact that we had displayed a few months earlier in 2021. I contacted Professor Mary Phillips, the curator of our College Art Collections and headed upstairs to compare. To my delight, it was a perfect match. The third slab of our Canopus Stone had somehow survived the 1907 fire in Old Main, with cracks but still within its original wooden 2”x3” casing.

A suitable display case was identified among donations from the estate of Gracie Peterson, our recently deceased former music faculty member, and the stone was placed on display next to the case containing the bottom slab.

The Decree of Canopus

Ptolemy III was the third of the fifteen Ptolemaic leaders that ruled Egypt from 305 BC until 30 BC. Of the fifteen Ptolemies, Ptolemy III in 238 BC was the first of three rulers to bring his priests together and issue a decree that would be inscribed in three scripts on stelae and placed in temples throughout Egypt. Ptolemy IV and Ptolemy V also issued such decrees during their reigns. In 217 BC Ptolemy IV issued his Decree of Memphis. In 196 BC Ptolemy V issued a decree, also known as the Decree of Memphis. However, Ptolemy V's decree was the first decree to be

discovered in 1799 by Napoleon's army and team of scientists and artists who joined him as he conquered Egypt. We know Ptolemy V's Decree of Memphis as the Rosetta Stone

By 238 BC, there were likely very few Egyptians who could read the hieroglyphics used on these decrees. Hieroglyphics were first used around 3300 BCE. Other simplified scripts were developed, first hieratic and later demotic, for documents more commonly written on papyrus. Few Egyptians were likely to have been familiar with Greek either, but Greek would have been the script used by the ruling Ptolemies from Macedonia. Even by 238 BC the only script that was more likely to be read by Egyptian administrators and priests would have been the demotic. Scholars of demotic would also note that the demotic script was a line-for-line translation of the Greek, not a translation of the hieroglyphics.¹⁴

In the ninth year of Ptolemy III's reign (238 BC), the priests of Egypt were summoned to gather in the city of Canopus for an opportunity to discuss and record a number of events and pronouncements for posterity. It would be a time to celebrate and honor some of the gods and ancestors, and especially his and his wife Berenice's daughter, also named Berenice, who had died suddenly just a few months prior. It would be an opportunity to honor and deify her as well. Ptolemy III and his wife were considered gods by virtue of being the current rulers of Egypt and were often referred to as the "Good-doing Gods" in the decree.¹⁵

There were other accomplishments from Ptolemy III's reign that would be recorded for the historical record. There were six "good deeds" identified that Ptolemy III and his wife, Berenice, had conferred upon Egypt, and they were followed by twenty-four decrees to be completed in appreciation of their acts of goodness. Many of these dealt with a new order of priests to be created and festivals to be observed on specified dates. And most importantly, an adjustment to Egypt's 3,000-year-old calendar was to be implemented. Three millennia ago, the ancient Egyptians had created a remarkable 365-day calendar, divided into twelve months of thirty days each, along with an additional five intercalary days. Over the millennia, though, most Egyptians more closely followed the rising and flooding of the Nile which was essential to the planting seasons. And this annual event more closely aligned with the annual appearance of the star known as "Sopdet," found low on the Eastern horizon in the early morning hours. We know this star as "Sirius" the "Dog-Star" whose heliacal rising on the eastern horizon generally occurs in late July and early August. For the Egyptians their annual sighting of "Sopdet" was much more reliable for their day-to-day existence than the official calendar.

However, Ptolemy III was ready to implement something quite unique to calendar history. In the eleventh item of the Decree of Canopus it is stipulated that "The year shall no longer consist of 360 days and five epagomenal days only, but every fourth year one day shall be added. . . ." This appears to be the first written record of a "Leap Day" to be added every four years. The Egyptian priests were to return to their homes throughout Egypt and implement this new calendar. For a variety of reasons, it was not universally implemented and fell completely out of use shortly after Ptolemy III's death.¹⁶ Some say it was the Macedonians who first recognized the need for a leap day every four years in their calendars. And the Ptolemies still considered themselves Macedonians. Perhaps there was a bit of rebellious nationalism on the part of the

¹⁴ Budge 1904: 35–6.

¹⁵ Budge 1904: 9–13.

¹⁶ Budge 1904: 13.

priests being asked to implement a "Macedonian" calendar. It is hard to know. It was almost 200 years later in 46 BC that Julius Caesar introduced the Leap Year into the new Julian Calendar.

For the record, the Julian Calendar remained in use throughout the Western world until 1582, when Pope Gregory XIII reset the calendar and introduced our present Gregorian calendar.

Addenda

More on the Smithsonian Institution and Monmouth's Canopus Stone

It is often asked why Monmouth College did not just contact the Smithsonian Institution and request a new copy of the copy made by the Smithsonian in 1871 for Monmouth College. As it happens, Dr. Speel did just that, and he had some surprisingly significant connections with the Smithsonian! The following is from Speel's article published in *ScotsNewse* (Winter 1995).

Several months after the recovered pieces of Monmouth's cast had been fitted together on the table, I wrote to my undergraduate psychology professor, Dr. Leonard Carmichael of Brown University, who had become Secretary of the Smithsonian. I told him about the fate of Monmouth's cast and asked if the Smithsonian could return the favor, initiated by Julian (*sic*) Lansing, by sending a copy of the Smithsonian's cast to Monmouth. He replied that he would be glad to do so, but could not, because the Smithsonian had a fire about 1922 in which its cast had been destroyed. Photographic plates were available.

Sometime later I learned from Dr. Gus Van Beek, the Egyptologist at the Smithsonian, that Carmichael had been misinformed. The Smithsonian's cast had not been destroyed by fire. It was stored in a warehouse of the museum. It would take time and considerable effort to retrieve it, make a cast and crate it for shipping to Monmouth. Moreover, it might have entailed some expense. Gus said he could try to fulfill the request.

Alas, the project has been forgotten. Both Carmichael and Van Beek are deceased. It may be that a replacement cast for Monmouth College can be obtained, along with copies of the photographic plates, providing the cost and efforts for so doing can be met by interested persons. If so, the academic influence and legacy of Monmouth College can be further enriched.¹⁷

¹⁷ Speel 1995:19.

And more of the Smithsonian story...

When I searched subsequent annual reports of the Smithsonian for mention of the Canopus Stone, I found the following enlightening reference on page 29 of their 1874 *Annual Report* (fig. 3.10):

Not the least interesting and important of the collections of the year are “squeezes” from Egyptian antiquities, and a perfect copy of the Tanis or Canopus stone, from the museum at Boulak, of which a much inferior copy was already in possession of the Institution.

Figure 3.10: Reference to the Canopus Stone in the 1874 *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution*, pg. 29.

One might conclude from this brief account that the original broken and reconstructed Canopus Stone could have easily been discarded after receiving a more perfect copy. It was clearly another stele that was found in the early 1870s and offered to the Smithsonian by the Khedive, Isma'il Pasha, perhaps with an assurance of more meticulous packing. Further search of the Smithsonian Institution's collection online reveals one photographic plate of the Tanis Stone, depicting only the portion of the stone with demotic script.¹⁸

Curiously, the anonymous author of the “The Tanis or Canopus Stone” article from the *Monmouth College Courier* (September 1876) was also aware of the Smithsonian's replacement of Monmouth's casts:

The college permitted a copy to be taken from theirs for the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., but another and better cast has been more recently received by the institution from the Egyptian viceroy.¹⁹

Lansing Visit to Western Illinois 1873

In November 1873 Lansing and his second wife, Sarah Dales, did finally make it to the prairies of western Illinois for a visit. He visited and spoke to several Presbyterian congregations in the area seeking support for their important work at Assiut College.²⁰ It is assumed he found time to visit the Canopus Stone on display in Old Main during this visit. He also donated a beautiful copy of the Koran to the Monmouth College Library.²¹

¹⁸ Smithsonian Institution Archives, Acc. 11-007, Box 004, Image No. MNH-1073 https://siarchives.si.edu/collections/siris_arc_387765. Accessed February 26, 2026.

¹⁹ Anon 1876: 1

²⁰ Rankin 2019: 9

²¹ Strang 1885:5.

The Close Relationship between Assiut College and Monmouth College

The following is a short description of Monmouth's close connection with the Presbyterian Mission in Egypt, written by Professor William Urban. Assiut College was established by Reverend Dr. Gulian Lansing who was responsible for Monmouth College receiving a copy of the Canopus Stone.²²

Monmouth's Mission in Egypt

by William Urban

In 1865 Presbyterian missionaries established a college in Assiut. In the decades which followed this institution became the major educational center for the Christian community of Upper Egypt; Assiut College possessed one of the best hospitals, best libraries, and best faculties of the country, and its girls' school was almost unique. Through the years Monmouth College sent more teachers to Assiut than any other college; in 1952 six members of the faculty, including President James H. Grier, had begun their teaching careers at Assiut.

When the Nasser government nationalized the private universities in Egypt [in 1954], it expelled the foreign teachers and converted the college into a male university run by Islamic fundamentalists. The last president of Assiut College, Egyptian-born Paul McClanahan, came to Monmouth College as chaplain and professor of religion.

A Recent Revelation from Down Under!

In late December 2024 Jeff Rankin passed along an email inquiry he had received from Steve Martin, Art Collections Manager, of the University of Melbourne, Australia. Martin was interested in locating the image of the full front face of the Canopus/Tanis Stone that Rankin had included in a 2019 article that he had posted on the Monmouth College website on our twice-broken artifact. Rankin forwarded the email to me to respond. I replied with references to the foldout facsimiles found in v.3 of Wallis Budge's *The Decrees of Memphis and Canopus* (1904, reprinted 1976). I also provided him with copies of our images and other articles. He replied with a photograph of their display of the two plaster casts that they received from the British Museum in the late 1920s, or possibly as late as the 1950s or 1960s. It was a beautiful copy of the two front slabs impressively displayed in a lighted case. I was quite envious. Yet until our exchange of emails Martin was unaware of the third (side) slab with the demotic text. Martin has since reviewed their inventory records and has yet to find any reference to the receipt of a third slab. Perhaps, one

²² Professor Urban's account of Monmouth College's ties with the Presbyterian Missions in Egypt was from a two-sided informative handout placed on display with the Canopus Stone cabinet. The handout was drafted prior to my appointment as librarian in 1998. The handout was revised after the discovery of the slab with the demotic script, and, later, whenever my research showed a need for corrections or additional information.

day, he, too, will delight in the discovery of the missing third slab in some dark corner of the University of Melbourne's art collections.

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Part 2: THE CITY OF MONMOUTH

CHAPTER 4

Reliving the Past with Monmouth's Dearly Departed: What Can We Learn Through a Cemetery Tour

Tom Best

Most cities and towns have at least a small number of famous (or sometimes infamous) residents who lend an air of importance to such communities based upon the fact that these well-known people were born there or lived in that locality for some portion of their lives. With some of these noteworthy citizens having their final resting place preserved within luscious green and manicured lawns in hometown cemeteries, there is an opportunity to attract tourists to their gravesites. Think particularly of Abraham Lincoln's stately tomb on the outskirts of the state capital in Springfield, Illinois, and what that city has accomplished to both honor the 16th president and benefit from visits to his respectful tomb.

Monmouth, Illinois, is a community where both of these categories of well-known citizens either born here or once residing here are well remembered. It was with such community interest that I had long thought of enlightening both local residents and more distant history buffs as to some interesting gravesites in this vicinity. (Unfortunately, Wyatt Earp, who was born in our "Maple City," and whose legendary exploits have been often described in books and exhibited in many films, is buried in California.)

After attending several "cemetery walks" in other attractive memorial parks, in which local actors portrayed the lives of fascinating residents interred in their burying grounds, I had the goal of creating a similar performance within Monmouth's largest cemetery on North Sixth Street. The time and effort required to attempt such a mission was, understandably, simply too problematic in the days when I was still teaching 7th grade Social Studies, teaching night courses at Monmouth College, coaching youth sports, and volunteering in a host of civic and church activities. Since retiring, I decided to finally pursue my dream of creating a local cemetery walk and thereby celebrate the community that had become my second home.

The essential support for carrying out this latest mission came through the help of Monmouth's Buchanan Center for the Arts (BCA). An organization dedicated to enhancing the artistic endeavors of local citizens across a variety of expressive formats (e.g., art, drama, writing, etc.), the BCA (of which I am a board member) is highly supportive of such creative missions. Gladly joining me in this effort was the enthusiastic president of the BCA board, historian Dr. Mary Osborne. Kristyne Gilbert, the BCA's talented, dedicated, and ever busy executive director, gave her blessing to our endeavor in 2023. Approval by Monmouth's City Council to use the cemetery for this presentation was also secured in early 2024.

Dr. Osborne and I next brainstormed a list of significant and fascinating people who were known to be buried in the Sixth Street Cemetery. This stage of research was exciting, as we realized how many possibilities existed for our research and the eventual creation of informational and entertaining presentations. Such performances would offer valuable insight about individuals who had once greatly contributed to this area's business, educational, cultural, and social environment dating from Monmouth's birth and the city's growth throughout the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The identities and backgrounds of professors and college presidents, bankers and entrepreneurs, writers who illustrated their literary talents in newspapers, books, and in the theater, baseball club owners, organizers of social clubs, military heroes from the days of the Civil War to World War II, and many other categories of intriguing people filled the pages in our expanding note pads.

Our next task was to narrow a list of dozens of possible subjects to a manageable size. Particularly guiding the downsizing of our extensive list was a consideration of how many gravesites could be visited and discussed within one hour of walking leisurely along paved roads and grassy paths leading to reachable gravesites. With an eventual reasonable list of about eight easily reached burial sites on the far southern side of the cemetery, we dived further into research at such sites as the Warren County Library and their Genealogy and Local History Center. Fortunately, Dr. Osborne and I were also able to reach out to local historians and area writers whose work we knew and respected. Jeff Rankin and Rich Hanson were two of those sources. Rankin was the undeniably best-known go-to person when seeking any information regarding the essential history of Monmouth, Monmouth College, and fascinating, but lesser-known, stories of residents and events related to Monmouth and Warren County's past. (His twin brother, Doug, was also helpful with advice, given his background in local theater.) Hanson is not only a good friend, but also an outstanding researcher and writer across a variety of subjects ranging from the Civil War to baseball history. Carla Kanthak, a one-time Monmouth resident who once lived in the historic Carr Mansion, was tremendously supportive and assisted in the research regarding the Carr family.

Once the research was completed, our next challenging assignment was to create the scripts to be performed by the actors. Deciding that a time allotment of three to five minutes would be sufficient to educate and entertain the audience, Dr. Osborne and I created brief presentations to be performed at the gravesites. With the scripts completed by late August, local residents were approached to help portray the ghosts of these departed citizens. Some of these people had experience in theater and we knew that memorizing a brief statement reflecting their character's background and life experiences would not be a difficult challenge for them. Some of the people who eventually agreed to play a role were those without theatrical experiences, but they were able draw on their backgrounds in military reenacting, teaching, and public speaking.

The performances we created were initially thought to be best staged in two time slots in early October. We originally envisioned a morning gathering in conjunction with the BCA's popular program "OFTA" (or "Old Folks Talk Art"), followed later in the evening with a lantern-guided tour of the assigned gravesites. Conflicts with some actors' morning schedules resulted in the final production being scheduled with up to two performances during early evening segments at 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. The date for the performance was settled upon for October 9, 2024. In the case of inclement weather, I created a Powerpoint presentation featuring photographs of the burial sites. This presentation included the actors delivering their lines next to the images at the BCA on the same night as the previously scheduled outdoor event. For the purposes of this article, it would be appropriate to discuss what can be learned by creating such a historical presentation. Moreover, what do I and the others involved in this pursuit hope our audience would learn from their participation? First, anyone embarking on such a project would, no doubt, appreciate how primary and secondary research offerings, gleaned from a host of traditional sources (biographies, obituaries, county histories, newspapers, etc.), satisfied a sufficient understanding

of these individuals and their vital role in shaping this western Illinois community. For instance, we established a chronological perspective by identifying the birth dates and the years in which their lives were relevant to Monmouth's past. Specifically, what information could be revealed by knowing the exact timeframe during which these people spent their formative years in Monmouth? A youthful experience in the days of rugged dirt roads, crude cabins, and antebellum period culture would obviously shape such individuals' lives differently than a childhood in the post-Civil War era, when fast-paced train travel afforded distant travel, when stronger brick homes were being constructed for residents, and when life in the Gilded Age structured an outlook leading toward the advancements in the soon-to-be twentieth century. Moreover, what were these people's church affiliations, educational development, opportunities for employment, inspiration for transplanting themselves and their families, associations formed with significant and transformative individuals or groups, and what success or failures marked their development? Answers gathered from sources in the Warren County Genealogy's local history collections and other online sources (Newspapers.com, etc.) revealed the complexity of these influential residents' lives based upon their social class, level of education, family connections, and opportunities for mentoring by helpful adults who often shaped lives in positive directions.

A particular appreciation for a deeper understanding of these people's lives within a historical period and place was secured through the generous research offered to us by Carla Kanthak. Kanthak's days of living in the Carr Mansion at 416 East Broadway opened a fascinating historical portal for allowing Dr. Osborne and me to grasp the meaning of the Carr family's life in Monmouth during a period of demographic growth and affluent economics. The extremely tall and prominent obelisk dedicated to the Carr family on the far south side of the cemetery (and visible within nearly every square foot of the southern section of this burial ground), due to the research and personal insight Kanthak delivered, eventually evoked far more insights about this family than the impressive visual nature of their burial marker. Indeed, Kanthak was once able to run her hands down the same bannisters as the Carr family as she descended steps from one floor level to another. As she once pulled back tall curtains to gaze out of architecturally attractive windows and imagine the Carr family members as they viewed passing public and vehicles on the Broadway of a century ago, she had a firsthand perspective which only such insightful homeowners may provide to researchers such as Dr. Osborne and me. Over the years, Kanthak also collected numerous photographs of the Carr family which she shared with us. Such images allowed her to pull meaning from the nature of the Carrs' physical appearance and period attire. Kanthak's inspired information was lovingly blended into the presentation afforded to those attending the October tour.

Specifically, we learned that their father, John Carr, and their grandfather, Nathan Carr, Sr., were prominent citizens who came to Warren County in the decades before the Civil War. John and his brother Nathan, Jr. accumulated their wealth from business ventures involving the manufacturing of hand-guided cultivators and other essential agricultural devices, as well as carriages. By 1880, the Carr family acquired a home at 416 E. Broadway among the other beautiful and stately Victorian homes running east and west through Monmouth's tree-lined streets. A carriage house was built on the property in 1885 and was later remodeled to better accommodate the unique requirements of an electric car which the family purchased in 1910. Specifically, a sturdy turntable had to be installed on the floor to rotate the entering vehicle as there was no reverse gear in the automobile to easily back out of the garage. Upon John Carr's death in 1892,

his wife, Mary, remodeled the home for herself and her daughters, Rilla, Lucie, Sara, and Mabel. The acquired wealth of the Carr family afforded the girls the chance to attend Monmouth College and travel extensively. In 1887, they were able to attend the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. In later years, they further toured Europe and were especially impressed by the look of French architecture. The remodeling of the original Second Empire-style home into a residence evoking the style of a French chateau is still visible today. Returning home with tales of the Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary and descriptions of the fine furniture they encountered were only part of what local citizens learned of their travels. Therefore, the script emphasized a myriad of experiences they encountered during their lifetime.

From such rich background information, Dr. Osborne created a telling script from which to present the Carrs' story. In one sequence at the Carr monument, Mary Carr pointed out to daughter Sara: "Sara, I've told you before. I don't want you to pay any mind to what other people say. You are not a provincial just because you live in Monmouth! You received a fine education in the public schools." Next, Sara recalled the poetry she and her sister had once been tasked to memorize in an elementary classroom. Celebrating the birthday of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Sara offered a quotation from a portion of the poem "Evangeline." Her mother's stern reply was that people did not come to their gravesite to hear her quote Longfellow. Mary, politely finished this segment of dialogue with "Please excuse my daughter's exuberance." Young Sara later spoke with more reverence for the opportunities which extensive travel and their purchasing power afforded to them by the skillful business acumen and wise financial practices of their father and the sage advice of their mother. Sara opined at one point in her dialogue: "We'll try to be worthy of the investment you and father made in us." Interestingly, this perspective would include the daughters' consequential decision to continue living at the home over the course of their lifetimes and not enter the institution of marriage (although most certainly, there would have been an ample number of suitors in Monmouth to seek their hands in matrimony). As Sara said to the audience: "My sisters and I loved our home. We never married but instead became strong surrogate aunts to the neighborhood children. We opened our home to them for parties and holiday celebrations." Such conversation offered at the stop at the Carr obelisk therefore offered the audience a greater appreciation for the cultural attitudes and illustrations of Victorian life.

Another opportunity to expand the public's understanding of the development of Monmouth, and specifically Monmouth College and its precedent-setting social development of the first sororities, was made apparent through the wonderful narrative developed by Dr. Osborne regarding the life of Margaret Campbell. Campbell's informative, but not ornate, gravestone rests amidst other family member markers, whose significant service to the community in the mid-nineteenth century and the life-changing Union war effort in the Civil War (her brother died fighting at the battle of Vicksburg in 1863) is valuable to read. Campbell's dialogue opens with a question for the audience as to whether any of them are alumni of Monmouth College. (Such conversational dialogue was designed to put roving audience members more at ease as the shadows of nightfall began to spread across the cemetery. Campbell informed them next of what the hometown college was like in the time period of the Civil War and the immediate post-war years. (She graduated in 1867). Specifically, she described how this educational institution offered only two tracks of study at the time: the classical and scientific courses. She chose the scientific path. Campbell followed up by describing the history for which she is best remembered. As a senior, she and eleven other young women bravely founded the

social organization known as “I.C. Sorosis.” This small group was the foundation for what became one of the most well-known women’s fraternities in the nation: Pi Beta Phi. For a period of time, they lived at the still elegant Holt House at 402 East First Avenue, where students roomed during a period when no dormitories yet existed.

As her fraternity’s treasurer, Campbell gained an appreciation for philanthropic service—an endeavor which she pursued throughout her many years. The audience also heard about her years serving as a matron of the Thyne Institute in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. This school was created by Presbyterians, the guiding religious body at Monmouth College, in order to educate Black children. In the 1920s, Margaret was still dedicated to the work of Pi Beta Phi and was instrumental in helping to reinstall the chapter at Monmouth College, which had earlier banned secret societies. Her pride in establishing this social organization for college women and the work she had performed as an educator over many decades was thoughtfully instilled in Campbell’s warm dialogue.

Two of the men featured in the cemetery tour were born in Monmouth, although their eventual fame was often achieved far from their birthplace. Charles Dryden, whose grayish gravestone proudly declares him “Dean of the Sportswriters,” was a man whose quips and humorous statements were once widely known and often repeated across this nation among fans of American sports. Dryden’s appearance on the tour began with a question for the audience, which was quizzed about the once fretful reputation of the Washington Senators as a major league baseball team: “How many of you have ever heard the saying: ‘First in war; first in peace; and last in the American League?’” This was just one humorous example of the many witty aphorisms attributed to Dryden, an influential writer whose youthful days in Monmouth would have foretold nothing of an extensive career as one of America’s most recognized sportswriters.

Once hailed as the “Mark Twain of Baseball,” Dryden first worked at age 14 for the Pattee Plow Company for three dollars a week. Seeking a more suitable career to foster his interest in life beyond Monmouth’s rural setting (where it is possible that he never played a game of baseball), Dryden eventually found his way to cities ranging from San Francisco and Chicago to New York and Philadelphia. One of his most jovial tales shared with this traveling audience featured his story about once being barred from the grounds of the New York (baseball) Giants (who then played playing in the iconic horseshoe-shaped Polo Grounds), Dryden secretly managed to cover a game by climbing a telephone pole to follow the action. Seeking a closer view where he could more easily hear the stadium’s announcements, gauge the efforts of the ballplayers, and appreciate the reaction of the fans, he followed up his earlier subterfuge by disguising himself as a woman in order to get into the ballpark (maybe he conducted this ruse on one of the commonly held “Ladies Day” events). Such determination is emphasized in Dryden’s narrative about how he was forever forthright about getting his readers the story he felt they deserved.

Even less known to residents of Monmouth today is the role Dryden played in publicizing a 1909 exhibition baseball game in Monmouth. This unique opportunity for local baseball fans featured a contest between the then-dominant Chicago Cubs and a “D” level minor league team then competing in Monmouth. The “Browns,” named for their founder, John Brown (one of Monmouth’s better -known mayors, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists), played the Cubs one July afternoon in the ballpark field that stood on South Eleventh St. In his narrative regarding Monmouth’s preparations for the game Dryden described, for instance, the excitement of the

several thousand fans who filled the ballpark. So thrilled were they to have their local sports heroes taking on the vaunted Cubs in this once-in-a-lifetime event, these eager rooters were willing to squeeze together on hastily constructed bleachers composed of thick wooden boards resting on beer kegs. His further description of Monmouth's leaders arranging for the exhibition game (something Dryden dryly claimed Galesburg's leaders could not have pulled off) and the close outcome of the highly anticipated contest (a 4-2 victory for the World Champions of 1907 and 1908) highlighted Dryden's creative writing and his professionalism. Finally, the audience learned that in 1921 Dryden suffered a tragically debilitating stroke, which ended his stellar career. Upon his death, his sister decided that the proper resting place for his remains would be next to his other family members on the far southeastern side of the Monmouth Cemetery. Dryden's story in this restful overlook enticed audience members to return later although more likely in daytime hours) and carefully read the inscriptions on other family members' gravestones.

Finally, a dialogue was shared regarding the life and theatrical career of William Wallace Young. Perhaps even less known to local residents than Dryden's adventures, Young's Monmouth origins were described in the vein of his youthful interest in the literary and dramatic arts while a student at Monmouth College. Allowed to enter the institution at age 14, Young excelled and became the president of the college's Philadelphian literary society. His excellent academic performance ultimately elevated Young to the status of class valedictorian in 1863. Thinking of entering the field of legal work in Chicago was initially part of his career plans; but not for long. Young's narrative focused on his developing love of writing poetry and producing theatrical works. Besides illustrating his poetic talent in magazines such as *The Atlantic*, he was demonstrating his exceptional talents as a playwright by the 1870s. The famed actor, Edwin Booth, staged one of Young's plays, *Jonquil; or Only a Heart*, in New York. Lawrence Barrett, a great Shakespearean actor, appeared in this same performance.

Besides describing how he helped shape the early career of the famed international dancer Loie Fuller (herself a Monmouth resident in her youth), Young's dialogue concluded with a description of what was, perhaps, his most notable--the theatrical adaptation of General Lew Wallace's novel *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*. This six-act extravaganza ran for more than twenty years and was seen in the United States and around the globe by as many as twenty million people. With four hundred actors, twelve horses, and three camels, audience members marveled at Young's cycloramic stage display weighing forty tons. Even today, modern audience members would likely agree that the highlight of this dramatic display was a chariot race performed live on stage. Such an achievement in the performing arts and literature earned Young the title of "Dean of American Letters."

Young's final days were spent in leisure along the shores of Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire, where he died in 1920 at age 75. His remains, like those of sportswriter Charles Dryden, were returned to Monmouth where Young now rests with other family members. Disappointingly, the names inscribed on the marble lid of the family's sarcophagus-shaped monument are badly faded due to its soft surface and the forces of erosion. Also, unfortunately for those who might appreciate knowing more of his literary importance (similar to Dryden's declaration of his prominence on his stone), nothing is inscribed on Young's tomb to alert and educate a wandering visitor to the cemetery of Young's lifelong accomplishments. These early Monmouth residents are just four of the characters chosen for this cemetery tour. The cemetery walk began with a presentation of the life of Eliza Brown, the daughter of a Revolutionary War

veteran in the early nineteenth century. Champion Miller, a one-time slave who bought his freedom, made his way to Monmouth, and became a respected citizen and church member, was the next stop. His presentation took place at the recently marked modern memorial stone just steps from the cemetery's entrance. One of this community's most influential citizens in the development of early Monmouth, Ivory Quinby, was also featured during this evening gathering. His one-time home, just a short walk south of the cemetery, is the current residence of the president of Monmouth College. William Pressly, another of Monmouth's early influential civic leaders, was another gentleman featured on the tour. Residents who have previously stopped by the Warren County Library and noticed the inscribed wall next to the main entrance, would have already read of his service in establishing the first library in Monmouth. Moreover, Pressly's importance—less likely known to residents—was further explained in terms of his establishment of two mission schools in Egypt. The last stop on the tour highlighted the life of Margaret Campbell and her role in helping to establish Pi Beta Phi, one of this nation's oldest and more significant sororities.

Here is the roster of featured players and historical characters listed in the order of appearance during the walk:

Eliza Brown (Stephanie Sims)
 Champion Miller (Jeremy Raymond)
 William Wallace Young (Jeff Rankin)
 William Pressly (Dr. Eugene Watkins)
 Mary Carr (Mary Osborne)
 Sara Carr (Gina Raymond)
 Charles Dryden (Duane Bonifer)
 Ivory Quinby (John Henderson)
 Margaret Campbell (Pamela Best)

Here are comments from some of the participants and attendees:¹

Pamela Best: It was fascinating to step into the shoes of a founding member of Pi Beta Phi, an organization that I was a part of during my days at Monmouth College. People seemed very much involved in hearing the stories of past citizens of Monmouth.

Ted Briscoe: The story of a community is told through the stories of the people who lived there, which is why we are fortunate to have this Cemetery Walk to give us access to those stories. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn from those who were here before us -- about those lives, about Monmouth, and perhaps a bit about ourselves as well.

¹ Approximately fifty people attended this cemetery tour.

Jeff Rankin: In portraying the now-forgotten but once celebrated Broadway playwright William Young, who was born and raised in Monmouth, it was gratifying to be able to introduce Monmouth residents to a former fellow citizen who transformed the novel *Ben-Hur* into an electrifying stage spectacle. I had fun with the role, startling the spectators by appearing suddenly out of the shadows like a ghost, which my character essentially was. The wide variety of personalities who emerged from their eternal rest that autumn night made the inaugural Monmouth Cemetery Tour both entertaining and educational.

Jeanne Robeson: A well-prepared and presented program. Interesting. Who knew there were so many fascinating folks buried locally!

Eugene Watkins: The cemetery walk was a lot of fun. It was an interactive and imaginative opportunity to learn about the amazing individuals who lived in Monmouth and contributed to making our community what it is today, and I personally learned a lot. I really enjoyed the creativity of the participants in their costumes and interpretations of the personalities they portrayed.

Vicki Young: Out at the Monmouth Cemetery in the month of Halloween, the BCA Armoury Players provided an historical thespian performance reminiscent of *Our Town* and the *Spoon River Anthology*. Rebecca Quick, from the BCA, led us on a walk through eight gravesites of some of Monmouth's notables, where Stephanie Sims, Gina & Jeremy Raymond, Jeff Rankin, Eugene Watkins, Mary Osborne, Duane Bonifer, John Henderson, and Pamela Best ably and accurately portrayed the departed, with convincing costumes and characterizations. The historical research was excellent, as we gained a treasury of information about Eliza Brown, Champion Miller, William Wallace Young, William Pressly, Mary and Sara Carr, Charles Dryden, Ivory Quinby, and Margaret Campbell. **Error! Bookmark not defined..** A map of the gravesites was thoughtfully provided in case one wants to come back and revisit at a less ghostly time of year!

Amy Zesbaugh: The Dearly Departed cemetery walk was a great way to learn about Monmouth's notable citizens and their influence on our city. I enjoyed being able to question the historical figures about their lives, and the nighttime tour had just the right combination of fun and spooky.

Given the success of this first cemetery tour, it is hoped that there will be future walks, perhaps focusing on other sectors of the cemetery. As area people have found out about this tour, there have been repeated questions about whether a future program could include the stories of other such famous Monmouth residents as William Nicol, “The Great Nicola,” a world-famous magician who over the last several years has been honored with a weekend magic festival at the Warren County History Museum. Similar interest has been expressed in those buried in the northern section of the cemetery, such as Ralph Greenleaf, a world champion pocket billiards player. Once called, “The Babe Ruth of Billiards,” young Ralph learned his skill here and took his talent beyond the borders of Monmouth to national tournaments and great success. Other possibilities for study include some World War II heroes who lost their lives in service during the war. Likewise, early businessmen such as Algot Bowman could become a subject of research. Bowman was one of several brothers who came to the U.S. over a century ago from Sweden and started a shoe business which expanded beyond Monmouth and throughout the Midwest (and for full disclosure, Algot was my wife’s grandfather).

Such historical presentations framed as cemetery walks have been staged over many regions of our nation for a number of years. Offering a unique approach to the narrative of local history, our hope is that this initial eight-stop tour will provoke heightened interest in preserving this municipal burial ground while inspiring Monmouth and area residents to seek out similar compelling stories regarding their own ancestors.

Photo Gallery: Some Scenes from the Dearly Departed Cemetery Tour



Figure 4.1: John Henderson as Ivory Quinby. Photo courtesy of Kristyne Gilbert.



Figure 4.2: Duane Bonifer as Charles Dryden. Photo courtesy of Kristyne Gilbert.

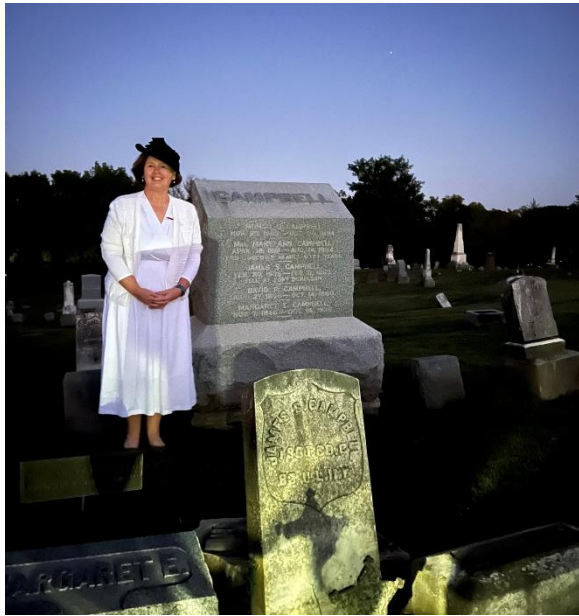


Figure 4.3: Pamela Best as Margaret Campbell. Photo courtesy of Kristyne Gilbert.



Figure 4.4: Eugene Watkins as William Pressly. Photo courtesy of Kristyne Gilbert.



Figure 4.5: Mary Osborne as Mary Carr and Gina Raymond as Sara Carr. Photo courtesy of Kristyne Gilbert.

CHAPTER 5

Warren Bunkerr: Monmouth's Celebrated 19th-Century "Drag Queen"¹

Jeff Rankin

If asked to name a 19th-century Monmouth, Illinois, native who performed in Paris as a renowned serpentine dancer, one somewhat knowledgeable about Monmouth history might answer Loie Fuller, but that would be incorrect. Fuller—the celebrated dancing star of the Exposition Universelle of 1900—was not born in Monmouth and only lived in the city for two years. The other flamboyant dancer from Monmouth was just as graceful and inventive as Fuller and wore equally elaborate gowns but possessed one major difference—this artist was a man.

Born November 18, 1864, to a middle-class Monmouth painter and his seamstress wife, Warren Bunker was one of nine children.² From an early age, he demonstrated that he not only inherited the artistic talents of both parents but also possessed a creative streak that defied the norms of a Victorian Midwest town. His ever-evolving résumé would include the following diverse occupations: snake charmer, Circassian prince, female impersonator, man milliner, fire and serpentine dancer, clairvoyant, palm reader, costume designer and vaudeville impresario. Those talents would lead him around the world — performing for royalty and befriending Hollywood stars.

The death of his father when Warren was just five years old³ may have influenced his early development, as he became close to his mother and learned to sew at an early age. By sixteen, he had quit school and was working as a cigar maker. The first indication of his unusual talent emerged shortly thereafter when he won a satin-lined chinchilla overcoat for designing the winning costume at a Davenport, Iowa, masquerade in 1885.⁴



Figure 5.1: A photograph of Warren Bunkerr in drag, published in the *San Francisco Review*. Photo courtesy of Jeff Rankin.

¹ The bulk of this article originally appeared in my weekly column, "The Rankin File," in the *Daily Review Atlas* (Monmouth, Illinois). It was published as a two-part series in the June 13 and June 20, 2017, editions.

² Account of the 80th birthday of Warren's mother, Polly Bunker, in *Warren County Democrat* (Monmouth, Illinois) October 25, 1905.

³ *Ibid.* Bunker later changed the spelling of his surname to Bunkerr.

⁴ *Evening Gazette* (Monmouth, Ill.) January 14, 1885.

In 1887, Warren Bunkerr took out an ad in the *New York Clipper*, describing himself as the “champion amateur female-impersonator of the world,” seeking a position with a sideshow or circus as “Almolette the Circassian,” and noting he had “the most elegant wardrobe and make-up ever produced.”⁵

While one might expect that some residents of a conservative Midwest town like Monmouth would take offense at a male citizen immodestly parading on stage as a woman, there is no evidence in local newspapers of the day ever publishing negative remarks about Bunkerr. In fact, Monmouth seemed to take pride in Bunkerr’s antics. After a newspaper in neighboring Galesburg wrote derisively that as [Bunkerr] “strutted around in his gilt-edged disguise, his long legs encased in tight hose, and his abbreviated dress fluttering in the wind, he created quite a sensation and some amusement... Evidently female impersonation suits him, but what particular necessity there is for his imitating the circus lady when he appears in public is not plain,” Monmouth’s *Evening Gazette* responded, “This reflection upon one of Monmouth’s residents must be resented and the esteemed contemporary can prepare itself for the onslaught.”⁶

Bunkerr’s brazen antics seemed to be embraced with good humor by many of his Victorian contemporaries. In January 1888, the Keokuk *Gate City* published the following note: “Warren Bunkerr, the costumer of Monmouth, Ill., represented a female Hindoo snake charmer at the masquerade last evening. It was a deceptive costume. A Main street clerk became quite infatuated with him and was very solicitous about making a date. When Mr. Bunkerr unmasked, the deeply chagrined counter-hopper left the hall.”⁷

Later that same season, Bunkerr changed his stage name to Zelldo, Circassian Prince, and was booked for three weeks in Columbus, Ohio.⁸ In 1889, he billed himself as Prince Zelldo, the Wonderful Snake Charmer, who worked with live cobras, boas and anacondas, and wore magnificent jeweled costumes,⁹ and performed in such far-flung locales as St. Joseph, Missouri, and Harlem, New York.

⁵ *New York Clipper*, March 26, 1887.

⁶ *Evening Gazette*, October 10, 1887

⁷ Report copied in *The Daily Atlas* (Monmouth, Illinois) January 13, 1888.

⁸ *New York Clipper*, April 7, 1888.

⁹ *Ibid.*, January 5, 1889

NOTICE.
WARREN BUNKERR,
CHAMPION AMATEUR FEMALE-IMPERSONATOR
OF THE WORLD WOULD LIKE AN ENGAGEMENT
WITH RESPONSIBLE SIDESHOW OR CIRCUS MAN-
AGER AS ALMOLETTE THE CIRCASSIAN; or with some
Minstrel or Specialty troupe.
P. S.—Have the most elegant wardrobe and make-up
ever produced. Address BOX 1,023 Monmouth, Ill.

Figure 5.2: Bunkerr took out this 1887 ad in the *New York Clipper* to promote his female impersonation act. Photo courtesy of Jeff Rankin.

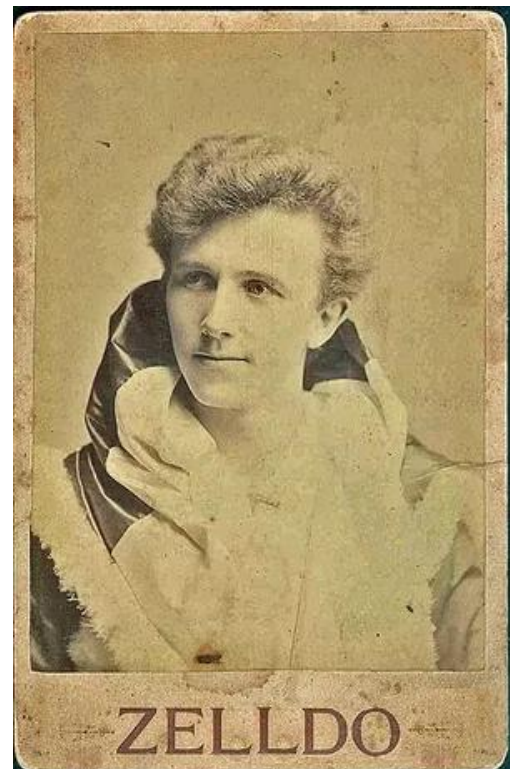


Figure 5.3: A circa 1890 cabinet card used by Bunkerr in advertising his Prince Zelldo snake charming act.

By age 27, Bunkerr was touring the south, performing as a snake charmer at museums in New Orleans and St. Louis. Using Monmouth as his home base, over the next few years he would tour widely, including an 1894 trip to Europe, where he was said to have performed before Queen Victoria.¹⁰

A Monmouth newspaper reported upon Bunkerr's return that he spent five weeks in Paris, two weeks of which he danced in two opera houses almost every night, going from one to the other. It added that during his time in Paris he was employed in some of the most fashionable millinery establishments and turned out patterns that were sent to New York.¹¹

In 1895, Bunkerr took out an ad in the *New York Clipper* that included his photograph and billed himself as "the only person in the world doing sensational dancing in a monster den of living serpents."¹² Later that year, it was announced he would perform in Atlanta, and then Mexico. In October, his Egyptian King snake gave birth to thirty-three babies, but none survived Monmouth's cold weather.¹³

In the meantime, Bunkerr had opened a millinery store on the south side of the Public Square and billed himself as having "no equal as a trimmer" and being "recommended by the leading ladies of the city." He also advertised having the largest inventory in the state of masquerade costumes for the winter season.¹⁴ In 1897, he moved to new quarters at 106 East Broadway, which he advertised as "The Finest Store in Monmouth"¹⁵ and announced he would make a tour through Illinois and Iowa in a theatrical troupe under his own management.¹⁶ The following February, he appeared as a female impersonator in Burlington, Iowa, wearing a gown costing \$5,000, with a train 40 feet long.¹⁷

When illness and a financial judgement caused his store to close in July 1898, Bunkerr headed to Colorado Springs for the sake of his health. While there he advertised himself as a "wonderful fortune-teller." By September, he was back in Monmouth,¹⁸ and, selling his snakes to a Cincinnati museum in December, decided to focus his talents on dancing.¹⁹

In 1901, Bunkerr claimed to have patented a fire dance,²⁰ which he asserted was witnessed by 50,000 spectators the night of Monmouth's Fourth of July celebration. "The Great Bunkerr" opened his next tour in 1902, carrying 12 all-star acts, which included jugglers, acrobatic clowns, a contortionist and a barrel jumper.²¹ By November, he announced he was organizing a

¹⁰ Bunkerr's performance before the queen may have been a fabrication. His obituary in the Monmouth *Daily Review Atlas* states: "... it is said he appeared in London and, by command, presented his famous dances before the then ruling English monarch. ..." Still, Victoria was purported to have loved attending dance and theatre performances and even attended a command performance of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show in 1887 (William F. Cody Archive).

¹¹ *The Monmouth Daily Review* (Monmouth, Illinois) October 12, 1894.

¹² *New York Clipper*, August 24, 1895.

¹³ *Ibid.*, October 25, 1895.

¹⁴ *Monmouth City Directory for 1895-1896* (City Directory Steam Print, Monmouth, Illinois) July 1895.

¹⁵ *Warren County Democrat*, September 2, 1897.

¹⁶ *Republican-Atlas* (Monmouth, Illinois) September 24, 1897.

¹⁷ *Burlington Hawk Eye* (Burlington, Iowa) cited in *Warren County Democrat* (Monmouth, Illinois) February 5, 1898.

¹⁸ *Republican-Atlas*, July 29, 1898, and September 16, 1898.

¹⁹ *Warren County Democrat*, December 19, 1898.

²⁰ Advertisement in *New York Clipper*, July 13, 1901.

²¹ *New York Clipper*, January 18, 1902.

high-class vaudeville company with his brother George as advance man. It would include a dance illustrating the eruption of Mount Pelée.²²

In 1903, an Irish booking agent invited Bunkerr to tour South Africa and the British colonies,²³ but it is uncertain that he did so, as he was performing in Houston, Texas that winter.

Bunkerr, the Man Milliner
OFFERS HIS FIRST
MILLINERY RECEPTION
To the Ladies of Alexandria

**WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, MARCH
18TH AND 19TH**

A Special Reception and a Special Invitation to Every Gentle-
man in the City to Call and See This
Wonderful Display

300 TRIMMED HATS FROM \$1.00 TO \$15.00

And every Hat trimmed by a Man, with all the dainty, artistic
taste that will be so greatly admired by every lady in the city.
I ask that you see my work, my styles which, with my low prices,
I am sure to be recognized as **THE LEADER**

Merry Widow Sailors in large varieties. You will find the right styles and the
right prices at my Parlor.

**BUNKERR, THE MAN MILLINER, Full of the Newest Ideas; Up-to-
the-Minute. FOURTH AND DeSOTO STREETS.**
Old Hats Made Over, Plumes Cleaned and Curled.

Bunkerr Foot Ease Cures All Sore Feet. 25c Package.

Zelldo Bunkerr, the World's Greatest Medium and Master Mind
Translator, Reveals the Past, Present and Future Correctly. No
Fake, but One of Nature's Wonderful Gifts.

Figure 5.4: A 1908 advertisement for Bunkerr's millinery shop in Alexandria, Louisiana, also advertised his foot ointment and his clairvoyant powers.

In 1904, he returned to Texas in a gypsy van equipped with a complete camping outfit and all the conveniences—an endeavor he said was designed to improve his health.²⁴ Ill health—never specifically divulged—would plague him through his remaining stage career.

A large ad in 1908 showed that Bunkerr had settled in Alexandria, Louisiana, and was billing himself as Zelldo Bunkerr—The Marvel,” a clairvoyant. The ad likely employed a degree of hyperbole, as it implied that Queen Victoria had bestowed upon him the Order of the Garter, and that he had read the palms of numerous celebrities of the day, including Mark Twain, Buckskin Frank Leslie, and Edward the Prince of Wales. The ad states that he was raised by Angeline, a daughter of Chief Seattle, who lived to be over one hundred years old and was one of the world's greatest mind readers.

But Bunkerr had not yet given up his millinery trade, either. He ran an ad in the Alexandria paper announcing a special reception, at which he would offer 300 trimmed hats from \$1.00 to \$15.00, decorated “with all the dainty, artistic taste that will be so greatly admired by every lady in the city.”²⁵

By 1909, Bunkerr had either suffered a recurring bout of poor health, or his business was on the ropes. He published several public notices in the Alexandria newspaper that he was going out of business and was offering his entire stock of elegant spring millinery at actual cost. Everything was to be sold by June 1.²⁶

In August, The Associated Press released a story from San Antonio, Texas, stating that an investigation had started “into the mysterious disappearance of Zelldo Warren Bunker, an impersonator known over all vaudeville circuits.” He had been last seen on Aug. 16 “in his shirt sleeves and carrying a pistol. He bid his friends here goodbye and left letters making disposition of his property. He is said to have been driven crazy and heart broken by some love affair.”²⁷

Whether or not that disappearance had been a ruse (perhaps to avoid creditors?), by the following April, Bunkerr was living with his sister Lesta Whaley in Joplin, Missouri, and working as

²² *Republican-Atlas*, November 1, 1902, and January 2, 1903.

²³ *Warren County Democrat*, September 24, 1903.

²⁴ *Republican-Atlas*, November 10, 1904.

²⁵ *The Town Talk* (Alexandria, Louisiana) April 6, 1909.

²⁶ *The Town Talk*, August 26, 1909.

²⁷ *The Brownsville Herald* (Brownsville, Texas), August 26, 1909.

a clairvoyant. Then, in July 1911, the Alexandria, Louisiana, paper published a notice that he had written to the city clerk there in regard to a license for conducting a palmist and clairvoyant business there. The paper noted that “Shortly after Mr. Bunkerr left this city three years ago news was received here that he had been killed. . . .”²⁸

It does not appear that Bunkerr ever returned to Louisiana. Instead, by February 1912, he had re-established himself in Monmouth, advertising as a clairvoyant palmist who also rented costumes and made over ladies’ old hats. His beloved family home at 332 North Main Street, in which his family had resided for more than half a century, had been sold following the death of his mother in 1907, so he took up quarters at 111 North First Street. In May, he moved his business to 415 North Main Street.²⁹

In 1913, Bunkerr took to the vaudeville stage again, headlining in Vancouver, B.C., as “the Great Bunkerr, the classic novelty dancer, featuring ‘The Dream of the Witch’ and the ‘Shower of Butterflies,’”³⁰ but by March 1914, he was back in Monmouth at a new location—208 East First Avenue.

In June, the *Monmouth Daily Atlas* carried an ad touting the “Extraordinary Arrival of New York’s most famous Clairvoyant and palmist,” Prof. R. Allen, offering “advice on all affairs of life, such as health, love, courtship, marriage, divorce, lawsuits, etc. Lost or stolen articles, locates oil wells, mines, hidden treasures.” Interestingly, Professor Allen’s readings were to be conducted at the address now occupied by Bunkerr.³¹ Whether this was a new Bunkerr persona, or perhaps a visiting friend, is a subject for speculation.

In August 1916, Bunkerr applied for a passport to visit Hawaii, China, Japan, Manila, the Philippines, South Africa, Australia, and Java. Ever eager to reinvent himself, he solemnly swore to the Bureau of Citizenship that he was born in 1873, after having declared on his 1894 passport that he was born in 1864.³² But he was well-practiced at deceiving the government. In previous censuses, he reported that his father was born in both New York and France. In the 1930 census, he would assert that his father had been born in India and his mother was an American Indian.

In January 1917, Monmouth’s other famous showman, magician Will “The Great Nicola” Nicol, returned from a trip to the Orient and reported having run into Bunkerr on a pier in Hong Kong. Bunkerr informed him that his company had just finished an engagement in Shanghai and was on its way to a carnival in Manila. While in China, Nicol said, “he trimmed a few hats for some of the vain Chinese and these were received so favorably that he was urged to remain and establish a millinery store in the city.”³³

After having talked for some time, Nicol took Bunkerr to the roof of a building where he had a large python in captivity. Although warned by Nicol that the snake was dangerous and that natives handling the snake typically pinned its head to the floor, Bunkerr nonchalantly opened the box, dragged the snake out and opened its mouth, giving Nicol some instructions about its care and feeding. The natives stood in awe at his abilities as a snake charmer.³⁴

²⁸ *The Town Talk*, July 28, 1911.

²⁹ *Republican-Atlas*, May 20, 1912.

³⁰ *The Daily Colonist* (Victoria, B.C.) October 19, 1913.

³¹ *The Monmouth Daily Atlas*, June 18, 1914.

³² U.S. Passport Applications, July 2, 1894, and August 16, 1916.

³³ *The Monmouth Daily Atlas*, February 1, 1917.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Bunkerr must have impressed the Great Nicola, for after returning to Monmouth in October 1917, he joined Nicola's company as the mind reader Prince Zelldo, who answered audience questions that had been written and sealed in envelopes. A 1918 review in a North Carolina newspaper said the act "was one of the best things in the show."³⁵ The advent of motion pictures, however, would soon dim the lights of vaudeville, and after the tour Bunkerr retired to Monmouth to run his millinery store.

The Illinois centennial celebration in 1918 would provide at least one more opportunity for Bunkerr to exhibit his dancing skills. On September 13, he was a special attraction at Weir's Fruit Farm near Gladstone, Ill. During the day, he told fortunes, with the proceeds donated to the Red Cross's war efforts. That night, he performed his famous Indian Dance of Death in a pow-wow assisted by about 100 actors dressed as Indians.³⁶

In 1922, still running his Monmouth millinery shop, Bunkerr announced an "Early Easter display of New York and Chicago pattern hats, just the same goods from the wholesale house as other millinery stores buy of, but I haven't got plate glass display windows, a lot of nice-looking expensive salesladies to pay." He offered five hundred hats from \$2 to \$10, which he could sell for half price.³⁷ Just after Christmas that year, despite nearing age 60, he entertained at a masquerade dance in Alexis, Illinois.³⁸

Perhaps the millinery business began to lose its customer base by the 1920s, for by 1925, Bunkerr had moved to Marshalltown, Iowa, where he lived with his brother Zack and advertised himself as a costumer. The following year found him listed in the San Diego city directory as Prince Zelldo, a medium. Then, in 1927, a listing for Prince Zelldo showed up in the San Antonio, Texas, city directory.³⁹

The 1930 federal census lists Zelldo Bunker, occupation of "needle work," living in Los Angeles, California. Although he was sixty-six, he gave his age as forty-three and also asserted he had been born in India. During this period of his life, Bunkerr worked as a costume designer and did spiritual readings for his numerous movie star friends, which in earlier days had included Rudolph Valentino.⁴⁰

As age began to take its toll, Bunkerr again moved in with his sister Lesta — his one surviving sibling—who had relocated from Joplin, Missouri, to Long Beach, Calif. There, he became a member of the Psychic Science Spiritualist Church. In 1936, he visited Monmouth one last time, staying for about a month.⁴¹

In early 1937, Bunkerr contracted double pneumonia at Long Beach and died January 29 at age seventy-eight. His ashes were buried in Los Angeles.⁴²

³⁵ *Winston-Salem Journal* (Winston-Salem, North Carolina) January 31, 1918.

³⁶ *The Monmouth Daily Atlas*, September 12, 1918.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, March 23, 1922.

³⁸ *The Monmouth Daily Atlas*, December 30, 1922.

³⁹ Marshalltown, Iowa (1925), San Diego, California (1926), and San Antonio (1927) City Directories.

⁴⁰ Warren Z. Bunker obituary, *Monmouth Daily Review-Atlas*, February 4, 1937.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

Part 3: ILLINOIS AND THE MIDWEST

CHAPTER 6

Befriending the Bereft: The Compassionate Legacy of Dr. George Zeller and the Peoria State Hospital

Sylvia Shults

*"Our biggest fear is that Doc Zeller may make being insane a pleasure."
-- an Illinois senator, quoted in a newspaper article about the Peoria State Hospital*

Imagine, just for a moment or two, that you are insane.

Maybe you're depressed. Maybe things haven't gone your way for a very long time. Maybe your life just seems kind of . . . bleak.

Maybe you can't seem to make it through the day without a glass of wine, or two, or five. Or maybe you need something a little harder to keep the black dog at bay. Maybe you're epileptic, just waiting for the next lightning strike to hit your brain.

Or maybe, things are worse than that. Maybe there are so many voices in your head, you're no longer sure which voice is your own. Maybe you can't make your way through the rusty fishhooks and barbed wire in your mind anymore. Maybe it hurts so bad to be you that you just can't stand it.

You know you need help, but you've heard such horror stories about asylums. You don't want to be bound, helpless, in a straitjacket. You're terrified of ending up shackled to a bed, trapped in a room just as your mind is trapped in the bony prison of your skull.

But there is hope.

There is the Peoria State Hospital.

The insane asylum has historically been a place of fear, pain, and abuse. Want to make a horror novel twice as horrible? Set it in an insane asylum. Every horror movie aficionado knows instinctively, if a story takes place in an asylum, nothing good's going to come of it. There will be no redemption, no happy ending. There will be blood and filth and pain and tears. Horror novels are the same way. Setting a novel in an asylum is a surefire recipe for desperate fear.

Even real life reflects this. There are plenty of modern sources, like Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* and Susanna Kaysen's *Girl, Interrupted*, that graphically describe life behind the walls of an asylum. The stigma of mental illness, and the fear of being locked up, of having one's freedom taken away, haunt us to this day.

But the Peoria State Hospital, in Bartonville, Illinois, was nothing like that. For most of its existence, it was held up to the rest of the country as a model of what psychiatric treatment *could*



Figure 6.1: The campus of the asylum was a self-contained little village occupying the hilltop in Bartonville. Courtesy of Alpha Park Library Peoria State Hospital Collection.

be. It was used as an example of what could be achieved with kind words, gentle treatment, the total absence of restraints, healthy food, wholesome entertainment, and productive work. People who suffer from mental illness inhabit a very confusing and at times frightening world, but the Peoria State Hospital was a place of refuge for the suffering.

And it all started with one man's vision.

George A. Zeller was tapped by the Peoria Women's League in 1898 to be not only the superintendent of their planned asylum, but its father figure. Zeller was born in 1858, and grew up in Spring Bay, north of Peoria on the Illinois River. Following in his father's footsteps, he too became a surgeon, with a thriving practice in Peoria. He spent some time in the Army, serving the population of the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. When he came back stateside, he took on the position of superintendent of the Illinois Asylum for the Incurable Insane.

Right away, he began to implement his vision for the institution. From the very beginning, he chafed at the name that had been assigned. He found it deeply offensive. He made a visit to the state legislature in Springfield to demand a name change. "Don't tell my patients they're incurable," he insisted. "That's exactly what I'm here to do." The institution's name was changed at his request to the Illinois General Hospital for the Insane, and later, to the Peoria State Hospital.

Dr. Zeller had a policy in which he proposed to take in "the worst of the worst" patients. A modern mind automatically assumes, oh, that must mean violently psychotic patients. Dr. Zeller's interpretation of that phrase was much different. By "worst of the worst," he meant those patients who could not care for themselves, people that needed the most care, people who were considered incurable, people that every other institution had given up on – the most vulnerable of the mentally ill. Dr. Zeller was proud of the fact that he had no training as a psychiatrist. He realized that this lack of training meant that he was not hide-bound by current treatments in the care of the mentally ill. His philosophy was simple: let's treat these people with kindness, as we would want our family members to be treated, and see what happens. And what happened was that the Peoria State Hospital became the premier institution for the care of the mentally ill, not just in Illinois, not just in the United States, but in the *world*.

The hospital had been stocked, for its opening in 1902, with equipment that was standard issue for asylums of the day: bars on the windows, straitjackets, and Utica cribs. (A Utica crib, designed to keep patients corralled, looks very much like a baby's crib, except for its barred lid, which locks.) Dr. Zeller believed passionately in a lot of things, including absolute non-restraint. He didn't want his charges to feel that they were living in cages. He ordered the bars taken off of the windows, so that his patients could see for themselves that they were not confined. He had his nurses leave the windows of each cottage open a few inches for the same reason. The hospitals, the cottages, all of the buildings on the hilltop were not locked. "These folks don't lock their doors at home," Dr. Zeller reasoned. "Why would we lock them in when they've come to us for help?" The straitjackets and handcuffs, he kept, but for only one reason. He stored them in a room next to his office. Their only use was as museum exhibits, something for his staff to point out to visitors and say, "Never again. Not here. Not at this institution."

The asylum, being a state-run institution, was watched closely by the higher-ups in Springfield. Dr. Zeller had to answer not only to his Board of Directors, but also to the state legislature. He was asked, "You've taken \$6,000 worth of bars off of all the windows—what do you propose to do with all that hardware?"

Zeller had a brilliant idea, one of many. He had the bars fashioned into cages, for a petting

zoo on the grounds. The Utica cribs were repurposed into rabbit hutches, or mangers for hay for the deer to eat. And the patients cared for those animals.

Any patients who found themselves at the Peoria State Hospital entered a world, perhaps, unlike any they had known before. Accounts from other asylums tell of patients being force-fed, of having a wedge shoved into their mouths to facilitate medicine dosing, breaking teeth in the process, of patients in the geriatric ward getting one meal a day, consisting of a thin, colorless broth. At the Peoria State Hospital, patients were fed wholesome food, supplied by the asylum's three farms. Personal stories from other institutions describe the mind-numbing monotony of sitting in a chair staring dully out a window, of not being allowed to do anything that would provide mental or physical stimulation. The days and weeks at the Peoria State Hospital were filled with activities. For years, the patients made the clothes that were worn by all the inmates. These garments were pants and shirts or dresses, too, not the shapeless pajamas we picture when we think of mental patients. Dr. Zeller believed that if you took away a man's clothes, you took away his dignity.

Patients were encouraged to socialize, to the extent that their issues allowed them to do so. Patients took their breakfast and lunch in their cottages, but they all came together for dinner in the Dining Hall. Shared mealtimes were not the only way that the staff encouraged socialization. The cottages were decorated for every holiday and for every patient's birthday. There were movies every Friday night and dances every Saturday night. There was church on Sunday morning, and baseball games on Sunday afternoon when the weather was fine. The patients tended the gardens that produced the food they ate. They raised the chickens and the pigs that provided eggs and bacon for their breakfasts. They cared for the animals in the zoo—whose fenced-in yard was created from the grates that had formerly barred the windows of the asylum—and trained a tame black bear to take baths in a pool on command. The *patients* did this. These activities were part of their daily life, thanks to Dr. Zeller's vision.

At other asylums, patients weren't permitted to have sharp objects, even sewing needles. Dressmaking was out of the question: in addition to being messy, with fabric and patterns spread out all over a room, it also involved the use of scissors. Putting needles and scissors into the hands of insane women? Unthinkable! But at Peoria State Hospital, women were encouraged to create clothing for themselves and for their fellow patients.

One of Dr. Zeller's favorite photographs shows a group of several men, epileptics, standing around a pool table. One of the men is lining up a shot with his cue. It's a perfectly ordinary scene—until you start imagining what it would feel like to be beaten with a pool cue. Or to have a billiard ball slammed into the bridge of your nose. Epileptics who were committed to state hospitals were considered to be potentially, explosively violent. For Dr. Zeller to encourage these men to enjoy a quiet game of pool during their down time was revolutionary. This photograph became one of Dr.



Figure 6.2: A nurse sitting in one of the original administration offices in the Bowen Building. Courtesy of Alpha Park Library Peoria State Hospital Collection.

Zeller's favorite examples of the effectiveness of his treatment. That treatment, for the most part, was simple kindness.

Dr. Zeller and his wife, Sophie, were unable to have children of their own. They referred to the asylum's residents as their children. And the patients who passed away, and were buried on the hilltop? Those were "our sleeping children." There was nothing Dr. Zeller and Sophie wouldn't do for their charges. History tells of a storm that rolled through the area in 1915, lashing the hilltop and knocking out power to the buildings. Sophie stood at the stove in one of the cottages, making pot after pot of coffee so that the nurses could take the hot, fortifying brew around to all the residents.

In the asylum archives there is a wonderful photograph of Dr. Zeller standing in his typical rigid military pose with several attendants in a field. It is only with a second look that you can see the two hundred male patients sitting quietly behind him, partially hidden in the tall grass in the field.

When Dr. Zeller went for a walk, the patients went with him. He just had that sort of charisma. In the early days, before the gymnasium was built, before the bars on the windows were turned into paddocks for the deer, before the dances and films and baseball games, the only physical activity available to the patients was a stroll outdoors—or, rather, a hike. The reasoning behind this was simple: a tired patient was a quiet patient.



Figure 6.3: Dr. Zeller delighted in taking walks with his patients, and they would follow him anywhere. As they strolled, he would ask his charges how they were getting along at his asylum. Everyone—even female patients—had a chance to express their opinions on these chatty walks. Courtesy of Alpha Park Library Peoria State Hospital Collection.

But it wasn't only the male patients who attended Dr. Zeller on his walks. He encouraged the female patients to stroll with him too, and he put that time to good use: he talked with them. Imagine being a mental patient, and a woman at that, and the head of the entire asylum takes the time to ask you how your day is going, did anything exciting happen this morning, and are you enjoying the food?

Interaction with his "children", and giving them a fulfilling life, was very important to Dr. Zeller. The hilltop was a self-sufficient community. Farms provided food for both patients and staff. Every cottage had a small truck garden for fresh vegetables as well. Farms and gardens alike were tended by patients. Each cottage was assigned a chicken pen, because the staff felt that caring for chickens and other small animals gave the patients a sense of responsibility. This practice turned out to be especially therapeutic for violent patients. Dr. Zeller wrote in his memoirs about a particular patient who suffered from paranoid dementia, who ended up completely cured and was allowed to go home. Before she left the asylum, she spoke with Dr. Zeller, who asked what had brought her mind back to reason. The woman said it was the chirp of the chicks, which were outside when a storm blew into the area. She hurried to catch the chicks and bring them to safe shelter, and that's when it occurred to her that they were tiny, helpless creatures who needed

her protection. “This woman, who smashed furniture and tore clothes, became a ministering angel to a brood of helpless chicks,” Dr. Zeller marveled.

Dr. Zeller was a father figure to his patients, but a military man to his employees. He refused to hire what he contemptuously called “bug housers,” any attendant who had previously worked in an asylum before coming to the hilltop. If he found that a bug houser had slipped past the application process, he would fire them immediately and without cause. But Dr. Zeller also

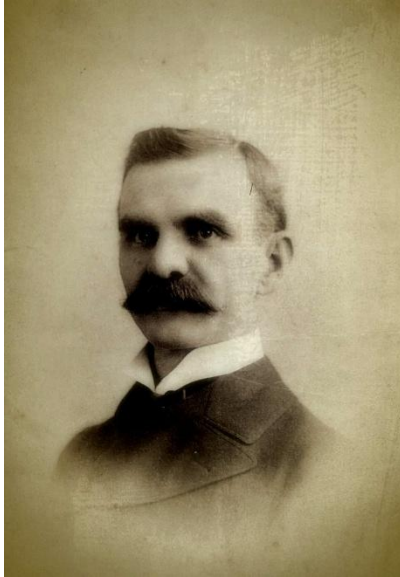


Figure 6.4: Dr. George A. Zeller. A military man to his employees, and a father figure to the patients under his care. Courtesy of Alpha Park Library Peoria State Hospital Collection.

lobbied the state senate for an eight-hour workday, both for his staff and for the able-bodied patients. He realized that working for more than eight hours at a stretch was harmful to his staff's mental health.

Dr. Zeller insisted that his female attendants be as well-trained in patient care – even care of violent patients – as male attendants. He felt that the soft touch and kind words of a woman were a balm to the troubled mind of someone suffering from insanity.

As it turns out, he was right. Due to the hospital's no-locked-door policy, it was not uncommon for patients to wander away from the grounds. Sometimes patients would get as far as Peoria, where they often got picked up by police. When this happened, someone at the station would simply pick up the phone and dial the asylum. “We’ve got one of your folks here—please come and collect them.” A pretty young nurse would be sent on the train to round up the patient and bring them back to the fold. And the patient would come along quietly, maybe a little abashed to have caused so much bother.

Another of Dr. Zeller's passions was his respect for women. The reason he refused to hire “bug housers” was that he insisted on training his staff to his exacting standards. To that end, he established a college of nursing, right there on the hilltop. The classes that made up the original three-year nursing program formed the backbone of the very best accredited school of nursing in the country. It was here that young women were trained to care for the mentally and physically ill. A few male students were trained as orderlies, but the overwhelming majority of students that sought their education at the Peoria State Hospital were women. And why not? They got a magnificent chance to make their own way in the world, to earn their own paycheck, to succeed



Figure 6.5: The expansive yard of the Bowen Building was a place for patients and visitors to visit when the weather was fine, and a gathering place for nurses on a break from their classes in the elegant edifice. Courtesy of Alpha Park Library Peoria State Hospital Collection.

in a fulfilling career, doing real good in their community. This was at a time when women didn't even have the right to vote. Dr. Zeller even encouraged his nurses to go on to become doctors in their own right. He believed passionately that women were equal to men, and indeed, were superior when it came to tending to the needs of patients with mental illness.

In 1936, all state hospital schools of nursing closed. The asylum's unparalleled school shut down in July of that year. But just a few months later, in October, the Peoria State Hospital School of Psychiatric Nursing opened its doors. The school was now affiliated with Methodist School of Nursing in Peoria and Brokaw Hospital School of Nursing in Normal.

This slight change in direction reflected a changing attitude towards nurses' training. A specialized hospital was no longer considered the ideal training environment for basic nursing. Instead, specialized institutions, like state hospitals, were used for a two-month course in psychiatric nursing, as part of a nurse's undergraduate work. This gave student nurses from three general hospitals in the community a chance to study psychiatric nursing, instead of providing an entire course of study for only the students at the asylum.

In the late 1940s, another course of study, this one lasting eighteen months, was developed for attendants and psychiatric aides. Peoria State Hospital was one of only a few hospitals in the world, and the only one in Illinois, that offered a psychiatric technician program. These later courses of study never achieved the cachet that Dr. Zeller's original nurses' college did in the early decades of the century. Nevertheless, Peoria State Hospital continued to provide excellent training for nurses and attendants until it closed in 1973.

Life at the Peoria State Hospital was as close to normal as it could possibly be. Patients lived in cottages together, spending most of their time with people who understood them. All of the cottages were looked after by a married couple, giving the residents a much-needed sense of home. The cottage system was what set the Peoria State Hospital apart from many other asylums in the United States.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many asylums were built on the Kirkbride plan, named after the architect who designed it. This plan called for one large octagonal building as the hub, with four wings coming out from the central building. These wings could be built out and expanded indefinitely, according to the housing needs of the institution. The original building of the Peoria State Hospital (then known as the Illinois Asylum for the Incurable Insane) was actually built on the Kirkbride plan. It was also built over an abandoned coal mine, out of shoddy materials, by contractors who were rumored to have ties to the Chicago Mob. Dr. Zeller toured the building before leaving for his service in the Philippines. Noting the cracks in the foundation and the abysmal lack of good ventilation, he refused to use the building. In 1898, never having housed any patients, the building was deemed unfit for habitation and was torn down. The limestone blocks were soon used to build the nurses' college.

In the Kirkbride plan, all of the asylum's patients were housed in one building, without regard for their afflictions. Someone who was merely depressed could have a paranoid schizophrenic as a roommate – not the ideal situation for improving mental health.

In the cottage plan, people with similar issues lived together. Epileptics lived with other epileptics; using the buddy system, they were paired off, and each patient kept an eye on his or her partner. If an epileptic patient was struck by a seizure, help was as close as their buddy.

Alcoholics were housed with other alcoholics, in the cottages on D Row. As with the epileptics, this system had another underlying benefit beyond simple camaraderie. Alcoholics

who had dried out and were able to function were assigned to care for the new arrivals, the patients who were still suffering in the grip of the terrible shakes and sickness and hallucinations of the DTs. This reminded the more stable patients of where they'd come from – and where they could end up once again if they ever found themselves backsliding into the bottle.

Dr. Zeller was the first to recognize that service veterans who had seen combat sometimes suffered from a tortuous mental illness. We now call that illness “post-traumatic stress disorder,” but the staff in those early days, around the time of the first World War, simply knew it as “shell shock.” Dr. Zeller assigned these veterans to their own cottage, where they could fight their demons in peace. Veterans also had their own burying ground as a mark of respect for their service. Even today, every grave in the veterans’ section has an American flag standing at attention before the headstone. The “soldier known only to God” has a flag as well.

Dr. Zeller also recognized that some women, after giving birth, suffered from issues ranging from depression to violence against their newborn children. He assigned them to their own cottage as well. In recognizing postpartum depression as a stress disorder, he saved many young women from death sentences. Dr. Zeller found many of these women in prisons, where they'd been locked up for attacking their children or their husbands. The courts found these women “criminally insane,” and sentenced many to die for their violent crimes. Dr. Zeller brought them to the Peoria State Hospital. He saved their sanity—and he saved their lives.

Dr. George Zeller retired in 1935. A grateful Peoria State Hospital board named him Superintendent Emeritus as thanks for his years of service. But one of his colleagues, Archie Bowen, wanted to do something more for Dr. Zeller, something more tangible. Dr. Zeller and Sophie were such beloved figures on the hilltop that Mr. Bowen knew they couldn't just leave, not yet. So he came to Dr. Zeller with a proposition: would he and Sophie consider moving into one of the apartments in the Employees' Building?

It took two conversations, but by the end of the second one Dr. Zeller had grasped what his old friend and colleague was really asking.

“You mean you want me and to stay here? On the hilltop?” The Zellers had been living in the Superintendent's Cottage, but Archie was offering a permanent arrangement, one that did not depend on Dr. Zeller's position.

“For as long as you like,” Archie replied.

And this military man, he of the stiff upper lip and the fierce dark gaze, who had served his country in the Spanish-American War and devoted his life to militantly defending the dignity of the mentally ill – this man was in humble tears of gratitude that his colleagues and former staff wanted him to stick around. It's not like Dr. Zeller was destitute at the end of his life. He certainly wasn't broke and homeless; far from it. He'd had a great career, he was well respected, and he was really quite wealthy, with lots of property to his name. In fact, in 1933 he bought Jubilee College and the grounds on which it sat, a total of 93 acres, six miles outside of Peoria. He donated it to the state of Illinois, and it became Jubilee College State Park. He could have lived in any number of fine homes. But he accepted Mr. Bowen's offer because it meant that he and Sophie could live out the rest of their days at the asylum they both loved so much.

He and Sophie moved into an apartment on the second floor, at the end of the building facing what is now Pfeiffer Road. From there, Dr. Zeller could look out over the grounds of his beloved institution. He lived there until his death from pneumonia in 1938. (Sophie had died a few months earlier.)

During his final illness, curious people asked Dr. Zeller why he didn't leave the asylum and travel to Peoria for treatment. His response was immediate and sensible. "I'm surrounded by my family, and by the best nurses, and by the prettiest women in the world. Why would I want to leave?"

The Peoria State Hospital was a unique institution in the history of mental health care. Under Dr. Zeller's supervision, it became a model for state hospitals everywhere. Dr. Zeller himself revolutionized the treatment of mental illness. He went out of his way to rescue the most wretched, most pathetic cases from the squalor and terror of the almshouses, and he brought them to his hospital. There, they were cared for, and their illnesses were treated. Perhaps most importantly, they were separated according to their affliction. They were finally – maybe for the first time in their lives – among others that were going through the same experiences they were, who understood exactly the misery they endured. This had to be an incredible relief to these patients.

Dr. Zeller's pioneering techniques inspired devotion in both his staff and in his patients. He was beloved by the population of the hospital, and in return, he dedicated his life to easing the misery of the mentally ill. That takes guts. Mental illness has few outward physical signs. A nurse at the Zeller Mental Health Center (yes, named in his honor) put it especially well: "It's very hard to keep reminding yourself that these people are very ill when you don't see any blood. You don't see the fever inside of them." The mentally ill often act weirdly or even turn violent. It's not an easy thing to care for people suffering like this. It's stressful, and to this day there's still a powerful stigma attached to mental illness. Dr. Zeller's importance in the field of mental health care cannot be overstated.

The staff of doctors, nurses, and attendants at the Peoria State Hospital had every right to be proud of the institution where they worked. It was *not* a place of terror and despair. It was a place of caring. It was a place of healing those who could be healed. And for those who were beyond healing, those who would never rejoin society, it was a place of refuge. At the asylum, minds too badly damaged ever to become functional were met with kindness. The tuberculosis patients were cared for with compassion until they died. And the mentally ill were allowed to mingle with others who were like them. Fractured spirits met kindred spirits and found comfort.¹



Figure 6.6: The Peoria State Hospital welcomed all: visitors, reporters, and those in need of refuge. Courtesy of Alpha Park Library Peoria State Hospital Collection.

¹ For further information about the history of the Peoria State Hospital, see the Alpha Park Public Library's "Peoria State Hospital Collection" at <https://www.alphapark.org/peoria-state-hospital-collection>.

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CHAPTER 7

After the Tractor Wars: Farm Equipment Manufacturers in 1929¹

Neil Dahlstrom

In his 1931 book *Century of the Reaper*, a history of the International Harvester Company and its predecessor, the company founded by his grandfather, Cyrus McCormick III,¹ briefly recognized a pivotal turning point in the early history of the farm tractor, a price war that attempted to accelerate tractor sales in the early 1920s. “When the tractor war was over,” he wrote, “the farmers of the world appreciated beyond a shadow of a doubt that they would best serve themselves by providing their farms with a tractor rugged enough to resist the shocks of farm use and powerful enough to do all of their work. They knew that there can be no such thing as a good cheap tractor.”

His statement recognized a profound, and much overlooked, shift in the evolution of farm equipment. *Tractor Wars: John Deere, Henry Ford, International Harvester, and the Birth of Modern Agriculture* features the twenty-year period between 1908 and 1928 during which the tractor was introduced to American farmers. In the face of great opposition and doubt, more than 160 companies were building more than 200,000 tractors annually by 1925. Automobile pioneer Henry Ford’s Fordson tractor captured 75% market share, but in 1928 he exited the business to put his resources into the replacement for the Model T automobile. This created a void that would be filled by only a few mega-companies, all adopting the model of the “full line.”

Closing his extended network of factories to reorganize and retool for production of the new Ford Model A automobile, Ford ordered the tools from the assembly line that produced the Fordson tractor to be quietly packed and shipped to Cork, Ireland. The last Fordson tractor, without fanfare, rolled off the assembly line at the River Rouge factory in Dearborn, Michigan on June 4, 1928. Ironically, Ford found change difficult. Still stubbornly convinced that the Model T was the perfect automobile and that the Fordson was the perfect tractor, Ford later bemused in a paper published in *Magazine for Business* that “In former days a new kind of article was opposed just because it was new, but now it is likely to be welcomed just because it is new.”²

While Ford stuck to the design of his Fordson tractor with little modification in the 1920s, the industry evolved, led by the International Harvester Farmall tractor and the John Deere Model D tractor, which, with others, ushered in a new generation of row-crop and general-purpose tractors that were more durable, flexible, efficient, and powerful. The era of the horse-farmer seemed numbered.³

¹ The phrase “tractor wars” comes from Cyrus McCormick III in his book *Century of the Reaper*, published in 1931. *Tractor Wars: John Deere, Henry Ford, International Harvester, and the Birth of Modern Agriculture* features the introduction of the farm tractor from 1908–1928 as told from the perspective of the three market share leaders during that period. Henry Ford’s announcement of a farm tractor in 1908, and his departure from the business in 1928, serve as bookends to the story. This article picks up where *Tractor Wars* left off, outlining the next era of competition through the Great Depression and leading into World War II.

² This article is cited by Watts 2005: 355.

³ Horses would still outnumber tractors on American farms into the 1950s.

Ohio State University professor G.W. McCuen plainly compared the benefits of tractors over horses. “Instead of going to a vicious cycle of growing more crops to feed more horses so that more crops may be grown to feed more horses,” he wrote, “the tractor has released man and horses from the farm.” The replacement of horses with tractors was no different than the replacement of the cradle by the reaper and binder, or the iron plow by the steel plow, he argued. Horses once replaced oxen as a more efficient way to do farm work, and mechanical power would continue to replace horses simply because it was a profitable change for farmers.⁴

The notable absence of the Fordson tractor was not the only change in front of manufacturers. The 1930s would prove another transformative period as industry consolidation, product innovation, food surpluses, and government intervention prioritized mechanization. For manufacturers, innovative engineering and machine evolution began to convince even the staunchest horse farmers of the undeniable economic opportunities of mechanical farm power.

As it would prove true for most Americans, the year 1929 would leave an indelible mark on the farm equipment industry. The impact was not marked by financial ruin, but instead by the reformation of an industry emerging from a disruptive decade, the 1920s, which kicked off with an agricultural recession, a training ground of sorts that ultimately benefited manufacturers, placing them in a recognizable position that help inform strategies to weather the economic tumult to come.

The race to mechanize the farm accelerated during World War I as Europe, and then the United States, experienced shortages both in horses and people. With the “tremendous demand for food, more food, U.S. farmers were told to buy more machines—any machine that would increase their production and get it into the holds of ships more quickly.”⁵

Post-war, many young people did not return to the farm. With more mouths to feed and less labor available to raise the food necessary to do it, manufacturers sold a record 203,207 tractors in 1920. Then, a post-war recession rolled through the rural United States as commodity prices fell and farmers spent less on new equipment. For the burgeoning tractor industry, panic soon hit, led by Henry Ford who dropped the price of his Fordson tractor by more than half, to an unmatched \$395. International Harvester offered a \$225 reduction of its Titan 10-20 tractor, but that only brought the price down to \$1,000. Other manufacturers attempted more modest price reductions of their tractors over the next six months, but at best it slowed their march to bankruptcy.

The farm industry recovered by the mid-1920s and much had changed. The National Farming Demonstration programs that introduced the farm tractor were already a thing of the past, replaced by localized dealership demonstrations. According to A. C. Seyfarth, International Harvester’s advertising director, the Wichita Power Farming Equipment and Road Shows in February 1929 included “the introduction and more or less extensive use of general-purpose tractors other than the pioneer, the Farmall,”. John Deere brought its GP tractor, and with an Advance-Rumely “Do-All” were both “centers of interest.” The “Do-All” had a vertical, four-cylinder Waukesha engine. The Nebraska test lab, now the authority on tractor performance,

⁴ *Farm Implement News*, Vol 54, No. 5, March 2, 1933, 28.

⁵ *Fortune Magazine*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, August 1933, 21.

rated it a maximum load of 21.61 horsepower, having to “improvise” a method of locking the shifting lever to prevent gear slipping.⁶

Tractors, threshing machines, and a variety of implements were also on exhibit, alongside a variety of automotive exhibitions, and six booths by “Uncle Sam,” providing a history of infrastructure growth in the United States since 1904.

After several years of steady growth from 1925–1928, tractor sales set a record with industry production of 223,081 machines. Heeding lessons from the recession of the 1920s, the farm equipment industry had undergone a profound transformation. Sales of both tractors and other farm machines were expected to once again continue an upward trajectory. The Deere & Company Board of Directors met in Moline, Illinois on the morning of October 29, 1929. History would remember it as Black Friday. For Deere, it was the close of the company’s fiscal year. Executive Frank Silloway optimistically shared that “. . . we believe farmers, generally, are feeling better than they have for some time; and if general business continues its present pace into 1930 we should do as large a business in 1930 as we did in 1929 in the United States and Canada.” A full year later Deere comptroller Theodore Wharton reported a company surplus of \$22.9 million, no back dividends to pay, and reserve accounts of \$33.4 million. Inventories were low, debt was low and receivables were high, all contributing to the “splendid financial condition of Deere & Company today” and showing “our ability to cope with any situation that may arise.” Wharton attributed this position to lessons learned during the post-World War I depression in the United States. In 1921, in the first year of the tractor price wars, Deere & Company reported a loss of \$2.7 million.

Deere had plenty of reasons for optimism during this period. Its tractor operation, which began in 1918, earned a profit for the first time in 1926. And with Ford’s departure in 1928, Deere held a manageable second position behind perennial market leader International Harvester. Deere had also built a successful full line—a term used to describe a company that built and sold most of the equipment needed on the farm—through its entry into the harvesting business, the acquisition of ten affiliated companies from 1910-1912, and its capstone, the acquisition of the Waterloo Gasoline Engine Company in 1918.⁷

By the late 1920s, consolidation seemed the only path to survival for farm equipment companies. Even after the financial news from New York after Black Friday, *The Farm Implement News* predicted that “The year 1929 may go down in farm equipment trade history as one in which more progress in the development of power farming equipment was made than in any previous period. So far as tractors are concerned, the trend has been significant.” The paper did not speculate on what was to come.⁸

⁶ In this case, Road Show did not mean the show travelled, but that it featured automobiles as well as tractors. Seyfarth; Nebraska Test No. 154 reported in *The 1928 Tractor Field Book*.

⁷ Deere & Company reorganized its sales branches, acquired several regional manufacturers like the Syracuse Chilled Plow Company (soft-center plows), and added complementary products through acquisition of the Dain Manufacturing Company (haying tools), Van Brunt Manufacturing Company (seeding equipment), Marseilles Manufacturing Company (corn shellers, manure spreaders, grain elevators), Moline Wagon Company (wagons), the Kemp & Burpee Manufacturing Company (manure spreaders), and others. Deere designed and introduced its own grain binder in 1912, marking its entry into the harvesting business. Broehl 1984:328–344.

⁸⁸ *Farm Implement News*, January 9, 1930.

In the post-Ford tractor market, John Deere and International Harvester combined for more than 65% market share (tractor unit sales). Harvester had returned to its pre-Ford dominance, itself holding 49% of the market, but more than half of Deere's profits now came from two lines that did not exist in its portfolio in 1910—tractors and combine harvesters, an indicator of how rapidly the industry was changing. Furthermore, the transition from wood implements to steel was, for the most part, complete. And now, a wave of mergers and consolidations were being executed to compete with the two agricultural equipment giants.

More than 220,000 farm tractors were manufactured in 1929, most of them sold domestically by the 47 listed tractor manufacturers that survived the end of the decade. Only eight years before, 186 manufacturers built 73,200 tractors. There were still a handful of small, localized builders and machine shops, short-liners they were called, supplementing the trade, but buyers had mostly returned to a few industry leaders. It appeared to be business as usual.

Manufacturers saw only upside. Farm tractor sales trends indicated growing sales, and most farmers still did not own a tractor. Nearly 1.5 million tractors had been produced between 1918 and 1927, though in January 1928 there were only an estimated 177,248 tractors still in operation. Seventy-seven percent of those machines were in fifteen states, led by Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, Wisconsin, and California. Unsuccessful machines, made in low volumes by a variety of manufacturers, were now being replaced, but this time farmers knew what they wanted. Reliable, flexible, and purpose-built machines for specific crops, backed by parts and service and matched implements, had evolved the buying decision. And manufacturers prepared for the demand for replacement vehicles.⁹

It was estimated that American farmers added 20-million horsepower to farms in 1927, as “power replaced human labor to a greater extent than ever before.” An estimated 170,000 machines were built, 120,000 of them sold in the United States, with the “general trend in tractor buying . . . towards larger machines,” though now much different than the “huge lumbering monstrosities of fifteen years ago” which had “practically disappeared.”¹⁰

Farm size was growing as well. There were 6,361,502 farms in the United States, comprising 878,798,000 acres in 1910 (138 acres per farm). This grew to 6,812,350 farms, comprising 1,054,515,000 acres (156 acres per farm) in 1935.¹¹

According to the Federal Trade Commission, the increases reflected “the increased use of modern labor-saving farm implements which has served as the basis for growth of the farm implement and machinery industry.”¹²

One concerning trend, which would continue during the Depression, was the increasing number of tenant farmers, as landowners added to their holdings and hired out much, if not all, of their labor needs. Southern tenant farming increased nearly 20% between 1880 and 1935, to 53.5%. Northern states were not much better, growing from 19.2% to 31.8% in 1935. There were consequences, according to the FTC. For one, owner equity was decreasing. Secondly, even

⁹ *Farm Implement News*, Vol. 49, No. 3, January 19, 1928, cover. By contrast, there were more than 17 million passenger cars and nearly 2.5 million trucks travelling on more than 521,000 miles of surfaced roads in the United States. Comparatively, in 1904, there were 55,000 total vehicles and 153,000 miles of road. Seyfarth, 69; *Farm Implement News*, Vol. 50, No. 8, February 21, 1929.

¹⁰ *Farm Implement News*, Vol. 49, No. 2, January 12, 1928, 16–17.

¹¹ *Report on the Agricultural Implement and Machinery Industry*, 1938, 62–63.

¹² *Report on the Agricultural Implement and Machinery Industry*, 1938, 3.

though their holdings were larger and landowners were hiring more tenant farmers, they were doing so for shorter periods, focusing on the growing of seasonal cash crops. In the process, the land was suffering and steady employment was difficult. “This system, unfortunately, often results in depleting the fertility of the soil with consequently steadily decreasing returns for both tenant and landlord,” offered an industry analyst.¹³

Collectively, these trends signaled ongoing demand, and manufacturers were planning accordingly. But now, the cost pressures of designing, building, selling, and serving a successful tractor priced out new and long-standing manufacturers alike, and many scrambled to find suitable partners. By the end of the decade, seven full-line manufacturers emerged:

- 1. International Harvester**

International Harvester was formed through the merger of McCormick Harvesting Machine Company and the Deering Harvesting Company, as well as several smaller harvesting equipment companies, in 1902. In all, the merger combined the five large manufacturers of harvesting (90% of industry sales) and haying equipment (80% of industry sales) in the country. Its full line quickly followed, as well as leading the industry in development of the farm tractor, as well as automobiles and trucks. After a Sherman Anti-Trust Act investigation, Harvester was forced to sell some of its subsidiaries and restricted to having only one dealership in any time they were represented. Still, the company led in most equipment categories.

- 2. Deere & Company**

Founded with the development of a steel plow in 1837, John Deere was primarily a manufacturer of tillage equipment, and after 1877 seeding equipment. From 1910-1918, Deere developed its full line by consolidating subsidiaries and sales branches, and making a series of acquisitions that added haying equipment, harvesters, corn shellers, manure spreaders, wagons, and in 1918, engines and tractors through the acquisition of the Waterloo Gasoline Engine Company.

- 3. J.I. Case Co.**

Formed in 1842 to manufacture threshing machines, J.I. Case developed experimental gasoline tractors as early as 1892, though none made it to production until 1911 when the line featured plows, engines, corn shellers, and with the acquisition of the Pierce Motor Co. in 1912, even automobiles. In 1919, J.I. Case acquired the Grand Detour Plow Company, a descendent of the original John Deere plow factory (his partner, Leonard Andrus, continued after Deere relocated to Moline, Illinois). The full line was completed through acquisition of the Emerson-Brantingham Co. in Rockford, Illinois, and the J.I. Case Threshing Machine Co.—an entirely independent company with a similar name and history. After decades of competition, in 1929 the two J.I. Case companies began operating under the new name J.I. Case. Co.

- 4. Allis Chalmers Manufacturing Company**

Founded in 1847 and reorganized in 1904, Allis manufactured primarily gasoline engines, hydraulic turbines, sawmills, steam engines, and mining machinery. In March 1928, the

¹³ Southern tenant farming increased from 36.2% in 1880 to 53.5% in 1935. *Report on the Agricultural Implement and Machinery Industry*, 1938.

company expanded through the acquisition of the Monarch Tractor Co. (Springfield, Illinois) and La Cross Plow Co. (La Crosse, Wisconsin). In 1931, the acquisition of the Advance-Rumley Co. (La Porte, Indiana) added combines and threshing machines.

5. Oliver Farm Equipment Company

The formation of the \$50 million Oliver Farm Equipment Company was announced on April 1, 1929—a consolidation of the Oliver Chilled Plow Works, Nichols & Shepard, and Hart-Parr Company (the company that coined the word “tractor”). “Thus,” noted International Harvester’s advertising director, “another pioneer in the tractor industry lost its identity, and the long famous Hart-Parr tractors became known as Oliver Hart-Parr.” Oliver now included plows, threshing machines, planters, corn pickers, and combines. By the end of 1936, Oliver operated four factories in Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

6. Minneapolis-Moline Power Implement Company

Founded in the 1860s as Candee, Swan, & Company, the company was renamed as the Moline Plow Company during a trademark dispute with its neighboring rival, John Deere. In 1911, the Moline Plow Company added grain drills, harvesting equipment and an additional plow line through acquisitions, and from a brief period operated the largest tractor factory in the world. In 1919 the company was purchased by the Willys Overland Co., which attempted to integrate automobile and tractor manufacturing. After several bankruptcies, the company was reorganized in 1922, and then again in 1929 with the formation of the Minneapolis-Moline Company, a consolidation of the Moline Implement Company, Minneapolis Steel Machinery Company (builders of the Twin City tractor), and the Minneapolis Threshing Machine Company (builders of the Minneapolis tractor).

7. Massey-Harris Co.

Massey-Harris was originally formed in the 1840s in Ontario, Canada, manufacturing of plows, hoes, and rakes. In 1876 the company was granted the first Canadian patent for a grain binder. From 1891-1904, acquisitions of farm wagon, manure spreader, and gasoline manufacturers expanded its reach. Tractor production began in 1918. Massey-Harris incorporated in the state of New York in 1917, and in 1928 acquired the J.I. Case Plow Works in Racine, Wisconsin (not to be confused with the J.I. Case Co.).

Even among these consolidated companies, there remained great disparity in resources. For example, each company operated a system of branch houses, organizations that carried farm equipment and repair parts, and employed salespeople who kept relationships with dealers and negotiated sales on behalf of the parent company. International Harvester operated 84 branches in the United States and 17 in Canada. Allis-Chalmers operated 19 branches in the United States and seven in Canada, as well as offices in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, France, and England. John Deere operated 14 domestic and one Canadian sales branch.¹⁴

The Great Depression, as it was for many industries, caused a re-examination of long-held industry practices, and a continued assessment of the relationship between manufacturers, dealers, and their customers. In 1930, 1,352 banks failed, followed by 2,294 in 1931. In 1930, 26,335 businesses failed in the United States. The value of farm property declined from \$57.7 billion in 1929 to \$51.8 billion in 1930 (and down from \$78.3 billion in 1920). Severe drought,

¹⁴ *Report on the Agricultural Implement and Machinery Industry*, 202.

grasshopper attacks, and the Dust Bowl contributed to the severe impact the Great Depression had on farmers.¹⁵

More than 600,000 tractors were sold in total in the United States from 1927–1932, compared to more than 18 million automobiles. The decline in horses on the farm continued from its height in 1918 (21,550,000 horses). By the end of 1932 it was nearly half (12,679,000).¹⁶

Farm machinery prices increased by nearly 60% between 1913 and 1928, while the prices of farm commodities during the same period rose only 44.5%. Equipment manufacturers during this period maintained that the cost of equipment was minimal in comparison to the cost of land, buildings, livestock, seed, and other farm inputs. In 1931, farmers spent only 3 ½ cents of every dollar of gross farm income on equipment. And that equipment, they argued, was generating more income than ever before.¹⁷

Not surprisingly, tractor production fell by nearly two-thirds, to total industry production of 71,703 units.¹⁸

Despite the positive report at the end of 1930, the Great Depression, combined with drought in parts of the United States, and the dust bowl that hit hardest in Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas, had, of course, a profound impact also on equipment producers. After a 17% drop in sales in 1930 (tractors sales fell from \$25.9 million to \$2.1 million); implement sales from \$26.9 million to \$4.5 million), Deere & Company sales fell another 67% the following year. Sales for 1933 were 86% less than 1930.

The market leader, International Harvester, reported a 40% fall in sales for 1931.

Even so, the farm population increased for the first time since 1925.¹⁹

Farm equipment manufacturers were regulated, but industry consolidation and the evolution of their machines and practices created an environment that drove demands for greater oversight and government scrutiny.

On January 22, 1932, Congress approved “An act to provide emergency financing facilities for financial institutions, to aid in financing agriculture, commerce, and industry, and for other purposes.” Fifty million dollars was allocated towards emergency loans for farmers that had suffered crop loss the previous year.²⁰

Finley P. Mount, president of the Advance-Rumely Corporation said “There are no bread lines or soup kitchens on the farm.” And that “we sometimes overlook the tremendous home market which belongs to the American farmer. There are 124 million people who consume food three times a day, 365 days in the year. . . . But even with unemployment, people are being fed, food is being consumed, the surplus [of food] is being wiped out.”²¹

¹⁵ Watkins 1993: 55, 115.

¹⁶ There were 21,550,000 horses on American farms in 1918. By the end of 1932 it was 12,679,000.

¹⁷ *Report on the Agricultural Implement and Machinery Industry* cites the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 410.

¹⁸ Gray 1958: 25.

¹⁹ Farm population increased to 31,241,000 on Jan 1932 from 30,169,000 on Jan 1, 1930. It was the first increase since 1925, with a net loss from 1910-1932 of 835,000. Report of the United States Bureau of Agricultural Statistics in *Farm Implement News*, Vol. 53, No 34, November 23, 1932, 23.

²⁰ *Farm Implement News*, March 10, 1932, 14-15.

²¹ Speech by Finley P. Mount, representing the National Association of Farm Equipment Manufacturers, entitled “Facts about Farm Prices” reported in the *Farm Implement News*, Vol. 53, No. 4, January 28, 1932.

On the heels of the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act was passed in early 1933, just three months after Franklin Roosevelt took office, and was implemented in its early months by former John Deere and Moline Plow Company executive George Peek (His brother, Burton, was Deere & Company's general counsel.). Its goal was to increase the purchasing power of farmers by closing the gap between production and consumption. To accomplish the goal, farmers were paid not to produce. This equated to millions of acres of crops being plowed over, and within a few years had created greater inequities in land ownership. The Supreme Court, in 1936, ruled the Agricultural Adjustment Act unconstitutional, though in the short-term it kept many farmers solvent. It also helped farm equipment manufacturers return to profitability.²²

Sales of the now eight full-line companies experienced combined sales during this period of \$437 million in 1929, down to just \$85 million in 1929, back to \$373 million in 1936.²³

Recovery was not only the result of government intervention. The introduction of the small tractor had irreversibly changed farming, but the revelation of the general-purpose tractor, capable of operating a wider range of farm jobs and adaptable to a diverse array of implements, hastened the adoption of tractors. The transition gained momentum with each passing day, as innovative new implements—plows, cultivators, grain and corn binders, and other compatible machines, continued to be designed specifically for tractor use.

Perhaps the first major innovation of the era was already widely adopted, the powerlift first featured on John Deere's model GP tractor in 1928. The GP was a row-crop tractor, Deere's less successful response to the International Harvester Farmall. But the tractor did include the first successful powerlift, a well-known concept that no company had yet to fully implement. For a century, farmers had to manually lift their implements out of the ground at the end of every row, turn around, and then drop it again into the ground. It was backbreaking work and cost valuable time in the field. The powerlift allowed the operator to simply hit a button or pull a lever to accomplish the same task. The Works Progress Administration estimated that this one innovation saved a farmer thirty-minutes a day, or a staggering 1-million-man hours in a year industry-wide.²⁴

Other industry innovations in this era included pneumatic tires, the adoption of regular gasoline, continued standardization of implements, and by the end of the 1930s, further adoption of automotive design. Ironically, this was a trend many tractor manufacturers had started several decades prior, then abandoned. But this transition was different, focused on increased power, efficiency, versatility, and even style. By the late 1930s tractors were being designed by well-known industrial designers like Henry Dreyfuss (John Deere) and Raymond Loewy (International Harvester).

Increased tractor horsepower and stronger transmissions allowed farmers to transition from two-bottom to three-bottom and four-bottom plows with little additional investment. In the Great Plains states, farmers acquired more land, as larger implements produced more work. And now their more powerful tractors could pull their combines up sloped fields. The problem was

²² Discussion of the Agricultural Adjustment Act in Fite 1954: 251–252.

²³ According to the Federal Trade Commission, the B.F. Avery Company was the eighth full-line manufacturer, even though it did not carry a line of tractors. Federal Trade Commission, *Agricultural Implement and Machinery Industry*, 626; Broehl 1984: 527–528.

²⁴ Works Progress Administration study of the powerlift cited in Williams 1987: 91.

real—farmers were slipping their tractors into low gear and hitching it to a team of horses for additional pulling power!

The use of pneumatic rubber tires found few early converts and was initially envisioned only as an alternative to steel wheels for industrial purposes, especially roadwork. These were hard rubber, not the pneumatic tires that would be adopted later. International Harvester experimented with rubber tires in 1918, but they failed to perform and efforts were abandoned.

In 1931, tire-maker B.F. Goodrich introduced a “zero pressure” farm tractor tire, a rubber tire that “was neither pneumatic nor solid, but had a web of solid piers inside that supported the outer arch which was said to give the tire enough flexibility to provide full soil contact and superior traction, besides being puncture proof.” But it, too, did not find an audience.²⁵

In 1932, a collaboration between Allis-Chalmers and Firestone got it right. That year, an Allis-Chalmers Model U tractor on rubber airplane tires hauled a trailer loaded with implements the 88.1 miles from Milwaukee to Chicago in five hours and one minute, including a route along Michigan Avenue. The destination was the International Live Stock Exposition in Chicago. The “new record for road speed of an air-tire stock model farm tractor will undoubtedly set at rest any doubts that may have existed as to the practicability of the modern tractor for road work,” offered an industry publication. Still, the assertion was that the “successful performance of the air-tired tractor in all kinds of farm work is of even greater importance.”²⁶

The first official test of pneumatic tires at the Nebraska Tractor Tests (No. 223), was held in May 1934. These tests provided the official ratings for all manufacturers for advertising purposes. What stood out was the increased efficiency of rubber over steel. A rating of 5.62 horsepower hours per gallon of fuel was recorded using steel wheels, compared to 8.18 horsepower hours per gallon of fuel on rubber tires. By 1939, 83% of all tractors sold in the United States had rubber tires.²⁷

Tractor adoption continued to spread as a replacement for scarce and costly labor in the east, for adaptability in the west, and the expansion of general-purpose tractors for planting and cultivation of row crops, but innovative new machines would continue to facilitate the march towards mechanization that would feed a growing world. A new machine form that was “spreading like wildfire” had been around for decades in previous forms but had started to overcome many of the obstacles once faced by the farm tractor. It was called a *combine* because it combined the functions of grain cutting, threshing, and cleaning into one machine.²⁸

Farm income in 1932, approximately \$5.4 billion, was 42% of what it was in 1929 before it began to rise again in 1933. Farmer purchase rates increased slightly faster. Except for rapid growth by Allis-Chalmers during this period—they now composed 11.3% of total farm equipment sales in 1936 (increased from 2.9% in 1929), the industry saw market share signs of a new competitive era. International Harvester’s share fell from 51.1% to 44.7%. Deere & Company’s share increased nearly three percentage points, to 23.3%. Besides the advances made by Allis-

²⁵ Moore, <https://www.farmcollector.com/tractors/allis-chalmers-rubber-firestone-tires/>.

²⁶ *Farm Implement News*, Vol. 53, No 34, November 23, 1932, 18–23.

²⁷ The adoption of rubber tires was swift. The first were sold in 1932. By 1935, 14% of tractors had rubber tires. By 1939 the total was eighty-nine percent; Williams 1987: 93.

²⁸ *Farm Implement News*, Vol. 49, No. 2, January 12, 1928, 16–17.

Chalmers, which introduced a small, one-man harvester to great acclaim in 1934 (called the All-Crop), all other full-liners lost ground.²⁹

The boom-and-bust cycle of the farm equipment industry forced manufacturers to emerge from the Great Depression leaner, more innovative, and more efficient, just in time for everything to evolve again when United States manufacturing responded to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. These full-line manufacturers continued to dominate tractor and overall farm equipment sales through the 1950s, the peak of tractor sales (by units) in the United States. But there was one new, familiar entrant. Henry Ford returned in 1939 with a partner well-known in the industry, an Irish inventor named Henry Ferguson. But even Ford could not pick up where he left off nearly 20 years earlier, though his very presence put the other full-line manufacturers on notice for yet another cycle of intense competition in the tractor wars.³⁰

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²⁹ *Report of the Federal Trade Commission on Manufacture and Distribution of Farm Implements*, 110.

³⁰ Harry Ferguson developed a 3-point linkage system which would be fully adopted across the industry. He showed it to Henry Ford as early as 1920, but the two did not partner until 1936. The result was the Ford-Ferguson 9N tractor, which debuted in June 1939. The 3-point hitch system featured two arms on pivots under the rear tractor axle, which formed a triangle with a single mounted strut. Using a hydraulic valve, the implement automatically raised and lowered based on resistance during field operation, creating a consistent and greatly reduced draft on the implement; Williams, 102–103.

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Part 4: THE UNITED STATES

CHAPTER 8

The Supreme Court: Originalism and Textualism

Daniel Cotter

Introduction

The Supreme Court of the United States was established by the Judiciary Act of 1789.¹ Only in the last 40 years or so, however, has originalism and textualism become a methodology supported by the Court. Examining the reasons behind such a diversion from tradition is perhaps a job best left to historians. In this essay, which considers the Court's recent embrace of originalism and textualism and history and tradition to support its decisions in a wide variety of areas of the law, I attempt to imagine how the subject of this *Festschrift*, the esteemed historian Bill Urban, might approach such an analysis, in contrast to justices who are not trained in the rigors of historical analysis.

Professor Urban

Professor Bill Urban taught at Monmouth from 1966 to 2015 and is the author of nearly two dozen books on subjects such as East European history and the history of warfare. He served as an editor of the *Journal of Baltic Studies* and was the recipient of Monmouth's prestigious Hatch Award for Distinguished Scholarship and Research. The William L. Urban History Prize was established at Monmouth in 2015 to reward excellence in research by history students.

Although I never personally had a class with Professor Urban as a Monmouth College student during the 1980s, I was greatly impressed by the man and his work. My wife, Ann Marie nee Stites, was a Monmouth history major and therefore took numerous classes from him. In reading articles and other materials written by Urban, I have always been impressed by the academic rigor he exercised in producing his works, at times learning the ancient language to better understand the original text of the documents and works he was covering.

We're all textualists now

In an often cited statement, Justice Elena Kagan, a liberal thinker who has been an associate justice on the Supreme Court since 2010, observed "we're all textualists now."² The remark was an homage to her colleague, Associate Justice Antonin Scalia.³ Many of Kagan's current colleagues have referenced this statement in claiming that textualism is embraced by conservatives and liberals alike.⁴

¹ The Judiciary Act of 1789, September 24, 1789, ch. 20, 1 Stat. 73.

² Harvard Law School, *The Antonin Scalia Lecture Series: A Dialogue with Justice Elena Kagan on the Reading of Statutes*, YOUTUBE (Nov. 25, 2015) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpEtszFTOTg>.

³ Antonin Scalia would pass away on February 13, 2016, not long after the statement was made by Elena Kagan.

⁴ See= Tobia 2023: 245,

A few years after making her “textualists” comment, Kagan recanted, stating, “Some years ago, I remarked that ‘[w]e’re all textualists now.’ It seems I was wrong.”⁵ She appears to have recognized that with those few words, she had given conservatives fodder to assert that textualism was the way to go.

Being a Textualist

Much scholarly attention has been paid to what it means to be a textualist.⁶ A good working definition of the term is:

Textualism is a mode of legal interpretation that focuses on the plain meaning of the text of a legal document. Textualism usually emphasizes how the terms in the Constitution would be understood by people at the time they were ratified, as well as the context in which those terms appear. Textualists usually believe there is an objective meaning of the text, and they do not typically inquire into questions regarding the intent of the drafters, adopters, or ratifiers of the Constitution and its amendments when deriving meaning from the text. They are concerned primarily with the plain, or popular, meaning of the text of the Constitution. Nor are textualists concerned with the practical consequences of a decision; rather, they are wary of the Court acting to refine or revise constitutional texts.⁷

What is Originalism?

Textualism looks specifically to the language. Closely connected, but slightly different, is the idea of originalism. Steven Calabresi, one of the co-founders of the Yale chapter of the Federalist Society,⁸ has described originalism as:

Originalism is a theory of the interpretation of legal texts, including the text of the Constitution. Originalists believe that the constitutional text ought to be given the original public meaning that it would have had at the time that it became law. The original meaning of constitutional texts can be discerned from dictionaries, grammar books, and from other legal documents from which the text might be borrowed. It can also be inferred from the background legal events and public debate that gave rise to a

⁵ *West Virginia v. EPA*, 142 S. Ct. 2587, 2641 (2022) (Kagan, J., dissenting) (quoting Kagan, *2015 Scalia Lecture Series*).

⁶ See, e.g., O’Sannlain 2017.

⁷ Constitution Annotated, Intro.8.2 Textualism and Constitutional Interpretation, available at https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/intro.8-2/ALDE_00001303/#ALDF_00015956.

⁸ The Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies is a group of conservatives and libertarians interested in the current state of the legal order. See <https://fedsoc.org/about-us>.

constitutional provision. The original meaning of a constitutional text is an objective legal construct like the reasonable man standard in tort law, which judges a person's actions based on whether an ordinary person would consider them reasonable, given the situation. It exists independently of the subjective "intentions" of those who wrote the text or of the "original expected applications" that the Framers of a constitutional text thought that it would have.⁹

Supporters of the concept of originalism, particularly Justice Scalia, have argued that the term focuses on the ways in which the Court had by whole cloth created amendments to the Constitution. Critics have responded that originalism, of which there are now several versions, has led to judicial fiat, just in a different direction.¹⁰

History and Tradition

A third tool recently used by conservative justices on the Court has been the "history and tradition" standard.¹¹ It is a method of scouring the historical record by untrained historians to determine what the history of a particular issue was at the time the law was passed or earlier. Recently, in the "Trump too small" case,¹² conservative Associate Justice Amy Coney Barrett took exception to the usage of this new standard, writing in concurrence, joined by the other three female justices:

While I agree with the Court that the names clause does not violate the First Amendment, I disagree with some of its reasoning. The Court claims that "history and tradition" settle the constitutionality of the names clause, rendering it unnecessary to adopt a standard for gauging whether a content-based trademark registration restriction abridges the right to free speech. That is wrong twice over. First, the Court's evidence, consisting of loosely related cases from the late-19th and early-20th centuries, does not establish a historical analogue for the names clause. Second, the Court never explains why hunting for historical forebears on a restriction-by-

⁹ Calebresi, Steven G., "On Originalism in Constitutional Interpretation," in The National Constitution Center, available at

<https://constitutioncenter.org/the-constitution/white-papers/on-originalism-in-constitutional-interpretation>.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Chemerinsky (2000: 385) says "Justice Scalia uses [original meaning jurisprudence] selectively when it leads to the conservative results he wants but ignores [it] when it does not generate the outcomes he desires." Nichol (1999: 968), in contrast, argues that "[Originalism's] principal advocates relentlessly refuse to stick by it. Originalism works if they agree with the outcome dictated by history. If history does not lead them where they want to go, they simply reject it."

¹¹ See, e.g., Bazelon 2024.

¹² *Vidal v. Elster*, 602 U.S. 286 (2024).

restriction basis is the right way to analyze the constitutional question.¹³

An Example of Using Tools, Different Conclusions

A provision in the Constitution that had little precedent to guide the Court was the Second Amendment, which provides that:

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.¹⁴

In *Heller v. District of Columbia*,¹⁵ dual historical analyses and originalism were on display, in a battle between Justice Scalia, who wrote for a five-justice majority, and Justice John Paul Stevens, who wrote a dissent.¹⁶ Writing for the majority, Scalia announced a new canon of original intent construction, the prefatory language condition:¹⁷

In interpreting this text, we are guided by the principle that “[t]he Constitution was written to be understood by the voters; its words and phrases were used in their normal and ordinary as distinguished from technical meaning.” *United States v. Sprague*, 282 U. S. 716, 731 (1931); see also *Gibbons v. Ogden*, 9 Wheat. 1, 188 (1824). Normal meaning may of course include an idiomatic meaning, but it excludes secret or technical meanings that would not have been known to ordinary citizens in the founding generation.

The two sides in this case have set out very different interpretations of the Amendment. Petitioners and today’s dissenting Justices believe that it protects only the right to possess and carry a firearm in connection with militia service. . . . Respondent argues that it protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home.

The Second Amendment is naturally divided into two parts: its prefatory clause and its operative clause. The former does not limit the latter grammatically, but rather announces a purpose.¹⁸

¹³ *Idem* at 311 (J. Barrett, concurring).

¹⁴ U.S. Const. amend. II.

¹⁵ *Heller v. District of Columbia*, 554 U.S. 570 (2008).

¹⁶ Justice Stephen Breyer, who joined Stevens’ dissent, also issued a separate dissent.

¹⁷ This reminds the author of this essay of those who interpreted the predictions of Nostradamus, with techniques of using anagrams, cutting off words to arrive at the meaning intended by him, etc.

¹⁸ *Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 at 576-577.

In addressing the wording as prefatory, Scalia seems to ignore that the other Bill of Rights¹⁹ provisions are not provided with reasons, and one wonders why normal meaning of those words and what a militia means did not control. The other Bill of Rights passed at the same time as the Second Amendment includes the dictates:

1. First: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."²⁰
2. Third: "Article the fifth. . . No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law."²¹
3. Fourth: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."²²

The First Amendment is the most direct of the Bill of Rights, and yet, even the purest First Amendment justice, Hugo Black, had limits. The Court has found a variety of ways that are limited, and yet the wording, "Congress shall make no law," suggests that all six rights packaged in that amendment are without control by Congress.²³ So how half of the language of the Second Amendment has no meaning is a mystery, one never very well explained by Scalia or by any justice or advocate subsequent.

Shortly after concluding that the prefatory statement about militia does not equal operative, Scalia next makes the following statement:

As we will describe below, the 'militia' in colonial America consisted of a subset of 'the people'—those who were male, able bodied, and within a certain age range.²⁴

¹⁹ The Bill of Rights refers to the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution, insisted upon by some states in the ratification process to ensure rights were protected. The 27th Amendment, the last one ratified, was not done so until 1992, some 200 plus years from its submission as part of the original twelve amendments submitted during the first Congress in 1789.

²⁰ U.S. Const. amend. I.

²¹ U.S. Const. amend. III.

²² U.S. Const. amend. IV.

²³ For a historical consideration, the reader might look to the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, which were passed in large part to stifle speech critical of the government.

²⁴ *Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 at 580.

This line has always confused me in his analysis. Start with this fact- in 1789, who were really considered by the Constitution and our founders? Females? Negative.²⁵ In addition, militia was broader than those citizens who could vote, so hard to imagine it is a subset.²⁶ At the time of the Constitution, only landowning white men at least 21 years of age could vote. The Militia Act of 1792 made clear who was eligible, shortly after the Second Amendment was ratified:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That each and every free able-bodied white male citizen of the respective States, resident therein, who is or shall be of age of eighteen years, and under the age of forty-five years (except as is herein after excepted) shall severally and respectively be enrolled in the militia, by the Captain or Commanding Officer of the company, within whose bounds such citizen shall reside, and that within twelve months after the passing of this Act.²⁷

We know at the time what a militia was and who was eligible. Not a subset at all, but broader than we the people as set forth in the Constitution.²⁸

In any event, after a long historical analysis and refuting what Stevens and others have stated, Scalia closes:

We conclude that nothing in our precedents forecloses our adoption of the original understanding of the Second Amendment. It should be unsurprising that such a significant matter has been for so long judicially unresolved. For most of our history, the Bill of Rights was not thought applicable to the States, and the Federal Government did not significantly regulate the possession of firearms by law-abiding citizens. Other provisions of the Bill of Rights have similarly remained unilluminated for lengthy periods. This Court first held a law to violate the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech in 1931,²⁹ almost 150 years after the Amendment was ratified, *see Near v. Minnesota ex rel. Olson*, 283 U. S. 697 (1931). . . . It is demonstrably not true that, as Justice Stevens claims, . . . "for most of our history, the invalidity of Second-Amendment-based objections to firearms regulations has been well settled and uncontroversial." For most of our history the question did not present itself.³⁰

²⁵ The 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote in 1920. Women could not apply for their own credit cards if married until 1974, when the Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA) of 1974 passed.

²⁶ Militia ages were 18 to 45.

²⁷ Militia Act of 1792.

²⁸ Scalia makes many references to the people meaning all the people.

²⁹ See footnote on Alien and Sedition Acts.

³⁰ *Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 at 625-626.

Stevens takes to the history and reason for Second Amendment, beginning with:

The Second Amendment was adopted to protect the right of the people of each of the several States to maintain a well-regulated militia. It was a response to concerns raised during the ratification of the Constitution that the power of Congress to disarm the state militias and create a national standing army posed an intolerable threat to the sovereignty of the several States. Neither the text of the Amendment nor the arguments advanced by its proponents evidenced the slightest interest in limiting any legislature's authority to regulate private civilian uses of firearms. Specifically, there is no indication that the Framers of the Amendment intended to enshrine the common-law right of self-defense in the Constitution.³¹

Stevens points to a case that the Court decided, *United States v. Miller*, 307 U. S. 174 (1939), considering the National Firearms Act, in which the Court found that, "[i]n the absence of any evidence tending to show that possession or use of a 'shotgun having a barrel of less than eighteen inches in length' at this time has some reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well-regulated militia, we cannot say that the Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear such an instrument."³² Per Stevens, the Court affirmed that holding in a 1980 decision. Stevens also cited two states that included rights to hunt and defend the home that were available.³³ He wrote for his dissent:

The parallels between the Second Amendment and these state declarations, and the Second Amendment's omission of any statement of purpose related to the right to use firearms for hunting or personal self-defense, is especially striking in light of the fact that the Declarations of Rights of Pennsylvania and Vermont *did* expressly protect such civilian uses at the time. Article XIII of Pennsylvania's 1776 Declaration of Rights announced that "the people have a right to bear arms for the defence *of themselves* and the state," 1 Schwartz 266 (emphasis added); § 43 of the Declaration ensured that "[t]he inhabitants of this state shall have the liberty to fowl and hunt in seasonable times on the lands they hold, and on all other lands therein not inclosed," *id.*, at 274. And Article XV of the 1777 Vermont Declaration of Rights guaranteed "[t]hat *the* people have a right to bear arms for the defence of themselves and the State."³⁴

³¹ *Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 at 637.

³² *Idem.*

³³ See Cotter 2017. , Daniel, *Maybe the Second Amendment doesn't quite say what so many think*, Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, October 19, 2017.

³⁴ *Heller*, 554 U.S. 570 at 642.

Conclusion

The citing of *Heller* is intended to show how textualism, originalism, history and tradition have been used in combination by various justices of the Supreme Court to justify their conclusions. It is not meant to dismiss outright the tools, but to call into question whether these techniques would pass the muster of a professional historian. One doubts that this methodology would uphold strict scrutiny. However, this is the approach of the current Court and, with its current make-up, it is likely it will remain the favored approach for some time. Our nation has surely evolved from what it was when it was founded and the Constitution was considered by fewer than 1,700 propertied white men during the ratification process.³⁵ The reality is that the current Supreme Court will continue to regularly use these three approaches to arriving at conclusions.

I am honored to be able to contribute to this celebration publication honoring one of the great professors who has made Monmouth College better than before he arrived on the campus. My analysis in this essay would no doubt have been enhanced had I had the opportunity to learn directly from a historian of Bill Urban's stature.

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³⁵ See Cotter 2014.

CHAPTER 9

Flawed Leadership: The Coffin Nail of Grand Ventures in Economics, Education, Business, and Politics

Kenneth G. McMillan

It is tempting, in one's "near-twilight" years, especially after teaching the core principles and policy applications of a fundamental discipline, to offer, as profound, the wisdom settled on. The problem is, I am an economist. Neither I, nor any other honest economist, should contend "economic wisdom" is settled. I shall not even attempt to do so.

Instead, my focus here is on wisdom earned, and learned, in an art which I have observed, practiced, studied, evaluated, and taught over 70 years—the art of leadership. I apply all of that here under the title I submitted, in a moment of introspection, after asking: "What is it that I can submit, from my unique life and career experience, as worthy of note or reflection?" Thus, my title: "Flawed Leadership—the Coffin Nail of Grand Ventures in Economics, Education, Business, and Politics."

I hope the title is intriguing. Yet, I really do not intend to cite example after example of specific economic or education or business or political leaders whose approaches doomed "grand ventures". Instead, I offer a few (neither exhaustive nor definitive) bits of wisdom gleaned from all the things I have done wrong (and observed others doing wrong) and, hopefully, many more I have done right (and observed from the privilege of working for and with some incredibly effective leaders).

I am inspired in this undertaking by two books: First, a text I used in both business and civic leadership courses over many years—*The Contrarian's Guide to Leadership*, by the late University of Southern California President Steven B. Sample (2002, Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint, San Francisco); and Second, *Leadership*, by Henry Kissinger (2022, Penguin Press, New York).

At the outset, I offer my definition of leadership: "The ability to MOVE identifiable followers to accomplish things they would not otherwise do." Emphasis must be on the action word MOVE. Leaders must be many things: for example, wise, ethical, creative, strategic, inspiring. A great speaker may "inspire" followers. Give me an effective leader who MOVES followers.

Here follow, then, ten "points to ponder" regarding how wise and skilled leaders function effectively to make possible "moving" identifiable followers to accomplish. Fundamentally, effective leaders must:

A. Seek highly competent, driven lieutenants and hire the strongest and most committed staff possible.

Leaders afraid that very strong staff might overpower or overshadow—or leery that very competent staff might "move on to greater opportunity"—make grave mistakes. An effective leader will hire an aide who will tell that leader when he or she is "dead wrong"! A great leader seeks, grooms, delegates to, and builds an effective organization with the best aides and followers

that can be found. A leader whose excellent staff are in great demand is a leader with whom the brightest and best seek to work and serve.

B. Commit to ensuring that staff and followers are “responsive and responsible.”

Long ago, from experience, I discovered the “Dead Organization Syndrome”—where followers exhibit: (1) an inability to say “No”; (2) the unwillingness to say “Yes”; and (3) the undesirability of doing either one. What does that mean? Too many people lack the sense of security to say, “No—I cannot take on that extra task ... I am already overcommitted!” Others avoid situations requiring them to say “Yes” ... and mean it and then show up. An effective leader makes desirable—and then rewards—those who do both. Respecting the trusted aide who is secure enough to convey to the leader that the aide just cannot take on one more challenge effectively—and then absolutely expecting performance from one who does take on “requested commitments”—reward both, making followers both responsive and responsible—and making progress to cure the “Dead Organization Syndrome”.

C. Create a problem surfacing (and preventing) system of open communication (both ways) with followers—but with decision-making and problem-solving that follow and strengthen the chain of command.

Too many “organization specialists” contend that board members or officers should refrain from being eager to talk openly with employees or followers about problems or concerns. Accusations of “meddling” or “micro-managing” tend to stifle the flow of extremely important situational knowledge that, left untended, can derail the soundest effort. Effective leaders at the top of an organization—a college, a firm, a legislative body, or a bureaucracy—must develop and advocate a culture in which any follower may appropriately bring any matter to the attention of the top leader or a lieutenant with authority with the understanding that the problem or challenge will be dealt with by charging the line official responsible with solving or correcting it. The effective leader should never leapfrog over the chain of command to handle the matter but ensure that the responsible lieutenant is held accountable, made more effective, and leaves authority and the organization strengthened in the process. Only such a process also enables effective authority structures to function to effectively MOVE the followers to achieve.

D. Understand fully the changing legal boundaries within which leaders--and their initiatives—must operate.

By the time one grasps the reins of leadership, it might be assumed that the leader knows the laws which pertain. What is often the case, however, is that one never can know exactly what that law means in the current moment. Effective leaders take “legal advice” cautiously. Some even read the pertinent law—or regulation—themselves. Court rulings, bureaucratic regulations, or organizational customs or bylaws may change. Effective leaders must constantly be on guard.

E. Master *Robert's Rules of Order*—and whatever statutory, bylaw, or constitutional rules govern the deliberative universe (great or small) in which the leader must seek decisions.

Many would-be leaders, seeking the ease of informal meeting and decision-making structures, pooh-pooh the formal deliberative rules. Political leaders look upon the U.S. Constitution in different ways. Even the smallest companies, civic units, or organizations maintain very specific norms for getting things done. The standard tool beyond any rules of operating in an entity's founding documents is *Robert's Rules of Order*-- basic rules for parliamentary procedure (official decision-making) which protect and preserve the rights of the majority, a minority, and the organizational entity itself as decisions are made. Any leader who does not know and follow *Robert's Rules* is destined to have authority endangered or have a noble cause sidetracked or a mission destroyed unnecessarily by a better-informed operator with very contrary motives or objectives.

F. Guard against making uninformed statements supporting unvetted causes, prematurely launching controversial ventures.

A leader must live with the choices announced. Pronouncements made may never be retracted—and can never be forgotten. Just as an egg can never be unscrambled, some actions must be lived with forever. Less than careful leaders, inclined to have no hesitation to make the boldest pronouncements, are sometimes mistaken. They must live with choices made. A less wise leader may contend: "So what if I am wrong? After all, we live in a world where God Forgives." The wise leader, however, knows: "Yes, God forgives, but God does not vote in the next election!"

G. Ignore the long run at the venture's peril; see tomorrow's battle as important as today's.

Many causes, requiring leaders, are battles—against other causes, other leaders, other programs, other solutions. Those other opposing entities seek to win too. The more prominent the issue, the higher the stakes, the more aggressive, or bitter, or nasty the battle. When an effective leader wins, or prevails, great care must be taken to ensure that the "other party"—or opposing cause—does not become a loser. The other side must be allowed to "save face" or at least not be humiliated. Two reasons: (1) Deep bitterness and humiliation make it harder for the winning leader to progress and enact the hard-fought victory successfully; and (2) In tomorrow's battles, the cause or person the leader defeated today may be the ally needed for victory tomorrow.

H. Vaccinate the organization against the plague of unintended consequences.

Constant attention must be on guard and not blindsided by potential for or by totally unexpected eventualities. Such blindness—either because of unrealistic optimism or unquenched zealotry or blatant naïve uninformedness—can derail a monumental achievement in progress or create unwanted and perhaps fatal consequences ahead. "New Math" advocates decades back unexpectedly yielded clerks unable to make change. Coca-Cola's "New Coke" unexpectedly

yielded a boomed demand for Pepsi. Federal Reserve Board, and Treasury, fixation on rock-bottom interest rates to boost demand while COVID shutdowns curtailed supply unexpectedly yielded dramatic inflation surge. Trump and Harris promises to eliminate income tax on tips, if enacted, would unexpectedly yield lower Social Security payments decades hence, since the size of Social Security payments is partially based on income—and tip income will not be recorded.

I. Get all the ducks in a row to ensure that the venture succeeds.

The greatest shortcoming of many creative leaders and conceivers of magnificently monumental ventures is the unmitigated failure of the leader to “Get all the ducks in a row”—to align all the elements necessary to make that venture succeed. No great idea just happens. Even nearly perfect objectives still demand that every possible problem be foreseen, every necessary ally involved, every legal barrier accounted for, every financial asset arranged, and every possible known objection reckoned with. Perhaps the greatest victims of such failure are in higher education. Brilliant scholars often exist within isolated silos. Trustees often fail to grasp the depths of their fiduciary responsibility. Presidents and deans are too often selected for criteria other than their capacity to manage and lead. Disastrous consequences ensue when leaders fail to “get their ducks in a row.”

J. Understand that great leadership today—for today’s challenges—will not be “good enough” for tomorrow.

Effective leadership does not develop naturally—or accidentally. Most great leaders cannot MOVE followers to accomplish without repeated, tested, reevaluated experience. Great wisdom comes when a leader learns, painfully, what does not work and surprisingly what does work effectively. Tomorrow’s challenges may be more formidable, and perhaps tomorrow’s identifiable followers may be wiser, less yielding, more obstinate, and less motivated than those effectively MOVED today. When a leader finishes growing—that leader is DONE!

Conclusion

Recall the definition of leadership presented here: “The ability to MOVE identifiable followers to accomplish things they would not otherwise do.” Many leaders, put to the test, are found wanting. Few actually meet the test. Institutions—from farm organizations, to businesses, to faculties, to the Congress—require effective leaders. Most often they are left wanting. When effective leaders do surface, and are harnessed into action, among dozens of other skills and techniques, they will master and exercise the ten points to ponder registered here.

CHAPTER 10

How William Jennings Bryan Captured the 1896 Democratic Nomination for President

Bradley Nahrstadt

Grover Cleveland was finishing his second non-consecutive term as president as the 1896 election approached. The Panic of 1893 and Cleveland's strong-arm tactics during the Pullman Strike of 1894 had made him wildly unpopular. The Democrats could not—and would not—endorse Cleveland for an unprecedented third term. And that meant that the Democratic field was wide open. Although William Jennings Bryan, a former two-term congressman and unsuccessful Senate candidate, wound up capturing the nomination, he was not considered a serious contender for the Democratic nomination in 1896. A cartoon that appeared in the July 5, 1896, edition of *The Chicago Tribune* was entitled “Ready For the Word ‘Go’ in the Grand Democratic Free-For-All Sweepstakes.” It showed seven potential nominees for the Democratic nomination, dressed in running clothes, warming up at the starting line of a race, waiting for the gun to fire. The contestants depicted were former Pennsylvania governor Robert Pattison,¹ Republican Senator Henry Teller of Colorado², Senator Joseph Blackburn of Kentucky,³ newspaper publisher John R.



Figure 10.1: This cartoon, entitled “Ready for the Word ‘Go’ in the Grand Democratic Free-for-all Sweepstakes,” depicts candidates lined up at the starting line in the race for the Democratic nomination for president. Conspicuously absent from the line-up is William Jennings Bryan. The cartoon appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*, on July 5, 1896, p. 21.

¹ Robert Emory Pattison (1850–1904) served as governor of Pennsylvania from 1891 to 1895.

² It is interesting that Henry Moore Teller (1830–1914) was depicted as one of the contenders. Teller was a Republican senator from Colorado. A devotee of silver, he walked out of the Republican National Convention when the party adopted a plank that strongly supported the gold standard. Several leaders of the Populist Party were touting Teller as the perfect Democratic nominee. Stan M. Haynes, *President-Making in the Gilded Age: The Nominating Conventions of 1876-1900* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2016), 218. Even some in the Democratic Party were singing Teller's praises. Arkansas Senator James K. Jones, when asked about Teller, said “I have the highest admiration for him...and if he should happen to be the nominee of the convention he will receive my loyal support.” Richard Franklin Bense, *Passion and Preferences: William Jennings Bryan and the 1896 Democratic National Convention* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 36. One of the Kansas at-large delegates, John Martin, reported that “every Democrat” in the state “feels warm toward Teller.” Bense, *Passion and Preferences*, 37. Teller received eight votes on the first and second ballot at the 1896 Democratic National Convention. McKee 1906: 291.

³ Joseph Clay Stiles Blackburn (1838–1918), U.S. Senator from Kentucky, was a supporter of free silver.

McLean of Ohio,⁴ Indiana Governor Claude Matthews,⁵ Horace Boies, governor of Iowa,⁶ and Richard P. Bland, US representative from Missouri.⁷ Bryan was nowhere to be seen.⁸

So who was William Jennings Bryan and how did he wind up capturing the Democratic nomination for president? Bryan was born in Salem, Illinois on March 19, 1860, the fourth child and second son of Silas Lillard Bryan and Mariah Jennings Bryan.⁹ As a boy he was described as “sturdy, round-limbed and fond of play.”¹⁰ From an early age he announced his determination to become a lawyer like his father.

Until he reached the age of ten, William was schooled at home. His mother “gladly and diligently served as schoolmistress.”¹¹ He learned to read early, and after memorizing his lessons, he would stand on a little table to recite them, “with Mariah elaborately encouraging him in the art of declamation.”¹² When he turned ten, William entered the public school at Salem. His performance as a student was undistinguished—he never failed an examination, but neither was he ever at the head of the class.¹³ It was here that he developed “an interest in the work of literary and debating societies.”¹⁴

At the age of fifteen he entered the Whipple Academy, the preparatory department of Illinois College in Jacksonville, Illinois. He studied Greek and Latin and seized the opportunity to join the academy’s leading literary society, Sigma Pi. Unlike many literary societies of the day, the ones at the Whipple Academy stressed speaking and debating, rather than literature.¹⁵ Bryan excelled in this atmosphere. In his junior and senior years at Whipple he entered declamation contests, winning third place in his final year of primary education.¹⁶

In the fall of 1877, Bryan entered the freshman class of Illinois College. He continued his studies of Latin and Greek, supplemented with courses in rhetoric, algebra, trigonometry, chemistry, geology, economics, political science and American history.¹⁷ During his four years at Illinois College he received multiple prizes for his oratorical skills.¹⁸ At the time of his graduation from college he was elected class orator and gave the valedictory address.¹⁹

In the fall of 1881, Bryan entered the Union College of Law in Chicago, Illinois. While in law school he developed a special interest in constitutional law.²⁰ He was elected president of the

⁴ John Roll McClean (1848–1916) represented Ohio at several Democratic conventions.

⁵ Claude Matthews (1845–1898), a farmer, was governor of Indiana from 1893 to 1897.

⁶ Horace Boies (1827–1923) served as governor of Iowa from 1890 to 1894.

⁷ Richard P. Bland (1835–1899) represented Missouri in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1873 to 1895 and again from 1897 to 1899. His support of bimetallism earned him the nickname “Silver Dick.”

⁸ *Chicago Tribune*, July 5, 1896, 21. Boies and Bland were depicted in the two innermost lanes, signifying their status as the front runners.

⁹ Koenig 1971: 17.

¹⁰ Bryan 1896: 36.

¹¹ Koenig 1971: 20.

¹² Koenig 1971: 20.

¹³ Koenig 1971: 22.

¹⁴ Bryan 1896: 37.

¹⁵ Koenig 1971: 26.

¹⁶ Koenig 1971: 26–27.

¹⁷ Koenig 1971: 27–28.

¹⁸ Koenig 1971: 30–31.

¹⁹ Bryan 1896: 39.

²⁰ Bryan 1896: 46.

junior class and class orator.²¹ He graduated from law school in 1883 and on July 4th of that year, hung out his shingle in Jacksonville, Illinois.²² In October of 1884, Bryan married Mary Elizabeth Baird. In October of 1887 he moved his young family to Lincoln, Nebraska and entered into a law partnership with Adolphus R. Talbot.²³

Bryan built up a thriving law practice in Lincoln and soon immersed himself in Democratic politics. In 1890, Bryan was the Democratic nominee for Congress in Nebraska's 1st district. He won the election by a plurality of 6,713 votes.²⁴ When he arrived in Washington, D.C. he was appointed to the House Ways & Means Committee.²⁵ His youth and exceptional speaking skills soon had newspapers referring to Bryan as the "Boy Orator of the Platte."²⁶ Bryan ran for re-election in 1892 and won by a mere 140 votes.²⁷ Bryan declined to run for re-election to the House in 1894, choosing instead to stand as the Democratic candidate for the United States Senate. The Republicans obtained a large majority in the Nebraska legislature in the fall of 1894 and chose Republican John Thurston as Nebraska's next senator.²⁸

In the fall of 1894 Bryan became the chief of the editorial staff of the Omaha *World-Herald*.²⁹ At the beginning of 1895, he started touring the country advocating for the cause of free silver, speaking in multiple states, meeting with newspaper editors and getting to know the possible delegates to the upcoming convention.³⁰ Before each state convention was held in 1896 he wrote to the state party chairman, bringing his name to each chairman's attention. He sent every state chairman a copy of the Nebraska silver delegates' platform, asking that it be adopted by their own conventions. Not only was he "calling attention to himself as a potential leader, he was providing a platform on which to run."³¹

At the time of the 1896 Democratic National Convention, Bryan's political resume consisted of two short, non-descript terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and a failed bid for the US Senate. He was only 36 years old (just a year beyond the constitutional age requirement to hold the office). Few people, other than, maybe, Bryan himself, thought he had a chance of seizing the Democratic nomination. As one Midwest governor told him, "You are young yet. Let Bland have the nomination this time. Your time will come."³²

Bryan wouldn't listen. He was telling his friends and supporters that he was going to be the Democratic nominee—he believed that when the time came, "the logic of the situation"

²¹ Koenig 1971: 40.

²² Bryan 1896: 47.

²³ Bryan 1896: 47.

²⁴ Bryan 1896: 50, 53.

²⁵ Bryan 1896: 53.

²⁶ Haynes 2016: 218.

²⁷ Bryan 1896: 54.

²⁸ Bryan 1896: 58; Koenig 1971: 154. At that time senators were chosen by the state legislature, not by a popular vote of the state's citizens.

²⁹ Bryan 1896: 60.

³⁰ Haynes 2016: 219.

³¹ Eaton 1964: 159. As one historian has noted, "Bryan's prenomination activities made him a significant figure within the silver movement, even though he was less well known as a party leader in the regular Democratic organization. He entered the convention with little direct support for the presidency, but his long work for the cause generated his credentials among silver delegates." Klinghard 2010: 185.

³² Haynes 2016: 219.

would demand it.³³ Bryan was convinced that “Silver Dick” Bland would not be nominated because Northern Democrats were not ready to support a southerner for president. Horace Boies was not well known, came from a traditionally, Republican state, and was generally opposed by the labor interests. There was no chance that the Democrats would nominate the Republican Henry Teller. In Bryan’s mind, of the remaining candidates, he alone had contributed the most to the free silver cause and, accordingly, the party would turn to him as their standard bearer.³⁴

On the first day of the Democratic National Convention, July 7, 1896, William F. Harrity³⁵ called the convention to order at 12:30 p.m. Immediately after the opening prayer, Harrity presented the report of the Democratic National Committee to the delegates. When he read the name of Senator David Hill³⁶ of New York as temporary chairman, “the delegates and spectators responded with applause lasting several minutes. Rising *en masse*, the New York delegation led the cheering. Massachusetts, Maryland, and all the other gold states immediately joined in. The gold men in the Michigan delegation unfurled and waved flags, ‘shouting and cheering at the top of their voices.’ Standing on their chairs, the Pennsylvania delegates waved flags as well.”³⁷

Once he presented the report to the delegates, Harrity recognized Henry D. Clayton,³⁸ who presented a minority report that recommended that Senator John W. Daniel³⁹ of Virginia be chosen as temporary chairman in lieu of Senator Hill.⁴⁰ Clayton noted that Daniel had been favored for temporary chairman by twenty-three members of Harrity’s own committee and that he was favored “by the great majority of this convention.”⁴¹ At the mention of Daniel’s name, every silver delegate in the convention hall “hopped into his seat and cheered lustily.”⁴² Following this demonstration, which went on for several minutes, a motion was made to substitute the minority report for the majority proposal and Clayton demanded a roll call on its adoption.⁴³

Prior to taking this vote a series of formal speeches were delivered in favor of either the minority or the majority report. Allen L. McDermott⁴⁴ gave an impassioned speech in support of Hill. He urged the delegates to ratify the choice of the majority of the Democratic National Committee. He pleaded with the delegates to respect party traditions:

³³ Haynes 2016: 223. Bryan’s good friend John Atwood provided Bryan with the following appraisal of Bryan’s candidacy a month before the convention: “Boies is too new a convert; Bland is too old and not brilliant enough. Blackburn is too far south; you alone have every quality that goes to make up my ideal of the candidate; you are young, clean and brilliant. . . .” Koenig 1971: 181.

³⁴ Haynes 2016: 223.

³⁵ William F. Harrity (1850–1912) was chair of the Democratic National Committee from 1892 to 1896.

³⁶ David Hill (1843–1910) served as governor of New York from 1885 to 1891 and as U.S. Senator from 1892 to 1897.

³⁷ Bensel 2008: 67.

³⁸ Alabama delegate Henry D. Lamar Clayton, Jr. (1857–1929) was serving as a district attorney in 1896.

³⁹ John Warwick Daniel (1842–1910) was U.S. Senator from Virginia from 1887 to 1910.

⁴⁰ *Official Report of the Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention* 1896: 72. Going forward, this reference is shortened to *Official Report*.

⁴¹ *Official Report* 1896: 71.

⁴² Bensel 2008: 68.

⁴³ Bensel 2008: 68.

⁴⁴ Allen Langdon McDermott (1854–1908) was chairman of the New Jersey State Democratic Committee from 1885 to 1895 and was a delegate at large at the 1896 convention.

Don't begin your Convention by violating a tradition. Don't begin your Convention by violating a rule. If you have the strength of giants, use it, not as giants do, but reserve that strength and all the spirit that is in it for the battle that will come in November. You have not, even in the moment of exultation, because of a majority in this assembly, any reasonable right to attack the minority by setting aside traditional rule.⁴⁵

Thomas M. Waller⁴⁶ of Connecticut followed McDermott and described Hill as the rightful candidate "according to the immemorial usage of your party" and Daniel as a challenger brought forth "by the exercise of a power never before invoked."⁴⁷ He argued that Hill should be elected temporary chairman and Daniel ought to be elected permanent chairman.⁴⁸

Charles Thomas⁴⁹ of Pennsylvania gave the first speech in favor of the minority report. He began by praising the Democratic pedigree of Hill and then urged his fellow silver delegates to show their strength: "Let it not be said that in the first skirmish the pickets which you yourselves threw out were driven back into the lines."⁵⁰ Thomas was followed by delegates Charles E. Waller⁵¹ and M. F. Tarpey.⁵² They argued that it was the national committee who had violated tradition by failing to honor the clear wishes of the majority. John Fellows,⁵³ a short, pudgy New Yorker with gold predilections swung the debate back to Hill, arguing that the proponents of the minority report "are going back on [the Democratic Party's] old traditions; you are violating its time-honored usages, and you are accepting a thing that was done for the first time in the history of parties in this Republic by a Republican Convention."⁵⁴ He also took askance with Thomas's claim that this was not a personal attack on Hill, noting that every other temporary officer, save Hill, was acceptable to the authors of the minority report.⁵⁵

After Fellows finished, the silver supporters once again took to the podium. Bulow Ward Marston⁵⁶ opened his remarks by saying, "It is not that we love David Hill less, but we love Democracy more."⁵⁷ Marston's comment drew cheers, as did his follow-up remark, "It is us that you would trample upon two-thirds of this Convention; we ask you in the name of two-thirds of this Convention to give us the temporary chairmanship."⁵⁸ Marston closed his remarks with an

⁴⁵ *Official Report* 1896: 74.

⁴⁶ Governor of Connecticut from 1883 to 1885, Thomas MacDonald Waller (1839–1924) was a prominent member of the gold faction at the 1896 convention.

⁴⁷ *Official Report* 1896: 75.

⁴⁸ *Official Report* 1896: 75.

⁴⁹ Charles W. Thomas (1860–1907) was serving as a member of the Pennsylvania Senate in 1896.

⁵⁰ *Official Report* 1896: 79.

⁵¹ Charles E. Waller (1849–1920) was a delegate from Alabama.

⁵² M. F. Tarpey (1847–1925) was a member of the Democratic National Committee from California.

⁵³ John R. Fellows (1832–1896) served as New York County District Attorney from 1888 to 1890 and from 1894 to 1896.

⁵⁴ *Official Report* 1896: 83.

⁵⁵ *Official Report* 1896: 83.

⁵⁶ Bulow Ward Marston (1841–1917) a Louisiana planter and steamboat man who served as a delegate from his state at the 1896 convention.

⁵⁷ *Official Report* 1896: 86.

⁵⁸ *Official Report* 1896: 86.

undisguised attack on his eastern brethren, “We knew that you intended to capture the chairmanship of the Convention, and we were to be held up to scorn and ridicule throughout the length and breadth of this land; we are forcing the issue, we are meeting the enemy in their own den; we are killing them.”⁵⁹ The eastern gold men, understandably, did not appreciate Marston’s remarks.⁶⁰

John Duncan⁶¹ followed Marston in an uninspiring silver speech in favor of John Daniel as the temporary chairman. Duncan was followed by C. K. Ladd.⁶² who attempted to explain why the silver men, despite their admiration for Hill, simply could not let him serve as temporary chairman:

The issue is this: By a majority of four the National Committee presents a candidate for Chairman here that is not in accord with the wishes of a majority of the Democrats in the United States. He would preside fairly; no man doubts it. He would make a speech; no man doubts it. It would be an able speech; no man doubts that. It would be a New York speech, and no man doubts that; and the Democratic party—the majority of it—would have to explain that speech to our Republican enemies during the whole campaign. They would say to us “you are divided amongst yourselves.”⁶³

The remainder of Ladd’s speech was moderate in tone and he appealed to the gold men to join their silver colleagues in battling the real enemy—the Republican Party.⁶⁴

J. W. St. Clair,⁶⁵ who was one of the few delegates who supported both free silver and David Hill, gave the last speech in favor of Hill’s candidacy. His basic argument was that the supporters of the gold standard deserved to be heard and that Hill could do little harm by addressing the convention as its temporary chairman.⁶⁶ Henry Clayton, who placed Daniel’s name in nomination for the temporary chairmanship, had the last word. His relatively short speech was “very moderate in tone and elicited little response” from the assembled delegates.⁶⁷

Once Clayton concluded his remarks, Harrity directed the secretary to call the roll of states on the minority report. As soon as Iowa was reached, an interesting point of parliamentary procedure occurred. This maneuver had little to do with who would serve as temporary chairman and everything to do with attempting to hurt one of the front runners for the nomination:

⁵⁹ *Official Report* 1896: 87.

⁶⁰ Bensel 2008: 75.

⁶¹ John Duncan (1851–1917) was a Texas delegate to the convention.

⁶² An Illinois lawyer, Charles Knox Ladd (1839–1908) was a close friend of William Jennings Bryan.

⁶³ *Official Report* 1896: 89.

⁶⁴ Bensel 2008: 77.

⁶⁵ J. W. St. Clair (1853–1906) was a delegate from West Virginia.

⁶⁶ *Official Report* 1896: 91–92; Bensel 2008: 77.

⁶⁷ Bensel 2008: 78.

Iowa was both a silver state and the home delegation of Horace Boies, one of the leading candidates for the presidential nomination. When the chairman reported the delegation as casting 26 votes for the minority report, one of the gold delegates, W. H. Stackhouse, rose and addressed the chair, saying, "I protest against the vote of Iowa as reported." Harrity responded, "The vote of Iowa is challenged, as I understand it?" Stackhouse answered, "Yes, sir." At that point the clerk was directed to poll the delegation, asking each of the members how they cast their vote. When the polling was completed, Harrity announced that Iowa had cast 19 yeas and 7 nays. Because the unit rule required that the entire state's vote be cast on the side that the majority favored, all 26 of Iowa's votes were then recorded in favor of the minority report. . . .

The object of the challenge was to provide an opportunity for the gold minority on the delegation to dissent publicly from the delegation's majority. Without the challenge and the ensuing poll of the delegation, their dissent would simply have been smothered by the unit rule. The challenge thus did not change the outcome, but it did reveal that over a quarter of the delegation would have voted for Hill if they had been given the opportunity. And the political fallout with respect to the Boies candidacy was substantial.

Because the silver men were deeply suspicious of any covert understanding that might emerge between one of the ostensibly silver candidates for the nomination and that third of the convention that supported gold, the fact that seven men on the Iowa delegation had voted for Hill was interpreted as either a calculated overture to the gold men (in the form of paying the New York senator a compliment without formally affecting the outcome) or an insult to Boies himself (by publicly breaking ranks with the silver majority of the convention, the dissenters intentionally undercut the former governor's standing with the silver faction, which, after all, was going to determine who was nominated for the presidency). . . .

Despite [issuing a statement explaining how it was that the gold men were permitted to be on the Iowa delegation and exposing their promise pre-convention to quietly submit to the unit rule and not oppose Boies or free silver], Boies was severely damaged by this public demonstration that had relied on a parliamentary device to reveal the distribution of preferences within the state delegation.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Bense 2008: 79–80.

In the end, the eloquence of Hill's supporters failed to carry the day and the tally at the conclusion of the roll call vote was 556 votes for the minority report and 349 against.⁶⁹ John Daniel would be the temporary chairman of the convention. Once the result was formally announced, an explosive demonstration broke out, lasting "nearly twenty minutes during which no business could be transacted, on account of the applause, cheers, noise and confusion."⁷⁰ The chasm between the gold men and the silver men continued to widen, further damaging the chances that they would be able to work together in the fall to elect a Democratic president.

As the temporary chairman, Daniel gave the opening speech of the convention. He began with a strong statement: "The birth of the Democratic party was [coequal] with the birth of the sovereignty of the people. It can never die until the Declaration of American Independence is forgotten, and that sovereignty is dethroned and extinguished."⁷¹ In paying tribute to the silver movement, he noted:

It begins with the sunrise in Maryland, and spreads into a sunburst in Louisiana and Texas. It stretches in unbroken line across the continent from Virginia and Georgia to California. It sends forth its pioneers from Plymouth Rock and waves over the wheat fields of Dakota. It has its strongholds in Alabama and Mississippi and its outposts in Minnesota, Florida and Oregon. It sticks like a tar-heel in the old North State, and writes sixteen-to-one on the saddlebags of the Arkansas traveler. It pours down its rivulets from the mountains of West Virginia and makes a great lake in New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming and Idaho, Nevada, Montana and Colorado. It stands guard around the National Capitol, in the District of Columbia, and camps on the frontiers of Oklahoma. It sweeps like a prairie fire over Iowa and Kansas, and lights up the horizon in Nebraska. It marshals its massive battalions in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Missouri.⁷²

He made a direct appeal to the eastern Democrats, stating that there was no "North, South, East or West" in the uprising of the American people for "American emancipation from the conspiracy of European Kings led by Great Britain, which seeks to destroy one-half of the money of the world, and to make American manufacturers, merchants, farmers and mechanics hewers of wood and drawers of water."⁷³ He quoted the Golden Rule—do unto others as you would have them do unto you—and he urged his eastern brethren to "acquiesce . . . in the will of [the] great majority of your fellow Democrats, who only ask you to go with them as they have often times gone with you."⁷⁴ He reminded the eastern Democrats that for thirty years the Democrats in the South and in the West had supported the men that the eastern Democrats had nominated for

⁶⁹ Bryan 1896: 188.

⁷⁰ *Official Report* 1896: 97.

⁷¹ *Official Report* 1896: 99.

⁷² *Official Report* 1896: 99.

⁷³ *Official Report* 1896: 100.

⁷⁴ *Official Report* 1896: 100.

president—Seymour,⁷⁵ Greeley,⁷⁶ Tilden,⁷⁷ Hancock⁷⁸ and Cleveland⁷⁹—that they had “submitted cheerfully” to their compromise platforms and repeated pledges for bimetallism and that they had “patiently borne repeated disappointments as to their fulfillment.”⁸⁰

Daniel spent the remainder of his speech extolling the virtues of bimetallism and condemning those who stood in the way of a monetary policy based on the use of both gold and silver as standard money.⁸¹ He excoriated the Republican adoption of the gold standard, which he argued would result in higher taxes, lower consumer confidence and significantly less money in circulation.⁸² He closed with a call to arms: “We maintain that this great Nation . . . is fully capable of restoring its constitutional money system of gold and silver at equality with each other, and as our Fathers in 1776 declared our National Independence, so now has the party founded by Thomas Jefferson, the author of that declaration, met here to declare our financial independence of all other nations and to invoke all true Americans to assert it by their votes and place their country where it of right belongs as the freest and foremost nation of the earth.”⁸³

Once Daniel concluded his remarks, the membership of the convention’s committees was announced. As noted in the *Official Report*,⁸⁴ The Committee on Resolutions, which would be responsible for drafting the Democratic platform, contained some Democratic heavyweights, including George Gray,⁸⁵ Francis Cockrell,⁸⁶ David Hill, and Benjamin Tillman.⁸⁷

The convention adjourned for the day after the make-up of the committees was announced. The Committee on Permanent Organization met for the first time immediately after adjournment and the gold men on the committee wanted to proceed directly to the nomination of the permanent officers of the convention. But the silver men on the committee discovered that they did not know who their leaders favored for permanent chairman of the convention, and they demanded that the committee stand in recess until eight o’clock that evening. Unbeknownst to the gold men, the silver members of the committee agreed to meet a half hour earlier and decide who should be the permanent chairman before the gold men arrived for the reconvened meeting.⁸⁸

⁷⁵ Horatio Seymour (1810–1886) was the unsuccessful Democratic nominee for U.S. President in 1868.

⁷⁶ Horace Greeley (1811–1872) was the unsuccessful Democratic and Liberal Republican nominee for U.S. President in 1872.

⁷⁷ Samuel Jones Tilden (1814–1886) was the unsuccessful Democratic nominee for U.S. President in 1876.

⁷⁸ Winfield Scott Hancock (1824–1886) was the unsuccessful Democratic nominee for U.S. President in 1880.

⁷⁹ Grover Cleveland (1837–1908) was the successful Democratic nominee for U.S. President in 1884, the unsuccessful candidate in 1888, and the successful candidate in 1892.

⁸⁰ *Official Report* 1896: 100.

⁸¹ *Official Report* 1896: 103.

⁸² *Official Report* 1896: 105.

⁸³ *Official Report* 1896: 107–08.

⁸⁴ *Official Report* 1896: 111.

⁸⁵ George Gray (1840–1925) served as U.S. Senator from Delaware from 1885 to 1899. Gray was nominated for president at the 1904 Democratic convention.

⁸⁶ Francis Marion Cockrell (1834–1915) served as U.S. Senator from Missouri from 1874 to 1905. Cockrell was nominated for president at 1904 Democratic convention.

⁸⁷ Benjamin Tillman (1847–1918) was governor of South Carolina from 1890 to 1894 and U.S. Senator from 1895 to 1918.

⁸⁸ Bense 2008: 85.

At the meeting of the silver delegates, it was decided that Senator Stephen White of California⁸⁹ should serve as the permanent chairman of the convention. Once the slate of other officers was finalized, they sent out “scouts . . . to round up” the gold men and “invite them” to a meeting of the full committee. The gold men knew before they entered the meeting that they had been railroaded and “treated the whole proceeding as a huge joke.” They went through the motions of nominating David Hill as an alternative to White, but White easily prevailed thirty-three to eighteen.⁹⁰ White’s nomination as permanent chairman meant that he was now no longer a “dark horse” in the presidential race.⁹¹

The second day of the convention dawned with not a single committee prepared to report to the delegates. As a result, the assembled crowd listened to a series of speeches from some of the Democratic heavyweights, including John Peter Altgeld⁹² and Joseph C. S. Blackburn.⁹³ Shortly after noon, the Committee on Credentials announced that it had a partial report, “which recommended seating the silver delegation from Nebraska headed by William Jennings Bryan, thereby reversing the decision of the Democratic National Committee, which had seated the gold delegation from Nebraska.”⁹⁴ The committee also recommended that each of the territories (Alaska, Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico and the Indian Territory) and the District of Columbia be permitted six delegates each (up from the customary two). It was not lost on anyone that this increase in delegates would inure to the benefit of the silver forces since the territories were all pro-silver.⁹⁵ The partial report of the committee was approved by a voice vote.⁹⁶ Bryan was now an official delegate and immediately took his delegation’s seat on the Committee on Resolutions, which had already begun drafting the party platform.⁹⁷

The evening session on the second day of the convention was spent arguing over the final report of the Committee on Credentials, which concerned four delegate seats from Michigan.⁹⁸ A majority of the committee recommended that four silver delegates, Henry Chamberlain,⁹⁹ Hannibal Hart,¹⁰⁰ H. J. Hoyt¹⁰¹ and J. S. White,¹⁰² be seated as part of the Michigan delegation, in place of four gold delegates who had originally been seated.¹⁰³ A minority of the committee recommended that the original gold delegates be allowed to retain their seats.¹⁰⁴ Three hours of

⁸⁹ Stephen Mallory White (1853–1901) served as U.S. Senator from California from 1893 to 1899.

⁹⁰ *Chicago Tribune*, July 7, 1896.

⁹¹ Bensel 2008: 86.

⁹² A leader of the Progressive wing of the Democratic party John Peter Altgeld (1847–1902) served as governor of Illinois from 1893 to 1897.

⁹³ Joseph Clay Stiles Blackburn (1838–1918) served as U.S. Senator from Kentucky from 1885 to 1897 and again from 1901 to 1907.

⁹⁴ Haynes 2016: 222.

⁹⁵ Haynes 2016: 222.

⁹⁶ *Official Report* 1896: 134.

⁹⁷ Haynes 2016: 222.

⁹⁸ Haynes 2016: 222.

⁹⁹ A Michigan farmer, Henry Chamberlain (1824–1907) was a Michigan delegate to the convention.

¹⁰⁰ A Michigan lawyer and judge, Hannibal Hart (1839–1900) was a delegate from his state to the convention.

¹⁰¹ No biographical information has been found for H. J. Hoyt except that he was a delegate from Michigan.

¹⁰² No biographical information has been found for J. S. White except that he was a convention delegate from Michigan.

¹⁰³ *Official Report* 1896: 136.

¹⁰⁴ *Official Report* 1896: 136–37.

debate ensued. Following a rollcall vote of the states, the four silver delegates were seated as part of the Michigan delegation.¹⁰⁵ The effect of this vote was to change the majority of the Michigan delegation from gold to silver. Under the unit rule then in effect, that change “would likely shift all of Michigan’s twenty-eight votes to the silver cause.”¹⁰⁶ The defeat of the minority position resulted in a wild thirty-minute demonstration, as the silver men yelled and waved hats and handkerchiefs and displayed pictures of Bland.¹⁰⁷

Day two of the convention ended with the receipt and approval of the report of the Committee on Permanent Organization, which named Stephen White as the permanent chairman. White gave a speech emphasizing party harmony, but it mostly fell on deaf ears—it was becoming abundantly clear that the silver forces held the majority of convention strength.¹⁰⁸ After his remarks, White was presented with a ceremonial gavel. Fittingly, it was made of solid silver, from a mine in Butte City, Montana.¹⁰⁹

The party platform was the first item of business on the agenda for day three of the convention. Members of the Committee on Resolutions, after meeting again that morning, had finalized the proposed platform. It called for greater regulation over corporations, monopolies and trusts by the Interstate Commerce Commission. It opposed the issuance of interest-bearing bonds in times of peace. It called for a fair and honest revision of the tariff. It condemned reckless government spending and federal interference in local affairs. It supported the admission of the Territories of New Mexico, Arizona and Oklahoma as states. It warned against dangerous court injunctions to end labor disputes, objected to presidential third terms, proclaimed support of the Monroe Doctrine and offered sympathy for Cuba’s struggle for independence.¹¹⁰

Most importantly, the proposed Democratic platform called for the free coinage of silver. The money plank in the platform proclaimed that “the money question is paramount to all others at this time. . . .”¹¹¹ According to the proposed platform, “We demand the free and unlimited coinage of both silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation. We demand that the standard silver dollar shall be full legal tender, equally with gold, for all debts, public and private. . . .”¹¹² When the money plank was read aloud, the silver-intoxicated crowd roared with approval and then demanded that the plank be read again so that they could celebrate once more.¹¹³ One reporter said that the scene was like “bringing a new mess of playthings into the violent wards of the insane asylum.”¹¹⁴

The gold men on the Committee on Resolutions offered a minority report after the proposed platform was read to the convention. The minority report argued for the gold standard and sought to replace the free silver plank with a gold one. According to the minority report:

¹⁰⁵ *Official Report* 1896: 166–67.

¹⁰⁶ Haynes 2016: 222.

¹⁰⁷ Bensel 2008; 153; *Official Report* 1896: 167.

¹⁰⁸ Sautter and Burke 1996: 91.

¹⁰⁹ Haynes 2016: 222; *Official Report* 1896: 173.

¹¹⁰ Sautter and Burke 1996: 91–92; McKee 1906: 294–97.

¹¹¹ McKee 1906: 294.

¹¹² McKee 1906: 293–94.

¹¹³ Sautter and Burke 1996: 92.

¹¹⁴ Sautter and Burke 1996: 92.

We declare our belief that the experiment on the part of the United States alone of free silver coinage and a change of the existing standard of value independently of the action of other great nations would not only imperil our finances, but would retard or entirely prevent the establishment of international bimetallism, to which the efforts of the government should be steadily directed. It would place this country at once upon a silver basis, impair contracts, disturb business, diminish the purchasing power of the wages of labor and inflict irreparable evils upon our nation's commerce and industry.

Until international co-operation among leading nations for the coinage of silver can be secured we favor the rigid maintenance of the existing gold standard as essential to the preservation of our national credit, the redemption of our public pledges and the keeping inviolate of our country's honor. We insist that all our paper and silver currency shall be kept absolutely at parity with gold.¹¹⁵

The convention leaders allotted two hours and forty minutes for the debate over the competing planks, equally split, eighty minutes for each side. The silver advocates would open the debate, the gold men would offer their arguments and the silver proponents would close the debate with their rebuttal.¹¹⁶ Bryan was asked by James Jones¹¹⁷ to take charge of the platform debate.¹¹⁸ Jones believed that Bryan's "prominence and long devotion to the silver cause . . . entitled him to the honor."¹¹⁹ Bryan, for his part, was shocked and surprised by Jones's request, but after protesting politely that Jones should be in charge of the debate, Bryan gladly accepted the position that would thrust him into the center spotlight.

"Pitchfork" Ben Tillman, who had requested to be part of the debate, informed Bryan that he wanted to talk for fifty of the eighty minutes and that he wanted to present the closing argument. Bryan told Tillman that he did not believe that the gold men would agree to such an extensive rebuttal. He was correct. David Bennett Hill, the leader of the gold men, refused to agree to such a lengthy rebuttal. When Tillman was apprised of that fact, he informed Bryan that the greater time was more important to him. He announced that he would take fifty minutes and deliver the opening remarks. It was agreed that Bryan would get thirty minutes to deliver the closing argument. Bryan intended to use the last word in the platform debate as an opportunity to create a groundswell of support for his candidacy that would propel him to the party's presidential nomination.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ *Official Report* 1896: 197.

¹¹⁶ Haynes 2016: 223.

¹¹⁷ James Kimbrough Jones (1839–1908) U.S. Senator from Arkansas and chair of the Democratic National Committee in 1896.

¹¹⁸ Haynes 2016: 223.d

¹¹⁹ Koenig 1971:189.

¹²⁰ Haynes 2016: 223–24.

As planned, Senator Tillman began the debate in favor of the free silver plank. The decision by the silver forces to let him be their primary spokesman in the platform debate was a mistake. From the start, his comments were an unmitigated disaster. As one commentator noted,

Tillman opened his remarks by stating the convention would see him 'as I am, and not as the lying newspapers have taught you to think of me.' He then proceeded to confirm the criticisms of him in the press. Tillman proudly stated that he was from South Carolina, 'the home of secession,' which elicited hisses and jeers from the crowd. . . . He then compared South Carolina's leadership in the cause of secession with its leadership in the cause of free coinage of silver and stated that, in 1896 as in 1860, southern Democrats had for too long been subservient to their northern Democratic brethren. . . . Like secession, the silver battle was 'a sectional issue,' he cried, drawing more hisses from the crowd...He rambled on, citing obscure economic statistics that he claimed proved his point, but which confused the audience even more . . . Tillman [then] went on to accuse the president of despotism, bad faith, and of actions that had deserved impeachment. It was too much, even for a crowd that mostly despised Grover Cleveland.¹²¹

Hill was the first orator to speak on behalf of the minority report—and it was apparent that the silverite platform filled him with contempt. "It smacks of Populism and Communism," he had written in an article that appeared in the July 9, 1896 issue of the *New York World*. He told the delegates, "I am a Democrat, but I am not a revolutionist." On the monetary issue, he stated that it would be foolish to move to a system of free coinage of silver before there was an international agreement fixing the value of silver and gold in relation to each other.¹²² He questioned whether the delegates really wanted to force longtime stalwarts out of the party "to make room for a lot of Republicans and Populists and political nondescripts who will not vote your ticket at the polls." No Democrat, Hill suggested, could be elected without carrying New York; only one ever had (James Buchanan in 1856). According to Hill, the Democrats would surely taste defeat in 1896 if bimetallism became "a question of patriotism" or "bravery" instead of a question of "business" and "economics."¹²³ Said Hill, "In your zeal for monetary reform you have gone out of the true path . . . and in your anxiety to promote and aid the silver currency you have unnecessarily put in this platform provisions which cannot stand a fair discussion."¹²⁴ He closed with the following words of warning:

My friends, I thus speak more in sorrow than in anger. You know what this platform means to the East; you know that we who are

¹²¹ Haynes 2016: 225–26.

¹²² Haynes 2016: 226.

¹²³ Michael Kazin 2006: 56–58.

¹²⁴ *Official Report* 1896: 217.

identified with the fortunes of the party there must suffer the result. But calamitous as it may be to us, it will be more calamitous to you if, after taking all these risks, you do not win this fight. My friends, we want the Democratic party to succeed. We want to build it up. We do not want to tear it down. We want our principles—the good old principles of Jefferson, of Jackson, of Tilden, of hard money, of safe money . . . We want to stand by the principles under which we have won during the history of the country, and made it what it is. If we keep in the good old paths of the party, we can win. If we depart from them, we shall lose the great contest which awaits us.¹²⁵

William F. Vilas¹²⁶ and William E. Russell¹²⁷ took to the stage after Hill. Both men argued in favor of gold. Neither man was particularly effective in making his arguments. All three, Hill, Vilas, and Russell, had given fine speeches in support of gold, “but there was no suspense in them and nothing that would make the silver delegates change their minds.”¹²⁸ The minority spokesmen had used all of their allotted time. One speaker remained: William Jennings Bryan. He would have the last word. He knew he had to make it count.

Bryan bounded up the steps to the platform, two at a time. Tall, slender, “every inch an Apollo,” Bryan threw his head back, thrust his foot forward and rested his left arm on the speaker’s podium.¹²⁹ Said Chicago journalist Ray Stannard Baker,¹³⁰ “I thought I had never seen a handsomer man—young, tall, powerfully built, clear-eyed, with a mane of black hair which he occasionally thrust back with his hand.”¹³¹ Looking and sounding like some kind of Democratic god, in a loud, forceful voice, Bryan delivered what has been considered by many historians and political scientists as one of the best political speeches ever given. Known as the “Cross of Gold” speech, Bryan began with a self-deprecating remark, portraying himself as young and inexperienced, especially compared to the political heavyweights who had just spoken:

I would be presumptuous, indeed, to present myself against the distinguished gentlemen to whom you have listened if this was a mere measuring of abilities; but this is not a contest between persons. The humblest citizen in all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of error. I come to speak to you in defense of a cause as holy as the cause of liberty - the cause of humanity.¹³²

¹²⁵ *Official Report* 1896: 219.

¹²⁶ William Freeman Vilas (1840–1908) was U.S. Senator from Wisconsin from 1891 to 1897.

¹²⁷ Governor of Massachusetts from 1891 to 1894, William Eustis Russell (1857–1896) was a strong advocate for the gold standard.

¹²⁸ Bense 2008: 222.

¹²⁹ Koenig 1971: 195.

¹³⁰ Ray Stannard Baker (1870–1946) was a journalist for the *Chicago News-Record* in 1896.

¹³¹ Sautter and Burke 1996: 92.

¹³² *Official Report* 1896: 227.

A hush fell over the crowd as Bryan continued with a history of the silver movement over the last year:

Never before in the history of this country has there been witnessed such a contest as that through which we have just passed. Never before in the history of American politics has a great issue been fought out, as this issue has been, by the voters of a great party.

On the fourth of March, 1895, a few democrats, most of them members of congress, issued an address to the democrats of the nation, asserting that the money question was the paramount issue of the hour; declaring that a majority of the democratic party had the right to control the action of the party on this paramount issue; and concluding with the request that the believers in the free coinage of silver in the democratic party should organize, take charge of, and control the policy of the democratic party. Three months later, at Memphis, an organization was perfected, and the silver democrats went forth openly and courageously proclaiming their belief, and declaring that, if successful, they would crystallize into a platform the declaration which they had made. Then began the conflict. With a zeal approaching the zeal which inspired the crusaders who followed Peter the Hermit, our silver democrats went forth from victory unto victory until they are now assembled, not to discuss, not to debate, but to enter up the judgment already rendered by the plain people of this country.

The supporters of gold argued that free silver would unfairly disrupt business interests in the country. Bryan argued that it was the gold men who had interfered with the business interests of those who supported free silver:

When you come before us and tell us that we are about to disturb your business interests, we reply that you have disturbed our business interests by your course.

We say to you that you have made the definition of a business man too limited in its application. The man who is employed for wages is as much a business man as his employer; the attorney in a country town is as much a business man as the corporation counsel in a great metropolis; the merchant at the cross-roads store is as much a business man as the merchant of New York; the farmer who goes forth in the morning and toils all day, who begins in the spring and toils all summer, and who by the application of brain and muscle to the natural resources of the country creates wealth, is as much a business man as the man who goes upon the board of trade and bets upon the price of grain; the

miners who go down a thousand feet into the earth, or climb two thousand feet upon the cliffs, and bring forth from their hiding places the precious metals to be poured into the channels of trade are as much business men as the few financial magnates who, in a back room, corner the money of the world. We come to speak for this broader class of business men.¹³³

Unlike Tillman, Bryan did not attack the East. But he had special words for those from the West. In a passage reminiscent of the Declaration of Independence, Bryan declared:

We do not come as aggressors. Our war is not a war of conquest; we are fighting in the defense of our homes, our families, and posterity. We have petitioned, and our petitions have been scorned; we have entreated, and our entreaties have been disregarded; we have begged, and they have mocked when our calamity came. We beg no longer; we entreat no more; we petition no more. We defy them!¹³⁴

By this time the pro-silver delegates were on their feet shouting approval. One enraptured farmer thrashed a vacant seat with his coat, exclaiming, "My God! My God!"¹³⁵ As Bryan later remembered, "the audience seemed to rise and sit down as one man . . . like a trained choir."¹³⁶ Bryan turned to a forceful defense of the majority platform:

They tell us that this platform was made to catch votes. We reply to them that changing conditions make new issues; that the principles upon which democracy rests are as everlasting as the hills, but that they must be applied to new conditions as they arise. Conditions have arisen, and we are here to meet those conditions. They tell us that the income tax ought not to be brought in here; that it is a new idea. They criticize us for our criticism of the Supreme Court of the United States. My friends, we have not criticized; we have simply called attention to what you know. If you want criticisms, read the dissenting opinions of the court. There you will find criticisms.

They say that we passed an unconstitutional law; we deny it. The income tax law was not unconstitutional when it was passed; it was not unconstitutional when it went before the supreme court for the first time; it did not become unconstitutional until one of

¹³³ *Official Report* 1896: 228–29.

¹³⁴ *Official Report* 1896: 229.

¹³⁵ Koenig 1971: 196.

¹³⁶ Sautter and Burke 1996: 94.

the judges changed his mind, and we cannot be expected to know when a judge will change his mind.

The income tax is a just law. It simply intends to put the burdens of government justly upon the backs of the people. I am in favor of an income tax. When I find a man who is not willing to bear his share of the burdens of the government which protects him, I find a man who is unworthy to enjoy the blessings of a government like ours.

He says that we are opposing national bank currency. It is true. If you will read what Thomas Benton said, you will find he said that, in searching history, he could find but one parallel to Andrew Jackson; that was Cicero who destroyed the conspiracy of Cataline [*sic*] and saved Rome. Benton said that Cicero only did for Rome what Jackson did for us when he destroyed the bank conspiracy and saved America.¹³⁷

We say in our platform that we believe that the right to coin and issue money is a function of government. We believe it. We believe it is a part of sovereignty, and can no more with safety be delegated to private individuals than can the power to make penal statutes or levy laws for taxation.

Mr. Jefferson, who was once regarded as good democratic authority, seems to have differed in opinion from the gentleman who has addressed us on the part of the minority. Those who are opposed to this proposition tell us that the issue of paper money is a function of the bank, and that the government ought to go out of the banking business. I stand with Jefferson rather than with them, and tell them, as he did, that the issue of money is a function of the Government, and that the banks should go out of the governing business.

They complain about the plank which declares against life tenure in office. They have tried to strain it to mean that which it does not mean. What we oppose in that plank is the life tenure that is being built up in Washington which establishes an office-holding class and excludes from participation in the benefits the humbler members of society.¹³⁸

Bryan urged the Democratic Party to stand with the people:

¹³⁷ Bryan here makes reference to a parallel made by Thomas Hart Benton (1782–1858), a U.S. Senator from Missouri, between President Andrew Jackson’s so-called “Bank War” against the Second Bank of the United States and the overthrow of the Catilinarian Conspiracy of 63 B.C. by Cicero, who was Roman consul at the time. Unfortunately, the name of the chief conspirator, Catiline, was misspelled in the *Official Report* of the convention.

¹³⁸ *Official Report* 1896: 229–30.

Mr. Carlisle said in 1878 that this was a struggle between the idle holders of idle capital and the struggling masses, who produce the wealth and pay the taxes of the country; and my friends, it is simply a question that we shall decide upon which side shall the Democratic party fight? Upon the side of the idle holders of idle capital or upon the side of the struggling masses? That is the question which the party must answer first; and then it must be answered by each individual hereafter. The sympathies of the Democratic party, as described by the platform, are on the side of the struggling masses, who have ever been the foundation of the Democratic party.

There are two ideas of government. There are those who believe that if you just legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous that their prosperity will leak through on those below. The Democratic idea has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous their prosperity will find its way up through every class that rests upon it.¹³⁹

Bryan viewed the nation and the world as a series of struggles between the forces of good and evil. For him, the battle between gold and silver was essentially a battle between rural and urban America.¹⁴⁰ Bryan drove home this point when he stated:

You come to us and tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country.¹⁴¹

Bryan then launched into his dramatic close:

If they dare to come out and in the open defend the gold standard as a good thing, we shall fight them to the uttermost, having behind us the producing masses of the Nation and the world. Having behind us the commercial interests and the laboring interests and all the toiling masses, we shall answer their demands for a gold standard by saying to them, you shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ *Official Report* 1896: 233–34.

¹⁴⁰ Koenig 1971: 197.

¹⁴¹ *Official Report* 1896: 234.

¹⁴² *Official Report* 1896: 234.

As he spoke the words “crown of thorns,” Bryan touched his hands to his temples; his fingers, spread inward, moved slowly down, compelling his audience to imagine the thorns piercing his flesh. As he uttered the words “cross of gold,” he extended his arms as if being crucified. He held this pose before the crowd of 20,000 people for a few brief seconds, wondering if he had overreached.¹⁴³ There was complete stillness, “a pause while the delegates and spectators came to fully appreciate the image that had just been placed before them.”¹⁴⁴

According to the *Atlanta Constitution*, “For a moment after Bryan’s last words there was a fearful silence. Breathlessly the audience leaned forward, in excited attitude...Then came a murmur of admiration. The murmurs grew into whispers of approving comment; the whisperings swelled into a wave of vigorous hand-clapping; the hand-clapping burst into an uplifting of voices.”¹⁴⁵

And then the crowd went absolutely wild:

Everybody stood up, even the eastern men, who at first were disposed to remain in their seats. Westerners shouted, waved handkerchiefs, hats, flags, canes, umbrellas and anything else conspicuous and portable. Deafening cheers rent the air and articles of every description were thrown high above the surging sea of humanity. The staffs bearing the names of the states were held aloft with flags and other things on top and waved to and fro. When that pastime became too tame...nearly all the silver states and some of the gold states joined in the procession and marched in triumph around the floor. . . . This furor continued for a quarter of an hour and no effort was made by the chairman or sergeant-at-arms to check its tempestuous progress. Away to the west and north and south of the platform in the multitude of spectators the demonstration of the delegates was repeated.

Hundreds of umbrellas were opened by the apparently crazed people. Harmless missiles of paper and other things were hurled through the air on the delegates’ heads. The remarkable feature of this wild outburst was that its spontaneity was apparent and it was so much a personal tribute to Mr. Bryan that eastern delegates who differed from him caught the infection and joined in moderately.¹⁴⁶

A delegate from Tennessee picked up the pole that held the sign designating the Tennessee delegation, began waving it around, and marched toward the Nebraska delegation, where Bryan had resumed his seat. Dr. E. B. Bush of Georgia¹⁴⁷ raced down the aisle toward the

¹⁴³ Koenig 1971: 198.

¹⁴⁴ Bensel 2008: 233.

¹⁴⁵ *Atlanta Constitution*, July 11, 1896.

¹⁴⁶ Bensel 2008: 1.

¹⁴⁷ Elijah Blackshear Bush, Sr. (1850–1914) was a physician from Georgia.

Nebraska delegation, waving the Georgia standard. Joe Lahay¹⁴⁸ leaped across the New York delegation in an attempt to beat Georgia to Bryan's side.¹⁴⁹ A fat man carrying the Kentucky banner marched up the main aisle, and following close behind him were the standards of Alabama, Nebraska, Louisiana and a lengthening string of western and southern states.¹⁵⁰ Only the signs of the gold states remained in place. The Nebraska delegation hoisted Bryan upon their shoulders while the "standard bearers began a ghost dance around him."¹⁵¹

When the commotion finally subsided (the demonstration lasted an hour), a vote was taken on the adoption of the pro-gold minority plank to the platform.¹⁵² To no one's surprise, the minority plank was defeated by a vote of 626 to 303. David Hill then called for a second vote on his proposed addition to the platform commending the "honesty, economy, courage and fidelity" of the Cleveland administration.¹⁵³ Again, to no one's great surprise, Hill's proposed addition to the platform lost by a vote of 357 yeas to 564 nays.¹⁵⁴ For the first time ever, a Democratic convention was on record "as having failed to adopt words of gratitude for the sitting Democratic administration."¹⁵⁵ The majority report of the Committee on Resolutions was then approved by a vote of 628 to 301.¹⁵⁶ The free coinage of silver would be the central issue of the Democratic platform of 1896.¹⁵⁷

After the platform was adopted, the delegates were supposed to immediately move into the presidential nominations. But the campaign managers for Bland, Boies and Blackburn knew that emotions were running high for Bryan after his glorious speech. They needed time to let the delegates cool down and to recommit support for their candidates. As a result, they orchestrated a recess of the convention until later in the evening of July 9th.¹⁵⁸ Accordingly, the delegates reconvened in the Coliseum at 8:26 p.m. to begin the task of nominating their candidate for President of the United States.¹⁵⁹

Richard Bland was the first candidate to be nominated. In making the nomination, George Vest¹⁶⁰ said, in part, "Twenty years ago the battle for silver was begun in the halls of Congress by a modest, unpretending brave man, not an iridescent or meteoric statesman, but of the people and from the people, who has never faltered for an instant in the great struggle. Others doubted and wavered, some yielded to blandishment and patronage, and are now holding office under the gold power; others misrepresented their constituents and have been provided for in the

¹⁴⁸ Joseph M. Lahay (1864–1911) was a convention delegate from the Indian territory.

¹⁴⁹ Eaton 1964: 173.

¹⁵⁰ Koenig 1971: 198.

¹⁵¹ Haynes 2016: 229.

¹⁵² Sautter and Burke, *Inside the Wigwam*, 95.

¹⁵³ Haynes 2016: 229.

¹⁵⁴ Bryan 1896: 208.

¹⁵⁵ Haynes 2016: 229.

¹⁵⁶ Haynes 2016: 229.

¹⁵⁷ To be sure, not all Democrats were in favor of bimetallism. In fact, throughout the Northeast and upper Midwest, Democrats who couldn't stand the party's new platform and the rhetoric of its new leader made plans to defeat them. In early September they convened the National Democratic Party in order to nominate a ticket committed to the gold standard. They nominated Illinois senator John M. Palmer for president and former Kentucky governor Simon B. Buckner for vice-president. Kazin 2006: 63; *Campaign Text Book of the National Democratic Party* 1896.

¹⁵⁸ Haynes 2016: 229–30.

¹⁵⁹ *Official Report* 1896: 257.

¹⁶⁰ George Graham Vest (1830–1904) was U.S. Senator from Missouri from 1879 to 1903.

national infirmity of the present administration; but Richard Parks Bland stands now where he stood then, the living, breathing embodiment of the silver cause.”¹⁶¹ He also reminded his audience that Bland was not just a one trick pony. He discussed Bland’s extensive record in Congress and closed with the following ditty: “Give us Silver Dick, and silver quick, and we will make McKinley sick, in the Ides of next November.”¹⁶²

David Overmyer¹⁶³ and J. R. Williams¹⁶⁴ gave seconding speeches in support of Bland’s candidacy.¹⁶⁵ In a nod to Bryan’s outstanding oratory earlier in the day, Williams described Bland thusly: “A candidate who is not an orator, but a statesman of sound judgment and many years of useful experience; a man whose long and loyal services for free coinage of silver has made his illustrious name a watchword in every home in America.”¹⁶⁶

Following Bland’s nomination, Henry T. Lewis was recognized by the chair. Lewis wasted no time in nominating William Jennings Bryan, claiming, “He needs no speech to introduce him to this Convention. He needs no encomium to commend him to the people of the United States. Honor him, fellow Democrats, and you will honor yourselves; nominate him and you will reflect credit upon the party you represent; honor him and you will win for yourselves the plaudits of your constituents and the blessings of posterity.”¹⁶⁷ Lewis’s nomination of Bryan resulted in a long period of noise, shouting, cheers and confusion.¹⁶⁸ When the demonstration showed no signs of ending, Lewis, who had not finished his nominating speech, left the stage and returned to the Georgia delegation, believing “that he had produced a satisfactory effect. . . .”¹⁶⁹

Once order was restored, T. F. Kluttz,¹⁷⁰ George F. Williams¹⁷¹ and Thomas J. Kernan¹⁷² all gave speeches seconding Bryan’s nomination.¹⁷³ Kernan in particular laid it on thick, stating, “I believe that to nominate him is to elect him; I believe that to elect him is to restore business and to return to prosperity; and when his term of office shall have ended, I believe that we Democrats can truly say what has been so well said of another, that ‘he smote the rock of the public resources and it streamed with revenue; that he touched the portal of the public credit and it rolled open at his feet.’”¹⁷⁴

¹⁶¹ *Official Report* 1896: 259.

¹⁶² *Official Report* 1896: 260.

¹⁶³ David Overmyer (1847–1907) was the unsuccessful Democratic candidate for governor of Kansas in 1894 and a delegate to numerous Democratic conventions

¹⁶⁴ James Robert Williams (1850–1923) had been a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1889 to 1895 and was a close friend of William Jennings Bryan.

¹⁶⁵ *Official Report* 1896: 260–65.

¹⁶⁶ *Official Report* 1896: 263.

¹⁶⁷ *Official Report* 1896: 266.

¹⁶⁸ *Official Report* 1896: 266.

¹⁶⁹ Bense 2008: 278.

¹⁷⁰ T. K. Kluttz (1848–1918) was a convention delegate from North Carolina.

¹⁷¹ A Massachusetts lawyer, George Fred Williams (1869–1898) represented his state in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1891 to 1893 and was an unsuccessful candidate for governor in 1896.

¹⁷² Thomas J. Kernan (1854–1911) was a Louisiana delegate.

¹⁷³ *Official Report* 1896: 266–69.

¹⁷⁴ *Official Report* 1896: 269.

David Turpie¹⁷⁵ then moved, and Oscar A. Trippet¹⁷⁶ seconded, the nomination of Claude Matthews.¹⁷⁷

After Matthews was nominated, Frederick White¹⁷⁸ mounted the platform and nominated Horace Boies for president. In doing so he said, in part:

Upon the overshadowing issue of this campaign Governor Boies stands upon an invulnerable platform, the Constitution of his country, inasmuch as the Constitution, in defining what the State shall use as "legal tender in the payment of debts," designates not gold or silver, but gold and silver. Governor Boies believes that the bimetallic system thus provided for in the fundamental law of the land is the system the Democratic party must indorse and uphold. He believes that so long as the Constitution remains unchanged Congress has no power to demonetize either metal. Hence, in common with the great mass of the American people, he believes that the demonetization of silver was not an ordinary political blunder, but an actual crime, and he can conceive of no condition which can possibly arise that would justify the Democratic party in justifying that crime or in helping to perpetuate its direful result.¹⁷⁹

T. A. Smith¹⁸⁰ seconded Boies' nomination.¹⁸¹

John S. Rhea¹⁸² then nominated Joseph Blackburn, a former Confederate soldier, for the office of president of the United States.¹⁸³ Delegate William W. Foote¹⁸⁴ seconded Blackburn's nomination.¹⁸⁵

The last person to be nominated for the presidency on the third day of the convention was John R. McLean. Colonel A. W. Patrick of Ohio¹⁸⁶ moved the nomination.¹⁸⁷ Once the nominations were completed, well after midnight on July 10th, the convention adjourned until later that morning. The convention's fourth day would be the day of decision.

Throughout the night and into the morning, Bryan's supporters tried to woo as many votes as possible. They concentrated on trying to convince Ohio to swing its votes to Bryan on the second or third ballot, expecting such a move to trigger a stampede in Bryan's favor. The Bryan

¹⁷⁵ David Battle Turpie (1828-1909) was U.S. Senator from Indiana from 1887 to 1899.

¹⁷⁶ Oscar A. Trippet (1856-1923) was a California lawyer and delegate to the 1896 convention.

¹⁷⁷ *Official Report* 1896: 275-76.

¹⁷⁸ Frederick Edward White (1844-1920) was an Iowa farmer who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1891 to 1893.

¹⁷⁹ *Official Report* 1896: 280.

¹⁸⁰ Minnesotan T. A. Smith was not a delegate.

¹⁸¹ *Official Report* 1896: 281-83.

¹⁸² Delegate John Stockale Rhea (1855-1924) was a Kentucky lawyer and prosecuting attorney.

¹⁸³ *Official Report* 1896: 283-86.

¹⁸⁴ William W. Foote (1846-1904) was a California delegate to the convention.

¹⁸⁵ *Official Report* 1896: 286-87.

¹⁸⁶ A. W. Patrick (1829-1909) was a delegate from Ohio.

¹⁸⁷ *Official Report* 1896: 289-91.

enthusiasts agreed that in exchange for Ohio placing her votes squarely behind Bryan, McLean would be awarded the vice-presidency. Dr. Charles Rosser rushed to tell Bryan that victory was in sight. Bryan declared that the deal must be scuttled. According to Bryan, despite McLean's support of silver, he was not politically "straight." Bryan further opined that he could not afford to be nominated as a result of any kind of political deal.¹⁸⁸

Chairman White called day four of the convention to order at 11:00 a.m. Before the voting for the presidential nominees could begin, William Harrity nominated Robert E. Pattison for president. M. A. Miller¹⁸⁹ then nominated Sylvester Pennoyer¹⁹⁰ for the presidency.¹⁹¹

As the balloting began, rumors were flying: the gold delegates were going to bolt the convention, the gold men were going to vote as a bloc for Senator Teller, Bryan had momentum in his favor and would capture the nomination on the first ballot, Bland was a shoo-in. Uncertainty was in the air. As one reporter noted, "A few people said there was going to be a nomination right away. Others claimed the barning would occur about the fourth ballot, while more were strenuous in the belief that the blessed thing might tie up for a week."¹⁹²

Under the rules of the convention, a two-thirds vote was necessary to capture the nomination.¹⁹³ Since there were 930 voting delegates at the convention, a candidate would need 623 votes to win the prize. The first ballot showed no clear consensus. Bland was the clear frontrunner with 235 votes. Bryan polled a respectable 137 votes. Pattison came in third with ninety-seven votes. Blackburn received eighty-two votes, Boies received sixty-seven, McLean received fifty-four and Matthews received thirty-seven. "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman (whose name had not even been placed in nomination) received seventeen votes, all from his home state of South Carolina. A handful of other candidates received vote totals in the single digits. One hundred and seventy-eight gold delegates refused to cast a vote.¹⁹⁴

On the second ballot, the race became a two-man contest between Bland and Bryan. Bland still had a commanding lead, garnering 281 votes. Bryan was in second place with 197 votes. Pattison gained three additional votes and stood at an even 100 votes. Most of Bland's and Bryan's gains came at the expense of Boies and Blackburn. All of South Carolina's votes, which had previously been cast for "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman, were cast for Bryan. One hundred and sixty gold delegates again refused to cast a ballot.¹⁹⁵

The third ballot showed little movement. Both Bland and Bryan gained votes. Bland was sitting at 291 votes, an increase of ten votes from the second ballot. Bryan gained an additional

¹⁸⁸ Koenig 1972: 201–02.

¹⁸⁹ M.A. Miller (1862–1938) was a drug store owner and Democratic politician from Linn Co., Oregon. He served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention five times. He was an at-large delegate to the 1896 convention.

¹⁹⁰ Sylvester Pennoyer (1831–1902) served as governor of Oregon from 1887 to 1895. He was a member of the Populist party and was elected mayor of Portland in 1896.

¹⁹¹ *Official Report* 1896: 298.

¹⁹² Haynes 2016: 231.

¹⁹³ The two-thirds rule was first adopted at the Democratic National Convention in 1832 and was more or less adhered to at every convention until the 1936 convention. Bensel 2008: 131; "South Bows to Change: Appeased by Promise to Reapportion as Two-thirds Rule Ends," *New York Times*, June 26, 1936, 1.

¹⁹⁴ Haynes 2016: 231; *Official Report* 1896: 312. Most of the gold leaders in the party had decided that abstaining from the proceedings (and particularly the voting) was their best strategy. "Their silent presence would dramatically protest the silver platform without compelling them to either oppose or support the ticket." Bensel 2008: 111.

¹⁹⁵ Haynes 2016: 231; *Official Report* 1896: 315.

twenty-two votes and stood at 219. Pattison was still in third place, with ninety-seven votes. Once again, 162 gold delegates had refused to participate in the balloting.¹⁹⁶

On the fourth ballot, the momentum shifted decidedly in Bryan's favor. For the first time, Bryan moved into the lead, with 280 votes. Bland dropped to second place, with 241 votes. Pattison still held on to third place with ninety-seven votes. One hundred and sixty-one gold delegates again refused to vote.¹⁹⁷ As the fourth ballot was being completed, the Illinois delegation (who had consistently cast its forty-eight votes for Bland) left the floor "for consultation."¹⁹⁸ Many saw this as a sign that Illinois was about to switch its votes from Bland to Bryan and help deliver Bryan the nomination.¹⁹⁹

Before the fifth ballot, the convention was in a state of frenzy, "with most suspecting that a Bryan nomination was coming on the next ballot."²⁰⁰ Chairman White then announced a ruling from the platform that all but guaranteed that Bryan would capture the nomination on the fifth ballot. According to White, the two-thirds rule for nomination meant that a candidate had to receive two-thirds of the delegate votes being cast, NOT two-thirds of the total delegates at the convention. Since only 768 votes were being cast, the winning candidate only needed 512 votes to secure the nomination.²⁰¹

Following White's pronouncement, balloting began for the fifth time. Alabama switched to Bryan; Colorado dropped its support of Teller and voted for Bryan; Kansas switched its votes from Bland to Bryan.²⁰² The roll call of states was completed in due course and Bryan still did not have enough votes to win the nomination. The secretary of the convention then returned to call the names of the states that had been passed. Illinois cast all forty-eight of its votes for Bryan. The Ohio delegation switched all forty-six of its votes from John R. McLean to Bryan. The chairman of the Missouri delegation then approached the podium and read a brief letter from Richard Bland. The letter stated, "I wish it to be understood that I do not desire the nomination unless it is the judgment of the free silver delegates that I would be the strongest candidate. If it should at any time appear that my candidacy is the least obstruction to the nomination of any candidate who is acceptable to the free coinage delegates in the Convention, or one more acceptable to a majority of those delegates than myself, I wish my name at once unconditionally withdrawn from further consideration."²⁰³ Bland's name was withdrawn from consideration and Missouri's thirty-four votes were cast for Bryan, finally putting him over the top.²⁰⁴ With the contest over, a motion to make the vote for Bryan unanimous was passed on a voice vote.²⁰⁵

Once Bryan was declared the winner, pandemonium broke out on the convention floor. According to the *Chicago Tribune*:

¹⁹⁶ Haynes 2016: 231; *Official Report* 1896: 320.

¹⁹⁷ Haynes 2016: 231; *Official Report* 1896: 320.

¹⁹⁸ On July 6th the Illinois delegation had voted 43 to 1 to endorse Bland and commit all forty-eight delegates to him under the unit rule. Bensel 2008: 267.

¹⁹⁹ Haynes 2016: 231.

²⁰⁰ Haynes 2016: 231.

²⁰¹ Haynes 2016: 231; *Official Report* 1896: 320.

²⁰² Koenig 1072: 202.

²⁰³ *Official Report* 1896: 323.

²⁰⁴ Haynes 2016: 232; *Official Report* 1896: 324.

²⁰⁵ Haynes 2016: 232.

The air was agitated by thousands of flags and handkerchiefs, banners, umbrellas, and the paper ear-trumpets with which hundreds of the audience had been trying to make the proceedings more audible, all wildly waving back and forth in honor of the victor of the contest. . . .

Down on the floor in the space reserved to the delegates there was equal commotion. The delegates were standing on their chairs watching with interest the efforts of the acres of people around them to make the heavens ring for Bryan and doing all they could to increase the noise. There was a struggle of free silver delegations to reach the standard of Nebraska, and the men of Iowa got there first and hoisted their huge banner of Boies in honor of his successful rival.

The features of the farmer candidate seemed at a distance to have lost some of their benignant expression for the moment, but the tribute to the winner tickled the fancy of the crowd, which recognized it with a stentorian shout which clapped the climax of the pandemonium that had been raging unrestrained from the moment the people knew that Bryan had been nominated.

The standards of the other States waved in the air like cornstalks of a Nebraska farm in a breeze as enthusiastic delegates hurried with them to the common center. They looked like a forest of blue saplings huddled about the seats of the Nebraska delegation, until their bearers started a triumphal procession around the delegates' seats. . . .

Pictures and banners of Bland and the banner representing the Bland silver dollar were carried like captives in the procession to grace the triumph for Bryan. Pictures of Bryan himself pierced and carried aloft on canes or umbrellas dotted the procession of the delegates and waved in the air all over the Coliseum. . . .

The standards of the sound money delegations did not join in the triumphal parade, but remained in their places, though there were indications that their custodians had hard work to keep them from being swept away by the enthusiasm of outsiders.²⁰⁶

The 1896 Democratic National Convention was a bruising affair. The Eastern wing of the party had fought with the Southern and Western portions of the party from the very beginning. The gold men were defeated and the silver men had gained ascendancy. Bryan had emerged victorious, "but his prize was the leadership of a broken party."²⁰⁷ As the Chicago Tribune concluded, "Never has the Democratic Party been so torn to pieces as it is now."²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ BenseI 2008: 300.

²⁰⁷ Koenig 1971: 208.

²⁰⁸ Sautter and Burke 1996: 98.

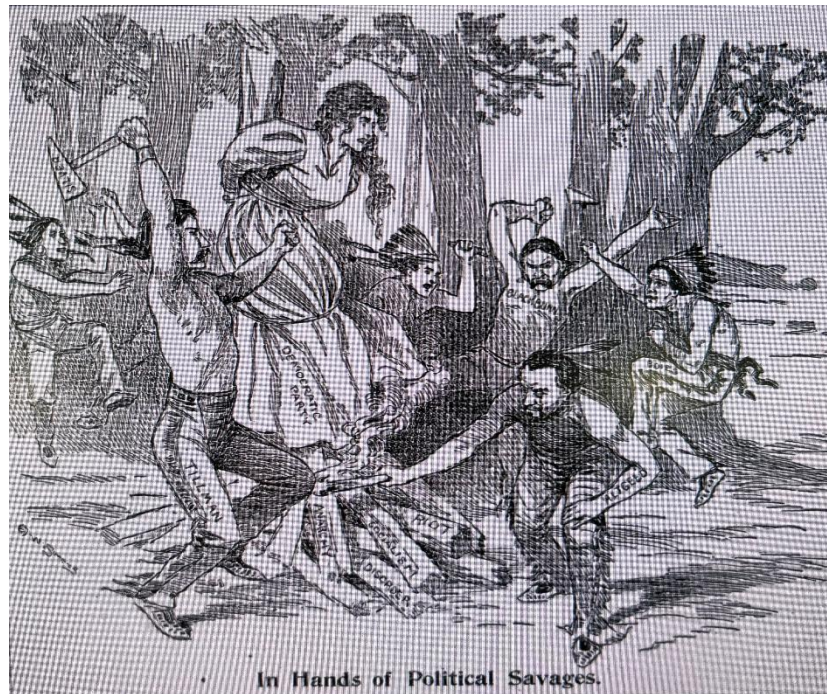


Figure 10.2: This cartoon by W. Simons, entitled “In the Hands of Political Savages,” depicts the Democratic Party as a woman being burned at the stake by the “political savages.” The cartoon appeared in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* on July 5, 1896.

A cartoon appearing in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* on July 5, 1896, showed the Democratic Party, in the form of a beautiful woman, tied to a tree in a forest. “Pitchfork” Ben Tillman, John Peter Altgeld, Horace Boies and Joseph Blackburn dance around her, bare chested, dressed as American Indians. Several of them carry silver tomahawks. Altgeld is bent over touching a lit torch to wood piled around the woman’s feet. The logs are labeled “anarchy,” “disorder,” “socialism,” and “riot.” The message is clear—the silver Democrats were burning the Democratic Party to the ground.

Not surprisingly, Bryan was unsuccessful on election day. McKinley polled 7,107,822 popular votes to Bryan’s 6,511,072. In the Electoral College, McKinley bested Bryan 271 to 176. Bryan won most of the western states (McKinley carried Oregon and California) and the solid South, but McKinley captured the industrial northeast, the critical midwestern states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa and carried the traditionally Democratic states of Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland and West Virginia.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁹ Sautter and Burke 1996: 101. The Populist movement never recovered from Bryan’s failure in the 1896 election. In the Midwest, the Populist Party essentially merged into the Democratic Party before the end of the 1890s. Lawrence Goodwyn 1978: 285–86. Although it continued to operate in the South and the West, by the first decade of the twentieth century it was a dried-out shell of its former self. Thomas E. Watson was the party’s nominee for president in 1904—he mustered only 113,258 popular votes and failed to capture a single electoral vote. McKee 1906: 401, 416–17. In 1913, Walter Lippmann wrote, “As I write, a convention of the Populist Party has just taken

The wounds that were opened and exacerbated prior to and during the 1896 Democratic National Convention simply could not be healed in the five months between the convention and the election. Most traditional Democrats—the Gold Democrats—turned their backs on Bryan, who, together with his running mate, Arthur Sewall of Maine,²¹⁰ did not carry a single state where Gold Democrats predominated: Connecticut, Delaware, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maryland, Pennsylvania. Without two or three of those states in his electoral column, Bryan had no chance of winning. Sectional tensions and mistrust among the Democrats practically guaranteed that the Republicans would capture the White House.



Figure 10.3: 1896 Democratic nominees William J. Bryan of Nebraska for President (l.) and Arthur Sewall of Maine for Vice President (r.).

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Chicago Tribune, July 5, 1896.

place. Eight delegates attended the meeting, which was held in a parlor.” Lippman 1913: 275. This was the last gasp of the People’s Party.

²¹⁰ Arthur Sewall (1835–1900) was a Maine shipbuilder.

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CHAPTER 11

Pressing the Case: Case Studies in the Use of Poetry in Sculptural Competition in Washington, D.C.

Julia A. Sienkewicz

During the War of 1812, the British military succeeded in exacting the ultimate indignity on the young United States when they set fire to the United States Capitol and the White House (then called the President's House). Although not yet completed, these structures were integral to the purpose-built capital city and crucial investments in the belief that the experimental nation could survive. After considering the abandonment of Washington, D.C., governmental leaders instead decided to double down on their investment. They pressed for the repair and completion of the buildings and began a campaign of construction, decoration, and embellishment that would last (with some interruptions) until after the Civil War. The history of the construction and decoration of these federal buildings has been the subject of extensive study and most of the works of art that were commissioned to adorn the Capitol and White House have become well-known backdrops of the nation's political pomp.¹ At least in theory, government officials sought to complete these buildings as quickly as possible, even authorizing the international recruitment of sculptors and stone-carvers.

Although Washington, D.C., did not have an existing reputation as a city of art (How could it, when it was founded merely a few decades earlier?), the word began to spread throughout the young United States and across the Atlantic Ocean, that it could be an auspicious destination for ambitious artists. That many artists travelled to, and sought commissions in, Washington, D.C. across these decades is well known. Less understood, to date, has been the structure through which they competed for commissions and how this process might have differed from the existing practices in European art centers. Lacking a Royal Academy of Art and an existing Salon exhibition culture, how could artists promote their work? How could viewers determine what was good and what merited a commission? Without any existing court and Academy infrastructure, which government official might have decision-making authority? While, of course, the structures of the art world in European capitals were neither immovable nor monolithic, the complete absence of any established procedure by which a democratic government would assess or commission art left the process open to any range of strategies that an artist could dream up. We can imagine the art world of Washington in these decades alternatively as a field of dreams or a minefield—but certainly not as an orderly, predictable process of calls for proposals, juries, and public comment.

As eager as government officials were to have completed structures in which to work, they often failed to allocate the necessary funds to keep the work moving forward and were perpetually distracted by issues more urgent than the sculptural and pictorial embellishment of governmental buildings. Catching the attention of these officials, guiding their decision-making, and ensuring the allocation of funds became a central concern of the artists who flocked to the

¹ Foundational texts include: Architect of the Capitol 1976; Brown 1900/1903 (also available in a reprinted edition with preface and updated annotations in Architect of the Capitol 2007); Fryd 2001; Kennon 2000; Reed 2005.

city, eager to work for the government. As they pressed their case, artists seeking high-profile commissions needed to walk a fine line between being perceived as caring for the public good and appearing to be wholly self-serving.

Records confirm that many strategies were employed for getting the attention of government officials. Artists would call on an official in his place of residence. They and their advocates would write letters of inquiry. They would participate actively in the social life of the city, attending social events hosted by government officials or cultural events in the city. They would spend as much time as possible in the public buildings—if they were lucky, they might be granted an improvised studio space in the Capitol or on its grounds. They would offer works for exhibition in the public spaces of the Capitol—frequently being allocated space in the Library of Congress (which was then inside the Capitol itself) and sometimes even in the Rotunda. They would offer to make portraits of government officials and, more generally, they would cultivate these relationships over many years' time. And, as will be the focus of this article, artists would seek to have their work promoted in the local and national press.

Of all the strategies employed by artists who competed for work in Washington, the use of press coverage has left the most substantial paper trail, producing overwhelming numbers of articles, issued in multiple regional publications.² In the case of Horatio Greenough, one of three sculptors discussed in greater detail here, many hundreds of newspaper articles mentioned the artist, with numerous featuring lengthy discussions of individual works, his studio, his travels, and other details of his career.³ In seeking press coverage, artists took advantage of another reality in Washington—the free press was able to comment without fear of official repression, which differed substantially from many other global regions at the time.⁴ Though its role in artistic competition has been only minimally explored, and the full weight of its influence remains to be more completely studied, newspaper coverage was a prominent factor in the jockeying among artists for government commissions.⁵ For all artists, a principal challenge of these decades was opposing the commonly-held notion that art was a tool of monarchs and aristocracies and that patronage was, therefore, unnecessary or even unwise for a democratic republic.⁶ Well-placed newspaper articles likely played a key role in swaying government officials on these matters as they deliberated, whether behind closed doors in committee rooms in the Capitol or in the White House, if a commission should be awarded and which artist(s) should produce the work.

The existence of a free press posed an alluring field of opportunity for artists. It also risked uncertain negative consequences, as the great degree of press freedom, coupled with the lack of official structures in the art world, meant that there were not many precedents to weigh in deciding how to engage with one's professional image or attack competitors' reputations.

² Once published, an article was often recirculated across numerous outlets throughout the United States, sometimes with reference to the periodical of origin and sometimes not.

³ My research archive on Greenough alone includes more than three hundred newspaper citations.

⁴ On the Italian peninsula in the same period, for example, the circulation of periodicals and the content they contained was highly correlated to the government structure in each area. Different cities were subject to varying levels of permissiveness or scrutiny and this could also change rapidly, depending on political events.

⁵ The most complete recent source that touches on this topic is Katz 2020. No similar source exists for art in the Washington, D.C. context. For historical context of art criticism in periodicals, see, *inter alia*: Ames 1972, Huntzicker 1999, Ratner and Teeter 2003, and Smith 1977.

⁶ For a discussion of these issues see, for example, Latrobe 1811: 16.

Through newspaper articles, artists faced the possibility of angering a crucial government official, being the subject of commentary that was damaging (or even fatal) to an artist's ambitions or stepping into a pitfall that could sour public opinion. Artists became public figures through extensive press coverage, a reality that came with pressures of its own. While artists might have some control over the positive coverage that they and their allies placed in the newspapers, they had little ability to anticipate or prevent negative articles that might emerge in the service of their competitors. Of course, rebuttals and counter-articles could be somewhat effective, but they might not erase the advantage achieved by certain accusations.⁷ In the years under consideration, increasing nativism and the 'know nothing' spirit of Jacksonian populism raised the hazards of press coverage for immigrant artists. Even if highly trained and eager to serve the young Republic, a foreign-born artist faced increasing challenges in a cultural moment in which native-born artists could manipulate identity politics and nativist tendencies, even if they lacked the artistic training and record to readily complete commissions.

For historians seeking to trace the activities of artists in the nineteenth-century, newspaper sources play an increasingly accessible role. While digitization is still ongoing, numerous periodicals have become available through free online platforms and paid databases that allow the collection of sources from home or office, reducing the need for the review of microfilm/microfiche or lengthy travel to archives of periodicals in distant cities. A topic as prominent as federal art commissions can yield a trove of hundreds of pertinent newspaper references, making this research abundance a bit of a mixed blessing due to challenges in organization, analysis, and synthesis of information.

If finding relevant articles is, increasingly, a straightforward process, analyzing them is more complex. Newspapers provide a rich set of sources and data-points, but through interpretation and analysis, historians must weigh the veracity and weight of the evidence and arguments presented in these sources. Many newspaper articles are anonymous, a fact that leaves open the question of whether they might have been authored by, or at the immediate request of, an artist mentioned in the story. Given the complex politics of Washington, and the close association of newspaper editors and contributors to members of the political class, the political allegiances of authors also linger just beneath the surface of the facts and arguments contained, sometimes obscuring, rather than clarifying, the basic information. Further, the tenor of periodical accounts must be assessed through the specific *politesse* of their period eye—compliments, offenses, and veiled attacks could be readily evident to the competing artists involved, but not always so clear to scholars. Close study of newspaper accounts in relation to one another in a short span of time, across the breadth of a specific commission competition, and / or across a single artist's career can allow deeper understanding of how periodicals were used by artists to serve their career aspirations, to settle accounts with one another, or to seek to move the needle on the public's assessment of art in service of democracy.

Among the many press strategies employed by artists and their supporters, one type of press coverage will be explored in this article: newspaper publication of poems about individual artists or their works. This article analyzes three poems, each about a different sculptor. The sculptors were each active with, or seeking, federal commissions. All three poems use ties to

⁷ In this period, artists could also not be certain of the same protections under the law that exist today. Articles could contain completely false information or even libelous statements, often without true repercussions.

Europe and allusions to antiquity, perhaps in an attempt to advance the career of the artist-subject. As a sub-set of press coverage about artists in Washington, D.C., poems were rare. These three examples, then, represent exceptional, rather than typical, instances in the relationship between artists and the press. In particular, this subset of materials represents the pinnacle of highbrow coverage for these artists. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thought, poetry was considered to be the highest art form, exceeding painting and sculpture. The close relationship between poetry and visual art, first conceptualized by Horace through the concept of *ut pictura poesis* (“as is painting so is poetry”),⁸ meant that poetry was also considered a valuable genre for interpreting and elevating the visual arts.⁹ Yet, since poetry was an elite art form, it could also pose certain pitfalls in a society where populist tendencies were on the rise and education would not necessarily hold sway. Despite the obvious risks, none of the three poems considered in this article attempts to address this wider populist audience. This article analyzes the themes raised in each poem and the comparisons and contexts put forward for each artist or work of art discussed. Considering the poems alongside one another, some reflections are also made concerning the possibilities and limitations of poetry as a promotional form of art-writing in Washington, D.C. periodicals of the 1830s and early 1840s.

The three poems considered here—each published and circulated in *The National Intelligencer*, the premiere newspaper of Washington—will serve as comparative examples of the role of poetry in competitions among sculptors. The work of an unnamed poet (credited solely as “A. P.”) was used to promote Luigi Persico (1781–1860), as he returned to Washington, D.C. from Naples, Italy in 1834 with two federal commissions in tow (allegorical figures of *War* and *Peace*), and launched a campaign to secure an additional commission [Fig. 11.4].¹⁰ Interestingly, the featured poem was published in French, a language that would have been familiar to many readers, but would inevitably have struck a foreign and, perhaps, elitist tone for American readers. Published only in this venue, the poem may have been composed, as Persico’s statues were shown in Naples, where they were modelled and carved, before being shipped to Washington. G. Hood, a poet about whom I have uncovered no further information, offered a “Sonnet to Pettrich, the Sculptor” in 1840—[Fig. 11.5].¹¹ Rather than praising a particular work by the sculptor Ferdinand Pettrich (1798–1872), the verses were centered on telling some aspects of his life story, and calling readers to support commissions from the sculptor. Lastly, H[enry] T. Tuckerman’s verses on Horatio Greenough’s *George Washington*, published in 1842 after the work was installed, to mixed reviews, in the United States Capitol, highlights the patriotic role the sculpture will play in the Rotunda, while also emphasizing the sculpture’s roots in Europe

⁸ Horace, *Ars Poetica* 361.

⁹ There is a long art historical tradition of analyzing *ut picture poesis* and the associated concept of *ekphrasis*, though this has long been more closely associated with the generation of paintings, rather than sculpture. Of particular interest to considering the relationship of sculpture to poetry in the early nineteenth century is Hamrick and Nash 2006.

¹⁰ “A. P.” 1834. Published in the *National Intelligencer*, Issue 6818, Column E, on December 17. 1834. English translation by Anne W. Sienkewicz and Julia A. Sienkewicz.

¹¹ Hood 1840.

[Fig.11.7].¹² The publication of a poem by Tuckerman, a prominent art critic, would associate the sculptor and his work with Tuckerman's professional reputation. Each of these three poetic examples offered endorsement and support of a sculptor engaged in, or seeking, work for the United States Capitol. Far from presenting straightforward criticism of the sculptors' works, these poems are each clearly intended to press the case of the sculptor's merit with an audience that had the power to endorse or decline future attempts to secure commissions. Overall, analysis and comparison of these poems indicates that their authors have little interest in a wider, populist audience and are, instead, directing their verses purely toward a more elite readership, probably consisting primarily of those politicians and other public officials who upheld the standards of taste.

This article is drawn from a much larger *corpus* of research for an in-progress book manuscript, currently titled *Modelling Civilization: Transnational Sculpture and the United States Capitol, 1825–1865*. This book studies the three commissions for sculptural "adornment" of the ceremonial east entrance of the United States Capitol [Fig. 11.1]. Each commission was justified as a work of architectural sculpture that would contribute to the completion of the building.



Figure 11.1: Persico completed three commissions on the Capitol's East front: *The Genius of America* (in the pediment), *Peace and War* (in niches behind the colonnade) and *The Discovery Group* (visible flanking the stairs). John Plumbe, *United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., east front elevation, ca. 1846*.

¹² These verses were published in Watterston 1842: 53–54 along with Watterston's description of Greenough's statue of Washington. While Watterston's book was still in press, the description of the statue and Tuckerman's verses appeared, with editorial comments, in *The National Intelligencer*. *The North American* 1842 reprinted the article from *The National Intelligencer*.



Figures 11.2 & 11.3: Marble replica of Luigi Persico, *Peace*, 1829-1835 (l.). Marble replica of Luigi Persico, *War*, 1829-1835 (r.). Re-carved 1958-1960 from the original statues under supervision of Paul Manship, with the work carried out by Carl Schmitz, George Giannetti and the Vermont Marble Company, viz

<https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/art/war-and-peace> [last accessed May 20, 2025]. Photographs courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol <https://www.flickr.com/photos/uscapitol/albums/>.

Persico completed the commission for *Peace* and *War*, designed for niches flanking the east entrance of the United States Capitol [Figs. 11.2 and 11.3]¹³ in 1834, but wound up in fierce competition with Greenough and Pettrich for another commission. This competitive process unfolded in Washington, D.C. between 1835 and 1837. Ultimately, the final commission was divided between Persico and Greenough, each of whom was responsible for a monumental sculpture group to flank the east staircase. The three poems discussed here were identified while gathering a large body of newspaper sources concerning these federal commissions.

In praising the work of Persico, poet A. P. focuses on responding to the allegorical works of *Peace* and *War*. At the time of the poem's publication, Persico had recently returned to Washington from Naples after an absence of five years during which he had conceptualized, modelled and carved the works.¹⁴ Although Persico seems to have taken pride in promoting his sculptural technique as based on realism, rather than on the classical tradition, the poem's opening lines praise him as a "rival to Canova" and as a "new Praxiteles." Antonio Canova (1757–1822) was the best-known name in sculpture in the young United States. Staging Persico as a rival of Canova would present him as worthy of the latter's legacy and therefore deserving of federal commissions. Positioning Persico as the inheritor of the legacy of Praxiteles, meanwhile, made a direct connection between the contemporary sculptor's work and the most renowned sculptures

¹³ The heavily-damaged original sculptures by Persico were placed in storage during renovations made to the Capitol façade in the 1950s. Recreations of the sculptures were made. These works were carved based on plaster models taken from the originals but also edited by the 20th-century sculptural team, who set out to make repairs and return the works to their original appearance.

¹⁴ Persico's studio practice remains undocumented. It is not known whether he carved the works himself or with the assistance of stone carvers in Naples

A.P.
 “Á Persico”

Rival de Canova! Praxitele nouveau,
 Mars et Vénus sont nés sous tes coups de ciseau!
 L'on admire dans Mars, la force et le courage;
 Il est prêt à marcher, à frayer son passage
 Autravers des guerriers, des morts et des mourants;
 A vaincre, à pardonner ses ennemis tremblants!
 Dans Vénus, ou la Paix, éclate de nobles;
 Le marbre est amolé, l'on y voit la souplesse,
 La grace et la beauté qui font naître l'amour;
 Ces deux Divinités te doivent donc le jour!

Translation:

Canova's Rival! New Praxiteles,
 Mars and Venus are born beneath your chisel blows!
 One admires the strength and courage in Mars;
 He is ready to march, to forge his pathway
 Through warriors, dead and dying men;
 To conquer, to pardon his trembling enemies!
 In Venus, or Peace, noble things burst forth;
 Marble becomes soft, suppleness is seen in it;
 Grace and beauty cause love to be born;
 These two Divinities, thus owe you their life!

Figure 11.4: A.P. (1834) “Á Persico,” *National Intelligencer*, December 1, 1834, Issue 6818, Column E.

from the ancient Greek tradition. With four quick words, the poet ambitiously pronounced Persico as equal to, or exceeding, the greatest artists of the ancient and modern traditions.

While these references to Canova and Praxiteles bring art historical context to the poet's praise of Persico, they also could have more specific meaning for claims about the artist's identity and worth. Canova was an Italian sculptor—and to an American audience Canova's name was associated with the most desirable characteristics of the Italian sculptural tradition. Canova represented Italy and the key qualities of Italian artists to Americans at this time. Praxiteles, by contrast, would be a tie to the Classical past and, specifically, to the Ancient Greek artistic heritage with which the American public associated itself through the form of its public buildings and, frequently, in political rhetoric.¹⁵ Conveniently enough, Southern Italy was *Magna Graecia*, the area of the Greek colonies on the Italian peninsula. Hailing Persico as the “new Praxiteles” could draw a direct line between the Neapolitan sculptor and his ancient Greek predecessor, both in terms of artistic traditions and racial heritage.¹⁶

The remaining nine lines speak directly of the sculptural works as if they are living divinities to which Persico has given life—another poetic strategy to elevate the sculptor's work. Both *War* (referred to by the poet as *Mars*) and *Peace* (referred to variously as *Venus* and *Peace*) are described in evocative, lifelike terms. Mars is described as prepared to charge forward powerfully in defense of his country and the certain defeat of his enemies. *Peace*, meanwhile, is characterized with the sensualized language typical of descriptions of *Venus*. The figure is “soft” and “supple” and inspires “love” in her viewers.

The poet's iconographic confusion between whether the statue presented an allegory of Peace or of Venus is interesting, as mischaracterizing the meaning of the figure surely lessens the conceptual power of the works. More sensitive art critics, including an anonymous author known only as “E,” viewed the success of the pair as lying in the moderating and calming force of *Peace*,

¹⁵ For American identity with its Greco-Roman heritage, see, for example, Reinhold 1984.

¹⁶ That people thought in this manner can be seen by the fact that a fierce critic of Persico's also sought to damage him by using a phrase from Horace to criticize the artist's possible Persian heritage—an ancestral origin implied by his last name. See *Boston Courier* 1835.

who could ensure that *War* did not spring into action unless his power was truly needed.¹⁷ Together, flanking the ceremonial entrance of the Capitol, the pair could reassure the American public that the country had the power and strength to act if necessary, but that the government would be guided by peace, not war. Misunderstood as *Venus*, rather than as *Peace*, the allegorical figure loses her ethical power. She becomes, instead, a seductress. Indeed, she risks provoking associations with beauty and lust as the instigators of war, such as in the role of Helen (and Venus) in setting the Trojan war in motion. This slippage of meaning, and the dangers of association with Venus, can be seen in an article critical of Persico, wherein his female allegorical figure is, in fact, criticized as sensual.¹⁸ Persico and his supporters should have been quick to correct this misperception of the work—but no corrective response to the poem was made.

Given its fundamental misunderstanding of the sculpture, it seems important to question whether this poem was put forward in the press at the request of Persico or by another source with less direct knowledge of the sculptor and his intent. While it is impossible to know the origins of the piece with any certainty and the actual identity of its poet remains unknown, I expect it is likely that Persico either placed the poem in the newspaper himself or encouraged its publication. Across the history of his work in Washington, Persico was consistently pragmatic and adaptable. When faced with political pressure and obstacles, he would take criticism with magnanimity—even changing the subjects of proposed works in order to conform to the preferences of his politically powerful interlocutors. The sculptor, who came from humble family origins and whose educational background had prepared him in *disegno* (“drawing”), but not in marble carving, may have felt the need to not only prove his worth by completing his commissions responsibly and in a timely fashion, but also to try to elevate his own reputation in the press.¹⁹ Although inaccurate in its understanding of the sculptor’s allegory, the poem presented strong praise for Persico by characterizing him as in the company of Praxiteles and Canova. Furthermore, even for readers who were not able to read the French text, this association of Persico with Canova and Praxiteles was easily understandable from the straightforward vocabulary of the title and first line of the poem. A monolingual English speaker could skim no further than the first line and receive the message of Persico’s grand company with sculpture’s greatest figures. So, it seems likely that Persico would have been pleased with the positive associations conveyed by this poem and perhaps not too concerned with the poet’s mixing of allegorical associations, as this message would only have reached those readers who were conversant in French and who might also be ready to quibble with iconographic misattributions.

That said, the French language of the poem posed its own risks—which Persico may have been ill-equipped to judge at the time that it was published. Persico, who had received consistent support and patronage from John Quincy Adams during his presidency, had been in Naples for most of Andrew Jackson’s presidency. He had no personal experience with the increasingly nativist populism that Jackson ushered into American politics. He, himself, had been educated in Naples during the time of French rule and he may have spoken French with greater mastery than English. While he had, perhaps, some warning of the shifting perspective toward immigrants (a self-identification that Persico might also have discounted given the fact that sources indicate he

¹⁷ “E” 1834.

¹⁸ *Boston Courier* 1835.

¹⁹ For biographical information on Persico, see Irollo 2015 and Vecchi 1847.

became a U. S. citizen in the 1820s), he may not have considered how the publication of a French language poem risked presenting himself as a foreigner. Persico had lived and worked in Washington for an extended period. He had numerous acquaintances—and probably friends—in Washington, which he considered his adoptive home. He may have believed that this poem would underline his credentials and reputation as a poet in an international context, without realizing that this foreign (or at least, foreign language) approbation could be met with both skepticism and disdain.

Jacksonian populism not only cultivated nativist tendencies but also privileged a more home-grown and less-educated demeanor. Thus, while the poem “*À Persico*” might have appealed to Quincy Adams and his associates, it is unlikely that it gained Persico any new friends in Washington among the circle of Jackson. Indeed, as he struggled over the ensuing three years to secure his next federal commission, he would learn the hard way that the politics and preferences in Washington had shifted dramatically during his absence, requiring him to fight back aggressively in order to redefine himself as “American” and as passionately committed to the nation’s principles. Direct evidence of the intertwined political and artistic stakes of A. P.’s poem can be found in a same-day response by a political correspondent to the poem:

By the way, two figures of Peace and War have just taken their stand in the Rotunda—probably that our legislators may, upon the French question, have an opportunity of consulting their favorite oracle. Be this as it may, the statues are very creditable to the artist, Persico, but not such models of perfection as to warrant a French poetical correspondent, in this morning’s *Intelligence*, in his adulatory exclamation, ‘Rival de Canova! Praxiteles nouveau!’²⁰

Amid international tensions between the Jackson administration and the nation of France, Persico’s statues of Peace and War had arrived just in time to guide the deliberations of Congress. Yet, the political commentator takes a jab at the “French poetical correspondent” and laughingly dismisses the notion that Persico’s sculptures put him on par with Canova and Praxiteles. The joke and the association of the poem with a foreign, French author, did not bode well for Persico’s chances of competitive success in a heated political climate.

Six years later, in 1840, G. Hood published “Sonnet to Pettrich, the Sculptor,” written for *The National Intelligencer*, in praise of Ferdinand Pettrich.²¹ Pettrich, who was the son of a sculptor and born in Dresden, had completed formal training in sculpture in the Roman studio of Bertel Thorvaldsen (1797–1838). He arrived in Washington in late 1835 and was already established in the city when this poem was published in 1840, having completed a number of prominent works since moving to the United States, including a bust of Andrew Jackson [Fig. 11 6]. Although he had a studio and had made some prominent friends, including the editors of *The National Intelligencer*, Pettrich had been unsuccessful in obtaining the federal commissions

²⁰ *Baltimore Gazette* 1834.

²¹ To date, I have not uncovered information about the author of this poem.

necessary to keep himself financially stable.²² In publishing this poem, the newspaper was advancing a years-long attempt to further Pettrich's career by shining a positive light on his education and abilities.

Like A.P. in his treatment of Persico, Hood elevates Pettrich's ties to Italy, beginning his sonnet with a reference to Rome as "that old city, whose imperial form / Yet awes the world, throned mid the wrecks of Art". Seemingly uncertain that his audience will be able to identify the place to which he refers, the newspaper includes a referential asterisk and names the city below. It is Rome, the poem states, that has "warmed" the "genius" of Pettrich through the "inspiring imagery" of the city's "wrecks of Art". If the ruins of empire have lit the flame of genius in the artist, the poet praises Pettrich for shrugging off the patronage of kings due to having been inspired by "Works by those proud old trophies of the free." The reference here to Pettrich's ready regal patronage is accurate, while Hood's reference to "trophies of the free" that would have inspired Pettrich is much more ambiguous. Is this a reference to Ancient Greek art of Periclean Athens? In such a case, the connections drawn would be similar to those in reference by A. P. to Praxiteles (though without any possible connection for Pettrich with Magna Graecia). Or, could Hood be referring to Pettrich's admiration of Republican Rome? This latter idea seems less likely, given the poem's allusion to the city as having an "imperial form." While the identity of the art objects that supposedly inspired Pettrich is unclear, their social importance is not. These works have inspired his travel across the Atlantic and led him to Washington, D.C.—the modern city most closely associated with the idea of "freedom." The poet concludes by welcoming Pettrich to the city and wishing him timely and free-flowing wealth. It ends with the phrase "and not *too late*" with the last words italicized to emphasize for

G. Hood. "Sonnet to Pettrich, the Sculptor; For the *National Intelligencer*"

From that old city,* whose imperial form
Yet awes the world, throned mid the wrecks of Art,
Not unregretted did thy genius, warm
From their inspiring imagery, depart;
Stored, like the pictured halls thou long hadst paced,
With dreams of beauty, and empowered to give
--Moulded in stone or on the canvass traced—
Them outward shape and bid them all but live.
Kings were thy patrons: but the impulse strong,
Woke by those proud old trophies of the free,
The objects of thy deep-felt wonder long,
Has borne thee here. A welcome, then, to thee!
Nor that alone—wealth, glory on thee wait,
Poured in no reflux tide and not *too late*!

*Rome.

Figure 11.5: Hood, G. (1840) "Sonnet to Pettrich, the Sculptor; For the *National Intelligencer*," *The National Intelligencer*, February 17, 1840.

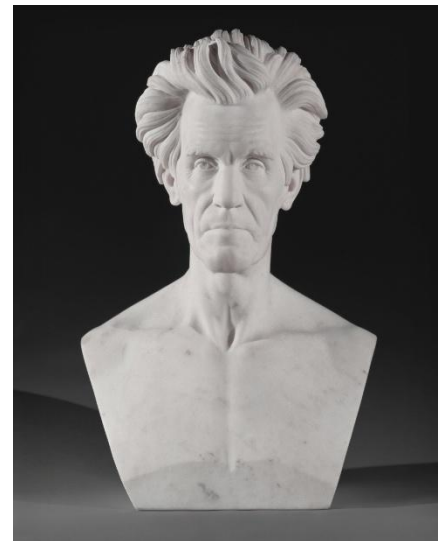


Figure 11.6: Ferdinand Pettrich, *Andrew Jackson*, later copy of original 1836 bust. Marble. Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, NPG.91.45.

²² Judging by the multiple comments in the press, it seems that Pettrich's financial situation was even more limited than that of the average artists. He travelled to Washington with a large family and commentators mentioned his financial exigency with respect to needing to support his family on various occasions.

the readers that Pettrich's need for financial support is substantial and urgent. Without spelling out the sculptor's challenging personal situation, Hood attempts to use wording and typography to spur readers into acts of patronage.

Hood's poem seeks to position the sculptor as someone motivated by the cause of "freedom" and desirous of using his high level of training in sculpture to advance freedom. The argument would seem a powerful one for an audience of politicians serving the founding vision of the young democratic republic. In praising Pettrich's decision to shrug off the patronage of kings, Hood is inviting his readers to see Pettrich as thoroughly committed to the American experiment. His words could even invite them to see the sculptor as the art world's answer to the great heroes of the Revolutionary generation, a connection that would be tantalizing to national leaders who needed to find appropriate artistic offerings for the nation's federal buildings through which to remember and celebrate the founding generation while also celebrate the nation's founding principles.

Importantly, Hood's promotion of Pettrich on these points is, in broad strokes at least, truthful. The sculptor came to the United States despite a job offer from King Otto of Greece to move to Athens and work there. Prior to the opportunity to work in Athens, Pettrich had been employed at Valhalla in Germany. He had also contributed works to the Catholic church in Rome and been noticed by the Vatican. It would be fair to say that multiple "kings" (including in that number the Pope, who had both religious and civic powers at this time) were interested in Pettrich before his departure for Washington. Despite this professional momentum, it is true that Pettrich chose to leave Europe and travel to Washington, D.C., perhaps under the inspiration of Thorvaldsen, who encouraged his protégé to believe that the young United States would have more opportunity to reward him for his efforts. Hood is by no means "puffing" Pettrich inaccurately with the assertion that his work attracted the interest of multiple monarchs.

That said, though, the depth of Pettrich's interest in "freedom" as a motivating concept is historically unclear. He was definitely motivated to serve the United States government, but, while he sought the financial security and public visibility of government patronage, his commitments to one form of government over another are murky. Indeed, after leaving the United States he worked from 1843 to 1858 for Emperor Don Pedro II of Brazil, then returned to Rome where he again offered his services quite willingly to Pope Pius IX, a world leader who was at the time aggressively engaged in fending off the unification of Italy and maintaining his temporal power. Of course, Hood would not have known that Pettrich would pursue these career options in the later 1840s and 1850s. Still, Pettrich's loose investment in the democratic principles of the United States government may have been evident in other aspects of the decisions he made during his years in Washington, D.C. Would readers of *The National Intelligencer* have found Hood's poem convincing in how it described this aspect of Pettrich's motivations?

In some level of tension with Hood's assertion of Pettrich's commitment to freedom was the fact that the artist was a well-known member of the Roman Catholic Church. His first major commissions in the region were in 1837 for St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Frederick, Maryland. In 1840, there was a high-level of suspicion of Catholics, and especially of German Catholic immigrants, among the American public. In politics and elsewhere in American life, hateful attacks were voiced against this religion and ethnic community, which was accused of having greater loyalty to the power of the Roman Catholic Church than to the United States.

Allegiance to the Pope was seen by many as antithetical to allegiance to the United States. Although Pettrich had left Germany decades earlier and was more truly a citizen of Rome than of Germany, his ethnic origin and limited English mastery would surely have made some members of the Washington community suspicious of his political allegiances. As a poet, Hood certainly had no obligation to provide evidence to the contrary, but he could have made his praise of Pettrich on this point more convincing if he had offered a description of a completed or proposed work of art by Pettrich that spoke to the principles of freedom and/or the structure of the U. S. government.

Though Hood's poem was written in English rather than French, it seems no more likely than A.P.'s poem to have connected with a broad American reading audience. Those readers who would be drawn to Hood's discussion of the old city with "imperial form" and the reference to "old trophies of the free" would be put off by the assumption that they could not even identify the city of Rome. They might also be unimpressed by Hood's lack of actual engagement with any of Pettrich's works. Worse, though, would be the reaction of an audience committed to a more populist mentality. Hood's poem is hardly written in a style to connect with a common reader. Realistically, the poetic offering probably did at least as much damage as good to Pettrich's public image. Given the artist's limited mastery of English, it seems likely that the poem was solicited and promoted by the editors of *The National Intelligencer* rather than by the sculptor himself, though likely the effort could have come about due to the sculptor requesting additional support from them.

Lastly, the poem by Henry T. Tuckerman (1813–1871), written in honor of Horatio Greenough's *George Washington* [Figure 11.8], offers intriguing comparisons with the poems published in support of Pettrich and Persico. At the time of the poem's publication, Tuckerman was a well-known art critic and writer. He is also known to have been closely associated with Greenough. After the sculptor's death, Tuckerman published a memorial volume honoring Greenough's life and work.²³ Publishing the poem under his own name ensured its wide circulation in periodicals and emphasized his support for Greenough in a moment when the sculptor's work was receiving acrimonious, mixed responses.²⁴ Tuckerman's poem, like that dedicated to Persico, discusses a work of art that has already been commissioned and completed

"The following appropriate lines on this statue, by Mr. H. T. Tuckerman, will be found interesting:

The quarry whence thy form majestic sprung
Has peopled earth with grace,
Heroes and gods that elder bards have sung—
A bright and peerless race.
But from its sleeping veins ne'er rose before
A shape of loftier name
Than his who glory's wreath with meekness wore—
The noblest son of fame.

And it is well to place his image there,
Beneath the dome he blest.
Let meaner spirits, who in council share,
Revere that silent guest.
Let us go up with high and sacred love,
To look on his pure brow,
And as with solemn grace he points above,
Renew the patriot's vow."

Figure 11.7: "The following appropriate lines on this statue, by Mr. H. T. Tuckerman, will be found interesting" in Watterston, George (1842) *A New Guide to Washington*. Washington, D.C.: Robert Farnham.: 53–54.

²³ Tuckerman 1853.

²⁴ *Inter alia*, see Rand 2020 for an overview of the press coverage.

for the U. S. government. Greenough was still actively at work on a second government commission and surely would have thrown his hat in the ring for other opportunities, so even as this poem focuses on a completed work of art, it actively engages with promoting the sculptor for ongoing and future commissions.

Tuckerman begins his poem in Italy, invoking the quarries of Carrara from which the large block of stone for Greenough's *Washington* was removed.²⁵ From these quarries, Tuckerman intones, "earlier bards" have produced "a bright and peerless race" of divinities and heroes, but the quarries had been "sleeping" for some time until Greenough's "form majestic sprung" from them, surpassing the earlier sculptures because of the nobility of its subject. This first stanza of Tuckerman's poem, in broad strokes, positions ff's *Washington* in dialog with sculptures from an ancient past. Unlike the previous poems, however, he does not specifically invoke the sculptural traditions of Greece or Rome and, instead, refers to earlier "bards"—a term more readily used in the literary tradition than in visual art criticism. Washington exceeds the figures of these ancient bards due to the "meekness" of his leadership. Likewise, Greenough, may, by implication, surpass the ancient sculptors.

If the first stanza links Greenough's work with the ancient world, the second stanza concentrates on the present. The reader is brought directly into the Rotunda of the Capitol to reflect on the cultural and political impact of the sculpture installed in this site of civic pilgrimage. The statue is found "beneath the dome he [Washington] blest" where the honored legacy of the nation's first president is in contrast with the "meaner spirits" of the nation's contemporary politicians. The current inhabitants of the Capitol are expected to "revere" Washington. The legislators will be joined in this reverence by the rest of the American populace ("us") whom Tuckerman encourages to approach the statue with "high and sacred love" and "renew the patriot's vow," even as Washington "points above," redirecting their reverence from him to God. Through this stanza, Tuckerman highlights the key functions that the statue was commissioned to serve: to inspire legislators via the memory of Washington and to offer a destination of public memory and commemoration for American citizens when they visited the Capitol. For both public servants and members of the public, a visit to the statue would help to reinforce their feelings of patriotism and guide them to recommit to the nation's principles.

Interestingly, Tuckerman's poem says almost nothing about the appearance of the statue, other than its reference to the figure's gesture upward. Unlike the poems to Persico and Pettrich, which both take pains to emphasize the artistic prowess of the sculptors, this poem promotes



Figure 11.8: Horatio Greenough, *George Washington*, 1832–1841. Marble. Collection of the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution.

²⁵ That Tuckerman led his poem with European allusions is no surprise, as his most popular publication was his *The Italian Sketchbook*, first published in 1835, and republished in multiple editions.

the worth of the sculpture's subject while sidelining its aesthetics and, largely, its maker. In the 1830s and 1840s, Washington's legacy was peerless among the founders and Tuckerman clearly believed that readers would enjoy his poem (and the statue it discusses) most if they were focused on the persona of Washington. Perhaps he also hoped that his own authority as an art critic and writer would persuade readers of the worth of the statue without him needing to argue the case for its aesthetic merits. Yet, it was precisely the aesthetic attributes, not the subject, of the sculpture that caused it to be a hotly contested work and so Tuckerman's poem failed to address the aspects of the work that mattered most to the viewers. Commentators were upset by Greenough's decision to show Washington as a draped Classical nude, with many noting that the nation's first president would have been uncomfortable with such an immodest representation. Consequently, if Tuckerman's poem was published in an attempt to defend the reputation of his sculpture and increase the public reception of his work, it likely did little to move the needle.

In its appearance in the *National Intelligencer*, the poem was published along with the description of the statue from George Watterston's *A New Guide to Washington* (which was then in press). The editors of the *National Intelligencer* took note of the text's agnostic assessment of the statue itself, including the following editorializing comment: "The author has confined himself to a description of this work of art alone, and avoided any criticism of its merits or defects, as out of place in such a work. It is brief, and we think correct."²⁶ The editors' comment refers explicitly to Watterston's guidebook description, but it is also salient to Tuckerman's verses. While supportive and complimentary about the statue, both the prose description in the guidebook text and the accompanying poetic dedication sidestep a rigorous interpretation of the statue from the perspective of art criticism. Tuckerman's reputation and publication platform was such that he surely did not need to couple the publication of his poem with Watterston's guide, but there may have been financial or other reasons to do so. This publication venue could, in turn, have impacted the contents of the poem. Perhaps Watterston might have declined to publish the poem if it took a different, more opinionated, approach in its discussion of the statue. By sticking to the facts of the work with respect to Washington's legacy, Tuckerman composed a poem that could be circulated broadly in a variety of contexts without objection or uproar.

Equally interesting to consider from a public press perspective is Tuckerman's decision to ignore Greenough's identity as a native-born artist and focus, instead, on the connection of Greenough's statue to Europe and European history. Commentators who supported Greenough over immigrant artists generally did so on the basis of his identity as the first U. S.-born and professionally trained sculptor. Yet, Tuckerman's poem is completely silent about the identity of the artist. Instead, it speaks of Carrara and the bards of ancient Europe, putting the "noblest son of fame" in the company of these European ancestors, rather than firmly in the hands of this "Yankee stonecutter" (a label Greenough used to refer to himself).²⁷ In taking this approach, Tuckerman made a similar mistake to Greenough's own defenses of the work, in which he often tried to educate the American public about why they should align their tastes with European appreciation of neoclassical form. Tuckerman likely believed that associating the sculpture with Carrara and asserting its superiority to earlier sculptural precedents were two important prestige

²⁶ *The North American* 1842.

²⁷ Greenough 1852.

aspects of the work; yet, American readers may have seen it otherwise. Readers who might have been inclined to appreciate a poem celebrating the first major public sculpture by the nation's first native-born professional sculptor may well have been left frustrated that fifty percent of the poem focused on the European origins of the sculpture. Even the sculptor's upbringing in Massachusetts went unmentioned.

As a subset of newspaper coverage about artists in Washington, D.C., poems make up a very small part. None of these artists was first introduced to the readership through poetry and each had extensive coverage over years of publications, including both positive and negative press. Consequently, broader conclusions about the impact and intricacies of press coverage on artists' careers cannot be drawn from this small subset of materials. Still, this close reading of three verse contributions yields some interesting points of comparison across these examples. First, each of these poems foregrounds Europe and European connections—especially ties to the traditions of the ancient world. Only the Hood poem about Pettrich seems to imply a moral or political inferiority of the ancient world and European context, while foregrounding the artist's commitments to the principles of the young democratic republic. As already discussed, Hood's assertions are not coupled with mentions of objects or actions that would verify his claims. Second, none of the poems attempts to speak directly to a broad, public audience. Instead, they take a high-brow tone, clearly speaking from an elite perspective and seeking to reach a more elite audience. They engage with the artist's careers, objects, and subjects on an elevated level. One poem is published in French, another speaks grandiosely about the history of empires, ruins, and forms of government, and the third leads with vague allusions to the quarries at Carrara and the objects that have emerged from them. Third, none of the three poems speaks strongly to the identity-based issues that drove arguments about artistic commissions on the floor of Congress and in numerous other newspaper articles. Neither Tuckerman nor A.P. mention a word about the artist's backgrounds or socio-political commitments. Hood comes close to weighing in on these issues. He mentions aspects of Pettrich's life that point to the artist's origins (Rome, after all, warmed the sculptor's genius) and he claims that Pettrich has turned a cold shoulder to the patronage of kings because he is inspired by "old trophies of the free." But Hood's passive language and oblique references make these points hard to parse. Further, he does not clarify how these vague connections to "old trophies of the free" might be tied to identity or governance in the contemporary United States. Lastly, current issues of American society and politics barely enter into these poems. Of the three, only Tuckerman speaks directly to the contemporary American context and his clearest reference is to the "meaner spirits" of current politics who do not rise to the standard set by Washington. Hood urges readers to commission work from Pettrich before it is "too late," but the reference lacks specific context and comes only in the final two lines of the poem. While it is clear that each poet speaks of public sculpture and that their contributions were intended to gain interest due to current commissions, or due to arguments over the work of the sculptor in question, none of these issues were directly discussed.

Why would poets sidestep issues and arguments of such significance to current discourse? Why would they be content with speaking to a limited audience? Why are they clear in their praise of European heritage and history, but relatively silent on the contemporary issues and priorities of their contemporary, American context? Likely, these commonalities can be understood as the result of the genre itself. Poetry, as the highest of the literary arts, was expected to communicate with its audience at a different level from other, more mundane, forms

of writing. Overtly addressing current arguments in politics and the press about specific commissions would likely limit the perceived value of a poem. Instead, these poets sought to engage with overarching, more timeless, themes about art and artists.

Even if the poets sought to stay above the fray and sidestepped current arguments of art and politics in the content of their contributions, these poems remain significant aspects of the historical record in artistic competitions in Washington, D.C. It seems that the quality and content of each of these poems was, ultimately, less important than their existence and circulation; these poems were prestige pieces. Clearly, none of these poems were written to convince an audience on a single point. The highbrow language, vague allusions to history, and general pretension of these poems notwithstanding, their most important job was to elevate the sculptor's status. Indeed, the poets' decision to ignore ongoing arguments about the artists and their works reflects the pretension of their genre and claims their elite position above the pettiness of such disputes.

Since poetry was a relatively-rare contribution in the large body of writings about artists, and since it held a position of prestige in the history of art criticism, these poems could easily bring attention to their artist-subjects—especially when circulated broadly in a daily newspaper. Whether they read the poem or not, and whether they thought about its meaning or not, readers of *The National Intelligencer* would rapidly connect the sculptor with the poem (indeed, the contributions by both A.P. and Hood have the artist's name in the title). Few artists were so lucky as to have poems dedicated to their work, so this fact alone was likely to elevate the attention and appreciation for their work. Additionally, given the elite circles with which poetry was associated, the publication of these poems ensured that their subjects would be perceived as artists of a certain, elevated stature, perhaps increasing their value in the eyes of politicians and public servants who controlled the distribution of future, public commissions.

In the ongoing work of pressing the case for an artist's career, the publication of poetry in newspapers had a transactional role to play that was far more important than the ideas of the poet or the literary value of the poem itself. Scanning the page of a daily periodical, the different typeset of the lines of poetry stood out prominently. Certainly, some readers with literary or artistic pretensions might review the poem carefully, parsing its arguments and allusions with care. But many more readers might glance quickly at the text before moving on to the other news (whether political, society, financial, real estate, or otherwise) of greater interest and importance to them. While written in verse that targeted the more literary audience, these poems were likely equally important for the information they conveyed to the scanning reader. Having taken note of the different block of text, the newspaper's reader would quickly see the poem was about "Persico," "Pettrich" or the "Statue of Washington". In the end, that was all the information that most readers really needed. From this brief recognition and association with poetry, the statue or the artist could rise in name value and prestige, perhaps increasing the chance of favorable reviews and future patronage.

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Part 5: THE ROMAN EMPIRE, THEN AND NOW

CHAPTER 12

The Censorship of the Emperor Claudius

Joseph R. O'Neill

In 41 CE, upon the assassination of Gaius Caesar, Tiberius Claudius Drusus was hailed emperor by the Praetorian Guard. Assuming the name Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, Claudius became the fourth emperor of Rome. There were some hesitations about Claudius at the outset.¹ Although there was no doubt about his membership in the *domus augusta*—he was the grandson of Augustus' wife, Livia, and uncle to the newly deceased emperor Gaius—Claudius lacked any significant military or political achievements that would qualify him for the role of emperor. The Senate debated installing someone of their choosing who had the military and political experience Claudius lacked, while some even argued that the time was ripe for discarding the princeps altogether and restoring the long-dead Republic.² From the outset, Claudius had to assert his legitimacy as the rightful ruler of Rome and he did so, first and foremost, by self-consciously emulating Augustus, modeling his self-presentation on that of the first emperor. While also asserting his connection with the Julian *gens*, he sought to elevate the Claudians, which he did by recalling his connection with his popular late brother Germanicus (hence his new name), deifying his grandmother Livia Augusta (in 42 CE), and emulating illustrious ancestor such as Appius Claudius Caecus, who was censor in 312 BCE.

Claudius also strove to cast himself, like Augustus before him, as a new re-founder of Rome. Augustus' explanation and justification of his exceptional position rested largely on his claim that he was Rome's savior and the sole guarantor of its future peace and stability. The *Res Gestae* provide the framework for interpreting the rhetorical deployment of Augustus' military and diplomatic achievements in terms of a legitimizing discourse of re-foundation.³ Throughout, Augustus returns to themes of salvation and augmentation, notionally related features in the discourse of founding. He presents the civil wars as campaigns against factions whose lawlessness threatened the very survival of the *res publica*. He undertook foreign campaigns to correct past wrongs and restore Rome's previously diminished prestige. He augmented the prestige of the Roman people and secured lasting peace by expanding and fixing the borders of the empire. In exchange for these services, Augustus was granted extraordinary honors, the most conspicuous of which was his name.⁴ We are told that Augustus initially wanted to be called "Romulus,"

¹ The surviving literary accounts (Joseph. *AJ.* 19.2; Suet. *Claud.* 10; and Dio 60.1) each provide slightly different versions of events. What they most have in common is that there was hesitation.

² Claudius' family subjected him to ridicule and isolation. Augustus and Tiberius both saw to it that Claudius was kept out of the limelight. Gaius granted him a consulship, but because he repeatedly humiliated his uncle publicly, it is not unreasonable to conclude that office was conferred as a cruel joke—or so our literary sources would lead us to believe. As such, Claudius had no political or military accomplishments to speak of, and it is not difficult to imagine why, in the wake of Gaius' disastrous reign, some senators might have been reluctant to see Claudius as princeps.

³ Angelova 2015: 44 argues that the public display of the *Res Gestae* on Augustus' mausoleum, and the form and location of the monument, constituted "an audacious statement in the discourse of founding" that later emperors (in particular Hadrian and Constantine) would appropriate.

⁴ Augustus makes it quite clear that he received his new name and other exceptional honors in exchange for (*quo pro merito meo*, *RG* 34.2) putting an end to civil war and restoring the *res publica*.

because by saving the state from destruction, he founded it anew. He is said to have accepted “Augustus,” however, because it was novel, had special religious significance, and had associations with the city’s foundation.⁵ Angelova argues that it was no coincidence that Augustus accepted his new name and other extraordinary religious honors on the day he surrendered his *potestas* to the senate, announcing that he would thereafter guide the restored *res publica* by his *auctoritas*. Pointing to the religious significance of words derived from *augere*, she argues that Augustus meant for his name to be understood as a synonym for “founder.”⁶ By taking the name he did, Augustus was able to associate himself with the foundation of Rome, while avoiding the stigma of Romulus himself, whose fratricide and rapes would have been a constant reminder of Augustus’ own bloody rise to dominance.⁷ An integral part of Claudius’ emulation of Augustus’ claims of re-foundation and renewal was his revitalization of the censorship—an ancient office then in abeyance for nearly 70 years—which he did in 47 CE (Suet. *Claud.* 16.1).

The question is why then, six years after his elevation to the purple? The answer lies in the concurrence of Claudius’ censorship and the expansion of the *pomerium*—the sacred boundary of the City—in the 800th year of Rome’s founding (Tac. *Ann.* 11.11.1). Claudius used his censorship, in part, to explain and justify his extraordinary powers as princeps by becoming a new re-founder of Rome.⁸ As important as the revived censorship was to Claudius’ self-presentation as emperor, no coherent narrative of Claudius’ censorship survives from antiquity, and the extant sources are quite hostile. Therefore, in this paper I lay out Claudius’ achievements as censor. In so doing, I show the extent to which Claudius’ censorship hearkened back to Rome’s distant past and connected it with renewal and re-foundation.

The imperial biographer Suetonius discusses Claudius’ censorship briefly in one chapter (*Claud.* 16), while there are reports of other acts consistent with the office scattered throughout his biography of Claudius. The censorship is not explicitly mentioned in the epitome of Cassius Dio’s account of the years 47 and 48, though there are references to various acts consistent with the office, especially regarding Claudius’ policing of public morality. Tacitus provides us with what is closest to a concise extant literary account of Claudius’ censorship, but his report is deeply problematic. Tacitus’ own rhetorical project and his political disposition significantly color his representation of Claudius’ reign. However, piecing together reports from Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio, and other literary and epigraphic sources, allows us to gain insight into the lengths to which Claudius went to revitalize the ancient office.

The primary function of the censors was to conduct the census. From its inception, the purpose of the census was to organize Rome’s citizen-soldiers into ranks based on each man’s

⁵ The question of Augustus’ name is not unproblematic. Angelova 2015:10–12 provides an excellent overview of both the ancient sources and recent scholarship. Suetonius writes that “Romulus” was proposed because Octavian was Rome’s second founder, but that “Augustus” was chosen because of its novelty, and its association with the holiest things (*Aug.* 7.2). Cassius Dio writes that Octavian “strongly desired to be called Romulus” (ὁ Καῖσαρ ἐπεθύμει μὲν ἰσχυρῶς Ῥωμύλος ὀνομασθῆναι, 53.16.7), but that “Augustus” showed Octavian to be more than human (ὥς καὶ πλεῖόν τι ἢ κατὰ ἀνθρώπους ὦν, 53.16.8), and notes that all of the most precious and holiest things were called *augusta* (πάντα γὰρ τὰ ἐντιμώτατα καὶ τὰ ἱερώτατα αὐγουστα προσαγορεύεται, 53.16.8).

⁶ Suetonius (*Aug.* 7.2) explains the etymology of *augustus*, which he connects to the foundation of Rome directly by reciting a line from Ennius (*Ann.* 155 [Skutsch]): *augusto augurio postquam incluta condita Roma est*, “after Rome was founded by august augury”.

⁷ It is an association that authors like Ovid were not quick to forget (e.g., *Fas.* 2.127–48).

⁸ O’Neill 2020.

ability to arm himself. Legend has it that the first census was taken by the king Servius Tullius in the sixth century BCE (Livy 1.44). He counted up and assessed the citizenry, turning a mass of individuals into a well-organized fighting force. After the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of the Republic, responsibility for conducting the census fell to the consuls, Rome's chief executive officers. However, the burden of such an undertaking proved too much for the consuls and in the middle of the fifth century BCE, the first censors were elected (Livy 4.8). By the middle-republican period, the census had become "one of the most essential functions of the state," producing, among other things, the voting, taxation, and conscription rolls that formed the basis of civic life at Rome.⁹ Even as political realities changed over the centuries, the census remained the formalized set of procedures according to which the Roman body politic was constituted.¹⁰ It continued to determine who belonged, and where. It turned a mass of individuals into the Roman body politic, the *populus Romanus*. Throughout the republican period, censors were elected every five years or so until the disruptions of the civil wars that brought about the demise of the Republic. The last censors were Paullus Aemilius Lepidus and Lucius Munatius Plancus in 22 BCE (Suet. *Claud.* 16.1). During his reign, Augustus did conduct censuses, and performed other duties associated with the old *munia censoria*, but he did so in his capacity as princeps. Augustus never assumed the censorship.¹¹

In his report of the year 48, Tacitus writes that Claudius completed the census (*Ann.* 11.25.5). Tacitus' phrasing is telling. He writes (11.25.5):

condiditque lustrum, quo censa sunt ciuium LVIII.LXXXIII.LXXII.

And he conducted the *lustrum*, in which 5,984,072 citizens were enrolled.

Tacitus' emphasis is on the *lustrum*, the ritual purification of the *populus Romanus*, not the counting itself—the counting is subsumed under the *lustrum* in order of precedence, as if the ritual purification were the main event. This represents the grand finale of Claudius' censorship, arguably the most important part of the office. Going back to the legendary monarchy, the census concluded with the *lustrum*, the rite that purified and inaugurated the newly formed body politic.¹² It is generally regarded as a kind of closing ceremony, but it originally may have been what actually turned a group of Roman bodies into the Roman body politic.¹³ As we shall soon

⁹ Soulahti 1963: 20–21.

¹⁰ Direct taxation ceased after 167 BCE, but the census remained important for determining class for military service and voting (Soulahti 1963:38). After the Marian reforms, the census remained important because it determined voting privileges in the centuriate assembly (Wiseman 1969:59–60). By 27 BCE, the responsibilities of the centuriate assembly passed to the Senate, but direct taxation had been reintroduced, so the census remained necessary.

¹¹ Osgood 2011: 158.

¹² Wiseman 1969:64 argues that, at least in theory, there could be no *lustrum* without a census, nor would a census be valid (or I would argue, even necessary) without the *lustrum*. From at least the middle of the 2nd century BCE, *lustrum condere* and *lustrum facere* became synonymous with the taking of the census, suggesting the importance of the rite.

¹³ Habinek 2005:8–9 argues that ritual mimetic movement allows for the creation of collective identity and is essential for transforming a group of individuals into a community. The *lustrum* must be one such ritual. Collective movement

see, the *lustrum* also inaugurated a new temporal cycle. It is difficult to reconstruct all the details of the ritual, but it is apparent that its defining feature was the purification of the newly constituted *populus Romanus* with a circumambulatory procession and triple sacrifice. The censors either led the *populus* out of, around, and back into the city, or they conducted the sacrificial victims around the *populus*, who, assembled as they were in the Campus Martius, were outside of the religious boundary of the city.¹⁴ What matters was that the newly-constituted *populus Romanus* was outside the city, whether literally or symbolically, so that it could re-enter as a new entity. After the procession, either the circumambulation of the people around the city, or the victims around the people, the purificatory sacrifice of the pig, ram, and bull—the *suouetaurilia maiora*—was made (Varro *Rust.* 2.1.9; Livy 1.44.1–2). With the conclusion of the rites, the newly constituted *populus Romanus* was purified and inaugurated, and the census rolls—the list of who belongs and where—were deposited in the temple of the Nymphs in the Campus Martius where they would remain until the next census. Rome was founded anew.

The *lustrum*, however, did not only inaugurate a new *populus Romanus*. It also marked the beginning of a new period of time in the life of Rome. The etymology of *lustrum* is not well understood, but it is a word that refers to both circular motion, and purification. It is possible that the double meaning of *lustrare* (‘to move around something’ and ‘to purify’) relates to the rotation of the heavenly bodies.¹⁵ Such a connection would imply a natural relationship between the *lustrum* and the passage of time. *Lustrum*, in fact, came to mean a period of time, an interval of approximately five years, and formed a basic unit of temporal reference in the life of the state.¹⁶ The notion of a *lustrum* as five-year period is typically said to derive simply from the fact that censuses happened to have been taken about every five years. That is, the occurrence of the magistracy determined the timing of the census, which determined the timing of the *lustrum*. It is unlikely, however, that the intervals between *lustra* were set so arbitrarily. It seems plausible that the appropriate times for the *lustra* (and therefore the censuses) were originally determined ritually, perhaps based on the observation of portents, just as the beginnings of new *saecula* were originally determined (Verg. *Ecl.* 9.46–50; Plut. *Sulla* 7.3). That is, the *lustrum*, a “significant rhythmical pattern in the life of the city” may have been attended by reconstitution of the body

in imitation of, say, planets or stars, or even ambling livestock, *turns* many individual Romans into the Roman citizen body.

¹⁴ Varro (*Ling.* 6.87, 93) supports the notion of the people moving around the city. Evidence from the Column of Trajan, depicting a *lustratio exercitus*—notionally similar to the censorial *lustrum*—supports circumambulation of the *exercitus/populus* with the sacrificial victims around the city walls (scene 53), see Ogilvie 1961:pl. I. Ogilvie 1961:36 further cites as evidence for circumambulation of city walls or camp palisades the Augustan arch at Susa, the column of Marcus Aurelius, the arch of Constantine, and the Bridgeness relief. Granted, these are military *lustra*, but it must be remembered that, in Rome’s earliest days, the most basic configuration of the *populus Romanus* was the citizen militia (Suolahti 1963:45–46). The census frieze on the so-called altar of Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, however, suggests circumambulation of victims around a stationary *populus* (Ogilvie 1961:pl. II). See also Gruen 1992:147–50, 172. A remark by Cicero seems to support this interpretation (Cic. *Div.* 103). Cato’s discussion of the *suouetaurilia* suggests that all purificatory rituals required sacrificial victims be led around the thing to be purified (*Agr.* 141). It is not implausible that originally, the *populus/exercitus* (Livy uses the terms interchangeably, 1.44) were literally led out of the city and then led back in, but as the city and its population grew, the ritual was adapted.

¹⁵ See Ogilvie 1961 for a detailed discussion of the possible etymologies of *lustrum/lustrare*. Plutarch discusses worshippers’ turning during religious rites, perhaps in imitation of “the rotation of the *kosmos*” (ἡ περιφορὰ τοῦ κόσμου, *Numa* 14.4).

¹⁶ For discussions of *lustrum* as a period of time, see *RE* 13.2 (2046.2), Ogilvie 1961:34, and Feeney 2007: 176–77.

politic, and not the other way around.¹⁷ In short, if the census was the procedure for formally constituting the *populus Romanus*, and if the *lustrum* marked the end of one period of time and the beginning of another, then the essential function of the censors was the inauguration of a new cycle in the life of Rome.

Claudius revived the censorship so that he could ritually renew the *populus Romanus*—an essential part of his legitimizing discourse of re-foundation. He did so by counting up the citizens—no insignificant feat in a pre-industrial society—and ritually reconstituting the body politic with the *lustrum*.¹⁸ However, there are other duties that befall the censors which Claudius' enacted as part of his revival of the office. These *munia censoria* are ancillary responsibilities assumed over time by the censors and include the censors' *cura morum*, or policing of public morality, their responsibility for overseeing public contracts and public works, and the *lectio senatus*, their duty to maintain the rolls of senators.

Apart from census-taking, the duty most strongly associated with the censorship is the *cura morum*, the censor's policing of morality (Livy 4.8.2).¹⁹ This responsibility was likely added to the censors' purview in the fourth century BCE soon after the censors became responsible for the *lectio senatus*. The *lectio senatus* was the censors' duty to determine membership of the senatorial order.²⁰ Members of the order could be removed if they failed to meet the minimum wealth requirement, but soon senators could be removed on account of perceived immoral behavior. It was a short step from policing the morality of members of the senatorial order to that of the general public—hence the *cura morum* (Plutarch *Cat. Ma.* 16. 1–3).

The first mention of Claudius as censor in the extant *Annals* of Tacitus is at 11.13, where he reports that Claudius was fastidiously exercising his censorial duties despite being oblivious to the fact that his own household was in disarray (11.13.1):

*At Claudius, matrimonii sui ignarus et munia censoria usurpans,
theatralium populi lasciviam seueris edictis increpuit.*

But Claudius, clueless about the state of his marriage, enjoying his censorial duties, chastised the lewd behavior of people in the theater in strongly-worded edicts.

There is serious trouble in the imperial household—Claudius' wife, Messalina, was “distracted by a new love that came close to insanity” (*nouo et furori proximo amore distinebatur*, 11.12.1). This new love was the consul-designate C. Silius. While the *nouus amor* distracted Messalina from making new denunciations against perceived rivals, Claudius was distracted from mastering his *domus* by playing the scold, clicking his tongue at rowdy theatergoers. The people's misbehavior in the theater—they were hurling abuse at the consular Publius Pomponius and illustrious

¹⁷ The quote is from Feeney 2007: 177, who discusses the smaller temporal units that organized Roman political and social life, including the consular years and the *lustrum*.

¹⁸ For the “breathtaking accomplishment” of counting up and enrolling over five million citizens, see Osgood 2011: 158–59.

¹⁹ Astin 1988:14.

²⁰ The *lectio senatus* was transferred from the consuls to the censors by the Ovinian *pōlebiscite*, which was passed sometime between 319 and 312 BCE.

ladies—commanded the censor’s attention, not his wife’s affair that saw the transfer of the emblems of power to Silius’ house (11.12.3). Messalina’s affair—or Claudius’ obliviousness—would prove disastrous to the empire. Messalina’s downfall would ensure that Claudius would burn for an incestuous marriage with his niece, Agrippina (*ut deinde ardesceret in nuptas incestas*, 11.25.5), a marriage that would bring about the tyranny of Nero, the end of Augustus’ bloodline, and the return of civil war. The hollowness of Julio-Claudian rhetoric, that the stability of the imperial *domus* determined the stability of the empire, is laid bare. But the efficacy of Tacitus’ criticism depends on the censorship—here, Claudius’ *cura morum*. Tacitus appears to be relying on his readers’ implicit preconceptions about the censors’ role in policing public morality in order to highlight the irony of Messalina’s husband issuing moralizing edicts. The criticism of Claudius that arises from the elision of fastidious censor and clueless cuckold depends on the censorship being an important aspect of Claudius’ identity as princeps.

Suetonius’ brief mention of Claudius’ censorship highlights the emperor’s alleged inconsistency in carrying out the *munia censoria*. It is another example of the ancient sources’ hostility towards Claudius. However, it is possible to read through the criticism in order to see Claudius’ intentionality in his resurrection of the ancient office. Moreover, Suetonius’ account demonstrates the interconnectedness of the censors’ *cura morum* and the *lectio senatus*. Suetonius’ account focuses on instances where Claudius failed to censure people for moral lapses as part of his review of the rolls of senators and equestrians. For example, Suetonius cites the case of an unnamed young man who was of evil character (*probri plenum*, 16.1). Rather than publicly censure the young man, Claudius let him off (*sine ignominia dimisit*, 16.1) with a remark praising the rectitude of the man’s father. On the other hand, Claudius is said to have affixed the *nota*, or mark of disgrace, next to the names of senators presumably guilty of minor offences, such as those who had left Italy without suing Claudius for a leave of absence. Suetonius goes on to recount instances where Claudius tried to degrade other senators for offenses they did not commit, accusing men of celibacy who were married, of childlessness who were fathers, of penury who were wealthy. Claudius even is said to have had a silver chariot destroyed in his presence as a check against public displays of *luxuria*. Regardless of whether he was successful or even consistent, Claudius can be seen to be exercising the *cura morum* and *lectio senatus* diligently and with relish—a point on which Tacitus appears to agree.²¹

The epitome of Cassius Dio’s account of the year 47 also contains allusions to Claudius’ censorial acts consistent with the *cura morum* and the *lectio senatus*. For example, it reports that Claudius expelled some senators on account of their poverty (60.29.1), checked the misbehavior of freedmen (60.29.2-3), forbade senators from traveling past the seventh marker without his permission (60.29.7a), and prohibited anyone from riding in a vehicle through the city (60.29.7b).²² These notices are included despite the passing over of Claudius’ revival of the censorship.

Tacitus next reports that Claudius carried a law against creditors who lent money at interest to sons repayable upon the deaths of their fathers (11.13.2). This very brief notice once more calls to mind the censors’ *cura morum*. Claudius presumably disapproves because borrowing against the promise of an inheritance is banking on the death of a parent, and it is

²¹ *Claudius . . . munia censoria usurpans* (Tac. Ann. 11.13.1).

²² cf. Suet. *Claud.* 25.2, Claudius’ destruction of a silver chariot.

doubtful money acquired in such a way would be spent in a manner the likes of Cato would approve. But Claudius' action is not actually against the sons, or even the creditors themselves. At issue seems to be the *faenus*, the interest the creditors are charging on the loans (11.13.2). This puzzling notice appears to refer to the censors' role in overseeing contracts, a responsibility which predates the *cura morum* and is tied directly to the census.²³ Servius Tullius is said to have not only conducted the first census, but that he also used the opportunity to collect taxes to fund construction of the defensive walls that to this day bear his name (Livy 1.44).²⁴ The responsibility for counting up and organizing the citizen militia, and overseeing the collection of taxes to fund public building projects passed eventually to the censors. Because the censors were involved in the collection of taxes, they came to be responsible for overseeing the execution of contracts awarded to tax collectors. They also became responsible for collecting revenues earned off public land. These responsibilities evolved to include the censors' general supervision of contracts both public and private. Hence Claudius' action against the *saeuitia creditorum*. What at first glance appears to be another example of Claudius fastidiously exercising his *cura morum*—defending the dignity of the *pater familias* while his own wife carries on an affair that threatens the stability of the empire—actually reveals Claudius exercising one of the oldest of the censors' prerogatives, one tied closely to the census and the foundation of the Roman body politic. Claudius appears to have done his homework.

Tacitus next mentions the completion of an aqueduct that Tacitus assigns to Claudius in the year 47. He states that Claudius brought new sources of water into the city from the Simbruine hills (*fontisque aquarum Simbruinis collibus deductos urbi intulit*, *Ann.* 11.13.3). This would appear consistent with Claudius' emulation of Appius Claudius Caecus, who used his censorship to initiate massive public works, including the road to Brundisium that bears his name. However, the placement of this notice among Claudius' acts of 47 has caused some controversy.²⁵ For one thing, emperors built things. Why should such a brief mention of a public building project be mentioned here, especially considering that, apart from Tacitus' reference, there is no evidence for the completion of aqueducts during Claudius' censorship? In 46, Claudius made repairs to the Aqua Virgo, which originates near Collatia—not anywhere near the Simbruine hills.²⁶ Two aqueducts were dedicated by Claudius in 52/3 CE, the Aqua Claudia and the Aqua Anio Novus. Both rise in the Apennines and might be the *fontes aquarum* Tacitus mentions.²⁷ Both were begun by Gaius in 38 (Suet. *Claud.* 20.1). None of the dates line up with Claudius' censorship. Yet Tacitus' use of the perfect of *inferre* implies completion, but what was supposed to have been completed is entirely unclear. It has been suggested that the censorship provided Claudius with the “happy opportunity to attend to a public need in a traditional manner,” and that Tacitus therefore chose to include supervision (if not actual completion and dedication) of the aqueducts in his report of 47 simply because Claudius was censor at that time.²⁸ Tacitus would have done so in order to

²³ The *cura morum* likely came about after the censors became responsible for the *lectio senatus* in the 4th century BCE.

²⁴ For a further discussion on the connection between census-taking and public works at the time of Tullius, see Suolahti 1963: 57.

²⁵ See Malloch 2013: 214–16 for a summary of arguments.

²⁶ *ILS* 205=Smallwood 308b.

²⁷ Malloch 2013: 215 and *CIL* VI 1256 = *ILS* 218 = Smallwood 309.

²⁸ Malloch 2013: 215–16.

point up the censorship itself at this point in his narrative to sharpen his criticism of Claudius and Julio-Claudian rhetoric. Tacitus presents a Claudius who is so preoccupied with playing the Appian censor that he is utterly blind to the imminent threat to his *domus* and the stability of the empire.

Another possible link between the censorships of Appius Claudius and Claudius Caesar is the latter's addition of three letters to the Roman alphabet.²⁹ Tacitus says that the letters were new (*Ann.* 11.13.1). They were in fact archaic Greek letters that had fallen into disuse. Claudius ingeniously repurposed them. The most widely attested letter was the inverted digamma (ϝ), which represented the consonantal V. The second letter resembled the Boeotian heta (Ϟ), and represented the sound between u and i. Augustus seemed to recognize the need for a new way to represent this sound, consistently writing, for example, *simus* for *sumus* (Suet. *Aug.* 87.2). Claudius appears to have found a solution. The third letter is unattested but was meant to represent bs and ps (Prisc. *Gramm.* II 33. 3–4). There has been much debate about the precise form of this letter. It is referred to as an antisigma, so is often thought to be an inverted lunate sigma (Ϛ). It seems more likely, based on illustrations in the Priscian manuscripts and the other letters' origins in archaic Greek, to have been a variation of the Locrian and Arcadian psi (Ϙ or ϙ).

Ryan argues that Claudius' orthographic intervention is directly related to his censorship.³⁰ He argues that the *plebiscitum Quinium*, which transferred responsibility of the *lectio senatus* from the consuls to the censors, in practice established a connection between the censorship and Latin orthography. As the censors became responsible for determining eligibility for membership in the senate, they needed to create and maintain an accurate list of senators' names. The first censor to conduct the *lectio senatus* was none other than Appius Claudius Caecus. He is said to have spelled the names of senators phonetically, writing Valerii for Valesii, Furii for Fusii, and so forth (Mac. *Sat.* 3.28, *Dig.* 1.2.2.36).³¹ With Appius' execution of the *lectio senatus* in 312 BCE, a link was established between the censorship and orthography. Claudius, Ryan argues, intervened in Latin orthography in order to perform the censorship according to the model established by Appius.

Tacitus, however, is the only ancient author to connect Claudius' invention of the new letters and his censorship. No epigraphic evidence has yet been found that suggests that the letters debuted in 47 or 48 CE. Furthermore, Suetonius claims that Claudius invented the letters, and published a book on their usefulness, while still a *priuatus* (*Claud.* 41.3). It is possible that Claudius invented the letters before he became emperor, and that he took advantage of his position to foist the fruits of an idiosyncratic hobby on a captive audience. However, as with the aqueducts, Tacitus seems to be creating his own version of Claudius' censorship, one that keeps calling to mind the career of Appius Claudius to suit his own rhetorical aims. Tacitus presents his readers with an emperor so preoccupied with antiquarian frivolities that he puts the peace and stability of the empire in jeopardy. Yet Tacitus' attempt at misdirection clues us in to how Claudius might have been trying to spell out his legitimacy. In any event, we see Tacitus assuming Claudius'

²⁹ For a discussion of sources, see Oliver 1949: 253–254 and Malloch 2013: 228.

³⁰ Ryan 1993: 612.

³¹ This is a reference to the rhotacization of medials in Latin, a phenomenon observable from the middle of the 4th century BCE. Other examples include Papisii becoming Papirii (Cic. *Fam.* 9.21) and *asae* becoming *arae* (Mac. *Sat.* 3.2.8). Several ancient sources associate Appius with this process. Pomponius goes so far as to credit Appius with the invention of the letter R (*Dig.* 1.2.2.36).

emulation of Appius Claudius and attending to public works and orthography as part of the *munia censoria*.

Wrapping up his account of Claudius' censorial acts of 47, Tacitus reports a motion before the senate proposing that the *haruspices* be organized into a priestly college (*Ann.* 11.15.1). The *haruspices* were called upon in the past whenever the state was in danger, their divinations helping to restore divine favor in times of national crisis. Claudius believed that the ancient practices of the *haruspices* were in danger of being lost, so he proposed that the transmission of the diviners' science be put under state supervision. Claudius' proposal recalls Appius' controversial decision to use his authority as censor to reorganize the cult of Hercules at the Ara Maxima. To put it briefly, Appius placed the cult of Hercules under state control (*Livy* 9.29.9–11).³² Claudius' proposal also invites a rather obvious comparison with Augustus, who was particularly concerned with restoring lapsed religious practices. Among his many reforms, Augustus revived the *augurium salutis*, the practice of seeking through divination when to perform rituals to guarantee the safety of the Roman people, and in what form (*Suet. Aug.* 31.4). It seems a relatively minor intervention compared with all of Augustus' other religious reforms and restorations, but its similarity to Claudius' attempt to revitalize the practices of the *haruspices* cannot be coincidental. It has been observed that Claudius "made a show of reverting to the maintenance of ancestral customs," partly in an effort to reassert the norms established by Augustus that Tiberius and Gaius appear to have transgressed.³³ In other words, Claudius wanted his reign to be seen as a return to Augustan rectitude. But he also "made a show" of returning to ancestral practices precisely because Augustus did too. However, just as important as reverting to the old ways is establishing something new. In the *Res Gestae*, Augustus boasts of temples restored and lapsed practices reinvigorated, but he also established new rites. Suetonius says the same of Claudius: he made corrections to ritual practice, restored lapsed rites, and established new ones, civil and military, at home and abroad (*Suet. Claud.* 22.1). It is likely, based on his emulation of Appius Claudius Caecus, who used his position as censor to restore the worship of Hercules at the Ara Maxima (*Livy* 9.29.9–11), that Claudius Caesar did so in his capacity as censor.

The last of Claudius' *munia censoria* reported by Tacitus are reforms made to the senate (*Ann.* 11.23–25), and so we return once more to the *lectio senatus*. Claudius purged the senate of unworthy members and admitted new ones—acts consistent with *munia censoria* going back as far as the Ovinian plebiscite. Plans to supplement the senate included the admission of the *primores* of Gallia Comata. Claudius' speech concerning the matter provides additional clues about how he conceived of his censorship in relation to the rhetoric of re-foundation.³⁴ It is particularly instructive because Tacitus' version of Claudius' speech closely resembles one preserved on a bronze tablet discovered in Lyon in the 16th century.³⁵ Both versions of the speech repeatedly return to the theme of salvation by augmentation. In Tacitus' version, after rooting his

³² Livy seems to have understood it this way. The matter is, of course, not quite so straightforward. See Palmer 1965.

³³ A most appropriate choice of words if Claudius' return to ancestral customs was for the sake of his self-presentation (Beard 1998: 209–10).

³⁴ Levick 1978:98–99 argues that Claudius was attempting to emulate Julius Caesar's generosity with the Roman citizenship. Ryan 1993:613–614 argues that Claudius was emulating Appius per the Ovinian plebiscite. Neither explanation is mutually exclusive, nor inconsistent with Claudius' presentation as (re-)foundational figure.

³⁵ *CIL* XIII.1668=ILS 212=FIRA I.43=Smallwood 369. On the similarities between the two and various interpretations of the Lyon speech, see Syme 1956:317–19, Momigliano 1961: 10–16), and Osgood 2007: 165–67.

family in the fog of Rome's distant past, Claudius presents himself as one in a line of leaders who have guaranteed the continued survival of the Roman state by augmenting it. He invokes the Lacedaemonians and Athenians, whose "extinction" he credits to their refusal to allow foreigners to be admitted as citizens and contrasts them with "our founder Romulus" (*conditor nostri Romulus*), in whose wisdom was so inclusive as to call one group enemies and fellow citizens on the same day (11.24.4). This tactic appears in the Lyon tablet as well. Claudius discusses the careers of the various kings, each of whom contributed to the survival of Rome by augmenting its population with foreigners, even former enemies. He pays special attention to Servius Tullius, saying that, although foreign born, Servius became king of Rome "to the greatest benefit to the state."³⁶ In both speeches, a large part of Claudius's argument hinges on Rome's survival through the ages having depended on the augmentation of the body politic, logic which he applies to the continued welfare of the senate. In both, we see the censor invoking augmentation as a form of foundation, aligning himself with figures from the past who have been responsible for saving the state by adding to it.

As we have seen, Claudius assumed the censorship and exercised many of its ancient prerogatives to "make a show" of his revitalization of an ancestral office with origins in the semi-mythical past. Claudius' censorship consisted of a number of individual acts that signal renewal and augmentation and recall not only the ancient censorship as reimagined by Claudius, but also figures from the past associated with acts of re-foundation, primarily the first emperor, Augustus, and Claudius' distant ancestor Appius Claudius Caecus. Claudius' censorship culminated in the formal reorganization of the body politic—the *populus Romanus* made anew—and the inauguration of a new period in the social, religious, and political life of Rome. The censorship allowed him to overcome the problem of salvation. Claudius may not have saved the state from destruction, but by remaking the Roman body politic (*census*) and initiating a new cycle in the rhythm of Roman life (*lustrum*), he could nevertheless found Rome anew.

³⁶ CIL XIII.1668=ILS 212=FIRA I.43=Smallwood 369, col 1. 23–24.

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CHAPTER 13

Cruising on the Danube with the Romans

Vicki A. Wine and James E. Betts

We have known Bill and Jackie Urban for more than thirty years. Jim worked closely with Bill at Monmouth College, helping edit the *Journal of Baltic Studies* and team-teaching American colonial history as Coordinator of Pan-American Studies. Vicki and Jackie both served as Latin teachers at Monmouth High School. During all these years of working together, we never traveled abroad together, although we frequently shared pictures and stories of our experiences in Europe.

This finally changed after our retirements. In 2019, Bill and Jackie planned to take a Danube River cruise offered by Viking Cruises.¹ We had never been on a vacation cruise, and the itinerary covered countries and areas we had not visited on our European travels. We decided to join them, and this gave us an opportunity to plan a trip that would be interesting to all of us.

Vicki's being a professor of classics meant that most of our travels outside the United States had been built around visits to Roman and Greek sites. Some of these were organized tours we signed up for, but at other times we would design our own itinerary, making our plane, hotel, and car reservations and plotting routes that allowed us to explore as many classical sites as possible. This trip would be different since Viking would determine the stops along the cruise. Viking did offer onshore excursions at each port, but none of them focused on Roman history. Therefore, we had to plan some of our own onshore activities.

A trip on the Danube offered many opportunities for observing classical sites and museums. Because the river was the northernmost defense border of the Romans against the barbarian tribes to the north, the Romans established the *limes Romanus*, a series of forts and watchtowers along the southern bank of the river, with additional protection provided by Roman ships patrolling the river and transporting troops and supplies along what would become the southwestern and central European main trade route. The section of the Danube we would be cruising is all part of a UNESCO Heritage Site,² and four of the most important Roman sites were at or near ports the Viking cruise would be visiting. Vicki was interested in understanding further, from research after the trip, how Romanization occurred on the border, how living on the border through the four centuries developed sequentially, and how the river had an important role.

Another factor we considered was our mutual interest in beer and wine tasting. The Danube cruise visits towns in southern Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, all of which have significant brewing and vinting histories. As we write below, Viking does try to provide representative beverages with its onboard meals, but we wanted to explore some of the more local craft-oriented options as well.

So, our planning began. Bill negotiated the travel arrangements, managing to get flights from and to Peoria instead of Chicago for no additional charge. Jim did the research on classical sites along the route and found some venues for tastings. The cruise was to begin on October 30,

¹ For a sample itinerary, see Viking Cruise Line n.d.

² For a description, see UNESCO World Heritage Convention, n.d.a.

but Bill and Jackie flew to Munich earlier to visit with friends in Ulm. We left Peoria in the afternoon of October 29 and flew overnight from Chicago to Munich, where Viking provided buses from the airport to the dock in Passau, a German town on the Austrian border. Once we checked in and boarded the Viking *Vilhjalm*, one of several river vessels Viking labels “longships,” with three decks of cabins and a capacity of almost two hundred passengers, we had a light lunch and walked to the Passau train station to meet Bill and Jackie and help carry their luggage to the boat. We had rooms across the hall from each other on the lower deck toward the front of the vessel. The rooms were small but efficiently organized and comfortably furnished. On the lower deck, our view was limited to a porthole, so we spent most of our free time on the upper deck or in the lounges with full-length windows. The weather was, overall, quite cooperative for this as well.

That evening we had our first of many delicious meals aboard the vessel. The Viking kitchen staff tried to offer main courses that represented typical cuisine of the area the boat was visiting. This also extended to drink offerings with meals; for example, in Austria we were offered a choice of a white Grüner Veltliner or a red Zweigelt wine, both characteristically Austrian. Another of the amenities Viking offers is coffee available 24 hours a day from large dispensers on the upper deck, usually accompanied by a selection of cookies. It was fortunate for us that our plans included a good deal of walking.

The next morning was set for touring Passau. The town is situated at the confluence of the Danube and two tributaries, which has made it an ideal site for trade. In Roman times, it was known as Batavis, a fort and colony on the border between the provinces of Raetia and Noricum, responsible for control of trade between Gallia and Illyria. After the original fort was destroyed by barbarian attacks in the third century, a new fort, Boiodrum, was built slightly upriver. The Romans left this site in the late fifth century, and the fort was demolished. In the late medieval period part of the foundation of the fort was used for the construction of a house, but the rest of



Figure 13.1: From l. to r., Jackie Urban, Jim Betts and Vicki Wine outside the Passau Roman Museum. Photo by Bill Urban.

the fort’s foundation was lost until uncovered by an urban construction project in 1974. The site was named Kastell Boiotro, and Jim learned that a Roman museum had been installed there. We walked to it after breakfast instead of taking the Viking town tour.

Artifacts in the museum date from the Mesolithic era to the fifth century. They are organized in chronological order³ and include funerary monuments, figurines, *terra sigillata* (clay being one of the items traded in the area), and transcripts of documents. Maps, signs, and audio-visual aids offer information on Roman colonization,

³ The exhibit on the topic “economy and trade from the Stone Age to the Roman era in Passau” shows that “As early as the 5th millennium BC, flint was being exported from Lower Bavaria to Lower Austria. The Celts traded from the 5th century BC to the 1st century AD with salt and graphite, clay, ceramics among other things.” (translated from Museen in Passau n.d. This German language website gives a detailed description of the museum holdings.)

viticulture, the operation of the customs system,⁴ and the activities of the monk, diplomat, political leader, and canonized saint Severin.⁵

After touring the museum, we caught up with the town tour in time to join them for the noon organ concert in St. Stephen's Cathedral. The organ (actually five separate organs which can all be played from the main console), with more than two hundred registers and almost eighteen thousand pipes, was considered the largest church organ in the world until surpassed by a Los Angeles church in 1994.⁶ The half-hour recital showcased all its resources in works ranging from the Renaissance through Bach to twentieth-century composers. As a musician, Jim enjoyed the program, and Vicki and Jackie were both impressed as keyboard players themselves. Bill was not too excited by the twentieth-century pieces, though. After the concert, we boarded the boat and finally set sail down the Danube and into Austria.

The cruise was scheduled to do most of the sailing overnight, except in places where the scenery is especially notable, such as the Wachau Valley in Austria and the wetlands on the Slovakian-Hungarian border past Bratislava. This meant that we were asleep on most occasions when the *Vilhjalm* went through locks on the river, but we did get to watch the procedure a few times during the day. For those of us who live near the Mississippi River, the sight of locks and dams is not unusual, but the view from onboard as the boat went through was impressive. In fact, the photo we took of the lock gate at Melk, opening to reveal Melk Abbey downstream, became Vicki and Jim's 2019 holiday card (Fig. 13.2).

We first docked in Linz, Austria. Even though it was the site of the Roman fort of *Lentia*, there is not a great deal remaining of that history to be seen either in surviving construction or in museum holdings. According to the website on the city's history, the fort was located where the Provincial Theatre stands today, and remains of a Mithraeum were discovered in Tummelplatz.⁷ The timeline presented in the website notes "Evidence of permanent human settlement since the late Stone Age" and further states that

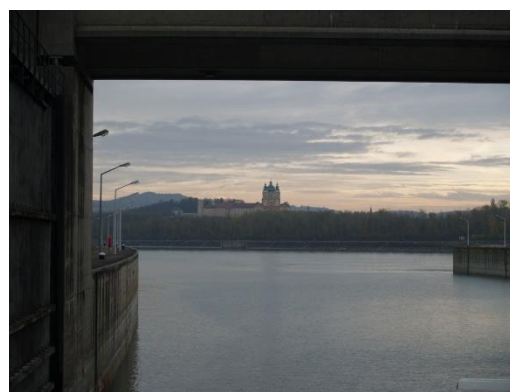


Figure 13.2: Melk Abbey from the lock gate on the Danube. Photo by James Betts.

⁴ An exhibit plaque explains how the custom system worked. "Customs duty was an important source of revenue for Rome and the leaseholders of customs stations. Both inhabitants of the Empire and foreigners had to pay 2.5% of the value of trade goods in customs fee" (Museen in Passau n.d.).

⁵ "The written tradition with the memoir on the life of the diplomat Severin" offers "a comprehensive insight into the time of the collapsing Roman Empire, again using Passau as an example" (Museen in Passau n.d.) His monastery near Mautern also provided an important connection for the Romans during this turbulent time. The museum there has more information on his life and association.

⁶ More information about the instrument may be found at Passau Tourism n.d.

⁷ The fort, named *Lentia* by the Romans from the Celtic word for "bending, curving," from its location at the bend of the river, was "the first in the Noricum-Danube region." The area had been inhabited by a settlement of Celts in the Linz Basin from c. 400 B.C. The Romans, after first constructing fortification of wood and earth in the first century A.D., replaced them with a larger stone fort in the second century. A civilian settlement followed soon after. "The settlement was destroyed on several occasions by attacks by the Goths in the second century; a residual settlement from the late antiquity on the Martinsfeld withstood the storms of the barbarian invasions" (Linz City Administration n.d.b.).

“The significance of the settlement has been marked since time immemorial by the East-West path of the Danube, divided by the North-South line which marks the shortest route from the Adriatic to the Baltic Seas.”⁸



Figure 13.3: Bill Urban (l.) and Jim Betts (r.) sampling Czech beer in the Restaurant Pivovar. Photo by Jackie Urban.

Bill suggested that we should take advantage of one of the excursions offered by Viking at this stop, a trip into the Czech Republic for a walking tour of the UNESCO Heritage Site of Český Krumlov,⁹ and we boarded the buses for the one-and-a-quarter-hour ride. Český Krumlov was a feudal capital on the Vltava River from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, and the architecture of the town reflects this. The castle is medieval in its basic design, with Renaissance additions and a Baroque theater (one of only two to have survived to the present). It also features a three-story bridge across a moat which instead of water holds brown bears! The town houses and shops are of similar age and make for an attractive town square.

Fortunately, the town and castle were spared in World War II. Bill was the one of us familiar with the history of the area and could point out things the tour guide could not take time to mention.

After a tour of the castle, a walk to the riverbank to view the town from that level, and a walk back into the square, we were left on our own for lunch. Most of the tourists headed for restaurants in the old town, but we had other plans. Jim had learned that Český Krumlov had a tradition of beer brewing dating from the foundation of the town. A craft brewery had set up shop on the grounds of one of the old breweries, and we went there for a hearty lunch and excellent draft beer. Some American tourists who had visited previously had posted negative online comments about the service; fortunately, three of us speak German, and we had no problem with the waitstaff. Bill was so impressed by the place that he recommended to Viking that it be put on the list of lunch options. The walking, beer, and food made for a rather sleepy bus ride back to Linz.

We were scheduled to dock in Krems next. Krems is one of several small towns on the Danube in the Wachau Valley, one of Austria's prime viticultural areas. The views of the vineyards rising up the riverbanks as the Danube flows through the valley were very picturesque and peaceful. Jim had learned that a town near Krems, Mautern, had been the site of the fort and surrounding town of Favianis¹⁰ and had a museum with many Roman items. The museum was

⁸ Linz City Administration n.d.a.

⁹ For more information on the town, see UNESCO World Heritage Convention n.d.b,

¹⁰ According to Lower Austrian Magazine n.d. Roman building activity in the area began in the first century for a fort to house auxiliary troops, on top of traces of earlier settlements during the transition from “the Early to Middle Bronze Age (1700 to 1500 BC). . . .” Stone walls in the second century replaced the initial camp, followed by “destruction of the fortifications and settlement during the Marcomannic Wars” in 180. In 300 the 1st Noricum Legion was stationed in Favianis. Then “significant expansion” occurred “in the fourth century, when fan-shaped and horseshoe-shaped towers were built – some of which can still be seen today.” The fort had barracks and stables. The civilian settlement which grew up outside the camp, as with other military forts, had both residential buildings and workshops, with “evidence of blacksmiths, metalsmiths, tanners and weavers as well as shops such as butchers and bakers” (Lower Austrian Magazine n.d.).

officially closed for the winter, but Jim contacted the museum by email and found that staff would be there for post-season maintenance. He made arrangements for us to visit on a Saturday morning, but the *Vilhjalm* did not dock until late morning. With the aid of cell phones, we managed to talk the museum staff into waiting for us until we walked the mile from Krems to Mautern. The museum, located in a Baroque building originally serving as a granary, was small but had interesting finds from Favianis, such as jewelry, glass and ceramic ware, clay masks, game pieces, a small plaque with an incantation begging the gods of the underworld for help with a love affair, and a bronze tablet inscribed with a military discharge document. There were also artifacts from the nearby monastery which St. Severin established and in which he died in 482. When we visited, a special exhibition on Severin gave a good deal of information on the effect on the residents as the Roman Empire declined, including Severin's diplomacy between the Roman residents and the Germanic tribes on the north side of the Danube.¹¹ Outside the museum, sections of the Roman fort walls and remains of two towers still stand.¹²

By the time we finished touring the museum, lunch hours on the boat had ended. Jackie, however, talked to some of the crew and persuaded them to set up a small meal for us in the lounge. After lunch, Jackie took a nap while the other three of us went back into Krems. One of the Viking excursions for the day was a visit to a large Wachau Valley winery. Jim, however, had found a tasting room for a small winery, Lesehof Stågard, right in town. The winery offers typical Austrian wines like Grüner Veltliner and Zweigelt but specializes in Riesling wines from single-sourced vineyards in the area. We sampled several of their wines and were surprised by the differences between Rieslings from different vineyards, even though they were produced by the same winemaker. (Jim particularly liked the Steiner Pfaffenberg.)



Figure 13.4: Bill Urban at the Mautern Roman Museum. Photo by James Betts.

From Krems the voyage went to Vienna. In Roman times, the site was known as Vindobona. The camp was situated in the location of the modern city center, with the accompanying civilian settlement, from the third century, stretching to the third district, to the southeast; there are some Roman ruins to be seen in the city, such as those in the

¹¹ The timeline given in Mautern an der Donau n.d.a shows that in 450, Severin von Noricum, "Saint Severin," founded a monastery in the area. Eugippius published "Vita Sancti Severini," in 511, as a biography of Severin "that very vividly depicts his life and work in Noricum" and records his interactions with the Romans along the Danube. He tried to be helpful to both the barbarians and the Romans. One example of how he worked with the Romans at Batavis is given in Chapter 27.

¹² The fort lies beneath the oldest parts of modern Mautern. The brochure "The Danube Limes in Austria: MAUTERN –FAVIANIS," citing OAI research literature, further indicates Mautern was significant for its location controlling the river crossing "on a traffic route that was already in use in prehistoric times and runs parallel to the Amber Road leading east." Additional information is available at Mautern an der Donau (n.d.b.).

Michaelerplatz,¹³ and a Roman museum¹⁴ in the Hoher Markt. Due to time constraints, however, we did not visit these¹⁵ and instead chose to explore another Roman site in the area.

We took a train thirty miles to the town of Petronell, today a small town about two-thirds of the way from Vienna to Bratislava. This was the location of the Roman city of Carnuntum, which started in A.D. 6 as a temporary camp, grew to be larger than Vindobona, and became the capital of the province of Pannonia Superior¹⁶ until its cession to the Goths in 433. Marcus Aurelius lived in Carnuntum from A.D. 172 to A.D. 175 and wrote part of his *Meditations* there, and in A.D. 193 Septimius Severus was proclaimed emperor at Carnuntum. One of the reasons for its success was its location on what is known as the Amber Road,¹⁷ a trade route that served to transport amber from the Baltic Sea to what is now Venice. Among the holdings of the Museum of Carnuntum are several pieces of amber.¹⁸

The site extends over a two-mile stretch of the southern bank of the Danube and includes an archeological park incorporating a quarter of the civilian city, two amphitheatres (one civilian, one military), a gladiator training school, a museum, and a triumphal arch known today as the Heidentor (“Heathens’ Gate”). We concentrated on the archeological park, an interesting combination of excavations and reconstructions of several of the Roman buildings, including houses and baths (similar to the Villa Borg in Germany and Arbeia in England). We took our time touring the ruins and reconstructed buildings, and enjoyed lunch in the restaurant onsite, which includes a few recipes from the cookbook of Apicius along with Austrian and Italian dishes.

¹³ Described in Atlas Obscura n.d. In Visiting Vienna n.d.b it is observed that “Building works often reveal evidence of Roman times.” One example is “Michaelerplatz square at one entrance to the Hofburg palace complex,” which is the site of crossroads of earlier east-west and north-south trade routes. Extensive excavations during the redesign of the square in the early 1990s exposed remains of Roman dwellings. The reconstruction provided a “special display” across from the center for public view of some of the excavations.

¹⁴ For details see Visiting Vienna n.d.a. The Romermuseum, within the Wien Museum Karlsplatz, provides an introduction to the Roman fortress and settlements, and has excavations from two officer houses in the basement. “The late fourth and fifth centuries began to see the dramatic decline not only of the Roman Empire in general but also of Vindobona in particular” (City of Vienna n.d.).

¹⁵ Both *Visiting Vienna* n.d.b and *Wikipedia* n.d.a and n.d.b provide helpful information on further remains of Roman sites within the city. Besides remains of the Roman military camp found at many sites in the center of Vienna, street names in the city also reflect the Roman presence, as well as perhaps the street plan, because parts of the walls may have been standing when streets were laid out in the Middle Ages. Visiting Vienna n.d.b points out that “The Graben street that forms the pedestrianised heart of the city may have marked one side of the fortifications, for example. (*Graben* actually means ditch or trench.) The layout of the city centre probably reflects in part the structure of the original Roman camp.” Of additional interest, “The word Vindobona also survives in business, product, ship, street, and train names. For example, this pharmacy on Porzellangasse: Vindobona Apotheke” (*Visiting Vienna* n.d.b).

¹⁶ This information (and more) is available at Roman City of Carnuntum n.d. After Tiberius had established a winter camp, the permanent military camp was built in A.D. 41 to 54. In 70, settlement of the civilian city began. From A.D. 81 to 96, “the auxiliary fort and the amphitheatre in the canabae are established” during the reign of Domitian.

¹⁷ According to Anders Hammarlund, researcher at the universities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Uppsala, the term “Amber Road” “was coined in the 1920s by the Cambridge archaeologist José Maria de Navarro to denote a set of trails or paths connecting the Baltic and the Adriatic during antiquity. Here, people have been trading since Neolithic times. Salt from the salt mines of Central Europe—sought after by the peoples of northern Europe—was exchanged with amber from the Baltic shores, which was then sold to Mediterranean peoples. This trade intensified when the Roman Empire expanded north of the Alps, and in some Roman cities the fabrication of amber art wares reached almost industrial proportions.” See Billock 2019.

¹⁸ In Billock 2019 Hammarlund describes Carnuntum as the main trading point on the Amber Road, which intersected with another ancient trading route, the Limes Road.

Although we had originally planned on our return to Vienna to have dinner in the city, we had been active enough during the day that we opted to dine on the boat.

The Viking *Vilhjalm* went on to Slovakia and stopped in Bratislava. The modern city lies mostly on the northern bank of the Danube, but there was a Roman site about ten miles south of the boat dock, in Gerulata (modern Rusovce). Gerulata started as an earth-and-timber fort in the first century and went through four construction phases.¹⁹ The archaeological site contains ruins from throughout this period.²⁰ The second fort, built in the fourth century “into the northern corner of the original *castellum*” is in the open-air part of the museum.²¹

Unfortunately, the museum is not open in November, so Jim and Vicki settled for the Viking city excursion instead. After we returned from our trip, we learned that there were ruins of a *villa rustica* located north of our dock in Bratislava in the suburb of Dúbravka;²² even if we had known about it, though, getting there would have taken almost an hour. The villa, similar in design to those in other provinces, is on the “barbarian” side of the river, indicating that in this area the Romans were able to establish settlement on this side, or at least Romanization with leaders of Germanic tribes.

Remains of Roman buildings have also survived in Stupava, Devín Castle, and Bratislava Castle Hill. Devín Castle Natural Heritage Site indicates that Roman stone structures dating from the third and fourth centuries have been found within the later Castle construction.²³ The Romans had displaced the Celts and Germanic tribes who had previously occupied the Devín Castle Hill “at the confluence of the Danube and Morava Rivers.”²⁴

The Devín *oppidum*, a “strategic trade centre” and “fortified acropolis” at the top of the castle hill, founded by Celts at the end of the 2nd century BC, “took place due to favourable location at cross-roads of long-distance roads.” Other Roman activity is in evidence, because “buildings from Stupava, Bratislava-Dúbravka, Cífer-Pác, Veľký Kýr (before Milanovce) and from Bratislava-Devín belong already to the 2nd, 3rd and the late 4th century.”²⁵ The museum website notes that “The Kelemantia Fort (Iža – Leányvár near Komárno) was part of the Limes as a Roman bridgehead on the Danube’s left bank.” As with the other sites established along the Danube, this strategic area has settlement evidenced as early as Upper Paleolithic, through Bronze, to the end of the Iron Age, when the Celts came. “Celtic settlement was destroyed in the 20s–30s AD by

¹⁹ The border fortress and civil town (*vicus*) of Gerulata—a name of Celtic origin because the Celts founded an *oppidum* (“fortified settlement”) “at the crossroads of long-distance roads”—were established during the Flavian dynasty (reign of Emperor Domitian, A. D. 69–96). The museum webpage describes the following development: “During Trajan’s rule (A.D. 98–117), the defensive system of the Limes was perfected,” and the camp housed a cavalry unit for the protection of Carnuntum. The Bratislava Museum in the village-district of Rosovce, on the site of the remains of the military camp, exhibits finds from excavations, showing military occupation: “Many finds are related to the presence of troops. Decorations include engraved gems, buckles, bracelets, pendants and amulets.” See Bratislava City Museum n.d.b.

²⁰ A detailed description can be found at Schmidtová n.d.

²¹ See Bratislava City Museum n.d.a.

²² Elschek n.d. gives details.

²³ Bratislava City Museum n.d.c.

²⁴ Bratislava Tourist Board n.d.

²⁵ Schmidtová n.d.

German tribes. Strategic location of the Devín hillfort enabled and contributed to the development of cultural contacts and trade.”²⁶

Anton Spiesz writes that in the mid-fourth century “Roman influence began gradually to decline. Nevertheless, under the Emperor Valentinian [*sic*] I, new fortifications were built on the Roman ‘limes’ and old army posts reconstructed.” Eventually, though, in the late fifth and early sixth centuries, the weakening Roman Empire “ultimately collapsed” and other peoples, including Huns, Goths, and Lombards, inherited the remnants of the Roman Empire.²⁷

The last port on the Viking cruise was Budapest. Bill and Jackie decided to look around the city, while Jim and Vicki took city transit for a thirty-minute ride to the Roman site of Aquincum.²⁸ One of the four major fortresses on the Roman Danube *limes*, Aquincum was originally a Celtic settlement. The Romans used the strategic site, again, typically, for both defense of their side of the border and for protection of an important crossing with trade routes. Modern Buda developed from the legionary camp of Aquincum, one of the four largest military *castra* of the *limes*, and Pest from the fort of Contra-Aquincum (built on east side of Danube to defend the crossing) in the early Middle Ages. The approach to the Elizabeth bridge on the Pest side, which we walked over on our way to the train station, passes over a park with the preserved remains of Aquincum’s wall and two of its towers.

Like Carnuntum, the location includes a museum and an archeological site,²⁹ but much closer to one another than in the former case. There is also an amphitheater near the transit stop. The archeological remains include sanctuaries, baths, Mithraea and shops, “the most characteristic public buildings and several private houses” from the civil town’s second and third centuries.³⁰ The museum website also describes other sites in the area, such as the mineral springs that supplied the aqueduct, evidenced by remains of its pillars.³¹

The finds in the museum include mosaics, statuary, coins, and building materials. Unique in the museum’s holdings are the fragmentary remains of an organ built in the third century alongside a modern reproduction of the instrument.³² It was interesting to compare this small, portable instrument of fifty-two pipes with the Passau organ we had heard on our first day of the cruise.

²⁶ Bratislava City Museum n.d.c.

²⁷ Spiesz 2006: 309. Spiesz meant the Roman emperor Valentinian I (321–364), known as “The Great.”

²⁸ Many images of the museum holdings and also a virtual tour can be found at Aquincum Museum n.d.a.

²⁹ Budapest City n.d. introduces the Aquincum Museum with a description of its origin, going “back to a discovery in 1778 when a local vineyard owner stumbled upon the remnants of a Roman floor heating system, or ‘hypocaustum’ in his garden. Schönvisner István, a university librarian, recognized the importance of this discovery and identified the location as the ancient city of Aquincum. Today, the Aquincum Museum operates as a branch of the Budapest History Museum.”

³⁰ Aquincum Museum n.d.b.

³¹ “Mineral springs still flowing in modern-day Római Strandfürdő (Roman Lido) supplied one of the greatest architectural feats of Roman Budapest, the aqueduct.” Aquincum Museum n.d.c describes the mechanics of how the aqueduct worked, until the Romans were no longer able to maintain it in the 4th century. “The aqueduct is mentioned in medieval sources and documents and portrayed in engravings. Remains of the pillars can be found in the park north of the Aquincum Museum, while the reconstructed section of the aqueduct can be seen between the lanes of the Szentendrei Road between Aquincum and Kaszásdűlő stations.”

³² A full description with an audio sample of the reconstructed instrument can be found at Aquincum Museum n.d.d.

We all dined together on the boat that evening and went to bed early in order to be ready for our 3 a.m. debarkation and trip to the Budapest airport for the return flights that would take us back to Peoria.

In addition to all these activities there was also much opportunity to enjoy the beautiful scenery along the Danube (both natural features and historical buildings along the shore), socialize with other travelers on the boat, and appreciate the good food, lectures on the culture and history of the towns visited, and local entertainment that Viking provided onboard, including a folk music performance at one stop and at another a program of arias and *Lieder* presented by members of the city opera company.

Having the opportunity to see the Roman remains and learn about the fortifications helped us to understand the structure of the defense system, the organization of the forts (similar to the border constructions we had seen in England), the continuity of the time period beginning in the first century A.D. through expansion and eventual decline as the barbarian tribes overcame the defenses and the Roman legions left. It was also instructive to see the Roman influence in the towns which grew around and supported the military camps, with Romanization evident in the lifestyle, housing, religious development, and (last, but not least) viticulture.

This was the most time we had spent together with Bill and Jackie, and it was very rewarding for us. Bill's historical background provided us with insights to the places we were seeing, and Jackie's experience shepherding her family through foreign countries came in handy for us on several occasions. It was fortunate that we went when we did, for by the spring of 2020 all river cruises had been suspended due to global health conditions.

Of course, as soon as travel restrictions were lifted, Bill and Jackie were again on the road, taking a Rhine River cruise in 2022.

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Part 6: THE WORLD

A Journey Through Seven Countries Over Three Decades: The Relevance of Eastern Europe of the 1990s to the Middle East of the 2020s

Brian Chabowski and Tiffany Ramsey Chabowski

One of life's great joys and privileges for us has been to study different countries' cultures and histories in many capacities over the past three decades. While this career-guided trip has provided significant practical insights into the human condition in many forms, it has also permitted the ability to better understand the disparate impact of time and experience on individuals and their societies. In much the same way as explored by Plato's allegory of the cave,¹ Oresme's proposal of four dimensions,² Minkowski's discussion of the relation between space and time,³ and Einstein's concept of general relativity,⁴ cross-cultural experiences have become a way for us to traverse and navigate time in a scholarly sense.

Starting in the Czech Republic in 1994, we have benefited from many opportunities to better understand the similarities and differences among various world cultures and traditions. Once our original experience centering on Olomouc was completed, we began a life journey that found us living, working⁵, and/or studying for at least two months apiece, in locations as disparate as Lithuania (1995–1998), Estonia (1995–1998), Mexico (2002), China (2018), Finland (2021–2022), and Saudi Arabia (2023 to the present). For all practical purposes, we did not embark on this international cross-cultural odyssey with many specialized skills or grand intellectual insights. We were only armed with our competencies upon graduation from Monmouth College and the not dissimilar ideals of the Quakers⁶ and the Peace Corps. In short, this can be summarized briefly as viewing those you meet as potential friends while maintaining an unwavering commitment to community, partnership, and sustainability. This general mantra has served us well in the myriad of situations from which we have benefited and which we hope to share with the reader.

This exposition follows a deliberate outline. After an initial position is taken concerning the nature of individual advancement within our increasingly global society, an overview and synthesis of the different economic conditions across the seven countries included in our analysis is conducted. Then, an outline and analysis of the unique socio-cultural perspectives at play in these nations is examined. Finally, based on the information understood to this point, a conclusion is reached by applying our experiences in eastern Europe in the 1990s directly to the conditions we are currently witnessing in the Middle East in the 2020s. In all, we trust this

¹ *The Republic* 7.220–226.

² Nicole Oresme (1325–1382) was a French scholar who was “perhaps the first to approach the fourth dimension from the side of physics” (Cajori 1926:397).

³ Minkowski 1909; presentation was made on September 2, 1908, at the Congress of Natural Philosophers in Cologne, Germany.

⁴ Einstein 1915: 847.

⁵ In 1994 both authors spent a semester in Olomouc, Czech Republic. In an off-campus program run by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM), with William Urban as faculty director.

⁶ The Quakers are known worldwide for their support for pacifist views.

informal intellectual excursion through time can provide partial justification for the critical importance of internationally oriented education and cross-cultural experiences for the improvement of United States (US) citizens and betterment of American society into the future.

American Dream Deconstructed

Perhaps one of the most compelling concepts is the familiar notion of “the American Dream”. As with the 350 million people who call the US their home country, there are countless ways the American Dream may be defined. So, when an allusion is made to the exceptionality of the American Dream in a conversation in Saudi Arabia, one cannot help but pause and consider the ramifications of this national ideal.

Upon reflection, it stands to reason that the American Dream is not necessarily an original American construct. Even before the time bartering was the formal mode of commerce, individuals and groups of people have sought to improve their material standing in life. In fact, when individuals consider their own personal definition of the American Dream, some element(s) may include the realm of accumulating a certain quantity of physical possessions. Why? Because, as Maslow has observed,⁷ people are driven consciously, subconsciously, and unconsciously by innate and inherent needs. Particularly manifested in the physical realm, the most foundational of these psychological requirements relate to the need to feel safe. With this comes sustenance, shelter, and rest—but also health, possessions, and social mobility. In short, as the *Declaration of Independence* (1776) clearly states: “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness”.

However, there is nothing distinctively American about this dream. The formal origins of this perspective are rooted, of course, in the tradition of Locke’s philosophy.⁸ However, for as long as *homo sapiens* has roamed the earth, our human kin have sought a better life—in whatever form and with whatever definition may be used. Therefore, the concept of the American Dream could seem a grotesquely paradoxical misnomer at its worst. However, at its best, it is a magnificent marketing accomplishment.

To put this position in perspective, at the time the American union was being born, there were few political and economic governance options available. Adam Smith formalized a blueprint for the organization of labor, money, profit, property, wealth, stock, and government (e.g., “capitalism”) at that time,⁹ but—as indicated earlier—proto-capitalism existed for many millennia previously. Also, at most locations worldwide, the best form of government a population could hope for was a benevolent monarchy. Typically, such relatively ideal conditions provide many opportunities for individuals to benefit in their daily lives over time. However, in other words, there were a multitude of situations in which people sought to improve their lot – some were more ideal than others.

Therefore, there is only one trait that makes the American Dream distinctively “American”: it was the first pronouncement of its kind made to the world in a formal document on behalf of an entire nation. Stated differently, the American Dream, upon critical evaluation, is—at its heart—the dream of nearly every person. Regardless of their situation in life or prospects for the

⁷ Maslow 1943: 370, 389, 394.

⁸ Locke 1690 (Second Treatise: §6, §85, §87, §123, §209, §222).

⁹ Smith 1776: 10-12.

Table Illustrating Comparative Economic Information for Seven Countries							
<i>(Global Data and Rankings)</i>	Czech Republic	Lithuania	Estonia	Mexico	China	Finland	United States
Population (in millions)ⁱ	10.8	2.9	1.4	130.0	1.422	5.6	343.5
Nominal GDP (per capita)ⁱⁱ	38th	40th	36th	63rd	73rd	16th	6th
Human Development Indexⁱⁱⁱ	32nd (very high)	37th (very high)	31st (very high)	77th (high)	75th (high)	11 th (very high)	20th (very high)
Venture Capital and Private Equity Attractiveness^{iv}	30th	41st	32nd	38th	8th	16th	1st
Public Sector Employment (% total employment)^v	15.40%	26.90%	23.80%	11.80%	28.00%	26.10%	13.40%
Government Expenditure (% GDP)^{vi}	44.84%	36.59%	40.19%	30.23%	33.08%	54.05%	38.50%
Corruption Perceptions Index^{vii}	41st	34th	12th	126th	76th	2nd	24th
Spillover Index^{viii}	135th	153rd	158th	82nd	81st	139th	148th
Happy Planet Index^{ix}	32nd	55th	75th	43rd	51st	17th	102nd
Carbon Footprint (per capita)^x	101st	131st	142th	19th	3rd	122nd	31st
Carbon Footprint (per GDP/capita)^{xi}	24th	45th	69th	36th	106th	37th	62nd

ⁱ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2024.

ⁱⁱ International Monetary Fund 2024.

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Development Programme 2024.

^{iv} Groh, Liechtenstein, Lieser, and Biesinger 2023.

^v International Labour Organization 2024.

^{vi} International Monetary Fund 2024.

^{vii} Transparency International 2023.

^{viii} Sachs, Lafortune, and FullerError! Bookmark not defined. 2024.

^{ix} Abdallah, Hoffman, and Akenji 2024.

^x Abdallah, Hoffman, and Akenji 2024.

^{xi} Abdallah, Hoffman, and Akenji 2024.

Figure 14.1:
Table Illustrating Comparative Economic Information for Seven Countries.

future, nearly all people seek to improve themselves, by their own definition, in some fashion; all seek “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” This relates directly to the implicit drive of the human condition as described by Maslow.¹

However, the Americanness of the American Dream is that, absent other more compelling opportunities at the time and since, an individual seeking a better life is a near constant in the human condition. Due to its compelling message, this formal worldwide announcement expressing a popular sentiment unarticulated for many eons previously has enjoyed 250 years of largely uncontested awareness in humanity’s psyche. Thus, “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” are the foundations of the so-called American Dream *brand*. But what is often missed is that this dream is not exclusive within US national boundaries or among American citizens: it is nearly everyone’s dream. To aspire tomorrow to improve upon what we are today is, at its core, the human condition. Therefore, like many other noble human quests toward international peace and prosperity, this brand provides an actionable aspiration for individuals and groups which holds out the hope for achievement and progress to imagine and help bring into reality. Relating first economic and then socio-cultural comparisons of the countries in which we have had experience, the next two sections provide a detailed basis for a conclusion emphasizing the relatedness of eastern Europe to the Middle East—even though three decades separate each region in our experience.

Seven Economies, Seven Capers in Capitalism

From the internationally uninitiated American business perspective, any form of capitalism that does not place the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) or multinational corporation (MNC) as the critical and central influence in an economy is suspicious at best and heretical at worst. This position ignores the 19th- and 20th-century drivers of American labor led by the likes of Mary Harris (1837–1930), Peter McGuire (1852–1906), and César Chávez (1927–1993) as well as the similarly-timed impetus for American conservation guided by leaders such as John Muir (1838–1914), Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919), and Rachel Carson (1907–1964).

As indicated in the table illustrated in Fig. 14.1 there are many different flavors of capitalism. Though the comparative economic traditions of these systems range from government-dominated command economies in countries such as those found in eastern Europe (e.g., the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Estonia), east Asia (e.g., China), and the Middle East (e.g., Saudi Arabia), to more market-driven systems such as those found in Europe (e.g., Finland) and the US, recent developments clearly indicate the varieties of market-based economies that can result. These include a wide spectrum which extends from a relatively fundamental market economy (as found in the Czech Republic and Estonia) to a mixed market economy that includes partnerships between companies and the government (as shown in Lithuania, Mexico, China, Finland, and Saudi Arabia).

In a comparison of former Soviet countries that transitioned to the European Union (EU), it is quite noteworthy how the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Estonia are bunched together by numerous economic metrics. For instance, Estonia leads very slightly over the other two in nominal GDP (per capital), the human development index, and the corruption perceptions index.

¹ Maslow 1943: 370–371, 373, 375, 379, 384–385, 390, 394, 395.

Table Illustrating Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Comparative Economic Information on Seven Countries						
<i>(GCC Data and Rankings)</i>	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates
Population (in millions)ⁱ	1.6	4.8	5.0	3.0	33.3	10.6
Nominal GDP (per capita)ⁱⁱ	5th	4th	6th	1 st	3rd	2nd
Human Development Indexⁱⁱⁱ	2nd	5th	6th	3rd (tie)	3rd (tie)	1st
Venture Capital and Private Equity Attractiveness^{iv}	6th	4th	3rd	5 th	1st	2nd
Public Sector Employment (% total employment)^v	9.60%	18.60%	78.70%	11.30%	35.30%	10.20%
Government Expenditure (% GDP)^{vi}	29.12%	40.68%	29.05%	25.43%	28.06%	26.40%
Corruption Perceptions Index^{vii}	6th	4th	5th	2 nd	3rd	1st
Spillover Index^{viii}	3rd	4th	2nd	6 th	1st	5th
Happy Planet Index^{ix}	1st	4th	n/a	5 th	2nd	3rd
Carbon Footprint (per capita)^x	4th	3rd	n/a	5 th	1st	2nd
Carbon Footprint (per GDP/capita)^{xi}	1st	5th	n/a	4 th	3rd	2nd

ⁱ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2024.

ⁱⁱ International Monetary Fund 2024.

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Development Programme 2024.

^{iv} Groh, Liechtenstein, Lieser, and Biesinger 2023.

^v International Labour Organization 2024.

^{vi} International Monetary Fund 2024.

^{vii} Transparency International 2023.

^{viii} Sachs, Lafortune, and Fuller 2024.

^{ix} Abdallah, Hoffman, and Akenji 2024.

^x Abdallah, Hoffman, and Akenji 2024.

^{xi} Abdallah, Hoffman, and Akenji 2024.

Figure 14.2: Table Illustrating Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Comparative Economic Information on Seven Countries

Meanwhile, the Czech Republic leads in venture capital and private equity attractiveness, the spillover index, the happy planet index, and both carbon footprint measures.

Contrasting two countries known as large manufacturing suppliers to the global economic system, showing the differences between Mexico and China can help distinguish their current standing. For instance, Mexico leads on the measures of nominal GDP (per capita), the happy planet index, and its carbon footprint (per GDP/capita). Conversely, China leads considerably in venture capital and private equity attractiveness, the corruption perceptions index, and its carbon footprint (per capita). Finally, in terms of the human development index and the spillover index, they are nearly identical.

Then, as they are both leaders in different capacities in the global order, showing the alignment of Finland and the US is necessary.¹¹ As expected, the US leads on issues such as nominal GDP (per capita), venture capital and private equity attractiveness, and carbon footprint (per capita). However, Finland has the upper hand in relation to the human development index, the corruption perceptions index, the spillover index, the happy planet index, and its carbon footprint (per GDP/capita).

Upon closer inspection of the table provided in Fig. 14.2, there are considerable regional differences in the Middle East, as well. For instance, economic traditions may be similar across Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, but recent macroeconomic forces have encouraged considerable shifts to varying degrees. As an example, the central role of government in regional economies is a core foundation. However, due to recent phenomena (such as the Arab Spring movements throughout the Middle East), differential systemic economic changes have been made particularly relevant among GCC countries. In general, benefiting from smaller populations and pragmatic governance approaches, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, and Bahrain have made considerable progress in their respective economic transitions, leading to comparatively higher nominal gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.

Interestingly, even though the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has the largest population base and arguably the most traditional economic perspective due to its close association with established global Islamic culture¹², the country has made very noteworthy progress since the commencement in 2016 of its Saudi Vision 2030, a government-sponsored initiative to modernize the nation's economy, society, and culture. For instance, among all six GCC countries, the KSA is ranked third by GDP per capita and the corruption perceptions index, but the country is also tied with Qatar for third on the human development index. Even more impressive, the country is second in the region on the Happy Planet Index¹³ and leads the GCC on financial investment, the so-called Spillover Index,¹⁴ and carbon footprint per capita. In short, considering the fact that the country's past economic success has been dominated almost exclusively by the world's largest traditional energy corporation, Saudi Aramco, these national strides toward twenty-first century

¹¹ Finland leads in terms of balancing the government's intervention with societal, environmental, and economic well-being while the US emphasized a very business-centric approach.

¹² The two holiest places of the Muslim world, Mecca and Medina, respectively, are within the country's boundaries and receive religious pilgrims and visitors throughout the year.

¹³ This measure indicates the ability of a government to provide living conditions emphasizing longevity, happiness, and sustainability for its citizens.

¹⁴ This measure provides indication of a country's ability to its neighbors with opportunities to fulfill the United Nation's (UN's) sustainability development goals (SDGs).

progress are indicative of the changes taking place on a local level. As a fast follower to the economic development that has taken place already in the UAE and Qatar, KSA, very notably, is the third—and arguably the most formidable economy—in the region.

While it is unfair to directly compare economic conditions in different regions and time periods, it should be noted that much of the transition currently witnessed in the KSA in the 2020s appears remarkably similar to the shift observed in eastern Europe²³ during the 1990s. No doubt, there were considerable distinctions on the paths taken by the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Estonia. First, originally a part of Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic²⁴ began its move away from a Soviet-style system in 1989. As a member of COMECON, the Czech Republic had relied on a planned economic approach for its general commercial activities. Therefore, in order to break away from COMECON, the Czechs chose a so-called economic “shock therapy” which involved, contrary to other nearby countries such as Poland and Hungary, a much more abrupt shift toward a market-based system that abandoned key tenets of government involvement in economic activities.

In contrast, Lithuania and Estonia were not able to depart as easily from the sphere of a centrally planned economic system, because both countries had been formally incorporated as republics into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). As formal members of the Soviet Union since 1940, they were not the beneficiaries of membership in COMECON and their economic activities had been directly tied to Moscow, the capital of the USSR.²⁵ Therefore, although both countries formally began their political and economic departure in 1990, their transition was fraught with considerably more complications than those encountered by the Czech Republic.

Despite these challenges, Lithuania and Estonia managed to adapt their unique circumstances to market-based economies. Partially due to its traditional cultural proximity to Poland, Lithuania opted for a more gradual transition. Meanwhile, because of their closeness geographically and culturally to Finland, the Estonians chose a more direct route toward a market-driven system. There are two drivers that facilitated this decision. First, during the lifetime of the USSR, the global political and economic strategy taken across the Gulf of Finland from Tallinn was called, in political science circles, Finlandization. This decades-long tactic of Finns acting as “fake

²³ Although the geographic space generally found between Germany and Russia in the 2020s is considered central Europe, use of the term “eastern Europe” reflects the contemporary mindset and parlance of the 1990s. This is based on the hegemony of the Cold War (1947–1991) which clearly demarcated Europe into a western zone and eastern zone. The western zone, of course, reflected the EU as an economic system and an earlier form of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a military alliance. Meanwhile, the eastern zone was manifested by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) for economic purposes and the Warsaw Pact as a military organization.

²⁴ The Czech Republic and Slovakia split peacefully in 1992.

²⁵ It should be noted that, at the time of their formal declared independence resolutions, the Lithuanian and Estonian economic systems were nearly exclusively reliant on the Soviet Union’s infrastructure. Citizens in the former USSR reflected that, before 1991, there were two so-called “walls” that inhibited information flow. The first wall was the well-known wall of demarcation between eastern and western Europe. The second wall, however, was between the Soviet Union and the rest of eastern Europe. This resulted in at least two outcomes: (1) COMECON countries in eastern Europe had little knowledge about the Soviet Union aside from the formal information communicated, thus associating all Soviet Union countries with the singular message provided from official sources; and (2) countries in the Soviet Union found it nearly impossible to gain information about COMECON countries in eastern Europe, thus making nations such as Lithuania and Estonia comparatively very dependent on the economic system of the Soviet Union.

friends”²⁶ with the Soviet Union (and then later Russia) was derisively and derogatively referred to as a capitulation strategy by many observers in western Europe. However, while this approach prevented the Soviet Union from invading Finland, it also provided the opportunity for Finnish businesses and consumers to make the very short and easy 50-mile trip between Helsinki and Tallinn to support Estonia throughout the Cold War. Therefore, an economic kinship was established and maintained between the two Finno-Ugric cultures even during those inhospitable decades.

Second, and perhaps more importantly for its future, Finland acted as an economic role model for Estonia during the 1990s. This is very easily captured by Finland’s admittance to the EU in 1995. Based on the bonds with Finland that had been sustained for decades, the Estonians, in effect, benefited from a western European economy at its doorstep during the critical times of its transition to a market-based economy. While the Finnish model is not nearly as business centric as the US approach to capitalism, Estonia took a more *laissez-faire* approach to its economic system than Lithuania.

The relevance of the economic transitions of eastern European nations in the 1990s and GCC countries in the 2020s can also be seen from two countries in which we have experience but have not yet mentioned: Mexico and mainland China. As its southern neighbor, Mexico has had a more than informal economic relationship with the US for a very long time. However, the two systems were bound together formally with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 and then reaffirmed with the United States-Canada-Mexico Agreement (USMCA) in 2020. Following Nixon’s visit to Beijing and Shanghai in 1972, mainland China also started on a path toward a market-driven economy in 1978 which was solidified in 1982 by internal reforms resulting from Mao Zedong’s passing.

As seen through the eyes of two US citizens, the foundational tenets and impact for the considerable economic changes briefly described in these seven contexts (the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Estonia, Mexico, China, Finland, and Saudi Arabia) can be found in Smith’s (1776) treatise due to its primary emphasis on the dynamics and importance of supply and demand. The assembly and configuration of the workforce, the efficiency of the systems developed and deployed, and the possibility of providing choices in the marketplace are critical for the success of any capitalist-oriented economic structure. However, the underlying lever that has driven this system from well before 1776 in its myriad proto-capitalist forms and continues to this day in a largely globalized format is perhaps one issue: private property.

One must consider that the notion of private property should not be akin to political science notions of democracy. In its most foundational form, the concept of monetary-based ownership is a purely economic concept. However, be it tangible or intangible, private property can have implications for the individual, group, and corporation levels. As a result, this creates the possibility for a person, several people, or companies to develop a vested interest in identifying, creating, and/or acting upon opportunities for their own material and/or financial improvement.

This is the common essence across the seven countries in which we have studied, lived, and/or worked: in general, people—regardless of place, background, beliefs, or orientation—seek to improve their lot in life in whatever way it may be defined. In places and times undergoing

²⁶ This is a direct quote provided to one of the authors by an ethnically born and raised Finn.

considerable economic transitions, such as eastern Europe in the 1990s and the Middle East in the 2020s, the experience is quite visible. Regardless of context, local people undergoing the transformation are more open and willing to consider reason-based concepts, ideas, and strategies for which they would be considerably more skeptical in stable economic circumstances. The reason for doing so? To create potential opportunities to increase their standing in society.

In n varying degrees, this was also the case in Mexico, China, and Finland. At the time of our experiences, Mexico and mainland China were aligning their economic goals and ambitions with the US in the manufacturing and service sectors. A burgeoning middle class had emerged in both countries and was actively focused on upward mobility and continued personal economic improvement. Meanwhile, though Finland had stable conditions due to its EU membership for more than two decades by the time of our arrival, the notion of individual material betterment was somewhat different. Rather than searching for immediate personal progress, Finns were more concerned with longer term issues such as individual enrichment and system maintenance and preservation. Therefore, given the economic accomplishments achieved by Finland, it is little wonder the country sought to protect its prized possessions by joining NATO in 2023.²⁷

To conclude on commerce-related cross-national issues, there is a prevailing tendency to attempt to categorize economic and political ideologies in a crude binary fashion as either capitalist or non-capitalist. After judging an ideology as non-capitalist, some pundits seek attention and drama by going further and claiming that these so-called thoughts are socialist or communist. However, the discrete choice fallaciously presented as capitalist or non-capitalist very rarely exists. In reality, among economic and political decision makers, this approach amounts to nothing more than a stale McCarthyite Henny Penny tale.²⁸

We both have seen firsthand the psychic devastation that a true socialist economic system can cause on a population. A planned economy stripped of any and all notion of improvement, wellbeing, and profit is, in many ways, unimaginable to the pundits. Lacking conditions in which the multidimensional concept of private property is not sought, encouraged, and/or the norm, a centralized socialist economic system that lacks any semblance of private enterprise wreaks havoc on the intellect of a country's citizens. The mindless desolation that results can be discouraging for the uninitiated and terrifying for the masterful.²⁹

In some fashion, the top decision makers in each of our seven countries understand these ramifications very well. Returning to Maslow, people require the achievement of basic necessities and a sense of personal ownership to feel safe and secure.³⁰ As alluded to earlier, this has existed from the earliest days of proto-capitalism. We need these provisions in whatever form they take to sense membership in the small and/or large community of our choice. In effect, this is the reason that—for better or worse—the diverse options of capitalism available now and into the future will remain the same. Until humanity can conjure a better economic system, we will

²⁷ This action was precipitated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

²⁸ In essence, a derivation of a constant “The sky is falling!” siren from some societal figures.

²⁹ The absence of individual incentive can become so prevalent in a society due to its economic system that personal achievement is irrelevant and shunned. As a result, the mindset is such that—if accomplishments are meaningless—then individuals, groups, and organizations detach psychologically, physically, and practically. This creates perverse conditions in which cheating, corruption, and black-market activities abound. As one author has experienced in the workplace and been informed by local knowledgeable citizens, this is the enduring legacy of the Brezhnev Doctrine.

³⁰ Maslow 1943: 373, 376–381, 384, 388–389, 396.

continue to seek to modify and improve upon the varieties of market-based approaches currently at our disposal.

Seven Cultures, Seven Societies: The Foundations of National Cultural Values

In terms of a singular socio-cultural insight from our international experiences, the most resounding concept is very simple: the human spirit cannot be defeated. We have benefited from this understanding in both smaller and larger countries. As indicated previously, these experiences have occurred in the wake and/or amid some very forceful historical dynamics. In fact, no matter the worldly strength of the powers attempting to subjugate, direct, and/or undermine an adversary, even the smallest and seemingly most underestimated socio-cultural rival can remain.

In Table 3 two well-established complementary approaches to national cultural values are used to compare seven countries, including the United States.³¹ During this approach, we discuss in detail some critical thematic aspects related to each country that are indicative of each nation's character. In the Schwartz (1999) approach to national cultural values, there are three pairs of concepts that, based on established research practices, have unique scores for a variety of countries: (1) embeddedness and autonomy (affective and intellectual); (2) mastery and harmony; and (3) hierarchy and egalitarianism. The first pair deals with the tension between social stability and tradition versus individual choices. Meanwhile, the second two concepts address the strain between personal ability and improvement versus an individual's satisfaction with their place. Then, the third duo approaches the tradeoff of definite social boundaries as opposed to an emphasis on equality.

The Czech Republic and Estonia,³² are very similar on the embeddedness (3.81 vs. 3.77) and affective autonomy (3.36 vs. 3.37) measures. To an extent, this is plausible due to their similar recent Soviet-influence background. Along with this, it makes sense that both countries could seek a somewhat equal measure of stability and way for individuals to seek enjoyment. The Czech Republic is somewhat higher than Estonia in terms of harmony (4.31 vs. 4.23), thus leading to the conclusion that their greater emphasis on the group manifests itself in a slightly stronger national identity. Again, this is believable as the Czech Republic tracks its origins back to the establishment of the Duchy of Bohemia in A.D. 870 while Estonia became a nation for the first time in 1918. That stated, Estonia exceeds the Czech Republic on intellectual autonomy (4.45 vs. 4.23), mastery (3.98 vs. 3.79), (2.97 vs. 2.07), and egalitarianism (4.77 vs. 4.58). While, at first glance, it appears somewhat surprising that the encouragement of independent ideas as well as individual achievement is higher in Estonia than in the Czech Republic, the greater emphasis on harmony in the Czech Republic makes this understandable. However, since they are considered in direct contrast, the more intriguing finding is that both hierarchy and egalitarianism are higher in Estonia. Though speculative, this could be based on the ability of Estonians to balance the

³¹ As there is a considerable dearth of data on national cultural values concerning countries in the Middle East, we are unable to include the KSA in this part of the analysis. Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010; Schwartz 1999.

³² Schwartz 1999 lacked data for Lithuania.

maintenance of order with the encouragement of free thought. Given Estonia's significantly smaller population,³³ this appears easier to accomplish.

We can also contrast Mexico and China as they have similar underlying economic dynamics as emerging markets. Mexico scores higher on embeddedness (4.23 vs. 3.25), mastery (4.02 vs. 3.84), and hierarchy (2.99 vs. 1.69). Historically, the governing system in Mexico has been less centralized than the socialist-based system China has had since 1949. That, combined with the traditions of a race-based social system in Mexico,³⁴ explains the emphasis on societal stability, individual skill, and hierarchical order. In comparison, China exceeds at affective autonomy (3.94 vs. 2.68), intellectual autonomy (4.64 vs. 3.80), harmony (4.35 vs. 3.97), and egalitarianism (5.20 vs. 4.39). While the first three likely are related to Chinese philosophical pillars such as Confucian ethics³⁵ and the Taoism's *yinyang*,³⁶ the last cultural value emphasizing equality is probably due to the recent dual impact of socialism and capitalism on Chinese culture.

After that, we can also compare the US and Finland, two successful, yet opposite, implementations of capitalism (one societal-centric and the other business-centric, respectively). The data show Finland ranking higher on embeddedness (4.46 vs. 4.27) and harmony (4.19 vs. 3.53). Given the relative newness of Finland³⁷ as well as the diversity of the US,³⁸ this is somewhat expected. The US leads on affective autonomy (2.49 vs. 2.13), intellectual autonomy (3.89 vs. 3.58), mastery (4.12 vs. 3.60), and hierarchy (2.68 vs. 2.46). This aligns with motivated and impactful activities by corporations to bring a much higher comparative GDP per capita (as found in Table 1), but it also leaves much opportunity for personal advancement as identified in its leading in venture capital and private equity attractiveness (also in Table 1). Interestingly, the level of egalitarianism is quite similar in Finland and the US (4.68 vs. 4.73). While the US *Declaration of Independence* (1776) mentions the issue of equality as a foundational tenet, it is quite common for the Nordic countries to value this quality culturally, as well. And, due to the particularly challenging survival conditions posed by Finland's harsh climate, it is little surprising that egalitarianism is a core concept.

Switching to another, even more established framework of national cultural values,³⁹ we briefly compare the countries in our sample across six important facets: (1) power distance; (2) individualism/collectivism; (3) masculinity/femininity; (4) uncertainty avoidance; (5) long-term orientation; and (6) indulgence/restraint. As defined by Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, power distance relates to a culture's approach to the (un)equal distribution of power and resources. Meanwhile, individualism/collectivism focuses on whether a specific person or a

³³ Estonia has about 1.4 million people and the Czech Republic has about 10.8 million (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2024).

³⁴ Lizcano Fernández 2005:185–186.

³⁵ Confucius lived in the fourth and third centuries B.C.

³⁶ There is no clear founder of Taoism as it appears multiple people and forces impacted the belief system over time. However, the *Tao Te Ching* (2024) is often attributed to Lao Tzu sometime during the period 770–256 B.C.

³⁷ Finland declared its independence from Russia following the Russian Revolution, i.e., in 1917. The thirteen American colonies declared their independence from Britain in 1776.

³⁸ As an example, one could examine the religion-based demographics of each country. The level of Christianity is similar (Finland: 65.5%; US: 67%), but the consistency of Christianity is quite different. In Finland, the population is 63.6% Lutheran (Statistics Finland 2024). Meanwhile, the US population is 33% Protestant, 22% Catholic, and 11% other Christian (Gallup 2024).

³⁹ Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

general group should be emphasized more. Then, masculinity/femininity relates to a cultural approach that is more aggressive, competitive, and assertive versus one that is more focused on relationships, others, and quality of life, respectively. After that, uncertainty avoidance emphasizes the importance of predictability in a society. Also, long-term orientation deals with the temporal focus of a culture: whether it is on the past and present or on the future. Finally, indulgence/restraint addresses a society's propensity to enjoy life, leisure, and personal freedom versus utilizing self-control and hard work.

As noted in the table provided in Fig. 14.3, the power distance index for both Mexico (81) and China (80) are high.

Table Illustrating Comparative National Cultural Values for Seven Countries							
	Czech Republic	Lithuania	Estonia	Mexico	China	Finland	United States
Embeddednessⁱ	3.81	n/a	3.77	4.23	3.25	4.46	4.27
Affective Autonomyⁱⁱ	3.36	n/a	3.37	2.68	3.94	2.13	2.49
Intellectual Autonomyⁱⁱⁱ	4.23	n/a	4.45	3.80	4.64	3.58	3.89
Mastery^{iv}	3.79	n/a	3.98	4.02	3.84	3.60	4.12
Harmony^v	4.31	n/a	4.23	3.97	4.35	4.19	3.53
Hierarchy^{vi}	2.04	n/a	2.97	2.99	1.69	2.46	2.68
Egalitarianism^{vii}	4.58	n/a	4.77	4.39	5.20	4.68	4.73
Power Distance^{viii}	57	42	40	81	80	33	40
Individualism/Collectivism^{ix}	58	60	60	30	20	63	91
Masculinity/Femininity^x	57	19	30	69	66	26	62
Uncertainty Avoidance^{xi}	74	65	60	82	30	59	46
Long-Term Orientation^{xii}	70	82	82	24	87	38	26
Indulgence/Restraint^{xiii}	29	16	16	97	24	57	68

ⁱ Schwartz 1999.

ⁱⁱ Schwartz 1999.

ⁱⁱⁱ Schwartz 1999.

^{iv} Schwartz 1999.

^v Schwartz 1999.

^{vi} Schwartz 1999.

^{vii} Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

^{viii} Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

^{ix} Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

^x Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

^{xi} Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

^{xii} Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

^{xiii} Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010.

Figure 14.3: Table Illustrating Comparative National Cultural Values for Seven Countries

Mexico's rating can likely be attributed to the aforementioned centuries-old social strata on which Mexican society is still based.⁴⁰ With China, there has been a long history of rule by emperors⁴¹ which has laid the groundwork for the endurance of the authoritarian People's Republic of China (the PRC). Meanwhile, low in power distance is Finland (33) and this appears, as presented before, related to the country's level of egalitarianism.⁴² For individualism, highest in the sample is the US (91) while lowest is China (20). As both the person and an individual's property are fundamental aspects of the *Declaration of Independence* (1776) of the US, this is expected. Also, the considerable emphasis on collectivism in China is anticipated due to the previously mentioned aspect of harmony⁴³ which is supported by the nation's core teachings of Confucius and Lao-Tzu. Scoring high on masculinity are both Mexico (69) and China (66). There is little doubt that Mexico's results are based on the role of *machismo* in Latin culture.⁴⁴ However, China's score reflects a general trend that shows females tend to have less formal education than males in the PRC,⁴⁵ thus creating an inherent cultural as well as economic power dynamic rooted in its societal dynamics. Interestingly, the country that had the lowest ranking in Table 3 was Lithuania (19). This could be related to the central role women had in keeping the Lithuanian language, culture, and identity alive during the nation's Tsarist and Soviet occupations.⁴⁶

The contrast relating to uncertainty avoidance between emerging market countries is very noticeable. The country rating highest was Mexico (82) while China ranked lowest (30). Given the traditional influence of Catholicism's formal bureaucracy in Latin America, it is little wonder that



Figure 14.4: Reverse of 5 Litas Lithuanian Banknote (1993-2007)

⁴⁰ Lizcano Fernández 2005: 185–186

⁴¹ The first dynasty of rulers in China was established over 4000 years ago.

⁴² Schwartz 1999.

⁴³ Schwartz 1999.

⁴⁴ Heep 2014: 104.

⁴⁵ Tu and Liao 2005:625.

⁴⁶ Featured on the back of the post-1991 independence 5 litas banknote, the famous national sculpture by Rimša (1939) shows a mother secretly teaching her child from a Lithuanian language and culture book behind a loom (see Figure 14.4).

the Church provided a strong stabilizing force in Mexico amid the country's historical turbulence.⁴⁷ China's low score can, perhaps, be seen as a result of the cultural prevalence and pragmatic utilization in China of *guānxi* (关系)⁴⁸ to accomplish many life activities and milestones. The countries with the highest scores for long-term orientation are China (87), Lithuania (82) and Estonia (82). Given the combination of previous culturally related concepts, such as its long dynastic history as well as the notion of close, mutually beneficial personal relationships, it is little wonder that China is able to invest considerable time and effort in the future. In terms of the rankings for Lithuania and Estonia, they are both very small nations which have endured many centuries living under other countries' legal frameworks. Even though it existed as a Grand Duchy as early as 1236, the Lithuanian commonwealth with Poland in 1569 and then the last trilateral partition in central Europe⁴⁹ in 1795 saw Lithuania cease to exist as a formal nation until independence in 1918. Estonia was not a formal country until after World War I in 1918. Previously the area had been ruled, at various time, by the Teutonic Knights, by the Danish, Swedish, Germanic, Polish, and Russian empires⁵⁰ as well as the Soviet Union. Therefore, given the extended time that both Lithuanians and Estonians have had to wait for independence, it is very plausible that their high long-term orientation is reflective of their patience for results.⁵¹

As the lowest in long-term orientation, it could be said that Mexico (24) and the US (26) reflect a general mindset in the New World. Given the vast financial and natural resources unexpectedly presented during each country's colonial period, it is little wonder that—as a derivative of traditional European values—a cultural mindset reflecting immediate utilization would attempt to take advantage of the opportunities presented and imagined. The final Hofstede (2010) measure, indulgence/restraint, had indulgence highest with Mexico (97). This is reflected in the strong impact of cultural festivals in the development of communities in the country and in the building of relationships in an atmosphere of enjoying life and leisurely activities.⁵² In contrast, Lithuania's and Estonia's scores (both 16) indicate a very high level of cultural restraint. This emphasis on self-control and delayed gratification undoubtedly has at least two sources: (1) the previously mentioned delay in gaining nationhood; and (2) the purges in each country conducted at Stalin's behest.⁵³

⁴⁷ Ohan 2001: 53.

⁴⁸ Loosely translated, it refers to the personal, social, and business relationships one uses for mutual benefit. The concept has two parts: *guan* (关), meaning "closed/caring", and *xi* (系), referring to a "system".

⁴⁹ This was a geopolitical strategy coordinated by Austria, Prussia, and Russia at the end of the eighteenth century to alter the balance of power in central Europe.

⁵⁰ Urban 1975; Urban 1981a; Urban 1998.

⁵¹ Urban 1993 observed how coins facilitated commerce in what is now Estonia as early as the fourteenth century. In addition, Urban 1981b found evidence in Russow's historical chronicling of a strong national identity among the Estonians as early as the 16th century. Throughout the extensive period during which they were subject to various different political systems, Urban 1998 indicates they maintained a durable cultural character.

⁵² Solano Morales 2024: 201.

⁵³ Implemented in the 1940s and 1950s, it is widely known that Stalin deported to Siberia over 100,000 men, women, and children deemed a threat to the Soviet Union.

Seven Cultures, Seven Societies: National Characters on the World Stage

Reflecting on these seven non-US cultures, each has its own unique history, character, and energy. However, as we have presented throughout, there are some commonalities that can have a possible impact moving forward. No doubt, each of the seven countries briefly presented here left an indelibly special place in our hearts. Their distinctiveness helped us to see more clearly the vivid and constructive tapestry which can exist when the world is at its best. In the following, we hope to capture a simple slice of each country's character.

To varying degrees, the Czechs, Lithuanians, Estonians, and Finns perceive the Russian (and related Soviet) government as a colonizer. While the Czechs were a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire before World War I and benefited from a certain level of autonomy, the Lithuanians, Estonians, and Finns were well in the grip of the Russian Empire and endured a considerable level of attempted assimilation: discouraging the public use of the local language and requiring that only the Cyrillic alphabet be used instead of the Latin characters of each language's tradition. However, soon after the end of World War II, the Czechs found themselves a part of the great Soviet experiment that sought to balance eastern Europe against the western European democratic governmental and capitalistic economic systems.

The Czechs consider Good King Wenceslaus (Václav, in Czech), of Christmas carol fame, to be an early important influence on the nation. Although missionaries Cyril and Methodius—with their Christian traditions from Byzantium—are credited with introducing the faith to the country in the 9th century, when Christianity was not yet divided between the Orthodox East and the Catholic West, King Václav started orienting the Czechs toward Roman Christianity due to an increasing Germanic influence. Even though King Václav has a profound place in Czech history, the life of Jan Hus (1370–1415) captured the passion and perseverance of the nation's character. Seeking to reform the Church from within, Hus drew from the groundbreaking perspectives of John Wycliffe (c. 1328–1384). Considered a heretic because of his reformist teachings, Hus was burned at the stake in 1415.⁵⁴ In executing Hus, religious authorities clearly underestimated the impact of Hus among the Czechs. As a result, the nation revolted and the Hussites, led initially by a one-eyed general named Jan Žižka (1360–1424), fought in armed conflict against the Church for nearly two decades before the rebellion was defeated.

As noted by the special relationship Mozart had with the people of Prague,⁵⁵ the Czechs were a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Before their exit from this Empire after World War I, a widely known and endearing dark comedy and satire, *The Good Soldier Švejk* by Jaroslav Hašek (1883–1923),⁵⁶ included many topics which examined the pointlessness of armed conflict. With nationhood established in 1918 during a euphoric era of nationalist self-determinism, Tomáš Masaryk (1850–1937) became a critical figure as the country's first president. However, as a second world war became more and more likely, Hitler's temporary appeasement at the expense of the Czechs relinquishing the heavily fortified Sudetenland border regions was considered an unspoken national betrayal. At the end of World War II, the Czechs came under the Soviet umbrella for over four decades. Seeking to modernize and liberalize the Soviet system, the head

⁵⁴ Hus, in turn, greatly influenced Martin Luther's work nearly a full century later.

⁵⁵ Freeman 2021: 329–331.

⁵⁶ Hašek 1923.

of the Communist government, Alexander Dubček (1921–1992), led a movement with the motto of having “socialism with a human face”. However, this perspective was seen as a threat to the Soviet approach and it was summarily crushed by other, more conservative Soviet-friendly countries aligned with Moscow. However, throughout these turbulent and unpredictable events, the Czechs were still able to maintain their uniqueness through the music of Bedřich Smetana (1823–1884) and Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904), but also with the work of dissident writer and future president Václav Havel (1936–2011) amongst others.

Even though all three Baltic States endured more severe policies under the Soviet occupation after World War II, they were able to retain their very distinct national cultures and still band together for a common purpose.⁵⁷ For instance, in 1989, to protest the 50th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany,⁵⁸ about two million citizens of the Baltic States supporting independence held hands for fifteen minutes to connect all three capitals⁵⁹ as a human chain in an act of peaceful defiance to create what became known as *The Baltic Way*. Their activities were accompanied by an overall so-called Singing Revolution⁶⁰ which began in 1988 and continued until independence was achieved for all three countries in 1991.

Finland has had its own experiences with the Russian government. As part of the Swedish Empire,⁶¹ Finland’s administrative center was located in Turku, a town in the far southwest corner of the country. However, when the Russian Empire gained Finland in 1809, the Finns gained some autonomy but the capital was moved to Helsinki so it could be closer to Russia proper.⁶² Soon after, Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) emerged to inspire the Finns as a nation through his music compositions. Noticing the change among the populace, the Russian authorities began to actively discourage such nationalistic displays. In response, the titles of Sibelius’s works were changed and obfuscated to evade governmental attempts to suppress them.⁶³ At the end of World War I, Finland achieved independence but, soon after the start of World War II, the ethos of the Finnish national character, *sisu*,⁶⁴ was tested like never before. Vastly outnumbered in personnel and equipment, the Finns halted an attempted invasion by the Soviet Union in 1939–1940 in what became known as the Winter War. The result was a treaty in which Finland agreed to remain neutral toward Nazi Germany. After World War II and throughout the Cold War Finland continued

⁵⁷ Lieven 1993.

⁵⁸ The August 23, 1939, secret agreement was a non-aggression treaty which gave the Soviet Union the ability to absorb the Baltic States.

⁵⁹ Tallinn, Estonia; Riga, Latvia; and Vilnius, Lithuania.

⁶⁰ Vogt 2005: 26.

⁶¹ Relative to their experience with Russia, the Finns have had a quite amicable relationship with the Swedes. So much so that, in addition to Swedish as a necessary part of a Finnish schoolchild’s second language education, there is a considerable Swedish minority in the western part of the country to this day.

⁶² St. Petersburg, the empire’s capital, was a mere 250 miles away from Helsinki.

⁶³ This was particularly true of Sibelius’s *Finlandia* which conjured nationalist imagery of resistance to what had become perceived as occupation by the Russian Empire (Riley 2017). Alternative titles for *Finlandia* included *Happy Feelings at the awakening of Finnish Spring*, and *A Scandinavian Choral March* (Wikipedia n.d.).

⁶⁴ While many translations attempt to capture the essence of the concept, *sisu* is close to an internal toughness to persevere against all odds (NATO 2025).

to maintain a policy of non-alignment, a strategy called Finlandization.⁶⁵ Following the end of the Cold War in 1991, Finland joined the EU in 1995. Then, due to a resurgently bellicose Russian government, Finland joined NATO in 2023.

There is a heightened nationalist-based bond between the Finns and Estonians. This is partially due to a relatively common history vis-à-vis Russia (and the Soviet Union) as well as Sweden. However, unlike Lithuania,⁶⁶ both Estonia and Finland are Finno-Ugric countries.⁶⁷ In addition, the two countries' capitals are just across the Gulf of Finland from each other.⁶⁸

Table Illustrating Comparative National Anthem Information for Seven Countries

	Czech Republic	Lithuania	Estonia	Mexico	China	Finland	Saudi Arabia	United States
National Anthem Title	<i>Where My Home Is</i>	<i>National Song</i>	<i>My Fatherland, My Happiness and Joy</i>	<i>Mexican National Anthem</i>	<i>March of the Volunteers</i>	<i>Our Land</i>	<i>Chant of the Saudi Nation</i>	<i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i>
Anthem Significance or Theme	nature-focused incidental music from comedic play	poetically condensed nation-based concept	poetically condensed nation-based concept	refers to nation's battle victories and homeland defense	recalls fight against Japanese invasion of Manchuria	nature-focused nation-based poetically condensed concept	emphasizes God's importance, Islam's centrality, and King's long life	recalls British attack on Baltimore fort
Year Lyrics Written	1834	1898	1869	1853	1934	1848	1984	1814
Anthem Lyrics Author	Josef Kajetán Tyl	Vincas Kudirka	Johann Voldemar Jannsen	Francisco González Bocanegra	Tian Han	Johan Ludvig Runeberg	Ibrāhīm Khafājī	Francis Scott Key
Anthem Music Written	1834	1898	1848	1854	1935	1848	1947	1773
Anthem Music Composer	František Škroup	Vincas Kudirka	Fredrik Pacius	Jaime Nunó Roca	Nie Er	Fredrik Pacius	Abd al-Raḥman al-Khaṭīb	John Stafford Smith
Other Anthem Notes			same melody as Finnish national anthem			melody also used for Estonian national anthem		same melody as British social club song

Figure 14.5: Table Illustrating Comparative National Anthem Information for Seven Countries

⁶⁵ This term was coined with derogatory connotations in West Germany during the Cold War. However, it must be noted such global geopolitical commentary is much easier to make when the criticism is made from behind NATO's defenses. Politicians should be mindful that Finland borders Russia and, at the time, had little hope of assistance from NATO.

⁶⁶ Lithuania is considered a Baltic country in the linguistic and cultural sense of the word. Like Latvia, Lithuania's Baltic language is most similar (though very distantly) to Slavic languages and, thus, has a Indo-European lineage.

⁶⁷ In comparison to Lithuania and Latvia, Estonia (like Finland and, more removed, Hungary) is a Finno-Ugric people. In contrast to the Indo-European tradition with its origins in the eastern European steppes (Mallory 1989:185), Finno-Ugric languages have their origins mainly in the northern Ural Mountains (Campbell 2004: 405).

⁶⁸ The distance between Tallinn, Estonia, and Helsinki, Finland, is about 50 miles.

Therefore, a close relationship between the two nations was bound to occur. One very strong indication is found in the table provided in Fig. 14.5 as Estonia's and Finland's national anthems use the same melody, albeit with different titles and different lyrics. This fundamental kinship between the two nations can be thought of as forged to form a durable and lasting cultural relationship.

However, a unique Estonian character emerged at about the same time as in Finland. This corresponded with an aggressive policy in the Russian Empire to assimilate the local population. As in Finland, this created a national cultural response in which artists such as the Estonian writer Lydia Koidula (1843–1886) created nation-based work in the arts such as poetry, prose, and theater to manifest an Estonian identity. With its independence in 1918 after World War I, Estonia had its first opportunity to exert its distinctiveness as a nation-state. However, it was short lived as World War II wreaked havoc and, by its conclusion in 1945, Estonia was once again under the dominion of Russian-speaking superiors—this time as part of the Soviet Union.⁶⁹ As the Cold War quickly accelerated to an end and the Soviet Union ceased to exist, Estonia regained its independence in 1991.

For the nearly five decades of Soviet occupation, Estonia was able to sustain itself with Finland's help. Starting in the 1960s, broadcasts by Finnish television stations had made it possible for the northern section of Estonia to watch Western programming without interference from the Soviet censors.⁷⁰ To serve as a reminder of their similarity as well as the Estonians' own nationhood, the melody of both countries' national anthem (prohibited in Estonia during the Soviet period) was transmitted in the morning and in the evening at the beginning and at the end of every day's broadcast on Finnish national radio.⁷¹ Also, there were multilevel relationships and considerable investments made by Finnish businesses in the Estonian economy during the Soviet period.⁷² This laid the groundwork for Estonian and Finnish companies in 1991 and after to intensify their commerce activity and subsequently for Estonia to join the EU in 2004. In addition, given its past history specifically with Russian-led bureaucracies, Estonia sought protection from Russia and membership in NATO.⁷³ To complete its transition to western Europe, the country began participating fully in the organization's activities in 2004.⁷⁴

As mentioned earlier, Lithuania had a much different history than Estonia. In fact, this could have greatly influenced the different assimilation policy undertaken in Lithuania vis-à-vis that experienced by Estonia and Latvia.⁷⁵ For context, the first documentation of the country's existence in the historical record is in 1009,⁷⁶ before Lithuania was Christianized. This long history implies that, during the Soviet period, Lithuania, unlike the other two Baltic States had a deeper

⁶⁹ As with the Russian Empire before it, the Soviet Union conducted a cultural strategy intent on assimilating eastern Slavic culture with Estonia's. So effective was its implementation that, to compare, ethnic Estonians comprised about 90% in 1944 and then about 61% in 1989 (Estonian Ministry of Justice 2005: 21).

⁷⁰ Lepp and Pantti 2012: 77.

⁷¹ Miljan 2015: 314.

⁷² Stöcker 2016: 459–462, 465–468, 470–473.

⁷³ Volker 2010.

⁷⁴ It is worth stating that, upon visiting a local Estonian family's home, we noticed that an Estonian translated copy of *The Good Soldier Svejk* was on their public bookshelf. This provides an indication that Estonia was willing to draw from an amalgam of resources to maintain its identity centered on passive resistance during the Soviet period.

⁷⁵ Estonian Ministry of Justice 2005.

⁷⁶ Based on the writings related to St. Bruno of Querfurt on his travels throughout the region (Baranauskas 2009:28).

cultural well from which to draw strength. This led to an implicit cultural capacity, absent in Estonia and Latvia that, in the face of overwhelming odds, enabled Lithuanians to engage in the Soviet system with less concern for their national survival.⁷⁷ This relative positive societal attitude, from Moscow's perspective, made Lithuania undoubtedly seem less threatening than the other two Baltic States. As a result, the Soviet presence in Lithuania was considerably less hostile.

Lithuania had a noteworthy history beginning with Grand Duke Mindaugas (c.1203-1263) who became leader of the pagan Lithuanians in 1236, was baptized in 1250 or 1251 and then was granted the title of king by the Catholic Church in 1253. Lithuania was thus the last country in Europe to accept Christianity. Later, after reverting to paganism for a period of time, a dynastic union with Poland was achieved in 1386, when Vytautas the Great (c.1350–1430) emerged as another critical national figure. In fact, with increasing support from Poland, Lithuania, during a protracted civil war, was able to defeat the Teutonic Knights and its local sympathizers in decisive battles at Grunwald⁷⁸ in 1410 and at Ukmergė⁷⁹ in 1435.

Throughout this period, under Vytautas' leadership Lithuania expanded southeastward to its greatest extent and extended from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Then, in 1569, the union with Poland became more formalized and the two nations arranged as a commonwealth, which led to increased Polish influence on Lithuanian territories over the next two centuries. The combined country remained an important player in central European affairs until its final partition in 1795. After their absorption into the Russian Empire, Lithuanians maintained a sense of national identity, as mentioned earlier. This was maintained and fostered with the work of artists such as Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (1875–1911) who, like Sibelius in Finland, composed orchestral pieces that captured aspects of the Lithuanian spirit during the nation's occupation.⁸⁰

Mexico, meanwhile, has had a long and contentious relationship with the US. With a background highlighting the cultural achievements of the Aztecs and Mayans prior to the defeat of the Aztecs in 1521 by the Spaniards led by Hernán Cortés (1485–1547), Mexican culture is an amalgamation of indigenous and Spanish influence that continues to this day,⁸¹ with several dozen languages spoken in the country⁸² and with an ethnically mixed population created by these historical forces.⁸³ By the time Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821, the westward expansion of the US was already underway. This led to a long, border-based relationship in which the two countries have been intertwined for over two centuries.

The first flashpoint could be attributed to both countries' dealings with the Texas region. While its aspirations for independence went unrecognized by Mexico, the Battle of the Alamo⁸⁴

⁷⁷ This general perspective was noted in the Lithuanian government's open willingness to extend citizenship to Russian-speaking inhabitants after independence restoration in 1991 (Aptekar 2009: 520). This was contrary to the policies in Estonia and Latvia which required language proficiency for citizenship.

⁷⁸ Urban 1999.

⁷⁹ Housley 1992: 363.

⁸⁰ Two of his most famous pieces, *In the Forest* and *The Sea*, harken back to distant and naturalist historical motifs.

⁸¹ Solano Morales 2024: 196-197.

⁸² Lizcano Fernández 2005: 191.

⁸³ Lizcano Fernández 2005: 196, 198, 199, 218, 228. This is noted in the demographic data from the end of the 20th century indicating that people of mixed European and indigenous ancestry were 70% of the Mexican population, 15% were of European ancestry, and 14% were of indigenous ancestry (Lizcano Fernández 2005: 218).

⁸⁴ The remains of the fort survive in San Antonio, Texas.

in 1836 was an integral part of the formation of the Texas identity⁸⁵ and led to the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) and the US annexation of Texas in 1845. As a result of this armed conflict, the US also gained Utah, Nevada, California, and most of Arizona.⁸⁶ Subsequently, the rest of Arizona was acquired by the US through the Gadsden Purchase in 1853.

Afterward, Mexico and the US had a checkered relationship. Given the long border stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico, many opportunities arose for interaction and animosity. For instance, the film *Like Water for Chocolate*⁸⁷ follows a family in the 1910s which lives on both sides of the Mexico/US border in the Texas region. Following some of the relationships that develop, even though a national boundary separates different parts of the family from each other, the film demonstrates the potential constructiveness resulting from such circumstances.

That stated, significant cross-border migration has seen US employers seeking a Mexican-based workforce for some time. Driven partially by the turmoil and change of the Mexican Revolution of 1910–1920,⁸⁸ demand in the US for workers from Mexico was at an unprecedented high through the 1920s, only to drop considerably for the next five decades.⁸⁹ However, as Mexican workers tended to stay in the US, their children became American workers of Mexican descent. This led to movements, such as those led by César Chávez, to pressure for better wages and improved working conditions. Recognizing the close business ties that had developed over the years, NAFTA, which bound Mexico to the US closely economically, was enacted in 1994. Then, to replace NAFTA, the USMCA took effect in 2020.

Another country which has extensive trade ties with the US is China. With its first organized dynasty beginning around 2100 B.C., mainland China has a very rich cultural heritage. In order to provide protection against nomadic tribes to the north construction of the Great Wall, the most widely known monument of the country, began initially around 770 B.C., but moved forward in earnest in 221 B.C. with the establishment of a unified China under the rule of the Qin Dynasty. Throughout the imperial dynastic period, additional culturally significant architectural feats were accomplished. Most impressive could be considered the Forbidden City in Beijing on which construction began in 1406.⁹⁰

Given this deep history as a large country, mainland China has a strong national identity. This was most readily seen in the Boxer Rebellion of 1899–1901, which was a conservative movement against many of the international forces influencing the country at the time. Taking place after the Opium Wars of 1839–1842 and 1856–1860, this two-year period is seen as a nationalist attempt to reject foreign and Christian control in mainland China.⁹¹ Once the empire was replaced in 1912, China entered a turbulent period which eventually led to a civil war

⁸⁵ Walker 2015: 47–56.

⁸⁶ This was due to the Mexican Cession of 1848.

⁸⁷ A 1992 feature film distributed by Miramax that is based on the 1989 novel by Laura Esquivel.

⁸⁸ Benjamin 2000.

⁸⁹ Borjas and Katz 2005: 2. It should be noted that, in 1910, immigrants from Mexico only comprised about 2% of the total immigrant workforce in the US (Borjas and Katz 2005:48). By 1920, this had increased to almost 3% (Borjas and Katz:48). A steady increase in this statistic saw Mexican immigrants as 5% in 1950, about 17% in 1980, and about 30% in 2000 (Borjas and Katz 2005: 48; Gutiérrez 2019: 16). From there, the percentage of migrants from Mexico was steady until toward the end of the 2010s when it dropped to about 25% (Gutiérrez 2019: 16).

⁹⁰ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization 1987.

⁹¹ Hammond 2023: 131.

between the so-called nationalists and communists. Starting in 1927, the conflict was interrupted by Japan's invasion in 1936 and did not resume until the end of World War II in 1945.⁹² Afterward, the civil war reached its conclusion in 1949, with the communists under Mao Zedong (1893–1976) taking the mainland and the nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975) escaping to Taiwan.⁹³

After consolidating power, Mao decided to embark on the so-called Great Leap Forward of 1958–1962 to improve agriculture and industrialize the country.⁹⁴ However, the inefficiencies which this cultural overhaul created initiated the Great Chinese Famine around the same time.⁹⁵ Then, to rid the country of apparent capitalist-supporting forces, the Cultural Revolution began in 1966. Instead, this brought about ten years of chaos and turmoil until Mao's death in 1976.⁹⁶ The resulting impact of these two decades on the PRC was quite profound as many of the country's traditional cultural norms, values, and traditions were upended and undermined.

Taking a cue from Nixon's strategic visit to China in 1972, China's new leadership opted to begin engaging with the US and other Western countries in a more proactive fashion starting in the late 1970s.⁹⁷ This led in the 1980s to many economic liberalization policies similar to those found in Soviet-led countries.⁹⁸ Along with many nations with similar politically socialist leaders, a growing democratic movement emerged in 1989. However, contrary to most of the countries of eastern Europe, the political reforms demanded by the Tiananmen Square protesters were ended militarily.⁹⁹ Still, after regaining the former Western colonies of Hong Kong in 1997 and Macau in 1999 under a "one country, two systems" approach, the government determined that these territories could retain some autonomy.¹⁰⁰ Going further, China continued moving its economic system toward a version of capitalism to become a primary manufacturer in the global economy¹⁰¹ after joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. This well positioned the country to have a greater influence on the global stage through such projects as its Belt and Road Initiative. Started in 2013, this worldwide project has the goal of improving financial, digital, and other infrastructure, creating more business opportunities, and increasing China's influence in the global economy.¹⁰²

While the KSA was formally established in 1932 after King Abdulaziz unified many areas of the western, central, eastern, and southern Arabian Peninsula, the country has much richer cultural traditions than its recent nationhood might imply. Modern influences start with the emergence of the Islamic prophet Muhammad at the beginning of the A.D. 600s.¹⁰³ Muslims generally consider Muhammad as the last messenger of God following in a long tradition of

⁹² Lew and Leung 2013: 3, 6–8, 9–12.

⁹³ Lew and Leung 2013: 3.

⁹⁴ Perkins 1991: 483, 486.

⁹⁵ Gráda 2007: 5, 28–30.

⁹⁶ Tao, Berci, and He 2006.

⁹⁷ White House Historical Association 1979.

⁹⁸ Most noteworthy of these were the policies of *perestroika* ("restructuring") and *glasnost* ("transparency") undertaken in the Soviet Union by Gorbachev.

⁹⁹ Roth 2009.

¹⁰⁰ Hu 2023: 176.

¹⁰¹ Marsh 2011.

¹⁰² Jin 2023: 281–282.

¹⁰³ Watt 1998: 5.

important Judeo-Christian figures such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and Jesus.¹⁰⁴ Along with this influence of Islamic thought and culture has come an ornateness that is associated with the interior and exterior of many famous mosques¹⁰⁵ and complexity in music that have influenced the KSA and elsewhere.¹⁰⁶

While the people of today's KSA have nomadic cultural origins,¹⁰⁷ the emergence and spread of Islam with the Umayyad dynasty soon after Muhammad's death saw the religion's influence spread well to the west and east. By A.D. 750, the Muslim world occupied territory from nearly all of the Iberian Peninsula to the western fringes of southern Asia and included the Arabian Peninsula, as well.¹⁰⁸ Later, in the 16th century, the Ottomans began contending for the area of present-day KSA.¹⁰⁹ This precipitated a response from the local peoples in 1727. Led by the Saud dynasty and accompanied by the puritanical Sunni Muslim Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhaab (1703–1792),¹¹⁰ the first Saudi political government was established on the peninsula in 1744.¹¹¹ Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire held many parts of present-day KSA and the rest of the peninsula was controlled by nomadic tribes influenced by the Al-Rashid family.¹¹² After a power struggle and banishment to Kuwait, the Saud family returned to the country in 1902.

Just before World War I, the Saud family gained the support of many tribal Wahhabis and took strategic areas from the Ottoman Empire.¹¹³ After World War I, the Saudi family continued its conflict with the Al-Rashid family. Emerging victorious in 1921 and, with the continued help of the Wahhabi tribes, the Saudis established a more unified kingdom on the peninsula in 1926.¹¹⁴ At this point, the leaders of the Wahhabi movement wanted to expand their religious influence both inside and outside the new kingdom. However, since the Wahhabis' main tenet was much more Islamic fundamentalist and focused locally, the modernization efforts and encouragement of non-Muslim foreigners made by Abdulaziz Saud put them in conflict. Finally, in 1929, the fundamentalist Wahhabi leadership was defeated and subsequently eliminated.¹¹⁵ This laid the groundwork for the current conditions in the KSA.

Though there was a significant British presence in the affairs of the KSA early in the 20th century,¹¹⁶ the US has maintained more enduring and deeper unique relationships in the country over time due to a variety of factors. First, in the 1920s and early 1930s, before petroleum was discovered in the region, US companies commonly assisted the different struggling tribes¹¹⁷ to

¹⁰⁴ Peters 2003: 9.

¹⁰⁵ Peterson 1996: 195–197

¹⁰⁶ Urkevich 2015: 62–94, 181–218.

¹⁰⁷ Gordon 2005: 4.

¹⁰⁸ Lindsay 2005: 2.

¹⁰⁹ Bernstein 2008: 191.

¹¹⁰ Harris, Mews, Morris, and Shepherd 1992: 369. Al-Wahhab gave rise to the Wahhabi form of Islam with considerable influence in the KSA today.

¹¹¹ Bowen 2007: 69–70.

¹¹² Al-Rasheed 1997: 81.

¹¹³ Dekmejian 1994: 131.

¹¹⁴ Wynbrandt and Gerges 2010: 182.

¹¹⁵ Lacey 2009: 15–16.

¹¹⁶ Murphy 2008: 5–8. See also Harrod's paper in this volume.

¹¹⁷ El-Ghonemy 1998: 56.

locate and drill for water,¹¹⁸ a resource much more valuable for survival and livelihood in the desert.¹¹⁹ Then, once oil was found in the 1930s, Standard Oil of California (later Chevron) entered into an agreement with the Saudi government to form Aramco in the 1940s.¹²⁰ With Aramco transitioning from US to Saudi ownership over time,¹²¹ Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990–1991 saw many Western-aligned countries led by the US accomplish two objectives: (1) prevent Iraq from attacking the KSA; and (2) dislodge Iraq from Kuwait. In short, these three significant cross-national collaborations indicate the distinctive relations between the US and the KSA that currently exist and have laid the groundwork for continued interactions.

There is little doubt the KSA is currently seeking to have a greater influence on the global stage. Rather than utilizing the traditional historical approach used by nation-states which is typically more militaristic, the KSA is largely deploying a strategy of cultural diplomacy. The country holds a large degree of socio-cultural power in the Middle East and Arab world that well exceeds its position in the energy industry.¹²² As the primary regional alternative to Shia Iran, there are two aspects that contribute to this strength. First, by drawing away from recent fundamentalist influences and launching its Saudi Vision 2030 initiative,¹²³ the country's domestic culture of social cohesion, quality of life, opportunity, and tolerance¹²⁴ serve as an example to the region. Then, in the international context, the Saudi government typically focuses on respecting and solving multilateral problems in a cooperative way to adhere to commitments that may be necessary and/or expected,¹²⁵ and models the policy of modelling an example for other nations.

The strategy does not stop there. In addition to two of its Riyadh soccer clubs being the most searched sports teams on Google,¹²⁶ the country is making almost \$40 billion in investments to build the country as an esports hub.¹²⁷ Even more, the KSA supported the formation of the LIV¹²⁸ Golf organization in the 2020s to act as an alternative to the PGA in professional golfing.¹²⁹ So threatening was the LIV to the sport's established business model that the PGA¹³⁰ opted for the slow process of merging.¹³¹ Still, perhaps the greatest anticipation for the country was its awarding of the FIFA¹³² World Cup in 2034.¹³³ Should they continue on the present trajectory, the KSA will have the opportunity to showcase its balanced modernization efforts currently underway and potential successes to come.

¹¹⁸ Jones 2012: 231.

¹¹⁹ Oleson 2016.

¹²⁰ Aramco 2025.

¹²¹ The company, as a result, officially changed its name from Aramco to Saudi Aramco.

¹²² Gallorotti and Al-Filali 2014: 233.

¹²³ Alghannam 2024: 2.

¹²⁴ Gallorotti and Al-Filali 2014: 237.

¹²⁵ Gallorotti and Al-Filali 2014: 237.

¹²⁶ Legends 2024: 8.

¹²⁷ Legends 2024: 7.

¹²⁸ LIV is a reference to the Roman numeric system noting 54, the number of holes at an organization event (Harig 2022).

¹²⁹ Beall 2022.

¹³⁰ Professional Golfers' Association (of America).

¹³¹ Dethier 2025.

¹³² Fédération Internationale de Football Association.

¹³³ Colman 2024.

A Conclusion: 1990s Eastern Europe Versus 2020s Middle East and Beyond

Perhaps the best ending to this cross-national examination across three decades is to venture back to the country of this journey's beginning. On the Old Town Square in the capital of the Czech Republic, Prague, sits the Jan Hus Memorial as shown in Figure 2. Introduced in 1915, a full 500 years after his martyrdom, the location serves as a very powerful symbol of Czech national identity. However, true to form, in the face of overwhelming odds and a vastly superior opponent, the essence of passive resistance – which has been practiced for millennia in similar conditions – is found inscribed: “Love each other and wish the truth to everyone.”¹³⁴



Figure 14.6: Front View of Jan Hus Memorial on Prague Old Town Square in Prague, Czech Republic.

Science tells us that a vast majority of the biological differences between groups of people are contextual and based on conditions such as sunlight, rainfall, ground conditions, and weather. The humanities tell us something similar: based on the migration of humanity over time, languages, normative traditions, and governing systems are related, generally, based on their proximity – or lack thereof.

The crux? For reasons of survival, we have been acclimated to identify differences. This approach served us well 10,000 years ago when our species lived in conditions very far removed from the present day. Which plants would kill our small group? Which plants would help our group

live to the next day? Which animals had enough meat for us to not starve? In effect, humanity used its basic capabilities of discernment to survive. However, today we are faced with an altogether different challenge.

Due to the dual forces of globalization and information technology, the belief systems of the world which developed largely in isolation for most of history are now being increasingly accelerated toward each other. Because they had little contact with other belief systems,¹³⁵ each region told itself its way was the “right” way because there were few other options to inform otherwise. Now, we are starting to have the difficult discussions that can lead to conflict – and to possible understanding.

In fact, it has become clear, especially most recently in our experience in the KSA that there are underlying currents in any social system in which its members are seeking to improve themselves and their lot in life in some way, shape, or form at the very least—in whatever way that may be defined. However, destructive tactics and strategies to achieve this goal serve no useful purpose because they only breed more resentment and destruction. This leads back to the inscription on the Jan Hus Memorial: “Love each other and wish the truth to everyone.”

There have been many discussions over the years and centuries about the several different forms of love as expressed by the ancient Greeks. In fact, there is debate concerning the

¹³⁴ The inscription on the monument reads in Czech: *Milujte se pravdy každému přejte.*

¹³⁵ This was aside from tangential commercial activity.

precise number of expressions of the concept to this day. Still, there are some upon which most can agree: *eros*, *philia*, and *agape*.¹³⁶ However, depending on the time and context, there can be different meanings and interpretations for each of these three concepts of love. The first usually refers to some relation to passion. The second deals much more with love as friendship. The third addresses concepts akin to the love of doing good works. While *eros* can be used for negative objectives,¹³⁷ to be true to the inscription on the Jan Hus Memorial, the actions must be constructive in nature.¹³⁸ The same can be said for seeking, establishing, and maintaining friendships, but also doing good works both large and small when the opportunities arise.

Through the millennia, humanity has been conditioned to seek out differences to survive. Even today, we are trained to identify patterns of differences to deliver value for companies and customers. However, taken in the aggregate, the different branches of physical and social sciences tell us we are more similar than different. Starting from a fixed origination point on the global, *homo sapiens* branched out over time in isolated groups and adapted physically to their new environments. However, they also developed unique belief systems attempting to explain the unknown and the divine. Along with this came normative and linguistic similarities and differences.

Still, considerable parallels can be found across cultures from disparate places with enjoyment and respect for cultural artistic production in the form of music, dance, poetry, prose, and drama. Physical sciences go one step further and indicate that the members of the *homo sapiens* species are over 99% genetically identical.¹³⁹ As any statistician knows, this is well within the threshold of statistical significance. Therefore, in short, both the social and physical sciences are telling us we should be paying much more attention to our similarities than our differences.

There seem to be few alternatives to enact international societal understanding as envisioned by the Quakers and the Peace Corps. However, it would seem the process by which to weaponize peace is through love. As mentioned earlier, the ancient Greeks gave us a multitude of tools to accomplish this. Now that the globe is continuing to become a much smaller place perceptually, it may be the time to begin using the implements of peace in earnest.

¹³⁶ Richardson 1943: 173–174, 178–179.

¹³⁷ Perhaps among Christianity's seven cardinal sins, the most relevant in this case could be pride, greed, wrath, envy, and lust. Drawing from the equivalent in Hinduism, the most applicable of the six enemies of the mind might be ego, greed, anger, jealousy, and desire/lust. Then, turning to Buddhism, among the five poisons, pride, jealousy, and attachment could apply. As can be noted, many of the world's belief systems have corollaries which accomplish similar tasks.

¹³⁸ To accomplish this, possibly the most relevant of Christianity's seven capital virtues would be charity, diligence, kindness, patience, and humility.

¹³⁹ Abrams 2023 at 16:39 in presentation.

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The Intellectual Structure of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*: A Longitudinal Evaluation as a Foundation for Future Research Possibilities

Brian Chabowski and Tiffany Ramsey Chabowski

INTRODUCTION

As defined by the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, the notion of Baltic studies itself is “the study of the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), Kaliningrad, or the Baltic Sea region from a macro perspective.”¹ The journal states that “articles dealing solely with Poland fall outside [its] scope”² to indicate specific parameters related to researchers examining the Baltic phenomenon. Therefore, this makes the *Journal of Baltic Studies* the ideal peer reviewed research outlet to utilize in an evaluation of the Baltic studies literature’s domain.

In the past, previous attempts have been made to evaluate Baltic studies research in a more holistic sense.³ However, a scientific evaluation of the literature has yet to be performed in a comprehensive way. Therefore, this study follows previously established bibliometric research emphasizing the study of peer reviewed topics. The importance of utilizing multidimensional scaling (MDS) to depict the intellectual structure of a research domain such as the Baltic studies topic is two-fold. First, such an examination allows for a foundational understanding of the sequential and longitudinal dynamics at work in the area. Second, and more importantly, this previously stated evaluation follows the Kuhnian approach to theory development⁴ and provides the basis from which to suggest future research opportunities to be considered by the field.

The next steps in this study are as follows. First, the method used for this examination of the literature will be described in detail. Then, the results will be presented and summarized in a structured format. After that, a discussion will be provided to introduce research opportunities to consider by the future Baltic studies literature. Finally, a conclusion is given to summarize the overall message of this study.

METHOD

Bibliometric research is based on a long tradition of evaluating research domains in a variety of topics. Early work on the topic focused at a very general level and compared internationally oriented intellectual contributions longitudinally, geographically, and by sub-disciplines in the biological and physical sciences.⁵ This led to more detailed presentations concerning comparative

¹ *Journal of Baltic Studies* 2025.

² *Journal of Baltic Studies* 2025.

³ Musiał and Šime 2021: 488–494.

⁴ Kuhn 1962.

⁵ Billings 1881: 263.

work by research institutions,⁶ the relative influence of refereed outlets,⁷ and the demographic composition of impactful researchers.⁸ Alongside the emergence of bibliometric-related research, the emphasis on the citations and references made in academic journals over time emerged as a critical examination approach.⁹ Taken together, this laid the groundwork for modern theory and methodology emphasizing the bibliometric literature.

Perhaps the most compelling basis for bibliometric theory relates to the notion that intellectual fields evolve as a network of related ideas operationalized as influential publications in a research field¹⁰ and that co-citations made in a literary corpus not only reflect the state of the topical area but also provide opportunities to suggest future areas of research.¹¹ The Kuhnian perspective of scientific development¹² aligns well with social network theory, which defines social structures as networks comprised of actors as nodes linked with other actors.¹³ An intellectual structure represents a network of influential publications connected to each other by co-citations made by a set of refereed articles¹⁴ and the process used to achieve a domain's intellectual structure creates a representation of the critical underlying research of a discipline.

An essential aspect of this approach is the alignment in the depicted network of research groups, cliques, and chains. While a research group notes the relative closeness of at least two publications in an intellectual structure, a clique is an alternative research group type containing at least three publications typically densely configured in the network due to their topical similarity.¹⁵ In comparison, a research chain contains a series of similarly themed research groups connected to each other to focus on a more expansive topic.¹⁶ This type of configuration in an intellectual structure indicates the shared subjects have a common core but also benefit from different yet related branches emphasizing similar issues.¹⁷ Taken together, a long-term analysis of a domain provides an understanding of the changes which can take place over time by examining the composition of the topical area's groups, cliques, and chains.¹⁸

This study follows previous research which examined thematic elements of a specific academic journal via co-citation analysis.¹⁹ The Web of Science (WoS)²⁰ was used to gather relevant citation data for the 1981–2024 time period so this study could be as current as

⁶ Buchner 1903: 198, 199–200, 201.

⁷ Cason and Lubotsky 1936: 98–99.

⁸ Cattell 1906: 733–734, 738, 739–740, 741.

⁹ Fussler 1949: 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33; Gross and Gross 1927: 386, 387; Gross and Woodford 1931: 661, 662, 663, 664.

¹⁰ Kuhn 1962; Price 1965: 513–514.

¹¹ Kuhn 1962; Pritchard 1969: 348; Small 2003: 398.

¹² Kuhn 1962.

¹³ Hedström and Swedberg 1994: 327.

¹⁴ Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004: 983, 1001.

¹⁵ Burt 1980: 905; Burt 1987: 1292; Mizruchi 1994: 330–331; Marsden and Friedkin 1993; Wasserman and Faust 1994.

¹⁶ Borgatti, Mehra, Brass, and Labianca 2009: 893; Samiee and Chabowski 2021: 952.

¹⁷ Small 1986: 98–99.

¹⁸ Carley 1991: 331, 343.

¹⁹ Chabowski, Hult, Kiyak, and Mena 2010 evaluated the *Journal of International Business Studies* over more than three decades (1976–2008).

²⁰ The WoS is widely known in the bibliometric literature as a preferred data source due to its rigorous journal evaluative process and relative absence of predatory journals. See Ball and Tunger 2006: 300; Moed, Markusova, and Akoev 2018: 1153, 1160.

possible.²¹ After dividing the sample's 978 articles with 38,387 citations into four eleven-year periods, the 1981–1991 time period had 251 articles with 6,201 citations, the 1992–2002 period had 188 articles with 4,778 citations, the 2003–2013 period had 225 articles with 9,959 citations, and the 2014–2024 period had 314 articles with 17,449 citations.²²

Once the citation data were analyzed in the respective time periods, the most highly cited publications were determined for the four periods. The number of most influential publications for each period was driven by established protocol in bibliometrics stating that about 25–30 publications provide suitable basis for statistical rigor and thematic analysis of a domain.²³ However, due to inexact citation counts, 1981–1991 included 23 publications, 1992–2002 had 33 works, 2003–2013 included 19 publications, and 2014–2024 possessed 34 works.

Next, a co-citation matrix for each was developed so analysis could be conducted using MDS. Traditional bibliometric methods were used to evaluate the four co-citation matrices. The original matrices consisting of count data were normalized with the Ochiai coefficient method since the data were binary and alternative applications²⁴ are suboptimal in bibliometric research.²⁵ Two dimensions were used to plot the co-citation matrix data in MDS as this leads typically to satisfactory solutions and is easily interpretable by researchers.²⁶ In an evaluation of the statistical rigor of each model, stress values²⁷ were calculated for each period's MDS configuration.²⁸ The 1981–1991 period had a stress value of 0.06682, 1992–2002 had 0.11627, 2003–2013 had 0.05513, and 2014–2024 had 0.10909, indicating that the first and third periods had good data fit statistics and the second and fourth periods fair data fits. Then, to determine the precise relational network configuration and intellectual structure of the journal, visualizations from the MDS results were analyzed further. A standardized Euclidean distance of 0.25 was used to identify the domain's research groups, cliques, and chains and as a basis for determining appropriate names for each research group and clique.²⁹ This provided the ability to evaluate the journal's intellectual structure in each period and also made it possible to examine its longitudinal development over the 44 years of this analysis.

²¹ While the *Journal of Baltic Studies* began publication in 1970, WoS data were only available starting in 1981. This allowed for the division of the citation data into four equal time periods to facilitate longitudinal evaluation: 1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024.

²² Common bibliometric practice was followed for a precise understanding of the intellectual structure of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*. As such, editorials, biographical items, book reviews, and other indirect publications were excluded from further analysis to permit an examination of the foundational contributions to the journal (Chabowski, Kekec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 125; Foroudi, Kitchen, Marvi, Akarsu, and Uddin 2020: 2580; Zha, Melewar, Foroudi, and Jin 2020: 5).

²³ Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004: 986.

²⁴ Two popular normalization approaches utilize cosine or Pearson similarities. However, because these techniques are not specific to this study's conditions, they were not utilized.

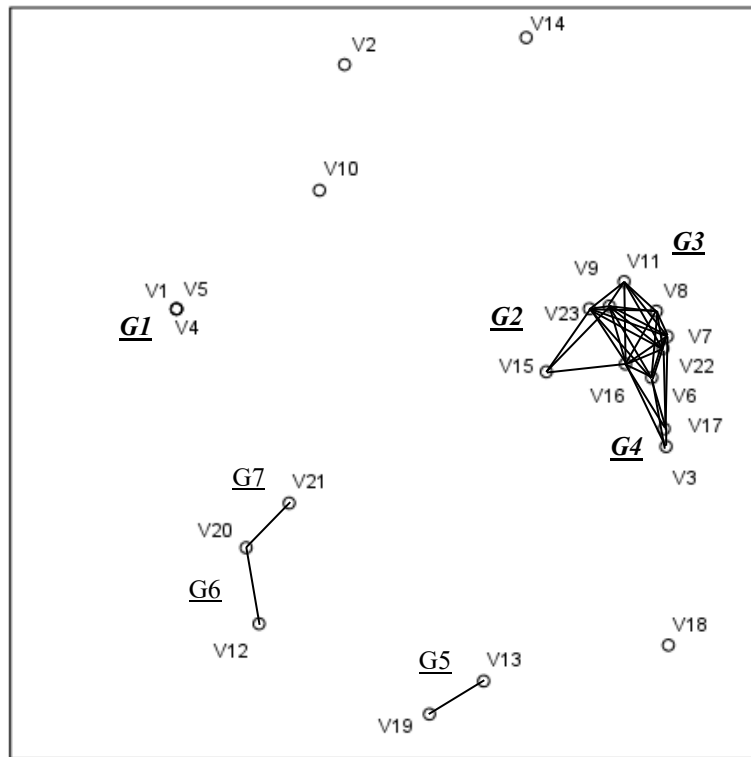
²⁵ van Eck and Waltman 2009:1638; Zhou and Leydesdorff 2016: 2805.

²⁶ Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black 1998.

²⁷ Stress values in bibliometric research also are considered a measure of a model's goodness of fit.

²⁸ Applications utilized this approach find that a stress value of 0.00 to 0.025 shows a perfect fit, 0.025 to 0.05 displays an excellent fit, 0.05 to 0.10 provides a good fit, 0.10 to 0.20 shows a fair fit, and 0.20 and higher renders a poor fit. See Kruskal 1964: 3 and Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro 2004: 986, 987.

²⁹ Chabowski, Kekec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 125; Foroudi, Kitchen, Marvi, Akarsu, and Uddin 2020: 2581, 2583, 2586, 2602; Torgerson 1952: 401, 402–410, 417–419; Zha, Melewar, Foroudi, and Jin 2020: 5, 6, 7.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 1981–1991

Notes: stress value = 0.06682; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Adolphi (1685); V2 = Apkalns (1977); V3 = Christiansen (1980); V4 = Dreszell (1685); V5 = Endzelīns (1951); V6 = Gimbutas (1963); V7 = Hiden (1987); V8 = Hinkkanen-Lievonen (1984); V9 = Hovi (1984); V10 = Kirby (1979); V11 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1983); V12 = Neuschäffer (1975); V13 = Remeikis (1980); V14 = Taagepera (1981); V15 = Thaden (1981); V16 = Thaden (1984); V17 = Urban (1975); V18 = Urban (1980); V19 = Vardys (1978); V20 = von Engelhardt (1983); V21 = von Pistohlkors (1978); V22 = von Rauch and Onn (1974); V23 = Zetterberg (1977).

Group 1 (V1, V4, & V5): Latvian Language and Grammar; **Group 2** (V9, V15, V16, & V23): Russian Western Borderland, Baltic Province, Finland, and Poland Political Relations; **Group 3** (V6, V7, V8, V9, V11, V16, V22, & V23): Russian Western Borderland, Baltic State, Finland, Poland, and British Political and Trade Relations; **Group 4** (V3, V6, V7, V16, V17, & V22): Baltic Crusades, Russian Western Borderlands, and Baltic State Independence; **Group 5** (V13 & V19): Catholicism, Opposition, Nationality, and Soviet Lithuania; **Group 6** (V12 & V20): Livonian Socioeconomic History, the Baltic Provinces, and Catherine the Great; **Group 7** (V20 & V21): Livonian Socioeconomic History.

Figure 15.1: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 1981–1991.

RESULTS

To establish the foundational influences of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, an overview of the journal's intellectual structure is provided for the four periods of this analysis: 1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024. Once the configurational themes of the most influential publications of this topical area are understood, the longitudinal development of the journal's influential topics can be determined. In all, this analysis provides a solid basis from which to suggest possible future research opportunities examining the generalized subject of Baltic studies in the subsequent section of this study.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 1981–1991

As noted in Figure 15.1, seven research groups were identified in the first period of this analysis. In fact, these included two research chains and two standalone groups. The first chain was comprised of three dense cliques while the second chain was modest, consisting of two groups. The first solitary group was a clique emphasizing Latvian language and grammar (Group 1). Meanwhile, the second isolated group focused on Catholicism, opposition, nationality, and Soviet Lithuania (Group 5).

The first, concentrated chain (Groups 2, 3, and 4) dealt with the regional complexities and history manifested as the Russian western borderland, the Baltic states, Finland, Poland, and international political and economic relations. Centering on the topic of Russia's involvement in the region,³⁰ this was supported by research focused on other major local influences represented by Finland and Poland³¹ during the interwar period³² specifically in Estonia³³ as well as the general independence of all three Baltic states.³⁴ The second, smaller chain was anchored by the issue of Livonian economic history³⁵ and analyzed subjects related to the overall topic of Livonian socioeconomic history (Group 7) as well as the more cross-disciplinary themes of Livonian socioeconomic history, the Baltic provinces, and Catherine the Great (Group 6).

³⁰ Thaden 1981.

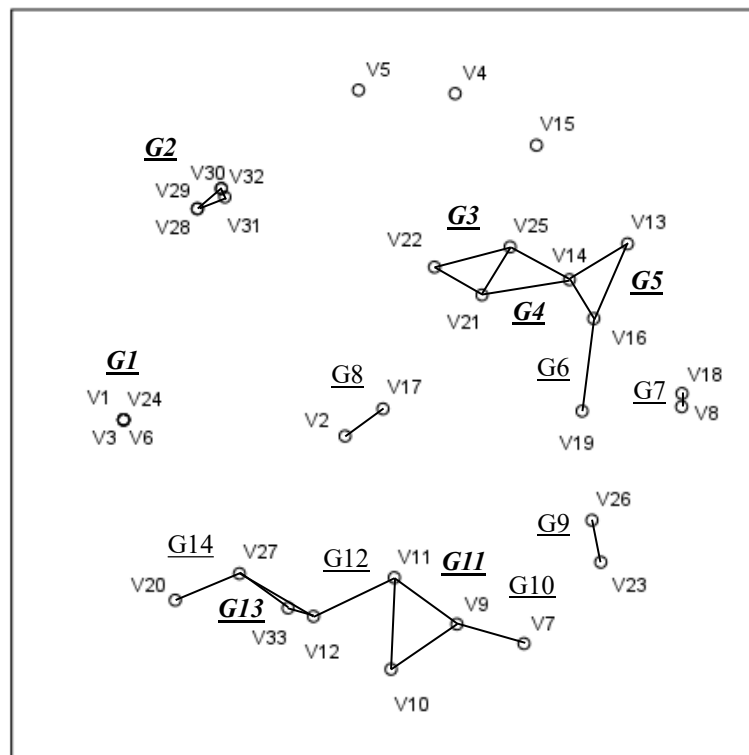
³¹ Hovi 1984.

³² The interwar period is generally considered the time frame between the end of World War I (1914–1918) to the beginning of World War II (1939–1945).

³³ Zetterberg 1977.

³⁴ von Rauch and Onn 1974.

³⁵ von Engelhardt 1983.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 1992–2002

Notes: stress value = 0.11627; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Blese (1936); V2 = Clemens (1991); V3 = Endzelīns (1951); V4 = England (1975); V5 = Eniņš (1984); V6 = Fennell and Langius (1987); V7 = Gimbutas (1963); V8 = Grennes (1997); V9 = Hiden (1987); V10 = Hovi (1980); V11 = Kirby (1990); V12 = Kirby (1995); V13 = Kirch, Kirch, and Tuisk (1993); V14 = Laitin (1998); V15 = Lieven (1993); V16 = Linz and Stepan (1996); V17 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1983); V18 = Nørgaard (1996); V19 = Park (1994); V20 = Raun (1987); V21 = Raun (2001); V22 = Rosengren, Lauristin, and Vihalemm (1997); V23 = Shugart and Carey (1992); V24 = Stenders (1783); V25 = Taagepera (1993); V26 = Taagepera (1994); V27 = Thaden (1981); V28 = Volkmann (1997); V29 = von Rauch (1986); V30 = Wittram (1939); V31 = Wittram (1945); V32 = Wittram (1954); V33 = Zernack (1977).

Group 1 (V1, V3, V6, & V24): Latvian Vocabulary, Language, and Grammar; Group 2 (V28, V29, V30, V31, & V32): Baltic German Historical Perspectives, National Socialism, and Livonian, Estonian, and Courland History; Group 3 (V21, V22, & V25): Independent Estonia and Post-Communist Cultural and Political Transition; Group 4 (V14, V21, & V25): Independent Estonia and Russian-Speaking Population Identity; Group 5 (V13, V14, & V16): Baltic State Post-Communist Transition Problems and Russian-Speaking Population Identities; Group 6 (V16 & V19): Post-Communist Transition Problems and Estonian Ethnicity and Independence; Group 7 (V8 & V18): Post-Soviet Baltic Independence and Economic Transition; Group 8 (V2 & V17): Russian Empire, Soviet Dependence, and Baltic Independence; Group 9 (V23 & V26): Democracy, Institutional Design, and Estonian Constitutional Assembly; Group 10 (V7 & V9): Weimar Republic Eastern Policies and the Baltic People; Group 11 (V9, V10, & V11): Weimar Republic Eastern Politics, Baltic History, and British Policy; Group 12 (V11 & V12): Baltic History and Northern Europe Periphery; Group 13 (V12, V27, & V33): Northern Europe Periphery, Baltic Province, and Finland Russification; Group 14 (V20 & V27): Baltic and Finland Russification and the Estonian Nation.

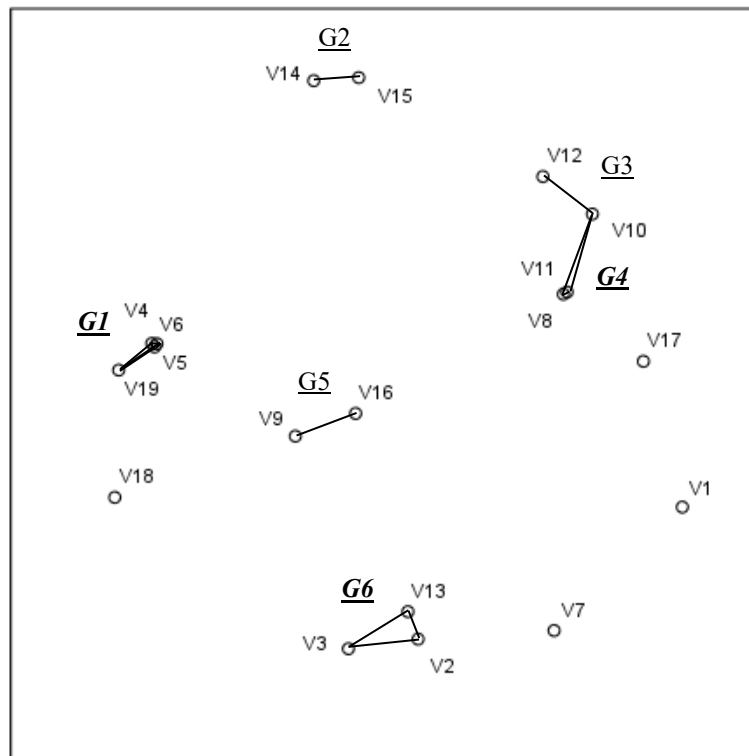
Figure 15.2: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 1992–2002.

***Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 1992–2002**

Shown in Figure 15.2, fourteen research groups were found in the second period of this study. More specifically, this time period possessed two chains and four solo groups. Both research chains were expansive, with one including three cliques and the other having two cliques. Similar to the previous period, one standalone clique focused on Latvian vocabulary, language, and grammar (Group 1). Then, the second individual group addressed the themes of the Russian empire, Soviet dependence, and Baltic independence (Group 8). Also, the third isolated group dealt with democracy, institutional design, and Estonian constitutional assembly (Group 9). Finally, the last independent group was compact and focused on post-Soviet Baltic independence and economic transition (Group 7).

The first broad chain centered on the community identity of Russian speakers in the Baltics,³⁶ but branched out into topics on independent Estonia and Russian-speaking population identity (Group 4) and independent Estonia and post-communist cultural and political transition as well as Baltic state post-communist transition problems and Russian-speaking population identities (Group 5) as well as post-communist transition problems and Estonian ethnicity and independence (Group 6). The second extensive chain's central topic took the perspective of Baltic history and northern Europe periphery (Group 12) while reaching topics on northern Europe periphery, Baltic province, and Finland Russification (Group 13) and Baltic and Finland Russification and the Estonian nation (Group 14) as well as Weimar Republic eastern politics, Baltic history, and British policy (Group 11) and Weimar Republic eastern policies and the Baltic people (Group 10).

³⁶ Laitin 1998.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 2003–2013

Notes: stress value = 0.05513; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Anderson (1991); V2 = Budryte (2005); V3 = Burch and Smith (2007); V4 = Inglehart (1997); V5 = Kalmus, Lauristin, and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (2004); V6 = Kennedy (2002); V7 = Kirss, Kõresaar, and Lauristin (2004); V8 = Laitin (1998); V9 = Lauristin and Kheĩdmets (2002); V10 = Lieven (1993); V11 = Melvin (1995); V12 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1993); V13 = Onken (2007); V14 = Plakans (1995); V15 = Raun (2001); V16 = Rosengren, Lauristin, and Vihalemm (1997); V17 = Skultans (1998); V18 = Taagepera (2002); V19 = Vogt (2005).

Group 1 (V4, V5, V6, & V19): National Cultural Values, Post-Communist Transition, and Twenty-First Century Estonia; Group 2 (V14 & V15): Latvian and Estonian Historical Identities; Group 3 (V10 & V12): Prolonged Soviet Dependence and Baltic Independence Revolution; Group 4 (V8, V10, & V11): Baltic Independence Revolution and Russian-Speaking Population Political Identities; Group 5 (V9 & V16): Post-Communist Multicultural Estonia, Democratic Transition, and Estonia's Russian Minority; Group 6 (V2, V3, & V13): Post-Soviet Political Community, National Symbols, and (Inter)national Cultural Memory.

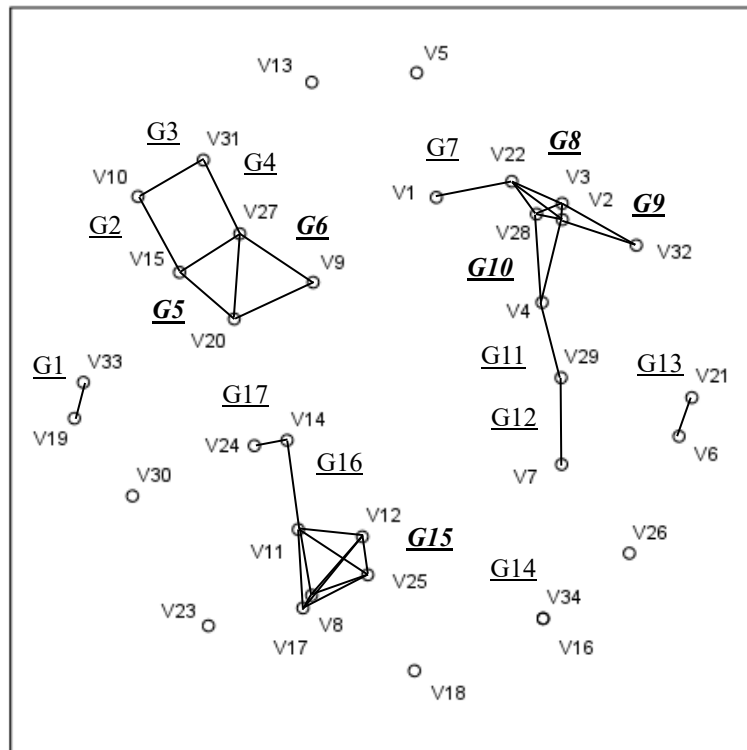
Figure 15.3: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 2003–2013.

***Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 2003–2013**

Identified in Figure 15.3, six research groups were shown in the third period's findings. To be exact, the time of 2003–2013 had one chain and four isolated groups. Emphasizing the importance of the Baltic States' independence movement at the end of the Soviet era,³⁷ the research chain was small, consisting of one clique and one regular group. The chain dealt with Baltic independence revolution and Russian-speaking population political identities (Group 4) while the adjacent group addressed prolonged Soviet dependence and Baltic independence revolution (Group 3).

The first individual group was a tightly knit clique emphasizing national cultural values, post-communist transition, and twenty-first century Estonia (Group 1). Meanwhile, the next standalone group examined Latvian and Estonian historical identities (Group 2). In addition, the subsequent isolated group focused on post-communist multicultural Estonia, democratic transition, and Estonia's Russian minority (Group 5). Then, the last detached group was a clique and studied post-Soviet political community, national symbols, and (inter)national cultural memory (Group 6).

³⁷ Lieven 1993.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure, 2014-2024

Notes: stress value = 0.10909; Ochiai coefficients used; standardized Euclidean distance ≤ 0.25 ; bolded and italicized research group abbreviations indicate research cliques.

V1 = Annus (2012); V2 = Annus (2016); V3 = Annus (2018); V4 = Bhabha (1995); V5 = Bohle and Greskovits (2007); V6 = Bohle and Greskovits (2012); V7 = Brubaker (1996); V8 = Cheskin (2013); V9 = Cheskin (2015); V10 = Duvold, Berglund, and Ekman (2020); V11 = Eglitis (2002); V12 = Ehala (2009); V13 = Gellner (1993); V14 = Golubeva (2010); V15 = Hiden (2004); V16 = Hobsbawm (1992); V17 = Jõesalu and Kõresaar (2013); V18 = Johansen and von Zur Mühlen (1973); V19 = Kasekamp (2018); V20 = Kattel and Raudla (2013); V21 = Kelertas (2006); V22 = Klumbyte (2010); V23 = Laitin (1998); V24 = Lauristin and Vihalemm (2009); V25 = Mincyte (2011); V26 = Misiunas and Taagepera (1993); V27 = Peiker (2016); V28 = Rothberg (2009); V29 = Simonsen (2006); V30 = Šmidchens (2014); V31 = Snyder (2010); V32 = Sommers and Woolfson (2014); V33 = Tamm (2008); V34 = Zahra (2010).

Group 1 (V19 & V33): Baltic History and National Cultural Memory; **Group 2** (V10 & V15): Post-First World War Baltic State Independence, Weimar Republic Eastern Political Friendship, and Post-Cold War (Inter)national Baltic State Integration; **Group 3** (V10 & V31): Central European Conflict and Post-Cold War (Inter)national Baltic State Integration; **Group 4** (V27 & V31): Central European Conflict and Postcolonial Estonian Nationalism; **Group 5** (V15, V20, & V27): Post-First World War Baltic State Independence, Weimar Republic Eastern Political Friendship, Postcolonial Nationalism, and Pragmatic Neo-Liberalism; **Group 6** (V9, V20, & V27): Baltic State Russian Speaker Identity and Integration, Postcolonial Nationalism, and Pragmatic Neo-Liberalism; **Group 7** (V1 & V22): Soviet Colonialism and Baltic Memory, Identity, and Citizenship; **Group 8** (V2, V3, V22, & V28): Soviet (Post)colonialism, Holocaust Remembrance, and Baltic Cultural Memory, Identity, and Citizenship; **Group 9** (V2, V3, & V32): Soviet (Post)colonialism, Baltic Culture, and Neo-Liberal Socioeconomic Structure; **Group 10** (V2, V4, & V28): Cultural Hybridity, Soviet (Post)colonial Baltic Culture, and Holocaust Remembrance; **Group 11** (V4 & V29): Cultural Hybridity, Outcast Youth, and Racial Hygiene; **Group 12** (V7 & V29): Post-Cold War Nationalism, Outcast Youth, and Racial Hygiene; **Group 13** (V6 & V21): Baltic Postcolonialism and European Periphery Capitalist Diversity; **Group 14** (V16 & V34): National Cultural Rituals, Symbolism Creation, and National Indifference; **Group 15** (V8, V11, V12, V17, & V25): Modern Baltic Nation and Russian-Speaking Identities, Socialism Remembrance, and Small Farming Subsistence and Sustainability; **Group 16** (V11 & V14): Modern Baltic Nation Identities and Majority/Minority Estonian and Latvian Acculturation; **Group 17** (V14 & V24): External and Internal Majority/Minority Estonian and Latvian Acculturation Factors.

Figure 15.4: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 2014–2024.

***Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure, 2014–2024**

Seen in Figure 15.4, seventeen research groups emerged for the last period of the results. More precisely, this period saw three chains and three individual groups. The first single group emphasized Baltic history and national cultural memory (Group 1). Also, another isolated group focused on Baltic postcolonialism and European periphery capitalist diversity (Group 2). Then, the final lone group dealt with national cultural rituals, symbolism creation, and national indifference (Group 14).

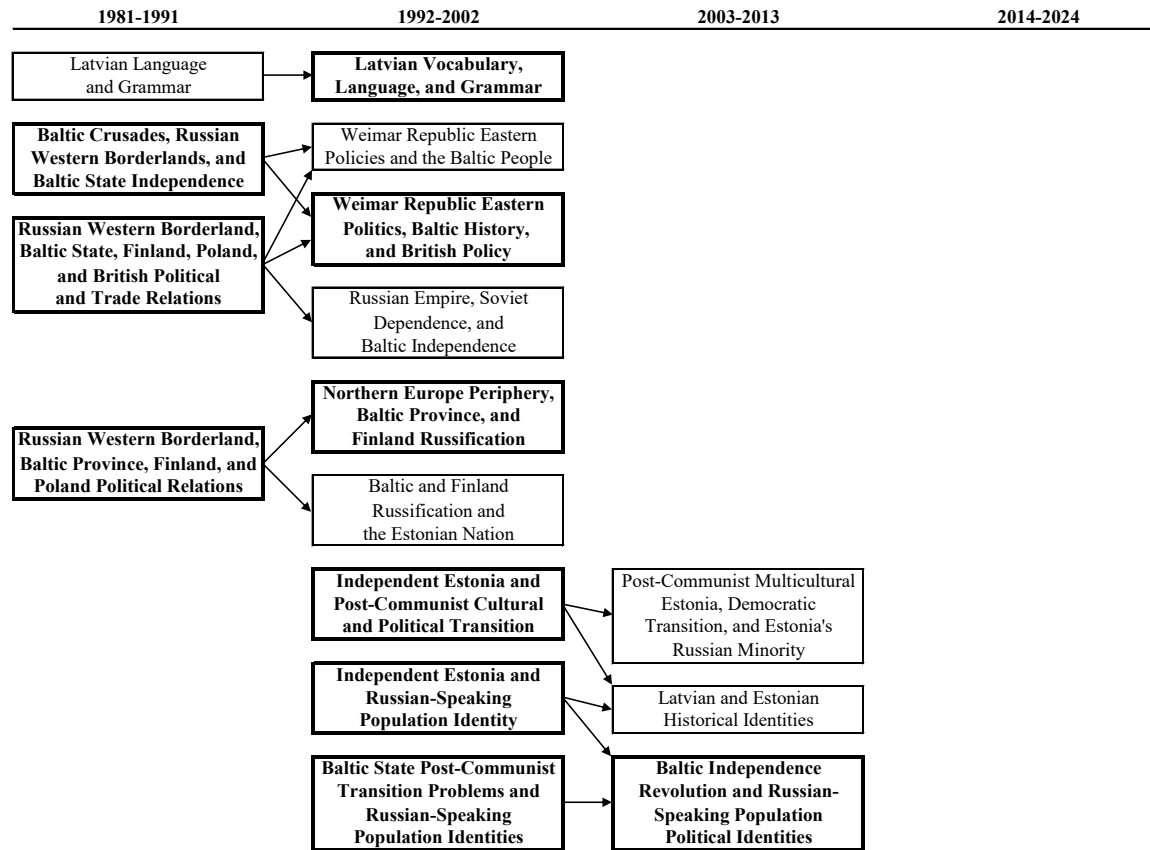
The first chain was anchored by the topic of post-First World War Baltic state independence, Weimar Republic eastern political friendship, and post-Cold War (inter)national Baltic State integration (Group 5) with related groups reaching topics such as the identity of Russian speakers in the Baltic States³⁸ and the opposing nation-based and European-centric political cultures at play in the three Baltic countries.³⁹ The second chain had a central focus on the Holocaust's role in the development of the Baltic countries' cultures in an era of post-Soviet colonialism.⁴⁰ Then, with a focal emphasis on modern Baltic nation identities and majority/minority Estonian and Latvian acculturation (Group 16), the third chain branched out to examine topics related to modern Baltic nation and Russian-speaking identities, socialism remembrance, and small farming subsistence and sustainability (Group 15) as well as external and internal majority/minority Estonian and Latvian acculturation factors (Group 17).

³⁸ Cheskin 2015: 72.

³⁹ Duvold, Berglund, and Ekman 2020.

⁴⁰ Annus 2016: 2–5; Rothberg 2009.

Journal of Baltic Studies Intellectual Structure Longitudinal Development



Notes: **Bolded** research groups indicate research cliques; arrows indicate formal longitudinal relationships.

Figure 15.5: *Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure Longitudinal Development

***Journal of Baltic Studies* Intellectual Structure Longitudinal Development**

This longitudinal development analysis of the *Journal of Baltic Studies* followed established protocol to provide the chronological development and dynamism of a research area.⁴¹ The four periods (1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024) in this bibliometric study identify three general trends as indicated in Figure 15.5. These trends are determined by identifying the research groups or cliques across each successive time period with identical publications. Stated differently, if, for example, a particular article appeared in a research group or clique in both the 1981–1991 and 1992–2002 periods, then a longitudinal development is identified between those two groups across time periods. As a result, an arrow is used in Figure 5 to indicate this research development. However, should an article only appear in a research group or clique in only one (and not a subsequent) time period, then one cannot use this as a basis for longitudinal development in the research area. Taken as a whole, this precise application determines specific intellectual movements in the intellectual structure of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*.

The first and third advancements identified were straightforward in the results. As shown with the transition of Latvian language and grammar (Group 1) in 1981–1991 to Latvian vocabulary, language, and grammar (Group 1) in 1992–2002, the topic of linguistics related to the Baltic language became more complex. Then, themes related to the Baltic States' independence from the communist area were very prevalent in *Journal of Baltic Studies* research from 1992–2002 to 2003–2013. For instance, topics connected to independent Estonia and post-communist cultural and political transition (Group 3), independent Estonia and Russian-speaking population identity (Group 4), and Baltic State post-communist transition problems and Russian-speaking population identities (Group 5) from the earlier period led to post-communist multicultural Estonia, democratic transition, and Estonia's Russian minority (Group 5), Latvian and Estonian history identities (Group 2), and Baltic independence revolution and Russian-speaking population political identities (Group 4) in the later period.

The second research advancement discovered is more nuanced. One aspect is more benign and focuses on the Baltic, Germanic, and Russian historical, cultural, political, and commercial influences in the region. This advancement saw research on the Baltic crusades, Russian western borderlands, and Baltic State independence (Group 4)⁴² and the Russian western borderland, Baltic State, Finland, Poland, and British political and trade relations (Group 3) from 1981–1991 transition into Weimar Republic eastern policies and the Baltic people (Group 10), Weimar Republic eastern politics, Baltic history, and British policy (Group 11), and Russian empire, Soviet dependence, and Baltic independence (Group 8) in 1992–2002. In contrast, this advancement's other aspect is much more aggressive and emphasizes the political and cultural Russification attempts made in the Baltic States on the local populations. This was found in the expansion of Russian western borderland, Baltic province, Finland, and Poland political relations (Group 2) in the earlier period to northern Europe periphery, Baltic province, and Finland

⁴¹ Braam, Moed, and van Raan 1991: 255; Chabowski, Kecec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 130; Chabowski and Samiee 2023: 7; Hult and Chabowski 2008: 331; Samiee, Chabowski, and Hult 2015: 11; Small 1977: 144, 155.

⁴² This is the research group in which Urban's (1975) seminal book, *The Baltic Crusades*, appears.

Russification (Group 13) and Baltic and Finland Russification and the Estonian nation (Group 14) in the subsequent period.

Research continuity between 2003–2013, this study's third period, and 2014–2024, this study's fourth period, was not found. That stated, sufficient diversity in the last period of the analysis was identified. As a result, there is substantial information to consider future research suggestions for academics looking to study the topic of Baltic studies.

DISCUSSION

Future research emphasizing Baltic studies is, by definition, based on the extant literature to a large degree.⁴³ While new concepts may be introduced to the field, they are typically imported from other domains and integrated with established ideas. This standard approach to scientific transitions in a research domain can be identified in the previous section as well as Figure 5. Based on the findings of the longitudinal development of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, it can be surmised that the advancement of the domain was an integration of well-known and emergent research areas.

With the findings from the intellectual structure and longitudinal development analyses in mind, the focus of this section is on suggesting possible future research opportunities in the Baltic studies domain. One approach used in the bibliometric literature to accomplish this⁴⁴ utilizes social network theory's weak ties⁴⁵ argument.⁴⁶ Supported by the Kuhnian notion that combining ideas from opposing sides of a conceptual domain makes for potentially invigorating new research areas, this approach relates research concepts appearing very distant from each other in the final period of the domain's intellectual structure.⁴⁷ Therefore, we turn to the *Journal of Baltic Studies* intellectual structure of 2014–2024 and use distant research groups and publications as a basis to propose five general topics for future research. These themes relate to areas emphasizing comparative Baltic history, culture, capitalist diversity, socioeconomic structure, socialism, nationalism, and Russian-speaking populations. Next, a presentation of these research possibilities is provided in greater detail.

First, the relationship between the national cultural memory⁴⁸ existing in postcolonial Baltic history⁴⁹ can be merged with the capitalist diversity of the region.⁵⁰ While research has been conducted to some degree on specific Baltic States, a relative comparison across Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania is necessary to sufficiently contribute to theory and contrast the differing embedded historical psyches across the three countries and their impact on the economic systems they chose in the post-Soviet period. For instance, aside from the relative closeness to

⁴³ Kuhn 1962.

⁴⁴ Chabowski, Kekec, Morgan, Hult, Walkowiak, and Runnalls 2018: 132–134; Samiee, Chabowski, and Hult 2015: 12–13.

⁴⁵ This can be alternatively referred to as, in the context of network theory, institutional voids.

⁴⁶ Borgatti and Halgin 2011: 1168, 1170–1175; Burt 1992; Granovetter 1973: 1373–1376.

⁴⁷ By focusing on the final period of the domain's intellectual structure, the suggestions which are proposed are the most relevant to the current readership.

⁴⁸ Tamm 2008: 499–502, 503–505.

⁴⁹ Kasekamp 2018; Kelertas 2006.

⁵⁰ Bohle and Greskovits 2012.

Finland, what anthropological and sociocultural reasons drove Estonia to choose a more *laissez-faire* application than Lithuania?⁵¹ Going further, how does Latvia's position as a crossroads in the Baltic States influence the historical and cultural reasons for its choice of economic system after the Soviet Union?

The second research opportunity exists by integrating Soviet (post)colonial cultural and socioeconomic structure⁵² with the modern Baltic nations⁵³ and their Russian-speaking populations.⁵⁴ There is little doubt that the Baltic States' experience as a part of the Soviet Union left a lasting impression on the three countries. In fact, the period is widely viewed by ethnic Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians as a vast experiment in colonialism that decimated the cultural and socioeconomic structures in place before World War II.⁵⁵ Still, as a part of the Soviet era, a large proportion of Russian speakers from elsewhere in the Soviet Union migrated to the Baltic States as a part of this colonialist policy. So effective was this strategy, about 27% of the population in Estonia, 29% in Latvia, and 6% in Lithuania are Russian speakers today.⁵⁶ This created distinct intra-country cultural dynamics in each Baltic State between the local and Russian-speaking migrant populations. As a result, this requires a two-fold approach that can be pursued. One application could evaluate the relative socioeconomic dynamics from the Soviet era's decline and end to the present day in each Baltic country. The other application could assess the comparative cultural hegemony shifts that took place during and after the Soviet period across the three Baltic States.

A third possible research direction relates to aligning post-Cold War (inter)national Baltic State integration⁵⁷ with a comparison of cultural traditions development⁵⁸ and a lack of cultural participation.⁵⁹ The ambition of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to integrate with the international community as quickly as possible after the Soviet period is understandable. After five decades of occupation and colonization, joining the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were natural extensions of policy meant to advance each country economically as well as to protect them politically and militarily protect. With this safety comes the opportunity for the Baltic States to recapture and enrich their heritage. However, in the face of this apparent progress, how should each country build on its legacy if the population is indifferent to those traditions? How can the contemporary cultural icons in each Baltic State combat a population's cultural nihilism induced by economic and political progress?

The fourth research topic to consider emphasizes the contrast of neoliberal economic policy⁶⁰ and the identities of Russian-speaking populations in the Baltic States.⁶¹ Overall, there is little doubt that each Baltic country deployed some degree of neoliberal economic applications. Still, the intensity of neoliberalism utilized varied from Estonia to Latvia and Lithuania. As a result,

⁵¹ Kattel and Raudla 2013: 442–444.

⁵² Annus 2016: 5–11; Annus 2018; Jõesalu and Kõresaar 2013: 183–185, 188–190; Sommers and Woolson 2014.

⁵³ Eglitis 2002; Ehala 2009: 146–155.

⁵⁴ Cheskin 2013: 292–295.

⁵⁵ Estonian Ministry of Justice 2005: 21, 143–144, 147, 164.

⁵⁶ Encyclopaedia Britannica 2025.

⁵⁷ Duvold, Berglund, and Ekman 2020.

⁵⁸ Hobsbawm 1992.

⁵⁹ Zahra 2010: 94–98.

⁶⁰ Bohle and Greskovits 2007: 446, 448, 449, 458, 459.

⁶¹ Laitin 1998.

how did the economic transition from the Soviet era comparatively impact the Russian speakers in the Baltic States? In general, it could be said that Lithuania provided more economic opportunities to Russian speakers than Estonia and Latvia. This is based on the Lithuanian government extending citizenship to Russian-speaking inhabitants after independence was restored in 1991,⁶² while Estonia and Latvia required language proficiency examinations for citizenship. This leads to a considerable number of possible issues. For example, how do the relative economic (dis)advantages impact the cultural identities of the different Russian-speaking populations in the Baltic States? Also, how does this relate to the potential economic and cultural integration of Russian speakers into the political landscape of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania?

Then, the final research synthesis focuses on the comparison of nationalism⁶³ with the development of the city of Tallinn.⁶⁴ Taken more broadly, this issue could be presented as the comparative depiction of a Baltic country's nationalism through its capital city. In Estonia's case, the city has a very long commercial tradition as the northernmost member of the Hanseatic League.⁶⁵ Then, during the Soviet era, Tallinn benefitted from daily television broadcasts of Western programming⁶⁶ and also morning and nightly transmissions of the country's national anthem melody⁶⁷ from Finland.⁶⁸ In addition, throughout the Soviet era, there were many relationships, investments, and partnerships made between Finnish and Estonian companies.⁶⁹

Continuing with this focus on the West, Riga, Latvia's capital, was also a member of the Hanseatic League. However, due to its more central location and larger size, its import/export ratio was more balanced than Tallinn's. Based on the Hanseatic League's ledgers in the fourteenth century,⁷⁰ Riga had a net export balance of 4,000 marks while Tallinn had a net import balance of 19,700 marks. To assist the Estonian Hanseatic representation's balances, Pärnu⁷¹ had a net export balance of 22,700 marks, thus placing present-day Estonia's cumulative trade export balance at 3,000 marks.⁷²

To contrast, Lithuania's capital city, Vilnius, has a much more eastern focus. Located about 25 miles from the border with Belarus, its location reflects the time when the nation was at its height in the fifteenth century, spanning from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Though a commonwealth was established with Poland in 1569, this cultural similarity led to Vilnius becoming a part of Poland between World Wars I and II. As a result, during this period of the country's original modern independence starting in 1918, Kaunas became Lithuania's capital city.

Based on the roles each of these four cities played as capital cities in the development and formation of their respective countries, it would be most valuable to examine the historical,

⁶² Aptekar 2009: 520.

⁶³ Gellner 1993.

⁶⁴ Johansen and von Zur Mühlen 1973.

⁶⁵ The Hanseatic League was a city-state trade and military alliance from the 13th through 17th centuries centering on the Lübeck area in present-day Germany.

⁶⁶ Lepp and Pantti 2012: 77.

⁶⁷ Miljan 2015: 314.

⁶⁸ Tallinn is a mere 50 miles across the Gulf of Finland from Helsinki, the capital of Finland.

⁶⁹ Stöcker 2016: 459–462, 465–468, 470–473

⁷⁰ Wikipedia (n.d.) published data for the period of March 18, 1368, through March 10, 1369.

⁷¹ Pärnu was one of a few other Estonian-based Hanseatic League members.

⁷² In all, this made Livonia's imports almost 13% and exports almost 25% of the entire Hanseatic League for the year specified.

ethnographic, and cultural drivers of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian nations based on the roles of their capital cities. As the focal points of commerce, governance, and art for each Baltic State, there is little doubt a comparative assessment could provide fruitful insights into the historical character of each country.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the Baltic studies literature by evaluating the *Journal of Baltic Studies* over 44 years. Drawing its data from the WoS database, bibliometric techniques were used to depict the journal's intellectual structure for 1981–2024. The data were split into four equal time periods (1981–1991, 1992–2002, 2003–2013, and 2014–2024) to display four distinct intellectual structure configurations over time. Then, an analysis was provided to indicate the longitudinal development of Baltic studies research. In addition, based on the last period in the study, five suggested areas for future research were provided with detailed thoughts and ideas to consider by academics aiming to pursue this topic. Taken together, this study provides a unique contribution to the literature and can be used as a basis from which to develop further Baltic studies research.

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Small Wars: The Case of Language and Education in Wales

Viv Edwards

The inspiration and starting point for this paper is William Urban's (2016) *Small Wars*, with its sharp focus on frontiers and the distribution of power. Drawing on the histories of a wide range of peoples in Europe, Asia and Africa, he sets the scene with a discussion of the "Celtic Fringe" (the Highland Scots, Irish, Welsh, and Cornish) on the periphery of the British Isles. His rationale for their inclusion is their similarity to "the experiences of many peoples elsewhere in the world."¹ He draws attention to the "long and unforgiving sense of history"² of Celtic peoples, a characteristic shared with frontier folk across the world. And within this broader discussion, he touches briefly on the Welsh.

In what follows, I pick up the threads of this discussion, focusing on the role of language and education in the power relations between the English and Welsh and validating the observation that those living on the periphery do indeed have "a long and unforgiving sense of history." By way of context, I provide a brief history of Wales and the Welsh language, tracing its decline from a nation of monoglot Welsh speakers to one where Welsh is very much a minority language. Finally, I consider the lessons learned from this case study which can usefully be shared with other small nations.

Wales and the Welsh language

Wales, a country which is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is bordered by England to the east (see Fig. 16.1 at right).

The Welsh language, or *Cymraeg*, is one of the oldest languages in Europe, with a literary tradition dating back to the sixth century CE. The start of its gradual decline can be traced to the 1536 Act of Union, when Henry VIII incorporated Wales into England, proclaiming English as the sole official language. This differential in power relations, then, lies at the heart of all future developments. Nonetheless, Wales remained an overwhelmingly monoglot Welsh-speaking nation until the discovery in the south Wales valleys in the mid-nineteenth century of the large deposits of the high-quality coal that fuelled the industrial revolution. The subsequent demand for labour resulted first in immigration



Figure 16.1: Map of the British Isles with location of Wales indicated in dark shading (reproduced under Creative Commons license).

¹ Urban 2016: 139.

² Urban 2016: 140.

from other areas of Wales and then to the arrival of English speakers from England and beyond.³ The sheer scale of the in-migration of English speakers was such that, by the 1901 census, the proportion of Welsh speakers had declined to a little over half. It also led to a different distribution of Welsh speakers across the nation, with much higher numbers in the north and west of the country, where the population remained more stable than in the industrial south. Even so, the fact that, by the 2001 census, almost a quarter of the population reported speaking the language bears witness to the resilience of a small nation where Welsh has continued to serve as a symbol of both identity and resistance in the face of the overwhelming power of their much larger and dominant English neighbour.

Loss and recovery

Many variables played a part in both the decline from a nation of monoglot Welsh speakers in the sixteenth century to the lowest point in the mid-twentieth century and again from that low point to its ongoing recovery in the twenty-first century. For present purposes, however, I will focus on just one: education.

Language and education in Wales

Historically, educational opportunities in Wales depended on social class. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the gentry tended to send their sons to the English public schools⁴. Parents with a reasonable income were able to enrol their children in schools run by charitable organizations such as the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) where the language of instruction was English.⁵ Yet, despite its success in creating a network of schools across Wales, the SPCK had minimal impact on the education of the Welsh-speaking masses. Efficacy of the English-only policy in these schools was first questioned in 1734 when Griffith Jones, a cleric and teacher in an SPCK school, proposed a radical alternative: temporary or circulating schools, which stayed in one location for three months in winter when there was less demand for labour and where provision included evening classes for those who had to work in the day.⁶ Schools then moved on to the next location at the end of this three-month period. Griffith Jones trained an army of teachers and located wealthy benefactors to pay their wages. Critically, Welsh was the language of instruction and the Bible, which had been translated into Welsh in 1588, served as the main reading material. Students flocked to the schools and an estimated 200,000 had attended by the second half of the 18th century. These achievements attracted international attention. Catherine the Great, for instance, sent envoys to explore the possibility of setting up similar schools in Russia. The use of Welsh thus challenged assumptions that English was the only acceptable language of instruction; it also created a huge audience for Welsh literature, stimulating the development of Welsh printing presses to produce a wide range

³ Davies 2007.

⁴ Public schools in the UK are elite institutions associated with the upper class.

⁵ Jones and Roderick 2003.

⁶ Carradice 2010; Jones 1902.

of reading resources. Yet, despite the evident efficacy of Welsh in education, its use remained limited for the next 200 years, during which time advocacy by the Welsh for their mother tongue was overruled by the more powerful English upper classes. Nowhere did this antagonism play out more clearly than in the 1847 report of the Royal Commission on Education in Wales which was undertaken by three English-speaking Anglican lawyers, spectacularly ill-suited to investigating education in predominantly Welsh-speaking, non-conformist communities.⁷ When the commissioners far outstepped their education brief to comment on the morality of the Welsh nation which, they claimed, was being held back by its language, this triggered a furious backlash. Their three-volume report is known to this day as the *Treachery of the blue books*.⁸

In some respects, the damage had already been done, since many Welsh people had begun to believe that the only route to self-improvement was through speaking English. The extent to which they were colluding with the English oppressors can be seen in the use of the “Welsh not,”⁹ a stick or plaque given to any child heard speaking Welsh during school, to be hung around the neck and handed on to whoever was next heard speaking the language (Fig. 16.2 below). At the end of the day, the last child with the ‘Not’ was punished.

The cruelty associated with the “Welsh not” serves as a present-day rallying cry for those trying to understand a history of oppression. Yet the reality is somewhat more nuanced. The issue here is not physical force but what the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has termed “symbolic violence,”¹⁰ whereby ordinary people are persuaded by an official narrative. The use of the “Welsh not” was never government policy. Rather, it was driven by individual teachers who, like the nineteenth-century Church Commissioners, mistakenly believed the surest route to self-advancement was through mastery of English. That said, while the government did not ban Welsh in education, neither did they do anything of note to promote its use.



Figure 16.2: A Welsh not (courtesy of the National Museum of Wales).

Turning of the tide

Complacency about the falling numbers of Welsh speakers reached a tipping point mid-century, by which time the demise of the language seemed inevitable. A growing sense of urgency among grassroots activists and cultural leaders, however, played a key role in changing attitudes. Saunders Lewis, for instance, one of the most important figures in twentieth-century Welsh language literature, is widely acknowledged as having kickstarted the process of bringing Welsh back from the brink of extinction with his 1962 BBC radio address, *Tynged yr Iaith* (“The Fate of the Language”).

⁷ Evans 1997; National Library of Wales, n.d.

⁸ ‘Blue’ comes from the colour of the reports’ covers.

⁹ Davies 1994.

¹⁰ Dowding 2011.

The continued intransigence of the Westminster¹¹ government when faced with Welsh demands also served as a catalyst for change. The flooding of the Trywern Valley in 1965 to provide water for the city of Liverpool in England was a case in point.¹² Very strong Welsh opposition failed to stop approval of the scheme, leading to the loss of several centuries-old communities. Frustration at the failure to be heard over this and other demands, resulted in increasing acts of civil disobedience in the 1970s, including the burning of holiday cottages owned by English incomers and the defacing of English language signage (see Fig. 16.3 at right).¹³

The failure to provide Welsh-language television proved another flashpoint. Although the main political parties had previously pledged a Welsh language channel during election campaigning, Margaret Thatcher's government reneged on its promise, triggering further acts of civil disobedience, including attacks on television transmitters in Welsh-speaking areas. The government finally relented in 1980 following the threat of Gwynfor Evans, politician and author, to fast till ¹⁴death (BBC News, 2010).

Increasing political pressure led to the establishment in 1990 of the Welsh Assembly Government and the transfer of certain limited powers, creating a space where the survival of the language became an important focus. The Welsh Language Act 1993, for instance, introduced equal treatment of Welsh and English in "public business and the administration of justice in Wales." It was not until 2011, however, that the Welsh language was finally recognised as co-official with English within Wales. The appointment of a Welsh Language Commissioner, with strong enforcement powers to protect the rights of Welsh-speaking people to access services through the medium of Welsh, was another significant development.

While political pressure produced the legislative framework for the revitalisation of Welsh, the main tool for its enactment has been Welsh-medium education. The nineteenth-century Church commissioners could scarcely have imagined twentieth-century ambitions for children to achieve fluency in both English *and* Welsh. The first Welsh-medium school was established independently of the state in 1939; this provision gained momentum in subsequent decades to the point where a significant minority of children in state funded schools in Wales now deliver some form of Welsh-medium education.¹⁵



Figure 16.3: English place name sprayed over a road sign leaving only the original Welsh name (Cr.edit: Yr Eryr Wen)

¹¹ I distinguish here between the Westminster government with jurisdiction in certain areas over the whole of the United Kingdom and the devolved governments with varying powers in the constituent nations based in Cardiff (Wales), Edinburgh (Scotland) and Belfast (Northern Ireland).

¹² Cunningham 2007.

¹³ Owen, & Lewis 2023.

¹⁴ Carradice 2012.

¹⁵ Welsh Government 2017.

The Welsh Government target is currently for 30 per cent of pupils to have varying degrees of their education through Welsh by 2031 and 40 per cent by 2050; and for all children ages five to sixteen to at least learn Welsh as a second language. Parental choice, of course, is the determining factor in whether children attend Welsh-medium schools. Those who opt for this form of delivery do so both as an expression of cultural identity and because it offers children an economic advantage, given the many employment opportunities in the public sector and the creative industries which have flowed from the improved status of the language.¹⁶

The evidence shows clearly that this educational intervention has stemmed the decline in numbers of Welsh speakers (see Fig. 16.4 below). According to the *Annual Population Survey*,¹⁷ children and young people aged three to fifteen years of age were more likely to report that they could speak Welsh than any other age group, underlining the importance of Welsh-medium education in language maintenance. However, this observation comes with certain caveats.¹⁸

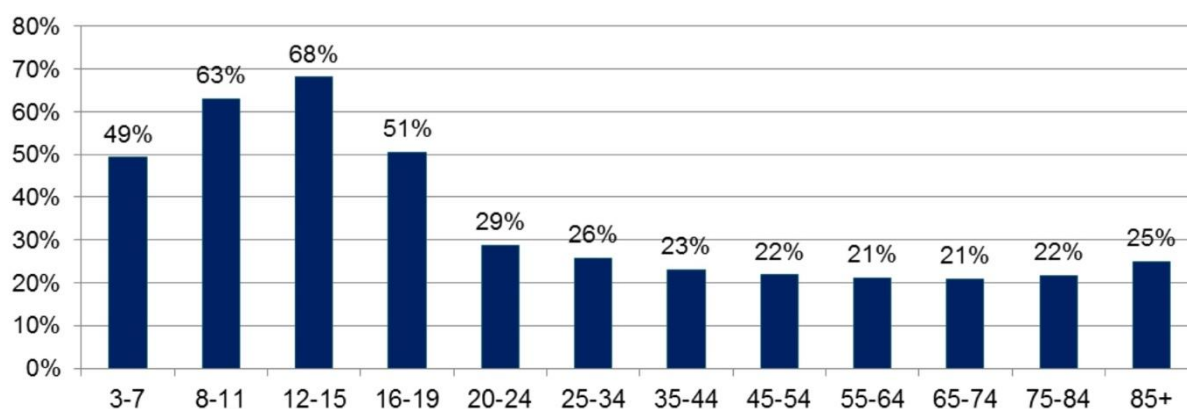


Figure 16.4: Chart Indicating percentage reporting speaking Welsh, by age group (Welsh Government, 2019)

When school is not enough

It is ironic that, while schools in the nineteenth century were an important engine of language loss, their great-great-grandchildren, educated through the medium of Welsh, choose in the main to speak not Welsh but English outside class. While a supportive education system is a prerequisite for language maintenance, it is not enough. Most children in Welsh-medium education today come from English-speaking homes and live in English-speaking communities where there are few opportunities for using the language outside school. While the realisation that a more comprehensive approach is required has been relatively slow, it is now firmly embedded in the Welsh Government's (2017) goal of producing a million Welsh speakers by 2050, as illustrated in the foreword by Carwyn Jones, First Minister, and Alun Davies, Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language:

¹⁶ Edwards and Pritchard 2006.

¹⁷ Welsh Government 2019. See also Chart 1 below.

¹⁸ See, for instance, Edwards and Newcombe Pritchard 2005.

Government cannot insist that parents and carers use the Welsh language with their children, that children play together in Welsh or that someone uses Welsh socially. We can, however, work to provide the conditions to facilitate an increase in the number of Welsh speakers and an increase in the use of Welsh. . . . The overarching message in this document is that we need to reach a position where the Welsh language is an integral element of all aspects of everyday life. . . . By raising our expectations and adopting an ambitious vision we have the potential to change the future outlook for the language. Together, we can enable the Welsh language to grow, and create a truly bilingual Wales with a living language for all.¹⁹

Arguably, the same desire for economic advancement, which persuaded many Welsh people to abandon their mother tongue for English in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries will determine outcomes in the twenty-first century, where the ability to speak Welsh gives a competitive edge in many areas of employment.

Discussion

While this paper focuses on one nation (Wales), two languages (Welsh and English) and just one aspect of social organisation (education), the findings have wide currency for nations discussed in Dr. Urban's *Small Wars*. In particular, the historical scope of the present case study – from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries – raises issues around language maintenance and loss for other borderlands. For instance, why are efforts to maintain the minority languages of Scotland or France less successful than in Wales or Catalunya?

In the mid-19th century, the vast majority of the population spoke Welsh. But just fifty years later, the proportion had fallen to around half. Alarm bells were ringing about the imminent demise of the language from the 1950s but, like earlier reports of the death of Mark Twain, such reports have proved unfounded. In spite of the far greater power of their English neighbour, the role of Welsh in individual and collective identity and resistance was such that almost a quarter of the population reported speaking the language into the new millennium, thus demonstrating the resilience against all the odds of this small nation.

Apart from a brief interlude in the seventeenth century, Welsh was completely excluded from education so that, by the late 1800s, negative attitudes towards the language on the part of the English elite had persuaded many that their children's future success depended on fluency in English rather than continued use of Welsh. The growing resistance of a small group of activists and cultural leaders, however, met with indifference from Westminster politicians which, in turn, led with increasing frequency to acts of civil disobedience. Small government concessions led incrementally to the devolution of certain powers to the Welsh Assembly Government in 1990, though it was not until the twenty-first century that an understanding emerged that the survival of the language depended on the use of both bottom-up and top-down approaches. The Welsh

¹⁹ Welsh Government 2017: 2–3.

experience thus poses questions for other borderlands: at which stage, for instance, does intransigence in the face of demands from less powerful neighbours become counterproductive? And what lessons can be learned from history? One such lesson which immediately springs to mind is that the same economic argument that drove the shift from English to Welsh in the nineteenth century is, in part at least, leading English-speaking parents to embrace Welsh-medium education for their children a hundred years later. The huge expansion of job opportunities, which has resulted from the equal status now accorded to Welsh and English, means that Welsh speakers have a competitive edge. And, in a similar vein, which mechanisms can usefully be harnessed for sharing both the successes and failures of initiatives in areas such as education?

Conclusion

In spite of the encouraging progress to date, it remains to be seen whether the extremely ambitious target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050²⁰ will be achieved. Nor is it the case that the population of Wales is unanimous in its support for the language: incomers from England taking advantage of lower house prices often have no interest either in Welsh-medium education for their children or in the widely available language classes for adults; many long-term Welsh residents are similarly resistant.

It would also seem that it is a case of *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. It is a matter of concern that assertions of Welsh identity provoke hostile responses from some outside Wales that are barely distinguishable in tone from the views expressed in the *Treason of the Blue Books*. Journalist A.A. Gill describes the Welsh in the *Sunday Times* as “loquacious, dissemblers, immoral liars, stunted, bigoted, dark, ugly, pugnacious little trolls.”²¹ In a similar vein, another journalist, Rod Liddle (2010), describes the Welsh as “miserable, seaweed munching, sheep-bothering pinch-faced hill-tribes.”

While it is difficult to disagree with Dr. Urban’s observation in *Small Wars* concerning the “long and unforgiving sense of history” of Celtic peoples, this is, arguably, a two-sided affair where it is important to consider the provocation!

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²⁰ Welsh Government 2017.

²¹ BBC News 1998.

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Between Washington and Cairo: Imamate Yemen's Foreign Relations with the United States in the Post-World War II Period¹

Richard Harrod

Introduction: The Yemeni Prince in Amarillo

One late-September evening in 1947, in an Amarillo, Texas, hotel room a Yemeni prince settled down for the night. Sayf al-Islām 'Abd Allāh was the sixth son and foreign minister of Imām Yaḥyā Muḥammad Ḥamīd al-Dīn, the King of North Yemen, and he was on the first official visit to the United States by a Yemeni minister in history. Following a presidential meeting at the White House and a stop at the Library of Congress to view Arabic manuscripts, the prince embarked on a tour to take in the wonders of the vast nation. It also gave him the opportunity to meet with some of America's industrial magnates and oil men while he awaited the United Nation's vote on his country's membership application.² The US had been the chief sponsor of Yemen's request to join the world government body. According to the Yemeni newspaper *al-Imān*, Prince 'Abd Allāh found the climate of Amarillo reminiscent of his homeland. The Yemeni royal's trip, which in addition to Texas included stops in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, California, and Tennessee, represented the apogee of friendly diplomacy between the Kingdom of Yemen and the US.³ In subsequent years, relations between the two nations would cool, and the US would steadily lose influence in Yemen.

Why did this change happen? Offered here is a formative study of the events that transpired in and around Yemen from approximately 1945 to 1962, ending with the death of Imām Aḥmad and the onset of the North Yemen Civil War. It draws primarily on documents from the United States, mostly from the State Department, as these are what are readily accessible and offer the clearest available insight into why Yemen moved away from America in the 1950s. Using these sources, it demonstrates that Yemen's initial shift away from the US was due in part to a scandal involving an American explorer and, more importantly, a lack of developmental aid for the country—including exploiting its possible oil wealth—which a US organization called the Yemen Development Corporation was supposed to provide. Another contributing factor was the

¹ Note: Small portions of this work appeared in an earlier form on the author's blog: <https://altarikhblog.wordpress.com/>.

² Stokes 1947: 2:1.

³ *Al-Imān* 1947b: 89–90. My thanks to John Willis for making me aware of the digitized copies of this important newspaper. With regards to the title "Imām," in this case it does not merely refer to one who leads Muslim prayers though he could, of course, do that. Rather, it refers to the paramount religious and political leader of a Muslim society. An Imamate, therefore, is an Islamic system of government in which the temporal and spiritual authority are vested in one person meeting certain requirements. The questions of who the rightful Imām is, what is the manner of choosing him, what are his responsibilities and limitations, and a whole host of others have been perennial in Islamic history. In the case of the *Sunnā* (singular *sunni*), the largest group within Islam, the Imamate eventually became the institution of the *khilāfa* or caliphate, which is now defunct. While the largest group of Shī'a, the *Ithnā 'Ashariyya* or "Twelvers" have a dozen Imāms, other Shī'a groups have had far more. While there is no Imām currently in the Zaydī community, there have been many in the past and, theoretically, there could be more in the future. For a good overview of the history of the Shī'a, see Halm 2004. For an overview of theological positions, see Haider 2016.

rise to power of President Gamāl ‘Abd al-Nāṣir (Nasser) in Egypt, which changed regional power dynamics. By the mid-1950s, the Yemeni Imām calculated that it was in his best interests to draw politically nearer to Cairo and, with Nasser’s encouragement, towards the Communist Bloc, and therefore away from the US. All of these events unfolded against the backdrop of the issue of Palestine, which was a continuously contentious matter between not only Yemen, but all Arab nations and the US.

North Yemen and the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imamate

The Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imāms of North Yemen ruled from Ṣan‘ā’ (fig. 17.1) and Ta‘izz over a land they officially called the “Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen.”⁴ Yaḥyā Muḥammad Ḥamīd al-Dīn, the founder of the dynasty, attained the Imamate in 1904 via *da‘wa*: solicitation of recognition of authority from the local *sāda*, and *khurūj*: conducting a militant uprising against a tyrannical ruler.⁵ In Yaḥyā’s case, that ruler was the Ottoman Sulṭān. The Imām’s *khurūj* ultimately forced the Ottomans to grant him a degree of autonomy via the 1911 Treaty of Da‘ān.⁶ Following Ottoman defeat in World War I and withdrawal from Yemen in 1918, Yaḥyā quickly consolidated power in Ṣan‘ā’, and proclaimed Yemen among the first of the independent postwar Arab polities.⁷

Although Yaḥyā’s struggle with the Ottomans legitimized his authority, he continued to use many artifacts of their imperial order to consolidate his control of the state, such as the telegraph system, schools, and a modern standing army.⁸ The Imām’s forces brought much of northern Yemen into his “domain of obedience” in the 1920s and 1930s, but they could not prevent the loss of some disputed territory with neighboring Saudi Arabia as a result of the 1934 Saudi-Yemeni War.⁹ Overall, Yemen began to resemble a rudimentary nation state; Imām Yaḥya became “King” Yaḥyā, the Imamate became a Kingdom, and His Majesty introduced



Figure 17.1: The Dār al-Ḥajr or “House of Stone” of Imām Yaḥyā Outside of Ṣan‘ā’ (Source Mājid al-Aḥlāsī via Wikimedia Commons CC BY-SA 4.0)

⁴ Imām Yaḥyā took the title “al-Mutawakkil” meaning “the one who relies on, or trusts in, God.” Thus, the official name of the country was the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen, Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: 212.

⁵ Haider 2016: 178. “Sāda” is the plural of “sayyid” and refers to those claiming descent from the Prophet Muḥammad.

⁶ Dresch 2000: 6.

⁷ Rabi 2015: 15–16.

⁸ Messick 1992: 108–09.

⁹ Willis 2012: 105–136. For a detailed account of the Saudi-Yemeni War, see Chapter Five in Khatrash 1983.

primogeniture through the designation of his son Aḥmad as heir. Thus, as John Willis has noted, the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imamate possessed “dual genealogies” in establishing its rule: one line composed of indigenous Yemeni and Zaydī Islamic tradition, and the other formed of modern statecraft principally Ottoman in character.¹⁰

One form of statecraft Yaḥyā embraced was diplomacy. The Imamate signed treaties with Italy (1926), the Soviet Union (1928), and Britain (1934) bolstering Yemen’s status as an independent nation and maneuvering among great powers active in the Red Sea region.¹¹ Although Yemen chose to remain neutral during World War II, following the conflict it reengaged with the world, joining the newly-formed Arab League in 1945.¹² Furthermore, the Imamate signaled its intent to participate in the broader international community when it reached out to the emerging global superpower in the region, the US, which was asserting its worldwide diplomatic and military presence and showing a more active interest in the Middle East. After the US recognized Yemen in 1946, the Imamate was, for a brief time, working closely with the Americans and showed a particular interest in gaining US support in matters of trade and development.¹³

Literature on Yemen in the Imamate Period

Despite the fact that the Kingdom was one of only two real independent powers in Arabia for much of the twentieth century (the other being the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), many historians of the Arabian Peninsula have chosen to focus on Yemen under the Ottoman Empire, or on the aftermath of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom’s collapse and the long civil war that raged throughout the 1960s.¹⁴ The result has been the repetition of a narrative that North Yemen in the Imamate period was a kind of “forbidden kingdom,” where backwardness and isolationism prevailed.¹⁵ It is true that the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imāms were conservative monarchs, and that Yemen was a relatively closed country during their period. Yet, this simplistic portrayal ignores a more complex reality, and some historians have begun to challenge the isolationist narrative of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom. Indeed, Yemen under the Ḥamīd al-Dīns was interested in, and, in its incrementalist way, active in world affairs.

The most recent publication to include a significant study of the international history of the Imamate is John M. Willis’ 2012 monograph, *Unmaking North and South: Cartographies of the Yemeni Past, 1857–1934*. Willis dedicates much space to discussing the rise and reign of Imām Yaḥyā, and convincingly argues that he was very interested in world affairs and aspired to become a Pan-Islamic leader.¹⁶ Prior to Willis, historian W. Taylor Fain published an article in *Diplomacy & Statecraft* entitled “‘Unfortunate Arabia:’ The United States, Great Britain and Yemen, 1955–63.”

¹⁰ Willis 2012: 108, 125, 159–60, 107.

¹¹ Willis 2012: 15, 157 and Degras 1952: 340–42.

¹² Macdonald 1965: 39.

¹³ Robert Stein to US Secretary of State, Aden, 4 June 1946: “Memoranda of Conversations with Officials of the Yemen Government in Sana’a from May 6–12, 1946,” in al-Rashid 1984: 25–29.

¹⁴ For example, see: Kuehn 2011; Farah 2002; Orkaby 2017; and Rabbi 2015.

¹⁵ For examples of this type of characterization, particularly with regards to Imām Yaḥyā, see: Rogan 2011: 331; and Clark 2010: 47.

¹⁶ See Chapter 4 in Willis 2012. Willis has also expanded upon this point in Willis 2019.

This article, while excellent, covered only a portion of the international history of Yemen under the rule of the second Imām, Aḥmad. Therefore, it missed some of the earlier developments of the 1950s, particularly with regard to the search for oil in Yemen, which played an important part in the country's history in the latter half of the decade. Aside from these works, the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imāms have largely been relegated to introductory chapters of books; a sort of necessary backstory for scholars to dispense with before arriving at more interesting topics.¹⁷

Accounts which jump to the late fifties or begin with the Civil War elide the Kingdom's first efforts to navigate the postwar world. A careful examination of the history of the relationship between the US and the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen in the mid-20th century helps us to understand better both nations' actions in the post-war/early Cold War period. It shows that the US missed an opportunity to develop a strategic partner in southern Arabia due to a failure to identify a long-term strategy for engaging with Yemen. On the Yemeni side, it shows that the Imāms were, far from being isolationist, very much interested in international cooperation as long as they saw a potential benefit in such actions. Indeed, international partnerships could bring about development and, the Imāms+ doubtless hoped, help preserve their rule.

The Treaty of Friendship & Commerce of 1946 and the Reign of Imām Yaḥyā

This commitment to international affairs revealed itself almost immediately in the postwar period. In 1946, Yemen and the United States signed a Treaty of Friendship. The August 1946 issue of *The American Foreign Service Journal* painted a romantic and straightforward description of the treaty, which the two nations signed on 4 May. It described it as being part of Yemen's decision to begin its "march into the 20th century."¹⁸ The reality was more complicated. Diplomatic sources reveal the Imamate's motives in seeking relations with the US were largely transactional in nature.¹⁹ For unspecified reasons (likely World War II), textile shipments from the British Colony of 'Adan to the Imamate's territory had stopped, and the Kingdom's negotiators made clear that they hoped the Americans could assist them by helping quickly upgrade the Red Sea port of al-Ḥudayda. The port could then serve as a new *entrepôt* for fresh shipments of textiles from the US.²⁰

The agreement also faced a major and abrupt hurdle when events in Palestine intervened in the negotiations. On 30 April 1946, the Anglo-American Commission, which the governments of the two nations had established to study the situation of Jews in Europe after World War II and the fate of Palestine, issued its report. It advised permitting the immigration of 100,000 European Jews to Palestine.²¹ Reaction in the Arab world was swift, with the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine calling for a general strike in the country and asking other Arab countries to join in

¹⁷ Examples of this treatment include, *Beyond the Arab Cold War: The International History of the Yemen Civil War, 1962–68* by Asher Orkaby (2017), and *Nasser's Gamble: How Intervention in Yemen Caused the Six-Day War and the Decline of Egyptian Power* by Jesse Ferris (2013).

¹⁸ Sanger 1946: 45.

¹⁹ Robert Stein to US Secretary of State, Aden, 4 June 1946: "Memoranda of Conversations with Officials of the Yemen Government in Sana'a from May 6–12, 1946," in al-Rashid 1985: 25–29.

²⁰ Stein to US Secretary of State, "Memoranda of Conversations with Officials of the Yemen Government in Sana'a from May 6–12, 1946," in al-Rashid 1985: 30.

²¹ Institute for Palestine Studies 2021.

solidarity protests. As *The New York Times* reported, “Arabs in general have been stunned by the report and feel that the democracies are working against them.”²² In Yemen, one of the Imām’s sons, Prince Ḥusayn, abruptly involved himself in the negotiations with the Americans. He informed them that the talks were at a dead end and, according to one American negotiator, implied that the US “could not be trusted to protect the rights of small nations.”²³ It was only because of direct intervention from Imām Yaḥyā that negotiations resumed, and the two nations’ representatives signed the treaty. A one-sentence telegram from negotiator William A. Eddy to the State Department on 4 May 1946 simply read: “agreement signed at Sana May 4 owing to personal intervention of Imam overriding Hussein.”²⁴ *Al-Imān* later carried an article optimistically opining that the agreement’s purpose was to achieve a “new age” in the life of Yemen.²⁵

Possible further negotiations following the treaty stalled when Imām Yaḥyā suffered a stroke in September of 1946.²⁶ When he began to recover in early 1947, diplomacy with the US picked up again. The highlight in this regard was the aforementioned visit to Washington, DC of Prince ‘Abd Allāh.²⁷ Internal State Department documents indicated they expected the prince to bring a letter from the Imām pleading the case of the Palestinians.²⁸ No copy of the letter has yet surfaced, but the fact that US officials expected it suggests that Yaḥyā saw lobbying the American president on behalf of Arab causes to be a good idea and reflected his desire to be a kind of Pan-Arab leader.

Discussions during ‘Abd Allāh’s visit included economic topics first broached a year earlier, such as the prospect of modernizing the port at al-Ḥudayda and the start of trade. They also included a newly expressed desire by the Yemenis to convert some gold and silver bullion into US dollars.²⁹ Whether or not he had a letter, *al-Imān* noted that the prince did raise international concerns to President Truman, stating that “the discussions between His Highness [‘Abd Allāh] and the President were friendly and included all Arab issues especially Palestine and Egypt.”³⁰ While in Washington, ‘Abd Allāh also spoke with the press and stated that he hoped his visit might persuade Americans to “give a fair hearing to the Arab case in the Egyptian and Palestine controversies” in the summation of one reporter.³¹ He subsequently left for his tour of the country. With the support of the US, Yemen was granted admission to the UN on 30 September

²² *New York Times* 1946.

²³ US State Department 1946a, Eddy to US Secretary of State, Pt. 1, 2 May 1946. Eddy later went on to help found the CIA.

²⁴ US State Department 1946b, Acheson to Certain Diplomatic and Consular Offices Circular, 7 May 1946.

²⁵ *Al-Imān* 1947: 17. The reason that the newspaper did not publish about this event sooner was that it had ceased publication during World War II, and it appears that this was their first issue after the end of the conflict. Information from the Yemen National Digital Archive.

²⁶ Telegram: James Rives Childs to US Secretary of State, Sana’a, 27 September 1946 (delayed in transmission: original date 2 September 1946), in al-Rashid 1985: 35.

²⁷ Office Memorandum—USG: Henry S. Villard to SS—Mr. Carter, “Call of Prince Abdullah of Yemen on Secretary Mashall,” 11 July 1947, in al-Rashid 1985: 97.

²⁸ Villard to Carter, “Call of Prince Abdullah of Yemen on Secretary Marshall,” in al-Rashid 1984: 97.

²⁹ For the official schedule as recorded by the State Department, see: “Schedule for Official Part of Visit” in al-Rashid 1985: 99–100; Villard to Carter, “Call of Prince Abdullah of Yemen on Secretary Marshall,” al-Rashid 1984: 98.

³⁰ *Al-Imān* 1947b: 89. The paper did not specify what the Egyptian issue was that ‘Abd Allāh discussed with Truman, but during this time there were violent demonstrations against the continued British presence in the canal zone of Suez. *Al-Imān* covered these in the same issue where it discussed the prince’s visit.

³¹ Stokes 1947: 2:1.

1947. ‘Abd Allāh only got to spend one night in Amarillo before he headed to New York to sign the paperwork on behalf of his father.³²

Why the country sought membership in the UN at that specific moment in time is not totally clear from the available sources. However, Yemen’s early activity in the UN shows that the Imām had desired to participate in matters at the world government body that concerned events in the broader Middle East. One of the Imamate’s first votes in the UN was a “no” on Resolution 181 on 29 November 1947: the plan to partition Palestine, demonstrating that this remained a significant international issue for the Yemeni government. Matters came to a head on 2 December 1947, following the successful passing of Resolution 181, when the Imām cabled President Truman directly, expressing his displeasure with the decision of the General Assembly. In the message, he declared that “we consider that by this decision the General Assembly of the United Nations have extinguished and nullified every hope of the sons of man and of reliance on it.” He condemned the decision as completely at odds with the UN’s goals and the “beliefs proclaimed at its radiant and cheer-inspiring” founding.³³

Had Imām Yaḥyā lived much longer, he likely would have been livid at the way matters played out in Palestine in the summer of 1948. However, by the time of the First Arab Israeli War (May 1948–March 1949) the Imām was dead. Members of the Free Yemeni Movement, a dissident group with connections to the Muslim Brotherhood, assassinated him on 17 February 1948.³⁴ In the days following his death, the press in the Arab world was unable to verify his passing, and conflicting stories circulated that he was dead and also that he was still alive and well. On the ground in Yemen, the assassination ushered in a brief “constitutional” Imamate, under the leadership of Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh al-Wazīr.³⁵ However, Aḥmad (fig. 17.2), Yaḥyā’s eldest son rallied Imamate forces, crushed the uprising in March, and executed al-Wazīr on 2 April 1948. Aḥmad’s government was not actually recognized by the US until 1950, and it was not until 1951 that diplomatic activity between the US and Yemen resumed.³⁶



Figure 17.2: Imām Aḥmad bin Yaḥyā Ḥamīd al-Dīn (Source: Wikimedia Commons PD-US).

³² *The New York Times* 1947, *al-Imān* 1947a: 90.

³³ Cable: “King of the Yemen, the Imam Yahya to his Excellency, Mr. Truman, President of the United States, Washington, D.C.,” 2 December 1947, in *al-Rashid* 1984: 131–132.

³⁴ Peterson 1982: 81.

³⁵ *Al-Balāgh* 1948, 2; *Alif Bā’* 1948, 1. *Al-Imān* did not publish news of the assassination and coup as they happened and appears to have been on hiatus. They resumed publishing in May 1948.

³⁶ Memorandum for the President: Dean Acheson to Harry S. Truman, “Recognition of Imam Ahmad of Yemen,” Washington, D.C., 12 January 1950, in *al-Rashid* 1985: 15–16.

The Search for Oil in Yemen and the “Phillips Incident”

The resumption of diplomacy coincided roughly with the search for oil. When it became clear that petroleum was going to play a major role in the world economy of the twentieth century, and when companies began to discover that the Arabian Peninsula held vast quantities of the black gold, the region acquired a new importance to the great powers.³⁷ The first discovery of petroleum in Arabia was in Bahrain in 1932, followed by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1938. Oil was discovered in Qatar in 1939 and in Oman in 1964.³⁸ British and American corporations led all of these petroleum projects. Aside from generating vast quantities of wealth and ushering in a new era of worldwide hydrocarbon dependence, the emergence of oil economies in the Arabian Peninsula, and the potential of yet-untapped reserves, drew the area further into the Western Bloc’s sphere of influence.³⁹ Imamate Yemen, independent like Saudi Arabia, but smaller and less politically connected internationally, nonetheless sought help from Western powers to ascertain the possibility of oil resources within its borders. Indeed, when Prince ‘Abd Allāh had been in the US, he had expressed the Kingdom’s interest in oil and visited refineries in California.⁴⁰

However, the first American expedition to locate oil in Yemen was not an official contingent from any firm established in the region. Rather, it was very likely a corporate conglomerate prospecting mission under the cover of, or at least in partnership with, an archeological dig. In 1951–52, an explorer named Wendell Phillips, with only a bachelor’s degree in archaeology, managed to secure academic institutional backing from The Johns Hopkins University, the University of Maryland, and many corporate sponsors to establish a foundation that, in turn, funded an archaeological expedition to Yemen. Ostensibly, the goal was to excavate ruins associated with the biblical Queen of Sheba, but the presence of several international oil companies on the board of directors of Phillips’s foundation indicates there were likely ulterior motives.⁴¹ Furthermore, British diplomats in the UK’s Foreign Office described him as “astute but a publicity-hinter [sic],” and claimed that while he had admitted that “he knows nothing of archaeology,” he had “important friends in the United States including the “Allied Mellon Organization and Gulf Oil Company.”⁴² Indeed, Phillips later became a wealthy oilman thanks to concessions the Sulṭān of Oman, Sa‘īd bin Taymūr, granted him.⁴³

Phillips’s expedition in Yemen ended badly. He carried out excavations at the ancient ruins of Ma‘rib (fig. 17.3), but the Yemeni authorities suspected him of stealing artifacts.⁴⁴ In February 1952, he fled the country out of concern for his safety, or as the Egyptian paper *al-Ahrām* put it, the expedition “fled Yemen when their armed Yemeni guards threatened them.”⁴⁵ As he prepared to leave, Phillips published a public chastisement of Imām Aḥmad, whom he blamed for his

³⁷ Munīf 2007:111–112.

³⁸ Rogan 2011: 356; Louay, et al. 2008: 36, 154.

³⁹ Macris 2010: 92–101.

⁴⁰ Taiz to UK Foreign Office, 22 October 1952, in Ingrams and Ingrams 1993: 159. Yemenis digging a well at al-Ṣalīf had discovered oil and sent it the United States for testing via the offices of the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO). Stokes 1947: 2:1, *Al-Imān* 1947b: 89–90.

⁴¹ Phillips 1955: 319–320.

⁴² Telegram, UK Foreign Office to Muscat, 12 March 1952, in FO 1016/207: “Mr. Wendell Phillips”: 17.

⁴³ Freeman 1975.

⁴⁴ *The New York Times* 1952.

⁴⁵ *Al-Ahrām* 1952: 8.

experience in the country.⁴⁶ The Yemeni response came on the pages of *al-Imān*, where the press office of the Foreign Ministry published a multi-page “official announcement” in which it shared a copy of the agreement that it claimed Phillips had assented to for his expedition to work in Yemen. It then detailed a list of his breaches of the agreement and other misdeeds including arriving in the country after he said he would, failing to secure the proper visas for all members of his expedition, “bad behavior and numerous repeated transgressions” by members of his party, mistreating Yemenis who worked with him, and destroying a number of ruins in Ma’rib. Finally, the Yemeni government announced that it “officially accuses Mr. Wendell Phillips of stealing valuable artifacts, including statues, and demands that he return them.” It also claimed he owed various people debts in connection with his expedition.⁴⁷

According to one Foreign Service Monthly Report from Vice-Consul Ralph Clark, “the Phillips Incident” bolstered the anti-foreign elements within the Imām’s court. As he put it: “Not only have the supporters of the Imam’s ‘forward’ policy been demonstrated to be wrong in their estimate of American reliability but their very ranks have been thrown into confusion and their leadership discredited.” Clark stated that many Yemenis in the Imām’s bureaucracy perceived Phillips’s behavior, which evidently included “loudly proclaiming in public places” that his sponsoring organization was “doing work on the behalf of various U.S. governmental agencies” as a kind of insult to the authority of the Yemeni government. He also reported that ordinary Yemenis were convinced that Phillips was stealing gold in Ma’rib. Clark’s conclusion that “the Imam’s most recent experiment with Americans has ended in failure. American prestige in the country has suffered a relapse” summed up the state of affairs.⁴⁸

Around the time that Phillips was active in Ma’rib, two official geological expeditions to Yemen also occurred, but without American participation. The first was a geological mission from Germany, under the direction of geologist W. Schott in 1952. It carried out the bulk of its work in al-Ṣalīf, on the coast of the Red Sea.⁴⁹ A

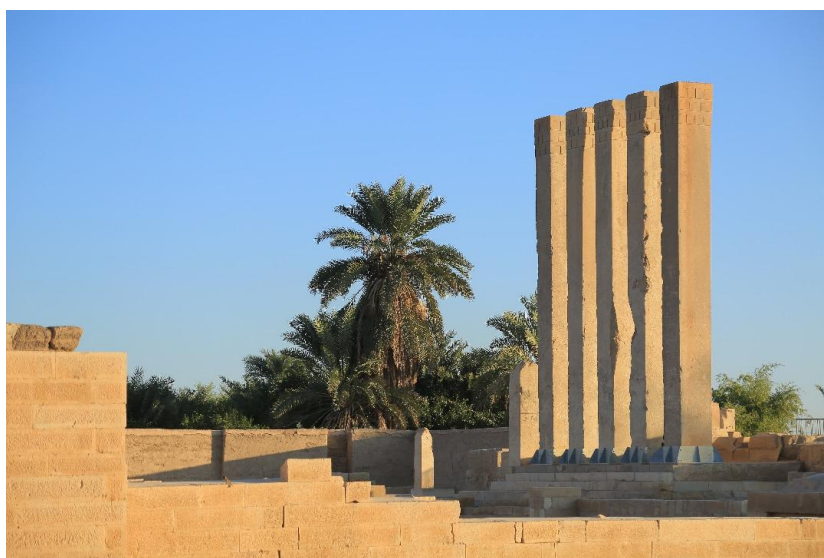


Figure 17.3: The “Throne of Bilqīs” or Temple of Awām in Ma’rib, partially excavated. (Source: Ma’rib Governorate via Wikimedia Commons CC BY-SA 2.0)

⁴⁶ Phillips 1955: 323–24.

⁴⁷ *Al-Imān* 1952: 8, 12.

⁴⁸ US State Department 1952, Clark to State Department, “Monthly Review of Political Developments RE Yemen, February - 1952” 8 March 1952: 1–4. Phillips’s actions and legacy continue to be a subject of much debate today. For example, see: Tucker 2019 and Sills 2025.

⁴⁹ Herman Frederick Eilts to US State Department, Aden, 3 December 1952, Foreign Service Despatch: “Monthly Review of Political Developments Re Yemen–November, 1952” in *al-Rashid* 1985: 87.

year later, a group of French geologists from the Société Lyonnaise des Eaux et de l'Éclairage visited Yemen in order to search for petroleum and to carry out geological surveys.⁵⁰ The German expedition was actually awarded a concession in al-Ṣalīf by the Yemeni government and, by the summer of 1953, there were over 70 German technicians in the coastal city searching for oil, which Imām Aḥmad was confident would be found beneath his kingdom's soil.⁵¹ Unfortunately for the Imām, oil was not discovered at that time, and by 1957 the Germans had become inactive in al-Ṣalīf, although they retained the rights to the concession.⁵²

In the two years following the Phillips incident, diplomatic interaction between the US and the Mutawakkilite Kingdom was limited to polite meetings between the American Consul General, some of the princes, and occasionally the Imām. Nonetheless, Aḥmad continued to seek expertise that might help him exploit his country's presumed riches and, several years after the Phillips affair, he turned again to the United States.⁵³

The Mystery of the Yemen Development Corporation

In the 5 December 1955 issue of the American popular magazine *Life*, an alliteratively titled article called "Forbidden Yemen Yields to a Yankee's Offer" appeared.⁵⁴ It concerned the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen, a country that was likely unfamiliar to most Americans, and it described the creation of a new US commercial venture: the Yemen Development Corporation (YDC). The enterprising capitalist behind this project was a man named Walter S. Gabler, whom the article described as "a Virginia farmer who turned international promoter." Gabler, along with an attorney named Jack Jessen, and a geologist named Jack Crichton, spent less than a month in Yemen and, with capital from George E. Eliot—whom the anonymous *Life* columnist called a "financier and crony of presidents"—they negotiated an oil and mineral concession from Imām Aḥmad. The terms of the concession were a 50/50 split of the profits from any revenue generated from the exploitation of minerals and oil from roughly 2/3 of the territory.⁵⁵

Life declared that Yemen's mineral wealth might include copper, gold, and possibly even uranium. As for oil, the article added excitedly that there was "shale so saturated with oil that it blazes at the touch of a match." The column was, like most articles in *Life*, surrounded by photographs, including one of Gabler, Jessen, and Crichton posing with a seated Imām Aḥmad, gazing into the distance.⁵⁶

The YDC is something of a mystery. *Life* cast it as a private venture and Fain has also described it as such.⁵⁷ On the other hand, Orkaby asserts it was nothing more than a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) shell company, set up to conduct espionage in Yemen.⁵⁸ There is

⁵⁰ Brown 1970: 76.

⁵¹ Eilts to US State Department, Aden, 6 August 1953, Foreign Service Despatch, "Monthly Review of Political Developments Re Yemen–July, 1953," in al-Rashid 1985: 125.

⁵² US State Department 1957d.

⁵³ *Al-Imām* 1954a: 60–61.

⁵⁴ "Forbidden Yemen Yields to a Yankee's Offer" in *Life* 1955: 52.

⁵⁵ *Life* 1955: 53. The 50/50 split was common for the time period. See Fuccaro, Nelida, "The Oil Company's Fields of Vision: Public Relations and Labour Images in the Arab World" in Fuccaro and Limbert 2023: 90.

⁵⁶ *Life* 1955: 52.

⁵⁷ Fain 2001: 149, n 18.

⁵⁸ Orkaby 2017: 25–27.

certainly evidence to support this claim. Jack Crichton was a geologist, as *Life* claimed, but he had also been a spy. In fact, he had served in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS, precursor to the CIA) during World War II.⁵⁹ Shortly before his death in 2007, Crichton, who went on to become a successful oilman, self-published, with the help of another Texas businessman named E. J. Anderson, a book entitled *The Middle East Connection (Yemen)* in which he details his work to secure the concession and to help found the YDC. While his words should be taken with a grain of salt, his timeline and characters (although given aliases) do line up with real events and people.⁶⁰ In his book, he explicitly states that he was a CIA agent, and that the CIA wanted a presence in Yemen out of fear that the Soviets were seeking to infiltrate the country.⁶¹

Yet, it is unclear to what degree the YDC was *only* a CIA spy station in Yemen, and to what degree its administrators actually hoped it would turn a profit by finding resource wealth in the country. On the one hand, Orkaby points out that the company never found any oil and, by 1957, had run out of funds because, in his estimation, it was only concerned with spying.⁶² On the other hand, US government documents paint a more mixed picture. Officials seem to have hoped that the YDC would actually achieve tangible economic results. George Wadsworth, the US ambassador to Yemen on his way back to the US from the Middle East in October 1955, after meeting with the Crown Prince and other Yemeni dignitaries, telegrammed the State Department with a positive report. He declared that a “Development program based on known agricultural resources and assumed great mineral wealth could not fail, especially if undertaken with American financial and related technical assistance.” Furthermore, he compared the decision of the Imām to grant the concession to the YDC to the decision by the Saudis to sign the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) concession in the 1930s.⁶³ In other words, the ambassador believed the venture had real economic potential.

It appears that the private American investors in the company were interested in both potential profit and national security. When the YDC’s monetary problems raised the possibility of closure in 1957, Wallace S. Whittaker, the chairman of the corporation, told National Security Council (NSC) member Bromley Smith that the “U.S. government, despite strenuous efforts extending over many months has never stated whether it believes the continuation of the Corporation’s concession in Yemen is important to the national security.” The potential closure of the YDC would result in “the personal loss of a relatively small amount of money put in by a group of private investors” who were motivated by personal gain but also by “a patriotic interest in insuring [sic] the continuance of a U.S. corporation in an area that appears to be attractive to the USSR.” Moreover, Whittaker asserted that “a group of people not connected with the Government, but knowledgeable because of their interest in the corporation” felt that Yemen

⁵⁹ *Dallas Morning News*, 2007.

⁶⁰ On the first page of the book the authors state that “this story is based on an actual happening. Some of the characters are fiction, as are some of the incidents.” See Anderson and Crichton 2005: 1.

⁶¹ Anderson and Crichton 2005: 9. See also Orkaby 2017: 26, 224: Another participant on the expedition, a Lebanese American named Hatem El-Khalidi, published a book about his time in Yemen entitled *Sojourn in a Dreadful Land (Yemen Chronicles)*, in which he also identified Crichton (under the alias of “Eric”) as being a CIA agent. El-Khalidi further asserts that Crichton (“Eric”) was active in attempting to assassinate Yemeni crown prince Muḥammad al-Badr for being too pro-Soviet. See: El-Khalidi 2011: viii.

⁶² Orkaby 2017: 27.

⁶³ US State Department 1955: 749.

was vital to US interests and that the “loss” of it to the Soviet Union would require efforts costing many millions of dollars to reverse.⁶⁴

The picture at the State Department was also complicated. According to the records of one Executive Secretariat meeting in November 1957, the group discussed a myriad of issues related to the corporation. First, since the YDC had run out of money, it would be unable to make its payments to the Imamate unless a group of new investors purchased it. Second, the Soviets were believed to have military personnel stationed in Yemen. Third, the Yemeni *chargé d'affaires* in Washington wanted the concession to continue because, if it lapsed and the Americans quit Yemen, it might entice further Soviet involvement in his country. The Department’s record states that Standard Oil of New Jersey was interested in purchasing the YDC, “but they insist this would be only to preserve the US position on the Arabian peninsula [sic] and not for commercial reasons.”⁶⁵ However, State Department officials in the meeting appeared to believe that aiding Yemen, specifically with infrastructural development, would be a good idea. William Roundtree, the Assistant Secretary of State pointed out that a recent ICA [Independent Cost Analysis] survey mission in Yemen had been “very successful and had recommended a \$5 million program” of development including an aerial and geologic survey (which could help oil companies determine the presence of crude in Yemen), help with building roads, and providing technical assistance in agricultural and air transport development.⁶⁶ Thus, at least some in the State Department still thought developmental assistance to Yemen was a good investment.

In the end, the YDC folded, but American encouragement of private enterprise in a quest for Yemeni oil continued. In 1959, the American Overseas Investment Corporation (AOIC) acquired a new concession in the country.⁶⁷ In 1961, at least a part of the territory was awarded to the Mecom Company, which had developed oil projects in other areas of the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia and Oman.⁶⁸ However, any prospects for Americans finding oil in Yemen were cut short when civil war erupted in the country in September 1962.⁶⁹

In sum, it is quite likely that the YDC was sheltering CIA agents, but it was not unusual for private corporations concerned with profit to take a few “company men” along for the ride. After all, ARAMCO had harbored many CIA personnel, but it was undoubtedly interested in finding petroleum and profiting from it above all else.⁷⁰ Moreover, the YDC arose from a particular

⁶⁴ US Central Intelligence Agency 1957. The memo is from Bromley Smith of the National Security Council. He was detailing a conversation he had the Chairman of the YDC, Wallace S. Whittaker. This message appears to have taken place within the NSC, so it is unclear why it is in the CIA’s records.

⁶⁵ US State Department 1957d: 769. We should be skeptical of the Yemeni *chargé d'affaires* expression of concern regarding increased Soviet involvement in his country. As we shall see below, Crown Prince al-Badr had visited the Soviet Union on a diplomatic mission in 1956, and the USSR was providing arms to the Kingdom in 1957. It is most likely the Yemeni *Chargé d'affaires* was attempting to play up the “threat” to spur the US to get the YDC to do more.

⁶⁶ US State Department 1957d: 770. *Al-Imān* 1954b: 57. Several years earlier, the paper refers to an “American expert representing the American Department of Technical Assistance” who was going to tour the country and provide a report to the Yemeni authorities. This may have been a person (perhaps one of several) who helped conduct the ICA that Roundtree referenced.

⁶⁷ US State Department 1959b: Amlegation to the Department of State, Taizz, 9 November 1959, “Mineral Concession in Yemen Obtained by American Company.”

⁶⁸ Orkaby 2017: 26–27. *New York Times* 1981. It is unclear if the AOIC awarded the entire area in its purview to Mecom, or just part of it. The original concession to the AOIC was for “the entire country.”

⁶⁹ Dresch 2000: 87.

⁷⁰ Vitalis 2007: 27.

historical context, one in which government officials perceived the interests of American business, and capitalism more generally, as synonymous with the interests of the American nation.⁷¹ The YDC is best understood as existing in this paradigm.

Yet, if American capital and national security interests were working together in Yemen, they never developed an effective strategy for delivering projects that satisfied Imām Aḥmad. In fact, the Imām expressed “grave concern at the company’s lack of activity in exploiting its concession” to Assistant Secretary Roundtree through his chargé d’affaires during a meeting in August of 1957.⁷² This lack of activity opened the door to Soviet involvement in Yemen. Indeed, YDC President Gabler had written to the State Department in early 1957 claiming that the corporation’s inactivity was facilitating just such events. In his view, the US government was acting under the assumption that it was solely the responsibility of the Yemeni government to ask for assistance, and thus the Russians were taking advantage of the situation by simply providing aid (in this case, arms) with no strings attached. As a result, “penetration by the Soviet Union and Communist influence is greater in Yemen than any other single middle eastern [*sic*] country” and “our government is insufficiently aware of the critical nature of this situation.”⁷³ In addition to the torpidity of the American government and the YDC contributing to the Imamate’s shift away from the US, the other important factor was the emergence of revolutionary Egypt during the same decade. This development changed the political landscape of the Arab World.

Nasser, Revolutionary Egypt, and the Imamate’s Turn Towards the Eastern Bloc

In many ways, Egyptian President Nasser and the various movements he championed represented policies hostile to the leaders and states in the Arabian Peninsula.⁷⁴ Whereas the Yemeni Imamate defined itself through an Islamic identity with an institutional history stretching back centuries, Nasser became the promoter of a mostly secular Pan-Arabism that advocated rapid political and economic change and supported certain revolutionary causes. In fact, from its earliest days in power, the new regime was permitting anti-Imamate groups to conduct their activities in Egypt.⁷⁵ For example, in the summer of 1953, the year after the Egyptian Revolution, the new government granted permission to the Yemeni Unity Association (an organization that advocated for the union of north and south Yemen as one country and was avowedly anti-Imamate) to open a new branch in Cairo, much to the consternation of Aḥmad.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, the Imām perceived that the political winds were blowing in Egypt’s direction, and he began to bring Ṣan‘ā’ closer to Cairo.

⁷¹ For a discussion of how American corporate and security interests overlapped in the Cold War in the context of the developing world, see: Schlesinger and Kinzer 2005 and Wharton 2004. To be sure, this attitude has not entirely disappeared.

⁷² US State Department 1957c: US State Department, Memorandum of Conversation, “Yemeni Chargé Reports on Discussions with Yemen Development Corporation”, 12 August 1957.

⁷³ US State Department, 1957b: The Yemen Development Corporation, Gabler to Roundtree, 22 January 1957: 2–3.

⁷⁴ Alexander 2004: 35.

⁷⁵ Ferris 2013: 33. In 1953, Nasser was not yet officially President of Egypt, however he was the real power behind the “Free Officers” movement.

⁷⁶ Orkaby 2017: 15. Eilts to US State Department, 30 May 1953, Foreign Service Dispatch, “Monthly Review of Political Developments Re Yemen–May, 1953” in al-Rashid 1985: 119.



Figure 17.4: Crown Prince Muḥammad al-Badr in 1962 (Source: Wikimedia Commons PD-US).

In 1954, the Mutawakkilite Kingdom signed a mutual defense pact with Egypt. Shortly thereafter, Aḥmad sent a contingent of young army officers to Egypt for training.⁷⁷ The same year, Crown Prince Muḥammad al-Badr (fig. 17.4) spent two months in Egypt having many discussions “with those responsible” for the country, meeting “important Arab individuals” and touring factories.⁷⁸ In 1956, at the encouragement of Nasser, al-Badr visited several communist countries and established diplomatic contact with China and the Soviet Union.⁷⁹ By 1957, Egyptian military personnel were in the Mutawakkilite Kingdom helping train Yemeni officers on how to use newly purchased Soviet weapons. These developments concerned the State Department’s Director of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Fraser Wilkins, and resulted in the Department informing its embassy in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, that Egypt and the Soviets might be

collaborating with Yemen to threaten the British position in ‘Adan.⁸⁰ Communist involvement in Yemen continued to grow and at the end of 1958 five hundred Russians were overhauling the port at al-Ḥudayda, and one thousand Chinese were working on a road to connect that city with Ṣan‘ā’.⁸¹ Thus, by the late-1950s, Egypt and communist countries were actually carrying out training and development projects in Yemen, while the US had failed to initiate any programs of substance, the very thing YDC President Gabler had worried would happen in his letter of 1957.

The Union of Arab States

Nasser also successfully influenced Yemen to partake in his ambitious project for a unified Arab Middle East. His successful nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956, followed by the war in which he took on the French, Israelis, and British and won a political victory, made him a hero across the Arab World. In 1957, Syria, fearing a growing communist threat within its borders, approached Nasser about the prospect of the unification of the two countries. Though Nasser was initially hesitant, he eventually embraced the idea, and on 1 February 1958, Egypt and Syria became one country: the United Arab Republic (UAR).⁸² Shortly after the proclamation of the UAR, Yemen announced its intentions to join with the new entity in a less formal manner by founding a loose

⁷⁷ Rabi 2010: 27.

⁷⁸ *Al-Imān* 1954c: 51.

⁷⁹ El Mallakh 1986: 7. See also Dresch 2000: 82.

⁸⁰ Dresch 2000: 81–82; US State Department 1957a.

⁸¹ El Mallakh 1986: 7. See also Dresch 2000: 82.

⁸² Tucker 2013: 217–21.

federation with the UAR known as the Union of Arab States (UAS).⁸³ Crown Prince al-Badr traveled to Egypt to meet with Nasser and negotiate the specifics of Yemen's affiliation.⁸⁴

The UAS had a short and unremarkable existence. Still, Imām Aḥmad appeared to have believed that it had some propaganda value. Likely referring to the British in 'Adan, he announced on Radio Ṣan'ā' that "the Arab giant will drive imperialism into the pit."⁸⁵ Ultimately, Yemen's participation in the UAS was a marriage of convenience and a calculated maneuver for survival on the part of the Imām. To put it another way, it was better to be with Nasser than risk being against him.⁸⁶

For the US, the UAS represented another setback for possible American activity in Yemen. In the view of Raymond Hare, US ambassador to the Mutawakkilite Kingdom, Yemen was a victim of the UAR's propaganda and was therefore likely to share its leadership's general dislike of the West. He lamented in a 1959 telegram that "we [are] definitely losing ground and [the] situation [is] more precarious than at any time during past two years."⁸⁷ Although the Imām cooperated with US rivals, he continued to affect a generally favorable attitude towards America. Yet, the precarity of his reign, including his chronically poor health, complicated his ability to manage foreign policy. In 1959, he became ill and went to Rome for treatment.⁸⁸

Crown Prince al-Badr & the Last Years of the Imamate in Yemen

The process of negotiating the founding of the UAS brought cooperation between Nasser and Crown Prince al-Badr. Their relationship proved to be consequential in the political developments of the final years of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom. This relationship between Nasser and al-Badr would also shatter American hopes of working through the Crown Prince. While a US diplomat had once noted that al-Badr's father, Imām Aḥmad, had "middle of the road tendencies" in his political outlook, the Crown Prince seemed even more liberal minded, and some US officials thought he could develop into a reformer.⁸⁹ For example, in 1955, Ambassador Wadsworth had commented that during a meeting with al-Badr, the Crown Prince had "listened intently to my exposition US policy aims, and effort contribute towards area stability and progress." The ambassador went on to state that any plan for a Yemeni "modernization program must center on his person."⁹⁰

However, by the latter half of the 1950s, al-Badr had grown to admire Nasser. According to Orkaby, al-Badr travelled to Damascus in 1958, where he met with the Egyptian President who broached the idea of staging a coup in Yemen. Nasser told al-Badr that he envisioned Yemen as a beachhead of Arab nationalism in the Arabian Peninsula and as a bulwark against the imperialist machinations of the West. Supposedly, the Chinese and Soviets were aware of the coup plan and

⁸³ Cotran 1959: 350.

⁸⁴ Orkaby 2017: 19.

⁸⁵ Imām Aḥmad bin Yaḥyā, as quoted in Dresch 2000: 82.

⁸⁶ Ferris 2013: 33.

⁸⁷ US State Department 1959a.

⁸⁸ Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen*: 83.

⁸⁹ J. Rives Childs to US Secretary of State, Jidda, 10 July 1950, "Government Organization in the Yemen," in al-Rashid 1985: 21.

⁹⁰ US State Department 1955: 748–49.

approved. An al-Badr-led uprising never materialized but, allegedly, the Crown Prince and Nasser conspired on-and-off over the next four years to kill Imām Aḥmad, and al-Badr became a virtual protégé of Nasser.⁹¹ As the 1950s drew to a close, US officials worried that al-Badr had not only become pro-Nasser, but felt “active hostility” towards the United States, and they were concerned about him pushing Yemen further in the direction of the Eastern Bloc.⁹²

In addition to al-Badr’s potential perfidy, there were other schemes within the royal family to overthrow Imām Aḥmad. In 1955, two of the Imām’s younger brothers, Prince ‘Abd Allāh (he of the official US tour) and Prince ‘Abbās, launched a coup against Aḥmad. It failed, and the Imām had them executed.⁹³ In January 1958, supporters of another prince, Ḥassan, attempted a coup but were unsuccessful.⁹⁴ Orkaby asserts that, at some point after 1959 and into 1961, the Imām forced al-Badr to remain inside Yemen because of his pro-Soviet leanings. Nonetheless, Nasser secretly contacted him in 1961 and asked him to kill his father.⁹⁵

Yet, despite the potential dangers of a Nasserist/pro-Soviet Imām of Yemen to their interests, the US’s policy regarding the country remained largely unchanged in this period—even as the regional order began to shift. In September 1961, following a revolution, Syria seceded from the UAR.⁹⁶ In December of the same year, Aḥmad announced, via a poem published for the world to read (including Nasser), that the Imamate was leaving the UAS.⁹⁷ Two weeks later, Radio Cairo began broadcasting calls for a revolution in the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen.⁹⁸

In the end, however, Imām Aḥmad did not lose his throne to rebellion but died peacefully on 19 September 1962.⁹⁹ The next day, al-Badr announced his father’s passing and declared himself Imām. The new leader of Yemen proclaimed in a speech on Radio Ṣan‘ā’ that he would work to “guarantee citizens their rights,” and that he would “assiduously study a way to set up a civil system to determine reforms and responsibilities in decisions of administration.” Expressing his Pan-Arab inclinations, he added that Yemen would “work in solidarity with its brother Arab states to establish the structure of a unified Arab nation.”¹⁰⁰ He did not have a chance to implement these promises. Shortly afterwards, on 26 September, a group of junior army officers overthrew al-Badr, and the North Yemen Civil War began.¹⁰¹

Between the death of Imām Aḥmad and the beginning of the revolt, the US showed no interest in action. In a State Department paper dated 20 September 1962, Talcott W. Seelye, the Officer in Charge of the Arabian Peninsula for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, stated “we do not believe that we should involve ourselves in a Yemeni power struggle unless Yemen should

⁹¹ Orkaby 2017: 20–22.

⁹² US State Department 1958b. Al-Badr’s increasingly pro-soviet/anti-US attitude was all the more concerning to the State Department because the Imām’s recurrent illness resulted in him being out of the country frequently for treatment. In his absence, al-Badr appeared to be taking an larger role in the nation’s foreign policy.

⁹³ Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen*, 78, also see Rabi, *Yemen*, 28.

⁹⁴ US State Department 1958a.

⁹⁵ Orkaby 2017: 21–22

⁹⁶ Jankowski 2002: 170.

⁹⁷ Dresch 2000: 86.

⁹⁸ Ingrams 1964: 124.

⁹⁹ Ferris 2013: 29.

¹⁰⁰ *Falastīn* 1962: 1, 3.

¹⁰¹ Ingrams 1964: 127–30; Dresch 2000: 89.

veer too far in the direction of the Soviet Union.”¹⁰² In the end, the Kennedy administration decided to recognize the revolutionary forces of the Yemen Arab Republic on 19 December 1962. They did so in a bid to maintain American influence in the region against communism and with a guarantee from Nasser that he would remove Egyptian troops—which were aiding the revolutionary forces in Yemen—to help stabilize the situation.¹⁰³ Nasser did not fulfil his part of the bargain, and the war dragged on until 1970.¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

Following World War II, the leadership of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen hoped that the US would support them in their quest to join the global community of nations, develop the country, and exploit natural resources including oil. Early successes in the relationship, like the US-sponsored admission of Yemen to the UN, were soon followed by difficulties, including those caused by the situation in Palestine. The assassination of Imām Yaḥyā in 1948 delayed developments, and the Phillips affair in 1952 set back relations. The US did execute a half-hearted attempt to help the Yemenis prospect for oil in the 1950s, but because of bureaucratic indecisiveness or lack of interest, the YDC—the one major American effort to execute development schemes in Yemen—failed, and its efforts to rectify the situation were insufficient. However, it is likely that the US would have continued to send aid to Yemen in a sporadic manner, accompanied by promises to improve in the future, had Nasser not arrived on the scene when he did. Even though Imām Aḥmad and his style of governance were seemingly at odds with the swaggering and charismatic Egyptian colonel-turned-president, the Imām sensed which way the political wind was blowing and understood that the balance of regional power had shifted towards Egypt.

Nasser’s relationship with and influence upon Crown Prince Muḥammad al-Badr were another factor. Al-Badr led the Imamate closer to both Egypt and the communist bloc, and Aḥmad, making a calculated political maneuver, went along by joining Yemen with Egypt via the UAS. Thus, the promise of natural resource exploitation and geopolitical interests brought the US and Yemen together in the late-1940s and early-1950s, but lack of progress in development created a gulf between the two nations. Egypt, the Soviets, and the Chinese stepped in to fill that void. What they had to offer Yemen proved more attractive than any promises the US officials were willing to make, and Yemen moved out of the US sphere of influence. American politicians and diplomats would have to build future policy on the foundation of these disappointments.

¹⁰² US State Department 1962. Seely suggests that al-Badr might have been rethinking his pro-soviet stance in the months before the death of the Imām.

¹⁰³ Orkaby 2017: 51. It is worth asking why Nasser, who had seemed to be al-Badr’s friend throughout the 1950s, so quickly turned against him after Aḥmad’s death. There is no definite answer, but historian Jesse Ferris argues that Nasser’s inclusion of Yemen in the UAS was simply to “generate momentum behind an expanding Pan-Arab entity,” and this outweighed the possible embarrassing political incongruities of a revolutionary movement paired with a conservative Islamic monarchy. By implication, the friendship was never sincere. Ferris 2013: 33.

¹⁰⁴ Dresch 2000: 115.

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CHAPTER 18

Orsanmichele: An Anomalous Grain Loft

Janet Goodhue Smith

When one looks down on Florence from the Piazzale Michelangelo, Orsanmichele is one of the tallest buildings on the skyline (fig. 18.1 and fig. 18.2). The only higher civic building is the Palazzo Vecchio but not by much. While the Palazzo Vecchio has three main stories it also has several mezzanines and an attic area, Orsanmichele has only three very tall stories, two vaulted and one with an open truss ceiling. (fig. 18.3 and fig. 18.4). The ground floor houses an elaborate tabernacle dedicated to a miraculous painting of the Enthroned Virgin and Child. The upper two stories were built to store grain and house the *Sei della Biada* ("the six of the grain"), or grain distribution officers, but do not seem appropriate for housing grain because they have huge Gothic windows. The elaborate tracery would not have been filled with glass but perhaps oiled cloth, called *impannata*. In the fourteenth century, glazing was quite rare for non-religious buildings. The upper stories of Orsanmichele were conceived for a utilitarian function. It was to be an urban barn, largely open to the elements.



Figure 18.1: Copy in the Palazzo Vecchio of the so-called Catena print of Florence, dating from 1471-1482. Orsanmichele located in the center of the photo and slightly to the left of the Palazzo Vecchio. Both buildings are approximately the same height. The towers behind Orsanmichele are those of the Badia and the Bargello. Photo by the author.



Figure 18.2: The upper story of Orsanmichele viewed through a window in the Sala dell'Udienza on the top floor of the Palazzo Vecchio. Photo by the author.



Figure 18.3: Palazzo Vecchio. The windows below the crenellations are in a covered walkway that is part of the defense system. The actual attic story of the palazzo is not visible. Francesco Bini, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons.

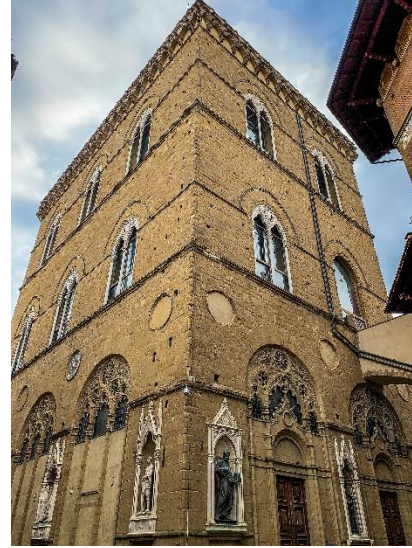


Figure 18.4: Orsanmichele. The two upper stories of the building are extremely tall. Photo by the author.

Procuring and Storing Grain

How was grain stored in the antique and medieval Mediterranean world? There were two methods: in pits underground called silos and in above ground shelters made of wood or masonry. The silos tended to be used for long-term storage. Their openings could be covered and hidden. Sometimes caves were used, as we can still see in the underground passages below the town of Orvieto, where wine, grain and other food stuffs were stored from the Etruscan period on. Above-ground storage was for more immediate use and was often in a fortified area because grain was a valuable commodity and could be pilfered or stolen. Storage facilities from the Roman imperial period survive around the empire, for example in North African countries such as Morocco and Tunisia. They were built in dry wall stone or dried bricks and were usually vaulted, at least on the ground floor. The storage rooms were lined up around a courtyard and were in walled enclosures with housing for soldiers.¹

Highly populated cities like Rome were not able to procure enough grain in the surrounding agricultural areas and had to import large quantities from Sicily, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and other countries in the Mediterranean basin. The grain was transported in ships and landed in coastal ports such as Puteoli, near Naples; and Portus, just north of Ostia--built by Claudius and enlarged by Trajan. The grains and cereals were temporarily housed in warehouses or *horrea*, which were not significantly different from the African configurations. Then they were transported by small boats up the Tiber to Rome, where they were again placed in warehouses

¹ For Roman warehouses in Africa see Amadori 2016 and Papi 2007.

along the river. Special rooms for grain storage in the warehouses often had raised floors to cut down on humidity spoilage. The floors would have been held up on small supports much like the caldarium of Roman baths, where hot air circulated below the raised floor.² While liquids such as wine, olive oil, and garum were transported in terracotta containers called amphoras, grain seems to have been placed in sacks or simply dumped loose into the hull of a boat or piled up in the storerooms (fig. 18.5).

After the fall of the Roman Empire and a drastic drop in population, there was less need for large-scale storage. The emerging organization of the Christian church sometimes stepped in to manage supplying the poor with grain. In the eighth century, Pope Adrian I founded the *domusculia*, a large agricultural complex outside of the Rome, meant to furnish grain for the city. Bishops were often large landholders and supervised the storage and distribution of grain within their diocese. The so-called Granary of the Cardinals was a three-story, four-bay grain vault constructed in the twelfth century inside the porch of the Temple of Minerva in the Forum Nerva. Weather conditions and war constantly created famines and therefore an abundant supply was a necessary responsibility for the prevailing authority. During the sparsely populated Early Middle Ages, there was more local storage, individual or in small communities. Imperial Lombard and the Carolingian representatives sometimes provided grain storage in their castles. Benedictine monastic houses founded by receiving grants from imperial benefactors accumulated large land holdings. In the beginning they set up small farms no further than a day's journey from the mother house but eventually acquired property much further away. The produce from the agricultural activities was stored in warehouses at the main monastery or other locations and then sold not only locally but also to grain merchants. These centralized farming organizations were called *grancias* ("granges"). Originally the term *grancia* referred to the building where grain was stored but then was extended to the warehouse and surrounding buildings and even to the whole farming operation. An example would be the abbey of Nonantola, located outside of Modena, which was founded in 752 by the monk Anselm on land granted to him by his brother-in-law the Lombard king Aistulf. We will return to Nonantola further on.

Where did Florence store and sell grain in the eleventh to fourteenth centuries? The earliest and most rudimentary system was based on individual landowners who brought their produce into the city, housed it in buildings they owned or rented and then sold the grain in a market. Not until cities became more populated from the second half of the 1200s did the need



Figure 18.5: Model of a Roman boat with a compartment for grain displayed at the excavation site of the Roman port of Vada, located south of Livorno. Photo by the author.

² I first learned about these raised floors for grain during an archeological tour of the Etruscan and then Roman port of Vada on the Tyrrhenian coast just below Livorno. The excavations of the port had uncovered a set of warehouses where you could see the supports for the raised flooring.

for civic storage emerge. Local supplies were not sufficient and cities began to import from southern Italy, Sicily and Africa, much as their Roman ancestors had done. Transport and storage changed little. Ships brought their cargo to ports along the coast, whether it be Naples, Ostia, Pisa, where it was either stored until needed or transferred to pack animals to be carried inland or onto smaller boats which could navigate rivers. In the case of Florence, barges pulled by oxen or mules were dragged up the Arno as far as the river was navigable, which was from the fourteenth century on Lastra a Signa, about 15 kilometers west of Florence. Between there and Florence, the river was filled with mills and *pesciai* (“fish weirs”), which impeded boat travel. The Porto a Signa was on the west bank of the Arno, the so-called left bank. All produce and building materials were unloaded there and then controlled, taxed and carried on wagons into the city, passing through the Porta San Frediano and crossing the Arno by one of the two existing bridges on the southwest side of the city. The *Ponte alla Carraia*, the second oldest Florentine bridge, was first built in wood in 1218–1220 to service the wool production of the Umiliati monks at Ognisanti. In order to get to the market area in the center of the city the carts would have passed from the *Ponte alla Carraia* up the *Via della Vigna Nuova* and then along the *Via Strozzi* or from the *Ponte Santa Trinita* along the *Via Tornabuoni* and then turning into the *via Strozzi*. These roads were narrow and filled with shops and stalls, so it is difficult to imagine how carts would have passed through the confusion. The main road leading to the north gate in the walls was the old Roman *cardo*. It was narrow and difficult to navigate, so between 1322 and 1325 the road to its east, which originally ended near the corner of the Medici Palace, was extended and enlarged to facilitate the transport of grains from the countryside to the market at Orsanmichele.³

In fact, it is difficult to understand why the Florentine market was located in the old Roman forum about six blocks in from the river and not closer to one of the bridges or embankments. Pisa’s first grain market, “Platea Blade” was situated in the 1200s in the area later occupied by the Sapienza or University, one block in from the Arno riverfront. It was moved in the mid-1300s to the *mercato dei porci* (“pork market”), which became the *Piazza del Grano* and then *Piazza Vettovaglie*. This market was also a block from the Arno, thereby facilitating unloading and transport.

Venice’s grain *fondaco* (“warehouse”) was built in 1343–1345 right on the waterfront at the end of the Grand Canal, a block west of the Ducale Palace



Figure 18.6: Detail of the Piazza San Marco and surrounding area, from the first state of the View of Venice (1500). Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota. Jacopo's De Barbari View (Veduta) of Venice, also known as the de' Barbari Map shows the Piazza San Marco and surrounding area, including the Granaries of Terranova located just above the points of the trident.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/View_of_Venice#/media/File:Jacopo_de'_Barbari_-_View_of_Venice_Google_Art_Project_\(cropped\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/View_of_Venice#/media/File:Jacopo_de'_Barbari_-_View_of_Venice_Google_Art_Project_(cropped).jpg). View of Venice, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

³ See Friedman 1988: 205–212 and Paolini n.d.a.



Figure 18.7: Detail of “Il Bacino di San Marco” by Canaletto showing the Granaio di Terranova at center left.

<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/the-bacino-di-san-marco-venice-seen-from-the-giudecca-131958>

Canaletto, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.



Figure 18.8: The fourteenth-century fortified granary of Cuna, south of Siena. The actual storage area is the tall part on the right. Other buildings behind and to the left housed laborers and soldiers who guarded the grain. Used until the early twentieth century, it then fell into disrepair and the roof is now being reinforced. Photo by the author.

(fig. 18.6 and fig. 18.7).⁴ This enormous brick building, known as the Granaio de Terranova (“Granaries of Terranova”) was four stories high and extended from the embankment to the *Piazza San Marco* behind, where markets were held. Three huge entrances led into four sections. In addition to grain it housed various administrative offices: the salt magazine, the Zecca or mint and a wood deposit. These granaries were torn down in the 19th century and replaced by the royal garden.

In Siena, the *Ospedale della Scala* was the richest institution in the city state and had extensive land holdings, which were farmed and produced huge amounts of grain. One of the main storage enters was the *Grancia di Cuna*, situated on the *Via Francigena* in the Sienese countryside and surrounded by many farms (fig. 18.8).⁵ The grain was transported into Siena and stored in appropriate containers in the underpinnings of the hospital. Procurement of grain for Siena was predominately controlled by the hospital. In Naples, the grain market, along with other markets, was located outside the walls and near the port.

From Monastery to Grain Market

A church dedicated to San Michele in Orto (“Saint Michael in the vegetable garden”) seems to have existed in the eighth century. St. Michael was a popular saint in the Lombard period and sparsely populated Florence was more garden than buildings at that point in history. The church and its monastery belonged to

the large Benedictine monastic house of Nonantola, which had holdings in both Emilia/Romagna and Tuscany. Nonantola improved the road leading across the Apennines from Modena to Pistoia and from there would have connected with the pilgrimage route, the *Francigena* connecting Rome and France. From Pistoia another road led to Florence, which was one of the seats of the itinerant Lombard and Carolingian rulers. Along the route, the mother house built various pilgrimage hospices and the small monastery of San Michele in Florence probably catered to pilgrims and perhaps distributed grain to the needy from another Nonantola property outside the city. In the early twelfth century, the church had become a *Popolo* (“Parish”), i.e., a religious and civic jurisdiction and the center of a neighborhood. Its courtyard and the area around the

⁴ On the public granaries of Tera Nova in Venice, see Peris (n.d.)

⁵ Coscarella 1983.

complex were used for judicial activities, which were usually carried on in an open space because meant to be public. By the thirteenth century, Nonantola was in decline and it seems that San Michele's ties with the mother house had deteriorated significantly, because the monks made several unsuccessful attempts to regain control. The church and monastery were in poor condition and in 1239 the emerging communal government had them torn down to make a piazza. From 1249, the area was dedicated to the sale of grain and other cereals.⁶

The main Florentine market, the *Mercato Vecchio* ("Old Market"), was located at the crossing of the old Roman *cardo* ("main north-south oriented road") and *decumanus* ("main east-west oriented road"). It dealt primarily with foodstuffs and inexpensive household items. Moving south along the *cardo* towards the gate in the walls, which led to the *Ponte Vecchio*, the only bridge across the river until 1220, was a small piazza and a second market, the *Mercato Nuovo* ("New Market"), which catered to more expensive products such as silk, gold, furs. Many moneychangers had their *banche* ("changing tables") there. San Michele and its piazza were located halfway between the two markets, one block to the east. Presumably, the grain trading established in the ex-San Michele piazza took place in the open air or under awnings. In 1284, the communal government constructed a portico consisting of brick pillars and a wooden roof and the area was paved in brick. From 1250–1280, the *Capitano del Popolo* had been in charge of food provisioning, but in 1284 a committee called the *Sei della Biada* was constituted.⁷ Its task was to commission merchants to sell all imported grain in the portico and to oversee grain commerce in general. This was a period of huge population expansion and economic growth for the city. As old feudal estates broke up, peasants migrated into cities and worked at crafts, and, particularly, in the production of wool. The population in 1240 was approximately 50,000, but by 1300 it has been estimated at 90,000–100,000.⁸ The first Guelf government not controlled by the old magnate families, the *Prima Popolo*, lasted from 1250 to 1260. The Guelfs then lost to the Ghibellines at the Battle of Montiperti in 1260 but regained control of the city in 1267. The priorate of the guilds was established and the ordinances of justice, which tried to curtail the power and bellicose activities of the old noble families, were promulgated in 1293. We have to see the building of the covered market as a product of the new Guelf government, which was trying to give some kind of order to the city and to promote the welfare of the citizens.

Saints and Grain Sharing a Portico

As an homage to the evicted saint, a representation of St. Michael was painted on one pier and on another there was an image of the Virgin. It is possible that this painting of the Virgin was saved from a wall or pier of the destroyed church and incorporated into the new portico. On June 11, 1289, the feast day of Saint Barnabas, the Florentine Guelfs won an important victory over the Ghibellines at the Battle of Campaldino. In 1290, an altar to honor Saint Barnabas, the new protector of the Guelf faction, was set up inside the market portico. Therefore, the religious

⁶ See Zervas 1996a and 1996b. This is my main source for this study. Zervas' work, which has both an Italian and English text, is a masterful study based on extensive research in the archives. She published all the documents separately. The work makes important contributions to understanding the historical context of the building and its political and religious significance. It is lavishly illustrated with spectacular photographs.

⁷ Zervas 1996a: 18.

⁸ Zervas 1996a: 14.

significance of the site was not eliminated by the encroaching commercial activity and on August 10, 1291, a religious confraternity, the *Compagnia Beata Vergine pura Mad. S. Maria di Sanmichele in Orto detto Laudesi*, was founded to pay homage to the image of the Virgin and to combat heretics.

Fighting heretics, especially Cathars, had become an issue in the mid-thirteenth century. The Dominican friar St. Peter Martyr came to Florence and founded several confraternities meant to stamp out heretics by persuasion or force. In 1245, while preaching on a corner of the Mercato Vecchio, the saint managed to calm a runaway horse and this miracle was commemorated by a large tabernacle on the spot, housing an altar and a painting of the Virgin and Child. Both the painting and tabernacle were remade in Gothic style in 1325–1350. Three confraternities were spinoffs of Peter Martyr's *Società della Fede* ("Society of the Faith"), founded on Ascension Day in 1244. One was *La Società Maggiore di S. Maria*, dedicated to looking after orphans. The confraternity also ran a hospital, called the *Bigallo*, outside of the city. It had its headquarters in the church of San Bartolo al Corso, two blocks from San Michele. In 1352, it moved into a building that belonged to the Macci family on the corner of *Piazza Orsanmichele* and *via Calzaiuoli*.⁹

Therefore, in this neighborhood there was, prior to 1284, a shrine in the old market dedicated to a miracle and the *Bigallo* confraternity, which handled orphans but also ran a pilgrimage hospice outside the city. The new confraternity at Orsanmichele was a *laudesi* organization, similar to one established by St. Peter Martyr at Santa Maria Novella. In 1292 the painting began to perform miracles and the confraternity eventually became the largest in the city, attracting members from all four quarters. The officials set up a stall to sell candles and wax figures near the image. They also had a shop and offices across the street from the corner of the portico that housed the image. The organization became very wealthy and distributed alms to the poor.

A New Building

On June 10, 1304, a fire, set by a member of a local family who was backing the Black faction of the Guelf party, burned down a large part of the city. It destroyed the wooden roof and a good part of the portico, which had to be repaired and a new image of the virgin and child made. We have to imagine a covered loggia with an area around the Virgin's image sectioned off and turned into what was at the time called an oratory. Domenico Lenzi, a member of a family of *biadaoli* ("grain merchants"), wrote a diary which recorded the price of grains sold at the Orsanmichele market from 1320–1335.¹⁰ An elaborate copy of the book, referred to as *il Biadaiole* ("grain merchant") was handwritten on parchment around 1329–1330 and illustrated with colored miniatures by an anonymous artist from the school of Giotto. The first of the two illustrations shown in Fig. 18.9 depicts the market in a time of plenty when merchants and buyers are busy making transactions, overseen by a protective angel. The second shows the market during a period of famine. Armed guards try to control the chaotic assault on the market by hungry citizens. On the right are depicted the painting of the Virgin in its tabernacle and the stall selling

⁹ Earenfight 2009 and Saalman 1969.

¹⁰ Pinto 1978 and Pezzarosso 2005, In the mid-1600s the volume was in the collection of the Florentine Tempi family. In 1839 the Tempi donated it to the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana di Firenze, il Laur. Tempi, 3.

candles. During market days the loggia would have been filled with piles, baskets, barrels and sacks of grain and various cereals and legumes. In the evening and on feast days people would congregate to make offerings and sing praises.

There was another fire in 1331 and then the devastating flood of 1333 damaged most of the area. The portico must have been in terrible condition. In 1336 the commune decided to commission a new building, which would not only provide shelter for the sale of grains and the tabernacle/oratory, but would also include two upper stories, one for grain storage and another for the offices of the *Sei della Biada*. The work was to be organized and overseen by the Silk Guild, whose headquarters were in the nearby *Mercato Nuovo*. The funds were to come from gabelle ("indirect taxes"), in this case the tax on grains. In 1337, there was a ceremony to celebrate the beginning of the project. Most scholarship on Orsanmichele has listed Neri di Fioravante, Benci di Cione, and Francesco Talenti as the architects. Diane Zervas points out that they were all still fairly young in 1336 and she thinks that Andrea Pisano was involved with the first stages of the project.¹¹ He was a member of the silk guild and belonged to the confraternity. In the 1330s, Pisano worked on the Duomo building site. He built the second level of the campanile from 1334,



Figure 18.9: Two pages from the *Specchio umano* or *Il Biadaiolo* by Domenico Lenzi (1328–1330) on which an unknown Italian miniaturist has depicted the market at Orsanmichele. The scene on the left shows the market functioning in prosperous times and the one on the right during a famine. The image on the right includes the oratory housing the miraculous image.

Left: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e8/14th-century_painters_-_Libro_del_Biadaiolo_-_WGA15968.jpg?uselang=fr.

Right: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/98/14th-century_painters_-_Libro_del_Biadaiolo_-_WGA15969.jpg?uselang=fr.

Domenico Lenzi, *Specchio Umano*, co. Temp 3,1340ca, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana. Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Public domain, via Web Gallery of Art, Wikimedia Commons. {PD-US}.

¹¹ Zervas 1996a: 50.

was involved with rebuilding the Ponte Vecchio after the flood and had just finished his bronze doors for the Baptistery in 1336.

What would have been the prototype for the new Orsanmichele? Certainly not a modest wooden or masonry barn. The huge Sienese warehouse at Cuna, built in the 1320s, was a multistory building in brick with small windows.¹² The main market in Florence was a large one-story basilica type shed with stalls inside and outside. The architects did not look to agricultural models but to civic buildings. The early thirteenth century *broletti* (“town halls” or “civic buildings”) of northern Italy have been suggested as models. They were open loggias on the ground floor, used for markets and for legal activities. They had upper stories with windows but these floors were used for civic purposes and not to store grain.

A possible prototype could be a building found in Volterra, located in Tuscany not far from Florence. Volterra had started to provide a *palazzo* (“palatial building”) for its priors as early as 1208. This building, known as the Palazzo dei Priori (“palatial building of the Priors”) was the first *palazzo pubblico* (“public palatial building”) in Tuscany and has been seen as a prototype for Florence’s Palazzo Vecchio, started nearly a hundred years later. The site of the Volterra Palazzo dei Priori was an area behind the cathedral called the *Piazza del Olmo* (“Plaza of the Elm tree”), where the market took place. Just past the Palazzo dei Priori was a building referred to in the fourteenth century as the *Vendita* (“Place where things are sold”).¹³ It was also called the *Loggia del Grano* (“Gallery for Grain”) (fig. 18.10). Archeologists say that traces of the original construction seem to indicate a date in the late 1200s. The ground floor consists of a series of four arched openings creating a portico. Under the portico there is a large basement space where there are still remains of four huge underground grain deposits or silos but there were probably quite a few more. Documents from 1330 and 1338 made provisions for digging holes for silos. The communal grain distribution took place in the portico, which was also used for other commercial activity and by notaries stipulating contracts, sales and wills. The floor above served as an archive for the communal documents and housed the committee controlling the *grascie* or grain administration. In 1472, Florence conquered Volterra and built a fortress on the site of the bishop’s palace. A new episcopal palace was built next to the cathedral and the grain loggia was incorporated into it. Although the façade was given an early sixteenth-century update the building still has the arched openings on the ground floor and two upper stories with a series of windows. The top floor may have been a later addition. The essential elements of the Orsanmichele project are there, the open ground floor portico carrying upper



Figure 18.10: Volterra. The Palazzo of the Priors is on the left and the vaulted grain loggia is on the right. Photo by author.

¹² For more information on the Grancia di Cuna in Siena, see Giorgi 2014. For a reproduction of a drawing of the Grange by Girolamo Macchi (1649–1734), see Martelucchi 2021: https://www.noiframmentidisiena.it/images/martellucci/cuna/12_La_Grancia_di_Cuna_in_un_disegno_di_Gerolamo_Macchi.jpeg

¹³ Furiesi 2003: 72–75.

floors for accommodating offices. However, the grain was stored below ground and not on the upper floor.

The windows of the new Orsanmichele (fig. 18.11) were designed larger than any of those seen on any of the prototypes and on the scale of the huge tracery window at the Bargello (fig. 18.12), which was being made in the 1340s by Neri Fiorovanti, one of the Orsanmichele architects.



Figure 18.11: Orsanmichele has large windows on all sides opening onto the huge spaces of both upper floors. Photo by the author.



Figure 18.12: The Bargello with its one large window in the main council chamber. Photo by the author.



Figure 18.13: The door which leads to the staircase in the north/west pier of the ground floor of Orsanmichele. Note the opening above it, which could have been for protective purposes or for hauling up the grain. Photo by the author.



Figure 18.14: The opening of the grain chute in one of the piers of the ground floor. The grain would have been poured into the chute from the floor above and exited into a container held by a recipient. Photo by the author.

It is true that air circulation was important for avoiding mold attacking the grain but windows that large would allow wind and rain to enter. However, it is clear that the first upper story was destined for grain because there are hollow passages in the two middle north piers for pouring grain down chutes into containers below. In the northwest pier there is a spiral staircase providing access to the upper floors. Above it is an opening which has been interpreted in two ways: a sort of machicolation to defend the opening to the stairs from starving people trying to raid the grain deposit or an opening through which bags of grain could be hauled up to the next floor. The opening seems rather inadequate for the latter. There must have been intended a pulley system outside from one of the windows (fig. 18.13 and fig. 18.14).

There is little information on how and where grain was stored before the new building was designed. References are to warehouses in private buildings, either for individual merchants or rented by the commune. The period in which the new construction was conceived was one of frequent famines, recently serious ones in 1328–1329, and it was essential for the city to provide enough grain for its citizens to prevent uprisings. The huge population of 90,000–100,000 would explain the need to centralize storage and to control distribution on a large scale and eliminate hoarding as much as possible. It does not explain the need for such large windows with intricate tracery. Perhaps it was considered indecorous to design a simple utilitarian building which was on the main road leading from the new cathedral and the recently built Palazzo Vecchio and which housed a miraculous image--a question of civic honor. Following the foundation ceremony in 1337, the ground floor piers of the new building were made and already in 1339 the commune ordered that each guild make a niche in the face of a pier and fill it with a painting or statue. The wool and silk guilds complied immediately with statues of their patron saints, Saint Stephen and Saint John Evangelist. The other guilds took much longer to act.

On July 26, 1343, Gualtieri (Walter VI) of Brienne, called the Duke of Athens, was driven out of Florence. He was a member of the Anjou regime ruling Naples at the time and had been called in as an outside ruler, whose task was to eliminate feuding factions and bring peace to the city. However, the Florentines soon rebelled against his despotic tactics and ousted him on Saint Anne's Day. Anne then became one of the patron saints of the city, an altar was set up in the portico to worship her and a city ordinance established that each year on July 26, her feast day, all of the trade guilds were to bring their identifying banners to Orsanmichele in order to commemorate the day the city banished the tyrant. Thereafter, there were four cults housed under the portico along with the grain: Mary, Michael, Barnabas and Anne. During the plague of 1348, many Florentines left large sums of money to the image and the confraternity became even richer. In 1347, it had commissioned Bernardo Daddi to paint a new version of the miraculous image and in 1349 it devolved much of the plague windfall to a new mosaic encrusted tabernacle commissioned from Andrea Orcagna.

Progress had been slow on the new building, which was funded by the commune and not the confraternity. Matteo Villani recounts, in his additions to his brother Giovanni's chronicle, that after the plague from 1349 to 1352 little work was done on the building.¹⁴ He says the piers were covered with a temporary wood roof. In 1350 the confraternity petitioned the commune to get on with the building and offered to contribute funds towards making the vault that would be over its new tabernacle. From 1360 to 1366, construction was brought up to the level of the parapet

¹⁴ Villani, Matteo 1980: 55 and 93–95 and Zervas 1996b: 30.

under the first-floor windows. In the meantime, however, the commune had decided that the commercial activity and dust from the grain was disturbing the religious functions of the sumptuous new tabernacle housing the miraculous image.

In 1357 a decision was made to move the grain market to another area. Consequently, before the upper floors were built and the building was roofed it was obsolete. In 1380, Carrara marble was finally ordered for the tracery of the upper-floor windows. It is possible that when building activity resumed in 1360 the original project was altered and the large windows were designed then. Neri Fioravanti had just finished vaulting the main upper room at the Bargello and had installed his huge tracery window. He may have decided to incorporate his skills into a more ambitious design for the upper floors (fig. 18.15, fig. 18.16 and fig. 18.17). In fact, the lower arched openings of Orsanmichele, without the later addition of tracery and before the niches had been made and decorated, would have had a more utilitarian aspect. Perhaps the original project had smaller openings more appropriate for grain storage. By the 1360s, Orsanmichele's ambiguous dual role as a grain warehouse and an oratory had been resolved. The grain had been eliminated.



Figure 18.15: Large tracery window on Orsanmichele. Note its similarity to the Bargello window in Figure 18.16, Photo by the author.



Figure 18.16 Council chamber window on the Bargello. Photo by the author.



Figure 18.17: The luminous, vaulted upper floor of Orsanmichele. Note the opening to the grain chute in the lower part of the left pier. Photo by the author.

Grain and Religion

Gods have always been associated with the natural elements: grain with Ceres, Bacchus with wine, Vertumnus with fruit. Grains were the basis of everyday consumption and annual feasts were dedicated to the various agricultural activities such as harvests. As early as the Republican period Roman rulers realized that some parts of the population were too poor to procure enough food. The first *Lex Frumentaria* ("Grain Law") was established in 123 BC by the tribune Gaius Sempronius Gracchus, providing a dole of grain to poor citizens and the practice continued into the late imperial period. The area where the distribution took place was to the east of the Republican temples in the Largo Argentina and between the present *Via delle Botteghe Oscure* e *Corso Vittoria Emanuele*. The Porticus Minucia, founded by Minucius Rufus, was an open space

surrounded by porticoes and it enclosed a temple dedicated to the nymphs, nature deities associated with hills, trees, springs and also grain.¹⁵ After the fire of AD 80 Domitian restored the portico and the temple. Two of the columns of the temple are still standing. Inside were bronze panels inscribed with the names of the citizens entitled to receive the dole, which was handed out once a month from 45 distribution points in the *Porticus Minucia* ("Minucian Portico"), located in the *Campus Martius* ("Field of Mars"). Grain and nymphs shared a space.

Zervas points out that the association of the grain market at Orsanmichele and the cult of the Virgin would not been incongruous. The Eucharist host is Christ in the form of bread. The Virgin nourished Christ with her milk and was sometimes associated with grain.¹⁶ As we have seen, another tabernacle housing a painting of the Virgin overlooked the main market area. Earthly and Heavenly food were inseparable in Mediterranean culture.

Grain and Politics

Zervas also shows how the area around Orsanmichele became a political center during the late 1100s and the 1200s. The residents of the surrounding area were old families but did not have imperial titles like the powerful Guidi and Alberti. On the north side of the piazza were the Abati and the Macci, to the east the Galigai, to the south the Cavalcanti and to the west the Compiobbi. These families lived in enclaves which consisted of tall towers, lower palazzi, service buildings and loggias which clustered around a sort of internal piazza.¹⁷ In the 1100s, the court system would have been primarily ecclesiastical or imperial, but as the artisan and merchant guilds gained power and formed the first Popular government in 1250, more and more civic judges took part in the judicial system. There were three main areas where courts convened: San Martino, Santa Cecilia and San Michele in Orto.¹⁸ Cases were heard primarily in open spaces or under loggias to accommodate the public. Earlier trials had taken place in episcopal palaces and castles but in the thirteenth century these were replaced by church courtyards or steps and private residences. After the church of San Michele was torn down, the Macci and Galigai accommodated judicial hearings in their loggias or courtyards. The Podestà, a foreign judge who was called in to act as a sort of impartial police force, was sometimes housed in a Macci palace. The fledgling guild government did not have a set meeting place and rented space from various families, including the Macci, Galigai, and nearby Cerchi. These families also provided grain storage in their properties and were important grain importers and merchants. In 1298, the Cerchi were not only storing grain for the commune but also housing government meetings in their palaces. A project to extend a street, on which Cerchi palaces were located, was proposed by the communal government so that it would be easier to bring grain into the center of town. The extension would have gone through part of the Badia's monastic property and the monks managed to abort it.¹⁹

¹⁵ See Zevi 1993.

¹⁶ Zervas 1996a: 24–27 and 48.

¹⁷ Ito 2014. In Chapter 2 of this thesis Ito provides a new analysis of the political and economic role of the families in the Orsanmichele neighborhood. In Chapter 3 the procurement of grain, its market value and its distribution is treated in detail.

¹⁸ Zervas 1994a: 131–138.

¹⁹ See Preyer 1985.

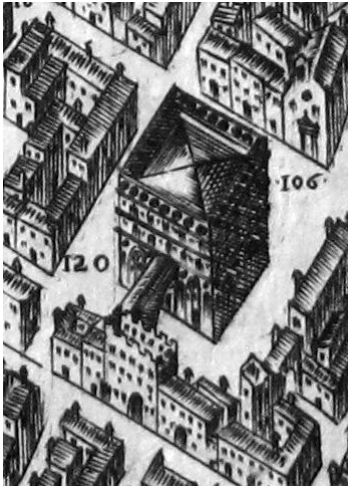


Figure 18.18: Detail from the Bonsignori map of Florence, 1584 depicts Orsanmichele surrounded by its piazza and connected to the Wool Guild house by an elevated passageway added in the mid-sixteenth century.

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/6b/Pianta_del_buonsignori%2C_dettaglio_120_orsanmichele.jpg. I, Sailko, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons



Figure 18.19: The Wool guild headquarters in the foreground and Orsanmichele behind. Photo by author.

In its attempt to free itself from the power of the old, often feuding families, the guild government decided to stop renting and to build its own civic buildings. The first was a palace for the Capitano della Popolo and his retinue of judges, notaries and soldiers. The Podestà represented the older factions with noble origins, while the Capitano was supposed to protect the middle and lower classes. Both held courts and heard similar cases. In 1255, property was bought along the via Proconsolo, where the old Roman and the eleventh-century walls had been replaced in 1172–1175 by walls further to the east. Around 1257, a series of houses and towers were cobbled together to house the Capitano. Later he shared it with the Podestà and the building was enlarged to become what is now known as the Bargello. In 1299, the Palazzo Vecchio was begun to house the priorate government, which had been using Cerchi residences. By 1337, when the new Orsanmichele building was started, the population of Florence was about 100,000 and huge amounts of grain were needed. It is easy to see why a large central storage area was essential and the three-story project was a great civic undertaking of the Popular government. An ambitious concept for an ambitious period before the mid-century disasters. Some of the most powerful grain importers were the Bardi and Peruzzi, who we usually think of as wool merchants and bankers. Their bankruptcies due to unpaid loans to the English and French kings started a financial crash. Then the plagues culminating in the crash of 1348 halved the population. Dust and commercial activity were probably not the only reasons for the 1357 decision to renounce storing grain at Orsanmichele and to move the market. Given the drastic reduction of the “mouths to feed,” the term used by the Florentines to list their family members in their tax declarations, and the financial crisis after the Peruzzi and Bardi bankruptcies the huge, elevated space may not have seemed necessary. The arches of the ground floor portico of Orsanmichele were closed with tracery and the building was slowly finished, with no function for the upper stories. It was not until 1569 that a use was found for them. Grand Duke Cosimo I moved the archive of contracts and wills there, which entailed adding intermediary stories to the high-ceilinged rooms. Now restored to their original, light-filled height, they provide protection for the marble and bronze statues, which have been removed from the exterior niches and replaced by copies.

Already in 1317, the powerful Arte della Lana, the wool guild, had bought Compiobbi properties on the west side of the Orsanmichele piazza and built its guild house there (fig. 18.18

and fig. 18.19). It was the first guild to place an image of its patron St. Stephen on the new building and contribute funds to the confraternity. Over the first decades of the fifteenth century, the outside and inside of the ground story became a showcase for the guilds, where they placed images of their patrons and organized celebrations on the saint's day. The Guelf party was given the most prestigious position for its niche, in which it placed the bronze figure of its patron St. Louis of Toulouse by Donatello. The building lost its commercial role and acquired a political one. Religion and politics had replaced religion and grain. The Guelf Party had its headquarters near the Mercato Nuovo. Around 1434 it commissioned Brunelleschi to design a new meeting room over an addition it had been building.²⁰ He created a tall story with corners defined by pilasters and created five huge round-headed windows—two on the south side and three on the east. Above, he placed large roundels, which probably were to hold the Guelf Party emblems and those of the civic authorities. Placed side by side, the council room and Orsanmichele share several similarities: smooth sandstone masonry, an abundance of tall windows and the circular frames, which at Orsanmichele display the coats-of-arms of the various guilds. Clearly, Brunelleschi looked at Orsanmichele as a civic prototype.

Epilogue

The commission to build a new market behind the Palazzo Vecchio was given to Benci di Cione in 1361 but funds were not found until 1365, the year Talenti was commissioned to close the Orsanmichele arches with tracery. Finished in 1368, the new covered space, or *Magazzino dei Grano* ("Grain Warehouse"), was a small two-bay portico in wood built next to an older building where wool was stored on the ground floor and some grain on the floor above.²¹ The office of the *Ufficiali della Gabella delle Porte* ("Gate-tax Officials"), who supervised the import taxes previously handled at the various gates, was also located behind the new Palazzo Vecchio. A small vegetable and wine market was nearby. Just up the street was the Palazzo del Podestà. In 1338, a house and loggia behind the Palazzo Vecchio, belonging to the Manieri family, had been bought for the Capitano del Popolo. To the north of the Palazzo Vecchio were the new *Mercanzia* ("Merchandise") headquarters—a sort of chamber of commerce—and the salt administration offices. The civic center of the city has shifted and the grain market with it. In addition, the new market building was only one long block from the river and a few blocks from the Ponte alle Grazie, first built in 1237, upriver from the Ponte Vecchio. Now carts could follow the road through the Porta San Frediana along the west bank and cross over the Ponte alle Grazie without going through the center. At first, the market was supervised, like the old market at San Michele, by the silk guild, but in 1373 a municipal grain administration took over.

This rather small portico survived until 1619 when Duke Cosimo II had Giulio Parigi replace it (Fig 18.20). He designed a porticoed market three bays wide and two deep, with grain storage above—a more substantial building but modest compared to Orsanmichele. Another story was added in 1868 and, after being a theater and then a department store, it is now a restaurant (Fig. 18.21).

²⁰ Zervas 1987: 202.

²¹See Paolini n.d.b and Battilotti 2011: 105–106.

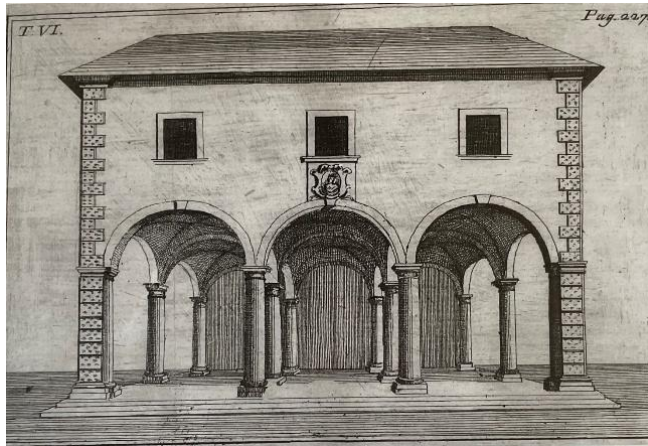


Figure 18.20: A print from the Follini and Rastrelli *Guide to Florence*, 1795, showing the Mercato del Grano, built in 1619 before the upper stories were added in the mid nineteenth century. Photo by author.



Figure 18.21: Loggia del Grano. The photo was taken in 2021, before a restaurant took over the lower loggia. Sailko, CC BY 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>>, via Wikimedia Commons.



Figure 18.22 Two photos of the Granaio dell'Abbondanza: on left, the façade facing the Piazza Cestello and, on right, a corner of the front and the side. Photos by author.

In 1695, Duke Cosimo III commissioned yet another grain warehouse, which did not combine sales and storage. Giovan Battista Foggini produced a huge building for storage alone on the other side of the river, only a few blocks from the Porta San Frediano gate. This was a fairly unpopulated area where some of the medieval wool cloth drying sheds were located. One was torn down to make space for the new building referred to as the *Granaio dell'Abbondanza* ("Granary of Abundance"), intended to stockpile enough grain in times of good harvests for periods of scarcity.²² The grain was stored in huge, round, vaulted brick containers, the old silos system used for long-term storage. A Tuscan *staio* was very approximately 50 pounds. Each of the 122 silos held 1000 *staio* of grain or 50,000 pounds.

²²Paolini n.d.c.

The *Granaio dell'Abbondanza*, too, is an ambiguous building. On the front, facing the piazza del Castello, the facade in stucco resembles a seventeenth-century country villa. The large entrance is flanked by square windows; above are another series of residential style windows, followed by small oval ones in an attic story. The sides and back are in brick and were treated like a seventeenth-century fortress, with few openings and scarped walls (fig.18.21). The administration and the custodian's residence are in a three-story palace, while the fortified storage area behind is much lower and filled with silos, or grain containers.²³

Unlike Orsanmichele, the grain storage area was not given the more elegant treatment. The utilitarian part was hidden behind the institutional part. Clearly, seventeenth-century Florentine sensibilities required that a barn be disguised. Religious and civic buildings were stages for ceremonies, which required a certain decorum and appropriate decoration and symbolism. A utilitarian grain warehouse had no place in the Renaissance and Baroque city center. Exiled to the other side of the Arno, it still had to be camouflaged. The building was used for housing soldiers during the Napoleonic period and in 1848 it was turned into a bakery for the military. In 1865-1871 it was remodeled to adapt to this new function and most of the silos were removed. The remaining silos have been recently restored and doors have cut into the sides to connect them, in order to use the spaces as small rooms for exhibitions.

The Granaio dell'Abbondanza has recently been completely renovated and now houses a bank, technology start-ups, co-working space, restaurants and cocktail bars.²⁴

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²³For a photograph of one of the remaining silos, see https://www.premio-architettura-toscana.it/cache_img/tt.php?src=https://faf-pat-live.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/fafpat/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/14998-06.jpg&w=900&h=810&zc=1&q=100. During a recent remodeling of the building, openings between the silos were added in order to use the space for exhibitions. Originally, there was only a round opening at the top into which the grain was poured.

²⁴ For additional information about the granary and its recent renovation, including a photo gallery, see Florence Architects Foundation n.d.

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Part 7: LITERATURE

CHAPTER 19

Nine Poems

Mary Hanford Bruce

Crunching Pears

The mountains" green mist hovers long and low.
As llamas hum their evening airs,
I breathe in peace and let the other go.

An infant yak considers darkening pools;
mountain mist hovers long and low.

Dogs beside me wave their canine grace
of lolling tongues and wispy shedding hair.
I breathe in peace and let the other go.

Old Heisenberg's theories cannot hold
the cadence of a camel crunching pears,
as mountain mist hovers long and low.

Explanations never fully stretch
to quilt the grass, or clouds or trees, blown bare.
The mountain green mist hovers long and low;
I breathe in peace and let all others go

Anna's Voice

So tremulous, her failing German
Is staticky across the Atlantic.
We are connected only
By a signal
Costly and cumbersome.

Anna may not recognize my voice
says anyway she is too deaf to understand a word.
I know she knows it's too late.
Still she's a sensible woman who hangs up,
Leaving only the phone's lonely buzz.

Down Home

In an ivied antebellum mansion, Mother ate artichokes while a poet fell in love.
There Mama met Maud, servant for thirty-eight years, who sang "Praise Jesus"
as she passed the greens. The owner, a widow in grey moiré,
left twenty-dollar bills in envelopes in the dog's bed, on the back stoop
and in the toilet tank. She filled in the missing dogwood blossoms
on wallpaper imported from Japan with a #5 paintbrush

while the poet confessed, he was an angel in disguise, that next to poetry,
women were his obsession, so he hopped bars with Mother who tried
breaking up a fight between whores on the Mississippi waterfront.
But the angel tossed her by the earring into a bus, and they did a giddyap
towards Nashville but ended at "Sweet Willie's" barbecue.

Eating artichokes in columned splendor, Mama served frog flowers
in finger bowls from the Pink Palace because Charles was coming,
Old South historian, protector of Ivory Flakes, (namely Mother)
Sue, a swank Dolly Parton, pregnant after her uncle's autopsy,
declared Mama "Welcome" and swore there was no other man in her divorce.
Sue's husband, ex-director of documentaries on UFO's barely made conversation,
His auburn strands kept falling into butter. Widow Jones believed Memphis
did not support the arts, that she could paint whole walls if she procured a grant.
"Waaaaaaaaaaaal..."crooned Sue to Mama. "You'll like our Southern male poets.
they're almost passionate." And the angel flew off

while Mama calmly cut out the heart with a pickle fork.

Resurrection

I

Ferns salute this stone path.
flanked by full leaved oaks and birches.
I move cheerfully as those young rabbits
chasing in and out of tall grasses.

Long ago, a dream-- a poplar lined path, my path
from which I'd stray
yet now land back on accidentally.

II

In a shed, young bulls lie beside a shaggy mother and calf.
Despite the calm they sense that grey clouds may collapse
into rain, as all have taken shelter except me.
Soft snorts of alarm and the scent of fresh grass
show me that what I thought was plowed under
still sprouts, fragile and green.
under the massive bovines' holy stares.

III

In a basement bedroom I huddle against drafts from slightly open casement windows
which I'm not strong enough to shut.
I pour over poems on turning seventy
by someone famous and younger,
words about wasted time, cancer, loss and crying rooms,
all of which I have of late experienced.

Yet despite the pain, mortality, the wasted time,
there's nowhere I'd rather be than here in solitude,

moved by rains' clatter on tin
and how those black, white winged, orange headed geese
face the gusts with feathers slicked back.
Grace across them.

IV

When the rain lets up, a bird from under the tin shed
flutters wet wings then soars out
to greet whatever comes....

V

Why weren't we told that age brings not only frailty and death,
but release and a faint green bud
of reinvention and surprising joy?

VI

As I move again though those arching trees
the light of them is a youngster's green.
I want to call it "Light in Trees," "Trees Light," or "Lit Trees,"

The path's so long I'm breathless,
The farm only yards away.
Soon the white Great Pyrenees and the border collie will bark
followed by a terrier's yelp, parrots' squawk, and yaks' low mumble.
Llamas will lift their long lashes and necks in alarm
and geese honk intrusion as I tramp on home.

Through the kitchen window I see a woman washing dishes.
Bordering grasses glimmer like trees.
But it's not light in trees, or through them, but a light
within trees, ferns and grasses,
within dogs, geese, parrots, yaks, llamas--
within the house's crippled sailor, harried poet, and silvered matriarch.
All, all are infused with light and light and light-- heavy, dripping light,

and I am resurrected.

Late Afternoon

meanders towards night, dandelion clocks blowing from her hair.
Wrapped in the mauve scarf of dusk she wards off the chill.
then, hands gloved in clouds, scatters lilac sachet
over the fence, mixes marigolds with sunsets,
before suddenly summoning darkness, infusing us
with an unexpected Silence.

The Long View

Bravo, the white Maremma, sticks his snout
into my face demanding love, intruding on the conversation
about the latest from Robert Wilson, Marina Abramovich,
psychedelic posters and *Einstein on the Beach*.
Around us wind flickers torn prayer flags
strung from the Stupa to a pole
on the stone wall which separates our grass
from those hills where the Serenity Prayer was written.

Bravo's muzzle whispers that I should abandon emails
and my camera,
suggests that centering life on a PhD, publications,
and applause only briefly shields
from stabs of malice or heartbreak,
the smells of roses, death, afterbirth,
or your head trembling on my breast.

As I snuggle Bravo's head, his tail wags
you have squandered your time
chasing virtual butterflies
when all you
really needed was right here.

When Away from You

I try not to remember your leaning on the Formica counter
hunched in pain, face furrowed
as you peel carrots, onions, beets
before turning to grace me in your arms.

When away, I worry that those pills
could con you into climbing a ladder
that collapses and hurls you down.

Best to recall that photo on your dresser,
you strong in middle age
smiling at your handsome son
among lathes and drills.

Better to picture your parents fresh from Italy
bragging how you bore a refrigerator
on your back
to their fifth-floor tenement.

I even conjure your ex-wife, daughters and son
picnicking by the river,
while you speed off in a motorboat.

That vision racks me but offers escape
from a grief that rends me.

my inability to heal you.

Clothespin Mom

Mother was a clothespin holding a gigantic apron.
folding shards of Father's alcoholism,
bourbon bottles, corks, crushed pills,
headache powders, which left unpinned
could destroy us.

Each day she combed corners for flasks, bills,
cigarette stubs,
empty liqueur miniatures
she stashed in her underwear,

threw them in her massive apron,
then clipped her giant pin.
to keep us safe.

I rattled in that apron with other remnants.
gnat corpses behind the stove
rubbed off the cobwebs.
spiders wove about me.

until I was polished to stoniness.

She dumped all out onto a molding heap
of sticks and fallen leaves,
then gave me a torch to light it.

Now I stand in the bonfire's ashes,
salute the waving wind.

Catch the Skipping Stones

Some poets write of passions' pounding sounds
like oompah bands, their trumpets blown, in gloves,
but I prefer the coo of mourning doves,
their soothing tunes to hunts with baying hounds.

Some claim desire dangerous seas wake
a thrill—that risk supplies that edge--a knife
which conquers mundane strife and grief at last.
or ride the wind sheers, stir a stagnant lake.

But I need a love like a metronome
or cattail reeds which catch the skipping stones,
so knowing you are close as any phone,
your steadiness will always calls me home.

Once duped by passion, now that I'm older,
I long for the hollow in your shoulder.

Cervantes' *Quijote* as a Model and Key to Unamuno's *Niebla*

Fred Keller

Three centuries separate the publication of Miguel de Cervantes's *Quijote* (1604 and 1616) and Miguel de Unamuno's *Niebla* (1914). Much has been written about Unamuno's literary rivalry with his famous namesake, as evident in his intertextual dialogue, essays and general obsession with Cervantes's masterpiece, which attests to the power and enduring influence by the latter over Spanish letters and his Basque namesake.¹

A close reading of *Niebla* reveals the presence of numerous Cervantine techniques and ideas.² Readers may find the text more accessible if it is approached with *Quijote* in mind. My purpose in this paper is to identify certain shared characteristics in the distinctive nature and perspectives of these works in terms of plot structure, narrative techniques and character development. Guided by Cervantes's conviction that man is *el hijo de sus obras* ("the son of his deeds"), a theme which permeates these narratives, I propose to begin with a brief review of the two Miguels works and circumstances.

Miguel de Cervantes, born in September 1547 in Alcalá de Henares near Madrid, appears to have been a student prodigy, as referenced by his teacher who included two poems penned by *nuestro caro y amado discípulo Cervantes* ("our dear and beloved student Cervantes") in a book he edited.³ The circumstances which prompted an aspiring poet and writer to turn soldier remain unclear.⁴ Like other sons of poor *hidalgos* ("gentlemen") of his time whose career options were limited to the Church, the sea, or military service, as alluded to in *Quijote* (I, 9), at twenty-one years of age Cervantes was serving the crown as a soldier in Italy. He participated in the epic battle of Lepanto and other engagements, was wounded, captured by pirates on his return voyage to

¹ In October 2000, I presented to an audience of *hispanistas* ("Hispanic scholars") at the European Studies Conference at the University of Nebraska at Omaha a paper entitled "*Singularidad y transcendencia en los gemelos quijotes* ("Singularity and transcendence in the quixotic twins"): Cervantes's *Quijote* as a model and key to Unamuno's *Niebla*." A much-simplified version thereof served as a study guide for my students in a course on 20th-century Spanish peninsular literature at Monmouth College, including *Niebla* (in Spanish) together with a film on the subject. The present iteration is a hybrid product of those efforts and includes references to *Niebla* based on Elena Barcia's *Fog* (2017), a highly readable modern translation of Unamuno's novel (See Unamuno 2017). All text quotations in Spanish have been translated and streamlined to render the material more accessible. The titles of the novels and other narratives are stated in the original Spanish, as are the names of the characters, except Don Quixote's whose guttural Castilian pronunciation is difficult for English speakers and moreover has changed since the days of Cervantes.

² *Niebla* (*Fog*) also translated as (*Mist*, see Unamuno 2014) is arguably Unamuno's most complex intertextual novel, a modernist text, reflective of the thoughts and works of contemporary writers and thinkers, notably Søren Kierkegaard and others, including Sigmund Freud whose works Unamuno had read in the original. The idea of fog as a metaphor of existence may well come from Kierkegaard's novels.

³ Cervantes's teacher, Juan López de Hoyos (1511–1583) included the poems in his work celebrating the life of Elisabeth of Valois, the wife of Philip II of Spain. See Wikipedia n.d.a.

⁴ For a detailed account of Cervantes's life and times, including a picture of the *lápida conmemorativa* ("commemorative plaque") at the Calle Vila de Madrid where Cervantes had studied, see Wikipedia n.d.b.

Spain, and kept in captivity until he was ransomed--events which are reflected in the fictional captive's tale in *Quijote* I, 40/41.

Cervantes's lifelong struggle to make a living and his literary efforts as a poet, novelist and playwright remained unrewarded until 1604 when he published the first part of *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha* (*The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of la Mancha* henceforth referred to as *Quijote*), which brought him instant popularity, if not financial success, as counterfeit copies of the novel were circulating within weeks. The second volume was published in 1615.⁵

When Cervantes died the following year, he was rightfully heralded as Spain's greatest novelist, who wrote the "epitaph on medievalism"⁶ and created the prototype of a modern novel infused with a humanistic outlook, nuanced irony, and replete with characters of diverse opinions, beliefs and perspectives, a polyphonic narrative which has fascinated readers throughout the ages. Cervantes was at the threshold of narrative change; his newly created literary genre represents "*enorme crisol que recoge de la tradicion, tanto culta como popular*" ("an enormous crucible that collects from tradition, both cultured and popular").⁷

Fast forwarding from Cervantes's *Siglo de Oro* ("Golden Age") to the luminaries and the *Zeitgeist* of Spain's *Edad de Plata* ("Silver Age"),⁸ we find his namesake, Miguel de Unamuno, appointing himself as supreme exegete and arbiter of Cervantes' world and works. Born in Bilbao in 1864, Unamuno pursued university studies in Madrid and earned a doctorate at age twenty. Following his return to his Basque *patria chica* ("small homeland") he devoted himself to intensive study of languages and literature and his nascent writing career. In 1891, he obtained the chair of Greek (by competitive examination) at the venerable University of Salamanca, which became his academic home and center of his prolific literary production.

In contrast to Cervantes's humble origins and pursuits, his penurious existence and long-unrewarded literary career, Unamuno's literary efforts and his public concerns for the regeneration of Spain earned him recognition as acknowledged "patriarch" of *la generación del '98* ("the generation of '98").⁹ An intellectual eccentric and *catedrático* ("professor") preoccupied with anguish and immortality and with an apparent desire to eclipse his namesake's stature both as novelist and interpreter of the soul of the nation, he actively cultivated his profile as writer for a national audience. A voracious reader with access to great libraries, Unamuno authored numerous articles, essays, poems, and novels, and maintained a steady dialog with major luminaries of Spanish and European thought whose influences are reflected in his own writings.

⁵ In 1614 an anonymous author writing under the pseudonym Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda, published *Segundo Tomo del Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha* ("Second Volume of the Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote de la Mancha") This false story of the famous knight errant, subsequently referred to as the *Quijote apócrifo* ("the apocryphal Quixote"), is referenced repeatedly in *Quijote* part II and may have hastened Cervantes' publication thereof. The imposter against whom Don Quixote's struggles against in *Quijote* II can be seen as a reference to Avellaneda. For a modern edition of this *Quijote apócrifo*, see Avellaneda 1972.

⁶ Otero 1967: 178.

⁷ Carrascón 2014: 222. My translation.

⁸ Spain's *Edad de Plata* is a parallelism to the Golden Age and refers to a flourishing cultural period (in spite of the disaster of 1898), encompassing roughly the last quarter of the nineteenth and first third of the twentieth century until the civil war in 1936.

⁹ The "Generation of '98" was a group of writers and intellectuals responsible for a renaissance of Spanish letters at the time of the Spanish-American War (1898).

José Ferrater Mora describes Unamuno as

one of those authors who may be called inexhaustible. And this is true or not, or not *only*, because he was interested in a great variety of subjects or because his works are rich in what are usually called “themes”. . . . Besides, the simple truth is that Unamuno was an essayist, a journalist, a playwright, a poet, a thinker and a polemicist—all of which contributes to making our “author” not easily exhaustible.¹⁰

Noting what he calls Unamuno’s “stubbornly negative attitude,” Ferrater Mora adopts a term first applied to Unamuno by the Spanish essayist and philosopher Ortega y Gasset¹¹ and says that Unamuno “doesn’t seem to be serious. It is sheer ‘energumenism,’ a desire to get himself talked about, intellectual histrionics.”¹² Undoubtedly, Cervantes’s *Quijote* remained a major preoccupation at the center of Unamuno’s vast literary production, as evident from his ruminations, essays and critical comments on the subject in his publications, notably his interpretations of Cervantes’s masterpiece in his books: *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* (1914, *The Life of Don Quixote and Sancho*); *Tres novelas ejemplares y un prólogo* (1920, *Three Exemplary Novels and a Prologue*), his own version of Cervantes’ *Novelas ejemplares* (*Exemplary Novels*); and *Niebla* (1914).

A common similarity between Unamuno and Cervantes is the fact that both authors use existing literary traditions to create a new type of novel. Cervantes’s *Quijote* is considered the most intertextual novel of his time with echoes of Seneca, Homer, Virgil in his interspersed stories and tales that combine the learned with the popular to enhance the story of the quixotic pair’s adventures. As Otero notes,

Unamuno once remarked that every man could be judged by his favorite readings, Unamuno’s favorite authors included Dante, Pascal, Rousseau, Sénancour, Leopardi, Kierkegaard and William James, a group characterized by him as “men of desperation,” or malcontents at odds with the world. On the other hand, Cervantes’ preference leans toward Garcilaso, Ariosto, Martorelli, and Boccaccio, men always ready to rely on the “rights of nature” to vindicate the life of the senses, men irrevocably attached to the here and now.¹³

It is no surprise, then, that the thoughts and theories of Unamuno’s favorite authors are reflected in *Niebla*.

In terms of plot development, the first seven chapters of *Quijote* were likely intended as an independent short story and parody of chivalric romances. However, the narrative grew with

¹⁰ Ferrater Mora 1967: 220–221.

¹¹ Ortega y Gasset 1961: I, 461.

¹² Ferrater Mora 1967: 224.

¹³ Otero, 1967: 179.

the addition of Sancho as the knight's squire and inseparable counterpart whose folksy proverbs provide comic relief and contrast to his master's heroics. Generally considered two of the greatest characters in fiction, the quixotic pair's adventures are the core of the book. Through their experiences, they change and develop. Don Quixote evolves from a ludicrous madman into a more complex character with moments of surprising lucidity, as evident in his discourse about arms and letters (*Quijote* I, 38) until he is overcome by doubt at his demise. Sancho grows from being a shrewd villager "with a little sand in his head" (*Quijote* I, 7) to becoming the governor of Batavia and a self-directed fabulist who narrates his fictional encounter with the enchanted Dulcinea, thereby reinforcing his master's belief that reality is fiction and vice versa.

Having been vanquished in battle, Don Quixote returned to his village, only to find that his end came when he least expected it:

. . . a fever seized him, and with his judgement now clear and free from the misty shadows of ignorance with which his ill-starred and continuous reading of those detestable books of chivalry had obscured.

Quijote II, 74

Though Sancho encouraged him to take up the "pastoral calling" and venture into the fields dressed as shepherds and perhaps "find lady Dulcinea behind some hedge disenchanted and pretty as a picture," his master's famous last words: "there are no birds this year in last year's nest" proved that he was truly dying and sane, as Alonso Quixano the Good (*Quijote* II, 74).¹⁴

In the closing chapter of the book, Cervantes, speaking through the fictional Arab historian Cide Hamete Benengeli, states, "I shall be proud and satisfied to have been the first author to enjoy the pleasure of witnessing the full effect of his own writing. For my sole object has been to arouse men's contempt for all fabulous and absurd stories of knight errantry, whose credit this tale of my genuine Don Quixote has already shaken, and which will, without a doubt, soon tumble to the ground. Farewell" (*Quijote* II, 74).¹⁵

In so doing, Cervantes asserts his rightful place as father of a new literary genre, rich in dialogues, adventure stories, a plethora of characters and multiple narrators of various degrees of fidelity that produce what the Spanish call *realidad oscilante* ("oscillating reality") that permeates the narrative. The interplay of voices includes: Cervantes, who introduces the story in the prologue, claiming to be the "stepfather" of the novel; narrators who relate events from the annals of la Mancha; and Cide Hamete Benengeli, the Arabic translator of questionable fidelity. Numerous individual characters relate stories and events as seen from their point of view, state of mind and degree of credulity, and, in the process, create a delightful cacophony of voices. There is the pairing of opposite viewpoints as exemplified in the *baciyelmo* ("helm" or "barber's basin") episode, where, in Don Quixote's mind "under enchantment," the barber's shaving basin appears transformed into Mambrino's golden helmet to be acquired in heroic battle (*Quijote* I, 21); ironic

¹⁴ "The priest ordered the clerk to draw up a certificate that Alonso Quixano the Good, commonly called Don Quixote de la Mancha, had passed out of his present life and died a natural death, which testimonial he required in order to deprive any author other than Cide Hamete Benengeli of all excuses for falsely resuscitating him and writing interminable histories of his deeds." This is clearly a reference to Avellaneda's apocryphal novel.

¹⁵ Cohen's translation (Cervantes 1976: 940).

distancing in the stupendous battle between Don Quixote and the gallant Basque where the action ceases in mid-sentence, the combatants having raised their swords about to smite each other. The narration stops there, its focus shifting to the search for and fortuitous encounter of the lost materials—parchments with scriptures in Arabic no less, which Cide Hamete then offers to translate in order to complete the story (*Quijote* I, 9).

In sum, *the Quijote* is an ingeniously crafted, episodic adventure story and parody of chivalric novels, rich in characters, some more detailed than others, e.g. the village priest and the barber, including episodes of historical significance, such as the captive's story, the historical reality of the battle of Lepanto, and the tragic expulsion of the *moriscos*,¹⁶ as referenced in *Quijote* II, 9.

Literature is a prominent theme throughout both *Quijote* and *Niebla*: In *Quijote* (I. 6) the village barber and priest opine on the merits of books in the book inquisition episode, and Don Quixote and Sancho question the veracity of their adventures as described in Avellaneda's fake *Quijote* as opposed to Cide Hamete's more veritable accounts of their deeds (*Quijote* II, 58), the effect of which heightens the complexity of the plot and the characters' own identities.

In *Niebla* we encounter characters' discussing "book stuff" as well; for example, Victor Goti explained his narrative theory and interspersed tales within his own work, including the farcical story of the scholar of "women in books" whom Augusto consults in his ludicrous attempts to conduct research on the female gender.¹⁷ Augusto's romantic sentiments are derived from novels, as Eugenia discerned, and are purely cerebral, as pointed out by Victor: "In fact, if you push me, I'll tell you that you yourself are nothing but an idea, a fictional character" (*Fog*, 54).

Niebla, Unamuno's third novel (written in 1907 but published in 1914), is an intertextual work of philosophical significance with undeniable narratological similarities to Cervantes' masterpiece. In its form and substance, *Niebla* draws from a wide spectrum of literary and philosophical currents, notably a profound Cervantine influence as evidenced in the tension between realism and fiction. Ardila notes that these two works share many similarities: a quixotic protagonist; interspersed episodes; extensive use of dialogues and monologues; the use of various narrative voices; the interaction between author and protagonist; and dreams as extensions of reality;¹⁸ to which Friedman adds the use of irony in the prologues.¹⁹ Ardila also notes Unamuno's use of various narrators, including the servants Domingo, Liduvina, and Victor Goti (whose role is similar to that of Cide Hamete in *Quijote*), as well as stream of consciousness and interior monologues, which provide Unamuno's *nivola* with the subjectivity of modernist novels.²⁰

Other resemblances include narrative self-awareness and death of the protagonist at the hands of the author. As Weber points out, Unamuno's *nivola* alludes to the protagonist's emergence into conscious existence and the author's attempt to create himself. "*Niebla* would

¹⁶ Spanish Moslems or their descendants who converted to Christianity.

¹⁷ The parody of Antolin's "research methods" and utterance that "a great writer's sentence lacked value until a scholar quoted it and mentioned the title, edition, and page where it appeared" satirizes the critical comments and opinions voiced by Unamuno's own critics and detractors (*Fog*, 125).

¹⁸ Ardila 2010: 349.

¹⁹ Friedman 2006: 302.

²⁰ Ardila 2010: 366.

be the perfect example of the novel in which reality and fiction merge as both character and author create themselves."²¹

Though Unamuno downplayed Cervantes's creative genius and influence on his own work, his *nivola* reflects numerous Cervantine ideas, mixed up with ruminations from other authors he had studied. Don Quixote, whose first act of self-creation was acquiring his knightly title, becomes the fictional model for Augusto Pérez in *Niebla*. Where Cervantes had claimed to be the novel's *padraastro* ("stepfather") in the prologue addressed to the "idle reader" of the book, Unamuno adopted a somewhat similar concept. In *Niebla*, the question of authorship starts with the prologues where an unidentified character introduces the famous Unamuno in discussing the protagonist Augusto Pérez, not unlike Cervantes's narrators who relate Cide Hamete Benengeli's rendered account of Don Quixote's exploits. Readers of *Niebla* may remain unaware that the prologue is actually penned by a character in the book until they read the post-prologue, which is authored by Unamuno. Here, Unamuno complains that his friend Victor Goti, himself a novelist, had, in the prologue, "indiscreetly disclosed some opinions of mine" which were not meant to be shared, admonishing him not to annoy his author or he would let him die or kill him just as he did with Augusto Pérez (*Fog*, post prologue, 11).

Goti purports to write his own novel within *Niebla*—one that looks suspiciously like Unamuno's own work. As character, author and Unamuno's alter ego, Goti expounds on his novelistic technique in relating to Augusto the fictional tragic-comic story of a certain don Eloino Rodriguez, which he intends to interpolate within the narrative:

I am writing the way Cervantes incorporated short tales into the *Quijote*. . . . My novel does not have a plot, the plot will reveal itself. It will create its own plot.

Fog, 89

As noted by Leon Livingstone, "The novel . . . creates itself as the character creates itself. And as the character creates himself, so do author and reader create themselves."²² Augusto, Unamuno's protagonist, who casts doubts on Unamuno's own existence, appears to reflect Don Miguel's judgments in *Quijote* about the illustrious quixotic pair being more real than Cervantes. Just as Augusto's attempts to escape from the mist of his doubtful existence failed, Don Quixote's *quijotada* ("quixotic act or deed") failed to disenchant Dulcinea and resuscitate the world of chivalry and knights-errant.

Clearly, Unamuno owes to Cervantes a considerable part of his inspiration, a debt he was loath to acknowledge. His narrative technique in the *nivola* may well have been inspired by the anecdote of the *El torpe pintor de Ubeda* ("The clumsy painter of Ubeda"), which Cervantes referenced twice (*Quijote* II, 3, 71). Whereas Unamuno had earlier expressed disdain for the little interspersed stories in *Quijote*, particularly the *El curioso impertinente* ("The Curious-Impertinent"),²³ he later adopted the concept. It has been suggested that Cervantes' tale is the basis for one of Unamuno's own *Novelas ejemplares* ("Exemplary novels") entitled *Nada menos*

²¹ Weber 1973: 209

²² Livingstone 1967: 96

²³ Chapter 33 of *Quijote*.

que todo un hombre ("Nothing Less than a Man"). In both narratives, the same desire to find proof of another's love—*una pasión que tenemos que aceptar con fe ciega* ("a passion we have to accept with blind faith"), leads to a tragic end.

Structurally, *Niebla*'s narrative is organized in thirty-three chapters, preceded by a prologue penned by Goti, a post-prologue by Unamuno, as well as an epilog/funeral oration by Orfeo, Augusto's dog, who ruminates about his master and the meaning of life before he dies. Orfeo as a narrator may well have been modeled after the canine Cipción in Cervantes's novela *El coloquio de los perros* ("The Dialog of the Dogs", 1613). As explained by Victor to his friend Augusto, the theory behind the novel he writes is as follows: The plot develops spontaneously, which, moreover, justifies the interpolated stories. The characters create themselves through their actions and words. Descriptions of physical characteristics are minimized: reality is the intimate fight of the character or agonist. (*Fog*, 88–91).

The greater part of *Niebla* consists of dialogues and interior monologues. Augusto's ruminations about love in Chapter 4 are one long interior monologue. The same holds true for Goti's own novel, which can include anything that a writer may imagine. The latter should hide his own presence in the work, leaving his characters to occupy the scene. Moreover, the *nivola* should be a "tragic comedy" and confuse the reader by treating with seriousness the comical incidents and vice versa, another Cervantine idea (*Fog*, 89–91).

Though Unamuno professed his indifference to Cervantes's narrative techniques, his *nivola* closely resembles the structure and form encountered in *Quijote*, such as the free development of the plot, determined by the fortuitous adventures of the quixotic duo in their *andanzas* ("meanderings") through the plains of La Mancha, a narrative technique which is reflected in *Niebla* with Augusto's aimless *paseos* ("meanderings") through town.

Perhaps following the example of the Spanish poet Manuel Machado (1874–1847), who once said that his unusual verse was not a "sonnet" but a "sunnit," Unamuno coined the term *nivola* to distinguish his work from a *novela* ("novel") so that no one would be able to complain that he is violating the rules of that literary form.²⁴

I'm inventing a new genre – I only need to give it a different name—
and it will be subject to whatever rules I like. And include lots of
dialogue.

Fog, 91

Unamuno adopted this concept, as evident in his description of the new *vivíparo* ("viviparous") method of novelistic composition in *A lo que salga* (*Whatever turns out*) where he states that his recent essays have grown spontaneously. The idea may also stem from the way that free-flowing

²⁴ Unamuno uses the neologism "sunnit" in the dialog between the characters Augusto Pérez (protagonist) and Victor Goti (himself a novelist) and Unamuno's alter ego who explains his novelistic technique of the *nivola* to his friend Augusto (*Fog*, 91). In this exchange, Goti claims to have heard the poet Manuel Machado (Antonio's brother) tell how he had read one of his sonnets written in some unusual verse to Eduardo Benot who observed that it was not a sonnet. "No, señor," Machado replied, "it's not a sonnet, it's a *sunnit*." He goes on to explain that this way no one will be able to say that he is violating the rules of the genre. Unamuno was fond of playing with the meaning of words: his fictional character's encounter with Machado (whether real or not) leads to Augusto's introspection about whether his friend Goti might be inventing him and whether his life is a novel or a *nivola* . . . , reality or fiction.

conversation between Don Quixote and Sancho illustrates the creative power of the word in the revelation and self-development of a character in the narrative.

Finally, the general plot outline of *Quijote* appears to be reflected in *Niebla*. Augusto Pérez, the protagonist of *Niebla*, has been described as the spiritual twin of Don Quixote: He is a somnambulist who, lost in the fog of his existence, is oblivious to Eugenia when their paths cross in the street, because, as Unamuno puts it, "the spiritual fog was too thick" (*Fog*, 19). Augusto's actions prior to being mesmerized by Eugenia's eyes are of little consequence, but, like Don Quixote, he was spurred on with an anguished sense of existence. As a hesitant *pretendiente* ("suitor"), Augusto gives in to his absurd infatuation, even though Eugenia is not remotely interested in him and has a fiancé. His attempt to impress her with "a generous and heroic act" (*Fog*, 37) is not unlike Don Quixote's quests in honor of Dulcinea. Augusto creates in his mind a sublimized image of his love interest: "My Eugenia, yes mine. . . . The one I'm creating . . . , Not the flesh-and-blood one who accidentally appeared in front of my building" (*Fog*, 18). This ideal image so obfuscates his mind that he fails to recognize the real Eugenia in the street.

"The plot shows how the protagonist, Augusto Pérez, emerges from the mist of unconsciousness into true existential awareness,"²⁵ his efforts having been likened to a failing experiment in exploring the depth of his character and the freedom, or lack thereof, in his existence, his *voluntad* or *noluntad* ("lack thereof") as Unamuno would say. In his despair, Augusto finds comfort in the quiet submission by Orfeo, his dog, to whom he confides his troubles and dejection. When Eugenia elopes with her lover, she not only dashes Augusto's dreams but also exposes him to ridicule, not unlike Don Quixote's exposure and humiliation before the Dukes (*Quijote* II, 70).

Having been vanquished and having lost his prospects of ever disenchanting Dulcinea, Don Quixote's spirits declined, he took ill and died, having renounced his chivalresque dreams and identity. A similar, though paradoxical, outcome awaits the anguished Augusto, who resolves to commit suicide after reading Eugenia's letter. He dies indeed, though the cause of his demise remains confoundingly ambiguous. Did Augusto succeed in killing himself in an act of desperation, thereby hoping to assert his autonomy in defiance of Unamuno, who told him that he did not exist?

You are neither alive nor dead, because you don't exist. . . .
You exist only as a fictional character. You, poor Augusto, are
nothing but a product of my imagination and of those who read
the fictional adventures and predicaments I've written. You're only
a character in the novel, or nivola, or whatever you want to call it.

Fog, 159

The reader is kept guessing whether Unamuno eliminated Augusto's character as either threatening or threatened. Did Augusto as a fictional being purposefully overeat to an extent that led to cardiac arrest in defiance of his creator's wishes, or was he clinging to life in defying Unamuno's threats to eliminate him?²⁶ Either way, with his death at the end of the novel, Augusto

²⁵ Weber 1973: 209.

²⁶ As Augusto himself argues, "I eat therefore I exist. There's no doubt about that. *Edo; ergo sum!*" (*Fog*, 168)

transcends the boundaries of mortality through literature, a transcendence which ultimately applies in equal measure to Unamuno, both as a character in the *nivola* and as the *nivola*'s creator. "Guided by Kierkegaardian anguish," Ardila says, "Unamuno comes up with a tragic and paradoxical dénouement for Augusto who, although being immortal, dies."²⁷

Cervantes described the demise of Alonso Quixano the Good in a simple way:

At last, Don Quixote's end came. . . . Amidst the compassionate tears of all present he gave up the ghost—that is to say, he died.

Quijote II, 74

Cervantes' declaration about Don Quixote's death, thus putting his character to rest, may have prompted Unamuno to effect the opposite with the philosophical problem posed by Augusto's ambiguous death. Both protagonists expire quietly, the principal mourners being Sancho, witness to his master's heroics and believer in his dreams, and Orfeo, the orphaned dog and Augusto's best friend.

The issue of authorship in *Niebla* invites another similarity. Unamuno inserts himself within the narrative as a character and authoritative figure who asserts his right to decide the fate of Augusto Pérez. Cervantes had done the same, albeit less obviously. In Unamuno's initial discussion about the *nivola* we are led to believe that Victor Goti, either directly or as a character and alter ego of Unamuno, is the true author of *Niebla*, just as Cide Hamete Benengeli claims in *Quijote*:

Idle reader, you can believe without any oath of mine that I would wish this book, the child of my brain, to be the most beautiful, the liveliest and the cleverest imaginable. . . . But I, though in appearance Don Quixote's father, am really his stepfather. . . . This book has no need for any of the things that you say it lacks, for the whole of it is an invective against the books of chivalry. . . .

Quijote I, prologue

The discussion of the *nivola* as an integral part of *Niebla* echoes the literary contemplations in *Quijote* by its author and various characters. This is a reversal of Unamuno's earlier judgement that Cervantes' literary criticism in the immortal novel was at best "misguided and of bad taste." Virtually all characters in *Niebla* talk about "book stuff" in one way or another, a prime example being the dialog between Augusto and his servant Domingo:

Who isn't something out of a book? . . . Unamuno is also book stuff. We all are. And he'll die. Yes, he'll die too, even if he does not want to."

Fog, 170–171

²⁷Ardila 2011: 360 "Unamuno, guiado por la angustia kierkegaardiana, despara un desenlace trágico y paradójico para Augusto, quien, aun siendo inmortal, muere." My translation.

Literature replaces life, as evidenced by the doctor's mutterings concerning Augusto's death by overeating:

To make up for what he was not going to eat in the future? Is that it? . . . Maybe his heart sensed he was going to die. . . . Who knows whether or not he existed, least of all him.? We know the least about our existence. We only exist for others.

Fog, 171

In *Niebla*, Unamuno portrays not only the protagonist's emergence into conscious existence, but also, having inserted himself into the story, the author's attempt to create himself through the novel. As Weber notes, Unamuno "had tried at different times in his life to find within himself a substantial, unchanging, and 'eternal' self"²⁸ and he

never wanted a self that was fiction, but he despaired of getting at a self that was substance. So he finally tried magically to convert the world and all his readers into fiction, an "eternal" fiction in which he could be eternally dreamed.²⁹

Thus, in Unamuno's view, Augusto Pérez's dreams are more real than reality.

Lastly, there is a metafictional echo in the ultimate exchange between creator and creation where Unamuno tells his creation

You exist only as a fictional character. You, poor Augusto, are nothing but a product of my imagination and of those who read the fictional adventures and predicaments I've written.

Fog, 159

To this Augusto, insinuating that Unamuno himself is nothing more than a pretext, later responds

Look, my dear Don Miguel, it's possible that you are a fictional character who doesn't really exist, neither living nor dead. You may be only an excuse to make my story and others like mine known throughout the world.

Fog, 174

This interview scene, according to Blanco-Aguinaga, represents "one more effort [on Unamuno's part] to achieve some sort of immortality by making sure he appears in a realm where

²⁸ Weber 1973: 215.

²⁹ Weber 1973: 216.

he will always be seen by mortals.”³⁰ To confound things further, upon his death, Augusto appears to Unamuno in his dream, to remind him

You may be only an excuse to make my story and others like mine
known to the world. When you’re dead and gone, we [your
creations] may be the ones keeping your soul alive.

Fog, 171

Américo Castro characterized Unamuno as an intellectual eccentric, who is primarily interested in confusing his readers with paradoxes and contradictions. “His is a living dialectic, a sustained dialogue that moves between hope of eternity and the terror of nothingness, midway between lofty poetry and flat reality.”³¹

Although there is a significant divergence in the form and content of the two novels, it has been suggested that, when Unamuno created *Niebla*, he may have modeled it, consciously or unconsciously, after *Quijote*. Critics have generally commented on the Cervantine nature of the interspersed episodes or asserted that *Niebla* may have been imagined precisely as a quixotic work, or as *una recreación en términos modernos de la más grande joya de la literatura española* (“a re-creation in modern terms of the greatest jewel of Spanish literature”).³² Others have pointed out the link Unamuno sought to establish with the works of Cervantes, as evident from the similarities between *Niebla* and Cervantes’ *Novelas ejemplares* (*Exemplary novels*).

Cervantes blurs the boundaries between reality and fiction, as evidenced from how the illusions of Don Quixote affect the world around him. His authorial intent, as stated in the prologue to *Quijote* addressed to the “idle reader,” was to ensure that “reading the story makes the melancholy laugh and the merry laugh louder; that the simpleton is not confused; that the intelligent admire your invention, the serious do not despise it, nor the prudent withhold with praise” (*Quijote*, Prologue, 30). Unamuno, on the other hand, felt obligated to confound his readers in order to “stir their dormant souls.” As Weber observes, in reading Unamuno “You have to confound everything, dream and wakefulness, fiction with reality, the true with the false, confound everything in one fog.”³³ Having no use for Cervantes’s realistic down-to-earthness and lack of concern for an afterlife, Unamuno decided to create literature out of his inner turmoil. Thus, the polar opposition of Cervantes’s and Unamuno’s world views may be summed up as “Cervantes worshiped life; Unamuno was obsessed with death and immortality.”³⁴

Niebla, Unamuno’s third novel, published when he was fifty years old, is emblematic of his persistent existential preoccupation and his concerns with immortality. By inserting himself as a character within the novel, he posits the question of immortality both for himself as author and for his creation. As Starkie notes, “Unamuno finds proof of immortality less in reason than in his passionate longing for immortality, his longing to live and live forever.”³⁵

³⁰ Blanco-Aguinaga 1964: 197 (cited by Weber 1973: 214).

³¹ Castro 1967: 2–3.

³² Ardila 2010: 348, citing King 1967: 219. My translation.

³³ Weber 1973: 212 “*Hay que confundir, confundirlo todo. Confundir el sueño con la vela, la ficción con la realidad, lo verdadero con lo falso; confundirlo todo en una sola niebla.*” My translation.

³⁴ Otero 1967: 179.

³⁵ Starkie 1967: 237.

Unamuno, the self-appointed *excitator hispaniae* ("arouser of Spain") as described by Curtius,³⁶ claimed the following:

My duty is to irritate people. We must sow in men the seeds of doubt, of distrust, of disquiet, and even of despair,³⁷

Otero contrasts him with Cervantes in the following way:

Cervantes worshipped life. Unamuno was obsessed with death. Cervantes was not eager to shuffle off his mortal coil, but was always quick to use his inexhaustible optimism to move the melancholy to laughter and make the cheerful man merrier still; Unamuno, on the other hand, having decided that he should never die, consumed most of his mortal hours dwelling on his immortality, meanwhile injecting his somber pessimism into melancholy and cheerful alike.³⁸

Following Cervantes's precept that *cada uno es hijo de sus obras* ("each one is the child of his works," *Quijote* I, 47), these uniquely Spanish authors and their genius merit their elevated stature, having created enduring works of literature, worthy of admiration and contemplation across the ages. Students of Spanish might find the below-referenced poem helpful in understanding Unamuno as a poet, author and thinker.

If you have read to this end, dear "idle reader," for your contemplation I leave you with this short poem, which is emblematic of Unamuno's work and more neatly and succinctly summarizes his ideas and major preoccupations than my digressions.³⁹

³⁶ See Curtius 1954: 264: "Unamuno is a unique example, . . . the vigilant, inspiring, revulsive, demanding and animating stirrer of a nation. Spain owes him . . . the awakening from her apathy and "abulia". . . . Without Unamuno's blows and stabs, the Spanish spirit would not be what it signifies today for Europe." (*Unamuno será un ejemplo único . . . el vigilante de una nación, un exitador hispaniae, estimulante, revulsivo, exigente y amenazador. España debe agradecerle . . . el despertar de su apatía de su "abulia" . . . sin los martillazos y las cuchilladas de Unamuno el espíritu español no sería lo que hoy significa para Europa.*)

³⁷ See Starkie 1967: 241, where the author quotes this statement by Unamuno without providing a citation.

³⁸ Otero 1967: 179–180.

³⁹ This poem was published posthumously in Unamuno 1953. My translation.

*Leer, leer, leer, vivir
 la vida que otros soñaron.
 Leer, leer, leer, el alma olvida,
 las cosas que pasaron.
 Se quedan las que quedan, las ficciones,
 las flores de la pluma,
 las solas, las humanas creaciones,
 el poso de la espuma.
 Leer, leer, leer, ¿seré lectura
 mañana también yo?
 ¿Seré mi creador, mi criatura,
 seré lo que pasó?*

To read, read, read, to live
 the life that others dreamed of.
 To read, read, read, the soul forgets,
 the things that passed.
 What remains, remains, the fictions,
 the flowers of the pen,
 the only, the human creations,
 the residue of the foam.
 To read, read, read; will I be read
 tomorrow too?
 Will I be my creator, my creature,
 will I be what happened?

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CHAPTER 21

A Tale of Two Epics: Homer's *Odyssey* and the West African *Sunjata*

Thomas J. Sienkewicz

This is a tale of two epics.¹ The first, the *Odyssey*, is an ancient Greek epic which dates back in some form to at least the eighth century B.C. It deals with the ten years of adventure experienced by the warrior Odysseus following the ten-year-long Trojan War, his struggle to return to his home and family on the island of Ithaca and his need to reestablish his authority at home after that twenty-year absence. Even if you have never read the *Odyssey*, you have probably encountered it in a number of ways. You may, for example, have seen *Ulysses*, the 1954 Hollywood film version of the epic starring Kirk Douglas as Odysseus or Ulysses, as he was known to the Romans. Or perhaps you have seen the 1987 *Duck Tales* episode entitled "Homer Sweet Homer" in which Donald Duck's nephews help Odysseus' son Telemachus on the journey he takes in search of news of his father in the first books of the *Odyssey*.

The second epic, the West African *Sunjata*, which probably originated in the thirteenth century A.D., is the tale of a great West African king who, in the thirteenth century, founded an empire called Mali.² *Sunjata* is widely known and appreciated throughout West Africa and is especially tightly bound with politics in the modern nation of Mali. This former French colony, once known as Soudan in French Equatorial Africa, celebrated its independence from French rule in 1960 by renaming itself Mali after the great empire founded by Sunjata many centuries earlier. The country's first president, Modibo Keita, claimed direct descent from the great king, Sunjata Keita. Ironically, when his government was overthrown by a military coup in 1968, Keita tried to escape along the same route Sunjata's antagonist, Soumaoro the blacksmith, used in the thirteenth century to flee from Sunjata. Keita was captured not far from the cave where Soumaoro disappeared after his defeat by Sunjata.³ When I visited Mali in 1987, I was able to visit that cave, known as Kolikoro, which remains a holy place to this day.

But this epic does not just belong to Mali. The *Sunjata* crosses several modern political boundaries, including those of Mali, The Gambia, Senegal and Ivory Coast, where a number of

¹This is a revised version of "A Tale of Two Epics or What Do Ithacas Mean?" a talk presented at a Monmouth College Convocation, in October 1991. The conversational language of the original, addressed to an audience consisting primarily of first-year students who were reading both epics, probably for the first time, in what was then called Freshman Seminar, has been retained. All the notes, however, were added in 2024 for this printed version of the talk.

² The spelling of the king's name varies. The most common spellings are "Sunjata," "Sundiata," and "Son-Jara," but Sunjata is probably the most widely accepted version of his name. The hero's full name is Sundiata Keita but he is also referred to in various sources as Manding Diara ("Lion of Mali"), Sogolon Djata ("Son of Sogolon"), Nare Maghan, Sogo Sogo Simbon Salaba, and Mari-Djata. I have used "Sunjata" as the hero's name in this paper, because that spelling is widely accepted, but for other characters in the epic have generally used the names Niane (1965) used since that is the version of the epic the students were using,

³ For a photograph of the area in which these events took place, see https://bluelatitudesgroup.rezdy.com/403170/koulikoro-historical-and-cultural-day-tour-with-squatted-camel-and-faramissiri-caves?_ga=2.136084467.37358494.1708128000-1258630545.1708128000&useTransparentSessions=1&currency=SEK&lang=sk The sign, written in French, reads in English: Nianankoulou. Here Soumangourou [i.e., Soumaoro] Kante disappeared in 1235.

closely related languages are spoken, including Malinke, Susu and Soninke. All these languages belong to a large ethnolinguistic group called Mande. Those who speak a Mande language are ancient and proud people with a long and well-established sense of history and a living oral literature. Despite their political divisions, the people of West Africa share a mutual heritage and genealogy in which they are able to express distinctly local elements of their culture and maintain, from region to region, differing versions of this heritage.

But what is all this about anyway? Why are Monmouth College Freshmen being asked to read not one but two epics in Freshmen Seminar? After all, an epic is, by nature, long and boring, right? The *Odyssey* runs some 24 books in Greek. Today we would probably call those books chapters. The original Greek version of the *Odyssey* is a poem written in blank or unrhymed verse in a meter called dactylic hexameter. You, of course, are not reading the epic in Greek but in English translation. Few translators of the poem have used this meter, which is not easily adaptable to the rhythms of the English language.⁴ Some English translators have used iambic pentameter, the meter used by Shakespeare, a rhythm which is more natural to English.⁵ Still others translate the poem into English using free verse of varying length.⁶ Yet other translators have preferred to put the epic into English prose.⁷ But whether prose or poem, the typical English translation of the *Odyssey* is about 300 pages long.⁸

The Sunjata can sometimes be just as long, although those who have not yet started to read *Sunjata* will be relieved to know that the version used in class is only about 84 pages long.⁹ But these 84 pages may seem endless to Americans unfamiliar, as most are, with the cultural background of this West African epic.

Part of the problem, I think, is that we just do not understand epics anymore. A long, narrative poem? Who wants to read a poem, especially if it is as long as a book? We simply do not live in an age of epics, unless you count something like the *Star Wars* film series with its many links to the plot of the *Odyssey*.¹⁰ Have you thought about how Luke Skywalker is like Telemachus, Odysseus' son? Or the ways in which Jabba the Hutt is like Polyphemus the Cyclops?

⁴ The most successful hexameter translation of the *Odyssey* in English is probably that of Lattimore 1967, but even he does not attempt to use dactyls in his translation.

⁵ One modern example is Mandelbaum 1990.

⁶ For example, Fitzgerald 1961.

⁷ For example, Rieu 1991 and Shewring 1980.

⁸ The version used by Monmouth College first-year students in Freshman Seminar in 1990 (Shewring 1980) was 296 pages in length.

⁹ This version is Niane 1965. Several other versions of the epic were also available in 1991, when this paper was first presented. Laye 1984 is, like Niane's version, written in prose. The following versions of the epic offer transcriptions of actual performances: Innes 1974 includes performances by Bamba Suso, Banna Kanute and Dembo Kanute; Johnson 1979 is a performance by Magan Sisòkò; and Johnson 1986 one by Fa-Digi Sisòkò. For convenience of reference in this paper, the following shorthand is used for these seven versions: Bamba Suso (Innes 1974), S₁; Banna Kanute (Innes 1974), S₂; Dembo Kanute (Innes 1974), S₃; Niane, S₄; Magan Sisòkò (Johnson 1979), S₅; Fa-Digi Sisòkò (Johnson 1986), S₆; Laye, S₇. References in this paper to S₁, S₂, S₃, S₅, and S₆ are by line number and references to S₄ and S₇ are by page number.

¹⁰ For thematic connections between *Star Wars* and the *Odyssey*, see, for example, Moyers 1988, a conversation between journalist Bill Moyers and the mythologist Joseph Campbell in a PBS series called *Joseph Campbell and the Power of Myth*; Moyers 1991, a book based on this series; and Moyers 1999, a TV movie in which Moyers and George Lucas discuss Campbell's influence on *Star Wars*. At Monmouth College I taught a popular course called "Classical

Beyond the movie theatre, however, we Americans can't seem to sit still long enough for an epic. We are too busy moving on. Too busy changing the channel. As a nation, we are still waiting for some brave person to come along and compose our great national epic. But if we ever do get that epic, I think it will probably center around the settling of the American frontier. Such an epic may immortalize some sharpshooter alone on the prairie wearing a badge and traveling around on his horse making the wild west safe for civilization, perhaps Bat Masterson or the Lone Ranger, or even Monmouth's own native son, Wyatt Earp.

Wyatt Earp, in fact, would, in many ways, make an especially good subject for an epic. His famous shootout at the O.K. Corral is certainly as exciting as Odysseus' lopsided shootout with the suitors and has been the subject of more than fifteen films.¹¹ Earp certainly has the right stuff to become an epic hero. Even the circumstances around his birth have heroic undertones.¹² While born of ordinary parents, like the rest of us, Earp's birth is surrounded by heated historical controversy in Monmouth over the actual location of his birthplace. Was he really born in the house known as the Wyatt Earp Memorial located at 406 South Third here in Monmouth or was he actually born somewhere else within the city limits? While many townspeople believe he was really born at 406 South Third, others are convinced he wasn't. Monmouth College's Dr. Urban, who has spent many hours researching this question in libraries and courthouses both here and in Iowa, has argued that Earp was not born at 406 South Third.¹³

While I don't wish, by any means, to cast aside the importance of historical accuracy or to imply that the debate surrounding the Earp birthplace is insignificant, I suggest that from an epic or poetic point of view the truth does not matter much. What matters is the image. The image of a local boy made good; the image of a local boy whose deeds and reputation bring fame to his hometown.

This is exactly what has happened with both the *Odyssey* and *Sunjata*. In both epics accurate reporting of actual historical events has taken second place to telling a good story, to describing the deeds of Odysseus and of Sunjata in an epic fashion. In this context the word "epic" takes on the meaning "exaggerated," as in the phrase "It was a lie of epic proportions." The *Odyssey* functions in a world of magic and ogres and divine apparitions which most of us dismiss as a fairy tale world, as fiction. It is not surprising that in the nineteenth century many logically minded historians agreed and concluded that there had been no Trojan War, no Trojan horse, no Troy, and certainly no historical Odysseus. These same people were astonished to learn in 1870 that a German archaeologist named Heinrich Schliemann had unearthed the remains of a city on a plain in what is now Turkey, right where Homer said Troy was located.

Mythology and Star Wars" and in 2016 I read a paper entitled "Teaching 'Star Wars' and Classical Mythology" at the Southwest Popular/American Culture Association Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

¹¹ For a lists of Wyatt Earp movies, see

<https://www.imdb.com/list/ls090999607/> and <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls025409183/>.

¹² According to Raglan 1934 and 1936, the lives of many heroes follow a similar pattern, including unusual circumstances surrounding their births. For a summary of Raglan's hero pattern, see Sienkewicz n.d. 1. For the hero pattern applied to Sunjata, see Sienkewicz n.d. 2.

¹³ See, especially, Urban 1980. For additional references to the controversy surrounding Earp's birth, see Urban n.d.

Since we now know that the city of Troy really did exist, maybe there is some historical truth behind the *Odyssey* and its companion epic the *Iliad*.¹⁴ The extent of the reality behind the Homeric epics involves a complicated picture of archaeological and literary record and lies outside the scope of this presentation. My point is that from a poetic point of view, it doesn't matter much whether Odysseus really saw a Cyclops or really killed the suitors the way Homer says he did, any more than it matters from a poetic point of view whether there really was a Troy or a Trojan war or which house in Monmouth saw the birth of Wyatt Earp. What matters is not distinguishing truth from exaggeration. What matters is how the story is told and the effect this story has on the society in which it thrives.

The same is true for *Sunjata*. Here, too, we cannot entirely sort out historical fact from poetic fiction. We know that Sunjata ruled Mali from about 1230 through 1255 because his reign was mentioned in a fourteenth-century Arabic historical encyclopedia entitled *Book of Lessons* by Ibn-Khaldun.¹⁵ But, beyond the mere fact of Sunjata's actual existence, few details of his life are certain. There are simply no reliable contemporary sources and the legend itself has been worked and reworked in West Africa through oral tradition for seven centuries.

Furthermore, like the *Odyssey*, *Sunjata* is filled with what we would call superstitious elements like magic spells, witches and jinns or genies, all part of the native, animistic religious beliefs of West Africa. Both Sogolon, Sunjata's mother, as well as Soumaoro, his antagonist, possess special magical powers linked with the animistic world. Several multiforms spend a significant portion of the epic tracing the animistic powers of Sunjata's mother back to the jinn of Du Kamisa, the Buffalo woman.¹⁶ Using his animistic powers as a blacksmith-magician, Soumaoro fills his palace with enchanted artifacts like death's heads which can come to life.¹⁷ And this king can only be defeated with a counterspell--the spur of a white rooster--which overpowers his animistic powers.¹⁸ We react to such magical elements in *Sunjata* with the same rational skepticism with which we view the Cyclops or Circe the witch in the *Odyssey*.

We are also disoriented by what might be called anachronisms in the epics. Sometimes even the great Homer nods, so to speak, and refers to things which could not have existed at the time in which the epic is set.¹⁹ One example of anachronism in *Sunjata* is the mention of guns and gunpowder at various points in the epic.²⁰

¹⁴ There have been frequent attempts to prove that many of Odysseus' exotic adventures in the *Odyssey* can be traced to real places in the Mediterranean, for example, Brown, 2020; Symeonoglou 1988; and Symeonoglou 1996.

¹⁵ Kitāb al-'Ibar [Arabic: كتاب العبر "Book of Lessons"] in seven books. Ibn-Khaldun mentions Sunjata as Mari-Djata in the 7th book which is a history of the Berbers and of the Muslim Dynasties of North Africa, including Mali. For a discussion of the historical accuracy of Ibn-Khaldun's early history of Mali, see Austen 1996.

¹⁶ S₄: 6–9; S₅: 73–940; S₆: 339–997; S₇: 35–64.

¹⁷ S₇: 175.

¹⁸ Sunjata's sister, Nana Triban, tricks Soumaoro into revealing his secret in S₁: 769–778; S₂: 1658–1661; S₃: 901–904; S₄: 64; S₇: 172.

¹⁹ In the introduction to his translation of the *Odyssey*, Lattimore 1967: 18, for example, lists the following anachronisms in the epic: "Sicilians, Phoenicians in the western seas, Dorians in Crete, consultation of oracles."

²⁰ Guns are used, for example, during Sunjata's circumcision ceremony at S₂: 866–873 and a rifle is used in an unsuccessful attempt to slay Du Kamisa, the Buffalo Woman, at S₅: 553–565 and S₆: 694–697. Firearms, however, probably did not reach the Manding region of West Africa until the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, at the earliest. See Brahm 2020.

More recent historical events are also integrated into *Sunjata*. Versions of the epic sometimes contain references to Musa Molo, a jihad leader and insurrectionist of the late nineteenth-century, or to Fodé Kaba, archenemy of both Molo and the French colonials.²¹ These references provide thematic links between the distant epic past of *Sunjata* and the twentieth-century audience. But they also distort the historical fiber of the epic.

Other anachronisms in *Sunjata* are related to the integration of Islam into the originally animistic epic. Here one can see the traditional religions of West Africa coming to terms with the increasing presence of Islam. Islamic influence apparently appeared in the area within one hundred years of *Sunjata*'s death. One of his successors, Mansa Musa, was certainly Muslim, for in the fourteenth century he made a hadj about which even Europe heard rumor. Mansa is illustrated seated on his throne in the fourteenth-century Catalan Atlas now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.²² Despite the Islamic faith of Musa, it is probable that *Sunjata* himself was not a Muslim and that many people in West Africa retained their animistic beliefs for several centuries. Only in the nineteenth century did Islam begin to make larger inroads in the area, mostly due to population upheavals and traumatic jihads in the 1840s.²³ It can therefore be assumed that integration of Islamic themes into *Sunjata* was a gradual process which strengthened in the nineteenth century.

Sometimes in the epic Islamic themes displace traditional animistic elements. Some genealogies of *Sunjata* show Islamic elements and *Sunjata* not only becomes a Muslim but also a descendant of a servant of the Prophet Muhammad.²⁴ On other occasions Islam is the ally not of *Sunjata* but of his antagonist, Soumaoro, who, in Banna Kanute's version of the epic (*S*₂) consults with the first four tribes of Mali to convert to Islam in his struggle with *Sunjata*.²⁵ Even though this part of West Africa is overwhelmingly Muslim today, tension between animism and Islam remains essentially unresolved in the epic.

We are also confused by the many oral features of these epics, which are meant to be performed, not read. You should not imagine ancient Greeks enjoying the *Odyssey* or West Africans enjoying the *Sunjata* the way we quietly enjoy a good book under the shade of a tree in summertime or in the cozy warmth of our homes in wintertime. Both the *Odyssey* and *Sunjata* are meant to be experienced in public gatherings, at parties and, yes, even at religious convocations. These epic performances have more in common with rap sessions than with formal lectures or concerts.

²¹ In *S*₁: 1222–1243 Bamba Suso sketches the conflict between the Muslim Fode Kaba and animist Musa Molo in The Gambia in the nineteenth century and thus links *Sunjata*'s story with more recent Gambian history.

²² For information about this atlas, see Wikipedia 2024. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catalan_Atlas. Musa's image is included on this website at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catalan_Atlas#/media/File:Catalan_Atlas_BNF_Sheet_6_Mansa_Musa.jpg.

²³ For an overview of Islam's history in West Africa, see Hill 2009.

²⁴ In *S*₄*S*₅*S*₆*S*₇ *Sunjata*'s paternal genealogy traces his ancestors back to Jon Bilali (known in Arabic as Bilal bin Rabah, i.e., Bilal the Slave) who was a servant of Muhammad and the Prophet's second convert to Islam.

²⁵ Banna Kanute's version of Sogolon's long pregnancy is structured around a series of four ominous consultations by Sumaoro with the leaders of the five Marabout clans of the Manding. In each of these consultations, which will continue after *Sunjata*'s birth, the inevitable rise of *Sunjata* is predicted and given further Islamic sanction by association with these clans, called "Manding Moslem" (*Manding Moori*) which were the first by tradition to convert to Islam (Innes 1974: 245).

The singer expects frequent encouragement and approval from the audience. Not just applause but verbal interjections, shouts of approval, and even questions. The special circumstances of the performance of *Sunjata* which I witnessed in Mali in 1987 illustrate the conversational aspect of performance. On this occasion the singer, performing in a West African language called Bambara, stopped his performance periodically so that his song could be translated into French and then into English for his foreign audience. It was not long before the performance became an exchange between singer and translator with the singer working the ancestors of the translator into the song and the translator responding with pleasure whenever his ancestors were mentioned.

The rhapsodes, i.e., the singers, of ancient Greece would sing their epics to audiences large and small and they would expect rewards in return. So, in the *Odyssey* Odysseus rewards a singer with a choice piece of meat at a banquet.²⁶ Similarly, West African griots perform in public and expect rewards for performances well-done. In one of the most memorable scenes in *Sunjata* the griot borrows Soumaoro's balafon, a musical instrument something like a xylophone, and sings such a good praise song in honor of the blacksmith king that Soumaoro gives the balafon to him.²⁷

Performers in both *Odyssey* and *Sunjata* describe people and things repeatedly in the same way. How often in Homer is Athena called "owl-eyed" and the dawn "rosy-fingered"? Odysseus is "the man of wide-ranging spirit," "acquainted with many perils," "patient" and "crafty." *Sunjata* is Na 'Kamma, "the man who had a mission to accomplish" and "the man with two names." Such descriptive phrases, called epithets, can not only take the place of the hero's name, but also define his personality.

Odysseus is also identified by his father's name, "son of Laertes." This is called a patronymic. The use of patronymics was common in ancient Greek society and reflects the patriarchal nature of that society. By contrast, *Sunjata* is not only called Maghan after his father, but also Sogolon Djata after his mother. The use of a matronymic as well as a patronymic for *Sunjata* complements the major role which Sogolon, *Sunjata*'s mother, plays in the epic and demonstrates a matriarchal feature of Manding society.

Epithets are not the only kind of repetition in the *Odyssey*, in *Sunjata*, and in epics in general. Type scenes of welcoming guests, banqueting, arming, departure or arrival in both epics frequently repeat the same language from one passage to the next.²⁸ These standardized phrases or formulae are used to describe actions which occur several times in the plot. Homer's language is so formulaic that some speeches repeat almost word for word. Try repeating yourself like that in an English 110 composition assignment and see how far that gets you.

Furthermore, this formulaic language is repetitious not only within a single performance, but from singer to singer and from generation to generation as performers borrow epithets and formulae from their predecessors and hand them down to their successors. When students try

²⁶ *Odyssey*.8.477–478.

²⁷ *S₇*: 176.

²⁸ For example, at *Odyssey* 1.135–142 and 4.52–59 identical language is used to describe the welcoming of guests with water to wash, a table set with bread, and meat served by a carver. At *S₁*: 218–219; 223–224; 226–228 nearly identical language is used in reference to people and things *Sunjata* needs to take with him into exile.

to do this today with writing assignments, professors frown and call it plagiarism. But in the context of the oral performances of the *Odyssey* and the *Sunjata*, it is called oral tradition.

Despite all this repetition, however, each performance of an oral epic is very different from the next, for epic singers do not usually memorize their songs word for word. Instead, they memorize epithets and formulae and build their song from these smaller components. This process is usually called composition in performance.

Singers of *Sunjata* are themselves aware that they each sing the epic in different ways. Banna Kanute, for example, says that:

You see one griot,
And he gives you an account of it one way,
And you will find that that is the way he heard it;
You see another griot,
And he gives you an account of it in another way
And you will find that what he has heard
has determined his version.

S₂: 8–13

Such variability is less evident in the *Odyssey* because sometime in the sixth century B.C. an official version of the epic was published in Athens and this version became the one everyone used and still uses. English translations may sound different but all are working from the same Greek text in which the *Odyssey* is divided into 24 books and which begins with the travels of Odysseus' son Telemachus, flashes back to the travels of Odysseus himself and ends with the hero's dramatic return to Ithaka and his defeat of the suitors.

But, unlike the *Odyssey*, there is no official version of *Sunjata*.²⁹ Each version is very different in many ways from the next. Some of these differences are due to the way in which the epic was written down. While five of the English versions are based on actual transcriptions, or recordings of live performances, two, including the one being read in Freshman Seminar, are literary reworkings, that is, the epic has been liberally revised and polished by the editor or author.³⁰ I refer to several of these versions of *Sunjata* in this presentation because I am convinced that a fuller understanding of this epic is only possible by reading multiple versions of the epic.

The plot of *Sunjata* contains several recurring thematic parts. In each version there are passages describing the miraculous conception, birth and childhood of the hero; his exile; and his defeat of the Susu king Soumaoro to become ruler of Mali. While these sections may be expanded or contracted, they usually appear in each version. To this narrative core, several subtales are sometimes added, including, at the beginning, stories about the Buffalo woman and about Sunjata's mother. At the end of the epic the defeat of Soumaoro is often followed by another series of battles and events related to the founding of the Empire of Old Mali.³¹

²⁹ In addition to the seven versions of the epic available in English translation when this paper was first read in 1991, Bulman 1997 lists fifty-seven versions of the epic published in various African languages, in French or in English translations.

³⁰ As noted earlier, S₁S₂S₃S₅S₆ are transcriptions of performances while S₄ and S₇ are literary reworkings.

³¹ See, for example, S₂: 2032–2063; S₄: 82–83; and S₇: 218.

Thus, each version of *Sunjata* differs distinctively from the next. Sometimes the epic may vary as the singer creates an epic appropriate to the people in the audience. The singer of the performance I attended in Mali in 1987, for example, adapted his song to the interests of his translator.

Or the epic may vary according to the place where it is performed. In one town in West Africa the tale may be told one way and in a second the tale will be told another way. For example, Bamba Suso's version of *Sunjata* (S₁) was performed at a school in Brikama, a town in The Gambia. This version has a notable emphasis on genealogies, on the aetiologies or origins of family names and on the foundation legends of towns near Brikama—information which is not found in other published versions of the epic. These special features may be due to the fact that the griot was asked to tell the pupils "something of the history of their people" and "to give as full an account as possible."³² Brikama is not mentioned in the other variants but receives particular notice in this performance, in which it is mentioned that Brikama was settled by Sankareng Madibe Konte, *Sunjata*'s maternal grandfather and one of his generals. It is no coincidence that the chief of Brikama at the time of the performance claimed descent from Sankareng.³³

As a result of all this variation, the biographical details mentioned in the various versions of *Sunjata* are a jumble of contradictions and cannot always be accepted as fact.³⁴ Instead, the life of this historical ruler has become a unifying element and cultural linchpin which unites diverse traditions, genealogies, and histories. In a similar way *Odysseus*' story has become part of our cultural heritage. Argus, *Odysseus*' dog, left behind in Ithaka when the hero left for Troy, recognizes the scent of his disguised master after an absence of twenty years, and has become the epitome of a faithful canine.³⁵ Penelope, *Odysseus*' wife, has become a symbol of long-suffering and fidelity. Telemachus is the model son determined to prove himself worthy of his absent father. So, too, *Odysseus* has become the archetype of the man who returns after a long absence, like Bilbo Baggins in Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. *Odysseus* is also the courageous wanderer, the restless soul who lives from one adventure to another, like Don Quixote chasing windmills or Captain Kirk on the Starship Enterprise.

Sometimes history even seems to imitate the *Odyssey*. After he leaves Calypso's island *Odysseus* is caught in a storm and manages to swim to a strange island with the aid of the wreckage of his raft. So, too, the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus is said to have been shipwrecked in 1476 off the southern coast of Portugal following a sea battle. Columbus managed

³² Innes 1974: 37.

³³ Innes 1974: 128–129.

³⁴ *Sunjata*'s paternal genealogy is a good example. While the paternal genealogies of the hero in S₄S₅S₆S₇ have *Sunjata* descend from Bilali, the servant of the prophet Muhammad, the name of Bilali's descendant who settled in Mali is not consistent among these variants. While S₄S₅ agree on the name of this ancestor, they offer different degrees of relationship with Bilali. He is Bilali's son in S₄ but his grandson in S₅. S₅S₆ agree on the generation which immigrated to Mali but disagree on the name of this grandson of Bilali. There is even less uniformity among the variants in the multi-generations between arrival in Mali and *Sunjata*'s father. Such fluidity of genealogical material is not unusual in oral contexts.

³⁵ *Odyssey* 17.290–305.

to swim to land with aid of an oar and eventually married into a good Portuguese family, just as Odysseus is offered the hand of princess Nausicaa before he leaves the island of the Phaeacians.³⁶

The spirit of this adventurous Odysseus is captured in “Ulysses,” a famous poem by the Victorian Poet Laureate Alfred, Lord Tennyson, whose hero refuses to remain quietly at home in Ithaca after killing the suitors.³⁷ Tennyson’s hero laments that

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink Life to the lees.

Odysseus is thus the restless traveler, and it is no coincidence that the word “odyssey” which simply means in Greek “the story of Odysseus” has come in English to suggest a long journey, like the one in *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

And if Odysseus’ odyssey becomes the model for the odyssey of others, so does his home, Ithaca. C. P. Cavafy, a 20th-century modern Greek poet, reflects on the universal aspect of Odysseus’ island home in a poem called “Ithaca”³⁸ which begins with the following advice:

When you start on your journey to Ithaca,
then pray that the road is long,
full of adventure, full of knowledge

Note that in this poem it is not Odysseus who is beginning this journey. It is the reader. It is each of us. Cavafy then advises us not

to hurry the voyage at all.
It is better to let it last for long years;
and even to anchor at the isle when you are old,
rich with all that you have gained on the way,
not expecting that Ithaca will offer you riches.

Cavafy warns us not to be disappointed if we do not find Ithaca to be what we thought it would be.

³⁶ This incident is told by Ferdinand Columbus (also known as Hernando Colon, 1488–1539) in his biography of his father, *Historie del S. D. Fernando Colombo; nelle quali s’ha particolare, & vera relatione della vita, & de fatti dell’Ammiraglio D. Cristoforo Colombo, suo padre: Et dello scoprimento ch’egli fece dell’Indie Occidentali, dette Mondo Nuovo*. See Keen 1992: 12-15 for an English translation of Columbus’s experiences in Portugal. Phillips and Phillips 1992: 95 question the historicity of this story with the comment that “such drama has all the markings of a scene from heroic epic.”

³⁷ For the full poem, see <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45392/ulysses>.

³⁸ Translation from Modern Greek by Rae Devlen. For the full poem, see Devlen 1989: 36.

And if you find her poor,

Cavafy concludes,

Ithaca has not defrauded you.

With the great wisdom you have gained, with so much experience,
you must surely have understood by then what Ithacas mean.

So what do Ithakas mean?

Because the *Odyssey* has become so much a part of our literary heritage in the west, because the *Odyssey* is so important a thread in our cultural fiber, Ithaca no longer belongs to Odysseus alone. Odysseus' island belongs to all of us. It has become a symbol of the quest, of the goal to which everyone is striving.

From this point of view, even Sunjata has his own Ithaka, his own quest, his own home. What is Sunjata's Ithaka? On one level it is Mali itself. It is his homeland from which he, like Odysseus, is absent for a considerable portion of the epic. On another level, Sunjata's Ithaka is his heroic quest, his drive to greatness which he shares with many other characters in the epic, including his antagonist, the blacksmith king Soumaoro, and with his griot and his mother.

This tendency to speak of Sunjata's (or anyone else's) Ithaka illustrates the extent to which ancient Greece in general and the Homeric epics in particular have framed intellectual discussions in Europe and America. So central is this cultural framework that one mark of a well-educated person in our society is familiarity with the literature of Greece and Rome. Anyone lacking such familiarity, anyone who has not read the *Odyssey*, will miss the point of much of what many writers and artists are saying. They will not understand Tennyson's poem or Cavafy's or James Joyce's novel *Ulysses* (1922). They may enjoy Walt Disney's *Duck Tales* version of the *Odyssey* without this background, but they will miss a whole level of fun and amusement.

Consequently, over the years, many people have looked upon the Greeks and especially the Homeric epics as special, as uniquely able to express universal themes which are meaningful cross-culturally. And, as we have just seen, Greek myths like those in the *Odyssey* have come to be used as standard themes and points-of-reference for Western artists, writers and poets. As a result, the survival of Greek mythology in the modern world has often been interpreted as a sign of the universality of Greek mythology, of its unique adaptability to different and changing social and cultural needs.

This view of Greek mythology as both unique and universal among the world's mythologies is brilliantly voiced by George Steiner, a major literary critic of our time. In a study called *Antigones*,³⁹ Steiner proposes that there is an inseparable link between the Greek language and Greek myths, a link by which the syntax of the Greek language and the myths expressed in this syntax reflect basic, universal human experiences and forms of expression. For example, Steiner argues that the myth of Prometheus, the Titan god whose name means "forethought," is connected with the future tense.⁴⁰ Similarly, the first-person singular pronoun, "I," is represented

³⁹ Steiner 1984.

⁴⁰ Steiner 1984: 136–137.

by the figure of the narcissistic Narcissus so engrossed in himself.⁴¹ In Steiner's view this basic bond between Greek mythology and the Greek language creates a collection of myths which incorporates all the diverse modes of human language and experience. In short, for Steiner and many others, the Greeks have said it all and little original material has been left by the Greeks for later generations or other people to develop. From this point of view, Greek mythology is "special" and the Greeks are "different" from the everyone else.

But universality is not unique to the *Odyssey*. It can also be seen in the literature of other cultures and time periods, including *Sunjata*. And, at the end of the twentieth century, we are positioned at an exciting turning point. A point at which we must make some important educational and philosophical decisions.

One route we could take would be to follow the example of our cultural forebears in Europe and America, declare the primacy of Western culture based upon Greco-Roman civilization and continue to belittle the cultures of the rest of the world. We can stick our heads in the sand like ostriches and ignore the points of view of Africa and Asia and South America.

Or we could abandon our own cultural heritage, which has in recent times been labeled as sexist, racist and worse, and restrict ourselves to points of view which are politically correct, non-controversial, and not offensive to any particular interest group. We could stop reading the *Odyssey* because it is too "old," too difficult, too European, and too male. After all, one might argue, why should we celebrate Odysseus who is unfaithful to Penelope throughout most of the *Odyssey* while Penelope is expected to remain absolutely faithful? Isn't this a double-standard? Isn't this sexism?

It certainly is sexism, but does this mean we should no longer read the *Odyssey*? Certainly not. Abandoning the *Odyssey* would mean unraveling the very fabric of our culture. We can only understand ourselves better by looking back and learning from the mistakes of the past. Abandoning the *Odyssey* would mean losing our cultural anchor, our starting point for understanding the world around us. Abandoning the *Odyssey* would mean losing our Ithakas.

What we really need is a convergence of cultural perspectives, a decision not only to learn about ourselves but also to use the knowledge we gain to learn about others. As Americans we can't read only American history and expect to understand the rest of the world. Nor can we only read the *Odyssey* and expect to have all the resources we need to fully understand the human experience.

The *Odyssey* is not an exception, but a model. We should not read the *Odyssey* in isolation but should use our familiarity with the *Odyssey* to assist us in understanding the literature of other cultures, like those of West Africa. This is why the Alternative Cultures component of the Human Societies requirement in the Monmouth College General Education Program is so important. Studying a different culture confronts us with different mind frames and world views and encourages us to better understand our own mind frame and world view.⁴²

On the one hand, *Sunjata* is like the *Odyssey* in that it, too, deals with universal themes of life about the hero, and his relationship with his family and with society. On the other hand,

⁴¹ Steiner 1984: 137.

⁴² In the academic year 1991–1992, Monmouth College students were required for graduation to take one course dealing with an alternative culture. For a list of courses which fulfilled this requirement see Monmouth College 1990:17.

the *Odyssey* is like *Sunjata*. Its culture is not totally a universal culture. That is, despite the popular belief that the Greeks are special, that they express ideas which can be understood apart from cultural and historical contexts, epics like the *Odyssey* and *Sunjata* must be interpreted in the context of their own cultural environments. On this point Steiner is wrong. The Greeks have not said it all.

The view that the Greeks are special has recently been challenged by a Belgian cultural historian named Marcel Detienne. In the first chapter of his book called *Dionysus Slain*⁴³ Detienne affirms that “The Greeks Are Indeed Like the Others” that is, like everyone else, the Greeks expressed themselves in ways which are culturally specific. Detienne rejects the idea that the “original” Greek version of a myth is the purest, the most universal. Instead, Detienne prefers to read all myths, including Greek myths, within their ethnographic contexts. In particular, Detienne asserts, it is the variants, the different versions of the epic, which show the essential fluidity of myth. Such variation occurs as myths are reworked and adapted to changing times and different locales. Epic and society evolve together. And this symbiotic relationship between epic and society allows traditional tales to adjust to changing social and political needs.

On this point the Greeks are no different from the others.

The *Odyssey* reflects the society in which it flourished. Even the Homeric epics reveal a tension between local diversity and cultural unity. One of my graduate school professors, Gregory Nagy, now at Harvard University, has argued, for example, that in the *Iliad* a more localized myth in which Achilles is at odds with Odysseus was eventually replaced by a quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon which appealed to a broader cultural base.⁴⁴ The more pan-cultural the myth strove to be, the less local it became.

This tension between local variants and cultural cohesion can be seen not only in the Greek experience but also in medieval Christian Europe and in the Islamic world. In all three contexts there is a diversity of local multiforms overspread and controlled by a dogmatic religious and cultural center. In the ancient Greek world cities like Delphi and Athens often served as processing centers for pan-cultural versions of local myths. So, too, was medieval Rome the religious and cultural unifier of a disparate and diverse Christian Europe. Indeed, Rome has long maintained psychological authority over culture and has often used a combination of imprimaturs and an Index of Forbidden Books to determine the official versions of the lives of the saints and other religious texts. In a similar way, Mecca has functioned for the Islamic world not only as a religious center, but also as a source of many pan-cultural myths, such as those which bind *Sunjata* to the life of the prophet Mohammed.

This tension between myth and society is the social glue of epic. Social concerns often determine the plot of the poem. One theme which both *Odyssey* and *Sunjata* share, for example, is the theme of guest-friendship, or *xenia*, as it was known to the Greeks.

The customs which determine social interaction between guest and host are of major concern as Odysseus confronts the uncivilized Cyclops in Book 9 of the *Odyssey*. Polyphemus spurns *xenia*. He refuses to treat his guests hospitably and instead eats them for dinner. Penelope's suitors are not good guests either. They stay in Odysseus' home beyond their welcome and consume his wealth. Their deaths are justified by their failure to respect *xenia*.

⁴³ Detienne 1979.

⁴⁴ Nagy 1998.

In *Sunjata* the theme of hospitality emerges especially in the period of the hero's exile when he visits a king named Mansa Konkon and barely escapes a deceitful death at his hands.⁴⁵

The relationship between the two epics and their societies is also expressed in the person of the singer. The West African singer or *jeli* is known more commonly in English as a "griot." While the etymology of "griot" is mysterious, the word possibly originated in the Portuguese word *cria* "to educate, to instruct" and comes into English from the French and has been used extensively since the 1960s to refer to West African singers.

Traditionally, the *jeli* was a member of a hereditary caste of singers who were linked family by family with specific tribal rulers. Thus, a singer from the Kouyate family has always been the *jeli* of the ruling Keitas of Mali and says that

There is a special relationship
Between the members of the Keita family and the
members of the Kuyate family.
Even today, if a member of the Kuyate family
deceives a member of the Keita family,
Things will go badly for him.

S₁: 470–475

The traditional *jeli* also served as the chief's spokesman or herald and advisor. Bala Fasséké, *Sunjata's* griot, frequently functions in the epic as the hero's spokesman and agent.⁴⁶

A similar relationship existed between Greek rulers and Greek singers. King Agamemnon left a singer behind as an advisor to his wife, Klytemnestra, when he sailed for Troy⁴⁷ and Odysseus makes a special point of sparing his unfaithful singer, Phemios, when the suitors are killed.⁴⁸

These singers are not merely entertainers. They are also historians. Singers recall and preserve the great deeds of the past. The adventures of Odysseus at Troy were already part of the repertoire of singers in his lifetime, for the Phaeacian singer Demodokos knew them and sang, at Odysseus' request, about the story of the Trojan horse.⁴⁹

In return for these services, singers look to their patrons for financial support. Thus, Odysseus maintains the singer Phemios in Ithaka and a destitute *Sunjata* struggles to satisfy the needs of his demanding griots, who, the griot Bamba Suso tells us,

. . . went and begged from him.
When they went and begged from him,
He did not have anything.
He went and got honey in the bush,

⁴⁵ S₄: 28–38 and S₇: 150–164.

⁴⁶ E.g., at S₄: 58–59 and S₇: 194–196 the griot rouses the troops on behalf of *Sunjata*.

⁴⁷ *Odyssey* 3.265–272.

⁴⁸ *Odyssey* 22.330–377.

⁴⁹ *Odyssey* 8.469–520.

And brought it back for the griots.
 Whatever he gave them, they did not scorn it.

S₁: 142–147

The trauma of colonial rule has brought about many social and economic changes in modern West Africa. These changes have included a decrease in the power and wealth of traditional chiefs and a parallel decrease in the modern griot's duties and social status. Traditional occasions for performance of the griot's song have become more and more rare and, without wealthy chiefs to support them, the singers have found it difficult to retain their position in society. The following lament reveals the griot Banna Kanute's frustration with the current situation:

In Sunjata's day a griot did not have to fetch water,
 To say nothing of farming and collecting firewood.
 Father World has changed, changed.

S₂: 320–322

The importance of the griot also emerges from the epic in other ways. In one song, the only part of his inheritance that Sunjata wants are his father's griots and the hero frequently develops a close bond with his singer.⁵⁰ Sometimes Sunjata even serves his unsuspecting singer flesh from his own thigh when both are starving on the savannah.⁵¹ Time and again Sunjata is unable to accomplish his tasks without the assistance of the singer. Sometimes the griot's song provides the hero with direct support, when, for example, Sunjata tries to walk for the first time⁵² or when the hero prepares for his final encounter with Soumaoro.⁵³ The *jeli* can also use his song to transform the hero's uninspiring or disreputable actions into praise. When Sunjata runs away in battle, the griots are able to save the hero's reputation by making the incident part of Sunjata's praise name.⁵⁴

Not only is the role of singers in *Odyssey* and *Sunjata* worth noting. So is the role of women. On the one hand, in both epics male domination or subordination of the female is prominent. The *Odyssey's* double sexual standard for males and females is paralleled in *Sunjata* by polygyny, and especially by the bitter rivalry between Sunjata's mother and another wife of his father.⁵⁵

On the other hand, maternal ties are particularly important in West African culture and are emphasized in the epic by Sunjata's ties with his mother, Sogolon. The hero's special powers are derived from his mother's identification with Du Kamisa. Both women are deformed outcasts from society who possess great occult power,⁵⁶ Furthermore, it is an insult to his mother that

⁵⁰ S₁: 125–127.

⁵¹ S₁: 441–451.

⁵² S₄: 20–21; S₇: 132.

⁵³ S₂: 1874–1878.

⁵⁴ S₁: 670–692.

⁵⁵ This rivalry is described widely in the early part of the epic; for example, see S₅: 980–1034.

⁵⁶ In S₄S₇ Du Kamisa is merely a shriveled old woman, but in S₅S₆ she has been physically mutilated by the King of Du who has cut off her breasts. Similarly, Sogolon is described as a hunchback in S₄S₇ and in S₅S₆ she is covered with

persuades the young and apparently crippled hero to stand up and walk for the first time at the age of seven.⁵⁷ Later in the epic, the exiled hero cannot return home and achieve victory over his antagonist Soumaoro until his sickly mother has died.⁵⁸

Sometimes her death specifically becomes an occult sign of Soumaoro's impending death at the hands of Sunjata.⁵⁹

Ties between brother and sister are also strong in West African society and are reflected in the close relationship between Sunjata and his sister Nana Triban. Like her mother Nana Triban is another necessary adjunct to Sunjata's heroic power. Every published version of the epic includes a scene in which the hero's sister seduces his antagonist and learns the secret of Soumaoro's power.⁶⁰ Without this information, Sunjata would never have defeated Soumaoro.

Sunjata's bonds with his griot, his mother, and his sister illustrate the close relationship between the West African hero and other members of his society. The hero of the West African epic succeeds only by means of a collective effort while the hero of the *Odyssey* usually faces his adventures alone. Sunjata acts in concert with others, while Odysseus acts as an individual.

So, in his confrontation with the Cyclops Odysseus pulls all the punches himself.⁶¹ It is Odysseus who makes Polyphemus drunk. It is Odysseus who figures out how to blind the Cyclops and how to escape from the cave by hiding under the sheep. In this adventure Odysseus' men are no more than helpmates for the hero or fodder for the Cyclops and, in the end, it is only Odysseus, not his men, who returns home safely to Ithaka.

By contrast, in the true spirit of African solidarity, Sunjata shares his epic and can even change roles with other characters in the epic. The most striking example of this interchangeability occurs in "the balafon scene." In this episode the first balafon is discovered and played. In one version it is Soumaoro who obtains the instrument and plays it.⁶² But in another it is Sunjata who performs the same deed.⁶³ In several versions a griot comes upon the instrument, plays it without permission, and is hamstrung by the owner, sometimes Soumaoro⁶⁴ and

warts. One of her epithets is "Sugulun-of-the-Warts" (S₅: 838, 845, 865, 866, 868, 877; S₆:880). These deformities lead to the exclusion of both women from their communities.

⁵⁷ In S₂S₄S₅S₆S₇ Sunjata's inability to walk leads to other women insulting his mother because she has no healthy son to collect baobab leaves for her culinary use. This goads Sunjata to learn to walk.

⁵⁸ For example, at S₁: 393–399 Sunjata stands by his sick mother's bed and says

"If I am to be king of Manding,
Before dawn breaks tomorrow, may you be dead.
If I am not to be king of Manding,
May you remain ill,
Because I will not leave you here in illness."

The next morning Sogolon was dead.

⁵⁹ At S₃: 450–478 Sunjata goes into the bush and prays that, if he is destined to defeat Soumaoro, all the leaves fall off the tree in front of him. When the tree becomes bare, he then prays for the return of the foliage as confirmation of the prophecy. When the tree's leaves are restored, he then asks for his mother's death as further confirmation of his destiny. When he returns from the bush, his sister meets him with news of their mother's death.

⁶⁰ For example, S₁: 693–830.

⁶¹ *Odyssey* 9.82–566.

⁶² S₃: 118–203.

⁶³ S₂: 1415–1525.

⁶⁴ S₃: 283–325; S₅: 2591–2683; S₆: 1798–1868.

sometimes Sunjata,⁶⁵ in order to keep the griot from leaving and to make him the balafon owner's personal griot. In this way, Sunjata shares his epic with his antagonist and the lasting glory of the song is enjoyed by both the hero and his antagonist.

In the *Odyssey*, however, Odysseus' victory over the suitors is a personal victory, not a communal one. Odysseus himself plans the attack on the suitors and kills them off with the help of only his son and a few faithful slaves. Neither the suitors nor their families share in his success and his glory.

By contrast, Sunjata even shares the supreme moment of victory with others, at the firing of the special arrow used to defeat Soumaoro. In one version of the epic, it is Sunjata himself who makes the shot.⁶⁶ In another it is the hero's maternal grandfather, Sankareng.⁶⁷ In yet a third the ancestor of the griot's host is said to have been the successful marksman.⁶⁸

So who shoots Soumaoro? The only real answer from a West African perspective is that everyone has. Soumaoro is shot not only by the individual who shoots the arrow, but by everyone who participates in the event, in the performative present as well as in the epic past. That is, the poem is not only the tale about its characters; it is also about its audience, as illustrated by the griot's use of direct address, which often integrates members of the audience directly into the epic. While direct references to individuals present in the audience are entirely absent from the rhapsodes' songs in the *Odyssey*, they are not at all uncommon in the West African epic. Frequently, this direct address consists of explicit advice to members of the audience, such as the following plea made by a singer to his host:

Seni Daabo, do something, sir;
Life consists of doing something,
Not of doing everything,
For there is no end to that, and failure wins no support.
S₃: 67–70

With these words a griot named Dembo Kanute encourages his host, Seni Daabo, to imitate the hero Sunjata and to perform deeds worth remembering and being recorded in song. If you wish to be remembered, do something, says the griot. His listener is being challenged to become a hero. And so is everyone else. This is perhaps the most significant way in which *Sunjata* differs from the *Odyssey*. In West African epic all members of society, living and dead, are considered part of the epic and share in the heroic action while listeners and readers of the *Odyssey* both in ancient Greece and today realize that they cannot be like Odysseus, that he is different, that the Greek hero Odysseus is part of a heroic society in the distant past, that there could never be any more heroes like Odysseus.

In *Sunjata*, on the other hand, this is not the case. Sunjata's actions do not set him apart from his contemporary society and from the modern West African world. He is not a hero who is

⁶⁵ S₂: 1548–1556.

⁶⁶ S₄: 65; S₇: 294.

⁶⁷ S₁: 835–836.

⁶⁸ S₃: 956–980. The marksman here is Sanatara Fofana Darbo, the ancestor of Seni Darbo, in whose honor this version was performed and who recorded this version of the epic.

different and solitary. He is a West African hero because he is an active member of his society and because other members of his society help him. Not only is Sunjata, as the victor over Soumaoro, the savior of his society, but his victory also becomes the means to the heroic apotheosis of his whole society. He is a communal hero and his story becomes a national epic and the source of unity out of diversity. The West African emphasis is not on the isolated individual as a hero but on the heroic individual as a member of a community. Sunjata's success is their success, too. Unlike the Greeks, for whom there was an unbridgeable gap between the present and the Heroic Age, West Africans have a sense of communality with their great past and its hero who becomes a hero of the present. In the process, Sunjata has given us a fuller picture of what Ithakas can mean.

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