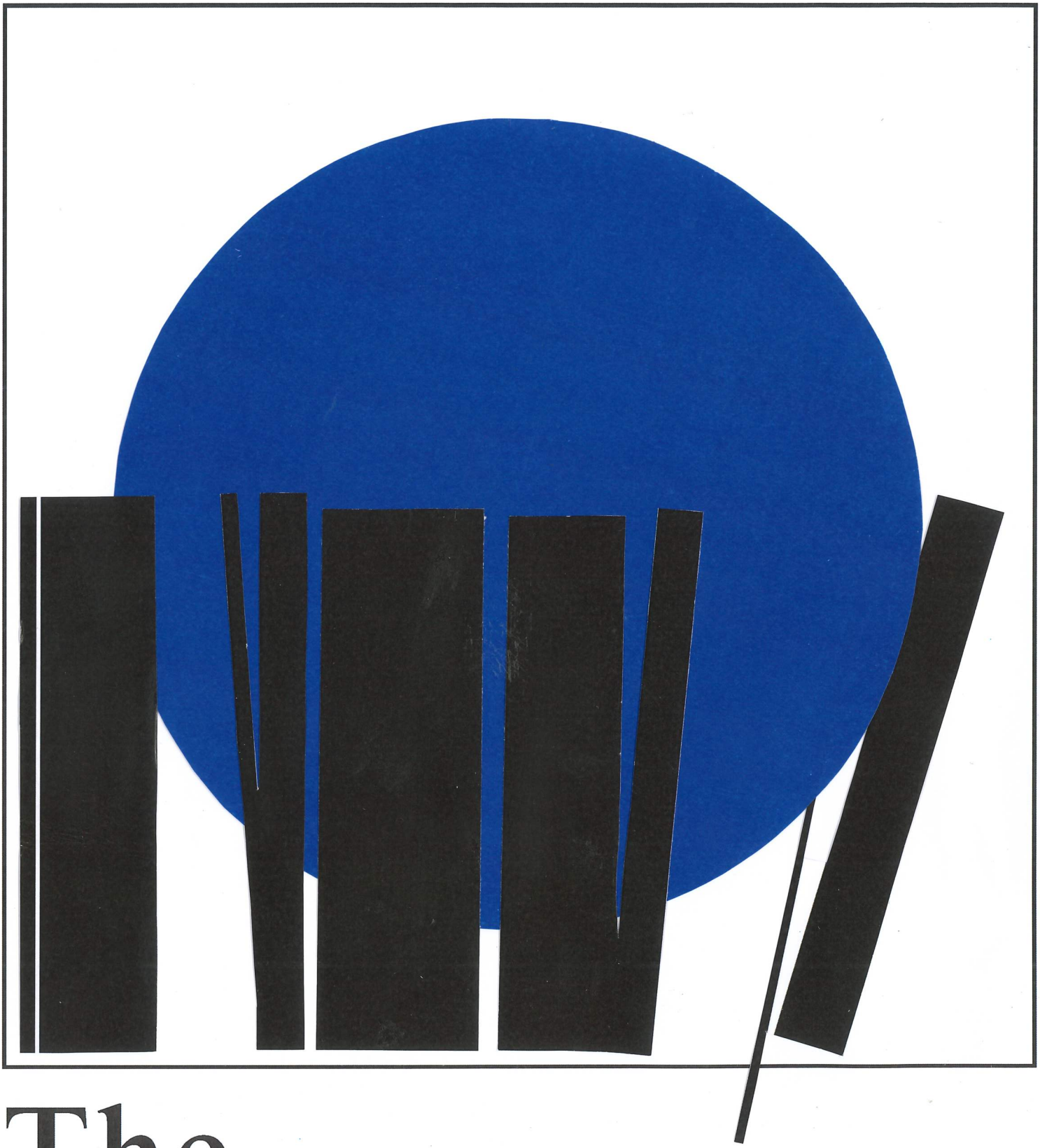

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St Andrew's History Society is the oldest and largest academic society within the University of St. Andrews, founded in 1979 to enhance the academic and social lives of St. Andrew's students and to facilitate interaction between students and members of the School of History Academic Staff.

THE HISTORICAL JOURNAL

The Historical Journal is an entirely student-run academic journal that gives undergraduate and postgraduate students the opportunity to publish their original scholarly work, peer-reviewed and edited by Journal Editors-in-Chief of the St. Andrews History Society, and their editing team. With topics ranging from Ancient to Modern times and related subjects such as art history, archeology, and classics, *The Historical Journal* encourages its writers to cover a wide spectrum of historical topics while focusing on their particular scholarly interests.

CONTENTS

STAFF AND COMMITTEE

Editor's Note

"We humbly claim to be no more than serious students of the history and conditions of our country and human aspirations…"

Bhagat Singh, *Statement Before the Session Court*, 1929.

What does it mean to study history? Why do we do it, and why does it matter? These questions have doubtless crossed the mind of every student of history at some critical juncture of their studies, and though motivations and purpose may vary between scholars and the soon-to-be, beyond personal drive stands an obligation to truths; not perhaps a complete 'cult to realism', but a critical, reflective, and truthful representation of the past.

The realities of subjectivity, ideology, and interpretation in the study of history must not, however, force our speciality into a dishonest or docile form, malleable to disingenuous narratives of the dominant class. In our world of increasingly skeptical sources, corporate domination of media outlets, and the transparent manipulation of information to the public by governments, companies, and individuals, the role of historians has never been so essential.

As we critically engage with the past, seeking to understand how it shapes mankind today, I urge our zeal to never stray from this mission—to learn from the guide of history, to find within sources the legitimacy of the oppressed, and to communicate humanity's past to the people. Liberation lies among the pages; "if there is anything that cannot bear free thought, let it crack," spoke Wendell Phillips.

Volume XIII celebrates the second year of *The Historical Journal*'s revival. Composed of nine papers from our undergraduate student body, we are incredibly pleased with the community's interest in the continuation of a student-run academic journal. Thank you to our contributors for their unique additions to Volume XIII, to the committee of the St Andrew's History Society for facilitating and supporting this journal's publication, and to the Student Activities Fund for providing us with the opportunity to see our work in-print this year. Most of all, thank you to our editing team, especially our Senior Editors–Julia Greiner, Owen McIlwaine, and Stephanie Chau–for committing your time and skills to make this publication possible. It was a pleasure to work with all of you.

As we prepare to graduate, John and I are stepping down from our roles as Editors-in-Chief of *The Historical Journal*. We are eternally grateful for the experience of resurrecting and building this publication to what it is today, and we look forward to watching it grow in the coming years.

It has been a pleasure,
Lindsay Martin and John McNealy

The Historical Journal

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2026 History Conference Winner

The Lost Cause Reconsidered: Norms, Values, and Social Order in the postbellum South

Zach Barnes

On April 24, 1916, Henry Brock left a screening of D.W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation. The film, a massive hit since its nationwide tour a year prior, performed well in Lafayette, Indiana, where Brock watched it one ordinary afternoon. An immediate fan, Brock was not only captivated by the film's visuals but also deeply moved by its message. Leaving the theatre, intoxicated with righteous determination and liquor, he was determined to embody the movie's teachings. As an eyewitness recounted, Brock vowed to become like the white men on the silver screen and "get [himself] a n——r before night".[1] Just a few hours later, Brock shot three bullets into fifteen-year-old Edward Manson, a young black teenager, killing him almost instantly.[2] Most accounts of this tragic and senseless killing begin and end with this fateful day.

But perhaps a better start date is April 11th, 1826, when Benjamin Berry Manson was born in Brunswick County, Virginia.[3] Benjamin, son of Sallie Blyth and Joe Manson, descended from a long lineage of enslaved peoples who journeyed from the west coast of Africa to far-off Virginia on ships like the Trident up till 1778.[4] Enslaved by the well-off Manson planters, Benjamin and his family eventually settled in Tennessee under the ownership of Nancy Manson.[5] It was here, in Tennessee, that Benjamin and his family weathered the bloody Civil War, and here where he started his new life as a freedman. Just a year after the Civil War, Benjamin took every new opportunity afforded to him by enfranchisement and the protections of Reconstruction government. He became a minister, and soon a Reverend.[6] By 1877, he was president of the Colored Benevolent Society of Tennessee.[7] On the surface, Benjamin Manson's life represented every promise of Reconstruction; once a slave and then a freedman, he became a successful and important pillar of his community. Yet by the latter years of his life, he was once again a farmer, and only two years after his death, his great-grandson was gunned down by Henry Brock's hand in a state that hadn't even been a part of the Confederacy.[8] 138 years removed from the last legal transatlantic slave voyage to Virginia, 51 years removed from the end of the Civil War, the oppression and violence of these periods still fatally affected the Manson family. More than just the prejudice of one man, the force that killed Edward Manson was the same force that ensured millions like his great-grandfather remained farmers on their old enslavers' lands. It was the same force that ensured the death of Reconstruction. The same force that led to a fivefold increase in lynchings and a 20 percent increase in Klan membership wherever Birth of a Nation played.[9] That force was the Lost Cause; its influence is integral to the fabric of American history, and understanding its deployment is essential to understanding why

tragedies like Edward Manson's death took place.

In discussing the Lost Cause in the postbellum period, we will first briefly touch on the origin of the term as well as Charles Wilson's 'Civil Religion' theory before approaching it through the interdisciplinary lens of Marxist sociology and their idea of cultural social order. Using this as a guideline, we will then analyse how the Lost Cause, and its new values and ideas, were projected outward to the North to promote the stability of the fragile Southern status quo, while also seeing how these values served as a foundation for Southern mythmaking in the Civil War. Following this, the paper will turn inward to discuss how the Lost Cause projected new values for Southern white men, helping to soothe a bubbling masculinity and morale crisis, while forming the basis for a romantic view of the Civil War that spared Southern 'dignity'. Lastly, the paper will conclude with a brief discussion of the stability that the Lost Cause brought, and who exactly this stability benefited and who it existed to subjugate. Throughout, we will pay particular focus to the words of Alexander H. Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy, whose writings and beliefs serve as an essential skeleton key in unlocking the mysteries of the wider Lost Cause.

The Lost Cause as a Social Order

The Lost Cause, as a term, is wide and sweeping in its usage. First coined by Southern journalist, historian, and Confederate sympathiser Edward A. Pollard in his 1866 book on the Civil War, it initially served as a simple marketing phrase to help sell copies of Pollard's book.[10] Yet it quickly took on a life of its own and began to be used by wider Southern society as a shorthand for many different aspects of Confederate tradition. Used to describe things as disparate as the construction of Confederate monuments to an entire field of academic historiography, it was united by the shared idea of an honourable Confederate struggle built upon noble goals instead of the preservation of slavery. In other words, the movement was built on intentional misdirection and, eventually, shared ignorance. In the late 1800s, Southern schools taught classes glorifying their participation in the Civil War, towns threw Confederate reunions celebrating the glory of old fights, organisations like the Daughters of the Confederacy built monuments to honour lost Confederate heroes.[11] The Lost Cause became so ubiquitous and powerful that in churches all throughout the South, hymns such as 'When the Roll Is Called Over Yonder' started to include verses like: "Where our Lee and Jackson call us to their home up in the sky", venerating Confederate figures and the larger struggle.[12] It was hymns like these, and the omnipresence of Lost Cause ideology they represented, that no doubt inspired Charles Wilison to write his seminal book *Baptised in Blood*. Categorising this omnipresence, he described the Lost Cause, its monuments, gatherings, and other vestigial elements as part of a "multidimensional spiritual movement," comprising various interrelated elements that all combined into a "Southern Civil Religion".[13] Wilson viewed the core of this "religion" as a series of similarly interrelated myths like the myth of the happy slave, the myth of the war of Northern Aggression, and the myth "of the Crusading Christian Confederates".[14] Narrowing his scope in on the religious dimensions of the Lost Cause, Wilson compellingly argues that the religious faith of the South became wholly enthralled, and indeed subsumed by the Lost Cause mythos, and while this fact is well argued, it is, in this paper's view, only one head of a much larger beast. Susan Durant's review of the book in the pages of the Civil

War Historical Review commented on the "handicapping narrowness" of his focus on Southern churches and ministers, and Edward L Ayers' review likewise takes issue with the "narrow focus" of Wilson's work overall.[15] While the content of *Baptised in Blood* is incredibly well written and well researched, what initially reads as a sweeping argument (applying a religious lens to this topic) actually ends up being somewhat limiting. While aspects of the greater Lost Cause, like Confederate monuments and specialised prayers, fit neatly into Wilson's chosen box, other aspects, like the rise of Lost Cause historiography and the Lost Cause's intended effect on African-Americans, do not. Thus, if a religious lens isn't as expansive as needed, what is a better vessel for this concept?

Borrowing a concept from sociology, social order represents an interesting alternative to religion. In his book *The Social Order: An Introduction to Sociology,* Robert Bierstedt posits that the difference between history and sociology is that "the former is a particularising or individualising discipline" and that "the latter is a generalising one".[16] He defines sociology as "a generalising science of sociocultural phenomena viewed in their generic forms, types, and manifold interconnections".[17] Therefore, if even wide historical concepts like civil religion are too narrow to fit the myriad of different forms the Lost Cause took, perhaps applying the more generalised concepts of sociology could promote a fuller view of exactly what the Lost Cause was. In helping to explain the Lost Cause, the idea of a social order fits aptly. Social order is, in simple terms, the means through which institutions, groups, and governments work together to maintain a stable and orderly society. In the cultural approach to social order, preferred by Marxist sociologists, norms and values "supply consensus about the right way to behave"; this consensus then provides "stability and order" to the wider society.[18] In the view of these same Marxist sociologists, the social order almost always exists to serve the interests of the powerful in a society, and more often than not, the norms and values that it relies upon are imposed on others by the powerful.[19] Under this framework, norms, values, and ideas form the foundation of social order, which in turn promotes stability. Typically, this Marxist lens is used to define large-scale systems like capitalism or feudalism, but it has a remarkable resonance to the role the Lost Cause played in the post-war period. If the end goal of a social order is to promote stability, one can hardly think of a more urgent time for stability than the postbellum South.

Two-thirds of Southern wealth (a majority held in enslaved peoples) had been destroyed (or freed), two-fifths of livestock had been killed or died of malnourishment, and most factories as well as almost all railroads had been demolished.[20] After the bloodiest war in American history and the destruction of an entire economic system, the old order of Slavery's Capitalism had been rendered untenable, and the need for a new stable status quo, and thus the need for a new social order, was the single most urgent goal of the Southern power structure immediately after the war. This need was answered by the Lost Cause. The exact end goal of this new social order will be discussed later, but first, the mechanisms, norms, and values through which the Lost Cause performed this role as a social order will be delved into.

"For the North" - The Lost Cause Externally as Means of Stability.

The most immediate challenge faced after the Civil War was the process of reintegration. The South had to rebuild politically, materially, and economically, but found

itself unequipped to do any of these processes without the help of the North. With millions of Southerners and Northerners dead, the moral resolve of Northern fighting, and the lack of a conditional surrender for the Confederacy at Appomattox, the South was hard-pressed to push for reintegration on its own terms, and the North was reluctant to let the South be in the driver's seat of Reconstruction. The first years of Reconstruction were characterised by this limited Southern resistance in the face of Northern willpower. But as Southern states slowly started to be readmitted, and the process of political reconsolidation began to occur, the South needed to develop a language of articulation to justify why it could be trusted with home rule and ensure northern buy-in on Southern political goals. This language took shape in a varying host of speeches, essays, and orations by prominent Southern politicians, but is perhaps best encapsulated in Alexander H Stephens's 1878 speech to Congress, which came to be known as the 'Carpenter's Picture' speech. It opens indelicately as Stephens waxes poetic about the donation of a painting commemorating Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. What starts as praise of the artist quickly turns to praise of Lincoln the man. Stephens writes, "He was warmhearted…generous…magnanimous and filled with malice towards none, and charity for all".[21] This rhetoric was a far cry from Stephens' wartime language, for example, in his infamous Cornerstone Speech, Stephens spoke ominously of Lincoln's inauguration, lamenting the "the idea of coercion" it represented.[22] In his private writings, despite their ostensibly friendly relationship, Stephens compared Lincoln to Caesar (an increasingly common refrain to antiquity which this paper will touch on again briefly) and claimed he'd be "looked upon as the destroyer[s] of liberties".[23] Just as Stephens whitewashed his words on Lincoln, so too did he whitewash the wider Confederate cause. He claims that long before the Civil War, Southerners knew that "slavery had better be abolished", that the war was fought not on the basis of slavery but "only to avoid [the] greater evil" of overreach that Great Britain represented during the Revolution.[24] That the Cornerstone Speech he gave at the start of the Civil War contradicted this should be no surprise. In it, he emphasised that the only way to have avoided secession and "secure[d] peace" was to have avoided the "clamour against the institution [of slavery]" as a whole.[25]

Beyond just politicking, this speech, and the hundreds of speeches, books, and essays like it, typified by Southerners like Edward Pollard, represented the intentional minimisation and obfuscation of Confederate war goals and the entire cause of the conflict. In this version of history, the Civil War was not a struggle over the morality of slavery, but instead a simple disagreement between states on questions like federal overreach. Beyond that, in this view, it was a conflict wherein the leaders still maintained good feelings for one another, and no severe animosity between parties developed. Faced with a Northern electorate increasingly weary of the toll Reconstruction demanded, the Southern perspective on the war provided a keen and convenient out for both Republican voters and politicians. The North was happy to accept Southern obfuscation and explanations of the war, which minimised slavery because that minimisation meant that Northern participation and funding of Reconstruction were unnecessary. After all, if the war was truly started over concerns of federal overreach and not on the realities (and increasingly as the war went on, the morals) of slavery, then they had no responsibility to ensure that the recently freed enslaved peoples of the South were protected. The 1878 date of Stephens' Carpenter's Picture speech, a year after the death knell of

Reconstruction, serves as both the culmination of decades of concerted effort to shift the facts of Civil War history, but also as the starting gun for an entire cottage industry of Lost Cause revisions of wider American history. The idea of a war for states' rights' served as one of the key external values of the Lost Cause social order, and more so than any other idea, contributed to the external stability of the nascent New South. It did this by negating Northern animosity, helping to undo the progression of Reconstruction, as well as erasing the centrality of slavery in the Civil War, thus clearing the runway for more romantic and marketable understandings of the war; romantic views which would be massively helpful in bringing about social order internally, as we'll dive into next.

"For the South" - The Lost Cause Internally as Social Balm, Norms, and Values.

In his October 25th, 1865 diary entry, Alexander H. Stephens, having just been freed from Fort Warren by President Johnson's pardon, remarked on the devastation he saw journeying back below the Mason-Dixon line. He wrote, "War has left a terrible impression on the whole country to Atlanta. The desolation is heart-sickening. Fences gone, fields all a-waste, houses burnt".[26] Doubtlessly, the South was in dire straits immediately after the war, and the first challenge faced by those in positions of power, even ones whose positions were informal, was the material reconstruction of the South. Yet, as the physical process of rebuilding began, so too did a more immaterial reconstruction begin. In newspapers, diaries, books, and speeches, all across the South, the rebuilding of the white Southern, and specifically the white male Southern psyche, started before even the signatures at Appomattox dried. The necessity of this was clear; as Gaines Foster wrote in his book *Ghosts of the Confederacy,* soldiers and civilians alike were uniformly "spiritless", "demoralised and dispirited" at the war's conclusion.[27] One veteran observed that "all seemed steeped in a fatal lethargy, unwilling or unable to resist or forward anything".[28] This moroseness was particularly pronounced among Southern white men, who in record numbers fell victim to alcohol and drugs like opium to cope with their nation's defeat.[29] In his diary at Fort Warren, Alexander H Stephens elucidated this dispiritedness as well as the larger fears of Southern white men when he wrote about a nightmare he had: Was disturbed by dreams. Richmond was the scene. I seemed to be roaming amid ruins, looking for Mr. Baskerville's house; was on my way home, and had stopped to see after Henry and Anthony. The house—in my dream—had been burned, not a vestige remained of it, nor of other houses that had stood around it; Mrs Stanard's and all were swept away by fire. I could find nobody I knew and could learn nothing about Henry and Anthony; could hear nothing of Nancy, their mother.[30] Here we see the internalised fears of many southern men broad as day; Stephens is petrified not only by the devastation he is witnessing in his dream (no doubt informed by the real burning of Richmond), but more interestingly, at the impact this devastation had on the women in his life. These women, Mrs. Stanard, a close family friend, and Nancy, one of the many enslaved women under Stephens's ownership with whom he had an extensive, and perhaps romantic, relationship, both appear as objects of concern in Stephens's private diary and are mentioned in differing biographies of the man.[31] Thus, while not married, Stephens serves as a useful proxy for the concerns that gripped the wider white male population of the South, particularly of the owning class. They feared the destruction of their material reality, but also the destruction of something far more intangible, a loss of status stemming from a

perceived masculine failure to fulfil the paternalistic role of protector.

This fear and its resulting coping mechanisms largely stemmed from questions of both personal honour and manhood in the contexts of a crushing military defeat, which weighed heavily on white men throughout the South. While the extent to which defeat in the Civil War led to fear of emasculation amongst the men of the former Confederacy is generally debated, widespread condemnations of Southern women who became sexually involved with Northerners as well as the widespread propagation of Northern cartoons depicting Confederate President Jefferson Davis as evading Yankee capture by way of cross-dressing all point to the issue having at least some influence in the postbellum period.[32] What united these psychological concerns, both masculine and material, was the generalised feeling of a failure to protect Southern women from the ravages of war.[33] The antebellum South was a society deeply built on patriarchy as well as paternalism, and the fundamental failure to uphold their end of the paternalistic 'bargain' led to much mental anguish. The shattering of American slavery and the resulting shattering of the paternalism that surrounded it meant that a return to antebellum era values and the social capital that came with them was groundless, and a new method of acquiring that social capital was needed; enter the Lost Cause.

If the masculine values and psyche of the South had been damaged by Southern defeat, a new set of values evolved to fill in the cracks. In his postbellum article, 'A Southerner in the Peloponnesian War*',* scholar and South Carolinian Basil L Gildersleeve provided an unmistakable guide to these new values. The article, ostensibly an academic study of the Civil War, compares the Southern conflict with that of the ancient Peloponnesian War. Gildersleeve draws countless parallels between both Athens and the American South, arguing that both exhibit and embody noble traits unique to Western civilisation.[34] He compares everything from their shared hunger during war to the ideals of their nations, drawing comparisons to both ancient figures and wider myth. In a particular section, Gildersleeve focuses on the shared struggle of women in wartime, contrasting the "genuine tears…which flowed from the eyes of the Southern women" and the "suffering" of the "women of Megara" to the general comfort of "Athenian dames and damsels who were as particular about their shoes and their other cordwainer's wares as ever".[35] In contrasting the squalor of the Southern women's situation and the relative prosperity of Athenian women during the Peloponnesian War, Gildersleeve is making a value statement about wider Southern society. Athens represents the idealised version of the South, as represented by their success in protecting their women's comfort. The idea of Athens, and wider Greece, as a particular focal point of Southern values following the war is corroborated in James C Cobb's book *Away Down South.* In it, Cobb writes that while the "Cult of Greece" had existed as an "important component" of European romanticism for generations beforehand, following the Civil War, it took enormous newfound importance, "flourishing in the minds of Southerners".[36] The connection, of course, is clear: Athens serves as a model of a masculine slave society that retained a refined and thoughtful landed class. This connection manifested not only in the correlation of the Southern struggle with that of ancient Greek wars but also in a multitude of other fields, like the spread of Greek Revival architecture, and the increased importance placed on the teaching of Classics.[37] Describing someone as Greek or Roman became shorthand for the most laudatory of praises and appears commonly throughout the

writings of the period, seen in the words of contemporary figures like Alexander H Stephens. In his *Recollections*, Stephens commonly blathered about classical antiquity, and indeed praises a young man by claiming he had the class of a Roman, a common compliment during the period.[38] Likewise, in Thomas E Schott's biography of Stephens, he writes adoringly that "[Stephens] read like a Roman…easily dispos[ing] of passages in the Greek Testament," while also being a keen scholar of Cicero.[39] The values of Antiquity were not the only values reprioritised after the defeat of the Southern Cause, and perhaps most famously, the Southern ideal of the English Cavalier became the most prominent, and certainly most influential, in the postbellum period. As Wilson discussed in *Baptised in Blood*, the ideal of the Crusading Christian Confederates had enormous sway in the postbellum.[40] This ideal, which formed the basis for Lost Cause organisations like the Ku Klux Klan, hinged on imagery of chivalric knights and Norman heritage. Like the cult of Greece, it demonstrates that after the war, a radical reinvention of Southern values and a push to connect to the norms of the past took place, and that these efforts were undertaken to whitewash the conflict between North and South, recasting it as a romantic ode to antiquity, while also serving as the values for a new social order that prioritized the maintenance of Southern morale, self-image, and masculinity in the face of catastrophic military defeat. Thus, from a sociologically Marxist perspective, these new values, like odes to antiquity, formed the foundation of a new Southern social order. They helped to maintain the morale of Southern whites, many of them former Confederate soldiers and of modest means, by preventing them from truly challenging the merits of their participation in the Civil War through their romantic allusions, while also playing on masculine concerns of protecting female comfort and innocence. All together, they combined to prevent them from questioning the powerful interests of the Southern elite and ensured the continued stability of the Southern social order.

Conclusion

The South of the postbellum era needed stability, and it found it in the values, norms, and ideas of the Lost Cause. In the halls of Congress, the South employed obfuscation, minimisation, and lies about its conduct in the war, deluding its own citizens and those of the North about the nature of the conflict. In the South, the correlation of antiquity with the Southern struggle and the general promotion of values surrounding antiquity and English chivalry helped soothe the damaged morale of Southern society, particularly amongst former Confederate soldiers and white men overall. Thus, both internally and externally, the South deployed the norms and values of a new social order, built around the loss of the Civil War, affecting every aspect of American society. Katharine Du Pre Lumpkin, herself a Southern sociologist, summarised the ubiquity of this social order when she recalled her father telling her at a young age, "Your mother teaches you prayers. I teach you the love of the Lost Cause".[41] But, beyond this ubiquity, beyond the stability of simple reconstruction and reintegration, the question remains: what were the fundamental aims of this new social order? More than just mindless maintenance of the status quo, the construction and active promotion of the Lost Cause, and indeed the entire social order of the South, acted in unison with one simple aim in mind. This aim was the same aim celebrated by Alexander H. Stephens in his Cornerstone Speech in 1861, and the same one that existed for generations in the South. He wrote the Confederacy was "founded upon" the "great truth that the negro is not equal to the

white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition".[42] While the Confederacy may have been defeated, and Black Southerners were ostensibly freed, the subjugation and oppression of millions of Black Americans continued and the continuation of this suffering and a society intrinsically built around white supremacy remained the core goal of the Lost Cause in the years after the Civil War. This goal was filtered through the helpful guise of honouring heroism, tradition, and celebrating history, and as a result, could succeed where the Confederacy failed. Thus, while the Lost Cause represented a crucial stabilising force and a substantial evolution of the South's social order, shifting the values, norms, and ideas that underpinned Southern society, it nevertheless served the same role as the Confederacy and the paternalism of antebellum society before it. This role was the support and solidification of white supremacy both in the South and the wider United States. The success of this goal, and the Lost Cause as a whole, can be felt today in the history people read, the heritage they uphold, and in the hearts and homes of families like the Mansons, who deal with the suffering it wrought and still inflicts to this day.

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40. Wilson, *Baptised in Blood*, p. 36.
41. Katherine Du Pre Lumpkin, 'Southern Religion and the Lost Cause' in Paul D. Escott, and, David R. Goldfield, (eds.), *Major Problems in the History of the American South: Volume II the New South* (New York, 1999), p. 196.
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2026 History Conference Runner-Up

From Triumph to Tragedy: The Political Realities Behind Llyweln ap Gruffadd's Downfall

Owen McIlwaine

In 1267 Llywelyn ap Gruffudd had achieved his lifelong ambition achieving recognition "so that [he] and his heirs [would] be called and be princes of Wales, and moreover [have] the fealty and homage of all the Welsh barons of Wales".[1] Yet barely a decade later Llywelyn would fall from grace and be forced to quitclaim his Welsh vassals, the majority of his territorial gains in Wales, and his native Welsh customs, reduced to *Princeps Wallie* in name only.[2] Such a dramatic turn of events is often attributed to Llywelyn's ambition, as he is frequently seen as a ruler reaching beyond what was thought to be feasible, implementing policies that required more resources than he could spare. This characterisation fails to consider all factors. Although Llywelyn was undoubtedly an ambitious man, his ambition and harsh personality, although certainly a factor in worsening his relationship with Edward I, was not the calamity it is often made to seem. Instead, his eventual collapse can be attributed to the weak construction of the Treaty of Montgomery, the ambitions of the Marcher lords and his own vassals, and the steady deterioration of Anglo-Welsh relations, which compounded over time bringing about his ruin.

Embarrassed by the fact that Llywelyn had achieved his principality through exploiting the weakness of England during the Baronial Revolt, an exploitation that allowed him to "retain seisin of the lands, men, […] and other things" the Monarchy attempted to limit the power Llywelyn would gain through the Treaty of Montgomery.[3] While the Treaty of Montgomery was generous to Llywelyn, it was structured in such a manner that it ensured Llywelyn's weakness and inability to gain the political independence for Wales he desired. Despite the treaty granting "the prince the Four Cantrefs of Perfeddwlad" and "the fealty and homage of all the Welsh barons of Wales", it was intentionally vague on other aspects of the agreement.[4] Notably, there was no definition of who was understood to be a "Welsh baron of Wales", an omission that left the status of key barons in Glamorgan and Gwent uncertain.[5] The nebulous nature of this status is increasingly confused by the matter of men like Hywel ap Meurig, men who had been previous vassals of the Marcher lords, but had that vassalage transferred because of the treaty, leaving their allegiance to Llywelyn in question.[6] Moreover, the clauses regarding lands in Brecon and Gwrtheyrnion, and their return to their previous owners were ambiguous, sowing the seeds for conflict.[7] Originally requiring 25,000 marks, with an additional 5,000 if Llywelyn ever wished to purchase the vassalage of Maredudd ap Rhys, the treaty placed an enormous financial obligation on Llywelyn.[8] Although Llywelyn was able to pay promptly for the first few years following the treaty, by 1270 he was under considerable financial stress.[9] A poor harvest coupled with his purchase of Maredudd's

service in 1270 only worsened the problem, leading to four successive years of an inability to pay causing increased tensions with the English Crown and a growing realisation that Llywelyn's principality was fiscally unstable.[10] The vague nature of the treaty was then ultimately disadvantageous for Llywelyn as it destabilised his principality from the offset, required monies Llywelyn could not afford to pay, and ensured the development of future conflicts with the March that would only weaken his stance.

Although the Treaty of Montgomery had weakened Llywelyn, it would be the Marcher lords who would threaten his authority. Almost immediately after the Treaty of Montgomery, key marcher lords, like the Mortimers and de Clares, sought to retake the lands they had lost in Glamorgan, Brecon, and Maelinydd. As early as 1267, Gilbert de Clare was increasing his authority in upland Glamorgan, arresting Gruffudd ap Rhys and soon after building Caerffili castle in 1268 to consolidate his gains, looking ahead at his plans to reassert control over Caerleon.[11] This would unfortunately develop into a trend for Llywelyn as Roger Mortimer would seek to reinstate Humphery Bohun in his lands in Brecon, lands which Llywelyn now claimed for his own.[12] Calling on his allies, both ecclesiastical and bureaucratic, Mortimer was able to use his position as regent to seek justification for the use of royal armies to secure Brecon for Bohun.[13] Finding his justification through a legal loophole, Mortimer eventually secured Brecon for his ally by stationing royal garrisons in key castles, all the while using his influence in the royal chancery to admonish Llywelyn's attempts at counter-attacks.[14] Additionally, due to his role as regent with Edward I being out of the country, Mortimer was able to use his power to issuing mandates to key figures like William de Valencia, ordering him "to let Humphery [Bohun] […] have seisin of the castle and town of Haverford", further legitimising the actions he took against Llywelyn.[15] Mortimer did not stop at Brecon; instead, he turned his attention towards regaining his own lands. Focusing on the lands he had lost in Maelienydd, Mortimer began to rebuild his castle at Cefnllys a clear violation of the terms of the Treaty of Montgomery and a further sign to Llywelyn that Mortimer would continue to push his authority further into Wales.[16] While Llywelyn did seek to offset the Marcher lords for several years, it was evident by 1272 that he would be unable to successfully combat their growing authority as the financial cost was growing too great for him to bear.[17] The triple threat of Bohun, Mortimer, and de Clare then illustrates how untenable Llywelyn's position was as in a few short years they had effectively reversed the majority of the gains he had won in 1267.

Interestingly enough, it was not just marcher lords who would contribute to the destabilisation of Llywelyn's realm, as the noblewomen of the March would play an important role as well. Historian Emma Cavell argues women such as Maud Mortimer were able to create networks of communication between themselves and their Welsh servants, which supplied noble families like the Mortimers advance warnings of possible military action against them, and the movements and resources of Llywelyn.[18] With the advance notice of Llywelyn's actions, families were able to secure their position in the March, as Maud did when Llywelyn tried to take Clun, circumventing Llywelyn before he even had a chance to arrive.[19] The notification then served a dual purpose of reinforcing Anglican hegemony throughout the border, and ensured Llywelyn would not be successful at expanding his influence in the March. Marcher Lords were thus an extremely important cause in destabilising Llywelyn's principality, as, by immediately seeking to reverse their 1267

losses, they gave Llywelyn no time to consolidate his authority within his new territories. Instead, they continually weakened his strength and disrupted his principality by seizing key areas, forcing Llywelyn to spend resources on fighting battles he could not win as they steadily chipped away at his power, resources, and territory.

In a similar fashion to the Marcher lords, many Welsh princes were less than enthusiastic over Llywelyn's ascendancy and poised themselves to profit at his expense. The most famous example of this exploitation occurred in 1274, originating from Llywelyn's brother Daffydd and his plot to assassinate his elder brother. Chafing beneath Llywelyn's new principality, Daffydd, along with Llywelyn's chief rival, Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn, plotted the assassination together with the end goal of Daffydd supplanting Llywelyn, and Gruffudd being granted the strategic territories of Ceri and Cedewain.[20] With the plot eventually discovered by Llywelyn, Daffydd and Gruffudd were forced to seek, and were granted, asylum in England, where, from their staging ground in Shrewsbury, they continually raided Llywelyn and seized lands in Powys.[21] While the plot was unsuccessful, its existence and consequences demonstrate the fragility of Llywelyn's principality by highlighting the extreme distrust between Llywelyn and his vassals, and their willingness to take up arms against him.

Such fragility is given greater credence through the principality's overturning of decades of precedent. As early as 1157, Welsh Princes performed homage to Henry II, and by 1172, the King was established as a recognized overlord and was able to place feudal obligations on his Welsh vassals.[22] Ties between England and Wales would become increasingly feudal so by 1240 it was normal for "Dafydd ap Llywelyn and the barons of Wales […] to do homage to King Henry".[23] While Llywelyn's achievement of the Treaty of Montgomery was remarkable in its stalling of English expansionism, it must be placed in the context of decades of growing English hegemony in the region. The idea that Llywelyn could then establish a strong and united principality with vassals that had no real ties to one another in a few short years is laughable, as he would be attempting to undo a century's worth of work in a decade. The failure of Llywelyn to accomplish this feat is evidenced by the breakneck speed at which the Welsh princes abandoned him once Edward invaded Wales. By April of 1277, just a few months after Edward had begun his campaign, an agreement was reached with Rhys ap Maredudd where "the said Rhys will make homage to the lord king […] and the lord king grants that Rhys will never be removed from his homage without his will".[24] Although Rhys was required to "give up the right he claims in Gwnionydd and Medwynion" to complete the agreement he was assured that "the King will make him reasonable restitution elsewhere".[25] Despite the speed at which Rhys abandoned Llywelyn being damning enough to suggest his aversion to being Llywelyn's vassal, the provision assuring Rhys he would remain the King's vassal illustrates a growing tendency of Welsh lords to prefer to be sworn to Edward than Llywelyn. Furthermore, the promise of restitution is indicative of the ease with which the loyalty of Welsh princes could be bought from Llywelyn, proving again how weak the bonds of vassalage to Llywelyn were and how inherently unstable his principality was. Resembling his agreement with Rhys, Edward would go on to bribe more vassals of Llywelyn's, such as Llywelyn ap Gruffudd ap Madog, who was promised lands in Wales and the transfer of his vassalage to the King in exchange for his support against Llywelyn, and certain minor ministerial nobles of Gwynedd who were promised further rewards for their defection to Edward.[26] The contribution that the ambition

of his Welsh vassals and their lack of loyalty to him played in his downfall is therefore clear. The ambitions of the Welsh princes performed a role extremely similar to their marcher counterparts—by continually seeking to serve their own ambitions instead of promoting Llywelyn's newborn principality, they ensured Llywelyn would never have the strength to create a lasting domain, leaving the door open for his eventual collapse. Moreover, Llywelyn's inevitable failure to overcome the established English influences and gain his vassals' trust demonstrates the level of distrust permeating his realm. Such a wariness exemplified his Welsh vassals' desire to serve under the King rather than him, a desire which proves how ineffective the authority he held over Wales had become.

Besides having the effect of weakening Llywelyn's power in his principality, the incursions of the Marcher lords and Welsh vassals helped worsen Anglo-Welsh relations. When Edward left England in 1270 to go on crusade, he left behind relatively stable relations with Llywelyn, having arranged the sale of Maredudd ap Rhys' vassalage to Llywelyn leaving them on cordial, if not friendly, terms.[27] However, within a year of Edward's departure, tensions had begun to cool over Llywelyn's inability to pay the funds required by the Treaty of Montgomery. Unfortunately, the longer Edward was out of the country, the more the actions of men like Roger Mortimer served to escalate the issue. For instance, Mortimer's use of the chancery to justify his and Bohun's encroachments gave the perception that the Crown was, at the least, unwilling to assist him in the matter, and, at most, actively supporting the men trying to tear him down.[28] This viewpoint would not be beneficial to Llywelyn, as it served to make him increasingly paranoid of the Crown and his position within it, ultimately fostering further distrust and straining the bonds between his principality and England. While the Marcher lords activities deteriorated Anglo-Welsh relations on Llywelyn's side, Llywelyn's attempts to rectify them would harm relations with the Crown. Believing the actions of the Marcher lords to be illegal under the 1267 agreement, Llywelyn would ask in 1274 for the "king to compel the earl of Gloucester […] and the other marchers to restore to Llywelyn the lands which they have unjustly occupied […] and Llywelyn [would] immediately pay the [money owed]".[29] While Llywelyn doubtlessly intended to demonstrate the injustice of the Marshal lords actions, hoping it would cause Edward to intercede on his behalf, addressing the King in such a direct manner would do nothing but antagonise him. By suggesting to Edward that he was not performing his duties as a just king, and threatening to withhold agreed upon monies, Llywelyn was not only in violation of the Treaty of Montgomery, but was also attacking the image of Edward as a model of good governance, an image Edward had worked for decades to cultivate.[30] Llywelyn's search for justice had then had the adverse effect of alienating him further from the Crown.

The attack on Edward's image no doubt strained Anglo-Welsh relations, but the greatest cause of tension would come from Edward's harbouring of Daffydd ap Gruffudd and Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn. When Edward agreed to provide political asylum for the failed murderers, he signified to Llywelyn, intentionally or otherwise, that it was his policy to destabilise Llywelyn's principality, confirming Llywelyn's earlier suspicions that the Crown was actively supporting his opponents. It's no wonder then that historians like Rees Davies view this event as a considerable contribution to the ultimate breakdown of Llywelyn and Edward's relationship.[31] Although the fallout from Daffydd's assassination plot was extremely trying for Anglo-Welsh relations, Welsh vassals strained Llywelyn's royal relations

in other ways, one of which was Llywelyn's conflict with Anian, the Bishop of St Asaph. Beginning in 1274 over a disagreement on the sharing of certain profits, the conflict would escalate to a point where Anian sought English support resulting in Edward's confirmation of St Asaph's ecclesiastical liberties.[32] Edward's siding with Anian no doubt led to tension between prince and king as Llywelyn would view Edward's intervention as a severe overreach and violation of Llywelyn's own authority. Further slights to Llywelyn's authority emerged following Edward's depriving Llywelyn of greater income, a cause for tension if ever there was one, making it obvious that Edward's actions would have done nothing but turn Llywelyn further from him. Through their actions, the Marcher lords and Welsh vassals had unconsciously strained both Llywelyn's opinion of Edward and Edward's opinion of Llywelyn, creating the first sparks of animosity and laying the groundwork for future conflicts between the two, conflicts that would end with Llywelyn's collapse.

Already distrustful of one another due to the proclivities of the Marcher lords and Welsh princes, the personal corrosion of Llywelyn and Edward's relationship would be the final straw before the outbreak of war. Central to the decay of their affiliation would be the matter of homage. As the Treaty of Montgomery was written as a royal grant instead of a recognition of rights, Edward viewed Llywelyn as beneath his imperial authority and therefore homage and fealty were legal obligations that constituted an act of rebellion to withhold.[33] Llywelyn did not share this view and held his performing of homage as a negotiating tool, seeking to use it to address the incursions of the Marcher lords in his territory and compel Edward to return his brother and Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn to him for trial.[34] Throughout the early 1270s Llywelyn was repeatedly summoned to perform homage, demurring each time, negatively affecting his relations with the crown as he did so and increasing Edward's view of Llywelyn as a recalcitrant vassal. Although Llywelyn did in part delay homage, hoping it would force Edward to recognise his grievances, he delayed chiefly out of fear for his own safety. As previously stated, Edward's sheltering of Daffydd and Gruffudd made Llywelyn highly suspicious of the King, so Edward's command to have Llywelyn perform homage to him at Westminster not only reinforced those suspicions but made Llywelyn even more concerned for his own safety.[35] To avoid further escalation of the issue in 1275 Edward and Llywelyn reached a compromise where they would meet at Chester to perform the ceremony.[36] On Edward's part, travelling to Chester for the ceremony guaranteed the safety of Llywelyn while demonstrating the prestige and importance of Llywelyn as his vassal. For Llywelyn, performing the act symbolised his understanding of his place within Edward's realm and required the forfeit of one of Llywelyn's major bargaining tools. Unfortunately, the meeting would never take place. After consulting "all the barons of Wales" Llywelyn would decide not to go to Chester, unconvinced Edward would guarantee his safety since "the King harboured his fugitives […] and for that reason the King returned enraged to England".[37] Shattering the compromise spelled the complete destruction of Anglo-Welsh relations, and from then on neither Edward nor Llywelyn would give ground, each believing they were being treated unfairly by one another.

However, conflict could have still been avoided if not for Eleanor de Montfort. Llywelyn's decision to marry the daughter of Simon de Montfort, the man who had nearly overthrown Edward's father and caused the nobility to rise against the monarchy, was immensely provocative and would be the catalyst for war. While historians have differing

opinions on the reasons for marriage between Llywelyn and Eleanor, ranging from retaliation for Edward's sheltering of Llywelyn's enemies, to a simple fulfilment of agreements between Llywelyn and Simon de Montfort, the reasons matter less than Edward's reaction to the marriage.[38] Discovering the marriage by accident after detaining Eleanor at sea, Edward would view the marriage as a conscious decision on Llywelyn's part to incite revolt throughout England using the de Montfort name as a figurehead, a view reinforced by the discovery of a Montfortian banner in the ship with Eleanor.[39] To Edward, this was the point of no return. While Edward would continue to command Llywelyn "to do his homage and fealty […] before the King at Westminster" there was no expectation for Llywelyn to comply. Instead, the commands were used to further justify Edward's eventual martial campaign by illustrating Llywelyn as a disobedient vassal.[40] Hopelessly, Llywelyn would seek to rectify the situation, attempting desperate negotiations for peace up until his eventual branding as a rebel in 1276, but all his efforts would prove fruitless.[41] By 1276 the once cordial, if adversarial, relationship between the two men had suffered for years beneath the weight of their own personal animosities towards one another. While Llywelyn was not blameless, as his paranoia for his security and refusal to perform homage certainly fostered animosity, it was Edward's strict interpretation of feudal obligations and fear of greater rebellion that led to the breakdown of diplomacy and subsequent path to war.

History has been unkind to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. His political downfall is often attributed to his ever-present ambition, yet blaming his collapse on his over-ambition ignores the unpleasant truth that Llywelyn's principality was doomed to fail before it had even begun. The treaty of Montgomery, although intended to secure him a principality, had ensured its volatility from the outset. Its vague nature and harsh financial demands not only deprived Llywelyn of much-needed resources but forced him into military conflicts with Marcher lords and even some of his own vassals, which steadily ate away at his territory and influence throughout Wales. However, it would be the growing tensions between England and Wales that would ultimately spell Llywelyn's doom, as the Crown's view of Llywelyn would steadily decline over time due to personal animosities and increased Anglo-Welsh tension brought about by Marcher lords and Welshmen, which would ultimately cause the breakdown of diplomacy and force Edward I to launch the military campaign in 1277 that would lead to the Treaty of Aberconwy and Llywelyn's demise.

NOTES

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25. *Ibid*.
26. Carr, ‘Daffydd ap Gruffudd’, p. 386. Stephenson, ‘Struggle for the Principality of Wales’, p. 42
27. Stephenson, ‘Struggle for the Principality of Wales’, p. 41.
28. Smith, ‘Llywelyn and The March’, pp. 17-18.
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30. Kathleen Neal, ‘Words as Weapons in the Correspondence of Edward I and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd’, *Parergon*, 30:1, (2013), p. 54.
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35. Smith, *Llywelyn ap Gruffydd*, pp. 386-387. Michael Prestwich, 'Edward I and Wales', in John Kenyon and Diane Williams (eds.), *The Impact of the Edwardian Castle in Wales*, (Oxford, 2010), p. 1.
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37. *Brut y Tywysogyon*, p. 263.
38. Smith, *Llywelyn ap Gruffudd'*, pp. 393-395.
39. *Ibid*., p. 390, 395.
40. *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, p. 104. Smith, *Llywelyn ap Gruffudd'*, pp. 402-403.
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From Marginalisation to Mainstage: Evaluating the Extent of Diversity in the Works Progress Administration's Cultural Programmes, 1935-1943

Emma Davies

As part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, created to alleviate the effects of the Great Depression on public life and the economy, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was established in May 1935, lasting until 1943. The WPA stood as an integral public employment initiative, responsible for the employment of nearly 3.5 million Americans and the construction of more than 40,000 new buildings, including nearly 6,000 schools, 1,000 libraries, and 325 firehouses, all within its first three years in action.[1] While the WPA is most often remembered for its physical contributions to American infrastructure, its cultural endeavours, such as the Federal Art Project (FAP), Federal Writers' Project (FWP), Federal Theatre Project (FTP), and the Federal Music Project (FMP), were equally as innovative and significant for American society during the Roosevelt years. These cultural projects employed a multitude of artists, writers, musicians, and actors at a time when employment in this sector was severely undervalued and overlooked as people scrambled for stable employment in times of job scarcity. As W.H. Auden puts it, "The WPA was, perhaps, one of the noblest and most absurd undertakings ever attempted by any state… to consider in a time of general distress starving artists as artists and not simply as paupers is unique to the Roosevelt Administration".[2] The WPA cultural projects were fundamental in promoting the democratisation of expressive arts and bringing marginalised American voices into the creative scene. Nevertheless, these initiatives raised crucial questions about how far federal cultural policy genuinely celebrated American diversity. On one hand, the WPA's cultural projects preserved regional and ethnic heritage and amplified marginalised voices, showcasing the diversity of American life and people. On the other hand, this celebration of diversity was limited and constrained by political censorship and embedded prejudices that seeped into individual projects. Throughout this essay, the successes and limitations of celebrating diversity in the FWP, FTP, and FAP will be thematically analysed. By examining race, ethnicity, and social mobility, it can be determined that these three WPA cultural projects celebrated American diversity to a significant yet limited and uneven extent.

Beginning in 1937, the Federal Writers' Project constructed the *American Guide Series*, a collection of detailed U.S. state and territory travel guides which sought to foster a sense of national unity in a culturally heterogeneous nation by preserving and foregrounding the diversity of American life in print. From the arctic slopes of Alaska to the deep canyons of the Southwest, the guides documented the diversity of America's dialects, folklore, history, people, sights, and terrain in vivid written and illustrative detail. In doing so, the FWP held "up a mirror to America", reframing local distinctiveness as part of a broader democratic and pluralistic national identity.[3] Moreover, Christine Bold claims that the guidebooks drove "the

growth of American cultural confidence", articulating a vision of a unified nation during a period of severe economic and social instability.[4]

Despite the project making considerable efforts to incorporate a diverse range of American voices and traditions, cultural biases and misrepresentation remained deeply woven into the pages of the guides. For instance, the *Alaska Guide* termed Inuit communities as "Eskimos" and "primitive", reflecting not only the outdated terms of the era but also the editors' narrow assumptions and paternalistic framing. Most guidebook editors were white Americans writing about communities and heritage of which they had meagre knowledge of.[5] Furthermore, the guidebooks frequently softened or overlooked controversial or sensitive political topics such as racism, segregation, xenophobia, poverty, and women's rights in order to avoid antagonising state officials or local elites. The *Washington, D.C. Guide* illustrates this tendency clearly: while it traces the history of Native Americans, it concludes with a narrative suggesting their successful assimilation into a welcoming American society, analogised through Charles Curtis, the 1928 vice president with partial Native ancestry.[6] However, optimistic guidebook portrayals bore little resemblance to the lived realities of many Native Americans during the 1930s, who continued to face systemic discrimination, ostracism, and economic inequality.[7] Hence, the guides often presented celebratory narratives that obscured the realities of ongoing social injustices. Nevertheless, the complexity of interpreting the FWP's cultural output is complicated by the project's origins. As David A. Taylor notes, "the Writers' Project…had its roots in poverty relief, not in a patriotic desire to celebrate America"; thus, its main purpose was economic rather than cultural.[8] This raises important questions about the extent to which the FWP truly celebrated American diversity, particularly when such representation was never embedded in the project's initial objectives. Nevertheless, the enduring significance of the guidebooks in cultural memory demonstrates that though not intentional from the outset, these functioned as one of "America's first self-portraits" and did celebrate American diversity, despite some contradictory approaches.[9] Furthermore, the FWP made fundamental strides in documenting the stories of formerly enslaved African Americans in the 1936-1938 *Slave Narrative Collection* project, adding a layer of diversity to American historiography and culture. This endeavour captured more than 500 monochrome photographs and over 2,000 first-hand testimonies from formerly enslaved Americans at a time when accounts of the lived realities of slavery were largely missing from historical documentation. Norman R. Yetman stresses the significance of this project, as it cultivated "a high degree of representativeness and inclusiveness" in its far-reaching collation of testimonies from different locations, ages, and backgrounds, which was a success unmatched by earlier efforts.[10] Nonetheless, Yetman acknowledges the project's curtailments. Many interviewees were elderly, recalling events from childhood or early adolescence, meaning that their memories had been altered by the passage of time, nostalgia, and the psychological effects of trauma. Likewise, most interviews were conducted by white WPA workers, often in the racially segregated South. This magnified issues of racial hierarchy and power dynamics, resulting in incomplete or sanitised testimonies that were produced under pressure and were "what they wanted to hear".[11] However, accounts did not completely stray from authenticity. The FWP was committed to transcribing interviews in the exact language and dialect used by the interviewees. Their speech was not standardised or 'whitewashed'.

For example, Adeline Jackson's interview from 1936 was recorded exactly as it was first articulated:

> I took off de nussin' and went straight to the field. I drapped cotton seed, hoed some, and picked cotton…. I don't 'member no poor buckra, outside de overseers, 'cept a Mr. Reed dat lived down on wateroe, passin' our house sometime. He was a God forsaken lookin' man dat marster or mistress always give somethin'.[12]

The FWP's upholding of linguistic authenticity emphasises the project's effort to preserve not only the content of testimonies but also their true cultural intricacies. Ultimately, these narratives are fundamental for understanding American slavery and the memory of its survivors. Similarly, the FWP established the Oneida Language and Folklore project in January 1939, which sought to preserve the Oneida language, folklore, and history while providing employment and purpose for Indigenous people during the Great Depression.[13] One Oneida man spoke of the project, "I think it will be a good thing for the tribe. My little grandson here can't speak any Oneida, we older people don't like to see them forget all about their heritage".[14] Thus, the very existence of these programmes suggests an emerging recognition, and even a celebration, by White Americans of African American and Indigenous experiences, cultures, and languages as essential to the nation's history and deserving to be a celebrated and recorded part of it. In this sense, these FWP projects functioned as an early, albeit flawed, attempt to broaden historical representation and acknowledge the centrality of minority culture to the nation's wider narrative.[15]

Figure 1.

The Federal Theatre Project (FTP) arguably offered the largest platform for celebrations of diversity and social critique, as it was "designed to reverse the aristocratic posture of earlier theatrical operations" by giving marginalised people an opportunity to become involved in theatre.[16] Under the sometimes contested yet progressive female leadership of Hallie Flanagan, the FTP staged productions that featured racially integrated casts and audience seating arrangements, immigrant stories, and experimental "Living

Newspaper" dramas that addressed contemporary social issues. This was the first time that the government had funded theatre in the USA, investing 45 million dollars into the funding of actors, directors, designers, and technicians so that they could perform plays, marionette shows, circuses, dance programmes, and a myriad of other expressive works.[17] The FTP's 'Negro Units' provided steady employment for African American actors, playwrights, and directors, producing plays such as the celebrated "Voodoo Macbeth", which featured an all-Black cast, as shown in Figure 1. While it may seem that having a 'Negro unit' for African American performers reinforced segregation, this idea was proposed by Black actress Rose McClendon to ensure that Black themes and talents were represented in contemporary arts productions, highlighting that African Americans clearly had autonomy and influence in the FTP's decision-making.[18]

Nevertheless, Black performances were sometimes filtered through a white lens, which exoticised, imperialised, or romanticised African American culture for the entertainment of white audiences. This is best seen in the problematic performance of "Savage Africa" from 1936 to 1937 by the Burns O'Sullivan production group. This show featured an all-Black cast and an elephant actor named Japino performing exaggerated African stereotypes.[19] This fuelled the false representation of Africa as 'wild'and 'alien' to American society. Performances like these complicate whether the FTP were celebrating Black culture through theatre or depicting it as an exotic spectacle for profit and amusement. More pertinently, providing financial relief for Japino, an elephant, while thousands of Americans were unemployed made the FTP appear frivolous and unserious, damaging the professionalism and public reception of Black theatre.[20] Furthermore, the FTP's engagement with themes of poverty, labour struggles, and racism attracted political controversy, leading conservative critics to accuse it of promoting left-wing or anti-American ideas. In the fitting words of Hallie Flanagan during a government investigation into the FTP, "Theatre, when it's good, it's always dangerous".[21] Thus, in 1939, Congress ceased the Federal Theatre Project. The suppression of the FTP stresses both the ambition of its multicultural vision and the political limits placed on federal celebrations of diversity. Nonetheless, Barry Witham demonstrates that the WPA "reimagined the very way that theatre was produced in the United States", signalling that the FWP set into motion a longer-lasting legacy of minority representation in American theatre.[22]

The Federal Art Project (FAP) was crucial to broadening public access to art and showcasing American cultural diversity in different artistic forms. By placing murals, sculptures, and paintings in public buildings, the FAP relocated art from elite spaces into everyday areas, allowing Americans of all ages, backgrounds, genders, and regions to see their histories and communities represented in art.[23] In particular, Mexican and Mexican-American artistic influences played a prominent role in shaping the FAP's public artworks. Inspired by the Mexican muralist movement led by figures such as Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros, FAP artists created bold murals that told stories of history, labour, and social injustice. This depicted marginalised groups through artistic realism and the shared struggles and achievements of a multicultural nation.[24] The FAP's integration of Mexican artistic techniques and stories into public art projects celebrated the cultural plurality of the United States. However, as Tey Marianna Nunn explains, many of the Hispanic works that were part of the FAP are absent from historiography, highlighting

that Hispanic and Latin-American artists of this era are rarely named or credited for their work.[25] Yet Harold Porcher contends that "the parallels of the art created in Mexico under the Obregón presidency and that of artists working in Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal WPA programs is extraordinary", revealing current contradictory interpretations of how fully Hispanic and Latin American culture was celebrated and remembered by the FAP.[26]
Additionally, the FAP showcased the heritage of African Americans, Native Americans, and other ethnic communities through murals and sculptures. These portrayed their histories, daily lives, and cultural practices, as seen in Aaron Douglas' artwork, *Aspects of Negro Life*, shown in Figure 2.[27]

Figure 2.

These works not only reflected the demographic realities of American society but also challenged the notion of a singular, dominant cultural narrative by emphasising the value of diverse perspectives. As Vertis Hayes puts it, "To the WPA/FAP must go the credit for having taken the initiative in bringing art opportunities to a great number of people in many communities throughout the country…".[28] The FAP celebrated diversity by working to remove artistic barriers and provide visibility for marginalised peoples through art to a partial extent.

A crucial component of the FAP was the Index of American Design, which aided in shaping the WPA's broader celebration of American diversity. The Index employed over five hundred artists from thirty-four different states to produce more than 18,000 meticulous watercolour depictions of everyday objects drawn from a wide range of regional, ethnic, and folk traditions.[29] Rather than focusing on elite or religious artworks, the Index sought to showcase the folk and material culture of communities often absent from formal art history, including German-American craftsmen, Shaker communities, Black artisans, and immigrant folk traditions. By documenting these objects with scholarly precision, the project constructed a visual archive that reframed American artistic identity as a patchwork of different communities and cultures, rather than one solely stemming from European artistic heritage.

Despite the Index indirectly celebrating minority contributions through artwork and objects, it also revealed the limitations of the era. According to Victoria Grieve, it often

filtered the acquisition of objects through "national expectations" of "the folk".[30] This led to Eurocentric definitions of "folk" which ultimately excluded many Inuit or Native American crafts, which did not conform to the categories upheld by FAP administrators and curators.[31] K.L.H. Wells strengthens Grieves' view, illuminating that by "celebrating the diversity of white Euro-Americans and presenting their material culture as the basis for unified American art, the Index of American Design supported this shift in the definition of whiteness and its underpinning of American national identity".[32] Consequently, the Index of American Design's ambitions to celebrate cultural heterogeneity were, in practice, largely contradictory, as it included some minority traditions but obscured or excluded other ones altogether. Therefore, it is fair to say that the American Index of Design only celebrated American diversity to a small extent. Elizabeth Stillbinger adds a further layer of complication by drawing attention to the overlooked identities of the artists themselves, many of whom were women, Black artisans, or immigrants whose names were not celebrated or recorded.[33] As a whole, these discontinuities complicate the legacy of the Index. While the project undoubtedly expanded the scope of American art history, it did so within constricting ideological frameworks that diluted the diversity it sought to promote, revealing contemporary racial and ethnic tensions within the FAP and wider WPA's celebration of diversity to a large extent.

In conclusion, the WPA's cultural projects constituted a celebration of American diversity to a significant but limited extent. Through initiatives such as the Federal Writers' Project, Federal Theatre Project, and Federal Art Project, the New Deal expanded cultural participation beyond elite spaces and brought the voices, histories, and creative expressions of marginalised communities into public view. The Slave Narrative Collection preserved African American experiences previously excluded from dominant historical accounts, while the Oneida Language and Folklore Project acknowledged the cultural importance of Indigenous heritage and languages. Similarly, the FTP employed Black actors and theatre crew and staged integrated, multicultural productions, which was arguably ahead of its time. The FAP aspired to generate visibility of marginalised communities, peoples, and traditions in public artworks, signalling a growing awareness of America's cultural plurality. However, these celebrations were also incomplete and uneven. Diversity was often filtered through white editorial control, resulting in exoticised portrayals, misrepresentation, and the softening of contemporary and historical social realities. Political pressures further limited opportunities for cultural expression, as illustrated by the defunding of the FTP following left-wing accusations. Meanwhile, the Index of American Design favoured Euro-American folk traditions, reinforcing cultural hierarchies rather than dismantling them. Therefore, while the WPA cultural projects widened representation and laid the foundations for future celebrations of American diversity, they also reflected the prejudices and constraints of their time, making their celebration of American diversity significant yet uneven to a large extent.

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The Depths of Human Identity: Travelling as an Expression of Freedom

Matej Hruza

Discussing the newly introduced "injustice" of passport controls in the mid-1790s by the revolutionary government, French lawyer and liberal Jacques Peuchet commented on what he saw as the violation of fundamental human rights: "Passports are contrary to every principle of justice and reason… To allow a man to travel is to allow him to do something that one has no right to deny: it is a social injustice".[1] This notion of *mobility justice*–equal access to mobility constitutes free individuals–harkens back to the paradoxes of early democracies.[2] The French state acknowledged the negativity of the immobile Ancien Régime, but anticipated with anxiety the proceedings of the free-floating poor, unrestrained by landlords.[3] "Absolute freedom" passed quickly out of favour. Although the modern urge to control (and facilitate) movement was not unerring and meant that "…the emigres of yesterday met the emigres of tomorrow on the roads to the frontiers, and the latter outnumbered the former", it made visible that democracy requires constant labour and its liberty is not border-free.[4]

Mobility is the part of human life guarded carefully due to its transformative power: static cultures are resisting the "historical forces of movement and contamination", and, conversely, cultural backgrounds serve as mediators through which negotiation and re-institution take place.[5] With the fall of traditional hierarchies, the clear margins and centres built on estate identity were deconstructed in France, enlarging the freedom of the "unknown" inhabitants in liminal spaces. The previous borders *beyond* borders were replaced by the state-borders.[6] These constructed new inequalities, now in the name of apparent and formal freedom.[7] The rootless (migrants) became, in Bhabha's words: "Wandering peoples,… the marks of a shifting boundary that alienat[ed] the frontiers of the modern nation [and made] it unheimlich," seen either as absolutely free, or devoid of rights.[8] Although the Enlightenment provided new perspectives on mobility and borders, it did not create them. This means that beliefs accountable for Peuchet's dismay about restrictions on movement must be ingrained in something more substantive. The combination of travelling and freedom seems fundamental to human existence and meaning; thus, our task is to comprehend why.

This essay draws on Timothy Snyder's theory (and practice) of positive freedom and its constitutive parts to argue that humans are defined as more-or-less free *homo viatores*, from whom travelling (and hence freedom) can never be taken away without undermining their essence.[9] We first outline the theory of negative and positive freedom, which will guide us, secondly, throughout our considerations of travel and its connection to liberty. The aim is not to state propositions, but to actively "create" the idea of liberty based on conceptual analysis and historical empiricism.

The Complicated Affair of Travel and Freedom: Negative Reflections

Timothy Snyder provides the following image from the north-Ukrainian town of Yahidne, occupied by Russians in 2022 (and then *de*occupied):

> Russian occupiers had transformed [the school basement] into a small concentration camp… [where] 350 civilians… [were cramped in] an area of less than two hundred square meters… On the ground floor, Russian soldiers had destroyed the furniture. On the walls, they left behind dehumanising graffiti about Ukrainians… I made my way down to the cellar, and examined the children´s drawings on its walls. I could read what they had written (´No to war´) …[10]

Subsequently, the author questions whether the survivors were *free* after de-occupation took place, and immediately contends: "It takes collective work to build structures of freedom".[11] Snyder, as a narrator *and* traveller, *re*collects (in a sense of basing his account on facts and emphatically, objectively reporting on reality, rather than colonially *re*presenting/*re*constructing it) the images he sees. Shedding light on the antithetical paintings that share place and differ in layers of experience, he acts as a mediator connecting places and readers.[12] This reflection helps Snyder to consider his own freedom based on solidarity with the imagined survivors, who themselves *are not* free.

Snyder´s book warns that we misunderstand what freedom means on a fundamental level of human dignity. By effortlessly connecting freedom and travel, and seeing freedom as negative (absence of hindrances, "pure" agency), historians undermine the humanity of many travellers, travelees (term used for people depicted by the travel narratives), and readers. Deoccupied concentration camps, destroyed towns, or independent travellers may enjoy the necessary conditions of freedom, but the question of *where* they shall travel, how they will create themselves (and therefore their freedom), has not been addressed.

Negative freedom should not be discarded but acknowledged and studied. Three distinct examples could be utilised by historians in this vein. Firstly: how are the spaces of negative freedom (wars and natural catastrophes) reflected by travellers? Do they impart feelings of hopelessness, promoting unfreedom, or emphasise structural changes? Although the role of war reporters has been recently challenged, traditional travel accounts may prove instructive in thinking about "malfunctioning spaces".[13] W. H. Russell´s reporting and the travels of Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War both served to emphasise that lack of facts and state support diminishes the freedom of soldiers.[14] The crucial part was that their travels were physical *and* mental, setting thinking into motion that brought a change.

The second category includes "conventionally" unfree travellers, who, in reality, were supported by structures of freedom. This means that, despite being traditionally seen as unfree, we could reliably argue that their mobility was either substantiated by, or itself conducive to, freedom. This questions too narrow a conception of freedom in travelling, seeing it as pure agency. Even though historians could doubt this claim as problematic, we find verity thereof throughout history. Examples of the unfree travel substantiated by freedom, and also conducive to it, include the eighteenth-century African slaves' narratives (an apex of which is Equiano´s work), as well as the so-called "fugitive narratives". A paradigmatic (but less common) example of the "conducive-to-freedom" version is the "travel" of the Polish soldier Tomasz Serafiński to the concentration camp of Auschwitz. By

document falsification, he managed to be imprisoned in the camp, from where he was sending information to the world about Nazi atrocities.[15] Historians would call similar conditions unfree by principle; nevertheless, Serafiński *had* basic freedom of sovereignty and unpredictability (vide below), indeed, he enabled others to be freer by providing facts that would remain unknown.

Ultimately, some historians began considering tourism in "negative-freedom" terms. Travels to stereotypical and ideal places, narrated through unanimous photographs that obliterate the traveller/travelee distinction, often indicate agency, but are scarcely real movements of "alterity". What is more, tourism has served as an inanimate force destroying and homogenising human encounters by negating barriers without replacing them. The modern form of leisure, while important for mental well-being, created a vacuum of meaning.[16]

As Gandhi and Smile emphasised, the main form of unfreedom equals being prisoners in souls: "It may be of comparatively little consequence how a man is governed from without, whilst everything depends on how he governs himself from within".[17] *Materiality* may help towards freedom, but does not constitute its nature.

Creative Affair of Travel and Freedom: Building Futures

"Whether we become free depends upon the actions of others, upon the structures that enable those actions, upon the values that enliven those structures–and only then upon a flicker of spontaneity and the courage of our own choices".[18] Positive freedom depends on our creative capacity to act on personally chosen values based on knowledge with which we check the decisions*;* and yet, all these are from the outset steeped in society, in whose "creencias" we stand, and who support us *en route*.[19] Importantly, freedom is a quest of a lifetime, growing from past decisions (hence the importance of narrating and remembering) into future possible paths. Timothy Snyder determines five forms of freedom that he considers constitutive:

1) sovereignty (autonomy): learned (taught by others) capacity to make choices;
2) unpredictability: the power to adapt external regularities to one's own purposes, making something *new* in the world through evaluating and acting on values;
3) mobility: capacity to move through spatio-temporal units following values, rebelling against institutions that made unpredictability and sovereignty possible;
4) factuality: complex networks of truth enabling us to have a grip on reality (we move to understand and gain facts, or we are moved by facts brought by others);
5) solidarity: acknowledgement of shared fragility and humanity seen due to movement away from "home".[20]

The role of "travelling" (mobility) in freedom is apparent: as a middle point, it is enabled by gained autonomy and imagined values, and itself facilitates higher forms of freedom that concern other people. In this way, travelling (of body and mind) is the means by which freedom is practised, and its forms are not always obvious, as it is in constant friction between determined conditions, and upcoming/pressing outside reality. Freedom is sustained by movement, movement equals life, and life grows from encounters.

Travelling is, next to physiology and locomotion, the defining "movement" of humans, depending on the combination of mobility and statics.[21] It could be delimited as a

transformative temporary state of "elsewhereness" in spatio-temporal terms, its main feature being contexts and processes which we call living. Living promotes *encounters* that lead us to either reinforce, critically redefine, or at least suspend from effectivity cultural and personal norms.[22]

"The travelling self is both…the self that moves physically from one place to another… and the self that embarks on an undetermined journeying practice, having to constantly negotiate between home and abroad".[23] Mobility is about living and leaving homes. Often, it consists of both wandering around the space of "home"–to expound heterogeneity and erase borders separating it from neighbouring areas–and mapping the outer spaces beyond the boundaries.[24] Hence, travelling is not only a temporary state of "elsewhereness": the extent to which we travel in our lives we are free; and freedom as a fundamental human condition is expressed through movement (not remaining in stasis). This explains why only *a person*, in a social context, can unify within oneself spaces, meanings, and contradicting values.[25]

Snyder´s conception of positive freedom may seem anachronistic for historical periods pre-French Revolution. However, as Mitchell notes about early modern travellers from England to the Netherlands: "Although [they] dedicated paragraphs to a discussion of freedom, it was more often the case that freedom was woven into anecdotes and descriptions of cities and buildings. This freedom was therefore presented as an animator of observable changes, rather than as a theoretical abstraction".[26] To hint at another similarity, seventeenth-century Irish historian Walter Harris uses the words free and secure ("well-ordered") interchangeably, a notion Snyder embraces.[27] Nevertheless, it is true freedom which has gained different forms in history, and our study thereof must be cautious. Freedom shows travel on a spectrum: there indeed are substantial "rifts" we observe (as slavery compared to aristocratic travel), but they are underlain by varied forms of "little" freedoms which we have to understand. Before moving to these, we can state what *the* main movement in freedom is: in society, enabling us to actualise at least some potentials and giving us a perspective of change, we *move* from theoretical prejudices about reality to a deeper appreciation of other cultures and people.[28]

That this conceptual chain is not unknown to travel historians is exemplified by Bennett Zon, who, in his book about musicology and travelling, writes: "[Travellers] begin by scientific observation, and move to experimentation, fieldwork, and last, to the acknowledgement of ourselves in the Other and the Other in ourselves".[29] The Orientalist discourse (as any other negative discourse), collapsing the less civilised societies with *inhumanity,* could be historically dismantled at the point when shared humanity as sameness (universalism) was posited, simultaneously being checked by "difference" (individualism). Only in inscribing foreignness into cultural translations without "Westernising" them (conveying different cultures to our own), are we successful in the practice of factuality and solidarity. This was enabled by reporters who, being sovereign and unpredictable human beings, ventured to enter into dialogue with others. As Fox Strangways wrote in 1914, commenting on (Hindu) music: "Music has been called a universal language, and no doubt, in the deepest sense, it is. But just as no one language can be really common to all peoples because it will be pronounced differently in different mouths, so the very same notes will be sung by different throats in such a way as to be unrecognisable to us".[30] Celebrating the

heterogeneity of values while acknowledging what is in common as the ultimate quest is the leitmotif of travelling and a condition of freedom.

Travel, Living, Writing, and Reading

As became apparent, the proposed historians' work consists of mapping the various forms of (un)freedom in societies, with the "big" process in mind. Hence, this section shall move on and ask about methods of historical study and their examples.

We have concluded that travelling is the point of departure for freedom to flourish, and that freedom informs travellers on their *way*. This way is not only physical, and the informing need not be merely conscious/individualised. This does not mean individual corporeality is not a crucial mediator between freedom and travelling. As Campbell emphasised, the bodily and sensual part has often been left out of travel, although it is the first "receptor" the traveller experiences.[31] The first method could, hence, be one of the studies of bodies. This includes looking at the travelling of disabled people, and how the composition of our bodies influences the experience of travel.[32] Another layer lies in scrutinising sexuality and inner drives that coerce travellers (these coercions belonging mainly to the category of "defence mechanisms") and show themselves in travel accounts.

Much more contested is the question of travel *narrating*, where travel and freedom become (con)textualised, remembered (based on correspondence to reality), and read from the outside. Alongside our lived experience, the "textual" form is what bears precedence. However, the centre of narrating is the ego, which accommodates both corporeal feelings and societal norms, creating stories full of hidden meanings. Literary criticism appears to be the best way to understand freedom, particularly when it is primarily presented in the form of a story or text. In this interpretation, the unity of the narrating self is opposed.[33] The second, textual methodology includes: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and deconstruction.[34]

The third method would be to observe travel and freedom from the vantage-point of the politics of text, which is closely related to the previous category:[35]

1) How the experience came into textual being: route taking, *en route* writing/route writing, and route revising/editing.[36]
2) Mobility analysis: physical movement, representation, and practice.[37]
3) Mobility politics: motive force, velocity, rhythm, route, experience, friction.[38]

The fourth approach is that of "epochs", where freedom underneath travelling can be viewed from a *longue durée* perspective. Negative freedom, the immediate conditions to be free, and individual freedom are the most immediate layers of liberty, while infrastructures, states, the gathering of facts, and networks of communities (in generations) create the middle layer. The deepest and most ancient layer would then be the spatial surroundings and the archetypal human place within. As Shehadeh writes in *A Rift in Time:* "Think of the scene as part of a long rift extending across continents… a natural wonder of our amazing planet that has survived and will continue to exist beyond the borders people and political entities impose to confine us".[39]

The last method (which we will apply in more detail) of historical contextualisation delimits different "constellations of freedom in travel" to which historical examples align:

1) Description of negative freedom (vide third section).

2) Direct connection of movement with depiction/representation/practice of freedom (vote travels; drive-in travels; travel to liberal lands: emigration, information gathering, representation back home; depiction of otherness and sameness; travel as nomadism and unboundedness).[40]
3) Structures/infrastructures/institutions behind travel: roads, landscapes, state role, geopolitics.
4) Legal/normative backgrounds (citizenship, visas, immigration, borders and boundaries, limits).
5) Travel and crossing borders as an aspect of physical and mental mobility.

Considering that deserved space could not be given to all categories, we shall analyse the last one. For it is speaking about human nature in terms of travel–consisting of crossing borders and different types of movement–which ultimately includes all the preceding methods, and helps us to understand the intimate bonds between travelling and freedom.

Borders and Crossing: Archetype of Travel in Freedom

Travelling, borders, and crossing are contested terms; as Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, the editor of essays about border-crossing, concedes:

> …some praise the crossing of borders as a precondition for hybridity, which appears as the natural result of easy interactions and exchanges between members of different groups and different places. Others point out that such mobility has also brought about a growing anxiety about the erosion of cohesion and homogeneity.[41]

We must consider this when comprehending movement to be fundamental to human, free existence.

De Certeau speaks about every narrative being a travel narrative, where border-crossings are always present.[42] Jarvis comments on travel writing as deeply dependent on difference, and this difference is present from the point we set out on the way. The opposite of the mentioned narratives is, therefore, rootedness or stagnation, proposed by some cultures. These two approaches are connected by Greenblatt: "If culture functions as a structure of limits, it also serves as a regulator and guarantor of movement. Indeed, the limits are virtually meaningless without movement; it is only through improvisation, experiment and exchange that cultural boundaries can be established".[43] At the border, which we face always when deciding to set off, and many times on the way, the presence or potential of freedom is unavoidable. Borders are *witnesses* that we are *in transition*, and not often do travellers wholly "cross" them.[44] How are we prepared to cross borders and creatively engage with them? Do we have enough knowledge, and do we share solidarity with others *en route*?
For Schimanski, border crossing is a complex process, and borders themselves are deeply ambivalent "figurative" spaces. In the same way, I propose that freedom of travelling consists of the "double vector" of crossing into and past borders.[45] Crossing boundaries is a movement of bodies and minds in space, from one side to another, from known to the unknown. Moretti aptly remarks upon the "figurative power" and imagination of borderlines: they cause something to move within us.[46] At the borders "…we face the border of our knowledge," and may (fail to) pass the limits.[47] Freedom begins at this point of ambivalence, and flows from our unpredictable engagement with boundaries crossed/passed.[48]

A useful way of speaking about borders is "giving an account": mapping the cultural and geographical borders.[49] Early study in this direction includes Turner´s [1921] Frontier Thesis, which proposed the "imperial border" of Americans, which was constantly moving, as the epitome of national character.[50] In the first decades of our century, historians focused rather on borders connected with slavery, and hence (im)mobility.[51] One of the twentieth-century accounts of borders in this vein is Rowan´s *South of Freedom*, focusing on the "vagabond" character African-Americans had in the 1950s US.[52]

Rowan's travelogue was called a "counter-story" by Delgado, which functioned to combat majority narratives about borderlines and their meaning. For stories to challenge institutional power, they "must be or must appear to be noncoercive," and "invite the listener to suspend judgment, listen for the story's point, and test it against his or her own version of reality".[53] The ultimate aim is to instantiate knowledge of one´s identity from which to argue; this can happen only with relocation of power, which in turn must be backed by widespread change of discourse.

As others emphasised, therein lies the *therapeutic* power of travelling, which would be impossible if travel did not reflect fundamental human qualities, and freedom in change, growth, community, and the self. The search for harmony is possible merely *in* a world, among others, and this necessitates dialogue, sovereignty, and unpredictability.[54] Mooli Lahad's psychological analysis suggests that such stories *make* and *sustain* our humanity.[55]

Case for Impartiality of Travel Writing

Thus far, we have chiefly covered travellers and their way of encountering the world. However, travel narratives never exist in a vacuum, and are always susceptible to reading. Travellers should be comfortable in their impartiality: to speak at all means to speak off script; imperfection is openness to retrospection and responsive testing. This leads us to appreciate the role of *lying* and *falsehood* as a constitutive part of our lives.[56] Succinctly put, "the thing which is not" is fundamental to language and mind, not negatively, but constructively and creatively. In such realisation, we understand the importance of freedom: if we *invent* for ourselves a major part of experience, of how we *travel through* the world, then generalising truths and objectivity erode freedom's interpersonal and processual event-fulness. We move "from the stimulus-and-response confines of truth to the *freedom* of fiction".[57] Travelling freely means *writing* and *reading*: it is a prescriptive and descriptive situating of our place in the world.[58]

Although historians acknowledge the power of *fiction*, once the fiction is created, they seem to presuppose its general effectiveness (e.g. the binary savage-civilisation in colonial history, expecting its unconditional applicability).[59] A seminal example of freedom, antithetical to the mentioned approach, is found in the analysis of "communication circuits" and the consumption of literature.[60] Travellers were not the last sources, nor readers the first audience, and there always existed limits, textual or physical, to convey reality and fiction. Also, written texts often were not the *terminus*: authors returned to them, readers processed and reviewed them, creating networks of responsive testing.[61]

Even though travelogues were "the type of publication about which readers wished to be informed [by newspaper reviews] rather than to read themselves," we can follow the trend of travelogues-borrowing from public libraries to see how popular they were.[62] Another path

of research is testing the responses of travellees whose "…readings prompted important arguments over the causes and explanations of human diversity…[and] regularly challenged a newly determinist eighteenth-century ethnology with the arguments of historical contingency, cultural relativism and Enlightenment moral universalism".[63]

The question of how authors established correspondence between texts and reality, and how the process of "voyage into print" came about, is where readership and authorship intersect.[64] Correspondence "[was] a matter of epistolary culture and an epistemic desideratum," which means texts had to *bear witness* to reality *somehow*.[65] Primarily, forms and genres of narratives are crucial to impart factuality, and there are always various ways cultures are used to receive/render facts. Secondly, accounts are testimonies which rest extensively upon trust (on the part of the writer and his instruments or sources, and on the reader to trust the output). Lastly, some authors took correspondence in the sense of *edition history*, taking the way to truth seriously.[66] Indeed, in the way of relevance of correspondence stand *chains of correspondences*–(un)acknowledged references to older texts, authorities and shared prejudices–which make the study of readership harder.

Some historians attach correspondence to questions of how narratives were created.[67] That is, to the experience and reflection of journeying ("route taking", accompanied by *en route* writing), the *epistolarity* of organising experience and notes into work ("*route* writing"), and the "second life" of books, including editing and reader-testing ("route to truth"). Narrative is not a corresponding textual depiction of practice, but practice on its own, or, more profoundly, an event of mediation, where different means were used to ensure correspondence (*to* authorial, societal or institutional imperatives/dialogues).[68] Route making and taking are determined by practices of instrumentation, navigation, and indigenous knowledge-gathering, while reflecting the landscape, borders and their force.[69] This exemplifies how freedom appears in different ways throughout travel and after it. Texts are created by material practices of inscription mediated through societal perceptions, agents and institutions.[70]

Coda: Miracles of Freedom

We can provide a new definition of travelling in freedom as a practice of "pendularity": movement on the spectrum of norms and thoughts; (re)creation of reality that needs time and understanding, maturing and experience.[71] Freedom is a habit (of travelling) through which we create and reflect reality. As Brian Eno states: "Human beings are capable of a unique trick, creating realities by first imagining them… [so that] what is possible in the *art* becomes thinkable in real life".[72] This imagination facilitates "generativity" of travelling, which becomes crucial to freedom.[73] On the other hand, every traveller has to ensure they are embedded firmly in reality: without roots and their help, travel and change become impersonal pandemonium. In this context, then, we can understand the notion that "hell" in the Christian sense can be understood as a place of unreality where individuals remain only with their own memories and passions, never able to break free.

For Theroux, departing for the unknown is "like dying", and due to this cathartic potential – where part of us gives way to novelty–travelling in freedom can be *a better way of living*.[74] Nevertheless, it becomes, as is reflected by elderly travellers, *a better way of dying*,

too.[75] With age, travellers begin to see beyond the immediately visible, often utilising mobility to realise the changeability and stability of life.

"We live in a world where people can expect miracles only from themselves".[76] These words of Simon Weil remind us of the special nature of humans, the only beings subject to "miracles", whose core lies in-between mobility and dwelling.[77] Ultimately, only when we acknowledge the "obedience to necessity", to limits and constraints that make us free, are we prepared to travel, and encounter miracles of freedom.[78]

NOTES

1. Peuchet (1790) as cited in John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 25.
2. Mimi Scheller, *Mobility Justice: The Politics of Movement in an Age of Extremes* (London, 2018).
3. Of which Peuchet was aware, responding to critics proclaiming he promoted free movement of the dangerous and "naturally" immobile (Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport,* p. 24).
4. Donald Gree, *The Incidence of Emigration During the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1951), p. 26.
5. James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Centur*y (Cambridge, 1997), p. 7.
Stephen Greenblatt, ´Culture´, in Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (eds), *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (Chicago, 1995), pp. 225–229.
6. By the 1790s, "border control" was done in the cities. At that time, the first passports appear in travel accounts; cf. Marian Starke (*Travels in Italy, between 1792 and 1798; containing a view of the late revolutions. Also a suppl. comprising instructions for travelling in France, volume 2* (London, 1802), p. 189): "We found it necessary to provide ourselves with a French, a Cisalpine, and an Imperial passport, to travel with safety from Florence to Hamburg."
7. Jane Caplan and John Torpey (eds), *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World* (Princeton and Oxford, 2001). Similarly, as Steffen Mau maintains (*Social Transnationalism Lifeworlds Beyond The Nation-State* (New York, 2012), p. 344): "Borders are rarely open or closed per se, but only with regards to specific persons and types of mobility."
8. The concept of "nomadism" was developed by Braidotti [2014] and Deluze [2010] as a way of subversion of set conventions, which is embodied in Wright´s writings (Fabre [1985; 77]).
9. Essence here bears a metaphysical meaning. As we shall see below, travelling ultimately creates an essential part of our humanity and is an indispensable characteristic of living beings.
10. Timothy Snyder, *On Freedom* (London, 2025) p. Xv.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Compare with E. Halley´s concept of "Hollow Land" and multilayered cultural vision of spaces (Charlotta Salmi, ´Reflections on a National Cartography: The Freedom to Roam and the Right to Imagine in Raja Shehadeh's Travel Writing´, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 48: 4 (2012), p. 432).
13. Mainly for unacknowledged colonial roots of their ethnographic sources (Marc Pedelty, *War Stories: Culture of Foreign Correspondents* (London, 1995); Steve Clark (ed.), *Travel Writing and Empire: Postcolonial Theory in Transit* (London, 1999)).
14. For the modern editions of their texts, see Michael D. Calabria and Janet A. Macrae (eds), *Suggestions for Thought by Florence Nightingale: Selections and Commentaries* (Pennsylvania, 2013), and W. H. Russell, *The Great War With Russia: The Invasion of the Crimea; A Personal Retrospect of the Battles of the Alma, Balaclava and Inkerman, and of the Winter of 1854-55* (Cambridge, 2012).
15. On the dynamics of creating the "Atlantic identity", see Vincent Carreta (ed.), *Unchained Voices: An Anthology of Black Authors in the English-Speaking World of the Eighteenth Century* (Lexington, 2004), pp. 1–16. To compare with Serafińsky, consult Józef Garlinski, ´The Underground Movement in Auschwitz Concentration Camp 1´, *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, 1 (2004), pp. 212–226.; Witold Pilecki and Józef Garlinski (ed.), *The Auschwitz volunteer: Beyond Bravery* (Los Angeles, 2012); John Besemeres, ´The worst of both worlds: Captain Witold Pilecki between Hitler and Stalin´, in *A Difficult Neighbourhood: Essays on Russia and East-Central Europe since World War II.* (Canberra, 2016), pp. 63–77.
16. Dean Maccannelli, *Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley, 2013). It can be, nevertheless, constructive of new spatial stories, as John I. Little (*Fashioning the Canadian Landscape: Essay on Travel Writing, Tourism, and National Identity in the Pre-Automobile Era* (Toronto, 2018)), and Dallen J. Timothy and Alon Gelbman (*Routledge Handbook of Borders and Tourism* (New York, 2022)) show.
17. Quoted in J. Barton Scott, ´Translated Liberties: Karsandas Mulji's Travels In England and the Anthropology of the Victorian Self´, *Modern Intellectual History*, 16 (2019), p. 832. The idea of

self-government as crucial for liberty is posited by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, *Světová revoluce* [World Revolution] (Prague, 1925), pp. 552–568.
18. Snyder, *On Freedom,* p. Xviii.
19. José Ortega y Gasset, *Historia como sistema* (Madrid, 1975).
20. The explanations are taken from Snyder´s *On Freedom* as follows: pp. 45–54 (sovereignty), pp. 66–69 (unpredictability), pp. 118–124 (mobility), pp. 166, 186–192 (factuality), pp. 195–201 (solidarity).
21. As it means (re)making our identities and keeping dialogue between "home" and "abroad" in the intercultural frontiers and neutral zones (where something has to be stable, and something "at stake"). On the coexistence of travelling and dwelling, see James Clifford, ´Travelling Cultures´, in Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler (eds), *Cultural Studies* (New York, 1992), and Chris Rojek and John Urry (eds), *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory* (New York, 1997).
22. Phillips´ experimental study (*Learning by Going: Transformative Learning through Long-Term Independent Travel* (Wiesbaden, 2019)) indicated the transformative power of independent travel through observations and interviews with modern travellers, and his conclusions should also be applied to history.
23. Henrietta L. Moore´Trinh T. Minh-ha Observed. Anthropology and Others´, in Lucien Taylor (ed.), *Visualising Theory: Selected Essays from V.A.R., 1990-1994* (New York, 1994), p. 9.
24. See Tamás Demény, ´Space, Travel, Freedom: A Comparative Reading of African American and Hungarian Roma Narratives´, *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Philologica*, 1: 1 (2012), pp. 184–185, for the example of expounding heterogeneity. The concept of home need not be one of a "stable" place to which we return, but may assume more complex dimensions. The best expression in historical sources, to my mind, is one by the Hungarian Roma author Hilda Péliné, *Az én kis életem* [My Little Life] (Budapest, 1996).
25. Snyder speaks about the fact that values and good things could not be combined and we must choose between them; Czech theologian Cardinal Špidlík would call it the ability of a *person* to unite ideals and realities.
26. William Mitchell, ´English Travel Writers' Representations of Freedom in the United Provinces, c. 1670–1795´, *The Historical Journal*, 66 (2023), pp. 975.
27. Harris, Walter, *A new history of the life and reign of William-Henry, prince of Orange and Nassau; king of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, &c. (4 vols.)* (Dublin, 1747), p. 71. English travellers, nevertheless, diagnose the disruptive egalitarianism and the power of money as the downside, endangering people with predictability and immorality towards others.
28. This could be perceived as the ideal, general way freedom develops in travelling, and rightly the most "venerable" one. As we are interested in the little steps underneath, enabling us to successfully walk this path, we will not analyse this one further.
29. Bennett Zon, *Representing Non-Western Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Rochester Press, 2007), p. 14.
30. A. H. Fox Strangways, *The Music Of Hindostan* (Oxford, 1914).
32. Marie B. Campbell, ´Travel writing and its theory´, in Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 271. On the primitive as the body of pleasure", see Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History* (New York, 1992), p. 271.
33. Charles Forsdick, ´Travel Writing, Disability, Blindness: Venturing Beyond Visual Geographies´, in Julia Kuehn and Paul Smethurst (eds), *New Directions in Travel Writing Studies* (London, 2015), pp. 113–128.
33. Charles Forsdick, Zoë Kinsley and Kathryn Walchester, *Keywords for Travel Writing Studies* (Cambridge, 2019), pp. 217–219.
34. Studying "immediate" experience of travellers, as far as it can be found and reasonably asserted, considering its conceptual frameworks and ways it "embodies" reality.
Reading into the context and circumstances of travel accounts, how they were written, how they were published before.
35. This categorisation is indebted to Tim Cresswell´s article about the politics of mobility (´Towards a Politics of Mobility´, in Mari Hvattum, Brita Brenna and Janike Kampevold Larsen (eds), *Routes, Roads and Landscapes* (New York, 2011)).

36. Analysed in the last section.
37. Physical movement studies destinations, vectors of movement and quantifiable measures; representations are images and adjectives connected to travel through which movement is understood and named; eventually, practices represent the transport means that help us to move.
38. These forms show how powers of domination can limit travel, where mobility is best seen as a political endeavour.
39. Shehadeh, Raja, *A Rift in Time: Travels with My Ottoman Uncle* (London, 2010), p. 116.
40. To this category we could add temporary travel ("drive-in votes") from diaspora back home to vote, or the American tradition of travel-voting. As regards "intellectual travel", recent studies focused on liberal Indian writers of the nineteenth century who visited Great Britain for inspiration.
41. Waldemar Zacharasiewicz (ed.), *Riding/Writing Across Borders in North American Travelogues and Fiction* (Vienna, 2011), p. 10.
42. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, 1984), pp. 115–128. This concept is confirmed by narratological theories of the last twenty years. Here, "narrative" equals the life we experience and somehow understand throughout existence.
43. Greenblatt, ´Culture´, p. 27. Borders are institutions, co-created in the processes of bordering all the time. Both states and citizens keep the process going; for more details, vide David Newman, ´The Lines that Continue to Separate Us: Borders in Our 'Borderless' World´, *Progress in Human Geography*, 30: 2 (2006), pp. 1-19.
44. Which can have various forms (epistemological, topographical, corporeal).
45. The following analysis is based on Johan Schimanski, ´Reading Borders and Reading as Crossing Borders´, in Önver Ceterz, Inga Brandell and Marie Carlson, *Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge* (Stockholm 2015), pp. 91–107.
46. Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel 1800-1900* (London, 1998), p. 45.
47. Schimanski, ´Reading Borders´, p. 99.
48. Borders are, hence, essential for our freedom to be positive and truthful. It is important to note that we speak both about real borders, and imagined boundaries lived in our minds; in this way, another culture, person, organism, experience or space may be a border we face. Frontiers and borders become places of transcendental and everyday *alethology* (study of truth).
49. We could see this as an important part of what David Newman calls the "bottom-up" approach to borders, constituted by personal experiences with these spaces. In this view, travel writers have a responsible and serious role, and their factuality and solidarity depend on whether borders are faced and engaged, or demolished (cf. Newman, ´The Lines that Continue to Separate Us´).
50. The term imperial border is taken from Snyder, *On Freedom*, pp. 124–126, who analyses it as one possible way freedom was conceptualised and a rising population sustained during the nineteenth century. This imperial mobility then became an exemplum for Nacistic and Stalinist regimes in the twentieth century. The American context of specific border *fluidity* was juxtaposed to European "closed" borders by Turner´s theory, which has been largely denied, mainly based on examples of other American countries (David J. Weber and Jane M. Rausch, *Where Cultures Meet: Frontiers in Latin American History* (Wilmington, 1994)).
51. In this context, parallel reading of Mary Jehlen´s (*American Incarnation. The Individual, the Nation, the Continent* (Cambridge, 1986)) and Toni Morrison´s (*Playing in the Dark. Whiteness and Literary Imagination* (New York, 1993)) conceptions of borders in connection with "Black America" is worthwhile: the very dynamism of free North and unfree South (same to antagonism of America and Europe) enabled and sustained the idea of freedom of the "Whites". Slavery could exist without compromising the idea of freedom, thanks to its limitation to a geographically limited space that enabled the possibility of "liberation" by crossing a border. For further discussion of Afro-American freedom, see Michael Ra-shon Hall, *Freedom Beyond Confinement: Travel and Imagination in African-American Cultural History and Letters* (Clemson, 2021). For narratives of escape, cf. the introduction to William Craft and Ellen Craft, *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom, Or, The Escape of William and Ellen Craft from Slavery* (Cambridge, 2014).
52. Gary Totten, ´Mobility, Skepticism, and Counter-storytelling in African American Travel Writing: Carl Rowan's South of Freedom´, *Journal of American Studies*, 55:4 (2021), pp. 887–909. Modern authors focus on how race, gender, nationality, democracy/wealth of the state of origin promote or negate border crossing (for example, Ahsan Ullah and Diotima Chattoraj, ´Travelling Across Global

Divides: Freedom or Barriers to Move?´, *World Affairs*, 188:1 (2025); Raoul V. Bianchi, Marcus L. Stephenson and Kevin Hannam, ´The Contradictory Politics of the Right to Travel: Mobilities, Borders & Tourism´, *Mobilities*, 15: 2 (2020), pp. 290–306; Laura Mclary and Emma Scheve, ´The Freedom to Travel, the Limitations of Borders: Teaching Global Perspectives of the Long 19th Century´, *Die Unterrichtspraxis / Teaching German,* 52: 2 (2019), pp. 161–166; Jacob Thomas, ´When Political Freedom Does Not Offer Travel Freedom: The Varying Determinants of Visa-Free Travel Opportunities´, *International Migration*, 58: 2 (2019), pp. 80–97; Pooneh Torabian and Maggie C. Miller, ´Freedom of Movement for All? Unpacking Racialised Travel Experiences´. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 20:9 (2017), pp. 931–945; Salmi, ´Reflections on a National Cartography´; Scheller, *Mobility Justice*; Raoul V. Bianchi and Marcus L. Stephenson, ´Deciphering Tourism and Citizenship in a Globalized World´, *Tourism Management*, 39 (2013), pp. 10–20). Simultaneously, the political and positive nature of denying passage plays an important role in the structures of freedom. Putting aside the controversial topic of migrants, article by Anatoliy Parfinenko (´The Impact of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on the Transformation of the Liberal Discourse Regarding Freedom of Tourist Travel´, *Journal in Historical and Political Sciences*, 48 (2023), pp. 29–39) has shown that closing borders to citizens of states that participate in inhuman or aggressive politics is a way of instituting safety, creating pressure and expressing moral values.

53. Richard Delgado, ´Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative´, *Michigan Law Review*, 87:8 (1989), pp. 2415–2440.

54. Note that the search for harmony is constant, given that we balance all the time on borders and limits.

55. Michael White and David Epston, *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends* (New York, 1990). Psychologically analysed by Mooli Lahad, *The Lonely Ape that Told Himself Stories. The Necessity of Stories for Human Survival* (London, 2017).

56. George Steiner, *After Babel* (London, 1975), pp. 236–295.

57. Ibid, p. 223 (emphasis added).

58. Homi K. Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and Narration* (London, 1990), pp. 145-46.

59. The most widely acknowledged example of created fiction is provided by Said´s *Orientalism.* Proclaiming travellers to exotic land and readers of contemporary colonial texts as complicit or unconditionally in agreement with what they (had) read, Jonathan Rose calls *receptive fallacy* (p. 209). In Snyder´s terms, we could say historians, by this unsensible generalisation, make us predictable algorithms that have a limited number of options to interpret reality.

60. On further definitions of communication circuits, see Robert Darnton, ´First Steps Toward a History of Reading´, in *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History.* New York, 1990, pp. 154-187.

61. David Miall (*Literary Reading: Empirical and Theoretical Studies* (London, 2006)) executed an unprecedented experimental design, testing readership with modern readers who varied in training, suggesting relevant methodological devices also for historians and the study of reading in history. Historical studies of readership include: Stephen Colclough´s (*Consuming Texts: Readers and Reading Communities, 1695-1870* (London, 2007, p. 114) study of a Sheffield butler and his heterogeneous reading habits (different ways of "reading" included reading aloud, making notes, transcribing text…), David Alan´s (*Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 252) focus on making notes and excitement in being mentally in exotic places in Georgian society, or H. J. Jackson´s (*Romantic Readers: The Evidence of Marginalia* (New Haven, 2005)) marginalia study. Robin Jarvis (*Romantic Readers and Transatlantic Travel: Expeditions and Tours in North America, 1760–1840* (Farnham, 2012)), focuses on the role of wonder and curiosity in travelogues from North America. Ultimately, Mike Esbester (´Nineteenth-Century Timetables and the History of Reading´, *Book History* 2009, 12, pp. 156–185) provides us with a study of ephemeral texts (texts meant as a means, e.g. timetables).
Crucial historical sources are to be found in the *Reading Experience Database*, which includes texts of personal provenance, such as diaries, annotated books, and notes.

62. E. M. Rogers, *A History of Communication Study: A Biographical Approach* (New York, 2009), p. 785. There was an observable trend of borrowing of travelogues, which were high in the first few years after publication, and continually receded (excluding, e.g., Captain Cook´s voyages).

63. William Bracewell, ´The Travellee's Eye: Reading European Travel Writing, 1750–1850´, in Julia

Kuehn and Paul Smethurst (eds), *New Directions in Travel Writing Studies* (London, 2015), pp. 220.
64. Marie-Noëlle Bourguet, ´The Explorer´, in Michel Vovelle (ed.), *Enlightenment Portraits* (Chicago, 1997), pp. 257–315.
65. That is, in ways accepted or accessible to the receiving culture. Charles Withers (´Travel, en route Writing, and the Problem of Correspondence´, in Mari Hvattum, Brita Brenna and Janike Kampevold Larsen (eds), *Routes, Roads and Landscapes* (New York, 2011), pp 85–87) distinguishes the epistolary conventions of travelogues, epistemological requirements of societies influencing the content of narratives, and the relationship of narratives to other accounts, and how these three relate to the "real experience".
66. For example, further editions and authorial handwritten notes of Tobias Smollett (See *Introduction* in Tobias Smollett, *Travels through France and Italy*, ed. Frank Felsenstein (Peterborough, 2011)).
67. For a seminal overview and analysis, see Withers ´Travel´; cf. also Ian S. MacLaren, ´Exploration/Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Author´, *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 5: 1 (1992), pp. 39–68.
68. For the context of ethnology and geology practices in the Arctic, see Michael Bravo and Sverker Sörlin, *Narrating the Arctic: A Cultural History of Nordic Scientific Practices* (Canton, 2002), pp. 3–32.
69. Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford and New York, 1999), and idem, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (London, 1995).
70. Timothy Lenoir (ed.), *Inscribing Science: Scientific Texts and the Materiality of Communication* (Stanford, 1998), pp. 1–19.
71. Again, see Phillips´ *Learning by Going*, who followed her subjects for 6–13 years, suggesting a long-term influence of travel.
72. Shehadeh, *A Rift in Time*, n. Pag.
73. Betty Friedan (*The Fountain of Age* (London, 1993), p. 612; see also pp. 300–328), defines it as "…[the need] to contribute something to the ongoing human enterprise, to pass on some legacy to the next generation."
74. Paul Theroux, *The Lower River* (London, 2013), p. 12.
75. Robin Jarvis, ´What am I still doing here? Travel, travel writing, and old age´, *Journeys*, 19: 1 (2018b), pp. 88–106, p. 104.
76. Quoted in Snyder, *On Freedom,* p. 276.
77. Forsdick, Kinsley and Walchester, *Keywords*, pp. 154–156.
78. Simon Weil, *Selected Essays 1934–1943* (Oxford, 1962), p. 111.

Greenbacks and Graybacks: Wartime Experiments in Monetary Authority

Peter Napier

In the preface to the first edition of his monograph, The State Theory of Money, Georg Friedrich Knapp pays tribute to his tutor in monetary theory, a "well-informed and clear-sighted man" whom he identifies as the economist Friedrich von Hermann.[1] Knapp goes on to write that, during his 1862-1863 period of study, von Hermann's "favourite subject was currency conditions in the United States".[2] Though a passing detail, mentioned no further in the work, his mentor's notable interest in the subject nevertheless points to the exceptional nature of American Civil War monetary developments. Indeed, from Spaulding's 1869 chronicling of the period's "most grave and extraordinary" financial upheavals, to Friedman and Schwartz's 1963 analysis of its "aftermath", von Hermann is certainly not alone in his engagement with the topic.[3] Much of this scholarly focus concerns the notal, or non-specie, money issued by the Union government, commonly known as greenbacks, and their functioning as a relatively successful fiat money, relying on government backing for their value. Yet to address the greenbacks in isolation is to obscure the more revealing ideological insights produced when they are contrasted with their Confederate counterpart. Also ostensibly a fiat notal money, Confederate graybacks performed catastrophically worse. The stark contrast that emerges between the two therefore demands a deeper explanation than the money's fiat or notal nature. This essay locates this in the Union and Confederate governments' fundamentally different approaches to monetary authority. In addressing this, the essay analyses these divergent approaches in relation to both the design, the creation, and the usage of their notal money. A substantivist approach is pursued throughout, understanding monetary authority as not just relating to legal decree, but also to the "complex structure of social relations" that constitutes money itself.[4]

Neither the Union nor the Confederate approaches arose in a vacuum. In order to fully grasp their nuances, it is therefore necessary to establish their origins in the beliefs of the preceding period. One of the most influential of these was the deep suspicion towards fiat notal money and a widely held conviction in the superiority of gold and silver specie, a belief that "lay at the core" of the antebellum United States' politics and economy.[5] To be sure, as a region subject to chronic shortages of such specie, the Civil War by no means marked the first instance of a fiat or notal money in the United States.[6] In fact, it was one of the earliest of these instances, the Continental currency of the Revolutionary era, that can be seen as formative in producing the later societal aversion to the concept. Printed under the limited authority of the Continental Congress as a means to finance the American Revolutionary War, they suffered extreme depreciation and inflation throughout the colonies. The effect of this episode on American monetary attitudes soon became evident. In a 1786 diatribe against the state structures that facilitate a fiat notal money, John Witherspoon writes that "to arm such bills with the authority of the state" by making them legal tender is "an absurdity so great that

it is not easy to speak with propriety upon it".[7] He continues in this vehement condemnation, going on to target the very societal confidence that underpins monetary authority by encouraging the citizenry to "refuse doubtful paper and thereby disgrace it, or prevent its circulation".[8] Such was the immediate strength of this reaction that the United States' Constitution contains an explicit prohibition of any state producing "Bills of Credit" or deeming "any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts".[9] In this light, it is hardly surprising that Republican Representative Frederick A Pike, defending the Union's planned greenbacks in 1862, felt compelled to dismiss those who "held up *in terrorem*" their similarity to the Continentals.[10]

While a general consensus regarding post-Revolution suspicion of fiat notal money certainly existed, views on how to then organise the nation's financial framework were far more contested. Broadly, the division mapped onto one of the most fundamental rifts in American politics: that between federalist and so-called anti-federalist ideologies. Indeed, it was during early debates concerning monetary policy that this rift took shape. At stake was whether the financial framework, and by implication the operation of monetary authority, ought to be exercised at a centralised federal-level or be left to the discretion of state governments. The United States' first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, emerged as the principal champion of the federalist position. In a seminal articulation of this Hamiltonian federalist approach, Hamilton's 1790 *Report on a National Bank* proposed that "a well-constituted national bank" would be "an institution of primary importance to the prosperous administration of the finances".[11] He would go on to implement this with the chartering of the federal level First National Bank of the United States in February 1791. Standing in opposition to the Hamiltonian approach were later-termed anti-federalist founding fathers such as Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, whose Jeffersonian, strict constructionist interpretations meant he opposed the National Bank as unconstitutional. In a 1791 response to Hamilton's proposal, he heavily criticised the scheme for requiring "laws paramount to the laws of the states".[12] These early debates continued into the 19th century political landscape, coming most visibly to a head with the presidency of Andrew Jackson, whose populist ideology of Jacksonian democracy was rooted in Jeffersonian views about the dangers of federal overreach. In an episode known as the Bank War, Jackson's 1832 veto of the Second Bank of the United States' reauthorisation precipitated the closure of the institution, which he had denounced as "subversive of the rights of the States" and "dangerous to the liberties of the people".[13] This, in turn, ushered in a period of decentralised "free banking" in the United States, which saw the production of circulating notal money, and monetary authority, effectively delegated to private banks operating under light state government oversight. Promissory in nature, these heterogeneous private bank notes proliferated across the nation during the period's economic expansion. By the eve of the Civil War, this had resulted in a maelstrom of "more than ten thousand different kinds of paper", many of which were counterfeit or of dubious origin, that regularly "baffled the uninitiated".[14] However, with the outbreak of hostilities, it rapidly became apparent that, just as the War of 1812 had demonstrated the importance of rechartering a national bank, so too did this emergency necessitate a higher degree of centralised government financial control. For the Union government of Abraham Lincoln and his Northern Republican cohort, steeped in a Hamiltonian political economy, this crisis was not just a threat but an opportunity to

reassert federal economic control. They were willing to exercise monetary authority in its full, centralising sense. Yet for the Southern Democrats of the Confederacy, under the leadership of the aptly named Jefferson Davis, their anti-federalist inheritance of states' rights and decentralised authority meant any such embrace was bound to be constrained.

The first way approaches to monetary authority in this period can be analysed is through the polities' approaches to the creation of notal money. Specifically, this begins with the design of the notes themselves. This aspect is often overlooked in more orthodox economic theory, which tends to treat money as akin to a neutral medium through which an independent economy expresses itself. Instead, a qualitative assessment of a money's physical features offers an appropriate starting point for a more substantive inquiry. Indeed, it is these tangible qualities that have often been the most immediate and consequential medium through which a population's monetary conceptions and behaviour were shaped. The Civil War period proves no exception in this regard, with the preceding free banking era having conditioned the public to place considerable importance on the notes' appearance as one of the only ways of judging a note's validity and redeemability. As Makinen and Woodward explain, this continued in both the wartime North and South, with "primitive and irrational" examination of note's physical characteristics and appearance" likely affecting rates of circulation.[15] The near universal identification of both polities' notal money with the colour of their ink, hence the Union greenbacks and Confederate graybacks, stands as the most obvious illustration of the attention afforded to these physical details. Moreover, the policymakers responsible for the notes' design were embedded in this society and aware of this behaviour, valuing the iconography of money as a critical means of expressing political legitimacy and values.[16] A semiotic analysis of the notes produced thus reveals much about both governments' attitudes and approaches.

An initial and essential tenet of Lincoln's Republican monetary agenda was the re-establishing of money as an explicitly national institution, thereby building what Emir Phillips describes as "the groundwork for a modern understanding of the government's role in the economy".[17] At a societal level, this was seen as a crucial way to form an underlying confidence in the greenbacks, particularly as much of the population still associated notal money with antebellum-era private banking. Elbridge Spaulding, an ally of Lincoln and a key figure in the story of the note's inception, clearly articulated such an ambition. In an 1861 speech on the proposed creation of demand notes, far from viewing the economy and monetary policy as a disembedded area, Spaulding posits that the money is intended to symbolise a pledge of the "faith, the honor, and property of the whole loyal people of the country".[18] The iconography of its newly issued notes thus emerged as a key means by which they sought to embody this connection between concepts of nation and that of its money. For example, on several first issue denominations of both the early demand notes and the subsequent United States notes, depictions of Hamilton featured with striking frequency. He could be found on the five-dollar demand notes denomination, as well as on the two-, twenty-, and fifty-dollar denominations of the United States notes.[19] In comparison, depictions of George Washington, the putative "father of the nation", were initially featured on only one United States note denomination.[20] Stephen Mihm draws out the federalist symbolism of this decision, describing how Hamilton was recognised by much of the population as the "patron saint of economic nationalists".[21] Additionally, alongside the

figures depicted, the vignettes that featured across Union denominations emphasised themes of nationwide unity and federal-level development. One-dollar national bank note designs depicted "two young women shaking hands", while motifs such as Columbus' first sighting of land or the explorers Lewis and Clark invoked shared national origins and continental development.[22] Taken together, these design choices function not only to express hope for a unified national future but also to impress upon those who encountered greenbacks that these notes were an active driver of this vision. Furthermore, in pursuing this through physical design, the administration legitimised the reasserted monetary authority at the most foundational level: that of everyday social exchange, where societal confidence is born.

Figure 1. Five-Dollar Demand Note (1861), Design No. 1, featuring the statue of Columbia atop the Capitol and the head of Alexander Hamilton. (Cited: Friedberg, Paper Money of the United States, p. 40.)

An examination of the Confederate notes' design provides an initial contrast and, in turn, an insight into their profoundly limited exercise of monetary authority. To be sure, the notes also attempted to project an impression of unity and national legitimacy through their iconography. Doing so was clearly of an immediate existential importance to the nascent polity, with the Provisional Confederate Congress approving "An Act To authorize the Issue of Treasury Notes" in March 1861, a month before their forces first attacked Fort Sumter.[23] The notes themselves most commonly featured images of agrarian scenes and, inevitably, in the Confederate context, romanticised depictions of enslaved men and women. Neither Hamilton nor any founding father, other than George Washington, appeared with any consistency. Portraits of contemporary Confederate politicians largely replaced them, with that of Confederate President Davis the most common.[24] Together, these symbols acted as touchstones, representative of the original, Jeffersonian values around which the Confederacy had first coalesced and reinforcing the centrality of such bonds. However, the distinctly inward-looking character of the designs betrays the wider parochial and conservative elements of this ideology, and thus the limited appetite for reform, monetary or otherwise, among Confederate policymakers. In this vein is the decision by the Confederate Provisional Congress to deem the treasury notes "payable to the bearer at the expiration of six months after the ratification of a treaty of peace between the Confederate States and the United States".[25] This government specification directly influenced the notes' design, a rare intrusion in the otherwise decentralised production process, with variants of the phrase emblazoned across the vast majority of Confederate notal money. Though intended to bolster confidence,

the vague promise also acted to imbue the notes with a decidedly temporal and conditional character. Unlike the Union's greenbacks, which derived a transcendent sense of stability from their associations with a more abstract notion of nationhood, Confederate notes were marked out as little more than a provisional wartime expedient. For Southerners in contact with the notes, this phrase and these implications were impossible to ignore. As such an optimistic assurance in a favourable peace deal grew ever further from reality over the course of the war, so too did faith in the notes that referenced it, or even that a peace deal would leave a "Confederate government in existence" to honour the pledge.[26] When, with the 1863 Sixth Issue of the notes, the terms of redemption were extended from six months to "two years" after a peace deal as a response to the worsening military situation, these anxieties were effectively confirmed.[27] By this time, experiencing ruinous inflation, the notes' promise endured as an empty reminder of the earlier hopes attached to the fiat money, and the Confederate political project it was created to sustain.

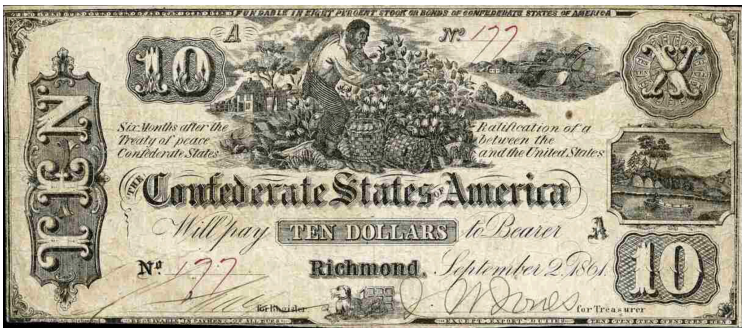

Figure 2. Ten-Dollar Confederate Note (1861), Third Issue, featuring an enslaved labourer picking cotton and a boat scene. (Cited: Slabaugh, Confederate States Paper Money, p. 36.)

Of course, when it comes to the creation of this notal money, it was not sufficient to merely specify its design. Both the Union and Confederate governments had to address how, and through which institutions, these notes would be produced. The respective frameworks they constructed thus provide another opportunity to analyse their markedly different approaches to monetary authority and creation. Indeed, the Union's approach can be understood as an intentional repudiation of the antebellum currents of monetary decentralisation, drawing on Hamiltonian theory in keeping with President Lincoln's persistent advocacy for a "safe and uniform currency" to be "prepared under the supervision of proper officers".[28] These beliefs first manifested in the production of the Union's earliest paper notes. The legislation establishing the transitional demand notes, as well as that authorising the legal tender United States Notes, prescribed a strict regime of uniformity and exclusive federal oversight in their production. This uniformity was to be guaranteed at a federal level, with each note being signed "by the Treasurer of the United States, or for the Treasurer by such persons as may be specially appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury for that purpose".[29] As Bray Hammond highlights, the nature and scale of these reforms alone represented an "exercise of federal power beyond precedent in any field".[30] Yet it was the Union's subsequent actions that ultimately marked the most radical departure from free banking antebellum norms. Continuing in their effort to consolidate monetary authority,

Lincoln's government turned to confront the principal remaining challenge to its notal money's acceptance: the surviving network of private banks whose "chaotic proliferation of bank notes" continued to undermine the public's confidence.[31] The solution eventually came in the form of the National Banking Acts of 1863 and 1864. In a "profound engagement with Hamiltonian principles", the acts instituted a pathway to centralised federal control over a banking network once seen as functionally independent.[32] Assisted by a punitive tax on state bank notes, these measures compelled the private banks to pivot towards the production of National Bank Notes, which were backed by a bank's holding of US treasury bonds, centrally produced by the federal Bureau of Engraving, and fitting seamlessly into the existing network of national notes.[33] Competing, state-level sources of notal money were thereby eventually extinguished across the Union. It is difficult to overstate the boon this successful consolidation proved for the Union's notal money standing. No longer just one note among many, greenbacks instead assumed the central position within the expanding federal financial framework, later described by Spaulding as a "permanent system of national currency and banking for the whole country".[34] Additionally, with this action, the earlier iconographic attempts to assuage the population's distrust of notal money, and to conceptually link it to the nation, were institutionally substantiated.

No such ambition to centralise monetary creation ever emerged within the Confederacy. Throughout the Civil War, Confederate notes instead remained just one piece of an increasingly convoluted and fragmented monetary mosaic. In keeping with their constitution's opening Jeffersonian assertion of states' "sovereign and independent character", Confederate states all issued their own forms of notal money.[35] Such a practice eventually became so prevalent that certain non-Confederate polities, including even the allied Cherokee nation, began contributing their own endogenously produced "Confederate notes" to the growing mixture.[36] Again, this contrast with the Union is entirely predictable given the reactionary, anti-federalist ideology upon which the entire Confederate project had been built. The specific way these views related to monetary production regulation was articulated most distinctly in Confederate President Jefferson Davis' 1845 eulogy for Andrew Jackson. In his praise for the fellow populist Democrat, he draws explicit attention to the Bank War and the quality of foresight and the "penetrating eye" that Jackson demonstrated through his forcing the closure of the Second Bank of the United States.[37] Hence, for Davis and the Southern Democrat Confederate Congress, to support any shift towards federally centralised monetary production was analogous to reneging on the judgment of "that good and great old man" who had so determinedly fought for the "divorce of government from banking".[38] The Confederacy thus clung to this outmoded understanding, and with this refusal to acknowledge wartime necessities came, in turn, the predictable intensification of the period's familiar instabilities. Despite limited efforts to prevent it, counterfeit money rapidly came to circulate "side by side" with the Confederacy's notes in this uncertain system.[39] As Joshua Greenberg writes, the issue of forgeries had become so acute that, "only a year into the rebellion", the Confederate secretary of the Treasury was compelled to request that they "legally circulate alongside ones issued by the government".[40] Applying the familiar logic of Gresham's law, wherein "bad money drives out good", the consequences for the Confederate notes were naturally devastating, even at this early stage in the war.[41] As the South Carolina diarist Samuel Agnew records, by 1864 local merchants were navigating the confusion by

placing their confidence in "nothing but greenbacks or cotton": a damning indication as to the respective efficacy of the Northern and Southern approaches to monetary creation.[42]

The other distinct way to analyse the period's approaches to monetary authority is through the two polities' approaches to the usage of their notal money. One aspect of this is whether or not they chose to designate the issued money as legal tender, a quality previously only held by specie. At first glance, this appears to be an area of pivotal importance for the notes' usage and, in turn, their success or failure as an accepted medium of exchange. Contemporary scholar James McPherson, in his influential account of the war, judges the "crucial difference" between the Confederate notes and those of the Union issued through this legislation was that they "were to be legal tender".[43] However, a substantivist understanding of the situation belies the notion that this declaration held such significance. Rather, to attribute the creation and circulation of the fiat notal money to this legal tender provision is to invert the order of events. As Knapp maintains, the label of legal tender is really a "reflection" of its existing function brought about through its acceptance in state-centric payments.[44] All other transactions are effectively derivative of this acceptance. Alfred Mitchell Innes sets out the crucial point even earlier than Knapp, writing in his 1913 work on credit theory that legal tender laws are "unnecessary for the maintenance of the monetary unit in a country with properly conducted finances".[45] Indeed, he includes the wording of an 1872 opinion by Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase to substantiate his claim. Prior to his judicial role, Chase served as Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury throughout the Civil War, and Mihm describes him as possessing a role of "federal stewardship" over the Union's notal money.[46] That he would then rule against the importance of a legal tender specification in favour of "receivability for debts due the government".[47] indicates a budding awareness of the mechanics behind monetary authority among the Union's key policymakers. A wider look at the Union's other notal money variations supports this conclusion, with the national bank notes subsequently issued functioning in a similar manner, despite never holding "a claim of legal tender status".[48]

This is not to accuse legal tender designation as being a measure entirely lacking in effect. As substantivist analysis understands, the public and visual nature of this declaration of legal tender status would have almost certainly increased citizens' confidence in its acceptability within society. Additionally, the Union's use of the legal tender measure holds analytical significance insofar as it demonstrates their willingness to deploy overarching federal power. To briefly turn to the Confederate approach, they never proved willing to declare their notal money legal tender. This was despite increasing calls from more pragmatic Confederate voices as the acceptability of their notes steadily declined.[49] Policymakers remained staunch in their unsupported views that the money was already "the accepted currency of the whole country".[50] Even if their views had adjusted, the "Jeffersonians and Jacksonian traditions of constitutional interpretation popular in the South" meant that neither central nor state governments believed they had the power to do so.[51] Besides, some Confederate forces believed they possessed a more effective remedy to this waning acceptability. In an 1863 letter sent from Texas, Confederate Lieutenant-Colonel John Robertson describes how, when troops found their attempts to purchase boots with Confederate money refused, they simply returned that night and "took the boots by force".[52]

To conclude, this essay has demonstrated the starkly divergent nature and extensive consequences of Union and Confederate approaches to monetary authority. Though both polities found themselves forced by wartime exigencies to accept the necessity of fiat notal money, only Lincoln's Union administration recognised the opportunity in these exceptional circumstances. Davis' Confederacy, meanwhile, remained constrained by the very Jeffersonian ideals upon which it had based its existence. Irrespective of the Civil War or its outcome, any fiat currency attempted under the Confederacy's ideology would have been compromised from the moment of its inception. To be sure, broader structural advantages in resource availability and industrial capacity favoured the Union. Yet it was always their prescient ideological and institutional framework through which these advantages were channelled, and which thus cemented the Union's victory. The legacy of their success is undeniable. While Confederate graybacks and antebellum private bank notes circulate only within the collections of a few eccentric numismatists, the direct descendants of the Union's monetary experiment are encountered each time an American opens their wallet. Moreover, were they to find an 1862 issue greenback among them, they would remain well within their rights to spend it.

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Scriptural Hinduism and Colonial Rule: The Administration of Sati

Kamerkar Mrunmayi

Under British rule between 1757 and 1857, Indian politics and society came to be governed by a new state apparatus. This apparatus served as a novel institution to mediate the interactions of politics and society with religion. Conventionally, the development of Indian political activity of a national character is periodised with the revolt of 1857 as a focal point for its roots. Broadening this, however, to include the early colonial period, is useful for understanding the nature of the Indian political sphere and interpreting the character of the nationalist movements that followed. Located within a tradition of subaltern scholars, Ranajit Guha discusses the political in India as characterised by a separation of the elite and the subaltern.[1] In this essay I will argue that British rule between 1757 and 1857 altered Indian politics and society by creating this separation between elite and subaltern socio-political domains through the construction of a state apparatus that rested on bourgeois hegemony. I will explore the creation, implementation, and legacy of this apparatus through a case study centred around the regulation and subsequent abolition of sati. I will investigate the history of sati through examining the formal political realm of bourgeois activity. Confronting the absences of the subaltern in bourgeois histories of sati, I will explore how the negotiations that contended with sati were intertwined with a process of socio-political change which created a formal political sphere that excluded the subaltern.

Official attempts to regulate sati grappled with two primary aims. First, navigating the alleged religious significance of the practice. Second, creating a universal legal response to confront the violation of liberal notions it entailed. These efforts were part of a broader endeavour to create or locate effective means to maintain law and order.[2] To do so, colonial officials attempted to create a state apparatus through the codification of Hindu law for judicial use.[3] As expressed in the preface of Halhed's translation of the Gentoo Laws, this endeavour was directed "towards the legal Accomplishment of a new System of Government in Bengal, wherein the British Laws may, in some Degree, be softened and tempered by a moderate Attention to the peculiar and national Prejudices of the Hindoo".[4]

The creation of this new system of government to administer the Indian subcontinent lacked precedent. In contrast to other British colonies, it necessitated a legal, rather than a military or political, response that confronted a socio-political reality vastly divergent to that in Europe.[5] Parliamentary discussions on the creation of this apparatus were tied to a desire to match up to "their predecessors in the great work of justice and humanity".[6] The idea of an empire burdened with great legacy was also tied to the conception of a mission to order a primitive world. Indigenous populations were consistently associated with "the lamentable effects of ignorance".[7] This legacy of Europe's great empires shaped British attitudes to sati with proponents of its abolition citing 'the Danes, the French, the Dutch, and the Portuguese', and their prohibition of the act 'in their portions of India'.[8] In official discourse, the evils of

sati were tied to an equation that attributed its cause to "the ignorance of the natives'" with a singular cure – "their instruction".[9] Central to this idea of a civilising mission was "the Institution of a Religion", expressed as "the first Step towards an Emerging from Savage Barbarism, and the Establishment of Civil Society".[10]

This civilising mission was also burdened with liberal values. Official hesitations to abolish sati were tied to a desire to uphold indigenous tradition as an exercise of religious tolerance. This idea of religious tolerance manifested in "an Adoption of such original Institutes of the Country, as do not immediately clash with the Laws or Interests of the Conquerors".[11] Another liberal value that directed the creation of a state apparatus was the idea of individual autonomy. The practice of sati was used to present a lack of indigenous autonomy, tied to a complete submission to religious force.[12] This idea coalesced around the symbol of the widow at the funeral pyre, described in official discourse as "scarcely ever a free agent at the performance of the suttee [sati]".[13] Intertwined with this lack of autonomy was the perpetuation of "revolting cruelty", conflated with a despotic notion of Indian rulership.[14] Rather than a cruelty attributed to the ancient scripture, this cruelty was attributed to the powers interpreting this scripture, identified by Henry Thomas Colebrooke as "Hindu legislators".[15]

When confronting sati, one of the early concerns was the unreliable nature of data collected by "natives". The argument for the abolishing of sati was generally presented alongside statistics, "the number so immolated in the Presidency of Calcutta alone, in the years 1817 and 1818, amounted to upwards of 1,500".[16] These were then used to assess and convey the scale and urgency of specific social issues. This was aligned with a trend in nineteenth century Britain to use statistics to assist policy decisions.[17] As expressed in an article in the *Times*, the reliability of data collected by the natives was undermined by a "tendency to indolence" and a "favourable leaning to ancient sanctioned usages" of sati.[18] In response, this process was centralised and formalised, with the Nizamat Adalat instructed to transmit details of each sati committed in their jurisdictions, including any prohibitive measures they might have taken.[19]

A bureaucratic response to sati was also constructed through a process of dialogue between collectors and the Governor-General. Warren Hastings' institution of the position of collector, combined executive and judicial power. Collectors simultaneously navigated and constructed this novel mechanism.[20] They were struck by the cruelty of sati, but lacked the interpretive tools to resolve the textual contradictions between "the case of living as an ascetic or undergoing Concremation" with "the performance of the one incompatible with the observance of another".[21] Upon refusing to sanction a request for the performance of the ritual, one collector, wrote to the Governor General, "desiring to know whether his conduct had met the approbation of his Lordship and the Government".[22] The Governor General's response emphasised the scriptural sanctity of sati, and portrayed its official prevention as a violation of religious tolerance. This presented a need to establish a framework for the interpretation of religious scripture that aligned with British liberal values.

All these considerations were tied together by an impulse to modernise that manifested in a project of state-making. Though not exclusively rooted in colonial agency, the creation of this state apparatus was dependent on a colonial project. Controlling

indigenous knowledge was central to this project–serving to establish sovereignty, issue commands, and collect information "without creating any alarm among the Hindoos".[23] It was constructed through a hybrid intellectual current built upon an official desire to control indigenous knowledge and indigenous attempts to engage with traditional ideas alongside Western political thought.[24] Indigenous intellectuals like Rammohun Roy engaged Hindu scripture in conjunction with traditions of Western political thought.[25] Parallelly, British intellectuals engaged in acts of translation to create a body of accessible indigenous knowledge. A primary example of this is "The Code of Gentoo Laws" translated by Nathaniel Halhed as part of official efforts to a fixed authoritative body of literature.[26] Bernard Cohn argues that the process of engaging Indian knowledge and transcribing its complexities into singular concepts that fit into European frameworks of thought, converted Indian forms of knowledge into European objects.[27] In doing so, it tied the body of official state knowledge to a language of Western political thought alien to much of the Indian population.

One medium for this process was the act of translation. In the case of the Code of Gentoo Laws, a process of translation from Sanskrit to Persian and from Persian to English, created multiple layers of interpretation, altering the meaning of the ancient texts each time.[28] While Halhed argued that 'the pen of the Translator must be considered as entirely the passive Instrument', the text produced cannot be understood without considering the hybridity produced by the act of translation.[29] This process of translation was also a collaborative act engaging both British labour and indigenous input with a "set of the most experienced of these Lawyers", incorporating the work of Brahmins who were "selected from every Part of Bengal for the Purpose of compiling the present Work".[30] This was an act of interpretation that transcended a colonial-indigenous divide. A similar dynamic was constructed when Brahmin pundits were appointed to civil courts by Warren Hastings in 1772.[31] By endowing these pundits with the responsibility to interpret scriptural law in civil matters, the appointment tied the hybrid process of interpretation to the apparatus of the state and the exercise of judicial authority.[32]

Both of these hybrid forces were central to the regulation and abolition of sati. Texts like the Code of Gentoo Laws were used to constitute the official understanding of sati. In Parliamentary discussions, for example, the argument was made that "Many of these murders took place contrary to the Hindoo law itself".[33] Citing that "females under 16 years of age were not allowed to ascend the funeral pile", the speaker drew from compilations of Hindu scripture like Henry Thomas Colebrooke's Essay on "The Duties of a Faithful Hindoo Widow".[34] The official regulation and ultimate abolition of sati was also met with public petitions on either side of the debate. This was another important avenue for the creation of hybrid discourse through organisations like the Tattvabodhini Sabha, who worked to promote a rational and modern form of Vedantic theism.[35] As expressed by the Sabhyadiger Vaktra, the organisation built on Rammohun Roy's legacy by constructing a program of "self-consciously diligent and morally upright behaviour" to address the spiritual well-being and enable the worldly success of a new colonial elite.[36] The Tattvabodhini Sabha could engage with the hybrid state apparatus emerging at the time, as its members had access to the framework of bourgeois language that held it together. United by common educational

attainments rather than class or caste, the organisation was characterised by individuals who could engage with an apparatus that incorporated an interaction of concepts of Western political thought with Hindu scripture. The result was a formal political sphere restricted to an educated class of indigenous bourgeois. This split within the political sphere extended to the social sphere due to the privileging of a bourgeois, scriptural Hinduism by the colonial state apparatus. It served to mediate the engagement of the bourgeois with scripture in a manner inaccessible to subaltern actors.

Hatcher argues for the role of colonialism in establishing the primacy of an elite, textual, and spiritualized model of Hinduism.[37] The centrality of this model of Hinduism to the formal political sphere that emerged in this period enforced bourgeois hegemony that resulted in the exclusion of the subaltern from this sphere, thus splitting what was previously a heterogeneous socio-political apparatus. The official discourse and regulation of sati was important to producing this model of Hinduism and linking it to the colonial state.

The first step in the development of this model was the unification of scripture into a body of singular authority, with early attempts such as Halhad's translation of the Gentoo Laws.[38] These were used as a basis of judicial authority in civil courts.[39] However, Halhad's translation, while engaging various scriptural texts in dialogue, failed to establish hierarchies of knowledge and linearity that could be used to resolve contradictions. Indigenous currents of debate like that of Roy and the Tattvabodhini Sabha acknowledged a range of scriptural authority, but suggested that "the laws given by Unggira and the others whom you have quoted, being contrary to the law of Munoo, cannot be accepted—Because the Ved declares 'Whatever Munoo has said is wholesome'", privileging the Vedanta. These indigenous discourses created two dialectics of hierarchy: one that privileged scripture over custom, and one that privileged specific interpretations on the grounds of moral purity. The Sabhyadiger Vaktra and Roy for example, both argue for the distinction between "those occupied by sensual desires" and those directed by a desire for "knowledge of the Supreme Truth".[40] They use this distinction to privilege the Manusmriti's prescriptions for widows as ascetic widowhood and undermine the practice of sati on the grounds of the greater moral purity of the former. In the process, they created a mechanism of sovereignty where monistic scriptural authority coalesced around Manu.[41] Roy's central assertion against sati, that "Munoo directs that after the death of her husband, the Widow should pass her whole life as an ascetic", was echoed by officials like Ewer who argued that "Manoo the parent of Hindoo jurisprudence, did not even mention sati, but instead glorified ascetic widowhood".[42] This construction was enforced by the belief that Brahmin authority was centred around great respect and idolatry. While this served as an effective appeal to the indigenous bourgeois, it failed to compel the loyalties of subaltern actors who associated with different conceptions of religious authority.

In conclusion, evaluating the nature of colonial impact has always been inextricably linked to modern Indian history. Interrogating the division of the socio-political between bourgeois and subaltern requires situating it within a scholarly trend. Early scholars portrayed colonial rule as beneficial.[43] In creating a formal political sphere characterised by bourgeois hegemony and hybrid intellectual currents, one can argue that colonialism ultimately helped the country inhabit an increasingly globalised world post-independence, by providing its leaders with a language to translate Indian knowledge for global comprehension. This

perspective however, is tied to a perception of globalisation as a European project effected through empire.[44] Historiographical focus in the 1960s and 1970s was centred around evaluating the interactions of colonialism and nationalism.[45] This historiographical context is key for evaluating the separation of a bourgeois and a subaltern socio-political sphere. Aligning with Bipan Chandra's framing of nationalism and colonialism as opposing forces, it is clear that the state apparatus established in the early colonial period hindered the coalescing of nationalist forces. It did so by creating a formal political sphere dictated by bourgeois hegemony and excluding the subaltern, creating a divide within a previously heterogenous socio-political fabric that had been tied together by a dynamic, communal process of scriptural interpretation.

NOTES

1. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity*, (Chicago, 2002), p. 9.
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3. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
4. Nathaniel B. Halhed, *A Code of Gentoo Laws, or, Ordinations of the Pundits*, (London, 1776), p. xi.
5. Cohn, *Colonialism*, pp. 2, 18.
6. *Parliamentary Papers on Hindoo Widows*, June 1823, Column 1218.
7. Anonymous, 'Hindoo Widows', The Times, London, 24 January 1820, <ProQuest>.
8. *Ibid*.
9. *Parliamentary Papers*, 1823.
10. Halhed, *Code of Gentoo*, p. xiv.
11. *Ibid*., p. ix.
12. Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Minneapolis,1987), p. 35.
13. Ibid., p. 35.
14. Parliamentary Papers, 1823, p.1017. Henry Thomas Colebrooke, *On The Duties of a Faithful Hindu Widow* (London, 1858), p. 73.
15. *Ibid*.
16. London, Common Hansard, vol. 9 cc.1017-21, House of Commons Debates, Burning of Hindoo Widows, 18 June 1823.
17. Aileen Fyfe, 'The Information Revolution', in David McKitterick, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Volume 6: 1830-1914*, (Cambridge, 2009), p. 570.
18. 'Hindoo Widows', *The Times*, 1820.
19. Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, p. 33.
20. Cohn, *Colonialism,* pp. 60-62.
21. Rammohun Roy, *Translation of a Conference between an Advocate & an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows Alive* : From the Original Bungla, (Calcutta, 1818), pp. 9-10.
22. Anonymous, 'Papers Relating to Hindoo Widows', The Times, London, 22 November, 1821, <ProQuest>.
23. Hindoo Widows, *The Times*.
24. Cohn, *Colonialism*, p. 56.
25. Milinda Banerjee, '"All This is Indeed Brahman": Rammohun Roy and a 'Global' History of the Rights-Bearing Self"', in *The Asian Review of World Histories,* pp. 81-112, pp. 81-82.
26. Cohn, *Colonialism,* p. 21.
27. *Ibid*., pp. 16, 21.
28. Halhed, *Gentoo*, p. x.
29. *Ibid*.
30. *Ibid*.
31. Mani, *Contentious Traditions*, p. 33.
32. *Ibid*.
33. Parliamentary Papers, 1821.
34. *Ibid*.; H. T. Colebrooke, *On the Duties of a Faithful Hindu Widow*, (Calcutta, 1795).
35. Brian A. Hatcher, 'Bourgeois Vedānta: The Colonial Roots of Middle-Class Hinduism', *American Academy of Religion*, 75: (2) (2007-08), pp. 298-323, p. 303.
36. *Ibid*., p. 305.

37. *Ibid.*
38. Cohn, *Colonialism*, p. 21.
39. *Ibid*.
40. Brian A. Hatcher, ‘The Complete English Translation of Sabhyadiger vaktṛtā', in Brian A. Hatcher, *Bourgeois Hinduism, or Faith of the Modern Vedantists: Rare Discourses from Early Colonial Bengal* (New York, 2008), pp. 141-174, p. 151. Roy, p. 13.
41. Milinda Banerjee, *The Mortal God: Imagining the Sovereign in Colonial India*, (Cambridge, 2018).
42. Parliamentary Papers, 1821.
43. Chakrabarty, *Habitations*, p. 4.
44. Banerjee, *All This is Indeed Brahman*, p. 86.
45. Chakrabarty, *Habitations*, p. 5.

Decentering Linnaeus: Colonial Zoology in Australia and Aboriginal Ontologies

Lachlan Shillabeer

Introduction

The first encounters between European naturalists and Australian fauna–including previously unknown mammals such as marsupials and monotremes–provoked fascination amongst zoologists in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as these species challenged existing assumptions about the natural order. This is exemplified through early observations of the platypus, which, due to its eccentric appearance and oviparous reproductive system, sparked controversy over its classification within the established taxonomical framework.[1] Some scientists excluded platypuses from the Mammalia class, and those that did disagreed whether to categorise them as toothless edentates or web-footed palmates.[2] Historians of science have generally examined these predicaments posed by Australian fauna to modern zoology through established history and philosophy of science frameworks. These include network theory, spatial history and the mobility of knowledge. Such approaches have begun to decentre European zoology in the context of animal knowledge in Australia by showing it as a historically contingent and spatially situated knowledge system, shaped by complex infrastructures of collection, classification, and exchange.

However, through focusing on European zoology in the colonies these studies frequently marginalise Indigenous Australians' ecological knowledge, treating it as anecdotal or auxiliary to Western science. I contend that Aboriginal ontologies and epistemologies, which differed markedly from Western science in their understandings of native fauna, should be genuinely recognised as historically grounded systems of knowledge. James Beattie and Ruth A. Morgan suggest that scholars of Australasia remodel their "history of science to histories of "knowledge" and "systems of knowledge".[3] By adopting this approach, historians may build upon the existing literature by paying attention to the processes through which Indigenous animal knowledge interacted with, informed or was disregarded by Western scientists. This can help shed light on the plural ways in which Australian fauna was understood, and as such move towards a decolonised perspective on animal knowledge, which considers Western zoology as only one part of the whole.

I first outline how established histories have approached colonial zoological encounters with Australian fauna, and the assumptions and frameworks that have guided this research. Beginning with a discussion of Carl Linnaeus in relation to Western zoology, I then show, with particular reference to Louis J. Pigott and Leslie Jessop's work on the first wombat specimen to reach Europe, that existing literature already establishes Western zoology as historically situated and influenced by global movements of people and objects.[4] This is most notable in studies which critically engage with pioneers of Western scientific understandings of fauna, such as Sir Joseph Banks, as well as those which highlight the

globalised networks and sites of zoological knowledge around the turn of the nineteenth century.[5] Research on Australian fauna for this period aligns with this tendency within the history of zoology, which reflects broader attempts to historicise scientific practices.

I subsequently build upon this scholarship by considering Aboriginal Australian knowledge about native animals. When Aboriginal peoples have featured in histories of zoology, they have often been explained as go-betweens for Western science, yet they possessed their own distinct knowledge systems that European naturalists both relied upon and marginalised through their colonial encounters. To conclude, I assess how historians may approach such research and suggest that it may be fruitful to adopt a "history of knowledge" approach as outlined by Beattie and Morgan.[6]

Contextualising Linnaeus

To understand how scholars have approached European encounters with Australian fauna, this section outlines the key historiographical frameworks that have shaped the historical study of zoology. Work over the past decades has effectively situated Western zoology (including from Australia) as a culturally and historically contingent enterprise rather than a neutral record of nature. Before examining these approaches, it is necessary to outline the classificatory work of Linnaeus, which underpins all subsequent zoological practice and provided the intellectual platform from which colonial naturalists understood Australian animals.

Hailing from eighteenth-century Sweden, Linnaeus created a hierarchical system of classifying all species, which aimed to bring consistency and universality to the study of nature, and has endured as the established scientific norm into the present day.[7] Linnaeus ordered organisms into the following nested ranks, going from the most general to progressively specific: kingdom, class, order, genus, species, and variety.[8] Based upon this classification system, Linnaeus also developed a binomial nomenclature through which organisms were given a two-part Latin name derived from their genus and species.[9] Linnaeus' work on categorisation, and notably his conception of the class Mammalia, is central to understanding the intellectual frameworks that informed Europeans' perceptions of Australian marsupials and monotremes upon initial encounter.[10] Early explorers and naturalists, due to their European origins, possessed a Linnaean understanding of fauna, to the extent that their bewilderment at species such as the kangaroo and platypus, which were interpreted as bizarre, must be understood against this context.[11]

There is now substantial literature that seeks to historicise Linnaeus and show that his classification system is historically and culturally rooted, rather than a simple reflection of scientific objectivity. A key scholar in this area is Lisbet Koerner, who suggests that Linnaeus' view of nature as "a servant of humankind" that "was created for man" derived from the Christian belief that placed humankind above other animals.[12] Significantly, Koerner also highlights that Linnaeus likened himself to the first man, Adam, due to his naming of animals through the binomial nomenclature–a point that is also emphasised by Peter Harrison to demonstrate the theological underpinnings of Linnaeus' work.[13] According to Harrison, early-modern naturalists believed that "God had imposed a rational order upon the world, and the goal of natural history was to discover what it was" in a manner similar to how Adam had done in Genesis.[14] By stressing the "Adamic" aspect of Linnaean taxonomy, Harrison

demonstrates the significance of Christian theology in informing how Linnaeus, amongst other early-modern naturalists, sought to conceive of and vindicate his scientific endeavours.[15] This firmly aligns with a large, mainstream body of literature, including John Hedley Brooke's seminal study alongside other works by Harrison, which rejects the "conflict myth" between Christianity and science to emphasise the deeply ingrained ties between them.[16] Considering naturalists in early colonial Australia, such scholarship helps us to begin decentring European zoological frameworks through highlighting their specific social contexts and thus diverging from viewing them as universally objective.

Western Zoology and Australian Fauna

Building upon the historicisation of Linnaeus within more general histories of natural history, historians of colonial zoology have also been influenced by the ideas of Bruno Latour to identify science as a social and geographically informed practice. Concepts such as networks, sites of knowledge and immutable mobiles are pervasive within the historiography on zoology, including works centred on early colonial Australia. These provide insightful frameworks through which to understand zoology as a historically and spatially situated discipline.[17] Pigott and Jessop's study of the arrival of the first wombat specimen in Europe illustrates the influence of Latourian concepts in the history of zoology.[18] I evaluate the prominence of networks, sites and mobility within the existing scholarship with close reference to this article as an exemplar to highlight the current ways that historians of zoology have situated its practice .

According to Latour's Actor-Network Theory, scientific knowledge is created through networks of human and non-human actors–in this case, naturalists, specimens, instruments, and institutions – all of which shape and stabilise the outcomes of inquiry and practice. As such, scientific knowledge only becomes a durable fact through the support of a strong network that allows it to circulate, be reproduced and gain traction amongst scientific and popular audiences.[19] In Pigott and Jessop's article, close attention is given to explaining the network of individuals and institutions which facilitated the circulation of zoological knowledge on the wombat. Pigott and Jessop contend that actors with relatively high social standings, such as governors and military personnel, participated directly in the transportation of animal specimens. This is illustrated through the movement of a wombat specimen from Preservation Island, where non-aboriginals likely first encountered wombats, to Newcastle upon Tyne via the hands of Governor John Hunter and Joseph Banks.[20] Furthermore, Pigott and Jessop detail the role of individuals such as Matthew Flinders and Nicolas Baudin in collecting or writing about wombats, as well as organisations such as the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle, thus showcasing the web of connections and patronage that facilitated scientific endeavours.[21] This array of people and institutions exemplifies the Latourian notion that scientific knowledge emerges from networks of multiple actors rather than any singular observer.

This idea is further exemplified in other works on the production of zoological knowledge such as Janet Browne's discussion of the importance of colonial officials to the study of natural work in the British colonies.[22] Additionally, Harriet Ritvo sheds light on the vast network of British naturalists who studied and transported zoological specimens from and around Australia, including Charles Darwin and George Shaw.[23] The prevalence of

institutions is also significant in works describing zoological networks, as seen through Ritvo's inclusion of organisations ranging from Oxford University to the same Literary and Philosophical Society that hosted Hunter's Wombat.[24] This is further substantiated through extensive work on Banks' ties to the British Museum's zoological collection.[25] Other works on specimen trade also highlight their intricacies and global reach, including discussions of the supply-chain logic in transporting specimens.[26] Whilst not all these works solely focus on imperial zoology from Australia, this highlights the global reach of the scientific networks that actors who encountered Australian fauna were a part of.

Many works already recognise Indigenous peoples as actors in the production of scientific knowledge, although this is typically confined to the lens of Western science. For instance, whilst Pigott and Jessop discuss the Aboriginal Dhurug origins of the English word 'wombat,' their article predominantly focuses on European encounters, with Indigenous contributions framed merely as facilitating Western, Linnaean understandings of the animal.[27] Other studies that depict Indigenous inputs to zoology in such a manner include those on non-Western collectors and Indigenous guides as intermediaries who facilitated the acquisition of zoological knowledge.[28] Whilst this permits some Aboriginal agency in the past, it continues to subsume Indigenous knowledge under the umbrella of Western science.

Linked to the emphasis on networks is that of artefacts such as specimens as "immutable mobiles"–objects that can be spatially relocated whilst retaining their form, allowing knowledge to travel. Their mobility helps information circulate through networks and their immutability ensures that such information remains consistent across locations.[29] Pigott and Jessop's focus on Governor Hunter's wombat exemplifies the attention paid by historians of science to immutable mobiles. Writing in 2007, Pigott and Jessop state that the wombat specimen was still in good condition, demonstrating how scientific knowledge, in this case about a wombat's appearance, could be stabilised for many decades through an immutable mobile.[30] Nonetheless, they also note that the wombat was preserved in an upright position based on a written description that falsely suggested that that was how wombats stood.[31] As such, this anecdote also highlights the limitations of Western practices in understanding and translating knowledge.

The significance of immutable mobiles in the history of colonial zoology is substantiated by Anne Mariss. Although Mariss highlights some key limitations of this model, such as its status as a top-down approach, its importance to translating and stabilising scientific knowledge is evident within the historical literature.[32] Practices such as taxidermy were especially significant for securing zoological information during this period because they fixed animals' appearances into durable and portable forms, which allowed specimens to circulate global networks. For example, Andreas Weber discusses the processes and challenges of preparing natural history specimens for shipping, as well as the notetaking practices that traders and scientists employed to describe specimens.[33] Intervening methods such as dissection and the use of alum and arsenic were also developed, suggesting that immutable mobiles are not neutral reflections of nature, but constructed artefacts – the result of human decision-making and material fabrication.[34] Furthermore, attention has been given to the practice of pricing taxidermy specimens based on Linnaean classification. Accordingly, a collection's value was determined by the range of categorically dissimilar species contained, which shows the impact of scientific knowledge on their cultural significance.[35] To

this extent, scholarship has shown that in Western spheres, specimens also possessed social and economic value, highlighting that scientific objects cannot be abstracted from cultural mediation as objective representations of the natural world.

Finally, work on sites of scientific knowledge production and dissemination is also significant to the current literature on colonial zoology. Notably, through spatial analysis of natural history, Dorinda Outram describes how the field and the office were significant for the production of zoological knowledge by naturalists, whilst zoos and natural museums were key sites for circulating that knowledge to both public and professional circles.[36] In the case of Pigott and Jessop's accounts of the wombat, Preservation Island, where the wombat was found, is identified as a site of knowledge production, whereas the Hancock Museum in Newcastle, which subsequently acquired the specimen, serves as the site of knowledge dissemination.[37]

The significance of sites in the history of zoology is further evident in studies such as Ritvo's on the captivity of Australian species in Britain in the early nineteenth century and the role of zoos as sites for informing the public on exotic animals.[38] Additionally, works on museums in Britain and her colonies discuss the role of museums in conveying scientific, including zoological, knowledge in the Empire, further showing the global and networked aspect of colonial science.[39] Scholarship concerning exchange practices of zoological specimens at Australian museums has also been particularly insightful on the role of museums as sites of knowledge within a global nexus of scientific exchange.[40] Crucially, this scholarship on Australian natural history museums also highlights how ethnographic materials were often housed alongside natural history collections.[41] In doing so, Indigenous peoples are implicitly positioned as elements of the natural world rather than as participants in history, and thus mirrors and reinforces their colonial subjugation by rendering them as objects of study. A key task for the historian, therefore, is to move beyond reproducing this epistemic hierarchy and instead engage with Indigenous views–including on the natural world–as historically situated ways of knowing rather than as artefacts filtered through Western knowledge regimes.

Taken together, this scholarship decentres Europe by revealing zoological knowledge as historically and geographically contingent. It situates figures such as Linnaeus within their intellectual contexts and highlights the global infrastructures that enabled the production and circulation of zoological knowledge, linking colonial spaces such as Australia with the metropole. However, existing scholarship has often left Aboriginal peoples and ways of knowing in the margins due to a heavy focus on Linnaean zoology as the primary lens through which to understand animals. The following sections seek to address this gap and consider how Aboriginal knowledge may be utilised to build upon more traditional histories of zoology.

Knowledge Systems in Contact

To fully globalise, and ultimately decolonise, the history of zoology, it is necessary to move beyond a narrowly defined history of science framework and engage with a broader history of knowledge. As Beattie and Morgan contend, about scholarship focused on Australasia, "the history of knowledge is a broader and more capricious framing that acknowledges the existence of a variety of different knowledge systems, while allowing for

no system to take analytical precedence over another".[42] This lens does not neglect science as a subject of historical study, but rather reframes it as one system of knowledge amongst many in Australasia, to the extent that Western epistemologies and ontologies are no longer the referential yardstick for colonial knowledge.[43] By turning to Aboriginal Australian knowledge of animals, historians can expand upon the existing historical scholarship that already begins to deconstruct Western zoology as objective, universal knowledge on fauna. Through decolonising the history of Australian zoology in this manner, historians may not only widen understanding of historical knowledge networks but also recognise Indigenous expertise as indispensable rather than peripheral. As such, historians may begin to adequately problematise the power dynamics that led to the epistemic violence against certain knowledge traditions.

Scholarship in fields ranging from anthropology, environmental sciences, and education has already started to take seriously Aboriginal understandings of Australian fauna.[44] It is imperative that historians of science do so too, as failing to account for non-European epistemologies risks reproducing the very hierarchies and exclusions that shaped scientific practice in the past. From first-hand accounts from Western observers, historians know that Indigenous people did indeed assist Europeans in learning about the native fauna and landscape.[45] However, scholars have argued that the Western construction of a nature-culture divide through scientific conceptualisations has also displaced the Indigenous voice, evident both in the past and through the absence of Indigenous voices in current scholarship.[46] As such, rather than simply portraying them as mere facilitators of Western science and exploration, Indigenous peoples must be recognised as genuine historical actors with distinct worldviews and agency.

A key scholar who explores Aboriginal Australian understandings of the natural world, including fauna, is Deborah Rose Bird. Her work demonstrates the relational and ethical aspects of Aboriginal ecological knowledge systems–a perspective often marginalised in Western frameworks, which have historically and presently treated nature as a hierarchical system in which humankind occupies a privileged position and subordinates non-human life.[47] While Indigenous Australian worldviews are heterogeneous, their ontologies generally resist a dualistic model of nature and culture through which animals are often understood as kin and agents with moral and spiritual significance.[48] This is seen through their centrality in Dreaming stories, where non-humans, such as species including kangaroos and snakes, are often encoded with ethical and social wisdom, as well as their roles in totemic practices.[49] This provides evidence of interpretations of animals that have informed knowledge on Australian fauna that is distinct from Western zoology.

Other works such as on the Ngarrindjeri Nation's ecological philosophy of "*Yannarumi*," or "Speaking as Country," highlight that Indigenous knowledge systems of nature not only predate Western science by millennia, but act as pluralistic, non-anthropocentric frameworks that understand land, humans, and animals as deeply interwoven.[50] By viewing animals as participants in a living ecology rather than as passive specimens, historians are offered an alternative to the taxonomical Linnaean outlook of modern zoology. Further research also demonstrates the uses of Indigenous animal knowledge in bridging scientific gaps, such as a 2006 ecological study on rock kangaroos that employed interviews with Indigenous people in western Arnhem Land.[51] This reflects what

Marie Roué and Douglas Nakashima refer to as "co-production", involving both science and Indigenous knowledge.[52] Whilst these works highlight Indigenous knowledge in the context of contemporary research and environmentalism, they illuminate the centrality of non-Western views for understanding and approaching the natural world. Consequently, due to this significance, scholars such as Jay T. Johnstone and Brian Murton argue for the necessity of historicising Indigenous knowledge to progress beyond treating these ways of knowing as anecdotal case studies, and instead as sophisticated epistemologies that formed part of the web of knowledge on animals in the Australian context.[53]

Just as globally oriented history of science scholarship has shown European zoology to be contingent, networked and constructed, attending to Indigenous knowledge makes visible the equally complex, situated and relational ways in which Aboriginal peoples perceive animals. Approaching both systems seriously through a history of knowledge framework allows historians to decentre Europe by expanding the field to encompass a broader diversity of human engagement with the animal world.

Conclusion

This essay has shown how recent historiography has reshaped our understanding of colonial zoological knowledge by revealing its historical and geographical contingencies. By tracing work on Linnaean classification and global network approaches to zoology in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, I have demonstrated how historians have framed it as neither a neutral nor universal enterprise, but a situated practice embedded in imperial structures. Nevertheless, growing scholarly attention to Indigenous ecological knowledge–particularly in the Australian context–has highlighted the limits of a Eurocentric history of science and the need to recognise Aboriginal knowledge systems as rich intellectual traditions in their own right.

Overall, these trends signify a burgeoning reorientation towards a history of knowledge approach to colonial science, through which historians may better acknowledge the existence of multiple knowledge systems, avoid collapsing Indigenous expertise into an accessory to that of the West, and understand the production of knowledge about animals as a plural and entangled process. Of course, this approach also presents methodological challenges due to the relative absence in traditional archival sources of Indigenous intellectual life. As such, historians must adopt more expansive and interdisciplinary approaches, perhaps drawing on anthropology, linguistics, and community-based work, to reconstruct these knowledge systems responsibly. By doing so, historians not only expand their analytical horizons, but also contribute to the crucial project of decolonising the history of science through restoring intellectual agency to those who have been marginalised in the historical record.

NOTES

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3. James Beattie and Ruth A. Morgan, 'From History of Science to History of Knowledge?: Themes and Perspectives in Colonial Australasia,' in Andrew Goss (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Science and Empire* (Abingdon, 2021), pp. 228-237.
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5. John Gascoigne, *Science in the Service of Empire: Joseph Banks, the British State and the Uses of Science in the Age of Revolution* (Melbourne, 1998), pp. 1-5.
6. Beattie and Morgan, 'Knowledge,' pp. 228-237.
7. Per Sjögren-Gulve, *et al*., 'Conservation Biology and the 300th Anniversary of the Birth of Carl Linnaeus,' *Conservation Biology,* 21: 4 (2007), p. 905.
8. Lisbet Koerner, 'Carl Linnaeus in his Time and Place,' in N. Jardine, J. A. Secord and E. C. Spray (eds.), *Cultures of Natural History* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 146-147.
9. *Ibid*., pp. 149-150.
10. Sjögren-Gulve, *et al*., 'Conservation,' p. 905.
11. Ritvo, *Platypus*, pp. 1-5.
12. Lisbet Koerner, *Linnaeus: Nature and Nation* (Cambridge, Mass, 2001), pp. 84-85.
13. Koerner, 'Time and Place,' p. 157. Peter Harrison, 'Linnaeus as a Second Adam? Taxonomy and the Religious Vocation,' *Zygon,* 44: 4 (2009), pp. 879-893.
14. Harrison, 'Second Adam,' pp. 879-880, 889.
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From 'Lady Scotland' to the 'Twa Wyfeis': The Uses of Female Characters in the Political Propaganda of the Marian Civil Wars

Hannah Stewart

When the confederate lords deposed their reigning queen in favour of her infant son, it seemed to prove John Knox's contention that the empire of a woman was "repugnant to nature, and … a subversion of good order".[1] The propaganda that followed the deposition of Mary Queen of Scots and accompanied the subsequent civil war adopted a similar perspective to Knox. Writers capitalized on gender to criticize Mary and her supporters, framing her as an adulteress or murderess due to the events surrounding her deposition. A diverse ensemble of female characters were employed in broadsheet propaganda to advance various political messages. Although this was striking in a society where women were believed to be "irrational and intellectually inferior to men", the use of female figures ultimately worked to reinforce core assumptions about gender and power relations between men and women: namely, that women, as the weaker sex, were not designed to hold power, and that a good ruler was firstly male, and a protector of the deserving and the needy.[2] "Bad" female figures could also emphasise notions about female inconstancy and inferiority, implicitly warning against Mary's return.

I will focus on how king's party propagandists employed female figures to advance gendered assumptions, as the majority of surviving sources come from this group. Firstly, Robert Sempill drew on older representations of a female Scotland in *The Lamentation of Lady Scotland*, to condemn the failure of Scotland's estates to protect this esteemed woman, and the common weal, personified in her absent husband, from the abuses of the Queen's party.[3] Lady Scotland also highlighted female weakness, helpless as she was without a male protector. A similar figure was employed by an anonymous poet to suggest that Scotland's ruin had begun with the deposition of a divinely appointed monarch, highlighting the varied political possibilities for this character.[4] Secondly, as well as speaking through elite female figures, Scottish writers in the King's party employed lower class female voices to present themselves as the party of the disempowered, as Tricia A. McElroy argues, and to create an illusion of society wide popular support.[5] Characters like Maddie of the Kail market presented the Regent Moray as a just and godly ruler, detracting from the cruelty and illegality of King's party actions towards Mary, and allowing them instead to present themselves as the party of the commons. Finally, writers employed female characters to criticise and emasculate the Queen's supporters at a critical moment in the civil war. The *Dialogue of the Twa Wyfeis* created an emasculating parallel between the Queen's men and two Edinburgh wyfeis, highlighting the inconstancy and self-interest of both parties. Thus, I will argue that by using female figures drawn from older forms, and engaging with popular understandings of gender roles, Scottish writers were able to condemn women as unsuitable rulers due to their supposedly inherently negative traits, and exonerate strong male rulers.

Despite the frequent appearance of female characters in the propaganda of the Marian civil war, scholars have traditionally underestimated their significance . Roger Mason’s work on the *Complaynt of Scotland*, which formed the basis for later representations of Lady Scotland, demonstrates the importance of the doctrine of “common weal” in this period; the idea that citizens must sublimate individual profit to the pursuit of a “common weal”.[6] However, Mason does not fully consider the gendered aspects of this text, in which Scotland is personified as an injured mother, whose three children have committed the unnatural crime of patricide by failing to defend Scotland against invasions.[7] Furthermore, the propaganda of this period, which often took the form of satirical poems, has been largely ignored by historians and literary scholars. However, as McElroy highlights, these works, which often ventriloquised female figures, highlight the importance of gender to the political arguments of the civil war. McElroy’s work explores the ways in which women were used by King’s party propagandists; to condemn and emasculate their male opponents and to suggest lower class female support for the King’s party.[8] Therefore, the gender dynamics in this propaganda worked in complex ways, simultaneously reflecting on what it meant to be a good ruler, and working to disqualify women from this category.

Female figures could be used by Scottish writers to condemn the failings of Scottish men to protect the ideal of the “common weal”, and to offer a wide critique of Scotland’s current state. Civil war propagandists drew on an older tradition in which women were used to personify the nation. The 1550 *Complaynt of Scotland*, likely written by Robert Wedderburn, lamented the failings of the three estates, speaking through the distraught “Dame Scotia”. Wedderburn in turn drew on an older French model.[9] The *Complaynt* was produced after the Rough Wooings of the 1540s, which decimated Scotland’s three estates.[10] Furthermore, many Scotsmen collaborated with the English for profit, betraying Scotland in Wedderburn’s eyes.[11] Dame Scotia criticised the three estates, described as her sons, for their failure to defend her. She is said to have endured “grote violens”, and is described as an “affligit lady”.[12] Dame Scotia locates the cause of her affliction, as Mason argues, in the failure of the three estates to value the “common weill” over one’s “particular weill”.[13] She laments the failure of her sons, obliged as they were by God’s law to be her “deffens” against all external invasions.[14] This failure allows the violation of Dame Scotia by evil forces. Indeed the ripped clothing that she describes was a marker of rape in contemporary law.[15] Furthermore, Mason contends that this male failure to protect Dame Scotia is presented as “unnatural”, as natural men must defend their realm.[16] Therefore, Wedderburn employed Dame Scotia to lament the failure of Scotland’s men to maintain the commonwealth ideal, ultimately questioning their status as “real” men. Sempill later employed the figure of a female Scotland to make a similar statement.

Robert Sempill’s 1572 poem, *The Lamentation of Lady Scotland* mourned the state of the nation, personified in Lady Scotland, now a widow in distress. While Wedderburn’s *Complaynt* was enthusiastically dedicated to the regent Marie de Guise, Sempill’s *Lamentation of Lady Scotland* held a different approach to female rulers.[17] Sempill, writing for the King’s party, worked to highlight the flaws in female rule, emphasising that even a pure woman like Lady Scotland, could not rule alone, hence arguing against Mary’s return.[18] Like Wedderburn, Sempill wrote in a time of crisis, and asserted that only a male ruler could restore the commonwealth to its natural state. Sempill adjusted the rhetorical device inherited

from Wedderburn, providing Lady Scotland with an absent husband in John the Commonweal. This addition suggested that women were not suitable rulers, highlighting Lady Scotland's vulnerability as a single female. Sempill spoke through Lady Scotland in this poem, using her to condemn the men of Scotland for failing to protect her from ruin, and for driving her husband away. Mary's deposition was justified by Lady Scotland, who stated that Scotland's children "with hir awin consent/ deposit hir in oppin parliament".[19] Lady Scotland lamented the loss of her husband, caused by the abandonment of the common weal: "thus am I left as widow in distress/ for commoun-weill: my bairnis left fatherless".[20] Readers could connect the idea of prizing private interest over public good to Mary's alleged involvement in Darnley's murder. Darnley presented a double for John the Commonweal, having been removed from Scotland, and leaving his "bairn" fatherless. Lady Scotland's positive example, as a virtuous woman who loved and lost her husband, highlighted Mary's supposed lack of such desirable qualities.

However, Lady Scotland's condemnation reached beyond Mary and her supporters. She criticised all three estates for their behaviour, condemning the nobles that did "oppress my pure community", and drove her husband away.[21] Lady Scotland's criticism fell on the male estates, and she looked to men to provide a solution to her struggles. She mourned the loss of Moray, her "best and belovit son", who was murdered for attempting to restore her husband.[22] She also looked to the young James to restore her, Scotland, "unto […] helth" again.[23] While female rule had created an unnatural situation in which Lady Scotland was spouseless, and the people had abandoned the values of common weal, male rule may allow for a return to the complete allegorical family. Finally, in *The Complaynt of Scotland*, Lady Scotland mourned Moray's death and appealed to the nobility to avenge her "deir".[24] This reinforced the idea that the responsibility to protect Lady Scotland from ruin fell on Scotland's men. Therefore, Lady Scotland functioned as a tool to condemn the men of Scotland for their failure to protect the nation, personified as female. Lady Scotland also stressed that revival for Scotland would come through a male ruler, while her vulnerability suggested that women alone should not wield power. The use of a female figure to criticise Mary and her supporters reflected the tradition of representing countries as female, but also allowed Sempill to reinforce gender roles, suggesting that it was the duty of a good ruler, and a good man, to defend the nation and its women. Lady Scotland represented the failings of the Scottish political community to protect a feminised nation from violence.

A female Scotland was also employed by those sympathetic to Mary, as is clear from an anonymous poem included in James Melville's *Memoirs*. Scotland, "your kindly mother", addressed the speaker in the poem. She was hurt, and blamed her children, whom she had 'nursit from ther youth'.[25] She located the cause of her problems in Mary's deposition, during which men had usurped a judgement belonging to God.[26] "Scotland" described James's replacement of Mary through a metaphor of intergenerational violence, in which a female viper bit off her mate's head and was then devoured by her own "kitlins".[27] This image of cyclical violence alluded to Mary's alleged involvement in Darnley's murder, and the subsequent use of her child to overthrow her. In this case, a female Scotland was allowed to allude sympathetically to Mary's treatment, presenting her as a victim. This highlights the plasticity of this rhetorical device, which could be used by both sides to convey the required political message; either critiquing female rule and condemning Scotland's men for their

failure to protect Lady Scotland, or lamenting Mary’s mistreatment and the intergenerational violence that followed.

While an elite allegorical figure such as Lady Scotland allowed the King’s men to highlight female vulnerability and condemn male failure, lower class women were also employed in propaganda to create the illusion of popular support, and to present themselves as the party of the disempowered. After Darnley’s murder and Mary’s affair with Bothwell, a rash of anonymous broadsheets appeared across Edinburgh, denouncing Mary as a “Jezebel” who deserved to lose her crown.[28] As McElroy contends, this campaign attempted to create the impression of a “disgruntled and politically involved populace”.[29] However, these poems emerged not from the commons, but from a group of elite men seeking to undermine Mary’s authority. After Mary’s removal, creating the illusion of popular support became crucial to securing English support. Elizabeth would not support a revolt based solely on Protestant theories of resistance, but the popular feeling suggested by these poems justified the Lords’ revolt.[30] Therefore, the King’s party employed broadsheets posing as popular polemic to create the illusion of widespread support. Furthermore, King’s party propaganda frequently employed female characters in an attempt to co-opt the voices of the disempowered, as McElroy argues.[31] For example, the character of Maddie of the Kail market built upon popular figures like John Upland, fulfilling this criteria.[32] By speaking through Maddie and other poor members of the commons, the King’s party could claim to represent the disempowered, aligning themselves with the ideal of just rulership that they promoted after Moray’s death.

Maddie mourned the loss of Moray in her *Lamentation*, characterising him as a just governor. She stated that Moray loved his “common weill … ouer all thing” and that the “pure commounis” mourned his fall.[33] He was described as a “second Moses”, representing both a national saviour and, as Blakeway argues, a biblical lawgiver.[34] Moray was also identified as the defender of the “wedow and the fatherles” in one lamentation following his death.[35] This was emphasised by the mourning of the widowed Lady Scotland, and by Moray’s pseudo-paternal relationship to James VI. The characterisation of Moray as just and merciful responded to Old Testament orders to care for widows and the fatherless.[36] Therefore, Maddie’s lament for Moray’s death emphasised the role of the King’s party in caring for weaker members of the commons. This provided a contrast with Mary’s failure to maintain the welfare of Scotland, and a court that had descended into “murther and … lecherie”.[37] The image of the King’s party as the champion of the disempowered was also apparent in *The Lamentation of the Comounis of Scotland*. The speakers repeated the phrase “blaming thy treason, the caus of all our greif”.[38] This was directed at William Kirkcaldy of Grange, who transitioned to support the Marians after Moray’s death, and controlled Edinburgh Castle from 1571. The commons blamed Grange for their troubles, highlighting the public suffering caused by his control of Edinburgh. Female characters also appear here. James Dalzell detailed Grange’s murder of his pregnant wife, which left his children motherless.[39] These lines recounted a true incident, giving an immediacy to this polemic.[40] ‘Downie Ros’ also featured, recounting how “reuthles ruffeis … did slay my husband”.[41] She and her children were left alone, and she called for God’s plague on Grange, whom she compared to Pharo. This furthered the biblical association of Moray with Moses, Pharo’s

enemy.[42] Therefore, the King's party employed female voices to present themselves as the party of the disempowered and further the image of Moray's just and godly rule.

This presentation of the King's party as the defenders of dispossessed and worthy women was particularly important in light of the criticisms levelled by the Queen's supporters. John Leslie's defence of Mary, published in 1569, condemned the treatment of Mary by the King's men, and argued for her innocence in Darnley's murder. Leslie was especially critical of Moray, contending that after receiving undue favour from Mary, Moray orchestrated her removal: murdering Darnley and framing Mary for the crime, thereby securing the regency.[43] Leslie also criticised the cruelty that characterised Mary's deposition, suggesting that Moray was not a just ruler, but a man motivated by personal ambition.[44] King's party propaganda worked to overturn these charges by speaking through the aforementioned figures who lacked power or required protection, such as Maddie or Lady Scotland. Both women highlighted Moray's just rule. Thus, the King's party worked to rebut accusations of cruelty by presenting themselves as a group who fulfilled God's law by protecting those in need, exonerating themselves through the use of female figures.

Furthermore, Tricia McElroy suggests that the use of imagined lower-class female voices in propaganda may also have reflected the real opinions of Edinburgh women. After her defeat at Carberry, Mary was paraded around Edinburgh, and many women "bellowed out against the whore".[45] The English diplomat Nicholas Throckmorton also claimed that women were "most furious and impudent against the Queen".[46] These reports suggest a popular and female condemnation of Mary, which justified the message coming from the Lords. As McElroy states, "women condemning their own forms a powerful narrative".[47] However, it is difficult to gauge the veracity of these reports, and the extent to which Mary's public condemned her.[48] Nonetheless, McElroy argues that the ruse of popular support that the King's party attempted to create was largely dependent on the opinions of Edinburgh women.[49] Overall, the use of lower-class female voices presented the King's party as supporters of the disempowered, drawing on biblical ideas about godly governance. In these poems, good men protect deserving women, while bad men abuse them. Conversely, 'bad' women, like Mary, did not qualify for male protection, or even justice. Finally, these lower-class women look to men for justice, presenting it as a masculine trait which could be bestowed upon women.

While Maddie and Lady Scotland were invoked as "good" women, civil war propaganda also employed female characters to comment on politics in a way that satirised the women they spoke through. Nowhere is this clearer than in *The Dialogue of the Twa Wyfeis*. The *Dialogue*, likely written by Robert Sempill, contains a conversation between two Edinburgh wives in a tavern.[50] The *Dialogue* employed many older tropes, including *chanson d'aventure*, in which an unseen observer records a conversation, and *chanson de mal mariée*, in which women complain about their husbands' sexual performance.[51] These devices were often used to satirise women for their "wantonness and loose tongues".[52] As McElroy argues, the opening of the *Dialogue,* with a man waking to hear two women conversing, prepares the reader for a discussion about sex.[53] Such expectations are subverted, as the women instead discuss contemporary politics. Moreover, the *Dialogue* was written in early 1570, at a critical moment in the civil war.[54] Moray was assassinated in January 1570, robbing the King's party of its leader. Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie noted that after Moray's burial most of the realm

“tuik the quenis pairt”, raising the possibility of Mary’s return.[55] Therefore it was crucial for the King’s party to tarnish the reputation of their opponents.

In the *Dialogue of the Twa Wyfeis,* the two “wyfeis” argue against Mary’s supporters as possible governors of Scotland.[56] They present the Queen’s men as selfish and womanlike in their fickleness, reflecting anti-feminist stereotypes onto these men. The wives describe how the lords of the Queen’s party “convene as barnis” to “learne wisdome” from William Maitland, referred to as “Mitchell Wylie”.[57] Maitland is presented as a scheming politician, schooling his pupils in Machiavelli’s teachings, while the lords are compared to schoolchildren, blindly following their teacher. The wives also patronisingly undermine the intelligence of the lords, praying that “God give them the grace to learne well”.[58] These statements emasculate the Queen’s men by comparing them to ignorant children. The Queen’s supporters are also said to fear religion, since it keeps men from “plesouris” and makes them fear punishment in “ane uther warld for thingis done in this warld”.[59] This presented the Queen’s men as impious and unrestrained by fears of God’s judgement. This furthered the attempt of the King’s men to present themselves as God’s chosen party, as they had in the laments for Moray’s death. It is implied that the Queen’s men could never succeed such a godly ruler. The two wives argued that the Queen’s party were motivated primarily by self-interest and questioned their allegiance to their leader; the lords supported Mary, they suggested, in order to “cover their crimes”, or in the hope of ruling.[60] Again, the contrast with the godly and self-sacrificial government of Moray is emphasised.

The *Dialogue* also sought to critique the Queen’s men through emasculation. While Mark Loughlin focuses on the *Dialogue* as an early exposition of popular Scottish understandings of Machiavellian principles, he overlooks how it employed popular understandings of gender.[61] McElroy, on the other hand, argues that the *Dialogue* strikes in two directions, using the wives’ female intuition to condemn the Queen’s supporters, whilst also satirising the wyfeis, and women more generally.[62] The use of the female voice makes the criticisms of the Queen’s party particularly effective. As Loughlin notes, the wives’ assessments proved that even simple gossips could recognise the Machiavellian character of the Queen’s party.[63] However, as McElroy argues, women, viewed as natural practitioners of fickleness and deception, were perfectly placed to recognise these faults in men.[64] While the wives must constitute reliable narrators to endorse criticisms of the Queen’s party, many of these criticisms are reflected back onto them. The *Dialogue* ends with Wife A stating that she has another man waiting, should her husband be killed.[65] This references the real wife accused of replacing her husband: Mary Queen of Scots. In the end, as McElroy states, these women are still ultimately concerned with sex.[66] This satire reinforces assumptions about female nature, presenting women as deceitful, inconstant, and lustful. Such assumptions were important to maintain when, as McElroy argues, the success of Mary’s deposition relied on anti-feminist stereotypes of sexual misconduct and female frailty.[67] These women also provide the ultimate criticism of the Queen’s party: the Queen’s men are shown to be just as inconstant as these women, changing political allegiances as the wives change sexual partners. Thus, “Mary’s supporters become an assembly of unreliable women” as McElroy states, led by the most unreliable woman of all.[68] Therefore, *The Dialogue of the Twa Wyfeis* employs female characters to present the Queen’s men as unsuitable rulers for Scotland,

denouncing them as Machiavellian and effeminate. In highlighting anti-feminist stereotypes, the undesirability of female rule was once again underlined.

To conclude, despite scholarly neglect of this area, female characters were central to Scottish civil war propaganda, and writers used them to comment on politics in a variety of ways. They built on existing gendered expectations around male responsibility and female weakness, attempting to emphasise the defects of female rulers, and to emasculate the male supporters of such rulers. On the other hand, "good" women were thought to deserve protection, and Moray was praised as a just ruler, who attempted to protect the dispossessed from the ravages of the civil war. These ideas manifested in three different ways. Firstly, Scottish writers employed the persona of Lady Scotland to engage with ideas about the common weal, and to emphasise the failure of Scotland's men to protect these values in the civil war. Furthermore, Lady Scotland highlighted the unsuitability of women for independent rule, demonstrated by her ripped clothing and injuries. Secondly, King's party propagandists such as Sempill employed lower class female figures to create the illusion of popular support and present the King's party as the party of the disempowered, in an attempt to characterise Moray as a godly ruler and justify their cause in English eyes. This compassionate image helped to detract from charges of ambition and cruelty, and presented the Queen's party as responsible for the oppression of the commons in war. Finally, in the *Dialogue of the Twa Wyfeis*, female characters were used to foreground the negative qualities of women that made them unsuitable for monarchic rule and to emasculate the lords of the Queen's party through association with such qualities. Therefore, Scottish writers used female figures to highlight the unsuitability of women for monarchic rule, whether through weakness or immorality, and to demonstrate how the King's party had fulfilled the duty of male responsibility to deserving women. This ultimately reinforced the idea that Mary was not a suitable candidate for the throne.

NOTES

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5. McElroy, ‘Complaining Women’, p.68.
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8. McElroy ‘Complaining Women’, p.68. Tricia McElroy, ‘The Uses of Genre and Gender in “The Dialogue of the Twa Wyfeis”’, in Joanna Martin and Emily Wingfield (eds), *Premodern Scotland: Literature and Governance 1420-1587* (Oxford, 2017), p.210.
9. Mason, ‘Dame Scotia’, p.131.
10. *Ibid*., p. 140.
11. *Ibid.,* p.142.
12. Robert Wedderburn, *The Complaynt of Scotland (1550),* ed. A.M. Stewart (Edinburgh, 1979), pp.54-55.
13. Mason, ‘Dame Scotia’, p.142.
14. Wedderburn, *The Complaynt,* p.56.
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16. Mason, ‘Dame Scotia’, p.137.
17. *Ibid*., p.135.
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19. Sempill, ‘The Lamentation of Lady Scotland’, ll.120-22.
20. *Ibid*., p.135.
21. *Ibid*., ll.215, 218.
22. *Ibid.,* l.63.
23. *Ibid*., l.131.
24. Sempill, ‘The Complaint of Scotland’, in Cranstoun (ed.), *Satirical Poems*, l.25, l.86.
25. James Melville, *Memoirs of His Own Life*, T. Thomson (ed.), (Edinburgh, 1827), p. 270.
26. *Ibid*., p.271.
27. *Ibid.,* p. 273.
28. McElroy, 'Imagining the "Scottis natioun”’, p.319.
29. *Ibid*., p.324.
30. *Ibid*., p.327.
31. McElroy, ‘Complaining Women’, p.83.
32. McElroy, 'Imagining the "Scottis natioun”’, p.323.
33. Sempill, ‘Maddeis Lamentation’, in Cranstoun (ed.), *Satirical Poems*, l.33, ll.57-8.
34. Amy Blakeway, ‘The Response to the Regent Moray’s Assassination’, *SHR*, 88, (2009), p. 23.
35. Sempill, ‘Ane Tragedie, in forme of ane Diallog’, in Cranstoun (ed.), *Satirical Poems,* ll.365-366.
36. Blakeway, ‘Regent Moray’s Assassination’, p. 22.
37. Sempill, ‘Declaratioun of the Lordis iust quarrell’ in Cranstoun (ed.), *Satirical Poems,* l.57

38. Sempill, ‘The Lamentation of the Comounis of Scotland’, in Cranstoun (ed.), *Satirical Poems,* l.8.
39. *Ibid*., l.77-78.
40. Dawson, *Scotland Reformed*, pp. 277-278.
41. Sempill, ‘Lamentation of the Comounis’, ll.81-83.
42. *Ibid*., ll. 85-6.
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"A condition unworthy of human beings": Assessing Negative Narratives of Working-class Life during British Industrialisation

Samuel Thayre

In assessing the accuracy of a negative narrative of British industrialisation, such as Engels's identification of the working class "[finding] themselves in a condition unworthy of human beings", one requires a wider perspective than solely looking at the proletariat.[1] There were, ostensibly, some improvements in working-class conditions, especially in quantitative terms. Yet to state that industrialisation is an overwhelmingly positive force would be a grave misstep–as Engels states, it often had the effect of "[hurrying people] to the grave before their time", at least emotionally if not physically.[2] Engels's observations on the plight of the working class, with the bourgeoisie "sucking out their very life-blood", have much merit.[3] Their misery was noticed by several contemporary groups and thinkers, even among this emerging bourgeois class; Engels is situated among an increasing class consciousness throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Prior ways of working life had been torn asunder, inadequate and unequal provisions for the poor led to lifelong trauma for many, and quantitative measurements of apparent improvement feature significant issues. The widening gulf between the working classes and the bourgeois class only serves to highlight profound inequality despite material conditions improving. Statistical trends do not portray contemporary working-class views, and teleological views of industrialisation risk overlooking their experiences in favour of a Whiggish notion of progress. An emphasis on the working classes' poor condition is more accurate–they reaped relatively meagre benefits while being thrust into an unfamiliar world.

Engels's scathing indictment of industrialisation within *The Condition of the Working Class in England* is brazenly apparent. The book asserted the premise that industrialisation (originating from "inventions" of steam engines and the cotton jenny in the 1760s) "called into existence" the English proletariat.[4] This newly established working class, according to Engels, was to be plagued by extreme poverty and inequality. Engels claims that during his stay in England, "at least twenty or thirty persons have died of simple starvation".[5] The extent to which Engels details the miseries of the working classes calls into question whether he is stating fact, or deliberately trying to drum up support for his fermenting communist ideology. Indeed, the *Condition of The Working Class* was published just three years prior to that of *The Communist Manifesto*. Yet, within the *Manifesto*'s preface to the English edition of 1888, Engels modestly admits he had "independently progressed" towards notions of historical materialism during his time writing the former, whilst Marx had already "worked [it] out".[6] Thus, with no obvious reason for this humility, it appears one must take this statement at face value, and thus it appears such an ulterior motive is less likely. Further, Engels's description of working-class life is consistent with other contemporary observers, reducing the likelihood of deliberate exaggeration.[7]

Similar contemporary descriptions and observations from mutual improvement groups indicate a fermenting class consciousness, thus suggesting an awareness of the poor conditions of the working class outside of Engels alone. Mutual improvement societies, for instance, were organised by working-class initiative.[8] Primarily focused on education, these groups were viewed by many from the middle classes as politically radical; working-class self-betterment was thus seen as against the norm during industrialisation.[9] Likewise, trade unions offered the chance for self-betterment against the grain of industrialisation. They would be responsible for pay during strikes, sickness, and unemployment for roughly 500,000 members by 1872 through means of self-help.[10] George Gregory, a miner, was galvanised into organising unions by a book auspiciously entitled *Self-Help*.[11] Educational improvement thus often took the form of self-betterment, rather than direct educational benefits from an alienating shift to industry, which then begot groups that were to campaign for better workers' rights. In the case of mutual improvement societies and subsequent unions, the positives they brought were not necessarily direct products of industrialisation, but rather a cooperative effort between working-class individuals seeking to better their lives via their own initiative.

On an individual level, some critiqued the conditions imposed upon Britain's working class, akin to Engels's so-called independent progression, without prior engagement with socialist literature. During the nineteenth century, opposition to industrialisation's effects upon the proletariat had gradually intensified, for example, with John Ruskin and William Morris.[12] Indeed, the latter viewed industrialisation as counter-inducive towards art among exploitation of workers: "the beauty produced by man's hand … has become an extra burden to him, and ornament is now but one of the follies of useless toil".[13] Within his essay *How I Became a Socialist*, Morris notes how "had never so much as opened Adam Smith, or heard of Ricardo, or of Karl Marx" before joining the Social Democratic Federation.[14] Thus, negative conditions of the working class must have been at least somewhat apparent outside of socialist literature, even to a professedly middle-class artist such as Morris.[15] Morris's own work gave him the opportunity to collaborate with theorists such as the Russian anarcho-communist Prince Kropotkin, demonstrating an appeal that stretched beyond a proletarian, non-intellectual audience.[16] This work also proved to inspire other artists to join the socialist movement, such as HG Wells and WB Yeats (even if the latter bitterly departed after repeated disputes over religion).[17] Focus on the exploited British proletariat, therefore, was not limited solely to Engels, but to a wider network of groups and individuals. His observations were not anomalous, but valid enough to warrant widespread concerns and attempts to remedy such negative effects.

Alongside the alienation of man away from artistic endeavours, rising poverty, and middle-class views of a piteous working class, industrialisation led to extremely unsanitary conditions, alongside normalising child labour. Chadwick's 1842 *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* staggeringly details the grossly unsanitary conditions of the "labouring classes", who are beset by disease due to "decomposing animal and vegetable substances, by damp and filth, and close and overcrowded dwellings".[18] Engels likewise recognises that urbanised streets were "filled with vegetable and animal refuse, without sewers or gutters, but supplied with foul stagnant pools instead".[19] Thus, Engels's emphasis on such squalid living conditions is factual when

considering the *Report*'s nature as an official document meant to replicate actual living conditions. Engels also observes the proliferation of child labour, such as in mines, due to the need for raw materials for manufacturing. For instance, Engels claims that around 11,000 women and children were employed within Cornish mines.[20] Indeed, it was precisely industrialisation's need for raw materials that led to the use of child labour in remarkably dangerous industries around the turn of the nineteenth century. As Humphries argues, it looks to have been "reinvented and propagated in the crucible of industrialisation"–the period of 1791–1850 had remarkably higher cumulative percentages of boys in work from the ages between six and fourteen (little under 60% of boys aged ten from 1821-1850 were at work) compared to 1627–1790.[21] Thus, industrialisation specifically led to intensely unsanitary conditions, and it saw significant usage of child labour, increasing the legitimacy of a negative narrative of industrialisation.

Of course, industrialisation can hardly be argued to have had no positive impact upon the working classes whatsoever. Women found significant employment in new industrial sectors. Within the worsted mills of Bradford and Halifax, 60 per cent of the labour force was women.[22] One must not view this as an industrial, feminist victory regarding access to work. Female labour was cheap, and on par with juvenile wages.[23] The aforementioned numbers of female and child labourers in coal mines illustrate how avenues of work for women were often unsanitary as well as dangerous. Engels reports that pelvic deformities from working within mines led to difficulties, or even death, during childbirth.[24] Additionally, provisions for the poor during industrialisation led to both positive and negative experiences. Tomkins's study of autobiographical accounts of the 1834 New Poor Law's workhouses illustrates how the lived experiences of those going through them had long-term emotional impacts, alongside the predominant Dickensian narratives of starvation.[25] Some conservative autobiographical narratives portray a level of happiness within workhouses, such as that of anti-socialist Samuel Shaw, who held warm memories of a workhouse infirmary, viewing the provisions for his younger self as sufficient.[26] Conversely, autobiographer Frank Stone extensively details his childhood abuse at the hands of nurse Catherine McKennon at a district school paired with a workhouse.[27] Happy recollection is tempered by other experiences of trauma. This diversity is indicative of a lack of enforcement or standardisation in delivering the provisions meant to provide for the worst off within society. Thus, for the lowest strata of society, workhouses were ultimately a gamble. If one were not so lucky, then they would not escape from the struggles of industrial, working-class life.

Certain statistical measurements otherwise point to improvements to both quality of life and the economy during a period of industrialisation. The later Victorian trend for the British Isles was that of improving living conditions: 'quality of life' (as measured by Jordan in four domains of families, education, wages, and climate) in Ireland improved drastically in the latter half of the nineteenth century, following the Great Famine of the 1840s to early 1850s.[28] For instance, regarding education, female illiteracy roughly halved, from 35.9 per cent to 15.4 per cent from 1871 to 1901.[29] In the same period, school enrolment increased by 28.7 per cent, from 42.1 per cent to 70.8 per cent.[30] For the rest of Britain excluding Ireland, GDP per capita (calculated from 1990 Geary-Khamis dollars) experienced a jump from $2,209 in 1830 to $2,846 in 1850–such an increase dwarfs that of the entire period of 1760 to 1820 ($1,803 to $2,099 respectively).[31] Yet, real wages grew comparatively slowly early in

the period, seeing no growth at all from 1790 to 1820 before rising 30 per cent from 1820 to 1850.[32] Thus, statistical measures suggest industrialisation ultimately led to increased quality of life, and economic growth occurred, despite real wages increasing relatively slowly. Yet Jordan realises how terms such as 'quality of life' are subjective, and profoundly influenced by the lived experience of those trying to judge the past. Those trying to measure health, for instance, may look towards different signifiers depending on their own experience with health and illness.[33] In order to combat this, the areas of life under historical scrutiny have broadened in recent years, though by diversifying what is meant by 'quality of life', it places the onus of more work upon the historian.[34] The more diverse the quantitative measurement of the effect of industrialisation, the myopic view of numeric measures can be somewhat alleviated. Yet statistics do not easily translate the contemporary emotions of the working class; Tomkins's study of the lifelong emotional toll workhouses placed upon those in them would not, for instance, be quantifiable.

While certain quantifiable measures like GDP per capita point towards economic growth, they are not flawless, as they skew measurements by failing to consider inequality. Despite Mokyr's argument that applying the Kuznets curve (an economic model equating development of industry to a period of high inequality) to an industrialising Britain has been "very difficult to do", both quantitative and qualitative measures point to great inequality.[35] Alongside aforementioned dissonance with rises of real wages, rents increased sharply until 1815, indicating a disproportionate income increase for a petit bourgeois landlord class compared to labourers.[36] Moreover, the cutting of support for the poor in half due to the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act would naturally reduce the disposable income of the poor, while simultaneously alleviating governmental budgets.[37] An increasingly consumerist society allowed for, especially for the artistically inclined, an awareness of the connection between inequality and production. For instance, the Great Exhibition of 1851 was, to some observers, an aesthetically disparate disaster which championed production above hand-made artistic integrity; William Morris found it to be "wonderfully ugly".[38] The emerging middle class, during a time of increasingly disparate incomes between the lowest and highest of society, was growing increasingly averse to the benefits of industrialisation.[39] If the consumerist fruits of industrialisation were viewed as vapid, its underpinning inequality only became more obvious and purposeless. Mechanisation, then, in the words of Morris, has been "made no use".[40] The benefits of industrialisation were seen as insignificant compared to an overwhelming sense of inequality for contemporary commentators, increasing the precision of Engels's narrative.

It is also arguably teleological to view Engels's emphasis on the negative effects of industrialisation as unfounded or inaccurate. The notion that technological progress can provide unlimited economic growth, begetting more innovation (a notion that Mokyr carries through *The Enlightened Economy*), disregards the environmentally and socially unsustainable nature of industrialisation and its explored contemporaneous impacts upon the working class respectively.[41] Indeed, Whiggishly focusing on aspects of growth associated with notions of technological and economic modernity sidelines any working-class conditions as merely par for the course. To do so neglects contemporary deprivation in arguing that industrialisation would eventually lead to better material conditions for workers in the twenty-first century.[42] To disregard the negative conditions a newly created proletariat found

themselves, in favour of the conditions industrialisation eventually leads to, risks straying too far from the accurate parts of Engels's observations.

Engels's view that "thousands of industrious and worthy people … [found] themselves in a condition unworthy of human beings" is therefore precise. Indeed, Engels is representative of a great deal of contemporary observations. Individuals such as Morris noted alienation from production and art, whilst Chadwick increased awareness of sanitary conditions. While industrialisation did lead to some improvements for the working classes, they were often beset with drawbacks. Viewing improvement in the form of statistics presents multiple problems; inequality and lived experience do not materialise in a contextless slew of figures. Moreover, improvements of working-class conditions from industrialisation do not reduce the accuracy of emphasising its negative impacts–while material conditions arguably improved in some way across the eighteenth to late nineteenth century, such improvements must be viewed in a context of intense inequality. Rather than a teleological march towards inevitable technological progress, industrialisation instead should be seen as a period of rising class consciousness and alienation. Production's apotheosis was to profoundly influence interest in the working class. Absurd inequality between proletariat and bourgeoisie trumped the benefits industrialisation provided to workers in the eyes of many contemporaries. Instead of constituting a positive developmental narrative, relatively minor improvements in material conditions do not negate this inequality.

NOTES

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14. William Morris, 'How I Became a Socialist', in *Useful Work v. Useless Toil* (London, 2008), pp. 88–89.
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17. *Ibid*., pp. 552–555.
18. Poor Law Commissioners, *Report to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department on an Inquiry into the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* (London, 1842), p. 369.
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29. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
30. *Ibid*.
31. Nicholas Crafts, 'Some Dimensions of the "Quality of Life" during the British Industrial Revolution', *The Economic History Review*, 50: 4 (November 1997), p. 623.
32. *Ibid*.

33. Jordan, 'Quality of Life', p. 106.
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35. Mokyr, *The Enlightened Economy*, p. 470.
36. *Ibid*.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 471.
38. Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 327–328.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
40. Morris, 'Useful Work', in *Useful Work v. Useless Toil* (London, 2008), p. 25.
41. Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, 'The Industrial Revolution in the Anthropocene', *The Journal of Modern History*, 84: 3 (September 2012), pp. 681–695.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 695–696.

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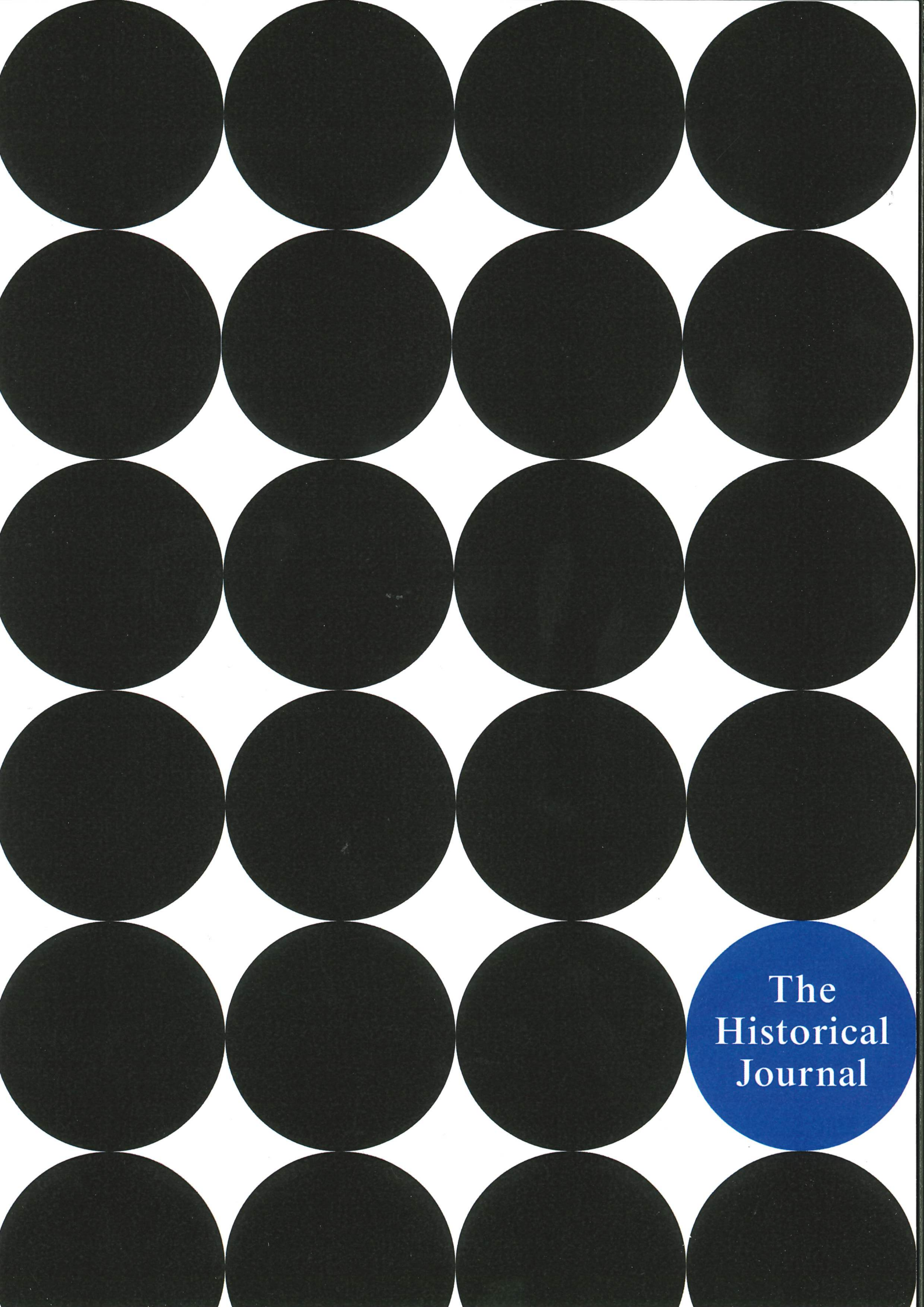
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