

PRIMARY SOURCE



The Undergraduate Journal of
History at Indiana University

Volume V: Issue II
Spring 2015

STAFF:

VIANNA N. NEWMAN, Editor-in-Chief

MADELINE MCDONOUGH, Director of Communications and Editor

ERIN LEONHARD, Web Development & Technical Support

HANNAH ANDERSON, Editor

CHRISTOPHER BROWN, Editor

ERICA EWEN, Editor

CAROLYN HAYTHORN, Editor

ETHAN HELFRICH, Editor

ASA KERR, Editor

CLAIRE REPSHOLDT, Editor

MISSION:

Primary Source, an undergraduate journal of history published by students of Indiana University, seeks to bring undergraduates into the historical conversation, strengthen their voices within all historical fields, and promote the understanding of a variety of historical viewpoints through the publication of quality undergraduate historical interpretation.

Publishing original works is an important endeavor at the university level, but it can be especially difficult for undergraduate students. Therefore, *Primary Source* seeks to offer undergraduates exploring all branches of history the opportunity to show their ideas to the world.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The editors of *Primary Source* publish a new edition every semester with cutting-edge undergraduate historical scholarship. New submissions are due by the beginning of October for the fall edition and by the middle of February for the spring publication. Submissions should be sent as attachments to primary@indiana.edu. Please direct questions to the same address. Finally, we ask that undergraduates interested in submitting a piece of their original work format it in the following manner:

Essays should be no longer than twenty (20) pages, excluding the title page and bibliography. The title page should list the title of the work as well as the author's name, university, and class (i.e. freshman, etc.). An abstract of 100 words maximum should also be on the title page. The essay should appear in 12-point Times New Roman font and be double-spaced. It should also have one-inch margins, with pagination centered at the bottom of the page. Finally, authors should format citations according to Chicago style.

CONTENTS

Historical Perspective and the *Song of Roland*.....1

Kyle Glenn Cunningham

The Pennsylvania State University

The Song of Roland is one of the magna opera of medieval French literature. Roland's legendary battle at Roncevaux in the Pyrenees Mountains and his ultimate sacrifice against the forces of Muslim Spain become the epitome of martial chivalry and noble conduct. However, the Roland of history and the Roland of myth are separated by 300 years of societal change. As such, an analysis of the Roland in respect to the time period of its composition is necessary in order to understand the ideals and beliefs of those who would have heard the famous poem.

Teaching New Harmony:

Education, Religion and Human Nature at New Harmony, Indiana, 1824-1827.....8

James Rick

Butler University

Education, an issue wrapped in concerns about human nature, played a significant part in the New Harmony utopian community. In 1824, British philanthropist and social theorist Robert Owen (1771-1858) purchased a settlement in southwestern Indiana and was joined there by educational reformer William Maclure (1763-1840). Historians have noted the centrality of education to the experiment but this paper will illustrate—through historiographical analysis of the accounts and publications of the community—how its ideas were divergent from the contemporary discourse, founded as they were upon subversive views about human nature and religion.

Pushkin and the Caucasus:

Literary Images of Russia's Eastern Frontier.....18

Ethan Helfrich

Indiana University–Bloomington

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Russian Empire saw its military become entangled in a conflict in the Transcaucasus that would last for several decades, during which artists, writers, poets, and those at odds with Russian high society flocked to this region in search of personal freedom. Perhaps the most notable individual who fled to the Caucasus was Russia's national poet, Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin. During his time in the Caucasus he wrote a famous poem entitled "The Prisoner of the Caucasus," which caused a sensation among the Russian nobility and helped contribute to the image of the Caucasus and the noble-savage Circassian mountaineer. Pushkin's writing on the Caucasus and its inhabitants helped shape the popular Russian image of Russia's southern frontier and its people for a century to come.

"I don't think I'm bad, although I do things she would probably frown upon":

Tensions between a Mother and Daughter in the Transformative Society of the 1960s....25

Rachel Christine Fulk

Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

While the feminist movement of the 1960s resulted in the United States moving towards a more progressive view of women, female nurses were frequently forced to deal with the stereotypes of "traditional" womanhood, even though the Army was becoming increasingly progressive, especially regarding career, marriage, and abortion. Karren Mundell, a nurse in the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War, reveals the tightrope that nurses were forced to walk between tradition and progressiveness. Her correspondence with her mother demonstrates how the women of the 1960s differed from the women of previous generations and reveals the Army's gradual reevaluation of ingrained gender beliefs.

Augustine of Hippo's Doctrine of Scripture:

Christian Exegesis in Late Antiquity.....33

Robert A. Ziegler

Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

Apprehensive of the apparent presence of contradictions within the Christian Scriptures, Augustine of Hippo developed a unique approach to early Christian interpretive challenges by arguing that apparent difficulties could be demonstrated to be actually supportive of "orthodox" Christian teachings. Augustine's dynamic approaches to canonical texts provide readers with a clear insight into how early Christian leaders creatively appropriated Christian texts to promote unity among the expanding and often fractious Christian communities of the Late Roman Empire.

Historical Perspective and the Song of Roland

KYLE GLENN CUNNINGHAM

When reading the *Song of Roland* (French *Chanson de Roland*), it is apparent early on that Roland's death in the defense of his uncle Charlemagne will become the stuff of legend. Indeed, the popularity of the *Song of Roland* makes it the defining blueprint for the *chanson de geste*, songs of heroic deeds that highlight the protagonist's chivalric and martial prowess in combat. Outside of the medieval world, Roland's qualities of valor, loyalty, and sacrifice are in fact so popular that his tale serves as the French national epic to this day. Based on the actual August 15, 778 Battle of Roncevaux described in Einhard's *The Life of Charlemagne* in which Christian Basques ambush Charlemagne's rearguard while traveling through a Pyrenees mountain pass, the *Roland* is a highly fictional, dramatized retelling of a relatively minor event in the emperor's biography. In the retelling, the Basques are transformed into a Muslim hoard numbering in the tens of thousands, and Charlemagne's rearguard is made up of the greatest knights in Christendom, all of whom die in the defense of their emperor.

The central problem in reading the *Roland* is that it is faithful to the historical account of Einhard in name only. Only Roland and Charlemagne have any real connection to the eighth-century battle. Those who study the *Roland* must realize they are reading a late eleventh/early twelfth-century poem derived from an oral tradition stretching back 300 years that has been constantly reinterpreted in modern times. With that said, the *Roland* is an excellent example of how to understand secondary sources effectively; namely, it is a text that better reflects the time period in which it was written rather than the time period in which it is set. As a result, the *Song of Roland*, in its most popular recorded form, cannot be viewed as an analysis of eighth-century Carolingian military society; rather, the tale of Roland's sacrifice highlights the contemporary beliefs and ideals of its late eleventh and early twelfth-century knightly audience through its focus on the character of Charlemagne, the role of the feudal vassal, and the allure of the Crusades.

The Historical Account and Manuscripts

The only surviving historical reference to the Battle of Roncevaux and the death of Roland appears in Einhard's *The Life of Charlemagne*. According to the courtier, Charlemagne's campaign in Spain is less a seven-year grand crusade as the *Roland* describes and more a brief foray into vulnerable territory in which the king "was vigorously and almost constantly pursuing the war with the Saxons."¹ Additionally, the actual battle is, in reality, an ambush by Christian Basque raiders who attack Charlemagne's rear baggage train. This is in stark contrast to the *Roland*, in which four hundred thousand Muslim soldiers meet Roland and his twenty thousand Frankish knights in heated combat. The following is Einhard's conclusion of what can be described as Charlemagne's only real defeat in the biography:

In the battle, Eggihard, the overseer of the king's table, Anselm, the count of the palace, and Roland, the prefect of the Breton March, were killed, along with many others. The deed could not be avenged at that time, because the enemy had so dispersed that not even a rumor remained as to where they might be sought.²

These two sentences reveal the liberties the *Roland* takes with the historical account. Roland is upgraded from prefect of the Breton March to Charlemagne's nephew (and holds more influence than the king's own son, Louis the Pious), the armies on both sides are inflated to gargantuan proportions, and Charlemagne immediately avenges the massacre of his rearguard. These differences show a disconnect between the actual history of Roncevaux and the composition of the *Roland* roughly 300 years later. Whether intentionally altered or simply forgotten, these differences form the core of what the *Song of Roland* would become to its medieval audience—a story of knightly honor and sacrifice that coincided with the contemporary societal and political issues of early twelfth-century France.

The Battle of Roncevaux receives no attention in Notker the Stammerer's *The Deeds of Charlemagne*. Nevertheless, Notker's presentation of Charlemagne connects much more strongly with the *Roland* than Einhard's does. Compared to Einhard's humanizing, Suetonian-inspired biography, the Charlemagne of the *Roland* and of Notker's work is a hero of the French people, almost beyond the point of human comprehension. Professor Lewis Thorpe, a philologist of French and veteran of the Second World War views Charlemagne in this heroic role, claiming he sees "Notker as the first to record stories about Charlemagne" even though Einhard wrote his biography earlier.³ The *Song of Roland* follows in this tradition. The Carolingian emperor is presented as a legendary, devout individual who brings together a massive empire through his strength of arms and devotion to God. He is beyond fault, his word is the law of Christendom, and those who serve loyally under him are the greatest barons of all France.

For those studying the *Song of Roland*, it is important to note that there are actually seven different recorded versions of the tale, the most popular being the Digby 23 manuscript housed in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University. The manuscript has been dated between 1125 and 1170 and is most likely based on a lost original work composed as early

¹ Einhard, "The Life of Charlemagne," in *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, revised ed., trans. David Ganz (London: Penguin Classics, 2008), 24, c. X.

² Einhard, "Charlemagne," 25, c. X.

³ Notker the Stammerer, "The Deeds of Charlemagne," in *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, revised ed., trans. David Ganz (London: Penguin Classics, 2008), 51.

as 1060. Somewhat contemporary accounts of the epic seem to support this idea of its circulation, at least in the form of well-known oral poetry. The Anglo-Norman chronicler Wace writes in his 1160 *Roman de Rou* that a member of William the Conqueror's household, Taillefer, sung a version of the song at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Whether or not this was the case, the fact that Wace references Roland and Roncevaux shows that, at least in his own time, it was a popular work worthy enough to be included in his chronicle.

Of the seven different recorded versions of Roland's death, there is a general categorization of the works based on their specific syllabic repetitiveness. Two versions, including the Digby 23 manuscript, utilize assonance, the frequent repetition of vowel sounds within the individual lines of the poem. The other five follow a more distinct rhyming pattern at the end of each line. Both configurations help flavor the narrative of the poem and serve as useful mnemonic devices to those writing and reciting the legend, but the assonance and rhyming traditions also feature significant thematic differences. In the assonant version (i.e. Digby 23), the heroes often have conflicting values, as seen in the verbal arguments between Roland and Oliver. At the same time, all the main characters, even Ganelon and his Saracen allies, are described as worthy individuals. In comparison, the rhyming tradition of the Roland features the Franks as a united social unit, and utterly demonizes Ganelon and his compatriots.

Within this context of syllabic, thematic, and authorial differences between the various versions of the Roland, it is important to consider: who would have read it, to whom would it have been read, and for what purpose? Scholars have long debated the authorship of the *Roland*, ranging from "traditionalists" who see it as a long compilation of ongoing oral narratives since 778, to "individualists" who attribute the poem to a single individual. The Digby 23 *Roland* appears to take the individualist approach; the final line of the poem names a certain Tuoldus as the author (vv. 4002). Whoever wrote it, the sheer length of the Roland—4002 lines—and its emphasis on detailed, violent combat imply that the work was meant to be read over a period of time to a knightly audience. In his extensive study on the compilation and use of the Digby 23 *Roland*, Andrew Taylor makes an argument that only clerics could have presented such a work, "since only if it took the form of a written text would a poem have the prestige or authority to command a listener's attention for four thousand lines." The *Roland* certainly could be retold over the period of a few days. Possible "acts" for its performance could include the events up until the Battle of Roncevaux, the battle itself, and Charlemagne's vengeance and conclusion. Viewed as a poem read by clerics to a knightly audience, the *Roland* fits well into the knightly and religious ideals of the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the remainder of this paper will explore.

Charlemagne – "The Father of Europe"

For all the pomp given to Roland's sacrifice, Charlemagne has an equal if not greater role in the poem. His name is the first word of the poem, and his endeavors in Spain are the frame that surrounds all of Roland's actions. Furthermore, it is made clear early on that the complexity of the Charlemagne of history is sidelined, as the Charlemagne of the *Roland* is first and foremost a holy warrior and conqueror. According to Ganelon, Charlemagne's conquered territory includes Apulia and Calabria in southern Italy along with England (vv. 370-76), none of which were historically conquered by Charlemagne. At his death, Roland expands upon his uncle's conquests, particularly the ones in which he had a direct role. According to his own accounts, Roland captured not only all of France and the lands listed above, but also Scotland, Ireland, and even Constantinople (vv. 2322-36). Simply put, the *Roland* presents Charlemagne very much at the head of a revitalized Roman Empire, which, by Notker the Stammerer's time, was already the popularly accepted image of the emperor. In the epic, Charlemagne controls more territory than he ever did historically (Spain can be added to the list by the end of the poem). In storytelling, the epics of Charlemagne and Roland are a source of pride. As Andrew Taylor puts it, a storyteller could "boast of their repertoire" by reciting tales of Charlemagne and Roland.¹¹ Clearly, Charlemagne is meant to be portrayed as a larger-than-life figure who 'civilized' Europe for Christians. Furthermore, by listing the lands that belong to him, the lands not under his control and the people who live in them (i.e. non-Christians) are put in stark contrast.

As a Christian conqueror, the Charlemagne of the *Roland* is portrayed as a king tasked by God to continually fight on behalf of oppressed Christians everywhere. The theme of conversion is prominent in the poem, particularly with King Marsile's wife Queen Bramimonde, the most prominent Muslim character to convert in the story (vv. 3673-

⁴ Jane Gilbert, "The Chanson de Roland," in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature*, ed. Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 22; Glyn Burgess, trans., *The Song of Roland* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 7-8.

⁵ Burgess, *The Song of Roland*, 8; Andrew Taylor, "Was There a Song of Roland?" *Speculum* 76 (2001): 28-29.

⁶ Gilbert, "Chanson de Roland," 22-23.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁹ Taylor, "Song of Roland," 63. See also Robert Francis Cook, *The Sense of the Song of Roland* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 133.

¹⁰ Based on the supposed composition of the Oxford Roland (1125-1170), it is possible these places are listed to reference the roughly contemporary expansion of the Normans into England and southern Italy. As has been seen with the reference to Wace, the Normans certainly were not above using legends like the Roland to promote their own culture.

¹¹ Taylor, "Song of Roland," 55.

74). Even more than a priest like Archbishop Turpin, Charlemagne is the center of religious piety. At the conclusion of the poem, the Archangel Gabriel approaches Charlemagne and tasks him to rally his army in order to help more Christians besieged by pagan forces (vv. 3993-98). By the twelfth century, Charlemagne was a symbol of Christian expansionism, reflecting the ideal that it was every good ruler's moral duty to defend his fellow worshippers. As shall be discussed later on, this idea of Christian authority, particularly in the context of the Crusades, is central to the *Roland* and its audience.

The final aspect of Charlemagne in the *Roland* is his duty and power as king and emperor. With the idea of Charlemagne as the medieval model of behavior in mind, Sarah Kay offers a thought-provoking analysis of the role of kingship within the *chanson de geste*. Simply put, the role of Charlemagne is not that of a literal king, but that of a representation of an "ideological hierarchy" in which one can explore secular and religious power.¹² This analysis revolves around the trial of Ganelon at the end of the poem. Even though Charlemagne is king and emperor, he does not hold the political power necessary to condemn Ganelon to death. His barons are the ones who render judgment, and they are won over by Ganelon's defense (vv. 3807-11). It takes a trial by combat and divine protection in order for Charlemagne's verdict to be enforced. Here again Charlemagne returns to a religious role, in which he is the ideal of the king serving in God's name to provide a source of unity and order.¹³

While he may not have direct power outside of the battlefield in the *Roland*, Charlemagne nevertheless "epitomizes value" in the form of his reputation as a warrior and arbiter and is therefore a model for future generations of monarchs.¹⁴ His barons have the power to disagree with his judgment, but they still look to him for approval and support. These disagreements between the emperor and his vassals may be an allusion to the frequent Carolingian problem of rebellious magnates. Indeed, Charlemagne, his predecessors, and his successors spent much time bringing rebel counties back under royal and, later, imperial control.¹⁵ However, there is also a strong allusion to the Capetian dynasty of twelfth-century France, which was the ruling dynasty of France at the time of the *Roland's* composition. At this time, the Capetians held very little monarchical power, nowhere near the strength of which Charlemagne boasted during his reign. Holding very little land outside of the royal domains, the Capetians in the first half of the twelfth century operated within the political webbing of French feudal practices. Just as Charlemagne dealt with rival barons, so too did the Capetians negotiate constantly with the powerful counts and dukes of areas like Champagne and Aquitaine, who held equal if not more political and military authority. The Capetians therefore could find a kindred spirit in the Charlemagne of the *Roland*, seeing him as a ruler struggling to assert his authority over rival and often rebellious vassals. Fortunately for Charlemagne, he has access to the greatest vassal of all in the form of Roland, whose deeds reinforce his own claim to kingship.

Proper Feudal Vassalage

Overall, the Charlemagne of the *Roland* is an ideal. He is the ideal Christian conqueror and the ideal Christian king, one who does not rule absolutely but through his barons and vassals. In turn, his vassals swear loyalty to him and operate in his name. Such a description is the very essence of the idealized medieval feudal system. As such, the proper role of the vassal in service to his king is also an important aspect of the *Roland*. In particular, the qualities of the worthy baron take shape in the form of Roland and his companion Oliver.

Roland is the baron par excellence of medieval vassalage, which he achieves through his incomparable fighting prowess. Indeed, Roland's reputation as a warrior is so great that his skill on the battlefield becomes the standard for future medieval tales. In Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain* (The Knight with the Lion), for example, the titular hero's martial skill is directly compared to Roland's: "and see how he [Yvain] wields his sword when he draws it! Roland never caused such devastation with Durendal against the Turks at Roncevaux or in Spain."¹⁶ Roland, himself, is also fully aware of his martial skill and frequently alludes to how he wishes to be remembered for his service to his uncle. In a subtle reference to the nature and legacy of the *Roland* itself, the titular character speaks multiple times of the "shameful song" that would be sung of him if he could not live up to his standards as a vassal (vv. 1014, 1466). As a result, his actions are as much the duty he owes to his lord as they are his way of being remembered through history.

Alongside Roland's need for glory and honor, he constantly provides insight into the complex nature of medieval vassalage. Before meeting in battle with the Muslim forces, Oliver shows some hesitation in a direct confrontation. Roland replies with a short lecture on their duties as the vassals of Charlemagne: "For his lord a vassal must suffer hardships / And endure great heat and great cold; / And he must lose both hair and hide" (vv. 1010-12). Likewise,

¹² Sarah Kay, *The Chansons de Geste in the Age of Romance: Political Fictions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 120.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Roger Collins, *Early Medieval Europe: 300-1000*, 3rd ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 311-312. One of the more infamous conspiracies Charlemagne had to put down was led by his illegitimate son, Pippin 'the Hunchback,' and a cabal of supporters who claimed never to have sworn allegiance to Charlemagne.

¹⁶ Chrétien de Troyes, "The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)," in *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William Kibler (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 335.

there is a discussion about the different qualities a vassal may have. For example, Roland is described as a brave warrior while Oliver's virtue is wisdom (vv. 1093). The description of Roland's bravery in the context of the heated battle with the Muslims seems to suggest that Roland's quality is more important than Oliver's, but a later line notes that "both are marvelous vassals" (vv. 1094).¹⁷ In the end, both knights display some level of the other's noble quality before they die. Such descriptions show that there was no single overriding quality to describe a loyal vassal. Surviving letters and charters written prior to the compilation of *Roland* contain examples of the ideal relationship between a vassal and his lord. A letter written by Bishop Fulbert of Chartres in 1020 to Duke William V of Aquitaine lists the many qualities a lord and vassal owe to one another. In particular, he notes that a vassal must be "harmless, safe, honorable, useful, easy, and possible" in order to prove worthy of his lord's favor.¹⁸ Even Fulbert's heavily simplified version of the vassal-lord relationship shows that there is no single, perfect approach to proper vassalage. As such, Roland and Oliver cannot be seen as superior or inferior to one another, for they both embody worthy characteristics of loyal servants to Charlemagne.

In what is probably the most discussed section in all of the *Roland*, the horn scenes evoke the core difference between Roland and Oliver's ideals as vassals. As the Muslim forces prepare to attack, Oliver requests that Roland blow his horn to alert Charlemagne to their plight. Roland refuses, for to do so would show preemptive cowardice and dishonor his family (vv. 1062-64). As Charlemagne's greatest warrior, Roland believes he can deal with the enemy army on his own without calling for help. However, as the battle turns in favor of the Muslims, Roland begins to consider calling for aid, but Oliver rebukes him. As Oliver states, "a true vassal's act, in its wisdom, avoids folly; / Caution is better than great zeal" (vv. 1724-25). Roland has his chance to call for aid, but squanders it. Consequently, he must bear the burden of his mistake in order to die as a warrior rather than face his uncle and admit the deaths of all the men under his command. Ultimately, the argument is the exact same as the first horn dialogue, where Roland refused to blow the horn to avoid dishonor, except that now the roles are reversed; it is now Oliver who invokes shame as Roland tries to value logic and reason.¹⁹ This once again highlights the complicated nature of vassalage, in which the vassal has to be constantly aware of a situation, whether on the battlefield at court, and model himself to best benefit his lord. There is no right approach; it all depends on the situation.

Roland is convinced by Archbishop Turpin to blow the horn so that Charlemagne and his army may avenge the death of Roland's rearguard. The notion of avenging the unjust death of a loyal servant highlights another ideal of medieval vassalage: avenging treachery. Just as Roland and Oliver embody ideal vassals, so, too, does Ganelon represent treachery. Through Ganelon, the *Roland* creates the standard for other examples of treachery in medieval literature. In *Cligés*, for example, Chrétien de Troyes compares the treachery of a count rebelling against King Arthur to Ganelon's treason against Roland and Charlemagne.²⁰ Treachery is the driving force behind the plot of the *Roland*. It is Ganelon's treachery which leads to the death of Roland, Oliver, and the Twelve Peers. Roland, in turn, fights in Spain to avenge the death of two counts who were beheaded by King Marsile after he had falsely called for peace with the Franks (vv. 194-213). The final instance in which treachery opposes proper vassalage arises in Ganelon's trial itself. Ganelon maintains he was obligated to have Roland killed since it was Roland who nominated Ganelon for the suicide mission into Spain in the first place (vv. 3768-78). This argument seems to win over the barons of Charlemagne's court. However, it is the emperor's champion, Thierry, who emphasizes the precedence of the lord-vassal relationship when he cites Roland's protected status as Charlemagne's vassal. As such, Ganelon's actions against Roland are seen as an insult to Charlemagne himself and are tantamount to high treason (vv. 3824-36). It is therefore established that disloyalty and treachery are the antithesis of everything that makes a knight a worthy vassal.

The *Roland* is first and foremost a story of warfare and, as such, much of the poem is dedicated to Christian knights fighting their Muslim equivalents. Within the context of the lord-vassal relationship, it is a vassal's sworn duty to defend his lord from harm. Proficiency in combat is therefore a requirement, and Roland and his knights must be able to defend Charlemagne with their lives. However, there is a strong disconnect between the combat of the *Roland* and actual medieval combat of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Medievalist John Benton highlights this trend with his reference to what he refers as the "epic stroke." At various points in the poem, Roland performs an attack with his sword in which he cuts through the enemy's head, chest, and groin and even into the body of the horse below (vv. 1325-34). Such a move is physically impossible to perform, and if it were executed, it would expose the warrior to harm as he lifted the sword above his head to deliver the blow. The attack is important because it is dramatic and expresses what Benton also calls the "enculturation" of the warrior class. Rather than a step-by-step guide to its knightly audience, the *Roland* creates the ideal in which a knight should think he belongs to.²¹ The "epic stroke" is not a move to be

¹⁷ Gilbert, "Chanson de Roland," 27.

¹⁸ Fulbert of Chartres, "Letter to William of Aquitaine," in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, ed. L. Delisle, vol. 10 (Paris, 1904), 463.

¹⁹ Peter Haidu, *The Subject of Violence: The Song of Roland and the Birth of the State* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 77-79.

²⁰ Chrétien de Troyes, "Cligés," in *Arthurian Romances*, trans. William Kibler (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 136.

²¹ John F. Benton, "'Nostre Franceis n'unt talent de fuïr': the Song of Roland and the Enculturation of a Warrior Class," in *Culture, Power, and Personality in Medieval Europe*, ed. Thomas N. Bisson (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), 150-51.

used in actual combat. Rather, it provides knights with the mentality that when they do fight, they give their all for the sake of their lord. The “epic stroke” is a very subtle link to the lord-vassal relationship that epitomizes Roland’s relationship with Charlemagne, but it shows in practice that Roland will give his entire being to defend his king from any opponent. And no opponent is a greater threat to the knights and nobles of the Roland than the powerful and deadly Muslim horde.

Crusader Mentality

So far, this paper has explored the nature of Charlemagne within the *Roland* and the concept of medieval vassalage. As a Christian conqueror, he commands the greatest knights of Western Europe. What this implies, and what the *Roland* shows, is that Christian medieval ideal being physically directed against its enemies, namely, pagans and Muslims. As a document of the late eleventh and early twelfth century, this depiction of Muslims and pagans as the enemies of Christianity was fueled by the contemporary Crusader ideology that launched the First Crusade in 1095. Overall, the *Roland* is very much an advertisement in support of holy war.

This ideology appears in the *Roland* in the theme of divine protection. Just before the battle between Roland’s forces and the Muslims begins, Archbishop Turpin speaks to the Frankish knights, granting them forgiveness of sin, martyrdom, and immediate entrance into heaven upon their deaths (vv. 1124-38). Throughout the battle, Charlemagne shows that he and his cause are divinely protected. For instance, God stops the setting of the sun so that Charlemagne and his army can attack King Marsile’s retreating forces (vv. 2458-59). In another subtle illusion to medieval history, Charlemagne’s sword pommel contains the very spearhead of the lance that pierced Christ (vv. 2504-06).²² During his duel with the emir Baligant, Charlemagne’s own body is divinely protected when he lives despite a blow that cleaves off part of his head (vv. 3609-11). Likewise, his champion, Thierry, is divinely assisted in his combat with Pinabel during Ganelon’s trial (vv. 3923).

Such references to the First Crusade created an image of the Franks as divinely protected warriors. Indeed, this image was used to great effect by Pope Urban II during the Council of Clermont in 1095, the event that launched the First Crusade to the Holy Land. Of the multiple versions of the speech that exist, the one by Robert the Monk offers the greatest connection to the Franks and Charlemagne. In it, the Franks are God’s chosen and beloved race meant to drive out a people “utterly alienated by God.” Furthermore, he directly cites Charlemagne and Louis the Pious’ role in destroying pagan kingdoms, thereby linking the memory of Charlemagne as a Christian conqueror with the impetus for the Crusade.²³

The nature of the enemy in the *Roland* is of particular importance in understanding this Crusader mentality. It is possible that Tuoldus, the supposed author of the *Roland*, had very little knowledge of Islam and its practices. The other possibility is that the anti-Muslim sentiment in the *Roland* is a deliberate attempt to belittle the Muslim faith as a whole, rather than the result of an overall misunderstanding. Whatever the case, Tuoldus’s *Roland*, as seen above with Urban II’s speech, is very much in service to the Christian militarization advocated by the papacy.²⁴ In it, the enemy is depicted as an “other” to the Frankish protagonists and is aided by a traitor, Ganelon, who must lose his identity with his own people as a result.²⁵ The historic enemies of Roncevaux were the Basques, but for the purpose of promoting the Crusades, they were transformed in the *Roland* into something outside of the Christian sphere. To further distinguish them, they are even sometimes described as being physically different from the Franks, as are the race of people from Occitan who forgo armor because their skin is as hard as iron (vv. 3246-3250). Finally, the *Roland* includes misconceptions about Islamic practices. Like other anti-Muslim texts, the *Roland* employs the common claim that non-Christian religions worship dead men rather than actual gods. The Muslims of the *Roland* do not worship Allah, but the long dead bodies of Apollo and Muhammad, and when they lose the battle with Roland, they throw the corpses into ditches in anger (vv. 2585-91).

Despite these instances in which the enemy is depicted as other, there are frequent references to non-Christians’ noble qualities. For instance, Blancandrin, King Marsile’s advisor, the emir from Balaguer, and Marcule from Outremer are all described as strong, handsome warriors who would make perfect barons if only they were Christians (vv. 24-26, 895-99, 3156-64). Why is this so? Why in the context of the Crusades, which justifies the slaughter of non-Christians in the name of God,²⁶ is the enemy presented favorably? Peter Haidu describes this depiction as a

²² Burgess, *Roland*, 8. According to medieval history, the lance was discovered by the Crusaders as they were besieged in Antioch in 1098. The discovery improved their morale enough to break the siege and escape. The inclusion of the spear in the *Roland* is seen as another example of the poem’s compilation around the time of the First Crusade.

²³ Urban II, “Speech at Council of Clermont, 1095, Five Versions of the Speech,” in Fordham Internet Medieval Sourcebook, <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-5vers.html>

²⁴ George Fenwick Jones, *The Ethos of the Song of Roland* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1963), 146.

²⁵ Kay, *Chansons de Geste*, 177.

²⁶ Haidu, *The Subject of Violence*, 206.

“projection of the self on the screen of the Other.”²⁷ To clarify this, it is helpful to consider the audience of the *Roland*. To a young knight learning chivalry, meeting with a worthy foe in head-to-head combat is the ideal challenge. Mass slaughter, while quite realistic to the Crusades, is not an honorable way to fight. Therefore, in order to justify the actions of a character like Roland, vassal and Christian knight, his non-Christian opponents must be equally honorable. This somewhat favorable look at Muslims may also stem from the cultural and historic ties between Christian France and Muslim Spain. Other chansons, such as *The Song of the Cid*, show a much more generous depiction of Muslims due to their Spanish origin.

Conclusion

By looking at the *Song of Roland* as a primary source of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, readers are provided with a snapshot of the contemporary military and social issues of Western Europe. To suit the audience of its time, the *Roland* highlights the legend of Charlemagne, depicts the ideal form of lord-vassal feudal relations, and promotes a Crusader mentality. Yet, for all these points, the *Roland* is most remembered in France for its emphasis on courage, loyalty, and sacrifice, values held particularly dear to the French during the Franco-Prussian War and the Nazi invasion during World War II. As such, the *Roland* is a story that can be recited throughout history, constantly remolded to fit the needs of its changing audience. As such, it is crucial for historians to look beyond the specific details and themes of a source in order to trace its overarching impact on history, to see the forest for the trees, so to speak. For example, the *Roland* is at its most basic level a story about knights and war, but how did knights perceive themselves, and what was their mentality going into battle? These are the questions that must be asked regarding any primary source, and in this sense, the author or authors of the *Song of Roland* expertly created a story that subtly but effectively depicts their society and the relevant social issues of the time.

²⁷ Haidu, *The Subject of Violence*, 36.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Burgess, Glyn, trans. *The Song of Roland*. London: Penguin Books, 1990.

Chrétien de Troyes. “Cligés.” In *Arthurian Romances*, translated by William W. Kibler. London: Penguin Books, 1991.

—. “The Knight with the Lion (Yvain).” In *Arthurian Romances*, translated by William W. Kibler. London: Penguin Books, 1991.

Einhard. “The Life of Charlemagne.” In *Two Lives of Charlemagne*. Revised edition. Translated by David Ganz, 1-44. London: Penguin Classics, 2008.

Fulbert of Chartres. “Letter to William of Aquitaine.” In *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, edited by L. Delisle, vol. 10, 463. Paris, 1904.

Notker the Stammerer. “The Deeds of Charlemagne.” In *Two Lives of Charlemagne*. Revised edition. Translated by David Ganz, 45-116. London: Penguin Classics, 2008.

Urban II. “Speech at Council of Clermont, 1095, Five Versions of the Speech.” In *Fordham Internet Medieval Sourcebook*. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-5vers.asp>.

Secondary Sources

Benton, John F. “‘Nostre Franceis n’unt talent de fiür’: the Song of Roland and the Enculturation of a Warrior Class.” In *Culture, Power, and Personality in Medieval Europe*, edited by Thomas N. Bisson, 147-165. London: Hambledon Press, 1991.

Collins, Roger. *Early Medieval Europe: 300-1000*. 3rd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Cook, Robert Francis. *The Sense of the Song of Roland*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987.

- Gilbert, Jane. "The *Chanson de Roland*." In *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature*, edited by Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay, 21-34. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Haidu, Peter. *The Subject of Violence: The Song of Roland and the Birth of the State*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.
- Jones, George Fenwick. *The Ethos of the Song of Roland*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1963.
- Kay, Sarah. *The Chansons de Geste in the Age of Romance: Political Fictions*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- Taylor, Andrew. "Was There a Song of Roland?" *Speculum* 76 (2001): 28-65.

Teaching New Harmony: Education, Religion and Human Nature at New Harmony, Indiana, 1824-1827

JAMES RICK

“This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson in “The American Scholar” 1837.¹

People in the early American republic were increasingly open to new ideas about how to instruct the coming generations. The impact of the enlightenment and the French and American revolutions left open many possibilities for social change. The same reformist spirit seen in Emerson’s *American Scholar* was felt on the North American continent thirty years earlier with theorists such as Samuel Knox championing a system of liberal schools and it was certainly present at the experiment in communitarianism on the Indiana Wabash in the 1820s.²

Liberal theory and mainstream practice were separated by differing ideologies concerning religion and social thought which weighed heavily into theories of education. In the case of New Harmony, the pedagogically theories of the community’s leaders were shaped by their ideas about human nature and the role of religion in society which challenged the dominant Christian understandings in contemporary America.

While others have written about reform at New Harmony, this paper will focus on the impact of ideas about human nature and religion on educational reform. Due to the central importance of pedagogical theory to the philosophies of the experiment’s leaders and the influence of their radical ideas about human nature and religion upon those philosophies, New Harmony posed an affront to the Christian discourse on those issues in early 19th century American thought.

The historical significance of the experiment at New Harmony is entirely dependent on the historical significance of the ideas of Robert Owen, William Maclure and the other educators at New Harmony. Therefore, to understand education at New Harmony we have to understand the context and educational philosophies of these two men. However, as Howell and Prevenier remind us, “Historians who focus on the importance of the individual must, at a minimum, be sure to take account of the situation that made it possible for one person to have such an effect.”³

New Harmony was championed by British philanthropist and social theorist, Robert Owen. Born in northern Wales in 1771, Owen turned his attention to social philosophy and the search for a “New Moral World” after gaining his fortune in the 1790s. From January 1800 until his American aspirations at New Harmony in the 1820s, Owen managed the New Lanark mills in Scotland and established an environment in which he could act as a social engineer and form his theories on mankind.⁴ Thinking men and educators in both Europe and America admired his success at New Lanark. One of these was another wealthy philanthropist in Scotland, William Maclure.

Maclure, like Owen, gained his fortune through business success around the turn of the century and by the age of thirty-seven was able to dedicate most of his time to philanthropic pursuits.⁵ Maclure was principally an educational reformer and traveled Europe and the United States during the first quarter of the nineteenth century visiting schools and establishing his own in France and in Philadelphia. When Owen purchased the land of a German sectarian community, Father Rapp’s Harmonists, in the summer of 1824, Maclure was supportive, saying of the American continent, “Tis the best field of experiment on earth and I am rejoiced to find that he has chosen it.”⁶ Maclure moved his school from Philadelphia to New Harmony and joined Owen’s experiment in Indiana two years later.

Owen and Maclure took their ideas and capital to the ideological landscape of America which was hostile to their ideas about religion and human nature. Christianity and education were seen as mutually dependent by those who ran American schools. Teachers were charged with the duty of preserving the faith and religion was also thought to be necessary to education. The Christian concept of original sin portrayed human nature as inherently corrupt. Children were seen as being closer to humanity’s original state of sin and education played an important role in restraining the inherent corruption of human nature through the discipline and rules of the schoolhouse. These ideas, as illustrated later, conflicted sharply with the ideas championed at New Harmony.

¹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar,” in *Eclectic English Classics by Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Orren Henry Smith (New York: American Book Company, 1903), 62.

² Samuel Knox, “An Essay on the Best System of Liberal Education,” (1799) in *Essays on Education in the Early Republic*, ed. Frederick Rudolph (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1965), 271-372. [Hereafter *Essays*]

³ Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), 141.

⁴ Arthur Eugene Bestor, Jr., *Backwoods Utopias: The Sectarian and Owenite Phase of American Communitarianism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950), 62.

⁵ Thomas A. Barlow, *Pestalozzi and American Education* (Boulder, Colorado: Es Este Press, University of Colorado, 1977), 36.

⁶ William Maclure, *The European Journals of William Maclure (1805-1824)*, ed. John S. Doskey (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1983).

While the lure of cheap land in the United States and the promise of new possibilities brought Owen and Maclure to America, their ideas were originally formulated in Scotland. The intellectual environment of Scotland in the early nineteenth century, characterized by the exploration of progressive and secular social science, created the space in which Owen and Maclure formulated their ideas. Harrison writes of intellectuals in early nineteenth century Scotland, “In their discussions of human nature, social forces and institutions, economic processes and government — all included in the omnibus category, moral philosophy — there emerged the beginnings of modern sociology and the idea of social science.”⁷

Out of this enlightenment-influenced climate, focused on the analysis of social life, came two men with the capital — also made possible by their circumstances in the growing industrial centers of England and Scotland—to put their ideas into action.

Although the exact intellectual origins of Owen’s ideas are less clear than those of Maclure’s—his son said he rarely read books and tended to dismiss them—they are still part of a process of thought in the discourse of the time.⁸ The ideas of both Maclure and Owen, influenced by a Scottish intellectual renaissance, had to act in concert with other ideas, and with their capital, to make an impact.⁹

Realities at New Harmony did not play out as the hopeful reformers had planned. By May 1825, the roughly eight hundred persons at New Harmony—who would escalate to about a thousand before the end of 1825—were administering the community known as the preliminary society.¹⁰ Owen departed in early June of that year to continue his propaganda campaign in the east to promote the experiment, which had so far involved two speeches before congress in February and March.¹¹ Without Owen at the helm, New Harmony had little success and some began to leave the community, as Thomas Pears, secretary of the preliminary society committee, wrote, “the Master Spirit is not here and I fear we shall advance but slowly until his reappearance.”¹²

The Master Spirit’s return did not however, bring any unity or end the factionalism Mr. Pears had felt brewing even before Owen’s departure.¹³ After Owen’s return and the arrival of Maclure’s party on board a river boat traveling from Pittsburg down the Ohio river — dubbed the ‘boatload of knowledge’ by Owen — in January 1826, the new constitution of the “New-Harmony Community of Equality” was drawn up and published in the experiment’s official newspaper, the *New-Harmony Gazette*.¹⁴ Only three weeks later, the first two groups of settlers to break off from the original community — the first a group upset with Owen’s religious ideas and the second a group of English immigrants — separated themselves from Owen’s New Harmony.¹⁵

The community further fractured in May of 1826, after a community vote to separate into three separate parts based on trade; the School Society, the Agricultural and Pastoral Society, and the Mechanic and Manufacturing Society.¹⁶ Maclure proposed the separation with the belief that communities would function better if they were small and homogenous but the split did little to reconcile conflict between the groups.¹⁷

In August 1826, the Agricultural and Mechanic societies both refused to any longer pay tuition to the School society and Owen himself encouraged the separation.¹⁸ The community was fractured and little could be done to save Owen’s dream. By Owen’s departure in June 1827 — he would not return for a year — the experiment was effectively at an end and newspapers from surrounding states began to declare the failure of the community.¹⁹

⁷ John F.C. Harrison, “The Steam Engine of the New Moral World” *Journal of British Studies* 6 (1967): 81.

⁸ Robert Dale Owen, *Threading My Way: An Autobiography* (New York: G.W. Carleton and Co., 1967), 90.

⁹ Harrison, “Steam Engine,” 81.

¹⁰ Introduction to *Pears Papers*, Vol. 11 of *Indiana Historical Society Publications* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1937), 8; Donald MacDonald, “Journey to America, 1824-1825” in *Indiana Historical Society Publications* vol. 14 (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1944), 292.

¹¹ Thomas Pears to Benjamin Bakewell, 2 June 1825. *Pears Papers*, 12-15; Robert Owen, *Two Discourses on a New System of Society as delivered in the Hall of Representatives of the United States* (Philadelphia: Atkinson and Alexander, printers, 1825).

¹² Thomas Pears to Benjamin Bakewell, 2 September 1825. *Pears Papers*, 24-32.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 12-15.

¹⁴ “Constitution of the New-Harmony Community of Equality,” *New-Harmony Gazette*, 15 February 1826. Vol. 1, 161 (Microfilm, Inter-Library Loan form East Texas State University Library, Commerce, TX). [Hereafter *New-Harmony Gazette*]

¹⁵ Donald MacDonald, “Second Journey to America, 1825-1826” *Indiana Historical Society Publications* vol. 14 (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1944), 337.

¹⁶ Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 184-185.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁸ Marie Duclos Frerageot to William Maclure, 11 August 1826 in Vol. 15 of *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, ed. Arthur Bestor (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Society, 1948), 351-353. [Hereafter Maclure-Frerageot Correspondence]

¹⁹ Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 196.

Maclure, however, continued to have a presence at New Harmony and opened several schools.²⁰ It was with the end of Owen's involvement at New Harmony that an end to the threat to dominant ideas about human nature and the role of religion in society prevalent in contemporary discourse came. Education was the apex of that threat due to its base in radical ideas about human nature and religion and its importance to the philosophies of both Owen and Maclure.

Robert Owen's philosophy on the social situation of mankind begins with the idea that every evil and malady present in mankind's situation results from, "that greatest of all errors, the notion that individuals form their own characters."²¹ Owen held that each person's nature was shaped for them by their circumstances and that, in order to create a new moral world, one would need to create the circumstances necessary to bring about the development of a new moral man. Education was then essential to Owen's ideas, as John F. C. Harrison writes, "The primary goal of education for the Owenite was to produce men and women suitable for a new moral world."²² Harrison also observes, "His first important work, *A New View of Society*, was in one sense a general treatise on education."²³ The importance of education to Owenism hinges partially on the fact that ideas about human nature, and the shaping thereof, were the central doctrine of Owenism and schools were its vessel.

Owen was successful with his school at New Lanark and it received positive attention from his contemporaries, including, as noted above, William Maclure. At New Lanark, Owen favored the Lancasterian theory of pedagogy in which older students would often instruct the younger.²⁴ For Owen, this was a practical system which would allow a great number of students to be taught efficiently. Teaching large numbers was important for Owen because the role of education in his philosophy was to generate harmony throughout the community and shape individuals in a manner which would ensure their happiness. He adopted a very liberal method of schooling, which avoided punishment and was dedicated to the instruction of poor children. Kindness and gentle direction with happiness as the desired end, rather than severity with discipline and order as the desired ends, produced, "a type of education greatly superior to the mechanical instruction of the age."²⁵

Owen carried his ideas and success at New Lanark with him to America when he established New Harmony. Owen's move to America brought him into a climate hostile to his religious ideas. Owen was already famous as an anti-religious thinker, a reputation which earned him some infamy in both the British Isles but his new environment in America would prove to be even more resistant.²⁶ New Harmony's affront to the pedagogical discourse, which saw education as dependent upon and responsible for religion, as discussed later, formed the context in which Owen attempted his system in Indiana.

Echoing his words from *A New View of Society*, he writes in the *Gazette*, "The basis on which the new Religion will arise, is the knowledge of the *all-important-fact*, that man does not, that he never can, form his own thoughts and feelings, from which proceed his conduct and character" [emphasis in original].²⁷ He speaks to congress of the virtues of separating children from their parents, a practice that was implemented by Maclure's boarding school at New Harmony.²⁸ The importance placed on removing children from their parents was certainly influenced by the idea that experience shapes human nature, and Owen and others believed that removing the possibly negative influence of the parent would create better conditions in which to shape the child's nature. Owen was particularly concerned with the schools at his experiment and took care to bring the finest instructors to New Harmony with him.

The central place of pedagogy within Owen's aspirations can be seen in his recruitment of skilled and reputable instructors for the school in New Harmony. Along with Maclure, a well-known educator and patron of reform in both Europe and America, came some of his compatriots such as Marie Duclos Fretageot [1783-1833] — primary teacher of the infant school for children between two and five years of age — and Joseph Neef [1770-1854] — primary teacher for the upper school for children between five and twelve years of age.²⁹ It says something about both the goals of Owen's experiment and the close ties between education and communitarianism that the most influential people he was able to bring with him to the southwestern corner of Indiana were intellectuals and educators. This is particularly evident in Owenism, with its focus on the inherent malleability of human nature.

These educators all came to New Harmony with their own new ideas about the school and its place in society. Neef and Maclure in particular were influenced by the pedagogical methods of Johann Pestalozzi [1746-1827],

²⁰ Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 201.

²¹ Robert Owen, *A New View of Society* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1927), 65.

²² Harrison, "Steam Engine," 98.

²³ *Ibid.*, 77.

²⁴ Owen, *Threading My Way*, 100-101.

²⁵ Harrison, "Steam Engine," 90.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 38.

²⁷ "Instruction in the New-System," *New-Harmony Gazette*, 19 July 1926. Vol. 1.

²⁸ Owen, *Two Discourses on a New System*, 42.; Barlow, *Pestalozzi and American Education*, 43.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 42-44.

a Swiss instructor who focused on the need to teach mentally, physically and spiritually and that the purpose of education was to prepare an individual for his or her future place within society. Stressing practical instruction, Pestalozzi broke away from the European mainstream of academic instruction focused on the classics and languages and sought to prepare students for their everyday lives.³⁰ His intended results were not however, obedient automatons, but rather independent, satisfied individuals. He says, "We must bear in mind that the ultimate goal of education is, not a perfection in the accomplishments of the school, but fitness for life; not the acquirement of habits of blind obedience and of prescribed diligence, but a preparation for independent action."³¹

We see then that Pestalozzi's method was concerned with the child's individuality and happiness. In arguing the role of education was to prepare children for independence and adulthood, Pestalozzi, "rejected the educational goal of contemporary religious groups of the day: to develop a good, contrite person who would be satisfied to enjoy the fruits of his earthly labors in the afterlife" but did not do away with religious instruction all together, maintaining that spiritual instruction was as important as mental or physical.³²

Ideas about human nature were every bit as prevalent in his methods as Owen's were in his. The influence of Pestalozzianism on Maclure first began when he first visited Pestalozzi's school at Yverdon in October 1805 and was enamored with the success of Pestalozzi's ideas professing them to have formed, "the most rational system of education I have ever seen."³³ Maclure brought Pestalozzi's former pupil and co-educator, Joseph Neef, with him to America, on Pestalozzi's recommendation.³⁴ Neef became the principal instructor at New Harmony's upper school, showing the connection between Pestalozzi's schools in Europe and the schools in New Harmony. One thing which Maclure and Pestalozzi shared with Owen was their desire to put education to the use of correcting social problems, a process Paul Smeyers and Marc Depaepe call educationalization.³⁵ This process developed rapidly alongside the idea of the nation-state beginning in the eighteenth century.³⁶

Pestalozzi's and Maclure's ideas about human nature were influenced by enlightenment philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau [1712-1778] and a profound respect for childhood. They took Rousseau's ideas of benevolent human nature which had to be treated kindly whereas the dominant form of education in contemporary America was more in line with Thomas Hobbes' [1588-1679] view of human nature as corrupt and needing of forcible correction.³⁷ Pestalozzi and Maclure attempted to apply Rousseau's ideas to the instruction of the poor and working classes, whereas Rousseau's focus in his educational treatise, *Emile*, had been on the wealthy child, whose parents could afford a personal tutor.³⁸ Regardless of its need to teach numerous working class children, Pestalozzian ideas remained tailored to developing the child as an individual and the need of working class children for practical education shaped the Pestalozzian perspective on instruction for everyday life.

Owen's and Maclure's ideas about religion influenced their pedagogical philosophies as well. Both men were skeptical and placed little value on spirituality in education. Owen's son Robert Dale, described Owen as a man who, "rejected ... the miraculous and the infallible" and Maclure as well railed against the influence of infallible religious doctrine on society in his journals.³⁹ However, because Owen proclaimed his mistrust of religion more readily than Maclure, and also given the fact that Owen was the more famous of the two, Owen's name was struck with the infamy of being anti-religious in a way Maclure's never was.⁴⁰ The fact that the aforementioned group which broke off from New Harmony out of disagreement with Owen's religious ideas named their community 'Macluria' in tribute to William Maclure, shows how little known to the general public his negative views on religion were.⁴¹ Owen's reputation as an enemy to Christianity contributed to the challenge his presence and leadership at New Harmony posed to the

³⁰ Barlow, *Pestalozzi and American Education*, 13.

³¹ Johann Pestalozzi, "How Gertude Teaches Her Children" in *Pestalozzi's Educational Writings* ed. J.A. Green and Frances A. Collie (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901). Quoted in Barlow, 14.

³² Barlow, *Pestalozzi and American Education*, 14, 24.

³³ Maclure, *European Journals*, 75.

³⁴ Emma L. Farrell, "The New Harmony Experiment, an Origin of Progressive Education," *Peabody Journal of Education* 15 (May, 1928): 357.

³⁵ Marc Depaepe and Paul Smeyers, "Educationalization as an ongoing Modernization Process," *Educational Theory* 58 (2008): 379.

³⁶ Rebekka Horlacher, "Schooling as a means of popular education: Pestalozzi's method as a popular education experiment," *Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education* 47 (2011): 65.

³⁷ Eric Schwitzgebel, "Human Nature and Moral Education in Mencius, Xunzi, Hobbes, and Rousseau," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 2 (April, 2007): 147-168.

³⁸ In this treatise, Rousseau lays out a method of education by which a tutor can help shape a young student and protect their nature from the hostile forces of society. Maclure and Pestalozzi also seek to allow the basic nature of the child to develop without harming it with excess discipline. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, Or on Education* (New York: Dutton, 1974); Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 136.

³⁹ Owen, *Threading My Way*, 194.; Maclure, *European Journals*, 18 May 1812, 551.

⁴⁰ Barlow, *Pestalozzi and American Education*, 38.

⁴¹ Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 176.

American discourse.

Both Owen and Maclure based their educational philosophies on ideas about human nature and ideas about the role of religion in society; ideas which challenged the Christian discourse of contemporary America. Yet, despite the similarities between Owen's and Maclure's ideas, aspects of Maclure's ideas drawn from Pestalozzi caused contention with Owen and placed Maclure in a position which was less threatening to established ideas than Owen's. This led to legal troubles between the two and a feud between Maclure's Pestalozzian school, which was focused on the education of the individual child, and the new school Owen opened in 1825, which was dedicated to mass instruction and promoting harmony in the community.⁴² David McLaren says of this new system that, "It was the monitorial system of mass instruction brought to bear on the community system and, as such, had no place in any system based on Pestalozzianism."⁴³ The individual-focused Pestalozzian education championed by Maclure was not compatible with Owen's dream of communal learning. Also, Owen's publicly negative views on religion were met with greater animosity from the people of America than Maclure's relatively quiet views and constituted a greater threat to the discourse.

The discourse within which Owen and Maclure had to operate was one in which education and ideas about human nature were heavily influenced by religion. Education was dependent upon religion in that one of its central purposes was seen as protecting and carrying on the Christian faith. Barlow describes the educational status of early nineteenth century America thusly, "Public education was at a low point in the United States. Still ensnared to a large extent in the pressures and dictates of religious bodies its primary purpose had not reached much beyond Luther's caveat that every person should be able to read the Bible in order to serve as his own priest."⁴⁴

Luther's caveat had been a dominant theme in American pedagogy since the colonial period when the General Court of Massachusetts passed the "old deluder Satan Act" in 1647. The justification for the law mandating schools in large towns was made with a religious argument about the necessity of Christians to read the Bible, reading,

It being one chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the scriptures... It is therefore ordered that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty house-holders, shall the forthwith appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write and read.⁴⁵

The mandate placed upon schools by religious America is shown in the late eighteenth into the nineteenth century by the way Christians thought and wrote about education. Simeon Doggett, a clergyman in the late eighteenth century said in his *Discourse on Education*, "Obvious it is that education, and most probably the clergy, are necessary to perpetuate the evidences of our holy religion."⁴⁶ This sacred duty entrusted to instructors was a central part of contemporary religious and pedagogical discourse and was threatened by Owen's presence and his 'godless' experiment in Indiana.

Not only is an obligation placed on schools to preserve Christian discourse, but it is seen as dependent upon religion for its existence. Education was to be built up from the common ground of Christianity and was to teach morality through spirituality. Benjamin Rush wrote, "I beg leave that the only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in RELIGION" [emphasis in original].⁴⁷ Within this frame, schools are both responsible for and dependent on religious ideas. Foucault argued that Christian education lent itself quite well to governmentality over the details of life saying,

In any case 'detail' had long been a category of theology and asceticism: every detail is important since, in the sight of God, no immensity is greater than a detail, nor is anything so small that it was not willed by one of his individual wishes. In this great tradition of the eminence of detail, all the minutiae of 'training' found their place easily enough. For the disciplined man, as for the true believer, no detail is unimportant, but not so much for the meaning that it conceals within it as for the hold it provides for the power that wishes to seize it.⁴⁸

Christianity's ability to make significant all the details of life brings those details of life under the control of the discourse through ideas about proper behavior and an ever-watchful deity. The school is one of the places where control is most exerted by authority over the minute details of an individual's life through restriction of movement and expectation of certain behaviors to be judged by a teacher. The cohabitation of Christianity and education in contemporary America was, in large part, built upon the exertion of power over students. The pedagogical ideas of both

⁴² "Instruction in the New System," 23 August 1826. *New-Harmony Gazette*. Vol 1. 382-383.

⁴³ David J. McLaren, "Robert Owen, William Maclure and New Harmony," *History of Education* 25 (1996): 233.

⁴⁴ Barlow, *Pestalozzi and American Education*, 9.

⁴⁵ "Old Deluder Satan Act." General Court of Massachusetts, 1647, in Stuart G. Noble, *A History of American Education* (New York: Rinehart and Co.), 1954.

⁴⁶ Simeon Doggett, "A Discourse on Education." 1796. In *Essays*, 157.

⁴⁷ Benjamin Rush, "Thoughts upon the Mode of Education Proper in a Republic." 1786. In *Essays*, 10.

⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, "Docile Bodies," in *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 184.

Maclure and Owen ran against this trend, as both advocated for leniency and imposed less restriction upon the child.

Christian ideas about human nature were also evident in contemporary American education, notably ideas about original sin. The doctrine of original sin, along with other Christian dogma, was taught to students and was incorporated into the lessons. In many primers—picture books which made use of rhyme to teach children the alphabet—the first entry for the letter “A” read, “In Adam’s fall, we sinned all.”⁴⁹ Repeated use of religious doctrine in instructed was an expected part of the instruction.

Schools not only taught original sin as a Christian doctrine, but their methods were fundamentally influenced by it. Just as Maclure and Pestalozzi’s pedagogical philosophies were influenced by Rousseau’s ideas about a benevolent human nature, and Owen’s by his steadfast belief in the absolute malleability of human nature, into allowing the good in a child to develop freely, the prevailing Christian education system tended towards a Hobbesian view of human nature, maintaining that rules and authority must work to correct and prevent the evil inherent in man’s nature.⁵⁰ Due to this difference, Owen’s and Maclure’s educational ideas were a threat to the discourse because of the influence of these contrary views about human nature.

As noted above, neither Maclure nor Owen held favorable views of Christianity. Maclure was dedicated to ensuring the school continued to, “Teach no species of religion, leaving the minds of youth a blank piece of paper on which their priests or parents may write what they please” and Owen shook up a fair amount of trouble any time he offered an opinion on religion. His 1826 ‘Declaration of Mental Independence,’ in which he maintained that, “this formidable Trinity, compounded of Ignorance, Superstition, and Hypocrisy, is the only Demon, or Devil, that ever has, or, most likely, ever will torment the human race,” caused such a stir that Maclure had to distance himself and his school from Owen’s ideas, writing, “They are the opinions of one individual, Mr. Owen, who is, perhaps, the only one within five hundred miles of him, who thinks them fit or necessary in the present state of society.”⁵¹ Maclure was inevitably successful in allowing Owen to take the brunt of the reaction to the community’s perceived lack of religious guidance and his schools remained at New Harmony after Owen’s involvement in the community had been pronounced a failure.

The community struggled with the problems brought about by religious contentions since the very beginning. In addition to the secession of the aforementioned dissidents of ‘Macluria,’ others expressed their distaste with secularism. In October of 1825, The Gazette ran a letter to the editor spanning three pages of print chastising the paper that, “Your correspondence appears to treat rather lightly of the divine judgments.”⁵² The editors responded with the warning, “We have to request our religious correspondents to shorten their communications, or we shall be under the necessity of rejecting them altogether.”⁵³ While religion may not have been something that Owen and the other editors of the Gazette wanted to address, it was an issue of preeminent importance for many Americans and would color their conception of what New Harmony was all about.

Criticism of the religious situation was not limited to those within the community itself. The experiment was a hot news story and contemporary Americans were interested in what was happening in Mr. Owen’s community in Indiana. Owen’s travel companion, Donald MacDonald wrote of how editors and newspapermen would frequently approach their party for hopes of some news during their travels.⁵⁴ Much of the national discourse concerning New Harmony revolved around its religious implications. In an entry before the community had even been established, MacDonald discusses a conversation Owen has with an American schoolmaster who believes Owen’s philosophy to be inconsistent because of Christian ideas about freewill and human nature.⁵⁵ These types of conversations appear more than once in MacDonald’s diaries and show the difficulty Owen had putting his other ideas into practice while operating in an environment hostile to his religious ideas.

Christian newspapers and periodicals attacked Owen and his ideas as early as 1817, before plans to make the United States his base of operations had even taken root.⁵⁶ In 1824, when he was focusing more on America, the Christian Advocate reported that Owen’s scheme, “appeared not only exceedingly visionary, but in some particulars

⁴⁹ Clifton Johnson, *Old-Time School Book*. (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Company, 1982), 77.

⁵⁰ Schwitzgebel, “Human Nature and Moral Education,” 147-168.

⁵¹ William Maclure to Marie Fretageot. 2 August 1826. *Maclure-Fretageot Correspondence*, 347.; “Declaration of Mental Independence,” 12 July 1826. *New-Harmony Gazette*. Vol. 1. 330.; Maclure, William to an Unnamed Gentleman. 20 September 1826. *Maclure-Fretageot Correspondence*, 374.

⁵² “Letter to the Editors,” 8 October 1825. *New-Harmony Gazette*. Vol. 1. 66.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁵⁴ MacDonald, *Second Journey*, 367.

⁵⁵ MacDonald, *First Journey*, 261. (For further arguments of Owen’s travel party caused by religion see *First Journey*, 168, and *Second Journey*, 316-318. One gets the sense that Owen and MacDonald tire of these conversations.)

⁵⁶ Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 124.

dangerous... (as Owen) denied the doctrine of original sin, and seemed to us to build his system on the old and baseless foundation of the Perfectionists.”⁵⁷ During the formative period of Owenism in America, mostly denominational periodicals attacked Owen, but their cries were a prelude to what would happen as the community developed.

After Owen’s public appearances at Washington in February and March 1825, the secular press began to echo the statements of the religious periodicals.⁵⁸ There was debate between supporters of Owen and the orthodox who opposed him, but the defense put up by Owen’s admirers—particularly if it evoked Christian scripture extolling the virtue of communism—only served to convince the orthodox even more of the threat of Owenism. For many Christians, “It was Owen’s rejection of the doctrine of human depravity and original sin that broke open all the vials of wrath.”⁵⁹ Benjamin Bakewell wrote to Thomas Pears that part of the public of Pittsburg are, “already prepared to crow at the downfall of Mr. Owen’s anti-religion system.”⁶⁰ Although the controversy had little to do with what was actually happening on the ground at New Harmony, the failure of the community was certainly a victory for those attacking Owen’s system.

The concept of deep contingency and relation between individuals and the larger power of the press over the discourse is helpful when looking at concepts of agency, or, as Ayers and Nesbit put it, “who possessed the capacity for action and who used that capacity for what purposes and when.”⁶¹ Individuals expressed their agency through dialogue and, in the case of those who formed Maclure, through separation. At the same time, the press, with the power of capital and a large base with greater influence over the discourse, shaped the notion of New Harmony as anti-Christian on a completely different scale. These two expressions of agency occur within unique scales but are connected in their expression of dissatisfaction with Owen’s ideas as being anti-Christian and therefore subversive.

It was principally Owen who received the attacks for his views about religion in human nature as it was his ideas, and his public statements of those ideas, which most directly flew against the discourse. Although both Owen’s and Maclure’s ideas about human nature ran against Christian doctrine and the dominant American discourse, Maclure’s at least included something akin to original sin, saying, “All children, as well as men, if not occupied in doing good, will most probably be doing harm, either to themselves or others. Want of occupation is one of the great sources of mischief. Children ought never to be idle, but to be constantly employed from morning to night in benefiting themselves or others.”⁶²

Maclure, like the Massachusetts General Court in the 1600s, wanted to keep the children occupied, for, as the saying goes, the devil has work for idle hands. Owen’s take on human nature was more radical than Maclure’s in this respect as, “For Owen, the notion of an inherent tendency to ‘sin’ was anathema. He believed children were born with the potential for either good or evil and their environment determined which road they would take.”⁶³ Owen’s dogmatic belief in the determination of individual’s characters by their circumstances was more radical an assault upon the Christian discourse of human nature than Maclure’s and was singled out as dangerous.

Also, as shown above in his Declaration of Mental Independence [1826] Owen was more vocal about his dissatisfaction with religion and Maclure sometimes had to distance himself and his school from those ideas in order to protect them; something Owen never learned to do for his community. Owen’s vocal ideas about religion continued to shape the way Americans thought about Owenism and the experiment at New Harmony even after he had left. In 1829, Owen took part in a debate with Alexander Campbell in Cincinnati in which Owen argued against Christian notions about human nature such as freewill and original sin and attempted, in his own words, “to prove that the principle of all religions are erroneous, and that their practice is injurious to the human race.”⁶⁴

Both Owen’s choice to leave New Harmony and his continued attacks on the Christian discourse are an example of deep contingency, as we see Owen’s actions on the local scale impacting the place of the experiment in the national discourse. No doubt Owen’s affairs after he left New Harmony continued to affect the place the experiment

⁵⁷ *Christian Advocate*. December 1824. Philadelphia. Vol. 2, 560 in Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 125.

⁵⁸ Owen, *Two Discourses on a New System*.

⁵⁹ Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 125-126.

⁶⁰ Benjamin Bakewell to Thomas Pears, 10 September 1825. *Pears Papers*, 34-35.

⁶¹ Deep contingency is a way of looking at social interactions across scales. These interactions are seen in the sources used for this paper including newspapers—an example of discourse on a national or community scale—and correspondence—an example of discourse on an individual scale. Owen and Maclure were able to gather the capital and influence to carry out an experiment in which to try their ideas on a local scale, but the ideas of the experiment also had an impact on the national scale in the contemporary discourse on education, human nature and religion. Ayers and Nesbit. “Seeing Emancipation.” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 1 (March, 2011), 4, 8. Project Muse.

⁶² William Maclure, “Notice of Mr. Owen’s Establishment in Indiana.” *American Journal of Science and Arts*. Vol. 10. (February, 1826). Quoted in David J McLaren, “Robert Owen, William Maclure and New Harmony,” *History of Education* 25 (1996): 231.

⁶³ David J. McLaren, “Robert Owen, William Maclure and New Harmony,” *History of Education* 25 (1996): 231.

⁶⁴ Edward H. Madden and Dennis W. Madden, “The Great Debate: Alexander Campbell vs. Robert Owen.” *Transactions of the Charles S. Pierce Society*. Vol. 18 (Summer, 1982). Accessed through JSTOR on 21 November 2013. 207-226.; *Robert Owen’s Opening Speech and his Reply to Rev. Alexander Campbell* (Cincinnati, 1829) in Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 228.

in the national discourse. No doubt Owen's affairs after he left New Harmony continued to affect the place the experiment held in the American narrative. Arthur Bestor argues that,

By the end of the 1820s Owenism was identified in the public mind less with communitarianism than with free thought, (because,) ... Conservatives had seized upon the handiest stick to beat the dog, and in the end they created the impression that New Harmony had failed because of its antireligious bias rather than any inherent defect in its economic principles.⁶⁵

While it is true that blame for the failure came to rest upon the anti-religious aspects of the community, it has less to do with the "handiest stick to beat the dog" and more to do with the absorption of Owen's radicalism back into the dominant narrative. By placing blame upon the community's lack of religious leadership, the Christian discourse gained an example of how education without religion and radical ideas about human nature were doomed to fail, something which was fit into the early eighteenth century American discourse more readily than a condemnation of communist economic principles. New Harmony's place was then established within the continuity of the Christian narrative, extolling their views of human nature and the role of religion in society to be more successful than those of anti-religious Robert Owen.

The methods and theories applied to the instruction of youth are intrinsically tied into the worldviews of those creating those theories and are a manifestation of ideological power in society. Although reform was on the mind of many teachers in the early republic, New Harmony posed a particular threat to the Christian discourse of contemporary America because of its combination of subversive ideas about human nature and the role of religion in society. At the time of the New Harmony experiment, Protestant Christianity held much of the ideological power in America and was expressed, engrained, and encouraged through schools. Education was chief among the objects of reform at New Harmony, and was perhaps even placed above economic egalitarianism in its importance to the philosophies of the community's leaders. It was also the most revolutionary issue on the New Harmony reformist agenda because it was the realm in which their radical ideas about human nature and religion had the most impact.

⁶⁵ Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 228.

Bibliography

Archival Sources

Published Essays/Treatises/Discourses:

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The American Scholar." In *Eclectic English Classics by Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Edited by Orren Henry Smith. New York: American Book Company, 1903. Accessed online through Primo by ExLibris.

Essays on Education in the Early Republic. Edited by Frederick Rudolph. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Doggett, Simeon. "A Discourse on Education." 1796. In *Essays*, 149-165.

Knox, Samuel. "An Essay on the Best System of Liberal Education." 1799. In *Essays*, 271-372.

Rush, Benjamin. "Thoughts upon the Mode of Education Proper in a Republic." 1786. In *Essays*, 3-40.

Johnson, Clifton. *Old-Time School Books*. Detroit, MI: Gale Research Company, 1982.

Maclure, William. "Notice of Mr. Owen's Establishment in Indiana." *American Journal of Science and Arts* 10 (February, 1826).

Quoted in McLaren, David J. "Robert Owen, William Maclure and New Harmony." *History of Education* 25 (1996): 231.

"Old Deluder Satan Act." General Court of Massachusetts, 1647, in Noble, Stuart G. *A History of American Education*. New York: Rinehart and Co., 1954.

Owen, Robert. *A New View of Society*. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1927.

Owen, Robert. *Two Discourses on a New System of Society as delivered in the Hall of Representatives of the United States*.

Philadelphia: Atkinson and Alexander, printers, 1825. Accessed at Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

Pestalozzi, Johann. "How Gertude Teaches Her Children." In *Pestalozzi's Educational Writings*. Edited by J.A. Green and Frances A.

Collie. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901. Quoted in Barlow, Thomas A. *Pestalozzi and American Education*.

Boulder, Colorado: Es Este Press, University of Colorado, 1977.

Robert Owen's Opening Speech and his Reply to Rev. Alexander Campbell (Cincinnati, 1829) in Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 228.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Emile; Or Education*. New York: Dutton, 1974.

Journals and Memoirs:

MacDonald, Donald. "Journey to America, 1824-1825" *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, vol. 14. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1944.

MacDonald, Donald. "Second Journey to America, 1825-1826." *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, vol. 14. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1944.

Maclure, William. *The European Journals of William Maclure (1805-1824)*. Edited by John S. Doskey. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1983. Accessed at Manuscripts Collection, Workingmen's Institute, New Harmony, Indiana.

Owen, Robert Dale. *Threading My Way: An Autobiography*. New York: G.W. Carleton and Co., 1967. Accessed at Manuscripts Collection, Workingmen's Institute, New Harmony, IN.

Correspondence:

Maclure-Fretageot Correspondence, Vol. 15 of *Indiana Historical Society Publications*. Edited by Arthur Bestor, Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Society, 1948.

Pears Papers, Vol. 11 of *Indiana Historical Society Publications*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1937.

Newspaper/Periodical:

Christian Advocate. December 1824. Philadelphia. Vol. 2. In Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias*, 125.

New Harmony Gazette, 1824-1827. Vol. 1 and 2 on Microfilm, Inter-Library Loan form East Texas State University Library, Commerce, TX.

Secondary Sources

Ayers and Nesbit. "Seeing Emancipation." *Journal of the Civil War Era* 1 (March, 2011). Project Muse.

Barlow, Thomas A. *Pestalozzi and American Education*. Boulder, Colorado: Estes Press, University of Colorado, 1977.

Bestor, Arthur Eugene Jr. *Backwoods Utopias: The Sectarian and Owenite Phase of American Communitarianism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950.

Depaepe, Marc and Paul Smeyers. "Educationalization as an ongoing Modernization Process." *Educational Theory* 58 (2008): 379-389.

Farrell, Emma L. "The New Harmony Experiment, an Origin of Progressive Education." *Peabody Journal of Education* 15 (May, 1928): 357.

Foucault, Michel. "Docile Bodies," in *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.

Harrison, John F.C. "The Steam Engine of the New Moral World." *Journal of British Studies* 6 (1967).

Horlacher, Rebekka. "Schooling as a means of popular education: Pestalozzi's method as a popular education experiment." *Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education* 47 (2011).

Howell, Martha and Walter Prevenier. *From Reliable Sources*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2001.

Madden, Edward H. and Dennis W Madden. "The Great Debate: Alexander Campbell vs. Robert Owen." *Transactions of the Charles S. Pierce Society*. Vol. 18 (Summer, 1982). Accessed through JSTOR on 21 November 2013. 207-226.

McLaren, David J. "Robert Owen, William Maclure and New Harmony." *History of Education* 25 (1996): 223-233.

Schwitzgebel, Eric. "Human Nature and Moral Education in Mencius, Xunzi, Hobbes, and Rousseau." *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 2 (April, 2007): 147-168.

Pushkin and the Caucasus: Literary Images of Russia's Eastern Frontier

ETHAN HELFRICH

By the closing action of the Crimean War in 1855, Russia was both one of history's largest empires and most politically and socially backward power. Tsar Nicholas I's reactionary policies resulted from the Westernizing trend in the Russian intellectual sphere. Despite the Tsar's attempt to stamp out internal threats, his reign saw the development of an independent intelligentsia whose members are oftentimes associated with the burgeoning literary scene in Russia. Due to the state censorship, literature became the primary method of communicating critique of Russian society and politics. Russia's national poet and progenitor of modern Russian literature, Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, whose works are seen by both his contemporaries and modern day readers as being critical of the Russian state and society, evokes the sense that the individual is dwarfed by the power of the state through his poetry and fiction. Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus" presents two dynamically different societies, Russian and Circassian. For the prisoner, the Caucasus represents a land of freedom where he is able to retreat from all the pressures of high societal life. Despite the narrator's belief in the freeing atmosphere of the Caucasus, he brings with him one of Pushkin's common themes, namely, imperial domination. One must remember that "Prisoner's" narrator is a soldier during the early years of the Caucasian War, which saw the expansion of Russian imperial might further into Asia and the genocide, forced removal, and subjugation of an entire people. Yet Pushkin's depiction of the Caucasus as an untamable land full of savage and unadvanced peoples cemented itself in the Russian popular imagination and propelled other writers to take inspiration from this area. While historians and literary experts accept that Pushkin's short stories and poetry provides social and political critique of Russia, his poem "Prisoner of the Caucasus" affirms Imperialism by creating an "us against other" opposition between Westernized Russian values, religion, and Enlightenment and the savagery of the Caucasian peoples.

The expansion of empire, dating back to Peter I, had already been well established in Russia when Tsar Nicholas I took the throne in 1826. Upon Tsar Nicholas I's coronation, the empire included Finland, the three Baltic nations, most of Poland, Ukraine, Crimea, Georgia, Armenia, Siberia and Central Asia, with the push into the Southern Caucasus only having started a few years prior under Alexander I. Although the Russian nobility had been westernized decades earlier, the Russian diplomat and poet Aleksandr Griboedov describes the peasantry as being a "different tribe, wild, incomprehensible, and strange."¹ For many Westernized Russians, the Caucasus appeared exotic and foreign as it lacked the European lifestyle that the nobility had grown accustomed. Encounters with the Russian peasantry and especially non-Europeans in the Eastern Frontier helped define the nobility's notion of the "us" in contrast to the uncivilized and wild "other." The underlying question for Russia's identity crisis was whether its future was with the West, within Russia, or somewhere else entirely. For this reason, the "other," be it the West or East, was critical in the formulation of what Russians viewed themselves as being different than.

The task of understanding Russian literature's relation to the Caucasus and how it played into Russian identity and empire proves difficult to ascertain, with arguments ranging from using history as a context for study to others taking an approach that incorporates Edward Said's notion of Orientalism into contemplation. The issue with the historical approach is that it does not take into consideration the contemporary Russian response to literary depictions of the Circassians because it is not able to approach the delicate topic of identity and images without first regarding how Pushkin and other writers' stories affected Russian popular opinion. Equally, Orientalism, developed by Edward Said, proves unable to meet the task, with Susan Layton arguing that by using Orientalism as a method of studying Russian perceptions of the Caucasus, we impose a modern ideology upon the conquest by creating an "us" versus "them" mentality.²

Yet despite Layton's apprehension towards using this sort of manner to study Russian images of the Caucasus, there is value in taking on elements of Said's Orientalist approach when incorporating it into the historical context of the conquest, because understanding how Russians self-identified relies very heavily upon how Russians saw themselves as being European, which made them unlike the Asian Circassians. As Layton points out, Pushkin and Lermontov did not write with the intention to "control them [the Caucasians]" through literature, but the writers works do reveal that they were actively aware of the Russian nobility's identity as European being in contrast to the Circassian savagery.³ The presentation of the opposing values and manners of life in Pushkin's poetry create the sense for the

¹ Susan Layton, "Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies of Caucasian Savagery," in *Russia's Orient*, ed. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 81.

² Ibid., 82.

³ Ibid.

Russian reader that they fundamentally differ from the foreign “other.”

While Pushkin was not the first Russian to write about the Caucasus, Scotto argues that his poem “The Prisoner of the Caucasus” had the biggest impact on how Russians perceived the area and marks the beginning of a period of “intensive appropriation of the region by Russian literature,”⁴ as writers began to flock to the Circassian mountains. Pushkin himself came to the region after writing a series of incendiary poems which, upon reaching the ears of the Tsar resulted in him being ordered to leave the capital for a provincial town in Ukraine on the charges of writing illegal revolutionary literature.⁵ In 1820, Pushkin travelled in the Caucasus after having left Ukraine on the suggestion of family friends. In comparison to Russia, Pushkin found the Caucasus more freeing and less constrictive than St. Petersburg, as it lacked both the highly regimented noble life and the politic oppression from the Tsar’s agents and censors. This sense of gained freedom is crucial to Pushkin’s image of the Caucasus, as it became his refuge from Russian society. Serving as inspiration to his poetry, the mountains and plains of the Caucasus became a “mount of inspiration” to a generation of writers, including Mikhail Lermontov and later Leo Tolstoy that followed him in seeking out the Caucasus as a place of freedom and nature.⁶

Before delving into Pushkin’s depiction of the Caucasus, it must be noted that Pushkin did not fully take in all of the ethnography and geographical locations of the Caucasus into consideration when writing “Prisoner of the Caucasus.”⁷ Layton argues that Pushkin mentally confuses the different peoples, locations, and even customs and religions of the Caucasus, forming one single imaginative picture of Caucasian life. Even the term “Circassian,” which Pushkin uses to describe the tribe that take his narrator captive is not completely correct, as the people from the Northwestern Caucasus, where Pushkin largely resided and wrote about, identified themselves as being Adyge.⁸ While the northwestern portion of Circassia was a predominantly Muslim region, which Pushkin highlights in his poem, it did not offer the same sort of religious-based resistance that Chechnya or Dagestan, the two regions most targeted by the Russian military, put up. Disregarding the actual differences between the various peoples of the Caucasus, Pushkin creates a romantic and idealized “Circassian” that only exists within literature and the imaginations of the readers at home in Russia who may have never been the region and know very little about it. Yet for the purpose of this paper, the terms Circassian, mountaineers, and Caucasians will be used as it is the terminology that Pushkin utilized.

Even with subsequent scientific and ethnographical studies that resulted from the expansion of empire in the Caucasus, which includes Semen Bronevskii’s book *A New Geography and History of the Caucasus* published in 1823, the romantic image of the Circassian continued to live on within the Russian popular imagination.⁹ The ensuing popularity of Pushkin’s reimagining of the Caucasus certainly says something about the power of literature being able to sway people’s views and beliefs about certain parts of the world. Prior to Pushkin’s poems about the Caucasus, this part of the world remained relatively unbeknown to most Russians. After Pushkin published “Prisoner of the Caucasus,” the Eastern frontier saw an increase in interest and travel by Russians who were enamored with Pushkin’s poetic description of the mountains.

Pushkin’s poem tells the story of a young officer who was captured while on duty and taken as a prisoner to a small mountain village in the unoccupied Circassian territory. As the victorious Circassians march their bound and half-alive Russian prisoner through the village, the townsfolk bombard him with curses and angry outbursts in a degrading scene that is reminiscent of the kind of victory parades of Ancient Rome. The allusion to a Roman styled spectacle in “Prisoners” has some relation to how the Russian high command in the Caucasus saw themselves as Roman generals combatting and bringing civilization to the barbarians on the fringe of the empire’s borders.¹⁰ Pushkin inverts the image of the glorious procession by reversing the roles of the savage as the victor and conqueror as the captive, thereby changing the event from a moment of celebration into one of shame, degradation, and dishonor on the part of the Russian officer. To further increase the narrator’s humiliation of being a prisoner, the Circassians leave the Russian outside on a hill overlooking the village with his wounds from the ambush left unattended. For an officer and a noble accustomed to European codes of honor and ethics in warfare, the Circassians’ disregard for the Western conception of the rights of prisoners reflect their status as savages in Pushkin’s poem. Charles King elaborates on this by saying that the official position of the Russian command was to “use barbaric tactics against the barbarians themselves,”¹¹ revealing

⁴ Peter Scotto, “Prisoner of the Caucasus: Ideologies of Imperialism in Lermontov’s *Bela*,” *PMLA* 107, no. 2 (1992): 246-260, 247.

⁵ D.S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999), 84.

⁶ Alexander Pushkin, “Prisoner of the Caucasus,” <http://faculty.washington.edu/jdwest/russ430/prisoner.pdf> 131.

⁷ Layton, “Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies,” 84.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁰ King, *The Ghost of Freedom*, 46.

that the military viewed the Circassian opposition to Russian rule as akin to barbarity. Since the mountain tribes did not fight in a European manner, the situation forced Russia to fight in an equally brutal fashion.¹²

Yet for the Circassians, Pushkin suggests that severity was a way of life and a part of their nature. The festival scene in the poem highlights this fact exactly, where a group of men release their anger out on slaves. The Russian prisoner reasons that the Circassians exist primarily to wage war and that peacetime bores them, resulting in them turning towards “crueler sport.”¹³ Although the brutality that makes up mountaineer life serves as a shocking reminder to Russian readers that these people are not like “us,” Pushkin comes to respect Circassian strength and the pride they feel in their martial ability. Pushkin’s praise of the Caucasus peoples drastically differs from earlier accounts that vilified the Circassians as a band of violent tribesmen.

Contrary to Eighteenth Century expeditionary reports that describe the Caucasian mountaineers as being murderous pillagers and brigands,¹⁴ Pushkin’s Circassians are reimagined and endowed with a noble spirit that manifests itself in their strength and independence as a proud warlike people who live simplistic lives in the mountains. In the several decades that followed the Russian explorers’ remarks about the Caucasus that they delivered to Catherine II, what changed was not the Circassians themselves, but the manner by which they were perceived and the individuals who were studying them. Considering that under Catherine II, the Russian Empire expanded its borders into Europe and further into Asia, the military expedition in the Caucasus carried with it a different objective, consequently coming to different conclusions than Pushkin on the nature of the Circassians. The expeditionary forces were faced with political and military questions like how the Circassians would respond to Russian expansion, tactical movements, and potential for trade, among other matters crucial to Russia’s involvement in the Caucasus. While Layton provides little information on the expedition’s experiences in the Caucasus, their objective was not artistic, but rather practical.

Pushkin, unlike the soldiers sent out on an expedition, did not go to the Caucasus for economic or military reasons, but rather to experience the exoticness of frontier life. As stated previously, Pushkin found the Caucasus to be not only immensely freeing and invigorating in comparison to St. Petersburg, but also a source of inspiration. It was in the Caucasus where he first encountered the works of Byron, who had a tremendous impact on the young poet’s life.¹⁵ Byron’s depictions of the valiant Albanian’s conflict with the Ottoman Empire in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* served as a creative muse for Pushkin’s reimagining of the Circassians as a noble cast of savages defending their mountainous homes.¹⁶ Like the Albanians, the Circassians were also highlanders living in the remoteness of their mountain homes, independent of outside powers and influences, aside from their adoption of Islam and other aspects of Turkish culture centuries ago. The Circassian’s defense of their homeland and ways of life from invaders impressed upon Pushkin the sense that the Caucasian peoples felt proud of their independence from foreign domination.

The Circassians’ status as a warrior people is fundamental to Pushkin’s imagining of the notion of Caucasian freedom in that their very livelihood depended on continual conflict. Pushkin stresses that the Circassians’ natural occupation is war and that they are ready at moment’s notice to ride off to fight in order to preserve their way of life. While the Circassians’ inclinations towards violence have already been touched upon, warfare provides the mountaineers with an outlet for their natural propensities. Being that Pushkin claims that their natural state is in conflict, warfare affirms Circassian existence. In reality though, warfare was a constant source of survival for the Circassians, as their lands possessed very little resources, meaning that raiding the steppes to the north of the Caucasus was a viable method of securing food and goods.¹⁷

In Pushkin’s depictions of Circassian life, war and violence is intertwined in every aspect. At several points, Pushkin describes the noble Circassians mounted on their steeds in armor as they ride off to another raid or the daring nighttime ambush on Cossack outposts. Even in village life, martial ability is praised above all else, which is shown when the young women sing a folk song, which Pushkin created entirely for the story, celebrating a Circassian raid. Above all else, Pushkin’s Circassians value war and the glory it brings them, such as the pride they felt by taking the narrator captive because they admire his courage and indifference to their savagery.¹⁸

By positing warfare as the essence of Circassian nature, Pushkin’s tribesmen affirm their existence through conflict and fighting. Russia’s subjugation of the Caucasus, the “putting aside the arrows of war” as Pushkin terms it,

¹¹ King, *The Ghost of Freedom*, 46.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Pushkin, “Prisoner of the Caucasus,” 139.

¹⁴ Layton, “Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies,” 85.

¹⁵ D.S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature*, 84.

¹⁶ Layton, “Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies,” 85.

¹⁷ Alexander Polunov, *Russia in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: ME. Sharpe, 2005), 74-75.

¹⁸ Pushkin, “Prisoner of the Caucasus,” 139.

renders their purpose as a nation invalid, making them another subject under Russian imperial rule.¹⁹ Contrasting Pushkin's certitude about the Circassians' purpose, the *raison d'être* for Russian nobility appears less clear than that of the mountaineers. Despite giving the reader only a small amount of information about the narrator's relationship with Russian society, it is extremely telling of how life in St. Petersburg dynamically differs from life in the Caucasus. For the narrator, society had been nothing but a source of grief, betrayal, and anger, where his activities consisted of dueling, drinking, romancing, and intrigue. The narrator reminisces of the arguments and fights that he had with others at home in Russia; however, the sort of conflict the prisoner engaged in lacked the danger and excitement of the Circassian's struggles for independence. Without the sort of existential threat to their lifestyle, the Russian purpose becomes much more superficial and inherently lacking in meaning in comparison to the natural man of the Caucasus. By living in closer connection to the perceived European idea of a natural state, the Circassians lack the sorts of social constrictions and etiquette of the Westernized Russian nobles, which is what Pushkin means by the term Circassian freedom; the freedom from the lack of social and political constraints placed upon the individual by society and the state.

Despite the freedom the Circassians experience through war, Pushkin gives insight into their experiences during peaceful times. When all of the warriors leave the village on a raid, we see the daily life of the Circassians; great-grandfathers smoking while the young women work and sing.²⁰ Pushkin also describes the village children as being "naked, dark skinned," which is the first instance of any racial distinctions of the Circassians, where they had previously all been cultural and religious. Another difference was that the Russians perceived Asians as being a people who survived only through pillaging and hunting;²¹ however Pushkin shatters this belief by referencing that the villagers tended to their fields during the day.²² Through breaking the Russian stereotype of Asians being too savage and uncivilized to farm, Pushkin brings his readers closer to the Circassians and leaves them with the understanding that they are capable of civilizing to some degree. In another instance of this, Pushkin relays a story of the hospitality given to a warrior upon returning from battle by a different village as he makes his way home. Keeping in mind the question of Russian identity, the inclusion of these vignettes of Circassian life serve as a reference point by which the nobility is able to relate them to the simpler element of their society, the peasantry, who was often regarded as equally foreign as the Circassians. Like the Circassians, the Russian peasantry was seen by many urban nobles as uncultured and backwards rural dwellers. By relating Circassian agriculture and hospitality to the Russian serfs, Pushkin draws a parallel between their lives and experiences.

For his Russian readers, the Circassian with his bow and his exotic festivals and mannerisms seem completely foreign when compared to the high society life that both Pushkin and his narrator come from. Layton even cites one Russian reviewer by the name of Nikolai Grech as having said that "Prisoner of the Caucasus" sends the reader to a "poetic land which saw Prometheus's suffering and the sojourn of the Greek Argonauts."²³ With reviews like this, it is no wonder that many young Russian nobles imbued with "daydreams about the Caucasus's pristine terrain and valiant tribesmen" joined the military in order to travel to the Caucasus and experience the robust Circassian freedom.²⁴ Mikhail Lermontov even states that at the military academy in St. Petersburg, Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus" was read more frequently than the officer training materials.²⁵

Yet for many of these young and idealistic officers who fled to the Caucasus, life there did not resemble Pushkin's poem. Instead, the freedom they sought was replaced with highly regimented military life and bureaucracy. While expecting valiant battles with the Circassians and free time to explore nature, the majority of the soldiers' time spent was in waiting.²⁶ The misjudgment of these young military men obsessed with the romantic Caucasus resulted from Pushkin's poetic depictions and his own overestimation of the threat that the Circassians posed to Russia. Although depicted as bloodthirsty savages who attack any foreigner, the reality was that for the larger part of the northern Caucasus, where the Russian administrative machine was fully functioning, very little conflict actually took place and was not seen as a primary threat in terms of Russian foreign policy.

In 1817, Russia began its first serious push into the Caucasus, which would spark a conflict that officially lasted until 1864, although opposition to Russian occupation continued on into modern times. In terms of foreign policy, the guiding factor in Russia's actions was, as Paul Valliere contends, an Eastern Question.²⁷ Tsar Nicholas I is famously

¹⁹ Pushkin, "Prisoner of the Caucasus," 147.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 143.

²¹ Layton, "Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies," 86.

²² Pushkin, "Prisoner of the Caucasus," 136.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Layton, "Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies," 91.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 93.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

attributed as having referred to the Ottoman Empire as the “sick man of Europe,” and, after a series of disastrous wars and financial hardships, it had become apparent that the Ottomans were in decline. Waning Turkish power and influence provoked Russia to look more carefully at its borders and dealings with the Turks in the Black Sea region, as this area was Russia’s primary trade outlet to its partners in the West. For this reason, Russia saw itself as having the potential to step up and become the primary and dominant power in the area. While Persia claimed a significant portion of the Caucasus prior to making territorial concessions to Russia at the conclusion of the Russo-Persian War, the Ottomans had the greatest influence in the region due to their close proximity and religious and cultural ties to the Circassians. The campaign in the Caucasus that Pushkin’s narrator is a part of must be viewed as an operation intended to remove Turkish influence and presence in the region in order to establish Russian imperial rule. Because of this, Layton rightly contends that Pushkin overplays the threat posed by the Circassians towards Russia and that the antagonism between the two comes not from the Caucasus, but from Russia.²⁸

Pushkin’s arrival in the Caucasus took place three years after the beginning of the brutal campaign of subjugation by General Aleksey Ermolov, whose name to this day conjures up hatred from people in the Caucasus. Charles King describes Ermolov as being “the quintessential frontier conqueror” and having led an extensive campaign of terror in an attempt to break the Caucasians and bring them under Russian rule.³⁰ The policies undertaken by Ermolov and his officers consisted of a series of systematic deportations, destruction of villages, kidnappings, and mass killings, which became the blueprints for Russia’s further expansion and the removal of native peoples in the Caucasus in the years that followed.³¹ As an esteemed veteran of the Napoleonic Wars and a skilled artillery commander, Ermolov brought with him modern firepower, tactics, and technology, and in the process, made the battlefield completely uneven for the Circassians. While Pushkin refers to the Caucasus mountaineers’ ancestors as being related to Mongols and even refers to the horsemen riding off to war as a horde, the only military action the reader is presented is the story of the stealthy Circassian sneaking up on a drowsing Cossack guard at night. Considering that the Russian and Circassian irregular guerilla forces were unequal in terms of technology and ability, the resistance to occupation transformed into a full on guerilla war for the Circassians.

Guerilla ambushes and nighttime raids changed the dynamic of Russian warfare from the open fields combined arms European model that arose during the Napoleonic Wars to a smaller scale which emphasized a series of forts where mobile Cossack units could be deployed to engage raiders. Yet this method was complicated by the Circassians’ development of alternative strategies to raid forts using stealthier means. While Pushkin praises the Circassians’ martial abilities and cunningness, the effects prove degrading, and in the long run, deadly. Following the triumphs of the Napoleonic Wars, Russian military machismo was at its zenith, and having been accustomed to that style of warfare, the frustration and the uncertainty that comes with guerilla warfare caused resentment amongst the Russian and Cossack ranks and a tendency to associate the mountaineers with negative traditionally feminine characteristics such as cowardice and lacking honor.³² The gendering of the “other” plays a prominent role in Said’s *Orientalism* argument, which purports that while weak, the “other” poses as a dangerous threat to “us.” In Pushkin’s “Prisoner,” the Circassians certainly prove themselves as a capable foe to the Russian occupiers, but their methods of combat can be considered stealthy, treacherous, and scheming in comparison to the Russian forces. Equally, the behavior of the Circassians at the Bairam festival that Pushkin vividly describes can also be viewed as a gendering moment, where tribesmen decapitate slaves because they lacked emotional restraint, a characteristic noble males would be expected to take into account. The narrator contemplates the Circassians violence and his own past of fighting duels, but remarks that his were fought under a code of honor that demanded that he receive satisfaction from a wrong doing, all of which have been constrained and determined through a chivalrous code.³³ The behavior of the Circassians lacked the honor and dignity of the European model and resulted from an utter lack of restraint, which was codified in the European noble’s honor system, further dividing the line between the “us” and the “other.”

The mythos of the feminine Circassian “other” which Pushkin helps create dynamically opposes the masculine image of the Russian officer. This feminine force is represented by the Circassian maiden character that falls in love with the officer during his imprisonment. Layton argues that the village girl’s love for the Russian is representative of a greater trend in Western literature that was inspired by colonial encounters, where a native woman falls for a European

²⁷ Paul Valliere, *Change and Tradition in Russian Civilization* (Westland, MI: Hayden-McNeil Publishing, 1995), 65.

²⁸ Layton, “Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies,” 85-86.

²⁹ Scotto, “Ideologies of Imperialism,” 249.

³⁰ King, *The Ghost of Freedom*, 46.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

³² *Ibid.*, 47.

³³ Pushkin, “Prisoner of the Caucasus,” 139.

man even without speaking to him.³⁴ This would suggest that the feminine character sees something inherently dominant and superior in the masculine European which causes her to gravitate towards him. While Layton disagrees with looking at Russian literary depictions of the Caucasus through a purely Orientalist lens, the relationship between the Russian and the native has much in common with how the Russian Empire viewed its relations with its dominions. The Tsar was the autocratic and patriarchal figure within Russia before whom the foreign non-Christian savages were expected to bow down.³⁵ Through conversion to Orthodoxy and acceptance of Russian culture, conquered peoples could become Russian and accepted into the empire. This process of transformation parallels the actions in "Prisoners," whereupon the maiden accepts that her Russian lover could not reciprocate her love and drowns herself to become Russian. Suicide by drowning had become embedded in the Russian literary tradition since its origins in Nikolai Karamzin's "Poor Liza," and by ending her life in such a manner, it Russifies her in a literary sense, making the Russian reader empathize with her and pity her tragic situation of having been brought up amongst the savage Circassians. At the moment before her death, the narrator begs her to leave "this terrible country together," to which she declines by saying that he has already given her happiness.³⁶ By committing suicide, the maiden rejects her Circassian birth in favor of loving the narrator, but because of their different backgrounds, they are unable to be together in the end. Here, Pushkin appears to be suggesting that if real Russian feeling and emotion can be conveyed to the savages, then they will give up their native ways in favor of the apparent superiority of Russian life, culture, and art.

The maiden's death heralds the metaphorical death of the Caucasus by the hands of the Russian Empire. In his epilogue, Pushkin glorifies the conquest and subjugation of the Circassians using violent language and comparing the destruction in the Caucasus with the likes of the Black Death.³⁷ His accounts of the slaughter in the mountains horrified many of his readers, with one veteran of the 1812 campaign and literary critic by the name of Petr Viazemskii writing in a letter that "poetry should never be the ally of butchers."³⁸ In that same letter, Viazemskii ponders over whether Russia's mission in the Caucasus was to spread Enlightenment or senseless slaughter. Despite Viazemskii's objections to the violent measures taken in the Caucasus, the official Tsarist purpose for Russia's expansion into the Caucasus was earlier discussed as being based around the Eastern Question in Russian politics, but the campaign that Ermolov and his following successors waged sought to establish a modern administrative system to ensure the safety of trade in the region with its close ally Persia.³⁹ Pushkin sent his brother a letter in 1820 that celebrates the work that Ermolov has done in the region by stating that the roads are safer for travel and that he hopes that through further expansion, closer ties with Persia and India will be made.⁴⁰ In the Caucasus, Russia experienced its first encounter with modern imperial rule, as the policies carried out in the Black Seas region represent a first for Russian imperial rule.

Historian Charles King places responsibility of Russia's becoming a modern imperial power in terms of the methods used to subdue native peoples and the incorporation of conquered lands into a centralized state squarely on Ermolov.⁴¹ Prior to Ermolov, Russia's approach towards the Caucasus had been to allow the native inhabitants to have autonomy and follow its own traditions of self-rule so long as they pledge loyalty to the Tsar. Autonomy had generally been the Russian Empire's rule of thumb for the majority of its imperial possessions, as it eased the need for a large imperial structure and hierarchy of rule; however, in the case of the Caucasus, the Tsarist policies diverged from the past and are representative of the newly devised system. While citizenship remained a touchy topic in Russia because it was seen as a dangerous Western European Republican concept, in the Eastern provinces, a sort of proto-citizenship began to emerge through the Russian lead development of civic institutions that incorporated the local native nobility. However, this process proved difficult for Russia as the natives did not always take the European values that were being imposed upon them well.⁴² Russia's Eastern provinces proved difficult to incorporate into the European model of empire that it was trying to emulate, the same one that Great Britain and France had been implementing in Africa and East Asia. Further frustrating Russia's efforts in the Caucasus, the empire's relative success in achieving stability in Finland and the Baltic provinces left authorities questioning why progress was stalled in Black Sea Region.

Interestingly enough, the Russian imperial approach to the Caucasus completely contrasts the situation of Finland under Tsarist Russia. Following the defeat of Sweden at the hands of Russia in 1809 during the Finnish War, Finland was

³⁴ Layton, "Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies," 87.

³⁵ Michael Khodarkovsky, "Ignoble Savages and Unfaithful Subjects: Constructing Non-Christian Identities in Early Modern Russia," in *Russia's Orient*, ed. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 11.

³⁶ Pushkin, "Prisoner of the Caucasus," 145.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 147.

³⁸ Layton, "Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies," 88.

³⁹ King, *The Ghost of Freedom*, 46.

⁴⁰ Scotto, "Ideologies of Imperialism," 249.

⁴¹ King, *The Ghost of Freedom*, 46.

⁴² Dov Yaroshevski, "Empire and Citizenship," in *Russia's Orient*, ed. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 68-70.

transferred to Russian rule, which in turned established the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland. In an appearance in the Finnish Riksdag in 1809, Tsar Alexander I addressed the future of Finland within the empire by saying that he would rule Finland in accordance with its traditions and laws, allowing them full autonomy so long as they remained loyal to him.⁴³ Like the Caucasus, Finland was also relatively backwards in comparison to more advanced Western nations; however, unlike the Caucasus, for the majority of Finland's history, it had been under foreign rule and had not experienced the same sort of self-rule as the Caucasus peoples. Yet despite this, Russian imperial authorities argued that since Finland had been under Swedish rule for so long and the ruling elites were either Swedish or Swedish speaking Finns, the Finns would be capable of running their own affairs.

Conversely, Russia's decision against granting the Circassians autonomy hits upon the question of whether or not Asians were able to progress historically like Europeans. The imperial authorities' belief in the inability of the Circassians to progress historically has its origins in the theories of social evolution that were in vogue amongst Europe's intellectual scene.⁴⁴ In the specific case of Russia, the philosopher Petr Chaadaev contemplated Russia's place in history and whether it, like Western Europe, was also capable of the sort of progress taking place in the West or doomed to a non-historical status like that of the peoples of Asia. Chaadaev concluded that Russia, like the Caucasus, was a nation forgotten by history and unable to move forward collectively.⁴⁵ To many educated and Western-minded Russian intellectuals, Russia appeared to lag behind the West, as it still clung to increasingly antiquated social and political systems, namely the lack of political participation, the authority of the autocracy, and the institution of serfdom. Chaadaev's foreboding assertion that Russia lacked the means to progress caused a wave of unrest within the Russian intelligentsia, dividing it internally between those who found Russia's destiny in the West and those who looked inward to Orthodoxy and Slavic traditions, and resulted in Chaadaev being declared mentally insane by the court system.⁴⁶ While the Russian intelligentsia debated the future of Russia, they generally considered the Caucasus as what Scotto refers to as a "blank [spot] on the map,"⁴⁷ meaning that it had little to no significance in world affairs and historical progression.

The argument for Russia's lack of history contended that the Caucasians' social relationships had not progressed past familial and tribal ties, whereas the West had already moved from civil society into the modern state with a robust and active citizenry.⁴⁸ From this arose the dynamic between nations with a history and those who were historical in themselves, which was differentiated by the prior being capable of progression while the latter existed as their ancestors had. The language that Pushkin uses in "Prisoner of the Caucasus" emphasize that the Circassians still retained every aspect of "their ancestral ways," and that only through Russian domination that they will lay down their ancient mode of life and be assimilated into the Russian Empire.⁴⁹ Assimilation could take place only after Russia had crushed any indigenous opposition, and once this process had taken place, then inoculation of Western values, administration, and values would soon follow.

In terms of empire, theories of social progress and history enabled the Tsarist authorities to justify expansion by claiming that their mission was to spread Enlightenment in order to help advance, which is typified by Viazemskii's letter that questioned whether Enlightenment could be spread through the violence depicted in Pushkin's work. For many young and liberal thinking Russians, the Caucasus represented the possibility for the fruition of their social and political ideals, which Yaroshevski provides examples for by describing the social policies of frontier administrators.⁵⁰ In attempts to establish a civil society, provincial governors often followed the social philosophy of the Russian philosopher and historian Konstantin Nevolin, which sought to establish a trickle-down social order with the bottom rungs of the tribal society working in a hierarchy with the Russian imperial authorities at the leading position.⁵¹ Nevolin believed that Russians were naturally superior in terms of social and historical progression, and therefore, the Circassians would naturally follow the Russian lead. This same argument was also used for the incorporation of the Baltic provinces under a similar assumption that after time, small and backwards people within the empire would slowly be assimilated into Russian culture and society. The Circassian maiden in "Prisoners" provides a clear example of belief in the natural superiority of Westernized Russians, as she gives herself to the narrator and professes her undying love for a man with whom she can barely even communicate. Despite the Russian's status as a being a prisoner of the Circassians, the true captive ends up being the young girl who selflessly sacrifices herself for the noble Russian officer may go free after having experienced his love.

⁴³ T.K. Derry, *A History of Scandinavia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979), 207.

⁴⁴ Yaroshevski, "Empire and Citizenship," 67.

⁴⁵ Andrej Walicki, *Russian Social Thought: An Introduction to the Intellectual History of Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Stanford, CA: Kimberly Press, 1977), 7.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Scotto, "Ideologies of Imperialism," 248.

⁴⁸ Yaroshevski, "Empire and Citizenship," 67.

⁴⁹ Pushkin, "Prisoner of the Caucasus," 147.

⁵⁰ Yaroshevski, "Empire and Citizenship," 68.

⁵¹ Ibid.

The reality of Russia's campaign to spread Enlightenment to Caucasus proved deadly for both the natives and the Russian military forces. The brutal and systematic destruction that Ermolov brought to the region set in motion resentment that still lasts to this day within Chechnya and Dagestan. Upon returning to the Caucasus in 1829, Pushkin faced the grim reality of the Caucasian War which he had glorified nine years earlier. In a travel journal entry, Pushkin notes that "The Circassians hate us. We have forced them from their pasturelands; their villages have been devastated, whole tribes destroyed."⁵² The deteriorating situation in Caucasus forces Pushkin to reconsider the methods used by Ermolov, seeing now that there may be a higher moral means to bring the Circassians under Russian control through conversion to Orthodoxy. On the contrary, religious differences between the Russian conquerors and Muslim strongholds in Chechnya and Dagestan proved inflammatory and a major source of resistance for the natives. Equally, conversion to Christianity did not earn the Circassians any more respect from the Russian authorities aside from the promotion to a slightly higher social standing in the frontier hierarchy, where pagans and Muslims occupied the lowest rung.⁵³ While under the imperial system, religion played a large role in the formation of non-Russian ethnic identities and place within the hierarchical system, other factors such as military service, lifestyle, and taxation were taken into account, which meant that only through adoption of Russian culture, religion, and language could the Circassians elevate themselves to even be considered Enlightened by Russian terms. This consequently meant the death of their native ways.

Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus" provided his contemporary readers with a temporary mental retreat from the superficialities and overbearing nature of Russian society to somewhere far removed from the Western world and closer to nature. His romantic Caucasus lived on within the Russian popular imagination and was the source of inspiration for other writers who sought to appropriate the "Circassian freedom," alongside all of the youthful officers who joined the military enamored by his poetic waxing of this lost and natural world. Yet in the process of reimagining the Circassian as a noble savage living in nature, Pushkin creates a binary opposition between the Enlightened Westernized Russians and the tribal and vicious Asians. Playing greatly into the social theories and insecurities felt by Russian intellectuals about Russia's future, the Caucasus and its people in "Prisoner" provide the foreign "other" for which Russia's identity as a European power can be based upon. The expansion of empire and the direct contact with non-Russians allow for Pushkin to formulate this "other." The continuation of the romantic image of the Caucasus bending its knee to Russia, as in the epilogue, affirms the acceptance of empire within Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus."

⁵² Scotto, "Ideologies of Imperialism," 250.

⁵³ Yaroshevski, "Empire and Citizenship," 21.

Bibliography

Derry, T.K. *A History of Scandinavia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979.

Khodarkovsky, Michael. "Ignoble Savages and Unfaithful Subjects: Constructing Non-Christian Identities in Early Modern Russia." In *Russia's Orient*. Edited by Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001.

King, Charles. *The Ghost of Freedom*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Layton, Susan. "Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies of Caucasian Savagery." In *Russia's Orient*. Edited by Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001.

Mirsky, D.S. *A History of Russian Literature*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999.

Polunov, Alexander. *Russia in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: ME. Sharpe Inc, 2005

Pushkin, Alexander. "Prisoner of the Caucasus." <http://faculty.washington.edu/jdwest/russ430/prisoner.pdf>

Scotto, Peter. "Prisoner of the Caucasus: Ideologies of Imperialism in Lermontov's *Bela*," *PMLA* 107, no. 2 (1992): 246-260.

Valliere, Paul. *Change and Tradition in Russian Civilization*. Westland, MI: Hayden-McNeil Publishing, 1995.

Walicki, Andrej. *Russian Social Thought: An Introduction to the Intellectual History of Nineteenth-Century Russia*. Stanford, CA: Kimberly Press, 1977.

Yaroshevski, Dov. "Empire and Citizenship." In *Russia's Orient*. Edited by Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001

"I don't think I'm bad, although I do things she would probably frown upon":

Tensions between a Mother and Daughter in the Transformative Society of the 1960s

RACHEL CHRISTINE FULK

American women who came of age during the 1960s experienced expanded expectations and fewer limitations than their mothers—women who had grown up during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s and who abided by a much more restrictive and family-oriented culture. Wini Breines, herself an adolescent during the 1950s and the author of *Young, White and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties*, explains that the factor that led to these differences in the lives of women in the new generation, the generation of the '60s, was individuality. The women of the '60s generation were able to become individualistic to an extent that had never been seen before by women—an extent that greatly surpassed the generation of their mothers. It was this newly allowed ability for women to be individual that accounted for the great leap that took place between the '50s/previous decades generation culture and the '60s generation culture. Breines clarifies this point, writing, "Women, in other words, were able to join men in a culture based on individual desire at the expense of traditional institutions, including family and community."¹ The constraints that had been placed upon the past generations of women, both economic and family restraints, were lifted and the new generation was free to explore and participate in American society.

At this same time, and as a result of the growing feminist movement within American society, the United States Army made considerable progress towards, according to Kara Dixon Vuic, "positioning itself on the side of progressive change in the lives of women."² Through changes made within the Army Nurse Corps, traditional regulations were lifted and women who served as nurses were able to have both careers and families, ending the "discriminatory policies" that limited nurses' careers if they got married or became pregnant.³ Vuic explains, "Through these changing regulations, then, the army accepted an equal rights approach to women that pervaded much of society in the 1960s and 1970s."⁴ Nurses in the army, similar to civilian women in America, experienced the 1960s as an era of fewer limitations. Women, nurses or not, were able to experience a life of greater freedom and choices as a result of the removal of long-held, traditional regulations and expectations.

Karren Mundell, a nurse in the Army Nurse Corps, embodies the women who emerged from the social movements of the 1960s and an examination of her writing from the time reveals that these women defined self-improvement differently and were much more free to seek self-fulfillment and participation within society. In contrast, the women of the previous generations had built their lives upon family and domesticity and it was from these that they achieved their self-fulfillment and a sense of happiness.

The correspondence between Mundell and her family in Frankfort, Indiana, that was maintained from 1966 to 1967 while Mundell was serving in Vietnam, shows the effects that individuality had on her generation.⁵ This correspondence is housed at the Indiana Historical Society and contains the letters that Mundell sent home. It creates a detailed picture of the ideological and cultural changes that occurred between the older and younger generation when Mundell's actions and beliefs in Vietnam were countered in response by letters from her mother in Frankfort. Although the response letters are not part of the collection, much can be inferred by what Mundell says in reply; at times, she even includes quotes or passages from the letter to which she is replying. Through a description of her own life, including her divorce, decision to go abroad, career aspirations and feelings on marriage, Mundell demonstrates the differences between the attitudes and values of the older generation versus her own generation.

Karren Mundell was born in 1943 and, until she was twenty-three, lived a life that was standard for white, middle-class women of that time.⁶ Mundell grew up in the town of Frankfort, Indiana, and attended Indiana Nursing School in Indianapolis. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing in 1965 and took a position at

¹ Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 82.

² Kara Dixon Vuic, "'I'm afraid we're going to have to just change our ways': Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy in the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War." *Signs: Journal Of Women In Culture & Society* 32, no. 4 (Summer 2007): 1019.

³ Vuic, "Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy," 1020.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1019.

⁵ Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967," Overview. Finding Aid.

⁶ *Ibid.*

the IU Medical Center working on the Labor and Delivery floor. In 1963, when Mundell was twenty, she married a doctor. The marriage was not to last, however, and only two years later Mundell was a divorcée. With the divorce, Mundell's life took a drastic change of course; in 1966, at the age of twenty-three, Mundell signed up for the Army Nurse Corps.⁷ She was the first woman in the Army Nurse Corps from Indiana who asked for direct assignment to Vietnam.⁸

The buildup of American forces in Vietnam had started in 1965 and, by the time that Mundell arrived, there would be over 300 nurses already there with a request pending by the United States Department of Defense for 700 more female nurses.⁹ Altogether, the eleven-year involvement of the United States in Vietnam (1962-1973) would reach a peak strength of 900 Army Nurse Corps officers and 5,000 nurses in 1969.¹⁰ Seemingly, there were never enough nurses to fulfill the great need during wartime. According to Vuic, this need for nurses assisted the army's move towards progressiveness, especially in regards to allowing in women with dependents. Vuic explains, "Given that the corps desperately needed nurses as the war in Vietnam escalated, some regulations had to change. Thus, along with changing regulations on marriage for army nurses came changing regulations on pregnancy."¹¹ In 1964, Executive Order 10,240, which was put forth in 1951 and reinforced the regulations that all nurses who were pregnant or became a parent of children under eighteen would be discharged, was replaced when the Army Nurse Corps realized that it inhibited recruitment.¹² New policies were put into place that allowed women with dependents between the ages of fifteen and eighteen to request waivers for assignment, and in the late '60s, women who were pregnant or with younger dependents than the previously stated fifteen years were allowed to fill out a waiver.¹³ This move by the army to allow mothers into the Nurse Corps signified a new belief of the time: that women were capable of having careers outside of marriage and motherhood. Lilian Dunlop, who worked in the Army Nurse Corps assignment branch and later became chief of the Army Nurse Corps, explained, "The position we took was that if the individual demonstrated the ability to manage her affairs after the baby was born, and we felt that she could manage this situation, we granted permission."¹⁴ Nurses in the Corps, beginning in the 1960s, were no longer limited to a career or a family. They now could have it all.

In April 1966, Mundell left for basic training camp at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. Her port-call came in May, and in June, Mundell arrived at the 3rd Surgical Hospital in Beinh Hoa, Vietnam. She was stationed there from 1966 to 1967. The hospital was small, with only sixty beds, but this was important because it meant that the medical personnel could move rapidly and treat quickly. The 3rd Surgical only did emergency life or limb saving surgeries. According to the Mundell, the 3rd Surgical unit was "probably the best in Vietnam."¹⁵ Throughout her year in Vietnam, Mundell consistently wrote home to her parents in Indiana. Examining her correspondence reveals that the nurse had developed greatly different aspirations, views, and beliefs than those held by the nursing-student she had been years before, marking a transformation from the family-oriented women of the pre-'60s generation to the individualistic women of the '60s generation. This change is described in Breines' research, in which the author explains: "White, middle class women grew up learning in their families' ways of being in and thinking about the world that were appropriate for earlier circumstances, receiving all the while contrary cues from the larger culture."¹⁶ In Frankfort, Mundell had lived a life that was appropriate for earlier circumstances, where women were fulfilled by getting married and starting a family. Once abroad, however, Mundell embraced the larger culture of social and cultural changes. Because of this changing society and cul-

⁷ Kara Dixon Vuic's *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War*, and Heather Marie Stur's *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era* provide a thorough look into the Army Nurse Corps through the personal accounts of nurses who describe their lives before, during and after their service.

⁸ Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967," Overview. Finding Aid.

⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Carolyn Feller and Major Constance J. Moore, eds., *Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps* (Washington D.C.: US Army Center of Military History, 1995), 40.

¹⁰ Feller and Moore, *Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps*, 45.

¹¹ Vuic, "Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy," 1008.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 1009.

¹⁵ Karren Mundell, June 16, 1966. Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967." Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 2.

¹⁶ Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 48.

ture, she became radically different than her mother, Virginia Long Mundell, who was born in 1921.¹⁷ These contrasting expectations and lifestyles of Mundell and her mother reveal much about the differences between women of the 1960s generation, Karren, and the generations that preceded the '60s, Virginia.

The restraints that most women of generations prior to the 1960s had to deal with were regarding family or economic restrictions that arose from these women gaining their sense of purpose from domesticity and family-rearing. Women of the pre-1960s generations also were restrained by their desire to feel safe—a desire that stemmed from the decades of economic turmoil that surrounded the Great Depression, two devastating World Wars, and the threat of nuclear obliteration during the (ongoing) Cold War. These women, according to Breines, found safety in the home, which meant that they: "...with their children, were safe, domestic, and dependent upon their husbands."¹⁸ The women of the 1960s generation, in rejecting domesticity, abandoned this desire to feel safe and replaced it with new attitudes about what ideas and behaviors were appropriate for the female gender. Mundell never mentioned having any fear in any of her letters and she states multiple times how she feels that nothing bad is going to happen to her even though she is on the frontlines. Regarding the other restraints of family and economic restrictions, Mundell was not burdened by familial restrictions because she was divorced and childless. She was also freed from being economically dependent on another person by receiving a paycheck from the Army Nurse Corps.

Because of the sense of freedom and the newly available opportunities afforded to women of her generation, Mundell was able to escape from a community in which she was looked down upon because of the divorce stigma that still existed from past generations. She revealed the sentiment of her hometown in a letter to her father in February of 1967, in which she talked about her part in serving her country through the Corps: "Perhaps this will reinstate me in the eyes of the community. Small towns still frown very much upon divorced persons and I can tell you that I have felt the stigma and coldness just on visits to Frankfort. And I always did want you to be proud of me justifiably."¹⁹ The letter continues on and indicates that Mundell chose to write this letter solely to her father instead of, as she usually would have, to both her parents, because her mother did not completely absolve her of responsibility for the divorce or support her in the decision to go abroad as a nurse. Her mother's unhappiness with both Mundell's divorce and decision to go abroad is a feeling that correlates to the belief of women from the generations preceding the 1960s that being a housewife marked the only "legitimate social and economic space for women."²⁰ Mundell's generation of women was not limited to this belief. They held the ability to do what they desired and were not constrained by traditional societal expectations about women solely belonging to the domestic sphere.

Virginia's unhappiness about her daughter's divorce may have stemmed from beliefs about propriety regarding both economic and social experiences, but her unhappiness may also have come from the stigma that women of her generation, not the younger generation in which her daughter belonged, associated with divorce. American law systems, especially those that focused upon divorce, transformed within the 20th century. Late 19th century and early 20th century divorce laws only recognized fault as grounds for divorce, particularly cruelty, adultery, and desertion.²¹ With the creation of "no fault" divorces, divorce and divorce laws no longer regulated gender boundaries and the family. In Felice Batlan's review of J. Herbie DiFonzo's *Beneath the Fault Line: The Popular and Legal Culture of Divorce in Twentieth-Century America*, Batlan explains that the change in the sentiment towards divorce accompanied "the emergence of the new woman, which included a widespread perception of greater economic opportunities for women in the labor force as well as a transition from an ideology of domesticity to that of individualism."²² To the women of Karren's generation, divorce was, henceforth, popularly acceptable. In her mother's lifetime, however, divorce was looked down upon—by both civilians and the law—as being detrimental to the stability of families. DiFonzo reveals the way that the state's efforts, in the

¹⁷ Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967," Overview. Finding Aid.

¹⁸ Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 49.

¹⁹ Karren Mundell, February 14, 1967. Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967," Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 6.

²⁰ Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 53.

²¹ Felice Batlan, Review of *Beneath the Fault Line: The Popular and Legal Culture of Divorce in Twentieth-Century America* by J. Herbie DiFonzo, (H-Law, H-Net Reviews, September, 2001).

²² Batlan, Review, *Beneath the Fault Line*.

1920s and 1930s, “to prevent divorces must also be understood as having gendered implications and as being, at least in part, efforts to control women and to enforce a particular norm of what constitutes the appropriate family.”²³ By Mundell’s lifetime, this had fallen by the wayside, but for her mother, there was a very real negative connotation that accompanied the act. It was this connotation that perhaps made Mundell feel as if her mother was unhappy towards her about the divorce.

In a previous letter, apparently Mundell’s mother chastised her for complaining about the hardship of her job in the Nurse Corps. To her father, Mundell stated: “I’m certain that mother’s letter influenced me too. I have been complaining about the loss of two friends without thinking that you and mom have both been down this road before. I shouldn’t complain.”²⁴ The “road” that Mundell is talking about is the deaths of friends—in Mundell’s case the deaths of soldiers that she had become close with during their time at her base. She mentions her parents going down this road because her dad was born in 1922 and her mother 1921, although nothing is stated directly, her parents most likely were affected by war sometime in their lives.²⁵ Mundell wrote to her father for it appeared that she had been closed off by a disapproving mother.

The contrasting opinions about lifestyle and beliefs between women of the 1960s generation and the women of preceding generations were brought to the forefront when Mundell wrote: “Mother is very concerned that I have become a wicked woman who no longer believes in God. My concept of God has changed very much from what it was in my high school days. But I don’t think I’m bad, although I do things she would probably frown upon.”²⁶ The last sentence depicted the way members of the past generations were limited by the culture they had grown up in and were unable to accept the changes that a new and evolving culture allowed for women. Women of the 1960s generation, in moving towards individuality, moved away from long-held traditions, including traditions of community and of religion—both depicted by Mundell. These women then decided for themselves what they thought was appropriate, instead of letting society or an outdated culture tell them how they could participate within the world or find self-fulfillment.

The comment from Mundell’s mother was also very revealing of the way preceding generations of women judged the morality of the women of younger generations. Seemingly, although Mundell endangered herself on daily basis to save the lives of United States’ soldiers, she was a wicked woman for not attending Sunday services and for questioning the faith in which she had been brought up. From Mundell’s letters, it appears that her mother never once considered all that her daughter had experienced working on the frontlines of a war with no end in sight; she instead wanted to question her daughter’s morality for its shift from tradition.

On the whole, the focus on the traditional aspects of women (such as women’s morality) instead of combat when it came to the examination of the female members of the Army Nurse Corps was not an uncommon fixation. While Mundell’s mother was concerned about her daughter not attending church service, the American public, particularly those in charge of the Corps and the army, was concerned with the perception of the nurses within the Army Nurse Corps. According to Kara Dixon Vuic in her book, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War*, “Female nurses were seen as nurturers, mothers, girlfriends who took care of injured men, and, at the same time, as the objects of soldiers’ sexual desires (especially when recruited as playthings for officers’ parties).”²⁷ Vuic examines the traditional and progressive aspects about nurses in Vietnam and the details that surrounded them, for instance, nurses were stationed in combat zones yet received no weapons training prior to deployment. Further, even though nurses were depended upon to react quickly and trained to do procedures that far advanced what female nurses were capable of doing stateside, arguments surrounded the nurses on whether or not they should be able to replace their uniform of a dress and heels with fatigues within combat zones.²⁸ Although it seems as if Mundell’s mother is being critical of her daughter, especially since her

²³ Batlan, Review, *Beneath the Fault Line*.

²⁴ Karren Mundell, February 14, 1967. Indiana Historical Society, “Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967.” Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 6.

²⁵ Indiana Historical Society, “Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967,” Overview. Finding Aid

²⁶ Karren Mundell, February 14, 1967. Indiana Historical Society, “Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967.” Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 6

²⁷ David J. Caruso, Review of *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War*, by Kara Dixon Vuic. *Oral History Review* 38, no. 2 (2011): 364-366.

²⁸ Caruso, Review, *Officer, Nurse, Woman*.

daughter was acting as a national hero, Virginia's reaction mirrored the public's perception that rebuked the progressive Army Nurse Corps based upon traditional values and opinion of gender.

Another instance that the traditional view of women clashed with the role that women assumed as nurses during the Vietnam War revolved around the subject of abortion. Military hospitals were not subject to civilian law and were able to carry out abortions, regardless of the laws that regulated abortion at civilian hospitals.²⁹ In 1971, however, President Nixon overturned this policy and stated, instead, that military hospitals had to comply with the same laws that state hospitals were made to comply with.³⁰ This had no effect on the women who sought abortions in Vietnam for the medical institutions there were determined by local customs and laws. Because of this, pregnant women of the Army Nurse Corps could, and did, have abortions. Kara Dixon Vuic, in her article, "I'm afraid we're going to have to change our ways': Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy in the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War," examines the army's reasoning behind its decision to allow nurses to have abortions prior to the 1973 decision of *Roe v. Wade* and after Nixon had reversed the official policy. She explains, "Considered in the context of Cold War regulations on seemingly threatening sexuality, the army's abortion policy can be read in several ways. It may have been an attempt to minimize any publicity about the predominately unmarried and sexually active nurse corps..."³¹ The army's quiet acceptance of the practice points to a greater implication of an aforementioned trend: the traditional versus the progressive. Although the army allowed for progressive decisions, such as whether or not to have a child or a career, it still wished for the rest of the country to see the women in its Nurse Corps as traditional.

A generational clash of values between Mundell and her mother that revealed her mother's expectations of how women should behave in society involved one of the gifts that Mundell was excited to send home. A friend of hers was a frequent traveler and told Mundell that she would always take photos from wherever she was at and send them home to her family on slides. Her family would then view the slides on a projector, making it, as her friend said, "...like the whole family traveled right with her."³² Mundell began taking pictures of the base and the surrounding areas, including her trips into Saigon. Multiple letters in the correspondence relay Mundell's anticipation and excitement for her family to get the projector and slides so that they could see what her every-day life was like. To the nurse's great disappointment, however, the slides arrived and were watched by her family only for her mother to comment not on the wonders of the foreign land, but on her disapproval and disappointment that there was alcohol on the hospital base.

The majority of Mundell's communications with her mother revolved around marriage. These exchanges are a great portrayal of the discrepancies between a culture based upon individual desires and self-fulfillment and a culture orientated toward family and based upon tradition. Mundell's mother apparently asked her in every letter if she had found a man to marry yet. Even in basic training, Mundell wrote to her mother, saying, "Please stop building Ben Casey up to me. I haven't heard from him. When I do believe me-you'll hear about it."³³ Her mother's ceaseless worrying about her daughter marrying is a direct manifestation of the generation in which she, Virginia, grew up. In that generation, a woman's life goal was to find a man, marry him and have children. Virginia Mundell's mindset, standard for women of the years preceding the 1960s, is described by Breines when she states: "Getting married and becoming a mother were the only genuinely valued activities for women, to which women's behavior conformed. To remain single or pursue a profession...was to be considered deviant and marginalized."³⁴ It is due to this domestic culture that Mundell's mother was raised in and conformed to that makes her daughter's love life so important and other aspects of her life less so. Mundell had mentioned the possible future plans of returning to IU to attain a Master's Degree in History and possibly even her PhD in previous letters that she wrote to her parents. After she had stated these aspirations of returning to academia, she had asked her parents not to laugh. Her mother seemingly did not consider any of Mundell's aspirations, including a

²⁹ Vuic, "Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy," 1016.

³⁰ Ibid., 1017.

³¹ Ibid., 1018.

³² Karren Mundell, September 4, 1966. Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967." Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 3.

³³ Karren Mundell, July 7, 1966. Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967." Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 2.

³⁴ Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 51.

return to IU, more important or worthy than finding a man to marry.³⁵

The difference between Mundell and her mother regarding marriage is fully revealed when Mundell described to her parents her feelings on one of her fellow nurses getting married—calling it “very foolish” and a “very bad mistake.”³⁶ Other women in the Army Nurse Corps, however, did not share this same sentiment regarding the option of finding love in Vietnam, in fact, the Vietnam War has come to be known as the first time that the army altered its perception on gender and “attempted to blend its traditional gender roles for nurses with feminist goals.”³⁷ Where pregnancy and marriage were once grounds for automatic dishonorable discharge, beginning in the 1960s the army went so far as to recruit for its Army Nurse Corps by using the phrase, “Doctors, patients, and colleagues will be your friends, new ones made in the Army Nurse Corps will be some of the finest you have ever had. Your Army friends will last a lifetime. Don’t be surprised if a diamond crops up on your left hand!”³⁸

Prior to this development, women from the Army Nurse Corps who married faced limitations such as voluntary discharge, mandatory discharge and placement within the Army Nurse Corps reserves. These restrictive policies reflected the “broader societal norms holding that married women’s primary responsibility was the home,” further, they hinted at the ideology held by the army that nurses should be the possible heterosexual partners for soldiers.³⁹ Similar to the previous presentation of the army’s traditional concerns about its female nurses, a married nurse who served away from her husband was surrounded by questions about her respectability, for she had left her husband to care for another man. Married women, along with those who married while serving within the Army Nurse Corps, experienced a change of policy starting in 1962 that not only reduced the limitations that surrounded marriage but went so far as to advertise marriage as a positive result of service.⁴⁰

The army’s sentiment for married nurses transformed into one that was supportive of married nurses, even going so far that “newspaper articles featured the experiences of these new military families and implied that the army valued and even encouraged family life for nurses.”⁴¹ Although military couples had no guarantee that they would be assigned the same base, oftentimes both would request Vietnam and wind up in close proximity of each other. In one lucky scenario, Babette Clough, a nurse in the Corps, married her husband who, at that time, already had orders to leave for Vietnam.⁴² On her honeymoon, she requested an assignment in Vietnam and was not only granted her request (itself not entirely surprising, due to the insatiable need for nurses), but was assigned to the same base as her husband. As if her luck could not get any better, the two were assigned bedrooms that shared an adjoining wall which they promptly knocked down.⁴³ The transitioning policies on marriage, just like the transitioning policy on motherhood, represented the army’s progress toward a belief that women could have both careers and families. Domesticity was no longer the end-all.

Mundell’s own feelings about her fellow nurses getting married stemmed from the angst that she felt from her own marriage and the divorce that ensued. About this, Mundell wrote:

I think I’ve decided to go to Germany. I’m not ready to settle down yet. I can’t take a chance on a man this soon. Maybe two years in Europe will sooth me somewhat. I’ll never trust a man again as I did Mike. I suppose I’ll never be naïve and innocent again.”⁴⁴

The entire concept of “not ready to settle down” would have seemed foreign to the women of previous generations, but to the women of the ‘60s generation, this was a newly allowed privilege that went hand-in-hand with

³⁵ Karren Mundell, September 30, 1966. Indiana Historical Society, “Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967.” Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 3.

³⁶ Karren Mundell, October 16, 1966. Indiana Historical Society, “Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967.” Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 4.

³⁷ Vuic, “Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy,” 998.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1001.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 999.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1001.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1001.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 1003.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Karren Mundell, September 15, 1966. Indiana Historical Society, “Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967.” Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 3.

individuality, self-improvement and self-fulfillment.

In the generations that preceded the '60s, as Breines states, the culture and system of beliefs denoted that: "The family and the home were the expected sites for fulfillment for all Americans; there were simply no others," and, "Children were their [women's] main achievement and reward in life."⁴⁵ This belief system and culture were transformed by the 1960s generation. Self-improvement no longer translated to getting married as it had with pre-1960s generation. Self-fulfillment was no longer equated with becoming a wife, mother and housewife. These changes in values are embodied when Mundell writes: "I think, Mom, that you should give up on any hope of seeing grandchildren from this member of the family. I was too young, naïve and innocent to get burned as badly as I did—much worse than you or Dad have any idea. Every day sees me more convinced that I can never take that chance again."⁴⁶ Mundell, as part of the 1960s generation, was free to explore and participate in society as a woman. This was the first time in American society that women had been granted the opportunity to do so and women took advantage of their newfound freedom. The same men that her mother saw as potential caretakers and providers, Mundell saw as equals—as friends with whom she could explore a strange country or from whom she could take comfort when living on a hospital base became hard to handle. For the 1960s generation of women, men were no longer the main component of their self-fulfillment. Women, like Karren Mundell, could and did decide what would fulfill them to their own standards.

For Karren, this turned out to be a two-year deployment to Landstuhl, Germany, which followed her service in Vietnam.⁴⁷ While in Germany, although Mundell had told her mother that marrying again was too big of a chance to take, Mundell met a man who convinced her that he was worth taking that chance. She married him in 1968.⁴⁸ The couple returned stateside in 1969.⁴⁹ Today, Karren Mundell Kowalski resides in Denver.⁵⁰ She has two sons and is a nationally known speaker and author.⁵¹

The 1960s gave women a sense of freedom that they had never experienced before, whether it be in civilian life in the States or abroad in the Army Nurse Corps. Women who came of age during this generation, such as Karren Mundell, were able to decide on the life that they wanted to live. No longer were their lives, like the lives of their mothers, ones that revolved around marrying and having children. Careers became viable options for women and women sought out this opportunity. The United States army is an institution that reveals the transformation that American society made during the 1960s. Nurses within the Army Nurse Corps were given the new capability to have both a career in the Corps and a family (either within the military or not). The Army Nurse Corps, while revealing the progressiveness of the era, also demonstrates the conflict between that same progressiveness and traditional ideology that remained attached to women. While women stateside joined the feminist movement, nurses abroad worked towards the privilege of wearing fatigues instead of the standard issued uniforms of a dress. Whether home or away, women fought against the same thing, the strict gender ideologies that had mandated the lives of their mothers.

⁴⁵ Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 51, 54.

⁴⁶ Karren Mundell, September 30, 1966. Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967." Collection #M700, Box 1, Folder 3.

⁴⁷ Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967," Overview. Finding Aid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Bibliography

- Batlan, Felice. Review of DiFonzo, J. Herbie, *Beneath the Fault Line: The Popular and Legal Culture of Divorce in Twentieth-Century America*. H-Law, H-Net Reviews. September, 2001.
- Breines, Wini. *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing up Female in the Fifties*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.
- Caruso, David J. "Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War (review)." *Oral History Review* 38, no. 2 (2011): 364-366.
- Feller, Carolyn, Lieutenant Colonel and Major Constance J Moore, eds. *Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps*. Washington D.C.: US Army Center of Military History, 1995.
- Indiana Historical Society, "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967." Overview. Finding Aid.
- Mundell, Karren. "Karren E. Mundell Vietnam Correspondence, 1966-1967." Indiana Historical Society.
- Stur, Heather Marie. *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Vuic, Kara Dixon. "I'm afraid we're going to have to just change our ways': Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy in the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War." *Signs: Journal Of Women In Culture & Society* 32, no. 4 (Summer 2007): 997-1022. *America: History & Life*, EBSCOhost.
- Vuic, Kara Dixon. *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.

Augustine of Hippo's Doctrine of Scripture: Christian Exegesis in Late Antiquity

ROBERT A. ZIEGLER

Throughout his career, Augustine focused considerable attention on the nature and interpretation of Scriptural texts, arguing that apparent errors and contradictions in the canonical books were not problematic, but further supported his orthodox theological commitments. Augustine maintained that human communication was inherently inferior to God's perfect Word. Thus, in revealing himself to human readers through the avenue of Scripture, God had condescended to human forms of communication. God's revelation, delivered through the medium of Scripture, was an invaluable manifestation of divine mercy and required disciplined study in order to be understood. Yet, biblical study was not simply an intellectual exercise predicated upon a set of presuppositions, but was also an act of faith requiring supernatural aid. With his joint commitment to disciplined study and divine guidance, Augustine sought to aid pious readers in identifying historical and prophetic textual themes and in addressing elements of the texts that seemed contradictory or irrelevant to sixth-century orthodox theology. For Augustine, "challenging" elements of Scripture could be attributed to trivial causes or demonstrated as, not problematic, but integral, to the harmony and ultimate purpose of Scripture.

For Augustine, divine speech, like God Himself, exists beyond the confines of time. Mortal speakers necessarily communicate in syllables and in languages. But, verbal communication reflects humanity's subordination to time.¹ Augustine contended that God's communication is not contained within syllables or limited to a single language because God himself is not subordinate to time and therefore possesses no need to communicate in a sequential, verbal manner.² Thus, despite the divinely-inspired nature of their work, the biblical authors were not recreating divine speech, which, within Augustine's theological framework, could not be bounded by the grammatical and time constraints inherent in all human communication. Michael Cameron, a specialist on Augustine's reception of Scripture, contends that, while Augustine recognized Scripture as divinely inspired, he did not believe Scripture to be a simple transcription of God's words. Thus, Cameron not only contends that Augustine revered Scripture as divinely inspired, but also writes that, "For Augustine, God's majesty surpasses the Scriptures... Scripture uses human authors and words, and it features the same rhetorical devices that are found in all discourse: figures of speech, staged dialogues, and shifting verb tenses."³ Augustine certainly presented the Bible as God's Word, both to his congregation and in his bitter polemical struggles with those he deemed heterodox. Yet, Augustine nuanced his perspective by recognizing that Scripture's human authors acted under divine inspiration, but their writings, expressed in mere human words, could not fully encapsulate God's infinite nature.

Yet, the 'human' dimension of the Scriptures was, like all other apparent shortcomings in Scripture, actually an integral part of Scripture's central purpose, directing readers to the divine Word. Cameron notes the role of early Christian incarnational theologies in Augustine's own nuanced understanding of Scripture, stating, "The divine submission to humble speech mirrors the humility of the Incarnation."⁴ Thus, for Augustine, the humble, human nature of Scripture paralleled the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. Augustine's biblical theology cannot be anachronistically conformed to modern perspectives on theological questions, such as biblical inerrancy. Indeed, the epistemological underpinning of Augustine's approach was rooted in his understanding that Scripture was finite, lacking divine totality. Yet, at the same time, Augustine clearly regarded the Scriptures as the essence of truth, which had been revealed to its divinely inspired authors. Even God's willingness to condescend and deliver His divine word through human authors reflected God the Son's incarnation and willingness to come to Earth as a man. Therein lies the heart of Augustine's perspective. Scripture served to direct readers' affections to the Word incarnate, Jesus of Nazareth. While Augustine firmly believed that Scripture contained historical narratives and conveyed accurate information about past events, he also contended that these historical accounts functioned prophetically, confirming the presuppositions of sixth-century Christians that the Hebrew Bible served as a harbinger of Jesus Christ's birth and ministry.

Augustine's mature, Christocentric understanding of Scripture was preceded by his more literal, Manichean approach to Scripture. An ancient Christian sect, Manichaeism provided many fifth-century Romans with an alluring and highly illegal alternative to the state-sanctioned, orthodox Christianity.⁵ As a youth, Augustine had been an

¹ Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), XI, 2.3.

² Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 2.4.

³ Michael Cameron, "Augustine and Scripture," in *A Companion to Augustine*, ed. Mark Vessey (West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2012), 203.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Anne-Marie La Bonnardiere, "Augustine's Biblical Initiation," in *Augustine and the Bible*, ed. and trans. Pamela Bright (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 12.

avowed Manichean. Manichean teachers opposed the inclusion of the Old Testament into the Christian canon. While they accepted portions of the New Testament, Manicheans disdained the Old Testament, with its graphic accounts of murder and adultery as fleshly, uninspired text. Anne-Marie La Bonnadiere, a specialist on Augustine's reception of Scripture, argues that Augustine, "Combined with this aberrant presentation of God and man was a persistent criticism of the Old Testament because of its 'scandals.' These included the shameful morality of the Patriarchs and the Kings presented in the Bible as having multiple marriages."⁶ As a youthful Manichean, Augustine was appalled by such accounts, which he regarded as incompatible with his society's standards of propriety, writing, "That the old writings of the Law...had previously looked absurd [to him]."⁷

However, as Augustine progressed away from Manichean teaching, he came under the influence of Bishop Ambrose's far more spiritualized understanding of the canonical texts. Augustine continued to acknowledge that a strictly literal reading of a text such as Genesis would leave readers unaware of the text's more significant theological meaning. However, under the preaching of Ambrose, Augustine was presented with spiritualized expositions of Scripture. Ambrose exhorted his congregants to read biblical passages, not only in their literal sense, but also in their spiritual sense. Seemingly scurrilous and wholly unspiritual accounts were held to possess deeper, spiritual meaning.⁸ In his *Confessions*, Augustine recounted how, as an intellectual in the Roman imperial court, he began to develop a skeptical attitude toward his once cherished Manichean beliefs, writing, "I began to see that the Catholic faith for which I had thought nothing could be said in the face of the Manichean objections, could be maintained on reasonable grounds: this especially after I had heard explained figuratively several passages of the Old Testament."⁹ For Augustine, maintaining a correct perspective on Scripture was essential to one's spiritual progress. Thus, in his *Confessions*, Augustine presents his adoption of an Ambrosian perspective on Scripture as a crucial prerequisite for his providential conversion to orthodoxy.

While Augustine's nuanced understanding of Scriptural interpretation enabled him to resolve potentially problematic biblical passages, his intensely intellectual approach also created a tension between divine guidance in biblical study and conventional, earthly academic study. In Book V of his *Confessions*, Augustine writes, "In the last place everyone who boasts that he through divine illumination, understands the obscurities of Scripture, though not instructed in any rules of interpretation, at the same time believes and believes rightly that this power is not his own, in the sense of originating with himself, but is the gift of God."¹⁰ Augustine, in this sense, firmly believed that a correct exposition of Scripture was contingent upon divine aid. A 'pagan' reading the Scriptures possessed a tremendous disadvantage because he lacked divine help in understanding the text. While Augustine admitted that non-Christian readers could apprehend Scripture, he emphasized that correct Scriptural exposition was predicated upon the reader's commitment to the tenets of orthodoxy.

However, Augustine, apprehensive of the danger that any Christian claiming divine guidance could foist his idiosyncratic and self-serving interpretations upon others, sought to encourage orthodoxy among fifth-century exegetes by developing a framework, through which churchmen could expound the Scriptures to their congregants. To encourage reader acquiescence, Augustine, in his *On Christian Doctrine*, appropriates the story of the Apostle Paul's conversion, stating, "Let us beware of such dangerous temptations of pride, and let us rather consider the fact that the Apostle Paul himself, although stricken down and admonished by the voice of God from heaven, was yet sent to a man to receive the sacraments and be admitted into the Church."¹¹ By contrasting Paul's humble submission to Ananias with some of his contemporaries' stubborn refusal to embrace an orthodox perspective on Scripture, Augustine developed a compelling moral argument against careless or heterodox interpretations of Scripture. Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* demonstrates his commitment to imposing theological unity on the fractious churches of the Ancient Mediterranean world.

With his perspective on Scripture molded by orthodox intellectuals, such as Ambrose, Augustine believed that biblical narratives, such as the Genesis creation accounts, were historically true and inherently communicated theological truths. Augustine, for instance, sought to understand Scripture's literal meaning in *De Genesi ad litteram*, a commentary on the Book of Genesis, in which Augustine attempted to understand the Genesis author(s)' descriptions of divine creation. Yet, one must recognize that Augustine possessed a broader understanding of literal interpretation than many modern readers do. In analyzing Augustine's textual strategies for reading the Pentateuch, Cameron

⁶ La Bonnadiere, "Augustine's Biblical Initiation," 13.

⁷ Augustine, *Confessions*, VI, 4.6.

⁸ La Bonnadiere, "Augustine's Biblical Initiation," 15.

⁹ Augustine, *Confessions*, V, 13. 24.

¹⁰ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. J.F. Shaw (Mineola: Dover Philosophical Publications, 2009), 8.

¹¹ Ibid., 6.

summarizes Augustine's pluralistic approach to literal interpretation: "Furthermore Augustine asks, since Moses was aware that his words would teach so many different people across so many generations, should we not expect him to make his words allow as many true meanings as possible?"¹² One must recognize that Augustine's belief in a multiplicity of true, literal interpretations was tempered by his theological commitments. While two orthodox expositors could develop two divergent, literal, and equally valid explanations for a single passage, a literalist, Donatist interpretation would be rejected as patently false. Thus, Augustine's approach to literal readings of Scripture is in one sense subjective. A range of literal and orthodox meanings may be wrung from a text, but the validity of one's exegesis is ultimately measured by the orthodoxy of one's conclusion, not by any attempt at objective textual analysis.

Yet, like many elements of his thought, Augustine's understanding of literal readings cannot be taken in isolation. The theologian believed that some texts could be read validly in both literal and figurative senses. The Augustinian scholar, R. A. Markus elaborated on Augustine's dichotomous approach to Scripture, a perspective that enabled him to believe that a single biblical passage contained multiple meanings. In his book, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of Saint Augustine*, Markus argues that "Augustine could now speak of the bible as *prophetica historia*, thus joining in one phrase two terms that had been antithetical."¹³ While Markus specifically sought to track the maturation of Augustine's biblical theology from a historical-prophetical dichotomy to a synthesis and even interchangeability of prophecy and history, his insight should strongly shape one's understanding of Augustine's literal reading. An expositor possesses no obligation to interpret a text in just a figurative manner or in just a literal way. Instead, Augustine frees readers to make subjective interpretations of the text, in any way that contributes to orthodox doctrine. Yet, once again, one must avoid over generalization on this matter. In his *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine cautions against the literal interpretations of certain texts, which he feels ought to be viewed only in a figurative, or prophetic, light.¹⁴ However, when one acknowledges Augustine's insistence on doctrinal conformity and his stern admonitions against 'slavish' literal readings, one can recognize that Augustine tolerated a multiplicity of approaches to Scripture.

His pluralist approach reflects his overarching belief that Scripture, with its many interpretations and seeming inconsistencies, was perfectly ordered to focus readers' affections on the incarnate Word. That Augustine advocated a Christocentric reading of Scripture and employed this perspective to overcome interpretive challenges is further illustrated in Augustine's *heilsgeschichte*, or theologized meta-history, found in books XV-XXIII of *City of God*. For Augustine, the long, seemingly disparate historical narratives of the Old Testament all point to Christ's unfolding plan for the deliverance of the heavenly city and the damnation of the earthly city. In what is, for many modern readers, a bizarre comparison, Augustine compares Canaan's mistreatment of his inebriated and unclothed grandfather Noah in Genesis IX as prophetic foreshadowing of the Jewish rejection of Christ at his first advent.¹⁵ Although Augustine's analysis of the book of Genesis lies far beyond the scope of this report, one may readily recognize that Augustine's primary objective was not to analyze individually the numerous anecdotes of the Old Testament. He was determined to interpret biblical narratives in a way that connected ancient Hebrew stories with his overarching theme of the incarnate Christ redeeming elements of humanity. With a clear understanding of the overall objective of Augustine's Scriptural hermeneutics, one may reasonably presuppose that seemingly problematic elements of Scripture were perceived by Augustine not as causes for concern, but opportunities to further emphasize Scripture's vital function in presenting Christ's central role in human history.

Despite Augustine's pluralistic but orthodox approach to the interpretation of biblical texts, he seems to have maintained a strong commitment to the historicity of all biblical accounts and sought to provide logical, naturalistic explanations for the Bible. In the fifteenth book of *City of God*, Augustine addresses contemporary criticisms of the tremendous physical size which the book of Genesis attributes to antediluvian humans. Augustine's response is two-fold. First, he contends that his personal discovery of a giant tooth provides empirical backing to biblical claims of giants: "On the beach at Utica I myself-not alone, but in the company of several other people- saw a human molar so enormous that if it had been cut into pieces the size of our teeth it would, as it seemed to us, have made a hundred of them." For Augustine, the existence of giant humans prior to the Noahic Flood of Genesis was not remotely fanciful or unreasonable. But, later in the chapter, Augustine notes that biblical claims regarding the extremely long lifespans of pre-flood humans lack supporting evidence. However, he dismisses this paucity of evidence, writing, "Impudence in not believing what it narrates would be as great as the evidence of the fulfillment of its prophecies is clear to our eyes."¹⁶ Augustine did not employ his rhetorical genius to defend every detail of the Bible's supernatural depiction of Earth's prehistory because he believed Scripture's primary function was to narrate Jesus Christ's central role in human

¹² Cameron, "Augustine and Scripture," 208.

¹³ R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of Saint Augustine* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 158.

¹⁴ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, III, 5.

¹⁵ Augustine, *City of God Against the Pagans*, trans. R.W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), XVI, 2. 697.

¹⁶ Augustine, *City of God*, XV, 9. 650-651.

history, not to provide minute details about Earth's ancient origins. Yet, because the longevity of pre-flood humans was included within the canonical books, Augustine believed that it functioned as a part of Scripture's prophetica historia and that, to impugn its historicity, would diminish its relation to the overall Christocentric, meta-historical narrative of Scripture. Although one must not anachronistically reduce Augustine to a proto-young earth fundamentalist, one must also recognize that Augustine believed establishing the historicity of unbelievable claims found in the Hebrew Bible would contribute to his overall objective of linking all of Scripture to the unfolding salvific work of Jesus Christ.

Paradoxically, Augustine's commitment to his Christocentric meta-narrative also led him to believe that many Scriptural passages had hidden, allegorical meanings. In Book XVII of *City of God*, Augustine endeavored to relate several psalms with the larger theological themes of his text. Psalm XLV provides, from a literal perspective, a description of an ancient Near Eastern coronation ritual. Ironically, Augustine himself acknowledges this fact while hastily dismissing the possibility that the text does indeed depict such as ritual, writing that, "I do not suppose that anyone is so foolish as to believe that it is some mere woman who is here praised and described: described that is as the wife of Him to Whom it is said, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.'"¹⁷ Instead, Augustine contends that the psalmist is presenting a vision of Christ, the king, and the city of God, personified by the queen. From Augustine's analysis of this Psalm, one may infer that Augustine felt little tension between history and prophecy. In certain contexts, Augustine employed his rhetorical genius to argue that a passage was 'historical,' while, in a different context or literary genre, Augustine readily argued against a passage's historicity. Such seemingly paradoxical textual strategies should not be attributed to error on the part of Augustine. Rather, Augustine understood the whole of Scripture to constitute prophetica historia and accordingly developed a hermeneutic that persuasively appropriated Scriptural texts to correspond to his theological beliefs.

For Augustine the presence of overarching themes within Scripture and a complete narrative of salvation did not constrain his textual analysis by leading him to 'forced' interpretations, but to the contrary, provided his Christian faith with a comprehensiveness and unity that rival philosophical and religious sects lacked. In the first ten books of *City of God*, Augustine analyzed and sought to rebut the various philosophical schools, which offered rival claims to Christianity. While he commended some Neo-Platonists' belief in God, Augustine sought to repudiate non-Christian philosophers, who often advocated polytheistic practice.¹⁸ In Book XVIII, he juxtaposes philosophical authors with the Scriptural authors, writing, "I concede that not a few philosophers, or even most of them, broke with their teachers or fellow pupils simply from love of truth, in order to seek what they conceived to be true...As to our own authors, however: God forbid that they should disagree with one another in any way!"¹⁹ A master of rhetoric, Augustine eagerly highlights the contrasting beliefs and frequent disputes among the rival philosophical schools of antiquity. Augustine also suggests later in the book that the proliferation of disputes is the inevitable consequence of futile human attempts to identify objective truth without God's aid. Augustine contrasts the unguided and discordant efforts of non-Christian philosophers with the monolithic canon of Scripture. Augustine based his voluminous expositions of Scriptural passages on the overarching principle that the many books of Scripture, no matter how apparently divergent, have been harmoniously arranged by divine will to tell the story of God's grand design for humanity. Augustine's commitment to the unity of Scriptural texts did not burden his expositional efforts, but in contrast, ensured that the canonical books were woven together by a unified, textual theme that was infinitely superior to the decentralized corpus of ancient philosophical writings.

In addition to advocating the concordance of Scriptural texts, Augustine also expended tremendous energy to contend that Scripture sets the stage for the apocalyptic climax of all history, which occurs through the damnation of the wicked and the glorification of the elect in the *City of God*. Augustine strongly contended that all Scripture set the stage for a future eschatological climax. Far from reducing his writings to frantic apocalyptic speculation, Augustine's reading of Scripture ensured that his theology provided concrete and satisfying certainty, where other modes of thought lacked an all-encompassing conclusion. In *City of God*, Augustine forcefully contrasts his own theology of history, which he has painstakingly based upon his own interweaving of biblical history with his belief in Christ's plan to save Christians, with the Neo-Platonist philosopher Porphyry, whom he contends has failed to identify any source of salvation in history. In the *City of God*, Augustine criticizes Neo-Platonism, writing, "Porphyry says that the universal way of the soul's deliverance had never yet come to his knowledge through the study of history. But what more illustrious can be found than that which has taken possession of the whole world?"²⁰ Augustine argues that Christ's followers possess an authoritative canon of Scriptures, which they rightly interpret as narrating deliverance of the soul from sin into eternal bliss in heaven. In contrast, other religious and philosophical texts are presented as lacking a comprehensive understanding of human history, and, in Augustine's estimation, are bereft of any hope for their eternal souls.

¹⁷ Augustine, *City of God*, XVII, 16. 805.

¹⁸ Augustine, *City of God*, X, 13. 412.

¹⁹ Augustine, *City of God*, XVIII, 41. 880.

²⁰ Augustine, *City of God*, X, 32. 446.

According to Augustine, this constraining and selective interpretive framework actually granted a sense of finality to Scriptural texts which other religious and philosophical texts lacked.

Despite the clear strengths of his perspective, Augustine acknowledged that his methodology presented considerable difficulties for interpreters who must differentiate between symbolic and literal interpretations. Why, then, Augustine asked, must Scripture be filled with so many seemingly ambiguous passages? Like all other interpretive challenges in the canonical books, Augustine attributed this difficulty to divine will's perfect plan to point biblical readers to the incarnate Word, writing in *On Christian Doctrine* that, "I do not doubt that this was divinely arranged for the purpose of subduing pride by toil, and of preventing a feeling of satiety in the intellect, which generally holds in small esteem what is discovered without difficulty."²¹ Thus, Augustine brilliantly answers the problem of Scriptural ambiguity. He views ambiguous and difficult language as a positive challenge for highly educated readers to solve. Augustine reasons that the arduous process of Scriptural interpretation will impart a greater sense of humility to educated readers, who must struggle to understand Scriptural texts. Additionally, he reasons that the complexity of the Scriptures provides further evidence of their divine inspiration and that no skeptic can rationally dismiss the Scriptures as simplistic. For Augustine the problem of obscurity, if handled properly, demonstrates the authenticity of the Bible and plays an integral role in the spiritual formation of readers.

Augustine also developed proactive answers to explain seeming inconsistencies among extant biblical manuscripts. Augustine adopted a realistic approach to variant manuscripts. In book XV of *City of God*, Augustine candidly acknowledges that the Genesis chronologies of the Septuagint diverge from the chronologies of Hebrew manuscripts.²² Augustine dismisses the efforts of zealous Christian readers to attribute genealogical contradictions to the use of the Greek calendar by Septuagint translators, in place of the Hebrew calendar. The Hebrew writers, some pious readers posited, understood years to constitute a smaller length of time than later Greek translators.²³ Augustine dismisses such numerical gymnastics as fanciful. Clear discrepancies exist between the two textual traditions. In Book XV of his *City of God*, Augustine writes that, "Some discrepancy of the kind here discussed might have occurred in one copy, from which, if it was the first such transcription, a widespread error would have emanated, arising from nothing more than an error on the part of a scribe."²⁴ Augustine did not condone early Christian denials of variant manuscript traditions, but recognized that the scribal process, like all human endeavors, was flawed and apt to propagate incorrect renderings of the original text. But, one must cautiously approach Augustine's admission and, remember that his admission of variant manuscript traditions was not a concession to charges that Scriptural authors produced erroneous texts.

Augustine, always eager to return to Scripture's central purpose of pointing readers to Christ's redemptive history, embraced the existence of variant manuscript traditions, viewing them as complementary parts of divine revelation. Near the end of his magisterial *City of God*, Augustine writes, "Moreover, whatever is found in both the Hebrew and the Septuagint is something which one and the same Spirit wished to say through both, but in such a way that the former took the lead by prophesying, while the later followed with a prophetic translation."²⁵ For Augustine, divine inspiration was, in one sense, not restricted to the writers of the canonical books. He accepted contemporary belief that the translators of the Septuagint had worked under divine inspiration, producing a 'perfect' translation. However, Augustine denied that a manuscript's perfection was contingent upon its being wholly identical to alternate manuscripts. Instead, Augustine reasoned that the Spirit of God had supernaturally altered the 'conflicting' manuscripts, providing the Septuagint translators with a slightly amended, but still wholly perfect, version of the Hebrew Bible. Augustine founded the understanding of variant manuscripts upon his firm belief that God's Spirit guided the development of biblical textual conditions to ensure that all readers and hearers of Scriptural texts were directed to the incarnate Word, around which the Biblical narrative was woven. Therefore, just he accepted the possibility of divergent, yet equally orthodox interpretations of Scripture, Augustine also acknowledged the existence of variant, but wholly orthodox textual traditions.

While Augustine readily appropriated Scripture to advocate orthodox theological claims, he also intensively used the Bible in debates with rivals, whose interpretations of Scripture he eagerly challenged, by presenting his own perspective as authentically 'biblical.' One of the bitterest polemical disputes of Augustine's career was his battle with Pelagius over the doctrine of Original Sin. Pelagius rejected the notion that men are created sinful. In his reading of Scripture, Pelagius held that Adam's decision to partake of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil harmed him personally but did not result in his ancestors, the whole of the human race, being born into sin. In contrast, Augustine maintained a radically different understanding of human nature. Augustine held that all humans are born into sin as a

²¹ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, I, 4.

²² The Septuagint was an ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. Many early Christian communities employed the Septuagint in their writings.

²³ Augustine, *City of God*, XV, 12. 655.

²⁴ Augustine, *City of God*, XV, 13. 657.

²⁵ Augustine, *City of God*, XVIII, 43. 886.

result of Adam's transgression and are utterly dependent upon divine grace. Although Pelagius had already composed a commentary upon Paul's epistle to the Romans, Augustine was undeterred, and in his polemical writings against Pelagius, liberally employed the Pauline corpus. Cameron analyzes Augustine's appropriation of Scripture, writing, "Ephesians 2:3: 'we are by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind'; and notoriously, Romans 5:12: 'in whom all sinned.' Here, Augustine tried to read into the Latin translation 'in quo omnes peccaverunt'—'in whom [Adam] all sinned.'"²⁷ Augustine's confident use of highly disputed biblical texts indicates that he refused to allow the existence of conflicting Scriptural interpretations hinder his use of Scripture. Instead, Augustine deployed his rhetorical genius and mastery of biblical texts into polemical battles, a tactic that reflected his overall commitment to converting potentially ambiguous passages into definitive statements of support for his theological commitments.

Augustine's exegetical confidence remained equally strong in the face of exegetical challenges posed by both an ill-defined biblical canon and the inferior Latin Bible translations of the early fifth century. By the fifth century, Christian communities had established a high, though by no means complete, level of agreement, over which texts should be classified as canonical. In his *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine classifies a number of books, such as Job and 1 and 2 Maccabees, as prophetic, but not of canonical status.²⁸ Yet, many of Augustine's contemporaries, including the churchmen who comprised the 497 Council of Carthage, recognized included books, such as Job and Esther, to be canonical. Augustine's mature position on the precise number of canonical books is unclear and debated by scholars. But, throughout his writings, Augustine never doubted the historicity, if not the canonicity, of 'deuterocanonical' texts.²⁹ Furthermore, Augustine also appropriated texts, which he and many of his contemporaries viewed as deuterocanonical, to buttress his many theological arguments.³⁰ While one cannot authoritatively state Augustine's precise understanding on the canon without venturing into the realm of speculation, one can, with good reason, contend that Augustine confidently appropriated biblical texts, canonical or not, ensuring that his readers would not be apt to dismiss selection of Scriptures as illegitimate.

Augustine also exhibited similar confidence when he encountered ambiguous words in Scripture. While scholarship has demonstrated that Augustine possessed access to the exegetical works of Jerome, much of Augustine's interaction with Scripture occurred through early Latin translations. Scholars remember these formative translations for their poor quality and confusing syntax.³¹ Yet, for Augustine, the presence of ambiguous terms and phrases within biblical texts was merely another opportunity to assert the veracity of his doctrinal claims. A sound example of Augustine's creative and confident linguistic analyses may be found in his exposition of Psalm 19. The Psalm's writers extol God's creative power and metaphorically describe the sky as the "tent for the sun, writing, that God has "pitched his tent in the sun." A modern reader might imagine that Augustine would be unable to wring any deep doctrinal truth out of the text. Matters are further complicated by the fact that the Latin word for sun, sole, in the context of the passage, possesses multiple meanings. Even so, Augustine confidently interprets sole as referring to the sun. Augustine then proceeds to interpret tent pitching as a literary sign of Christ's future establishment of the church.³² While one may, with ample reason, doubt the veracity of some of Augustine's linguistic claims, Augustine effectively presented potentially unclear words in ways that enabled him to relate them to his overall, Christocentric understanding of Scripture.

Augustine of Hippo based much of his theology upon his methodology of Scriptural interpretation. For him, textual difficulties were not to be avoided, but to be exploited and used to support his holistic, Christocentric approach to the Bible. Augustine's desire for Scriptural unity reflects his commitment to a universal Christian Church. Once a Manichean, Augustine reconciled the sordid tales of the Old Testament with his Christian piety by establishing an interpretive framework, which enabled him to interpret ordinary, or even vulgar stories, as somehow related to the overall redemptive plan of Christ. In this, Augustine exhibited tremendous creativity. Skirting contemporary discussions on the extent of the biblical canon and exploiting often ambiguous Latin translations, Augustine skillfully blended together a dizzying array of historical and 'prophetic' interpretations to provide sound Scriptural basis for his theological claims. Finally, Augustine reconciled his belief in the importance of divine illumination of Scripture with his conviction that human guidelines for biblical study were essential. Augustine's biblical theology displayed a remarkably creative range of textual strategies, all of which were based upon his unshakeable conviction that Christ was present in every verse and book of the Bible.

²⁶ Michael Cameron, "The Christological Substructure of Augustine's Figurative Exegesis" in *Augustine and the Bible*, ed. Pamela Bright (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 229.

²⁷ Cameron, "Augustine's Figurative Exegesis," 232.

²⁸ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 8.

²⁹ Cameron, "Augustine's Figurative Exegesis," 28.

³⁰ Augustine, *City of God*, I, 27. 40.

³¹ Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 31.

Bibliography

- Augustine. *Confessions*. Translated by Henry Chadwick. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Augustine. *On Christian Doctrine*. Translated by J.F. Shaw. Mineola: Dover Philosophical Publications, 2009.
- Augustine. *The City of God Against the Pagans*. Translated by R.W. Dyson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Cameron, Michael. "Augustine and Scripture." In *A Companion to Augustine*, edited by Mark Vessey. West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2012.
- Cameron, Michael. "The Christological Substructure of Augustine's Figurative Exegesis." In *Augustine and the Bible*, edited by Pamela Bright. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999.
- La Bonnadiere, Anne-Marie. "Augustine's Biblical Initiation." In *Augustine and the Bible*, edited and translated by Pamela Bright. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999.
- Markus, R.A. *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970.