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# FOUNDINGS ANCIENTS

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## EDITORIAL

This, the second volume of *Groundings Ancients*, has seen a fledgling academic journal maintain its commitment to quality. The range of submissions this year, across the arts, humanities and social sciences, show a breadth of thought, interest, and intellectual rigour that illustrates the corresponding qualities of the respective authors, editors and institutions. It has also been the year that the position of Managing Editor left Glasgow and started its journey around the other ancient universities of Scotland, finding a home this year in Aberdeen.

The culmination of the work you see before you has been no small task. Its success has been reliant on a combination of enthusiasm and dedication from numerous individuals. Particular thanks are due to Professor Margaret Ross, Vice Principal at the University of Aberdeen; Professor Dorothy Miell, Vice Principal at the University of Edinburgh; Professor Frank Coton, Vice Principal at the University of Glasgow, and Dr Gurchathen Sanghera, Pro Dean of Arts & Divinity at the University of St Andrews.

In keeping with Volume 1, each university has chosen their own theme, providing the successful authors an opportunity to display their academic skills on a variety of topics. The themes are: Aberdeen – Landscape and Language; Edinburgh – Foreign and Familiar; Glasgow – Competition and Tradition, and St Andrews – Identity and Transformation.

The existence of this journal and the student articles within it reinforces Scotland's place as one of the educational power-houses of the world, ensuring that *Groundings Ancients* will be a beacon of academic excellence for years to come.

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# ‘Semper Eadem’, Always the Same? The invention of Princess Elizabeth’s identity (1533-1558)

Simeon Burke

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In assessing the link between Queen Elizabeth I’s pre-accession identity and her personality as Queen Regnant, historians have often perpetuated the myth of a continuously stable and unchanging monarch. This article will review the myth that Elizabeth lived by her motto of *Semper Eadem* (Lat. ‘Always the Same’) by critically revisiting some of the primary sources which discuss Elizabeth’s youth. The bulk of the article will then turn to examining three instances of Elizabeth’s policy-making as Queen Regnant, attempting to trace the links between the identity of Elizabeth as young Princess and mature monarch: the Elizabethan Settlement (1558-59), the Anjou Marriage (1579-81) and the late succession crisis (1587-1603). It will be argued that Elizabeth’s pre-accession and monarchical experience were both characterised not so much by stability and fixed principles, as by a remarkable penchant for prioritising personal survival and political expedience.

Throughout her reign, Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) maintained that she lived her life by the motto of *Semper Eadem* (Lat. ‘Always the Same’).<sup>1</sup> Often invoked by Elizabeth’s historiographers, this adage is taken as proof that the queen retained a consistent core of convictions throughout her reign and maintained a stable identity.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the extent to which Elizabeth developed throughout and

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<sup>1</sup> Examples include S. Doran, ‘Elizabeth I’s religion: the evidence of her letters’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 51 (2000), 720; Elizabeth I: Collected Works (*CW*) (eds.) L.S. Marcus, J. Mueller, and M.B. Rose (Chicago, 2000), 283. For the origins, meaning and early modern conceptions of this motto see R.H. Wells, ‘Semper Eadem: Spenser’s ‘Legend of Constancie’, *The Modern Language Review*, 73, No. 2 (1978), 250-255.

<sup>2</sup> Doran, ‘Religion’, 720, for example concludes her article by writing that ‘in matters of religion, her motto was a guiding principle’.

before her reign has recently come under closer scrutiny.<sup>3</sup> This article is concerned with precisely the extent to which a link can be drawn between Elizabeth's early years (1533-1558) and her policy as Queen Regnant, a question which touches closely on the construction and self-fashioning of an ostensibly unchanging monarch. An initial sketch of the records of her early years will demonstrate the intriguing problems and myths associated with Elizabeth's pre-accession experience and identity. Moving into the main discussion, three instances of Elizabeth's policy as queen will be examined to determine the influence of her youth on the construction of her later identity: the early Elizabeth Settlement (1559), the Anjou Marriage Project (1579-81) and the late Succession Question (1587-1603). Through approaching the records of Elizabeth's upbringing critically, it will be demonstrated that while her early Christian Humanist upbringing, however difficult to determine precisely, was a vague guiding principle, Elizabeth's pre and post-accession character was characterised by a similar propensity to prioritise political expedience, compromise and survival in her decision-making.

## THE SOURCES FOR ELIZABETH'S EARLY YEARS

Of the works composed by the young Elizabeth, her letters perhaps present the clearest view into her education and its impact on her later life. Of particular note is Elizabeth's letter in captivity to Mary I, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1554, in which the young princess adeptly implements her early rhetorical education through an adapted quote from the classical Greek author Isocrates, in his discourse *To Nicocles*.<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth opens her plea, written the day before she was sent to the Tower for suspected involvement in the 1554 Wyatt Rebellion against Mary, by reminding her sister of her promise to 'not condemn without answer and due proof', introducing the classical concept of honour and monarchical oath-keeping found in Isocrates' words, 'a king's word was more than another man's oath'.<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth's

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<sup>3</sup> S. Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (New York, 1993); P. Collinson, 'Windows in a woman's soul: questions about the religion of Queen Elizabeth I' in his *Elizabethan Essays* (London, 1994), 87-118.

<sup>4</sup> *CW*, 41

<sup>5</sup> Isocrates, *Discourses*, translated by T. Norlin (Cambridge: MA, 1928); Elizabeth to Mary I, 16 March 1554, in *CW*, 41.



early exposure to classical rhetoric, under the tutelage of William Grindal and then Roger Ascham, afforded her the ability to associate and manipulate the connection between word, identity, oath and virtue in ways that would benefit her throughout her life.<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth's multilingual *Book of Devotions* – assembled in 1578 or 1579<sup>7</sup> – has been the subject of more varying evaluations, particularly regarding its value as a window into her soul or religious identity.<sup>8</sup> Although early Revisionist scholars detected a pious Elizabeth, more recently Patrick Collinson has questioned the historical value of these writings on the grounds that the *Devotions* were a fashion accessory probably composed by members of Elizabeth's house.<sup>9</sup> For evidence of the obvious lack of correspondence between Elizabeth's outward conformity and private radicalism, one can compare the staunchly evangelical<sup>10</sup> concepts of unmerited grace in her translation of Marie Angeloume's 'Le Miroir de L'Âme Pécheresse', with her persistent decision to attend Catholic mass.<sup>11</sup> All of this raises the question of whether the young princess' religious experience was genuine, or perhaps better put, whether it could, in the face of great pressure from her Catholic sister, remain entirely consistent. As will be seen below, outward conformity in behaviour that differed with private beliefs would be a continuing theme throughout Elizabeth's life as monarch. At this early stage, it was probably motivated by self-protection and fear of reprisal from her sister due to her defiance.

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<sup>6</sup> Frye, *Elizabeth I*, 4-5 notes that in her letters to James, Elizabeth uses this same rhetorical concept of oath-keeping. See 11-13 for further detail of this.

<sup>7</sup> Their original date of composition remains a mystery. See M. Perry, *Elizabeth I: The Word of a Prince: A Life from Contemporary Documents* (London, 1999), 183.

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth I, *A Book of Devotions Composed by Her Majesty Elizabeth with translation by Rev. Adam Fox* (London, 1920).

<sup>9</sup> W. Haugaard 'Elizabeth Tudor's book of devotions: a neglected clue to the queen's life and character' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 12 (1981), 79-105; Collinson, 'Windows', 87-118.

<sup>10</sup> By this sticky term is meant the growing idea among sixteenth century reformers that the gospel (*evangel*) meant the good news of Christ's death which offered unearned salvation for sinners. See Haugaard above 89.

<sup>11</sup> M. de Navarre, 'Le Miroir de L'Âme Pécheresse (1544)' in (eds.) J. Mueller and J. Scodel, *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1544-1589* (Chicago, 2009), 25-128. In defence of her consistency, Elizabeth did exhibit a fierce hostility to the Catholic Eucharistic doctrine of transubstantiation, even being credited with a short poem defending her belief in Christ's presence in the elements of the Lord's Supper. See 7-8 below and Doran, 'Religion', 711.

More voluminous is the category of sources written *about* Elizabeth. Martyrologist John Foxe, for example, emphasises Elizabeth's impressive feats of learning in the first edition of his *Actes and Monumentes* (1563):

what tong is it that her grace knoweth not? What language she cannot speake? What liberal arte or science, shee hath not learned?<sup>12</sup>

Recent scholarship has, however, questioned Foxe's agenda and characterisation of Elizabeth's pre-accession identity and religious policy as queen. Foxe tempers his praise for Elizabeth's learning by ascribing it as one of the 'giftes of God', a rare case of providence in which the grace of Elizabeth's earthly and heavenly teachers prevailed over the 'natural infirmitie of that sexe'.<sup>13</sup> Exploiting the common, early-modern trope of God's providential care for the monarch, which carried with it the concomitant duty of the recipient to aid the church, Foxe reminds Elizabeth that the ecclesiastical establishment required her efforts to push through the reformation, and that, as yet, she had failed to fulfil this responsibility.<sup>14</sup> Later editions of Foxe's work have highlighted that the author's narrative better represents the subversive attempt of an impatient radical to subtly challenge Elizabeth on church reform, than an adoring account of her sufferings as princess.<sup>15</sup> In contrast to Foxe, Elizabeth's former tutor Roger Ascham saw no need

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<sup>12</sup> J. Foxe, 'Acts and Monuments (1563 edition)', *The Acts and Monuments Online*. [Sheffield 2011] Available: <http://www.johnfoxe.org/index.php?realm=text&gototype=modern&edition=1563&pageid=1790> [Accessed 18.3.14]

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> T.S. Freeman, 'Providence and Prescription: The account of Elizabeth in Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'', in (eds.) Susan Doran and Thomas Freeman *The Myth of Elizabeth*, (Hampshire, 2003), 27–55. Foxe was particularly adamant that the use of ecclesiastical vestments be abolished.

<sup>15</sup> Although T.S. Freeman stresses its historical accuracy in "'As True a Subiect being Prysoner": John Foxe's Notes on the Imprisonment of Princess Elizabeth, 1554–5', *English Historical Review*, 117 (2002), 8–33. Nevertheless Freeman pays more attention to the rhetoric of providence and prescription contained in the multiple editions of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* which convey increasingly more overt warnings towards Elizabeth to repay the debt she owed to God for bringing her to power. 'Wherby it may appere not onely what education, or what nature may do, but what god aboue nature hath wrought in her noble breast' quoted in Freeman, 'Providence'.

to understate the godly learning the princess had acquired. In letters to the Swiss reformer Johannes Spithovius, and later in his 1570 treatise *The Scholemaster*, Ascham made little reference to Elizabeth's pious translations, preferring to describe Elizabeth as a philosopher-king who had joined a line of evangelical women lauded for their excellence in classical curriculum, including 'Greek, *historia* and rhetoric'.<sup>16</sup> Aysha Pollnitz has aptly demonstrated, however, that Ascham's account of Elizabeth's education shifted according to the swiftly changing standards of his day. In an earlier 1562-63 edition of *The Scholemaster*, Ascham emphasises Elizabeth's early training as a pious lady-in-waiting, 'a Mistress of womanhood to all women, & a mirror of cumlie & orderlier lyvinge to all her court'.<sup>17</sup> Chasteness and feminine virtues were initially what distinguished Elizabeth before Ascham decided to break in his 1570 edition, from what had been the familiar mould of describing Mary Tudor. Instead, he chose to magnify Elizabeth's learning, removing all traces of her feminine accomplishments.<sup>18</sup> Ascham's hesitation regarding the ideal template of Elizabeth's virtue – at one point Christian mistress and at another humanist-trained sovereign – was perhaps a result of his desire to portray Elizabeth (and probably himself) in the most advantageous manner possible. As a result, the historian should be aware of the fact that his account informs us of the evolving *ideal* and not the fixed reality of a Tudor princess-in-waiting's early instruction.<sup>19</sup>

How, then, if at all, can the impact of Elizabeth's pre-accession experience be evaluated?<sup>20</sup> Two observations have been made from this assessment of the data. First, it should be noted that the source base is thin, especially where Elizabeth's individual input as princess is concerned. Elizabeth's later references to, and construction of, her childhood are far more copious and will await further consideration below. Second, the majority of these records were written by others at a later date. Consequently, what often appears to be Elizabeth's pre-accession

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<sup>16</sup> A. Pollnitz, 'Christian Women or Sovereign Queens? The Schooling of Mary and Elizabeth' in (eds.), A. Whitelock and A. Hunt, *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (New York, 2010), 136-137.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. 137.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> This is certainly not an exhaustive list of sources for Elizabeth's life as princess. Others will be examined in the discussion below.

identity constitutes anachronistic, thinly disguised rhetoric used to justify, legitimise and at times, challenge her queenship. The young, historical Elizabeth is accessible, then, in perceived, constructed terms. When it comes to Elizabeth's youth, it is fair to say that historians peer perilously into a glass darkly. The three events in Elizabeth's rule will now be examined with this cautionary advice in mind.

## THE ELIZABETHAN SETTLEMENT

The first of these instances of policy, the Elizabethan Settlement, consisting of the 1559 Acts of Supremacy, Uniformity and the institution of the 1559 Book of Common Prayer has long been recognised as crucial to the stability and survival of Elizabeth's reign.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, it was in this act that her very status as a defender of the Protestant faith received its first, tense test. Among a number of historians who have recently recaptured interest in Elizabeth's role in the final decision is Susan Doran, who argues that the Elizabethan Settlement reflected a great measure of continuity with Elizabeth's Erasmian and Lutheran Protestant religious convictions, into which she was 'frozen' from her youth.<sup>22</sup> For Doran's thesis to stand up requires a close examination of Elizabeth's attitudes towards the words of institution, the statement with which Christ introduced the Last Supper, and which became one of the many confessional litmus tests in the early modern period.<sup>23</sup>

More specifically, one must ask whether Elizabeth preferred the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, which maintained a preference for a Lutheran Eucharist, or the 1552 Edwardian Book, which expressed a memorialist notion of Christ's sacrifice as a remembrance. J.E. Neale, and more recently Roger Bowers, have gathered evidence which strongly suggests that Elizabeth did prefer the 1549 book and that it was under pressure from staunchly Protestant, Marian exiles that she included

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<sup>21</sup> For narrative see N. L. Jones, *Faith by statute: parliament and the settlement of religion 1559* (London, 1982), 83-168.

<sup>22</sup> Doran, 'Religion', 720, 711-712.

<sup>23</sup> On the Eucharist in the context of the continental Reformation see now A.N. Burnett, *Karlstadt and the Origins of the Eucharistic Controversy: A Study in the Circulation of Ideas* (Oxford, 2011).

the 1552 words of institution.<sup>24</sup> This amendment to the later Edwardian version includes the notion of remembrance and faith, removing any notion of real presence, as Catholics and Lutherans held, each in their own way:

Take and eat this in *remembrance* that Christ died for thee and feed on him in thy heart by *faith*, with thanksgiving.<sup>25</sup>

Yet, Norman Jones has argued that Elizabeth favoured the Edwardian Reformed Book of 1552 all along, and that it was as a concession to Catholics who desired to attend the Mass while still maintaining a belief in Real Presence, that she agreed to place the words of the 1552 Book alongside the 1549 words of institution.<sup>26</sup>

In evaluating these two perspectives, it should be noted that regardless of the outcome, Elizabeth compromised to an opposing party on her view of the Eucharist. For instance, if Elizabeth shifted to side with the 1552 Book, it was likely because of the conclusion of the Italian War (1551-1559) with France at the Peace of Château-Cambrensis, a war in which England was allied with Catholic Spain. The introduction of a peace treaty no longer made appeasing Spanish allies, through adopting the 1549 'Catholic' version, so necessary a goal. Why, then, retain the words of the 1549 book at all? The domestic Catholic portion of the populace would still, for Elizabeth, require conciliating and thus the 1549 Lutheran statement of institution remained.

If this interpretation holds up, Elizabeth relied as much on political expediency as on a rigid set of principles learned from her childhood, a pattern which is mirrored in her upbringing. Between the years 1549-53, Elizabeth is reported to have studied the Eucharistic catechism of her chaplain, Edmund Allen, and to some extent followed his *via media* between the Calvinist conceptions of ubiquity

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<sup>24</sup> R. Bowers, 'The *Chapel Royal*, the first Edwardian Prayer Book, and Elizabeth's settlement of religion, 1559', *The Historical Journal*, 43 (2000), 317-44; J.E. Neale, 'The Elizabethan Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity', *English Historical Review*, 65 (1950), 326-30.

<sup>25</sup> J. Keatley (ed.), *The Two Liturgies A.D.1549 and A.D.1552 with Other Documents Set Forth by Authority in the Reign of King Edward VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1844), 279 (emphasis added).

<sup>26</sup> Jones, *Statute*, 1-4. See also *Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559 and 1662* edited by B. Cummings (Oxford, 2012), 137.

– with Christ’s presence being everywhere at the Eucharist – while affirming Lutheran Real Presence.<sup>27</sup> A poem of questionable source on the Eucharist, arguably penned by Elizabeth, echoes Ascham’s sentiment:

Twas God the Word that spake it  
He took the Bread and brake it  
And what the Word did make it  
That I believe and Take it.<sup>28</sup>

But, if Elizabeth adhered to a vaguely Lutheran notion of Real Presence, it was evidently ambiguous enough that she would alter her position when it was most politically beneficial. This she did by placing the Lutheran words side-by-side with the distinctly Swiss, Zwinglian statement of Christ’s death as a memorial, which was found in the Edwardian Prayer Book of 1552.<sup>29</sup> Doran is probably right in attributing Elizabeth’s preference for the 1549 Book to Lutheran preferences in her youth, but she has misconstrued these preferences by locating them in a *rigid*, Lutheran identity as princess. Elizabeth was not ‘frozen’ into anything and the Settlement strongly supports this. Rather, Elizabeth’s early religious beliefs were held loosely, and were comfortably set aside when the final compromise needed to be reached.

## MARRIAGE AND THE VIRGIN QUEEN

Next to the question of Elizabeth’s religion, the second great matter of anxiety for those in Elizabeth’s court concerned whether or not, and to whom, Elizabeth would marry. Within this question was believed to lie the perpetuity of her line and that of the commonwealth.<sup>30</sup> Because it was the last of Elizabeth’s serious courtships, the French marriage project with Francis, Duke of Anjou, which ran

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<sup>27</sup> Doran, ‘Religion’, 711; see her poem in *CW*, 47. See now the 1548 edition of Allen’s *Catechisme* (Ann Arbor: Michigan, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> *CW*, 47.

<sup>29</sup> See Elizabeth’s ‘shape-shifting’ on the Eucharist during Mary’s reign in W. MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I* (London, 1993), 12.

<sup>30</sup> Jones, *Statute*, 10.

on from 1579 until the breakdown of negotiations in 1581-2, is the subject of particular consideration.

In considering what ways Elizabeth's pre-accession experiences might have affected her decision not to marry, historians have readily observed the connections between Elizabeth's feelings towards several failed and violent marriages she witnessed in her childhood, and her later decision to pursue a life of celibacy. Suggested models for Elizabeth's subsequent interactions with suitors have included her mother, Anne Boleyn, and step-mother Katherine Parr.<sup>31</sup> Commenting on the aftermath of Anne Boleyn's execution in 1536, David Starkey takes considerable pains in noting that the 'alert three year old' princess would surely have 'noticed and questioned' that her mother no longer sent her the regular 'shower' of beautiful clothing.<sup>32</sup> Yet for all this psycho-historical speculation, we have no, or at least very little, explicit reference to Elizabeth's thoughts towards her mother, and none certainly with respect to her thoughts on marriage.<sup>33</sup> More significant parallels might be found in her complex and ambiguous dealings with her uncle-father, Thomas Seymour. The playboy antics of the Baron of Sudeley, and the Seymour affair more specifically, have been well accounted for, from Seymour's intentions to marry the teenage Elizabeth in the 1540s, and when, as her step-father upon his marriage to Katherine Parr in 1549, he notably made several advances into her bed-chamber at day-break.<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth was later held under trial for suspicion of colluding in Seymour's plot to oust Mary and marry Edward to Catherine Grey. The young princess was clearly moved by

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<sup>31</sup> See L.J. Taylor-Smith, 'Elizabeth I: A Psychological Profile', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 15.1 (1984), 66, 71 who stresses the impact of Anne Boleyn's death on Elizabeth's anger at being prevented the case of the Duke of Anjou.

<sup>32</sup> D. Starkey based on the letter of Elizabeth's Governess, Lady Bryan, to court in *Elizabeth: Apprenticeship* (London, 2000), 23.

<sup>33</sup> For a balanced criticism of psycho-historical approaches see S. Doran, 'Why Did Elizabeth Not Marry?', in J.M. Walker, (ed.), *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana* (Durham: NC, 1998), 30-59. Her main critiques consist of (1) the stability Elizabeth would have received through surrogate mothers and not least her step-mother Katherine Parr (2) anachronistic views of life, death and parent-child relationships abound in psycho-historical readings, bearing little resemblance to attitudes held in Tudor England.

<sup>34</sup> See *CW* 22-30.

the proceedings, especially Thomas Seymour's execution in 1549.<sup>35</sup> Yet again, however, there is a compelling absence in the historical record of any reference by Elizabeth as Queen Regnant to a link between the Seymour Episode and her decision to remain celibate. Indeed, the impact of the Seymour Affair relates more to Elizabeth's desire to *survive* rather than marry. Instead, dealings broke down between Elizabeth and Francis because of his military incapacities in the Spanish Netherlands and courtly and popular resistance to the pair's religious differences.<sup>36</sup> In spite of her initial heartbreak, Elizabeth was most likely contented with being pushed away from marriage to 'Monsieur' as it meant full authority balanced with a number of acquired political benefits.

Rather than searching for a link between Elizabeth's early life and her decision regarding Francis, it is more profitable to examine how the Seymour Affair may have afforded Elizabeth the tactics she needed to levy these political advantages. When rumours that she had mothered a child with Seymour were brought to Elizabeth from Robert Tyrwhitt in 1549, Elizabeth wrote directly to the Lord Protector, Edward Seymour, boldly declaring she would come to the palace to prove her innocence and signing off, 'your assured friend to my little power'.<sup>37</sup> Combining the virtues of modesty, humility and innocence in her letters paradoxically established Elizabeth's political power and strengthened her self-representation at the point when she was most vulnerable.<sup>38</sup>

It is possible to discern that Elizabeth tapped in to these precise virtues of justice and honour to secure political favours in the proceedings of the marriage negotiations with Anjou. Her use of the tactics of delay when travelling to trial before Mary correspond remarkably with the suspense in which she kept Anjou 'dangling' as she postponed direct involvement in a war in the Spanish Netherlands.<sup>39</sup> The benefits of this purposeful delay included placing Philip of Spain in a prolonged state of fear over the prospect of an Anglo-French alliance at

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<sup>35</sup> For the impact of the Seymour incident see Elizabeth's letter to Mary (n.5).

<sup>36</sup> J.E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth I* (London, 1954), 250-55.

<sup>37</sup> *CW*, 22-24.

<sup>38</sup> S. Cavanagh, 'The bad seed: Princess Elizabeth and the Seymour incident', in (ed.) J. Walker, *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana* (Durham, NC, 1998), 9, 16.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.



the height of his power, and keeping England out of the Netherlandish war, which the French fought on their behalf.<sup>40</sup> With the political skill she had learned in the school of her early experience, Elizabeth cultivated a 'guarded code of conduct', using 'every means available to articulate her honourable intentions' while through 'unpredictability' achieving a favourable political outcome.<sup>41</sup> Harsh reprisals were used against those who opposed and slandered her courtship of Anjou, including the pamphleteer John Stubbs.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, her efforts to deny rumours that her goal for marriage was a quick consummation bear striking resemblance to her letters to Tyrwhitt in the tower under Mary Tudor, when she had been similarly 'highly touched in honour' by reports that she was pregnant.<sup>43</sup> This observation about honour and virtue raises the interesting fact that historians, in truth, have access to Elizabeth's youth largely through the medium of the queen herself and through her later references to the events of her upbringing. It was Elizabeth, by and large, who pieced these references together from early recollections of her childhood, to construct and validate an identity as a virtuous, unchanging queen.<sup>44</sup> In constructing her pre-accession experience, Elizabeth was actively in the business of inventing, even re-inventing, herself as the virtuous and honourable queen she perceived England wanted, the commonwealth needed, and upon which her own political survival seemingly depended.

## THE SUCCESSION QUESTION AND THE 'SECOND PERSON'

At the age of fifty-one, Elizabeth's failed attempts to marry 'Monsieur' reintroduced the question of Elizabeth's successor with an even greater urgency. The Late Elizabethan Succession Question, and Elizabeth's response to it, contain a

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>41</sup> Barrett-Graves, 'Honour', 45.

<sup>42</sup> See John Stubbs's gaping gulf : *with letters and other relevant documents*, edited by L.E. Berry (Charlottesville: VA, 1968).

<sup>43</sup> See D. Barrett-Graves, 'Highly Touched in Honour': Elizabeth I and the Anjou Controversy,' in (eds.) C. Levin, J.E. Carney, and D. Barrett-Graves, *Elizabeth I: Always Her Own Free Woman* (Aldershot, 2003), 43-60; Neale, *Elizabeth*, 231.

<sup>44</sup> Space does not permit a full discussion of Elizabeth's use of the virgin-queen trope but this is covered extensively in the literature. See for example L. Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender and Representation* (Chicago, 2004).

number of remarkable analogies to her youth. Not least was Elizabeth's implementation of the Humanist strategies of counsel in her letters to James, in which she adopted the role of friend, kin and patriarchal advisor to assert her authority.<sup>45</sup> In March 1586, Elizabeth urged James to reject the offer of an alliance with France through appealing to the love they shared as friends. She reminded him of her familial protection and 'natural affection *ad incunabulis*' and offered to sign 'an instrument', possibly alluding to a signed grant of financial assistance and perhaps even rights of succession to the English throne.<sup>46</sup> On this occasion, and in a number of other letters to James<sup>47</sup>, Elizabeth employed the Humanist gradation of friend-kin-king that she had learned in her early upbringing, to legitimise her role as royal advisor and offer a highly effective 'manual of advice' to the future king of England.<sup>48</sup>

Moreover, through comparing her own experience as queen-in-waiting under Mary to that of her successor, Elizabeth was able to pursue a wise policy of silence on the Succession Question, ensuring that James came to power in peaceful circumstances in 1603. In an address to parliament much earlier in 1566, Elizabeth boldly challenged parliamentary pressure to name her successor by asserting that she knew through 'tast[ing] of the practice against my sister' the danger of announcing a successor, both for the one ruling and the one succeeding to the throne.<sup>49</sup> Decades later, Elizabeth continued to implicitly justify her tight-lipped policy on the basis of her experience as the 'second person'. The protection she offered to Mary Queen of Scots also bears remarkable resemblance, despite any explicit reference, to the treatment Elizabeth experienced under Mary following the disclosure of her status as successor in Henry's Fourth Succession Act (1543).<sup>50</sup> Elizabeth refused throughout her rule to name her successor in spite of the exasperated counsel of parliament and Privy Council, so that even on her

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<sup>45</sup> J. Mueller, 'To My Very Good Brother the King of Scots: Elizabeth I's Correspondence with James VI and the Question of the Succession,' *PMLA* 115 (2000), 1067.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* 1067; *CW*, 274-75.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *CW*, 261-262; 267. Often Elizabeth could assert her authority more directly in a 'highly exclamatory manner', *CW*, 375.

<sup>48</sup> Mueller, 'Brother', 1071; M.T. Crane, "'*Video et taceo*': Elizabeth I and the rhetoric of counsel', *Studies in English Literature* 28 (1988), 1-15.

<sup>49</sup> *CW*, 96

<sup>50</sup> See *CW*, 196-200. This has not, to my knowledge, been addressed in the secondary literature.

deathbed there was some measure of doubt on the matter.<sup>51</sup> The grave threats James faced from an international Jesuit conspiracy and the Spanish 'blanks' plot<sup>52</sup> demonstrate the wisdom of Elizabeth's policy, birthed largely in her experience as 'second person' under Mary.

In summary, two main conclusions have been reached on the subject of Elizabeth's identity as princess and its impact on three important policy decisions as queen regnant. First, Elizabeth's early exposure to Erasmian and Lutheran influences bore a degree of influence on her religious policy and, although less so, on her decision to end marriage negotiations with Francis, Duke of Anjou. Second, tactics of Humanist rhetoric and her experience in the Seymour affair, and as successor to Mary, provide more substantial parallels with the manner in which she compromised on the Settlement of 1559, negotiated the question of her successor, and levied political advantages from foreign and domestic power sources. This article began with a note on Elizabeth's life motto, *Semper Eadem*. Judging from Elizabeth's pre-accession and post-accession experience, her life contained little of the continuity or stability that would warrant such a title. If anything is to be concluded from assessing the impact of Elizabeth's early experience on her mature life, then it is that her life motto might be better rendered *Semper Mutantem*: 'Ever Changing'.

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<sup>51</sup> J. Hurstfield, 'The *Succession Struggle* in *Late Elizabethan England*', in his *Freedom, Corruption and Government in Elizabethan England* (London, 1973), 107.

<sup>52</sup> See *ibid* and Mueller, 'Correspondence'.

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# Competing interpretations of the land: presenting multi-experiential archaeology

Lauren Davidson

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This article introduces multi-experiential archaeology, a critical concept incorporating aspects of agency, multi-vocal and landscape theories. Multi-experiential archaeologies explore a wider range of human experience than has been typical in traditional site-based and archaeo-centric approaches, but it can be argued that such an inclusive approach serves to undermine or destabilise the archaeological discipline. Case-studies drawn from indigenous-colonial interaction illustrate the potential of multi-experiential archaeology to present new, critically informed and ethically situated interpretations of the past.

In this discussion of multi-experiential archaeology, I will argue that multivocal and landscape archaeologies can be used in combination with inter-disciplinary approaches to explore a wider range of human experience than has been available through a traditional site-based approach to archaeology. I suggest that more critical, inclusive approaches to the past are best described as multi-experiential, as they go beyond multivocality to recognise the ways in which different understandings of the world impact on the human activities that archaeologists seek to reconstruct. To avoid the need for repetition of this point, the term 'viewpoint' will be used throughout to signify the ways of knowing particular to an individual or a group. While this term does seem to prioritise the visual experience, it is used to acknowledge the personal ideological lens through which human experience is filtered. Alternative terms, such as standpoint or worldview, were considered but discounted as suggestive of an inflexible viewpoint and cultural homogeneity respectively. Following an introduction to the term multi-experiential, we will explore the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach as observed in case studies drawn from indigenous archaeology. We will see that multi-experiential archaeologies are recovering new information, presenting more informed interpretations and having a positive impact on the understanding of indigenous cultures in the past and the present, but that the

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relativity and inclusivity of such an approach also threatens to undermine or destabilise the archaeological practice.

## THE MULTI-EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH

As a critical concept, multi-experiential archaeology signifies those research projects which take into account that unique personal experiences have shaped not only the identities of the people we study, but influence contemporary perceptions of archaeology and generate individual or academic bias. By recognising and acknowledging this diversity, multi-experiential archaeologies seek to integrate, rather than polarise, multiple interpretations and to redress misconceptions informed by traditional opinions. These approaches also serve to recover information which has been excluded from dominant historical narratives and help to reassert the agency of individuals in the past. As indigenous archaeologies are particularly prone to being misperceived, ignored or homogenised, examples of interactions between colonial and indigenous societies are used to demonstrate the ability of multi-experiential archaeologies to present new, critically informed and ethically situated interpretations of the past. The practice of a multi-experiential archaeology is characterised by the inclusion of a range of different disciplinary, methodological, critical and theoretical approaches. These approaches vary according to the context they are employed in, but typically include aspects of landscape and multivocal theory, ethnography and analysis of the political context with the explicit aim of recovering the full range of past experiences.

## RESISTANCE TO COLONIAL RULE

With a focus on a broader understanding of the range of human activities, multi-experiential archaeology has the potential to recover information which has traditionally been excluded or under-played in the archaeological narrative; for example, in the analysis of non-typical, lesser known or less significant sites. This is particularly relevant to the study of resistance to colonial rule, which often manifests as a number of distinctive practices, some of which were deliberately hidden from view. Michael Given's *The Archaeology of the Colonized* deals with the complexities of colonial archaeology, particularly with regard to identifying



the practices of resistance in the archaeological record.<sup>1</sup> Given's aim, to redress the tendency to 'lump together the colonized and stereotype them as passive, unthinking machines', highlights the absence of the colonized experience from the historical narrative and the need for a targeted approach to its recovery.<sup>2</sup> A multi-experiential approach, including aspects of mythology, landscape theory, multivocalism and politics, serves to uncover a highly nuanced account of the experiences of and responses to, colonisation. The advantage of the multi-experiential approach is not only that it gives us access to new information and interpretations, but can serve to reclaim the agency of colonized individuals who have traditionally been ignored, homogenised or over-simplified in historical narratives.

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY

By acknowledging multiple viewpoints, we immediately recognise the diversity and complexities of both colonised and colonising societies. This can help us to break down the division between pre- and post-contact archaeologies which are problematic in that they separate the past into two temporally unbalanced phases and serve to homogenise pre-colonial activity, underplaying continuing indigenous experiences and suggesting a model of linear progression which can be used as a justification for colonial activity. In a multi-experiential narrative pre-contact indigenous societies are no longer reduced to one timeless and static culture or worldview, but are recognized as a range of communities and individuals whose experiences and viewpoints are determined by different temporal, geographic, social and personal experiences. This allows us to reconceive of Australian Aboriginality, for example, as the world's longest surviving cultural group, rather than the longest surviving cultural viewpoint.<sup>3</sup> This small change in nomenclature results in a new form of freedom for the understanding of Aboriginality as a cultural practice. Once we recognise the fluidity of how identity is enacted, modern-day practices of Aboriginality are no longer perceived as separate from 'traditional' practices, but are recontextualised as the diverse and on-going result of the interactions between social beliefs and personal context.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Given, *The Archaeology of the Colonized* (London, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>3</sup> B. David, *Landscapes, Rock-Art and the Dreaming* (London, 2002), 1.

The ability to augment the historical record allows archaeology to play more than a theoretical role in the understanding of cultural diversity, and this recognition of multiple viewpoints serves as a reminder of the agency of individuals in the past. In the search for evidence of multiple viewpoints, multi-experiential archaeology can challenge inaccuracies such as the typical portrayal of a 'timeless' Aboriginal culture. Bruno David argues that we can identify the practices informed by specific Dreaming stories in the archaeological record and demonstrates that the physical responses to Aboriginal belief systems have changed over time. He uses ethnography to identify those Dreaming stories which have influenced people's interactions with landscape and conducts excavations to identify and analyse their effect. One such excavation took place at Ngarabullgan, a mountainous area described in the oral tradition as home to malicious spirits. Here, David conducted a number of excavations in areas displaying, or likely to yield, evidence of human activity. Across the area, radiocarbon dating indicated a systematic abandonment of sites around 600 years ago. This abandonment does not correlate to any regional changes in land use nor can it be explained by environmental change. The abandonment of caves and rock shelters at Ngarabullgan is therefore interpreted as a localised, social adaptation; a conclusion which could have been discounted as speculative had the local traditions not provided an explanation.<sup>4</sup> Without specific evidence explaining a changing practice, some archaeologists would tend to assume, and search for, an economic explanation, but David's work with the Aboriginal Dreaming stories has shown that change can also be socially motivated. When attention is brought to the different ways in which people understand the world, archaeologists are reminded of the range of possible motivations behind a decision which helps to prevent the over-playing of economic factors and encourages an approach which recognises the interplay of social and economic influence.

Multi-experiential archaeology helps us to take a more holistic approach to understanding the motivations and experiences of people in the past, and by understanding that there are multiple ways of knowing and being, we give agency back to the individuals who make up a society, and create a frame of reference for changing practices. This helps us to break down the barriers between contact and colonial history and recast different practices as a process of adapting and

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 33-47.

integrating social practices. The advantage here is part of the move towards an understanding of the past which actively recognises and respects the variety of lived experiences within one cultural grouping; a move which allows us to recognise a cultural continuity which might otherwise have been missed, and to create more accurate and informed understandings of the past.

## CULTURAL CONTINUITY

In the Australian context, the perceived lack of cultural continuity has been reinforced by a lack of formally acknowledged post-colonial indigenous sites. While there are on-going attempts to redress the imbalance at governmental and academic level (see, for example, the 'Living Places' project in New South Wales), there is a lack of awareness and representation of post-contact Aboriginality in the archaeological record which serves to further the notion of an ancient culture, severing contemporary Aboriginal people from their heritage and implying the sort of linear progressive model which has been used to justify colonisation.<sup>5</sup> By underrepresenting post-contact Aboriginality in the archaeological record, we deny the presence of indigenous culture in favour of a more simplistic definition of replacement. Although post-colonial indigeneity is harder to locate in the landscape on a practical level, as the inorganic materials present in European sites are more likely to survive and it can be hard to distinguish between colonial and Aboriginal use of European artefacts, this does not excuse the over-simplification of historical narratives, especially when these narratives serve to reinforce the position of a politically dominant community.<sup>6</sup> By focussing on a broader range of activities and experiences we can discover or recover information which is not necessarily included in the dominant narrative; multi-experiential archaeologies serve to redress inaccuracies and misconceptions.

Denis Byrne's focus on identifying post-colonial Aboriginal sites is both an academic and a social act. A multi-experiential approach shows there were at least two different ways of understanding and using the landscape; the documented grid through which Europeans tended to move, delineating areas of private and

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<sup>5</sup> Department of Environment & Heritage, *Aboriginal 'Living Places'* (New South Wales, 2002).

<sup>6</sup> D. Byrne, 'Nervous Landscapes: Race and Space in Australia', *Journal of Social Archaeology*, (2003), 171-172.

public land, and the unwritten and over-lapping maps of individual Aboriginal experiences including areas of sustenance and social activity.<sup>7</sup> While both kinds of map used the same topographical basis and identify places for different activities and how to move between these, they share neither form nor effect. In the following example, we see that Aboriginal interaction with the post-colonial landscape was not necessarily influenced by the physical manifestations of colonialism:

Balbuk had been born on Huirison Island at the Causeway, and from there a straight track had led to the place where she had once gathered jilgies and vegetable food with the women, in the swamp where Perth railway station now stands. Through fences and over them, Balbuk took the straight path to the end. When a house was built in the way, she broke its fence-pailings with her digging stick and charged up the steps and through the rooms.<sup>8</sup>

While there can be indefinite speculation as to Balbuk's intentions (for example, comfort in the face of change, unconcerned continuity or defiance of the colonial order), the act itself proves that there are more factors at play in deciding how to move through a landscape than functional consideration. This conclusion highlights the importance of taking into account different viewpoints in order to understand human behaviour. Multi-experiential approaches, which integrate different techniques and ways of knowing, enable us to understand conflict and resistance at an individual level, and to reconstruct a more personal experience of the past.

## LIMITING THE HERITAGE PRACTITIONER

Though we have discussed a number of multi-experiential archaeology's advantages, it is important to recognise the disadvantages of such an approach, particularly with regard to the practice of archaeology. While we may gain a fuller understanding of the human experience in the past, we also lose the sense of

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>8</sup> S. Muecke, cited in Byrne, 'Nervous Landscapes', 182.

authority and certainty which some stakeholders, not least funders, expect from the archaeological discipline.

At Manning Valley, ethnography allows Byrne to identify the gaps in the colonial grid, such as pathways, waterways, external boundaries and areas set aside, but not yet developed, for public use, which he argues represent a form of Aboriginal 'subversion' of the prescribed colonial landscape.<sup>9</sup> The physical layout recorded in official maps does not represent the ultimate layout of a place such as Manning Valley, nor the ways in which people, both European and Aboriginal, chose to interact with it. By critically analysing the limitations of source material, multi-experiential archaeology is well placed to recognise misinformation and bias, and to counteract this with additional information. For Byrne this means integrating ethnography into the approach, but the same issues can arise when there is no access to contemporary records or memories. This poses a problem for the multi-experiential approach in that we do not necessarily have access to contemporary viewpoints in all situations; when we acknowledge the diversity of responses to a physical landscape, we become aware of our limitations as heritage practitioners. While this precludes the attribution of definite motivations to certain activities, it does allow for the consideration of more intuitive, humanistic suggestions. As with the Balbuk example above, the multi-experiential approach brings us closer to the human experience, but renders all interpretations relative and, therefore, indecisive.

As well as generating uncertainty, the multi-experiential mode of thinking is problematic as it calls into question the value of the archaeological practice. Many critiques of post-processual approaches similar to multi-experiential archaeology claim that engaging with issues such as agency and multivocality affects our ability to reach archaeological conclusions:

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<sup>9</sup> Byrne, 'Nervous landscapes', 181-2.

Much of the anxiety about multivocality has stemmed from a desire to avoid a slippage into a disabling relativism. As Bruce Trigger has insisted, archaeologists need to be able to evaluate different accounts of the past even if a diversity of indigenous and other perspectives is acknowledged and even celebrated.<sup>10</sup>

The concern with relativism is that we can never remove our own bias, nor synthesise all viewpoints, and so accepting the diversity of lived experiences paralyses the archaeological practice. While this argument is valid, and recognises the repercussions of multivocality - how can we secure funding without providing answers, how can we present findings if they are inherently biased and should we even practice archaeology if we are not working towards an objective understanding of the past - I would argue that the hyper-relativity argument is based upon another dichotomy which polarises objectivity and subjectivity. If we replace this with a sliding scale, we are able to move between subjectivity and objectivity as required, and we also recognise that the two are not mutually exclusive. As the successful approaches outlined above have shown, the acceptance of relativism does not render the archaeologist useless, but forces us to analyse and react to the biases created by personal, academic and nationalised viewpoints.

By identifying our biased tendencies we are in a position to challenge them using an understanding of alternative viewpoints, thus moving towards interpretations and narratives which are more, but not completely, objective. Although multi-experiential approaches force us to acknowledge our limitations, this can actually be perceived as an advantage in that it removes our obligation to an impossible objectivity and allows us to reconstruct a more inclusive and intuitive practice.

## PRACTICING MULTI-EXPERIENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The multi-experiential approach impacts not just how we interpret the past, but on the role and responsibilities of the heritage practitioner in contemporary

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<sup>10</sup> M. Johnson, 'Making a Home: Archaeologies of the Medieval English Village', in (eds) J. Habu, C. Fawcett & J. Matsunaga, *Evaluating Multiple Narratives: Beyond Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist Archaeologies* (New York, 2008), 51.

society. One example which illustrates both academic bias and the impact of recognising multiple viewpoints is found in Michael Blakey's study of the New York African Burial Ground. By analysing previous historical and anthropological narratives, Blakey identifies a tendency to deny the humanity of America's historic Black population. An awareness of this bias motivates Blakey to design a methodology which is critically aware and makes a deliberate effort 'to correct these distortions and omissions'.<sup>11</sup> His multi-experiential approach attempts to democratize the archaeological process by engaging in discussion with both the funding body and descendant communities prior to conducting research. While this step is legally required under The National Historic Preservation Act of the United States, 1966, it has not found favour with some heritage professionals who argue for their exclusive rights as stewards of the past. Blakey presents his decision to conduct community engagement as an ethically and academically motivated decision, rather than a legal obligation; this highlights the difficulty of enforcing heritage laws and the on-going authority of heritage professionals to make personally informed decisions.<sup>12</sup> Whatever the motivation, the result of Blakey's community engagement was the recognition that the traditional description of the African population in colonial America as 'slaves' denied any individual identity or agency prior to, and distinguished from, the role of servitude. The term 'enslaved Africans' recognises that individual identity is not based on a societal role and draws attention to the people who demanded and facilitated this slavery.<sup>13</sup> By taking into account the viewpoint of the present-day communities affected by his research, Blakey's report presents a more historically accurate and socially valuable understanding of slavery. Multi-experiential approaches have the ability not only to highlight historical truths, but to address issues which affect contemporary society.

A further result of Blakey's inclusive approach is the diversity of viewpoints represented by his team. While the integration of multiple disciplines, specialists and cultures is not exclusive to multi-experiential, nor critical, archaeology, it is

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<sup>11</sup> M. Blakey, 'An Ethical Epistemology of Publicly Engaged Biocultural Research' in: Habu, J., Fawcett, C. & Matsunaga, J. (eds.) *Evaluating Multiple Narratives: Beyond Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist Archaeologies* (New York, 2008), 19.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 21-22.

still worth examining the benefits of having access to multiple opinions while conducting research. At the New York West African Burial Ground:

the diasporic scope of expertise allowed us to find meaningful evidence where narrower expertise could not have 'seen' it. The use of quartz crystals as funerary objects required an African archaeological background whereas Americanist archaeologists might have assigned them no meaning [reference omitted]; the heart-shaped symbol, believed to be of Akan origin and meaning [reference omitted], was assumed to have a European, Christian meaning in the absence of anyone who could recognize an Akan adinkra symbol.<sup>14</sup>

This is a simple illustration of the notion that interpretation, which is inevitably based upon particular experiences and knowledge, is subjective. Although we can recognise a symbol as having a particular meaning in one context, we cannot objectively conclude that it holds the same meaning in another; it is only by being aware of different ways of viewing the world that we become aware of alternative interpretations, which can then be integrated with archaeological knowledge to generate the most appropriate interpretation. While the New York African Burial Ground is not an example of colonising an indigenous homeland, it is still an example of interaction between two cultures, where one has been presumed to hold the majority of the power; if there is diversity, continuity and agency in individuals removed from their cultural heartland, then it stands to reason that there must certainly be individuality where people have been colonised in their own lands. Further, if multi-experiential approaches can recover useful information in the former, they have the potential to yield better results in the latter. The advantages of acknowledging different viewpoints in colonial archaeology is two-fold: by engaging with the community, we ensure that work is ethically sound and relevant to the wider community, and by engaging with alternative ways of knowing, we can generate more informed conclusions.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 26.



## CONCLUSION

It is clear, then, that the practice of multi-experiential archaeology takes many forms and incorporates a range of practices, key to which is the recognition of multiple viewpoints and the reflection of this in the research methodology. Such an approach limits the potential to present conclusive interpretations of the past, but offers a more nuanced understanding of individual experiences. By seeking out practices of resistance to colonial rule, Michael Given reasserts the agency and individuality of colonised populations, while Bruno David's exploration of Aboriginal Dreaming demonstrates the evolution of cultural practices and helps to challenge the dominant perception of ancient cultures as static. With the deliberate intention of identifying post-contact Aboriginal sites, David Byrne discovers multiple ways of engaging with a prescribed landscape and helps to fill in the gap between pre- and post-contact Aboriginality. Michael Blakey engages with contemporary stakeholders and shows that a multi-experiential approach can produce ethically engaged research and contribute to a fuller understanding of non-Western cultures. These examples illustrate that by challenging dominant historical narratives, multi-experiential archaeologies can inform our understanding of modern-day indigeneity.

By limiting how far we can project our own experiences onto the past, we not only deter biased, false or hyper-interpretive conclusions, but we are also forced to be more innovative with what we do know and how we can know it. By acknowledging the many ways of experiencing and interpreting the world, we paradoxically create a more objective understanding of the past as made up of experiences which are themselves complex, diverse and indefinable. Acknowledging different ways of knowing is risky, as it leaves historical 'certainties' up for public debate, challenges traditional ways of knowing the past and threatens to undermine the authority of the archaeological discipline. Yet, it is only by engaging in wide-ranging discussion that we can generate more informed interpretations, and by challenging how we know that we can identify bias, errors and areas of potential, allowing us to re-examine existing evidence or to generate new information. When we deprive dominant viewpoints, we start a process of dialogue which brings to light forms of evidence and methods of interpretation which have not traditionally been adopted into the archaeological discipline, and

pave the way for the inclusion of local, indigenous or religious communities whose interpretations of the past have typically been ignored, homogenised or over-simplified. I would argue then, that the advantages and disadvantages of the multi-experiential approach are one and the same; by decentralising the subject, we diversify the practice of archaeology, resulting in something that is technically more complicated, yet more intuitive; less certain and therefore more accurate.

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# Modernist Experiments and the British Empire: radical aesthetics in fictional writing and their relationship to ideologies of identity within the Empire

Yasemin Hacıoglu

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This article breaks the assumption of a uniformly Modernist experimental text, demonstrating that within a Modernist text there are different levels of formal experimentation and radicalism. In reference to Forster's 'A Passage to India' and a close reading of Pound's 'Canto XCIH', it will argue that different levels of formal experimentation could represent contrasting positions in regard to the colonized 'other'. The formal experiments could be used to represent the 'other' voice. By placing this voice within the Imperialist's narrative, they demonstrate a view of the impact that the 'other' subjectivity could potentially have on the Empire's centre. This counterpoints Frederic Jameson's claim that Modernist formal experimentation was removed from the realities of the British Empire's workings and peripheries, presenting a more complicated relation between British Modernist aesthetics and the identity of the colonized 'other'.

High Modernist forms of writing emphasized both the capacity to form identities and created the means to challenge their boundaries. This meant that the forms directly implicated British Imperialist ideology, which propagated that the colonized and colonizer had distinct inherent identities and attributes, in order to justify its division and rule<sup>1</sup>. Modernist forms, such as stream-of-consciousness, could emphasize the human subject 'enmeshed in relations of exchange... that violate the limits of identity'<sup>2</sup>. However, Freud, who influenced stream-of-consciousness, contrastingly emphasized that one is inevitably defined by one's closest influences<sup>3</sup>; this could result in limited understandings of the 'other'. These contradictory elements could suggest, as Jameson argues, that the forms of Modernist writing were defined by attempts to represent an 'unrepresentable

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<sup>1</sup> J. Errington, 'Colonial Linguistics', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30 (2001), 27.

<sup>2</sup> M. Ellmann, *The Nets of Modernism* (Cambridge, 2010), 1.

<sup>3</sup> M. Charles, 'On the conservatism of post-Jungian criticism: competing concepts of the symbol in Freud, Jung and Walter Benjamin', *International Journal of Jungian Studies* 5:2 (2013)122.

totality', one that was separate from understanding and impacting the workings of the Empire<sup>4</sup>.

However, this article will argue that, within a High Modernist text, experimental forms could represent separate, conflicting positions in regard to their capacity to differentiate or conflate the 'other's' identities. This appealed to the question of whether colonized subjects were inherently different in their capacities to think, and thus to govern themselves. The experimental modernist forms used by Pound and Forster represent different methods of thought, with different capacities for remaining independent or being changeable. In this way, they parallel their contemporary's anthropological discourses; some anthropologists in colonial linguistics argued that different languages could be separated into racial identities signifying inherent thought capacities<sup>5</sup>. Pound's 'Canto XCIII' counters the danger of Modernist thought causing the loss of inherent racial identities, that in his view uphold society, by demonstrating it can be ideologically re-shaped into a different discourse. By contrast, Forster's *A Passage to India* places the apparently depoliticized Modernist aesthetic against colonialist ideology to explore whether it is separate, or inherently necessary, to its working.

The narrative voice of 'Canto XCIII' uses the stream-of-consciousness form to warn that the Modernist preoccupation with the individual causes apathy towards the degeneration of its speaker into a colonial 'other'. Pound uses the example of Egypt, which was in the process of overcoming British power, almost as an allegory of what he perceived to be the mistakes of the British Empire. The poem opens by directly contradicting Freud's argument that the individual inherently harbours desires that conflict with civilised society<sup>6</sup>: 'A man's paradise is his good nature'<sup>7</sup>, thus implying that his nature is social rather than sexual. However, it warns that this cannot be taken for granted because it is presented as a translation of Egyptian hieroglyphs; representative of a deceased society. Further, it suggests

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<sup>4</sup>F. Jameson, 'Modernism and Imperialism', *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature* (Minneapolis, 1990), 58.

<sup>5</sup> J. Irvine and S. Gall, 'Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation'. *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*, Ed. Alessandro Duranti (UK, 2009): 403.

<sup>6</sup> M. Billig, *Freudian Repression: Conversation Creating the Unconscious* (Cambridge, 1999), 72-3.

<sup>7</sup> E. Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (New York, 1996).

that not all peoples have this capacity for inherent control by contrasting 'Apollonius' who 'made his peace with the animals' with 'Filth of the Hyksos, butchers of lesser cattle'. 'Apollonius' and 'Hyksos' superficially signify Greek and Jewish identity, ethnicities that were migrant across territories of the former Ottoman Empire<sup>8</sup> including Egypt. In British colonialist linguistic ideology, multilingualism and multiple identities are equated with disorder and an uncivilized past<sup>9</sup>. Thus, the condition of societal good nature is presented as holding the potential to devolve into an animalistic, implicitly sexual identity of 'butchers of lesser cattle', which conflates with stereotypes of colonized peoples<sup>10</sup>. A voice resembling stream-of-consciousness is placed between these: 'the arcivescovo, fumbled round under his/ ample overcloaks as to what might have been/ a left-handed back pocket...'. In contrast to the clear hierarchical distinctions the hieroglyphic voice forms between peoples, this bathetically conflates 'arcivescovo', (meaning Archbishop in Italian), with 'ample overcloaks'. This evokes Freud's notion that meaning is attributed to signs not for their inherent value but by an individual's associations<sup>11</sup>, thus presenting Modernist stream-of-consciousness as preoccupied with individual experience. Pound implies that its consequent potential relativism and apathy towards defining the self against the 'other' imbues the individual with the qualities that define 'lesser' peoples.

The poetic voice re-forms stream-of-consciousness to demonstrate how to control the self in order to establish it within racial and societal hierarchies. The stream-of-consciousness voice runs enjambed into historical context: 'or as Augustine said, or as the Pope wrote to Augustine/ 'easier to convert after you feed 'em'', pushing the individual's concerns beyond their immediate experience. This counters the threat of the Modernist voice expiring. However, the poem registers that conflating an individual's concern with what is implied to be societal progress is difficult. This is reflected in the voice devolving into a hysterical pre-occupation with the self and sexual relations: '(Yes, my Ondine, it is so god-damned dry on

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<sup>8</sup> Irvine and Gall, 'Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation', 418.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> B. Parry, 'Materiality and Mystification in A Passage to India', *Novel*, 31:2 (1998), 176.

<sup>11</sup> M. Charles, 'On the conservatism of post-Jungian criticism: competing concepts of the symbol in Freud, Jung and Walter Benjamin', 121.

these rocks)'. It suggests that the lover is a source of constancy, 'like the moonlight/ Always there', in contrast to wider significances – 'the waves rise, and the waves fall' (643-4). This 'Modernist' model of retreat into the self for constancy is presented as distorted through the image of moonlight, which implies inconstancy. To maintain focus on wider society, Pound grafts societal issues beyond the immediate concern of the individual to individualistic sexual desire:

And the Medici failed  
From accepting excess deposits.  
'Te voila, mon Bourienne'  
corrent attrattiva (644)

'Corrent attrattiva', even without knowledge of the language, bears parallels to words such as 'attractive'; in this way the foreign language almost suggests euphemism. Sexual signifiers are presented solely in reference to other languages, encouraging the 'other' to be used merely as a sign to maintain the individual's attention. This perhaps implies that what can be learned of former foreign powers should also be used as signs; rather than viewing them for their intrinsic worth, the poem uses other cultures to develop a thought process that could reform hierarchy in civilization.

Former empires are portrayed as having been successful, but subsequently defeated, due to different forms of thought process; the narrative voice presents an experimental form that will prevent their mistakes. Pound believed successful government was based on moral will rather than power-seeking<sup>12</sup>; he equated the power-seeking society with 'Empire': 'A civilization was founded on Homer, civilization, not a mere bloated Empire' (Pound 54). The poem demonstrates that former empires were contrastingly focused upon ideals: 'Kung to the crystalline,/ To Queen Nephertari this incense/ To Isis this incense (645). Yet 'incense' is a seemingly unimportant symbol that does not specifically present any ideal, but rather superfluous abstraction. J. McGann has argued such contradictions signal

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<sup>12</sup> T. Redman, 'Pound's Politics and Economics' *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound*, Ed. Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge, 1999), 256.



Pound's frustration in failing to re-define civilization<sup>13</sup>. However, they are arguably used to teach the reader to avoid 'others' complacency and degeneration: 'incense' has connotations of indulgence, whilst the ideal of 'compagnevole animale' – the social animal – is placed beside the hieroglyph of Kati (see figure 1, from Pound, 'Cantos'), superficially depicting an actual animal (646). This perhaps implies that former empires were inherently more animalistic. To counter this, and thus build 'civilization', it emphasises that ideals should be viewed intellectually and without attachment: 'That love is the 'form' of philosophy, / is its shape (è forma di Filosofia)'. This evokes the theme of sexual desire, but simultaneously alludes to Plato's philosophy of Forms, in which abstract ideas signify a higher reality. The narrator's experimental form facilitates such thought. The repetition of '(È forma di Filosofia), meaning 'is the form of philosophy'<sup>14</sup>, suggests a form that fragments and thus re-considers the subject, transforming it into a controlled concept that does not expire. This counters the conflation of the Italian language with sex - 'l'amor che ti fa bella' which can expire like the 'bloated' Empire and that implicitly devolved from the Latinate Roman Empire: 'ut facias... pulchram' (630). Therefore, Pound's experimental thought process implicitly controls civilizations, preventing it from expiring.

Pound conflates multi-ethnic societies with hysteria and thus illness; the narrator uses the modified stream-of-consciousness as a talking cure that purges society of this state. Freud's case study of Anna O. presents 'four or five languages' as leading her to 'becoming completely deprived of words'<sup>15</sup>. The poem presents a pattern in which incoherency of foreign sources is broken by the clarity of ideograms: 'und kein Weekend-Spass/.../ The Bard of Avon mentioned the subject,/ Dante mentioned the subject/ ... Four thousand years before KATI [figure 1]' (647). The undefined but insistent repetition of 'the subject' presents its meaning as lost; yet the KATI ideogram conflates with the meaning of the previous ideogram, *chih*, meaning a pause as well as a centre the universe can turn round<sup>16</sup>. This shows how

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<sup>13</sup> J. McGann, 'The "Cantos" of Ezra Pound, the Truth in Contradiction', *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 15, No. 1, (Autumn, 1988): 1-25.

<sup>14</sup> C. Terrell, *A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound* (London, 1993), 564.

<sup>15</sup> Freud, W. Koestenbaum, 'The Waste Land: T.S. Eliot's and Ezra Pound's Collaboration on Hysteria,' *Twentieth Century Literature* 34.2 (1988), 114.

<sup>16</sup> C. Terrell, *A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound*, 560.

the mind can re-centre itself from hysterical degeneration into meaning and power. The allusion to Egypt arguably alludes to the process of nationalisation of Egypt in the 1950s that resulted in the dispelling of British power. Pound implicitly contrasts the obscure, former power of Ancient Egypt with its capacity to now re-form itself along the lines of a single nationality and ethnicity, which British colonial linguistics and ideology had previously tried to implement across the Empire. Pound uses Egypt to exemplify how, despite the collapse of the Empire at the time, the use of his thought form can re-centre the individual mind, and consequently a society, along the divided ethnicity ideals Pound inherited from British Imperialism.

Similarly, Forster's *A Passage to India* emphasizes that Modernist forms are inherently political and impact on the Empire. However, Forster presents the colonized individual as using such forms to resist colonial power. In contrast to Jameson's argument that Modernism's apparently apolitical character is due to ruling powers being separated from the incomprehensible workings of the Empire (45-51), Forster presents this incomprehensibility as consciously crafted by Aziz. Aziz defies his indebtedness to the colonizer's power through the lie that he prefers 'to walk', hoping to 'escape from the net [of Anglo-India] and be among manners and gestures that he knew' (15). Implicitly, he does this by locating his identity in what the Mosque symbolises to him, as it almost becomes a subconscious embodiment of his resistant identity: 'Here was Islam, his own country, more than faith, more than battle-cry' (16). He arguably sees the power in its identity as unique and impenetrable; it is the 'dualism' of light representing the ninety-nine names of God and the 'contention of shadows' that pleases him, particularly as this makes it difficult to connect it to 'some truth of religion of love' (15). Subversively, this alerts the reader that, in pretending to prefer to walk, Aziz similarly guarded against another invading his identity by obscuring it. This undermines assumptions of the colonizer's privileged perspective, as Callender may have implicitly read Aziz's preference to walk as a stereotype of pathetic contentment<sup>17</sup>. Furthermore, it undermines the assumed superiority of the colonizer's thought: stream-of-consciousness was seen as both a cultural form, and thus 'a source of identity and combative'<sup>18</sup>, as well as a power to understand

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<sup>17</sup> B. Parry, 'Materiality and Mystification in *A Passage to India*', 176.

<sup>18</sup> E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, 1994), Xiii.

others, through its associations with Freud. By providing access to Aziz's thoughts through stream-of-consciousness, Forster demonstrates that colonized subjects equally have forms of thought which provide them with identities and, ironically, are used in combination with the colonizer's assumption of superior perspective as a means of resistance.

Contrastingly, the colonizer's narrative is presented complicit to Imperialist ideology as a result of being combined with individualism. Fielding believes he holds an ideal of connecting people, locating this capacity in an individual's choice: 'the world, he believed, is a globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can do so by the help of goodwill plus culture and intelligence' (57). Like Pound, this causes Fielding to locate failures in the individual rather than politics. He refers to Anglo-Indians who do not support his views as possessing 'the herd instinct', implying that without making his individualistic choices they become, in Freudian and Darwinist terms, like animals. This ideology makes him interpret his misunderstandings of the 'other' as their flaws: when Aziz attempts to escape during arrest, Fielding interprets this as 'the profundity of the gulf that divided him from them. They always do something disappointing' (163), rather than initially considering the wider political injustice that led to Aziz's decision. Fielding's individualism is connected with Modernist stream-of-consciousness narrative. Virginia Woolf criticized Joyce's experiments for imprisoning the reader in their individual ego<sup>19</sup>; she attempted forms that transcended this to portray 'life itself'<sup>20</sup>. Contrastingly, Forster presents the impossibility of representing beyond one's own view. The narrative indicates an indirect interior monologue of Fielding's perspective with the signifier 'he believed'. It implies that it can go beyond this by moving across time: 'the remark that did the most harm...'. Yet the omniscient voice is drawn back to echoing Fielding's view: 'he communicated it to the rest of the herd'. The awareness of being trapped within an individual's experience and consequently not being able to understand the 'other', is presented as justified by Modernist stream-of-consciousness thought.

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<sup>19</sup> J. Naremore, *The World Without a Self: Virginia Woolf and the Novel* (New Haven and London, 1973), 63.

<sup>20</sup> V. Woolf, *ibid.*

Yet, whilst the colonizer's individualism prevents him from regenerating his ideas, Aziz's thought form allows dialogues across his society that present the connective capacity of stream-of-consciousness ideology. The colonizers' perceptions are depicted as creating a gulf of perception between themselves and the 'other'. Adela observes the Indian landscape, seeing it as 'infected with illusion. For instance, there were some mounds by the edge of the track, low, serrated' (131). This description echoes radical Post-Impressionist aesthetics<sup>21</sup> that were criticized for their use of terms associated with colonial 'others': 'infection', 'madness', 'evil' (Harrison, cited from Lewis, n.p.). In conveying an observation of a snake to Aziz, Adela fears dialogue with the 'other' gives them dangerous creative power, consequently lashing against further observation: Aziz 'improvised some rubbish about protective mimicry. Nothing was explained, and yet there was no romances'. This fear of connection arrests the development of the colonizers' thoughts, making them fragmented and merely aesthetic like Post-Impressionist paintings. This removes them from political reality. After referring to the West's atheism, Fielding assumes that the Indians' ideologies pertaining to religious values hamper them: 'Unless a sentence paid a few compliments to Justice and Morality in passing, its grammar... paralyzed their minds' (102). However, this is presented as reflecting the colonizer's entrapped ideology. Fielding mocks Aziz for his claims that India will gain independence on the grounds that Aziz is individually incapable: Aziz says "It will be arranged – a conference of oriental statesmen."; Fielding replies "It will indeed be arranged". Aziz, however, is referring to a connected collective identity, 'we', that is shown to capacitate genuine political change: as Nurreddin emerges from hospital 'there was a roar of relief as though the Bastille had fallen...[Bahadur] began a speech about Justice, Liberty and Prudence' (223). Thus, it is the colonized subject's form of thought unhampered by Imperialist individualism that most resembles the Modernist ideology of renewal and progress.

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<sup>21</sup> Figures 2 and 3, Gogh and Poster, n.p.: V. Gogh, *Starry Night*. June 1889, MOMA collection. Available:

<[http://www.moma.org/collection/browse\\_results.php?criteria=O%3AAD%3AE%3A2206%7CA%3AAR%3AE%3A1&page\\_number=3&template\\_id=1&sort\\_order=1](http://www.moma.org/collection/browse_results.php?criteria=O%3AAD%3AE%3A2206%7CA%3AAR%3AE%3A1&page_number=3&template_id=1&sort_order=1)> [Accessed 13.11.2013] ; Poster, *Exhibition Catalogue 'Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition'*, Grafton Galleries, London, 1912, Tate Archive. Available: <<http://www.tate.org.uk/research/library/exhibition-and-collection-catalogues>> [Accessed 13.11.2013].

In conclusion, both texts suggest that within a ‘high modernist’ text, formal experimentation could present differing perspectives on the extent to which the colonial ‘other’ should be understood and combined with the colonizer’s identity; they do this through depicting the experiments as different forms of thought. Stream-of-consciousness form could present an extreme form of a colonial narrative that Said defines as presenting its consciousness ‘as the principal authority... that made sense not just of colonizing activities but of exotic geographies and peoples’<sup>22</sup>; yet, it could also present the validity of the colonized people’s identity. Pound’s ‘Canto XCIII’ presents the Modernist form of thought as dispelling the racial hierarchy that he wanted to uphold, having inherited it from colonialist ideology; he thus presents an individual as having a choice, through their form of thought, between degenerating into the colonial ‘other’, or separating into and empowering a separate racial identity. By contrast, Forster presents Modernist forms as conflated with the ideologies of Imperialism, thus preventing the colonizing individual from understanding the ‘other’. However, he suggests that the colonized subjects’ thought form has the intellectual and political capacities that the colonizer claims wrongly as exclusively his own; this form is presented as potentially more radical as it is not hampered by the limitations colonialist thought necessitates.

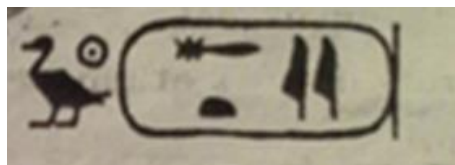


Figure 1: ‘Kati’ hieroglyph  
(open source)

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<sup>22</sup> E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, 1994), xxiii.



Figure 2: *Exhibition Catalogue 'Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition', Grafton Galleries, London. 1912* (reproduced with kind permission of the Tate Gallery, London)



Figure 3: V. Gogh. *Starry Night*. June 1889  
(reproduced with kind permission of the Museum of Modern Art, New York)

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# ‘Ennobling Interchange’: self-analysis in response to nature in Wordsworth’s *The Two-Part Prelude*

Andrew Haddon

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This article explores the ways in which doubt and fear are reconciled through the relationship between an external environment and a developing internal mind in *The Two-Part Prelude*. It also aims to outline how later Romantic works develop on the themes Wordsworth portrays, thereby highlighting important aspects of the text. The concept of interchange between man and nature is examined in regard to the ‘spots of time’ with specific attention paid to the oft ignored scene of ‘an island musical with birds’. Particular importance is given to previously unexpounded concepts of temporality as reflections of permanence, transience, and the fragmentary nature of memory and the mind.

The primary issue of *The Two-Part Prelude* (1799)<sup>1</sup> is Wordsworth’s crisis of writing, in which he aimed to justify his attempts to write an epic. Wordsworth recalls the events which aided his poetical development in an attempt to ‘enshrine the spirit of the past for future restoration.’<sup>2</sup> However, the ‘First Part’ of *The Two-Part Prelude* is characterised by doubt and fear, as is shown in the ‘spots of time’. What these doubts suggest is that Wordsworth is ultimately searching for a sense of balance, as can be seen in his *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1800):

For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.  
But though this be true, poems to which any value can be attached  
were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who,  
being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also  
thought long and deeply.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> W. Wordsworth, ‘The Two Part Prelude’, in David Wu, *Romanticism: An Anthology*, 4th edn. (Oxford, 2012), 457-483.

<sup>2</sup> H. Bloom, *The Visionary Company: A Reading of English Romantic Poetry*, (London, 1971), 161.

<sup>3</sup> Wu, *Romanticism*, 506-518.

The early memories he dissects are too overpowering, and often destructive, to present a basis for measured poetry. Therefore, Wordsworth attempts to resolve these fearful events in order to enable a maturation of his imaginative power. This is portrayed most readily in the 'island musical with birds' scene (ii.46-77), in which the young Wordsworth reconciles his position within nature and society, and consequently develops a meditative independence.

The reason childhood events retain such importance and fascination for Wordsworth is evident; they characterise the state of unbalance and instability from which his imaginative powers emerged. In this instance, childhood is 'imagined more than simply a time of life [...] It is, to be exact, the state of mind we all have experienced, of exalted joy, exalted despair, exalted terrors'.<sup>4</sup> This highlights a vital theme of Wordsworth's analysis in *The Two-Part Prelude* – the state of mind in relation to experience. The early 'spots of time' (the scenes of the stolen boat (i.81-129), the drowned man (i.258-287), and the gibbet (i.297-327)) events are marked, in many ways, by inaction or passivity on behalf of external forces in relation to man. However, it is the way in which the young Wordsworth's imagination manipulates the inaction of these scenes that reflects the turmoil of the poet himself, whose young counterpart is often faced with grief, doubt and fear. This is conveyed through Wordsworth's portrayal of absence, often not as stillness but as a threat. This threatening void is represented in the gibbet scene, in which he recalls all the materials associated with death: 'The bones were gone, the iron and the wood' (i.311), but which in fact are absent. Conversely, in the 'island' scene absence (represented through the final island) no longer represents fear. Wordsworth perceives that at this point, still a child though older than the earlier 'spots of time', he is no longer subject to his imagination's rampant creation of violent material, but is instead capable of using his imagination to interpret these events in order to improve himself. This represents the achievement of balance in Wordsworth's mind, he is able control his imagination as a creative force without falling victim to the imagery which offers only punishment. The imagery of volatile imagination was not unique to Wordsworth among the Romantic poets, Keats also ascertains the importance of balance in poetry, stating,

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<sup>4</sup> F. D. McConnell, *The Confessional Imagination: A Reading of Wordsworth's Prelude*, (London, 1974), 62.

Some think I have lost that poetic ardour and fire it is said I once had  
– the fact is perhaps I have: but instead of that I hope I shall substitute  
a more thoughtful and quiet power.<sup>5</sup>

This 'thoughtful and quiet power' is the true growth of Wordsworth's imaginative power in the 'island' episode, as it is this which enables the construction of powerful poetry.

Wordsworth's doubt is borne from the inability to understand his place within nature and, by extension, the adult male community of which he desires to be a part but cannot understand due to the death of his father. In an effort to find a place within nature the young Wordsworth attempts to connect with the environment through outdoor pursuits, but these are defined by acts of violation and borderline aggression. This is portrayed in the scene of the stolen boat:

I dipped my oars into the silent lake  
[...]  
A huge cliff,  
As if with voluntary power instinct,  
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again, (I:81-129)

If we accept the representation of the lake as female, as discussed by Ellis, the uprising takes on the form of the phallic and the repeated 'struck' is jarringly violent.<sup>6</sup> Wordsworth is rebuked for his aggressive visitation on nature, or his mother, by the masculine aspect of his father. However, when we look ahead to the 'island' scenario, the masculine is no longer a symbol of fear but of camaraderie. Once Wordsworth has abandoned the 'predatory element in the boys vigour' (Ellis, p.41) nature remains a teacher, but the negative reinforcement of the masculine figure is replaced by positive reinforcement that Wordsworth observes within himself – 'And I was taught to feel [...]'. Wordsworth has found his place in community with man and nature and it is the 'island' scene in which

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<sup>5</sup> *The Letters of John Keats 1814-1821*, ed. By Hyder Edward Rollins, 2 vols, (Cambridge, Mass, 1976), 209.

<sup>6</sup> D. Ellis, *Wordsworth, Freud and the Spots of Time: Interpretation in the Prelude*, (Cambridge, 1985), 40.

this begins to be understood and his poetic reasoning begins to mature. Echoes of the earlier violations remain in the aggressive overtones of the 'conquered and conqueror' but the identity of each is intentionally vague. It is not the battle of man over man, man over nature, or nature over man. All are victors in this adventure; the school boys strengthen companionship in their competition, through nature's passive splendour it 'produced | A quiet independence of the heart', and nature itself is amplified through the imagination of the young romantic (ii.53-76). In this way it can be said that if the early, fear-inducing events give a raucous growth to imaginative power, it is through this maturation of identity that the young Wordsworth reigns them in and gives his imagination the form and definition required for poetry.

This movement towards concepts of communal rather than domineering relationships distances the poem from the traditional epic style Wordsworth was steeling himself to create; he refutes the masculine, destructive forces of the great epics<sup>7</sup> and instead presents a prototype of the heroic poet that would later be developed by Byron in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Canto III* (1816).<sup>8</sup> The poet becomes the subject and the dramatic conflict is an internal struggle of consciousness and identity against external objects and forces that are insufficient in fulfilling the role of 'hero', and are instead a source of doubt. By using nature as presented in the 'spots of time' Wordsworth is seeking 'the possibility of intellectual and spiritual culmination of the heroic character through an experience of the sublime'.<sup>9</sup> In Byron's search for a heroic figure he turns away from the fallen Napoleon and the ambitious Rousseau and instead sees the features of heroism in nature; the Alps represent an identity 'imperishably pure beyond all things below',<sup>10</sup> this purity is internalised by the poet in an attempt to preserve the heroic figure in the realm of the human.<sup>11</sup> This internalisation is an explicit, if more developed, reflection of Wordsworth's attempt to see in himself a suitable

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<sup>7</sup> Homer's *The Iliad*, Vergil's *Aeneid*, Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

<sup>8</sup> Byron, 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Canto III' in Wu, *Romanticism*, 878-912.

<sup>9</sup> K. A. Bruffee, 'The Synthetic Hero and Narrative Structure of *Childe Harold III*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 6.4 (1966), 669-678 (671).

<sup>10</sup> Byron, 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Canto III', 643.

<sup>11</sup> P. A. Cantor, 'The Politics of the Epic: Wordsworth, Byron, and the Romantic Redefinition of heroism', *The Review of Politics*, 69.3 (2007), 375-401 (393-400).

power of creation through the imagery of nature which became the image of the 'new hero'.

The presentation of water as female is contested by Cosgrove who argues that 'Habitually, too, Wordsworth looks upon the sea not simply as flux and instability, but that part of nature which is barren and unsustaining.'<sup>12</sup> However, the presentation of the sea, which can be seen as analogous to the lakes, as singularly barren does not fit with Wordsworth's poetry. Though water has been the source of fear and death in the 'First Part' of *The Two-Part Prelude*, both in the aforementioned scene of the stolen boat and the account of the drowned man (258-287), it also invigorates Wordsworth's youthful, tempestuous and somewhat superstitious imagination. Moreover, at no point is the lake unstable; Wordsworth is the source of fear and instability while feminised waters are often passive. It is through this passivity that 'we are soon made aware of water as a powerful image of the apprehensive mind'<sup>13</sup> and, additionally, that it enables the poet to observe himself through external factors. Throughout the 'island musical with birds' passage the 'plain of Windermere' (ii.55), by its very description, is not a source of instability. Instead, the lake represents the safe basis from which the young Wordsworth can explore and better discover himself; this bears similarity to modern attachment theory, supporting the representation of water not only as female but as matriarchal, responsive to Wordsworth's inner turmoil and ultimately a source of security.<sup>14</sup> In this safe environment, the poet is able to look inward with no terrifying external object to distract him. This absence of a perceived external enforcer means that there can be no explosive appearance of imagined threats, but instead enables the meditation that Wordsworth uses to better understand himself and nature in order to cultivate his imaginative powers. 'In these moments of "ennobling interchange" [between man and nature], the line between sensation and reflection becomes confused and consciousness deepens.'<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> B. Cosgrove, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Self Sufficiency: a Study of the Poetic Development, 1796-1814*, (Salzburg, 1982), 245.

<sup>13</sup> J. Bishop, 'Wordsworth and the "spots of time"', *English Literary History*, 26.1 (1959), 45-65 (49).

<sup>14</sup> M. D. Salter Ainsworth, *Patterns of Attachment: A Psychological Study of the Strange Situation*, (New York, 1978).

<sup>15</sup> L. Newlyn, 'The Noble Living and the Noble Dead: Community in *The Prelude*', in *The Cambridge Companion to Wordsworth*, ed. By Stephen Gill, (Cambridge, 2003), 55-69.

In the early ‘spots of time’ the segregation Wordsworth feels can be seen through the repeated use of ‘I’, as discussed by Averill.<sup>16</sup> Wordsworth is a passive observer studying these events in hindsight with an inability to intervene where he may wish, and with an awareness of the resultant failures and guilt. However, the ‘Second Part’ of the *The Two-Part Prelude* emphasises the importance of shared identity portrayed in the ‘island musical with birds’ episode. The spectator becomes an active member and language changes to reflect this communal identity through the collective ‘we ran [...] our afternoons’ (ii.46, 54). As previously mentioned, personal identity is made intentionally vague, nevertheless, in order to analyse himself Wordsworth must sever this connection to the communal identity. As Bishop notes, a ‘common element, [is] the emergence of a solitary figure from a crowd [...]’<sup>17</sup> and this is particularly true in the ‘island’ scenario. After taking part in these group endeavours, all learn ‘A quiet independence of the heart’ the result of which is a return to the state of the individual, again represented through the return to ‘I’. Yet, Bishop goes on to argue ‘Does not such language [of the inner voice observing external pressures] [...] suggest that the moment of illumination is irresistibly followed by a punitive crushing?’ (p.51). The use of a rhetorical question to drive at a desired response is an attempt to strengthen a weak argument and does not conceal the fact that often it is the punishment that leads to the illumination. Consequently, through early development Wordsworth in the ‘Second Part’ is able to achieve personal enlightenment without the threat of punishment. In the ‘island’ scene, Wordsworth has affirmed his place in society with man and nature, while simultaneously defending his individuality. An air of sentimentality remains as he believes he learnt ‘perhaps too much, | The self-sufficing power of solitude’ (ii.72.76-77), but this nostalgic doubt is quickly overwhelmed by the following sibilance and direct reference to personal empowerment.

Intrinsically linked to the idea of fear, eventual acceptance, and development is, as Bishop explains (p.56-58), a somewhat obsessive focus on death through the eyes of the child. This death is again associated with a rejection from nature; the man bathes in the lake but is drowned and pulled out, the girl ‘seemed with difficult

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<sup>16</sup> Cosgrove, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, (London, 1980), 241.

<sup>17</sup> Bishop, ‘Wordsworth and the “spots of time”’, (1959), 45-65.

steps to force her way | Against the blowing wind' (i.318-319) which restricts her, and the gibbet has been replaced by 'a long green ridge' (i.312). What is presented is:

A permanent nature presid[ing] over human transience; though we should also recognize that, in death, the human being may be (in a familiar Wordsworthian movement) assimilated to this permanence.<sup>18</sup>

It is this integration into the permanence of nature that removes the fear of death in the 'Second Part', and this is presented through the islands themselves:

[...]  
and the selected bourn  
Was now an island musical with birds  
That sang for ever; now a sister isle  
Beneath the oak's umbrageous covert, sown  
With lilies-of-the-valley like a field;  
And now a third small island, where remained  
An old stone table and one mouldered cave –  
A hermit's history [...] (ii.56-63)

Wordsworth manipulates the ordering of the islands in order to reflect a perceived lifecycle. The initial island is associated with youth and portrays a quasi-Eden image; the birds 'sang for ever' as there is no presence of death in the innocence of the creatures. Yet, as the poet matures he notices that the beauty of the second island is overshadowed by the 'oak's umbrageous covert'; he has become aware of death but its touch is incorporeal. The final island shows the ultimate assimilation; the hermit is gone but his 'history' remains in his marks on the environment. Unlike the sudden, violent death of the 'mouldered' gibbet (i.310) the 'mouldered' cave represents death as the peaceful amalgamation of the human and the environmental. The optimistic, naive permanence of 'for ever' has been replaced by 'where remained', retaining permanence while accepting the inevitability of death.

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<sup>18</sup> Cosgrove, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Self Sufficiency*.



The acceptance of death is an important theme for Romantic texts as it often carries connotations of rebirth when paired with the immortal sublime. As an external force the permanence of the sublime is a reminder of the transience of man and that 'the earth | Forgets her empires with a just decay'.<sup>19</sup> This 'just decay' is the inconsequence of man to nature and the resultant fall of all corrupt regimes; while this leaves the possibility of the failure of liberty what the Romantics perceived was a natural state of equilibrium to which the earth must always return. The natural world becomes a political figure free from corruption and influence from the world of man and, as such, is adopted as a democratic symbol.<sup>20</sup> In Shelley's 'Mont Blanc' (1816)<sup>21</sup> the poet proclaims

Thou hast a voice, great mountain, to repeal  
Large codes of fraud and woe – not understood  
By all, but which the wise, and great, and good  
Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel. (80-83)

The purpose of the poet, then, is to observe in nature the potential for inspiration, and it is evident that Shelley, as a great admirer of Wordsworth, counts him among 'the wise, and great, and good' who can interpret the sublime. However, in this instance nature, or the sublime, is still an external figure; Shelley grapples with the relationship between internal mind and external world in 'Mont Blanc'<sup>22</sup> but does not achieve the aforementioned amalgamation of *The Two-Part Prelude*. It is later, in the 'Ode to the West Wind'(1819),<sup>23</sup> that Shelley understands the cooperative power of nature, begging the destructive and preserving wind to 'Drive my dead thoughts over the universe | Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!' (63-64). This is the 'where remained' of Wordsworth's poetry; it is not that the poet 'sang for ever' (ii.58) but that the work poets leave behind have the ability to reflect and contain the permanence of the sublime, to adopt the

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<sup>19</sup> Byron, 'Childe Harlod's Pilgrimage Canto III', 636-637.

<sup>20</sup> Cantor, 'The Politics of the Epic...', *The Review of Politics*, 69.3, (395-396).

<sup>21</sup> Wu, *Romanticism*, 1104-1107.

<sup>22</sup> A general argument on the topic of the relation between the various guises of the internal and external, which partly informed this discussion, can be found in I. J. Kapstein, "The Meaning of Shelley's "Mont Blanc"", *Modern Language Association*, 62.4 (1947), 1046-1060.

<sup>23</sup> Wu, *Romanticism*, 1131-1134.

symbolism of liberty and eternity, and to be a constant reminder to 'interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel'.

Intertwined with the theme of death in this extract is the issue of time and how it is represented. Unlike the earlier 'spots of time', which often offer the poet's age and a sequential storytelling, the 'island musical with birds' scene is vague on both accounts. The 'holiday delights' (ii.51) imply a summer setting in a break from school, but we cannot assume the point in which Wordsworth's childhood this occurs. The larger issue arises, however, as the description of the arrival at each island is presented in the present tense as 'now'. While there is the sense of continuity and sequence the overall impression is one of overlapping. The islands are not necessarily distinct, but are held as one event and one moment in Wordsworth's psyche, suggesting overlap between the past, present, and future. This fits with the somewhat fragmented mind of Wordsworth when he attempts to analyse himself as he states,

[...]

I seem

Two consciousnesses – conscious of myself,  
And of some other being. (ii.29-31)

This represents Wordsworth's difficulty in his self-analysis; he is attempting to recall the effects of the events of his youth through the eyes of the adult who is/was moulded by those same effects. In this way he is attempting to adhere to multiple periods of his life at one time, and this is reflected in the portrayal of the islands. Through this method of recollection and retroactive analysis Wordsworth is acknowledging the value of continued meditation that begun when he 'was taught to feel, perhaps too much, | The self-sufficing power of solitude' (ii.76-77). What is presented in the 'First Part' is a sense of doubt, fear, and desire for communal protection. These psychological traits in the mind of the young Wordsworth create the sublime, imaginative imagery that is the initial source of his poetic force. Nevertheless, this unbridled imagination is itself a source of fear and destruction for the poet. In the 'island musical with birds' scene Wordsworth is able to reconcile his fears through his assimilation into community with man and nature. In doing so, the young Wordsworth feels secure in his separation and

utilises this as a method to analyse himself. This leads to the highly introverted poetical abilities which are portrayed throughout *The Two-Part Prelude* and, as such, represent Wordsworth reaching an efficiency and power of form that would be impossible if driven purely by a 'spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings'.

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# Toward an anti-Zionist Jewish identity

Scarlet Harris

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The association of Jewish identity with Zionism is an often taken-for-granted relationship within the North American Jewish community. This article attempts to problematise the centrality of Zionism in contemporary and historical Jewish identity. Beginning with a contextualisation of both Zionist and concurrent anti-Zionist expression, it looks at the damaging effects of conflating Zionism with 'Jewishness', and anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism, through two major discourses: the 'self-hating Jew', and the 'new anti-Semitism'. It finishes by asking how these long-standing relationships might be challenged, and how Jewish identity might be reconceptualised in the fight for social justice. Whilst the paper addresses Jewish communities in North America, the arguments are also relevant to those living in the United Kingdom.

The representation of Israel as the 'collective Jew'<sup>1</sup> has been propagated since the conception of the state itself. However, such a narrative appears to have reared its head more recently, becoming a central concern for both scholars and the Jewish community alike. This article critically explores the centrality of Zionism in North American Jewish identity through contemporary discourses surrounding anti-Zionist Jews. I argue that the conflation of 'Jewishness' with Zionism, and anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism, not only creates and exacerbates social cleavages but, most importantly, sets a dangerous precedent in which the state of Israel is held unaccountable in its actions. The question then remains: how can the anti-Zionist Jewish community – along with non-Jewish activists – combat this appropriation of Jewish identity by Zionist forces, and re-establish a voice in mainstream Jewry? Finally, I explore how Jewish identity might be (re)conceptualized in the fight for social justice.

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<sup>1</sup> B. Klug, "The Collective Jew: Israel and the new anti-Semitism" *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37.2 (2003), 117-138.

For the purposes of this article I use a general definition of Zionism as support for a Jewish state based on a majority Jewish population in historic Palestine<sup>2</sup>. Of course, the term belies the ‘variousness of possibilities’<sup>3</sup> within its wider ideology; political, religious and cultural. Despite nuances however, variations on Zionism share a common thread captured by the given definition, and vary primarily in their reasoning. In my discussion of anti-Zionists, I therefore include those who in one way or another challenge the legitimacy of the given definition.

## JEWISH IDENTITY AND ZIONISM: THE CONTEMPORARY PARAMETERS

At the turn of the twentieth century, the conception of the ‘Jew’ in the Jewish popular imagination was one of an *individual* in exile; a refugee, an immigrant, more often than not having suffered prejudice and discrimination<sup>4</sup>. Israel’s emergence half a century later continues to have a profound impact on notions of Jewishness; many have come to see Israel as a symbolic representation of the ‘Jews as a sovereign people’<sup>5</sup>. Today, the conflation of Jewish identity and Zionism is widespread and deepening, with some scholars highlighting the increased efforts by the organized Jewish community to make Israel a ‘central pillar of identification for a current generation with even less attachment to traditional religious forms of Jewish identification’<sup>6</sup>. Despite this apparent hegemony, few would deny that Jewish identity is amongst the most diverse, involving ethnic, religious, and cultural components alike. Indeed, some of the fiercest debates surrounding what it means to be Jewish exist within the religious community between different denominations<sup>7</sup> and in the context of ethnicity, where in some places tensions between Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews form part of daily Jewish life<sup>8</sup>. Amongst this complex web of identities, that of the anti-Zionist Jew is often

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<sup>2</sup> N. Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict* (New York, 2001)

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>4</sup> B. Klug, “The Collective Jew: Israel and the new anti-Semitism” *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37.2 (2003), 117-138.

<sup>5</sup> J. Sacks cited in *ibid.*, 3.

<sup>6</sup> E. J. Aiken-Klar, “The Fear Factor: Assimilation, Antisemitism and the Relationship Between Zionism and Jewish Diasporic Identity” *Explorations in Anthropology*, 9.1 (2009), 112.

<sup>7</sup> J. Wertheimer, *Religious Movements in Collision - A Jewish Culture War?* (Waltham MA, 1993)

<sup>8</sup> Y. Laor, *The Myths of Liberal Zionism*, (New York, 2009), 8.

ignored, marginalized, or actively suppressed in favour of the ‘party line’ of the Israeli state; that to be a ‘real’ Jew, one must – at the very least – support the existence of a Jewish nation. That to be Jewish is to be Zionist.

Opposition to such a notion has existed within the Jewish community since the ‘founding proposals’<sup>9</sup> of a Zionist state were first set out and originates from all corners of the Jewish community, from sectors of the ultra-orthodox to secular Jewish philosophers. Whilst united in their rejection of Zionism, the motivations between different groups can vary significantly and as such they face quite different challenges. I first turn to the variations in anti-Zionism, before focusing on two narratives which are used to de-legitimize Jewish political anti-Zionism in particular.

## PATTERNS OF ANTI-ZIONISM

Underpinning religious opposition to Zionism is a perceived ‘negation’ of Jewish tradition<sup>10</sup>. The state of Israel poses a double threat. Firstly, its establishment was a literal disavowal of the Torah’s teachings on exile and redemption. Orthodox interpretations make clear that ‘exile’ in the form of the Jewish diaspora ‘is a punishment for sin’<sup>11</sup>. Return to the Holy Land will only be realized through ‘the universal effect of good deeds ... it will follow the advent of the Messiah’<sup>12</sup>. The attempt at returning Jews to a Jewish homeland through the Zionist project was thus seen as a blasphemous challenge to the will of God, to the divine destiny of the Jewish people, with the promise of only catastrophic consequences<sup>13</sup>.

Further, the state of Israel represented a ‘new’ form of Jewishness, one that embraced secularism and modernity and in turn redefined what it meant to be Jewish. As long as one remained loyal to a ‘Jewish state’, Judaic tradition could be abandoned altogether. In this way, certain sections of Ultra-Orthodoxy – even

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<sup>9</sup> J. Butler, *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism*, (NY, 2012), 116.

<sup>10</sup> Y. M. Rabkin, *A Threat From Within: A Century of Jewish Opposition to Zionism*, (NY, 2006), 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

those existing *within* Israel - represented a 'counterculture' to Zionist secular culture<sup>14</sup>. The teachings of the Torah were denigrated even further in light of Aliyah; that Jews now lack any 'obligation to obey the commandments of the Torah' continues to be a major concern for anti-Zionist religious Jews<sup>15</sup>.

A further variation that can be traced in the history of Jewish anti-Zionism concerns those who neither sit comfortably amongst the political anti-Zionists, nor the religious anti-Zionists, but come to the same conclusion in entirely different ways. Veblen was one of them. He argued that the creation of a Jewish homeland would 'normalize' the Jews, undermining a historical marginalization which had fostered some of the most creative thinkers of the time; what Veblen termed 'renegade Jews'<sup>16</sup>. For Veblen, then, it was not the political essence of a Jewish state that he challenged, but its potentially destructive consequences for Jewish culture.

#### THE NOT-SO-NEW 'NEW ANTI-SEMITISM'

Now we have clarified the distinct nature of religious anti-Zionism and touched upon those such as Veblen, who refuse to fit neatly in either category but who form an equally important part of the history of Jewish anti-Zionism. All who attempt to challenge Zionism, in whatever form that may take, face some sort of condemnation from the Zionist establishment, but not all to the same degree. It is difficult to paint an ultra-orthodox Jew as anti-Semitic in his or her anti-Zionism when they are so outwardly – and visually – dedicated to Judaic practice. Indeed, proponents of the theory of 'new anti-Semitism' seem most concerned with those who advocate for something *other* than a supposedly 'fair, just and reasonable two-state solution'<sup>17</sup>. In other words, those whose grievances lie with the very notion of a Jewish state and whom I refer to as political anti-Zionists. Consequently, those most vilified in their anti-Zionism are not the ultra-Orthodox

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<sup>14</sup> M. Friedman, 'The Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) Society: Sources, Trends and Processes', *The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies*, 41 (1991), 2.

<sup>15</sup> Y. M. Rabkin, *A Threat From Within: A Century of Jewish Opposition to Zionism*, (New York, 2006), 67.

<sup>16</sup> M. Weinfeld, 'The Changing Dimensions of Contemporary Canadian Antisemitism' 35-51 in (ed.) D. Penslar, et al., *Contemporary Anti-Semitism*, (Toronto, 2004), 37.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.



who take issue with the premature timing of Aliyah or the modern, secular tendencies of today's Israel, but rather those who challenge Israel's 'raison d'être'.

The claim of an insurmountable threat to Jews in the form of a 'new anti-Semitism' was first brought to the attention of the public at large almost forty years ago by Forster and Epstein<sup>18</sup>. Since then, the theme has re-emerged in public discourse intermittently, each time led by prominent members of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League<sup>19</sup>. Crucially, much of the 'new anti-Semitism' debate is wrapped up in historic Jewish suffering. Wieseltier<sup>20</sup> discusses the – for the most part illogical – fear amongst North American Jews of a threat to their existence and even a 'second Holocaust'<sup>21</sup>. Similar fears also exist amongst Israeli Jews in relation to the perceived threat of an Arab majority under a one-state solution<sup>22</sup>. For Wieseltier though, the view of history which sees Jews as continuously fighting for their lives against 'the enemy', whoever that may be, 'justifies nothing but the use of force'<sup>23</sup>. Some scholars have gone further, arguing that Jewish suffering has been purposefully exploited in the propagation of a 'new anti-Semitism' in order to silence critics of Israel, particularly those who consider themselves Jewish.

Pappé and Gur-Ze'ev<sup>24</sup> explain that 'Zionism has worked systematically on mystifying the Holocaust and structuring modes of control over the representation of its memory; it has become a salient feature of the Zionist educational system'. As such, challenges to Zionism are often construed as 'insensitivity to the Nazi genocide', even complicity in it, and thus 'associated with massive violence against

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<sup>18</sup> A. Forster & B. R. Epstein, *The New Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1974)

<sup>19</sup> N. Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History*, (Los Angeles, 2005), 21–22.

<sup>20</sup> L. Wieseltier, 'Against Ethnic Panic: Hitler is Dead' *The New Republic*, (May 27 2002). Available: <<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/hitler-dead>> [Accessed 14.03.13]

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> M. Weinfeld, 'The Changing Dimensions of Contemporary Canadian Antisemitism' 35–51 in *Contemporary Anti-Semitism*, edited by D. Penslar, et al., (Toronto, 2004), 45.

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<sup>24</sup> I. Gur-Ze'ev & I. Pappé, 'Beyond the Destruction of the Other's Collective Memory: Blueprints for a Palestinian/Israeli Dialogue' *Theory, Culture and Society*, 20 (2003), 94.

the Jews'<sup>25</sup>. In the words of writer Howard Jacobson, Jews feel 'subjected to a violence of language'<sup>26</sup>

### THE 'SELF-HATING JEW'

Ironically enough, those most denigrated in the rhetoric of a 'new anti-Semitism' are self-identified Jews for whom de-bunking such claims is perhaps one of the biggest challenges. More than anyone else, they face a double dose of criticism. Finkelstein highlights how prominent Jewish figures critical of the Israeli state are targeted and shamed as the worst kind of anti-Semites<sup>27</sup>. This is hardly surprising; a self-identified Jew, voicing even the most modest challenge to Zionism, poses one of the most potent threats to the illusion of an intrinsic Zionism in Jewish identity. The question then follows, how is such a threat framed within the Zionist narrative? The answer lies in the labelling of 'self-hating Jews'. Jewish dissent is pathologized and deemed the 'result of the internalization of anti-Semitism'<sup>28</sup>. Writers such as Forer highlight not only the illogical nature of the term – most often applied to those defending justice in the face of bitter condemnation – but also the divisiveness of such accusations for the Jewish community<sup>29</sup>.

Furthermore, the conflation of Zionism and Jewishness can surely only exacerbate legitimate anti-Semitism as the responsibility of the Israeli state becomes increasingly inseparable from that of Jews worldwide<sup>30</sup>. A real attempt to combat anti-Semitism could see Jews distance themselves from Israel and challenge the

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<sup>25</sup> J. Butler, *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism*, (New York, 2012), 32.

<sup>26</sup> M. Sela, 'Sorry for my chutzpah: How Howard Jacobson dissected the British Jewish condition' *Haaretz*, (May 24 2012). Available: <<http://www.haaretz.com/culture/arts-leisure/sorry-for-my-chutzpah-how-howard-jacobson-dissected-the-british-jewish-condition.premium-1.432477>> [Accessed 14.03.13]

<sup>27</sup> Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah*, 40.

<sup>28</sup> W. M. L. Finlay, 'Pathologizing dissent: Identity politics, Zionism and the 'self-hating Jew' *British Journal of Social Psychology* (44.1, 2005), 201-222.

<sup>29</sup> R. Forer, 'The Self-Hating Jew: A Strategy to Hide From Self-Reflection' *The Huffington Post*, (October 8 2012). Available: <[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/richard-forer/self-hating-jew-a-strategy-to-hide-from-self-reflection\\_b\\_1735006.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/richard-forer/self-hating-jew-a-strategy-to-hide-from-self-reflection_b_1735006.html)> [Accessed 10.04.13]

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

notion of it as their representative voice on the world stage<sup>31</sup>. Yet, in doing so, Jews are labelled as anti-Semitic and self-hating; a catch-22 situation emerges, in which Jews either allow themselves to be connected to the actions of the Israeli state through their apparently inherent Zionism, or challenge this connection and face vilification from their own community<sup>32</sup>.

#### UNSETTLING ZIONIST HEGEMONY: DECONSTRUCTING/RECONSTRUCTING JEWISH IDENTITY

We have seen how Jewish identity has been quite consciously appropriated and manipulated by Zionist forces, and how many have – perhaps just as unconsciously – embraced Zionism as a ‘given’ part of what it means to be Jewish. Such a phenomenon prompts us to ask whether this is an inevitable and irreversible process, or whether there are ways in which the anti-Zionist movement can combat it and propose a viable alternative that resonates with the North American Jewish community at large. A number of acclaimed scholars have been vocal in their belief of the latter.

Firstly, it is worth noting the widely acknowledged ethic of social justice which characterizes the North American Jewish identity. Such an ethic is evident throughout history; in rabbinical writings and Judaic tradition, but also in liberal contemporary values which have become the hallmark of more secular Jewish populations<sup>33</sup>. The actual source of such liberalism is a debate within itself,<sup>34</sup> but few could deny the impact of historical exile and the experience of the Holocaust as two salient examples with which scholars have attempted to reconcile the questions of contemporary Jewish identity.

The late Edward Said wrote extensively on Palestine and in more recent work touched upon Jewish identity, specifically how some aspects of this might be

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<sup>31</sup> N. Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History* (Los Angeles, 2005), 81.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>33</sup> M. H. Ellis, *Israel and Palestine: Out of the Ashes: The Search for Jewish Identity in the Twenty-First Century* (London, 2002)

<sup>34</sup> C. S. Liebman & S.M. Cohen, ‘Jewish Liberalism Revisited’, *American Jewish Committee* (1996), 51-53.

shared with Palestinians. Said's essential argument follows a critique of the notion of a 'pure' Jewish identity, as well as an emphasis on the Jewish experience of exile. Starting from the premise that Moses was an Egyptian – a conundrum that Freud, as a Jew himself, grappled with – Said suggests that Jewish identity has historically been characterized by ambiguity and 'inherent limits that prevent it from being fully incorporated into one, and only one, identity'<sup>35</sup>; in other words, a purely European one. Part of this ambiguity that Said talks about lies in the Jewish experience of displacement, past and present<sup>36</sup>; being neither complete insiders nor outsiders, never feeling a full sense of belonging, Jews have historically constructed identities from a plethora of lived realities. Said quite brilliantly links the diasporic experience of Jews to that of the Palestinians, drawing parallels between the two that are all but invisible in a Zionist narrative which, in Said's words, pitches Jews and Palestinians as 'antagonists of each other's history and underlying reality'<sup>37</sup>.

A reconceptualization of Jewish identity thus reveals a crucial commonality with that of the Palestinian people. Said suggests that this could perform a transformative role and provide the basis for a 'bi-national' or what is often referred to as a 'one-state' solution<sup>38</sup>. Writing a decade later, Judith Butler cites Said, amongst others, in her development of a similar argument in which she demonstrates how values of justice, anti-colonialism, and critiques of the nation-state have historically been – and continue to be – part of Jewish identity, derived from Jewish suffering of state violence and dispossession.

Hannah Arendt's staunch criticism of the nation-state following World War II is used by Butler<sup>39</sup> to highlight how experiences, such as the Holocaust, have profoundly influenced 'Jewish values', and how the historic suffering of Jews creates a moral obligation to honour such values. Butler is quick to argue how a Jewish ethic might *contribute* to, rather than form, an anti-Zionist critique; to suggest that an anti-Zionist morality be informed by Jewish values alone would be

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<sup>35</sup> E. Said, *Freud and the Non-European* (New York, 2003), 54.

<sup>36</sup> J. Butler, *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism* (New York, 2012), 29.

<sup>37</sup> E. Said, *Freud and the Non-European*, 55.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Butler, *Parting Ways*.

to suggest Jewish superiority as much as Zionism itself<sup>40</sup>. Indeed, other scholars have echoed similar sentiments in regards to the Jewish experience informing views on Zionism. As was mentioned earlier, the Jewish experience of the Holocaust has been co-opted to a certain degree by Zionism; used not only to justify the existence of a Jewish state but also – and perhaps less directly – through the capitalization on Jewish suffering, used to justify Israeli state violence<sup>41</sup>. It is worth noting that such a view is not limited to the ‘radical fringes’; Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* has run articles with such headlines as ‘Israel suffers from evoking the Holocaust to justify militant policies’<sup>42</sup>.

Ilan Pappé and Ilan Gur-Ze’Ev<sup>43</sup>, two Israeli historians, suggest that a de- and reconstruction of collective memories of the Holocaust and the Naqba – the ‘catastrophe’ of 1948 for Palestinians – is the first step in mitigating the centrality of the ‘Other’ that underpins the Zionist narrative. Thus, by drawing on similarities between Jewish and Palestinian suffering – like Said’s discussion of a shared diasporic experience – we can begin to counteract the exploitation of Jewish suffering based on a ‘negative Jewish exceptionalism’<sup>44</sup> and the accompanying narrative of the Holocaust as somehow distinct from the rest of history<sup>45</sup>.

Despite this painfully ironic outcome, it doubtless remains that many still believe such trauma can instead form the basis for solidarity with oppressed peoples everywhere, including Palestinians suffering under a Zionist state. Reclaiming the discourse of Jewish suffering for an anti-Zionist movement forms a part of

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>41</sup> B. Evron, ‘The Holocaust: Learning the Wrong Lessons’ *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 10.3 (1981), 21.

<sup>42</sup> A. Pfeffer, ‘Israel suffers from evoking Holocaust to justify militant policies’ *Haaretz*, (August 13 2010). Available: <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/anshel-pfeffer-israel-suffers-from-evoking-holocaust-to-justify-militant-policies-1.307713>> [Accessed 13.03.13]

<sup>43</sup> I. Gur-Ze’ev & I. Pappé, ‘Beyond the Destruction of the Other’s Collective Memory: Blueprints for a Palestinian/Israeli Dialogue’ *Theory, Culture and Society* (2003, 20)

<sup>44</sup> A. Lerman, ‘Must Jews always see themselves as victims?’ *The Independent*, (March 7 2009). Available: <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/must-jews-always-see-themselves-as-victims-1639277.html>> [Accessed 10.04.13]

<sup>45</sup> See B. Evron, ‘The Holocaust’.

*reframing* the entire current narrative surrounding what it means to identify as Jewish or as an anti-Zionist<sup>46</sup>. Perhaps the most important aspect of this reframing comes from the absolute necessity to oppose all forms of legitimate anti-Semitism within the anti-Zionist movement. As Anthony Lerman, former director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, points out: 'It's perfectly possible to acknowledge the pain caused by increased anti-Semitism but reject wild scenarios and counterproductive ways of dealing with the problem – such as demonising strong criticism of Israel'<sup>47</sup>. A movement informed by anti-colonial and anti-racist values should inherently do just that, and it is from this starting point that the anti-Zionist movement can begin to combat false claims of anti-Semitism built on the anti-Zionism/anti-Semitism fallacy discussed.

## CONCLUSION

It is without question that a dangerous conflation of Zionism and Jewish identity, of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, continues to be propagated by Zionist powers. We have seen how even within the anti-Zionist movement, as in the wider Jewish community, extraordinary diversity exists in relation to how people identify as Jewish. Identity is far from fixed; actors construct 'local narratives' of what it means to be a Jew<sup>48</sup>, yet hegemonic notions of 'Jewishness' are also quite purposefully constructed. This is evident in the media and literature with the not-so-new claims of a 'new anti-Semitism'. It is evident in the denigration of fellow Jews as 'self-hating', and the manipulation of Jewish suffering for the benefit of the Israeli state. I argue that it is not criticism of the Israeli state's policies or even challenges to the legitimacy of the state's existence in its current Zionist form that poses the biggest threat to Jews today. Rather, the aforementioned way in which Zionism has appropriated Jewish identity, creating a culture of fear and divisiveness, is the real danger to Jews in North America. Furthermore, the internationally condemned actions of the Israeli state, and the association of all

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<sup>46</sup> Butler, *Parting Ways*, 117.

<sup>47</sup> A. Lerman, 'Must Jews always see themselves as victims?' *The Independent*, (March 7 2009). Available: <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/must-jews-always-see-themselves-as-victims-1639277.html>> [Accessed 10.04.13]

<sup>48</sup> S. M. Cohen & A. M. Eisen, *The Jew Within: Self, Family and Community in America*, (Bloomington IN, 2000), 182.

Jews with such actions – both facilitated by Zionist ideology – will surely serve to entrench existing anti-Semitism.

Scholars have sought to reconceptualize a Jewish identity free from the shackles of Zionism. By contextualizing Jewish history within human history, and thus analysing the Jew in relation to his or her fellow human, we begin to see similarity rather than difference. Shared identities come to the fore, and it is these shared identities – transcending ethnicity and culture – which the likes of Butler, Said and Pappé believe are the foundations for peaceful cohabitation. In no way does this take away from the need to combat racism and colonialism in all forms, including that of anti-Semitism. The anti-Zionist movement is, in its very essence, about a shared humanity. It rejects a narrative based on the idea of a ‘chosen people’, and instead says, in the words of Judith Butler, ‘we are all, in this sense, the unchosen, but we are nevertheless unchosen together’<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Butler, *Parting Ways*, 24.

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# Liminal spaces, liminal stories: occluding the individual in Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark*

Alexander Jones

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The article argues that Seamus Deane's novel *Reading in the Dark* utilises liminal spaces – spaces that exist between others and are defined by this 'between-ness' – to undermine political, familial, and religious grand narratives. As the young narrator attempts to create a coherent history of his own family, his investigations of the past bring forward stories that challenge the accepted historical canon which defines sectarian attitudes in Northern Ireland. By staging these investigations in liminal spaces, Deane foregrounds the way that different groups warp their recollections of different events to justify their own goals, and how individual perspectives which challenge these commonly accepted versions of events are suppressed, trapped within these liminal spaces.

Against the backdrop of sectarian intrigue and violence in Northern Ireland from the 1940s through to the 1970s, Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* explores the problematic nature of recording history as related through the narrator's attempts to piece together the entire story of a feud that tore his family apart. However, in engaging with the fractured, complex timeline of his family, Deane's narrator also implicitly engages with the significance of the spaces that staged the events under scrutiny. As John Wilson Foster argues, 'preoccupation with place is a preoccupation with the past without which Irish selfhood is apparently inconceivable. The past is constantly made contemporary through an obsession with remembered space'.<sup>1</sup> What is significant in Deane's text is that many of the remembered spaces that stage the episodes of the disjointed narrative are liminal, a term derived from Victor Turner's studies of 'rites de passage' in the Ndembu tribe which he uses to signify an 'interstructural situation' whereby an individual exists in a state between two parts of a ritual.<sup>2</sup> Nordin and Holmsten, in their

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<sup>1</sup> J. W. Foster, *Colonial Consequences: Essays in Irish Literature and Culture* (Dublin, 1991), 30.

<sup>2</sup> V. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca, 1967), 67.

introduction on the application of liminality to Irish culture, term it as ‘a transitional place of becoming, a state of flux between two different states of being’.<sup>3</sup> It is this idea of the liminal as flux that provides a theoretical framework through which liminal spaces in *Reading in the Dark* can be read as reflections of unstable grand narratives of nation, politics, and family. This article argues that Deane’s text utilises liminal spaces to explore the ways in which individual perspectives are occluded by grand narratives. With reference to the stairway, the window, the parapet wall and Craigavon Bridge it is possible to highlight the ways in which the deceased characters associated with these spaces have their perspectives obscured, altered or silenced by narratives bigger than theirs.

The first liminal space in the novel is the stairway of the narrator’s house in the opening episode, ‘Stairs’. Lying between the floors of the house and allowing transit from one to the other, they immediately evoke the idea of spatial flux. This becomes symbolic of the action in the episode, as the narrator finds his mother claiming that there is a ‘shadow’ on the stairway. This phantasmal presence is the ghost of the narrator’s paternal uncle, Eddie, who was wrongly executed for being an IRA informer. The only person in the family who knows the truth about Eddie is the mother, whose former lover was the real informer and whose father ordered Eddie’s execution. As a result, her guilt over the events that led to his death have, as McGonigle writes, rendered her ‘unable to exorcise the ghost of Eddie by revealing the truth and she remains instead in the ‘shadow’ of the past, silent and obscured’.<sup>4</sup> What is significant about this situation is how it is reflected spatially within the liminal stairway:

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<sup>3</sup> G. Nordin & I. Holmsten, ‘Introduction: Borders and States of In-Betweenness in Irish Literature and Culture’ in G. Nordin & I. Holmsten (eds.), *Reimagining Ireland Volume 9: Liminal Borderlands in Irish Literature and Culture* (Brussels, 2009), 1 at 7.

<sup>4</sup> L. McGonigle, ‘Silencing the (M)other in Seamus Deane’s *Reading in the Dark*’ in Shane Alcobia-Murphy *et al.* (eds.), *Beyond the Anchoring Grounds: More Cross-currents in Irish and Scottish Studies* (Belfast, 2005), 204 at 205.

It was a short staircase, fourteen steps in all [...] Eleven steps took you to the turn of the stairs where the cathedral and the sky always hung in the window frame. Three more steps took you onto the landing, about six feet long. [...] I was on the tenth step, she was on the landing. I could have touched her.  
'There's something there between us. A shadow. Don't move.'  
I had no intention. I was enthralled. But I could see no shadow.<sup>5</sup>

The narrator describes the layout of the stairs in detail, explaining the way they are broken into distinct segments, and uses this to place both himself and his mother. The 'shadow', however, is placed on the 'turn' of the stairs, which not only lies between the floors of the house but also in the middle of the stairs themselves. This idea of a liminality within a liminality places the ghost in 'the most ambiguous space in the house'<sup>6</sup> and emphasises a clear spatial hierarchy between the guilt-ridden mother and the then-innocent narrator with the truth about Eddie's execution lying in the middle. The narrator asks his mother questions about the situation, insisting that 'I could walk up there to you, in two skips.'<sup>7</sup> This insistence on the part of the narrator indicates the beginnings of his curiosity about Eddie's individual narrative, as Flannery notes:

The boy's questioning is the means by which [...] pressure is exerted, and with the destabilisation of the established dialectics a need arises for a new history or life-story that would give the boy some rational and coherent form.<sup>8</sup>

Just as the narrator wishes to negotiate the space between himself and his mother to reach her and 'feel' the ghost on the turn, so too does his questioning try to negotiate the space between his own ignorant innocence and his mother's traumatic knowledge. Despite this, the mother's guilty silence renders his questions unanswerable, and as a result Eddie's ghost is trapped within the

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<sup>5</sup> S. Deane, *Reading in the Dark* (London, 1997), 5.

<sup>6</sup> E. Flannery, 'Reading in the Light of *Reading in the Dark*', (2003) 11 *Irish Studies Review*, 11 (2003), 71 at 77.

<sup>7</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 5.

<sup>8</sup> Flannery, 'Reading in the Light of *Reading in the Dark*', 77.

domestic space, his individual narrative of innocence occluded by the prevailing family narrative that he was a traitor. In spite of this, the narrator cannot now be unaware of the ghost's presence, as shown at the end of the episode when he goes down to the kitchen door and states 'I felt someone behind me and turned to see a darkness leaving the window'<sup>9</sup>. The window is another liminal space within the stairway that facilitates a view of the outside from within the house, and lies between private and public space. The narrator describes how it frames the sky and the church, offering a sense of religiously informed order and structure to the domestic space. However, the darkness prefigures revelations about the sectarian political context of Eddie's execution by suggesting that his individual narrative is also caught between the private and public sphere; the dominating family narrative that Eddie was a traitor is by necessity a political one as well. As a result, Eddie's occlusion stems from the intrusion of a grand political narrative into a domestic space.

The space of the stairway returns in the final episode, 'After'. Structurally, this works to enclose the narrative, as well as the characters, within the domestic space; by this point the narrator has learned the truth about Eddie's execution, and as a result he find himself understanding of and implicit in his mother's silence. The novel ends on the night that the narrator's father passes away in his sleep:

I went down the stairs to make tea. In the hallway I heard a sigh and looked back to the lobby window. There was no shadow there. It must be my mother in her sleep, sighing, perhaps, for my father. It was her last sleep of the old world.<sup>10</sup>

The disappearance of the shadow indicates that the mother is now no longer haunted by guilt over her betrayal of the father, suggesting a satisfactory emotional end to her individual narrative, but as Kennedy-Andrews points out, the 'note of reconciliation and hope'<sup>11</sup> of the last years of her marriage to the father is predicated on the mother's silence, which has been made permanent by a

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<sup>9</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

<sup>11</sup> E. Kennedy-Andrews, *Fiction and the Northern Ireland Troubles since 1969: (de-)constructing the North* (Dublin, 2003), 223.

stroke. That night, the narrator describes her mother's sleep as 'her last sleep of the old world', which suggests a temporal liminality that lies between the 'old world' of her generation and the new world of the narrator's, represented by the growing neighbourhood violence and the establishment of a new police curfew. The grand narratives that have occluded the mother and left her mute are cyclical, accounting for the enclosed structure of the novel and reflecting a postmodern historiographical narrative that defies ending. As Hutcheon writes, the idea of a narrative's 'end' 'suggests both teleology and closure and, of course, both of these are concepts that have come under considerable scrutiny in recent years'.<sup>12</sup> The occlusion of the mother is irreversible because the very grand narratives that have silenced her beget their own renewal. This informs the closing paragraph of the text:

That evening we would take my father to the cathedral that hung in the stair window and she would climb to her bedroom in silence, pausing at the turn of the stairs to stare out at the spire under which, for that night, before the darkened altar, he so innocently lay.<sup>13</sup>

Significantly, the action does not move to the cathedral from the point of view of the narrative. Instead, the narrator uses the simple future tense to temporally displace the action and keep the narrative perspective within the house. This reflects the entrapment of the mother within the house and the occlusion of her individual narrative as she takes the place of Eddie's ghost on the turn of the stairs, occupying the liminal space in silence. Furthermore, the view of the 'darkened altar' through the window evokes the darkness that the narrator describes in 'Stairs', and the sense of restrictive structure that it signifies. As the mother occupies the 'ambiguous' liminal space, Deane lends a certain ambiguity to the end of her narrative as she stands in a state of flux between her reconciliation with the past and her inability to move on from it.

Deane's treatment of the process of occlusion can also be seen in the episode 'Accident', in which the narrator witnesses the death of a young boy, Rory Hannaway, who is accidentally run over by a reversing lorry:

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<sup>12</sup> L. Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London, 1989), 62.

<sup>13</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 240.

I was standing on the parapet wall above Meenan's Park, only twenty yards away, and I could see the police car coming up the road from the barracks at the far end. Two policemen got out, and one of them bent down and looked under the lorry. He stood up and pushed his cap back on his head and rubbed his hands on his thighs. I think he felt sick.<sup>14</sup>

The narrator's position as observer is represented spatially by his standing on the parapet wall, a liminal boundary that removes him from the event, allowing him to witness it first-hand but not partake in it. The wall also facilitates the narrator's panoptic view of the event, allowing him to see both the accident and the arrival of the police. What this perspective produces is objective factual information about the accident, but throughout the episode these facts are subjected to different interpretations. First, the narrator hears from somebody after the event that one of the policemen had in fact been sick. This very basic show of the policeman's humanity conflicts with the nationalist rhetoric that the narrator has internalised as he states that 'this seemed wrong; everybody hated the police, told us to stay away from them, that they were a bad lot. So I said nothing'.<sup>15</sup> The narrator's confusion comes from the tension between what he has experienced, what he is told, and what he has been taught to experience; as Flannery writes, 'The boy's uneasiness at the thought of a policeman vomiting at the scene is indicative of a burgeoning incredulity at the certainties of the sectarian divide.'<sup>16</sup> This tension silences the narrator as his individual experience is displaced by another narrative that conflicts with the nationalist perspective through which he used to be able to read the world. An opposing example of this process of narrative creation is shown at the end of the episode, when another boy reinterprets the events to fit a nationalist perspective:

Danny Green told me in detail how young Hannaway had been run over by a police car which had not even stopped [...] I tightened the hauling rope around my waist and said nothing; somehow this allayed the subtle sense of treachery I had felt from the start.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 11.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Flannery, 'Reading in the Light of Reading in the Dark', 76.

<sup>17</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 12.

The narrative that Danny constructs from the event directly contradicts the narrator's experiences, and as a result silences the narrator again. However, this time the narrative fits his acquired nationalist perspective, and relieves him of his 'sense of treachery'. Farquharson notes the significance of this episode in relation to Eddie's story:

Coming after the introduction of Eddie, this section is crucial in understanding that no story is to be trusted, that everyone seems to have their own version of events and that often those versions are informed by personal agendas.<sup>18</sup>

This similarity between the stories of Eddie and Rory is reflected in the way both stories utilise certain motifs. The narrator's silence draws comparisons with the mother's loss of her voice, as both of them are in a position of knowing the truth, or at least aspects of the truth. Furthermore, Rory's body lies in 'the darkness under the truck,'<sup>19</sup> evoking the 'darkness' in the window of the stairway. As different grand narratives subsume the story of Rory's death, the narrator's panoptic perspective is silenced, leaving Rory's individual narrative in a state of liminal flux as it changes from one ideological interpretation to the next.

Liminality is also invoked in the episode 'Grandfather', where the process of occlusion becomes a form of education. The narrator's school receives a Christmas address from Brother Regan, who tells them about the murder of a policeman, Billy Mahon, which was committed by the narrator's grandfather in retaliation for the murder of his friend, Neil McLaughlin. The story takes place on the Craigavon Bridge, which connects two sides of Derry split along sectarian lines, and is thus in neither territory, 'simultaneously holding together and keeping apart the opposites on either side'.<sup>20</sup> This liminality reflects Billy's fate:

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<sup>18</sup> D. Farquharson, 'Resisting Genre and Type: Narrative Strategy and Instability in Danny Morrison's "The Wrong Man" and Seamus Deane's "Reading in the Dark"', *Writing Ulster*, 6 (1999), 103.

<sup>19</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 11.

<sup>20</sup> G. Smyth, *Space and the Irish Cultural Imagination* (Hampshire, 2001), 150.



They lifted him to the parapet and held him there for a minute like a log and let him stare down at the water – seventy, eighty feet below. Then they pushed him over and he fell, with the street lights shining on his wet coat until he disappeared into the shadows with a splash. They heard him thrashing, and he shouted once. Then he went under.<sup>21</sup>

Billy's fall into the 'shadows' evokes the motif of darkness once more. Not only is he visually obscured and literally silenced, but he becomes obfuscated in death; his individual perspective is subsumed into a Republican revenge narrative as well as Brother Regan's religious narrative which encourages the boys of the narrator's school to avoid paramilitary activity. Smyth writes that 'For [Billy Mahon], the bridge is a space where a repressed Other violently surfaces to exert its own topographical consciousness,'<sup>22</sup> and it is this exertion by the Other that silences Billy. As a result, he becomes trapped in a conceptual liminality between innocence and guilt, fluctuating at the behest of the grand narratives that occlude his individual perspective. Furthermore, these grand narratives then use the appropriated events to convince others to conform to them. Harte reads Brother Regan's address as an example of 'official attempts to interpellate [the narrator] as a loyal, acquiescent citizen' as part of a 'discursive struggle for control of the boy's subjectivity'.<sup>23</sup> Not only do grand narratives occlude individual perspectives that complicate them, but they also engender the repression of new perspectives that resist interpellation before they can develop. This creates tension between the narrator's education at the hand of a cultural hegemony and his desire to 'cross that window', to learn more about his family's history:

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<sup>21</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 23.

<sup>22</sup> Smyth, *Space and the Irish Cultural Imagination*, 151.

<sup>23</sup> L. Harte, 'History Lessons: Postcolonialism and Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark*', 30 (2000), *Irish University Review*, 152.

Was it really my grandfather who had done that, the little man who sat around in his simmet vest all day long, looking sick and barely speaking a word? [...] I had heard something of it when I was much younger and lay on the landing at night listening to the grown-ups talking in the kitchen below and had leaned over the banisters and imagined it was the edge of the parapet and that I was falling.<sup>24</sup>

The grandfather occupies a similar position to that of the mother in 'Stairs' or the narrator in 'Accident'; his perspective on the murder of Billy Mahon, which has the potential to reverse the process of occlusion, is lost to silence, keeping Billy trapped in a liminal state. The narrator's questioning once again acts to destabilise the established dialectics surrounding the murder, and indicates his movement towards the acquisition of knowledge. Indeed, his eavesdropping on the grown-ups beforehand already places him on the banisters, which take on aspects of the parapet of the bridge; it becomes a liminal space between ignorance and knowledge, with the potential for flux between the two. The hallway, then, becomes like the river, at once evoking knowledge, death, and silencing. The movement of the imagined fall and the flow of the river is reflected in the rhythm created by the run-on sentence, suggesting that the acquisition of knowledge, and the silencing that it engenders, is irreversible. This creates a cycle, like that in 'After', which underpins Deane's treatment of occlusion. The silence of those with knowledge invites interrogation from those without, leading to a movement towards knowledge that ends in the same silence that inspired it. It is the cycle of occlusion that encloses the text, trapping its characters in 'shadows'.

What Deane highlights to the reader throughout *Reading in the Dark* is the incompatibility of the individual voice and the grand narrative, with the latter always silencing and appropriating the former. Just as the spaces in the text exist in a state of flux, so too do the stories that take place in them, and thus the reader is confronted with a process of history-making that privileges grand narratives. As LaCapra writes:

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<sup>24</sup> Deane, *Reading in the Dark*, 27.

the past is not an 'it' in the sense of an objectified entity that may either be neutrally represented in and for itself or projectively reprocessed in terms of our narrowly 'presentist' interests.<sup>25</sup>

In this sense, all of the characters within the text are caught in a liminal state of flux, as they are forced to negotiate the space between the hegemonies of family, nation and religion, and their individual experiences.

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<sup>25</sup> Dominick LaCapra cited in Hutcheon, *Postmodernism*, 57.

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# Vassals or Vikings?: Orkney's identity in the changing Norwegian world, (1151-1206)

Stephanie Kirby

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Throughout the Middle Ages, the Jarldom of Orkney and Caithness maintained a fine balance between its geographical proximity to the Scottish mainland and its political and cultural proximity to the kingdom of Norway. On the periphery of both kingdoms, its rulers developed an independent, native identity that strongly reflected the classical ideal of the Viking ruler and warrior. However, the European-style transformation of the Norwegian crown in the second half of the twelfth century, and its consequential push to consolidate its outlying vassals, led to the decline of this autonomous rule, a decline many historians believe resulted from the static weakness of Orkney's Viking-style rule. This essay seeks to re-evaluate the changing relationship between the Orcadian earl and the Norwegian king and attempts to challenge the current view of Haraldr Maddaðarson's rule as 'weak', suggesting instead that circumstance, not incompetence, hastened the subjugation of Orkney to Norway after 1195.<sup>1</sup>

In his *Discourses on Livy*, written in 1517, Niccolò Machiavelli wrote that the successful man 'is he who suits the times.'<sup>2</sup> This phrase is particularly resonant when studying Norway and her position in the Northern world in the late twelfth century. The periodic civil wars from 1155 until 1184 and the subsequent rise of a new dynasty resulted in radical transformations for Norway and its client states, like the Jarldom of Orkney. New European ideas on the nature of kingship and vassalage challenged the old identities of the Viking-style state and the Viking-

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<sup>1</sup> Special thanks to Dr Alex Woolf at the University of St Andrews for his insightful comments on, and generous assistance with sources for, this essay.

<sup>2</sup> N. Machiavelli, 'Book Three: Chapter 9', *Discourses Upon The First Ten (Books) of Titus Livy*, (1517). Available: <<http://www.constitution.org/mac/disclivy.pdf>> [Accessed: 17.03.2014].

style ruler. This clash of ideologies and identities was personified in this period by the contemporaneous careers of King Sverrir Sigurðarson of Norway (1184-1202) and Haraldr Maddaðarson, Jarl of Orkney (1158-1206).

In the period under question, Norway had only recently emerged from a chronic state of civil war that had divided the country and regions between two main parties. Since 1174, Sverrir Sigurðarson fought for the Norwegian crown, claiming to be the son of Sigurð Jorsalfari, who had shared the Norwegian throne with his brothers from 1103-1130. Erling Shakke, (one of Norway's most powerful *jarls* or nobles), and Magnús Erlingsson (his son) challenged Sverrir's claim to the throne, but Sverrir was ultimately victorious and established a sole, united kingship in 1184. Sverrir's reign, however, differed enormously from that of his father; the unceasing civil wars had corroded the traditional Viking-style rulership of previous centuries. Then, the king acted as a 'first among equals' (*primus inter pares*). Instead of succession by divine right, he was elected to the throne by popular acclamation at the many different regional assemblies. Furthermore, royal inheritance was agnatic (open to all of the king's sons, whether legitimate or illegitimate) as opposed to primogeniture (whereby only the king's eldest legitimate son inherited). Hence, the throne was frequently shared between several brothers.

In contrast, during the civil wars, a new style of Norwegian royal identity emerged. Erling, Magnús and Sverrir transformed the nature of royal power by crafting a kingship that related closely to the concept of the sacral, just king (*rex iustus*), concurrently developing in Europe.<sup>3</sup> The king became the source of power and justice in the kingdom; consequently, these reigns marked the change towards increasing royal control and consolidation through institutions such as the office of the *sysselmenn* (royally-appointed governor), and by limiting royal succession.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> I. Beuermann, 'Conclusions. the long adaption of pagan and Christian ideologies of rulership', in G. Steinsland, J.V. Sigurðsson, J.E. Rekdal and I. Beuermann (eds), *Ideology and Power in the Viking and Middle Ages: Scandinavia, Iceland, Ireland, Orkney and the Faeroes* (Leiden, 2011), 367.

<sup>4</sup> P. Topping, 'Haraldr Maddadson, Earl of Orkney and Caithness, 1139-1206', *Scottish Historical Review* (1983) 63, 105.

The Norwegian jarldom of Orkney, across the Northern Sea, remained aloof from the internecine battles. Since the reign of Harald Fine-hair (872-930), the Jarl of Orkney and Shetland had acted as a largely-autonomous vassal of the Norwegian king.<sup>5</sup> Socially and politically the two realms were similar: both operated a Viking-style of rulership. Taxes or *skatt* were taken intermittently and mainly in the form of the *leidang* or ship levy. Like Norway, rulership was frequently divided between several brothers and legitimacy was not a necessary component of inheritance. However, the jarl of Orkney was not solely a Norwegian subject. He was also pledged to the Scottish king for the Earldom of Caithness, just across the Pentland Firth. Until the twelfth century, the jarldom was frequently divided between the two northern powers, one earl ruling Orkney, under the tenuous aegis of Norway; his brother or relative ruling Caithness from the kings of Scotland. During the reigns of King Sverrir in Norway and King William I of Scotland (1165-1214), however, both Scotland and Norway experienced drives towards consolidating the elastic feudal arrangements of previous centuries.

Jarl Haraldr Maddaðarson of Orkney, thus, was caught between two revolutionising monarchs. He sought to maintain his autonomy by reinforcing the traditional rulership and identity of Orkney. Elements of this ideological and political choice were evident in the tenor of the twelfth-century Orcadian Renaissance, the tone of Haraldr's submission to Sverrir in 1195, and the text of *Orkneyinga Saga* (the contemporary history of the Jarls of Orkney). Therefore, although Haraldr operated in the same geographical area as Sverrir and William, he represented a different political tradition.

Originally, historians, such as Joseph Clouston and Anton Brøgger, analysed the career of Haraldr Maddaðarson in the context of simultaneous developments in Norway under Magnus Erlingsson and Sverrir.<sup>6</sup> Particular focus was paid to their relationships with the church and their effectiveness in overcoming succession disputes. Success in defending their right to rule was another concern, whether against internal opposition or foreign enemies. Yet, these scholars have not been

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<sup>5</sup> 'Chapter 4', *Orkneyinga Saga: The History of the Earls of Orkney*, trans. and ed. H. Pálsson, P. Edwards (London, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> A.W. Brøgger, *Ancient Emigrants: A History of the Norse Settlements of Scotland*, (Oxford, 1929), 162.; J.S. Clouston, *A history of Orkney*, (London, 1929), 132.

careful enough in their comparative analyses, comparing men from quite different social milieu on equal terms. For example, the great collision between the two polities, in the aftermath of the failed 1193 Orcadian rebellion against Norway, and the subsequent decline in Orcadian independence, is frequently used as a point of judgement for the success of the new Norwegian rulership and, by extension, the failure of the Jarl of Orkney.<sup>7</sup>

This judgement lacks a nuanced view of the changing nature of identity in Orkney and Norway in this period. It assumes too much on the similarities between the Norwegian king and the Orcadian *jarl*. Rather, it might be preferable to compare these Orcadian and Norwegian rulers with counterparts of similar social status. Therefore, to understand the changing nature of the Orcadian rulership in this period, it is as important to contrast Jarl Haraldr of Orkney with the aristocratic opposition to Sverrir in Norway, as to Sverrir himself. Only by considering all of these issues is it possible to approach the nature of Orcadian identity in this period, and the extent and nature of its transformation.

Succession became an integral element of difference between the two emerging identities in Norway and the Jarldom of Orkney. In Norway, despite the Roman influence of the *Decretum* of Burchard of Saxony,<sup>8</sup> the pre-Christian, customary law dominated. Shared kingship was normal. In 1142 Eystein Haraldsson became king in addition to Ingí and Sigurð Haraldsson.<sup>9</sup> Only with the establishment of the Norwegian archbishopric in 1152 did a paradigm-shift towards a more sacral kingship occur. Now, instead of a shared, agnatic kingship, royal power was centred in a single ruler: a legitimate, blood-relation of the previous monarch. Magnús Erlingsson's new legal ordinances demonstrate this change: a king shall be 'a legitimate son of a king' and sole ruler.<sup>10</sup> Contemporary writers, like the historian Snorri Sturluson, observed that this change did much to 'augment...the

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<sup>7</sup> Clouston, *History*, 140.

<sup>8</sup> H. Vogt, *The Function of Kinship in Medieval Nordic Legislation*, (Leiden, 2010), 73.

<sup>9</sup> 'History of Sigurd, Inge and Eystein, The Sons of Harald Gilli: Chapter 13', Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla or the Lives of the Norse Kings*, ed. E. Monsen, trans. A. H. Smith, (New York, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> 'Book of Gulathing: The Church Law: Chapter 2' *The Earliest Norwegian Laws: Being the Gulathing Law and the Frostathing Law. Translated from the Old Norwegian*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., trans. L. Larson, (New Jersey, 2008).



king's right.'<sup>11</sup> Therefore, when Sverrir offered Magnús truce in 1180, on the condition that he divide his kingdom between them, Magnús refused.<sup>12</sup> Later, Sverrir did likewise: when his half-brother, Eirik Kings-son, sought to prove his descent from Sigurð Jorsalfari, Sverrir agreed, only on the proviso that 'neither to you nor to any other will I grant the name of king or give up the realm I now possess'<sup>13</sup>; a promise he kept firmly in 1184 when Eirik asked for an equal share in the kingdom.<sup>14</sup>

Orkney experienced no similar change in succession. This was partly circumstantial: the Jarldom of Orkney was sworn to the Norwegian king; the Earldom of Caithness, to the Scottish. Sharing the responsibility was accepted and practical even in the twelfth century.<sup>15</sup> Haraldr Maddaðarson entered into the jarldom of Orkney on a shared basis with Jarl Rognvald, receiving 'the title of jarl and half of Orkney'.<sup>16</sup> However, Scottish and Norwegian kings abused this system frequently. The royal promotion of rival heirs weakened the position of strong jarls. In 1196, Sverrir promoted Haraldr Ungi to the earldom, at the expense of Haraldr Maddaðarson.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, Orcadian jarls did not make any comparable move to change the nature of their rule or the pattern of succession. While written ca. 1192,<sup>18</sup> at a time of considerable royal interference in Orcadian succession,<sup>19</sup> *Orkneyinga Saga* does not condemn the practice of multiple jarls. Neither is there evidence of Haraldr protesting such interference by Scottish or Norwegian kings, in either Norwegian or Scottish chronicles. Furthermore, shared

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<sup>11</sup> 'The History of Magnús Erlingsson: Chapter 21', *Heimskringla*.

<sup>12</sup> 'Chapter 45', *Sverrisaga: The Saga of King Sverri of Norway*, trans. J. Sephton, (Felinfach, 1994).

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

<sup>14</sup> 'Chapter 113', *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> B.E. Crawford, 'The Earls of Orkney-Caithness and their Relations with Norway and Scotland, 1158-1470' (PhD dissertation, University of St Andrews, 1971), xvii.

<sup>16</sup> 'Chapter 77', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>17</sup> J. Gray, *Sutherland and Caithness in Saga-Time or, The Jarls and The Freskyns*, (Edinburgh, 1922), 42.

<sup>18</sup> I. Beuermann, 'Jarla Sogur Orkneyja: status and power of the Earls of Orkney according to their sagas' in G. Steinsland, J.V. Sigurðsson, J.E. Rekdal and I. Beuermann (eds), *Ideology and Power in the Viking and Middle Ages: Scandinavia, Iceland, Ireland, Orkney and the Faeroes*, (Leiden, 2011), 148.

<sup>19</sup> 'The History of St Olaf: Chapter 96', *Heimskringla*.

inheritance continued even after Haraldr's death, with the joint succession of his sons, John and David.<sup>20</sup> Unlike Sverrir and Magnús, who rejected tradition in pursuit of power and stability, Haraldr continued to abide by the status quo. He sought strength from enforcing his identity, despite the clear and continuous disadvantages it presented.

The transformation of the royal image in Norway was deeply intertwined with the influence of the church. The control of the church in the coronation of Magnús Erlingsson reflected the increasing religious influence in Norwegian politics.<sup>21</sup> In the 1164 revision, the Gulathing law included new ordinances in favour of the church, especially in rite of succession.<sup>22</sup> Although Sverrir disputed vociferously with Archbishop Eirik Ivarrson, leading to the latter's self-imposed exile in Denmark<sup>23</sup>, church influence remained strong in his reign. Sverrir sought episcopal approval for his coronation.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, Sverrir's politics made little concerted effort to limit church influence in Sverrir's politics, despite Archbishop Eirik's letters to the Pope suggesting the contrary.<sup>25</sup> The church played an important role in Sverrir's own biography, *Sverrisaga*: Sverrir's foster-father was Bishop Hroi who advised him on achieving the kingship of Norway.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, Sverrir's 'dreams' relied on religious imagery: Sverrir imagined himself as a young David, anointed God's chosen king by the prophet Samuel.<sup>27</sup> In Orkney, although the twelfth-century Orcadian Renaissance centred around the Cult of St Magnús (Earl of Orkney, 1108-1115), this appeared to bolster the secular autonomy of the jarl rather than the Orcadian church. Magnús was depicted as a Viking-style ruler as well as a saint, defending Orkney and killing two leading enemies.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the sanctification of Jarl Rognvald, another Viking-style leader, in 1192, promoted

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<sup>20</sup> Crawford, 'Earls of Orkney-Caithness', 6.

<sup>21</sup> 'History of Magnús Erlingsson: Chapter 22', *Heimskringla*.

<sup>22</sup> 'Book of Gulathing: The Church Law: Chapter 2' *The Earliest Norwegian Laws*.

<sup>23</sup> 'Chapter 118', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>24</sup> 'Chapter 123', *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> 'Appendix II: A Defence of the King against the Bishops and the Clergy', *Ibid.*; S. Bagge, *From Gang Leader to the Lord's Anointed: Kingship in Sverrisaga and Hákonar Saga Hákonarsonar*, (Bergen, 1996), 77.

<sup>26</sup> 'Chapter 6', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>27</sup> 'Chapter 10', *Ibid*.

<sup>28</sup> 'Chapter 45', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

Haraldr Maddaðarson's political ideology in the year immediately prior to the Orcadian rebellion under Olaf Jarlsmag.<sup>29</sup>

Unlike King Sverrir in Norway, the Orcadian jarls opposed episcopal interference in secular matters. Overt episcopal interference often led to violent reactions. Haraldr blinded and maimed Bishop John, bishop of Caithness and supporter of King William I,<sup>30</sup> in 1201, since Haraldr considered him 'an informer and instigator of the misunderstanding'<sup>31</sup> between the jarl and the king. Unlike Norway, native Orcadian bishops, such as Bjarni, gave their first loyalty to the jarldom, supporting Haraldr in his negotiations with Sverrir in 1195.<sup>32</sup> This subjugation can be contrasted with the church's increasing secular powers in Norway, and emphasises the difference between the two ideals of rulership in Norway and Orkney.

The *rex iustus* ideal of kingship, encouraged by church influence, added a new dimension to the Norwegian kings' changing identity. To transgress or be disloyal to the divinely-appointed king was to transgress against God. Consequently, treason, as a crime against the king's person, became punishable by a twelvefold oath, a greater compurgation than any other crime.<sup>33</sup> Sverrir often alluded to the divine nature of his kingship in *Sverrisaga*. During Haraldr Maddaðarson's trial in 1195, after the rebellion, Sverrir declared that he would grant Haraldr mercy 'for I shall need from God greater mercy than I have deserved.'<sup>34</sup> Sverrir considered himself, the king, to be judged on a higher plain than Harald, a mere jarl.<sup>35</sup> However, the jarls themselves considered the Norwegian king *primus inter pares*. Submission was more a mark of personal ties than a declaration of subservience. During his visit to Norway with Rognvald in 1148, Haraldr Maddaðarson probably

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<sup>29</sup> H. Antonsson, *St. Magnús of Orkney: A Scandinavian Martyr-Cult in Context*, (Leiden, 2007), 101.

<sup>30</sup> Antonsson, *Magnús of Orkney*, 159.

<sup>31</sup> 'Chapter XXIV', *The Historians of Scotland, Vol. IV: John of Fordun's Chronicle of the Scottish Nation*, trans. F.J. Skene, ed. W.F. Skene, (Edinburgh, 1872).

<sup>32</sup> 'Chapter 112', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>33</sup> 'Gulathing Law: Miscellaneous Provisions: Chapter 132', *The Earliest Norwegian Laws*.

<sup>34</sup> 'Chapter 125', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>35</sup> H.J. Orning, *Unpredictability and Presence: Norwegian Kingship in the High Middle Ages*, (Leiden, 2008), 172.

made a formal submission to King Ingí Haraldsson.<sup>36</sup> However, he apparently made no submission to King Eystein, nor felt the need. Haraldr's submission to Magnús Erlingsson, motivated by a personal friendship with Erling Skakke, was another example of this formalised personalised connection.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, when Haraldr expressed his fear of Sverrir's anger, during his submission in 1195, historians, like Hans Jacob Orning, interpreted this as a personal fear of wounding Sverrir's honour (possibly leading to a blood-feud) rather than the ceremonial fear of a 'sinful' vassal, exemplified earlier in *Sverrisaga* by the submission of Thorstein Kugad.<sup>38</sup> This view has some merit, since Haraldr did not resist the imposition of Norwegian *syselmenn* in Orkney until after Sverrir's death in 1202, when he murdered Arne Lorja.<sup>39</sup> This emphasises Haraldr's view of Sverrir as a powerful lord, worth respecting, but not a divinely-appointed king, whose decree is law. This difference in perception further suggests the difference between the transformations of kingly identity in Norway and the more 'static' view of the king-vassal relationship in Orkney, so integral to the traditional Viking identity.

There were also considerable differences in the perception of the Orcadian jarldom and its duties to the Norwegian crown. *Historia Norwegiae*, written ca. 1180<sup>40</sup>, possibly exemplifies the idealised Norwegian view of Orkney as a vassal fief. It describes Orkney as a tributary island, 'subject to the kings of Norway by due payment of tithe.'<sup>41</sup> However, *Sverrisaga* implies that the taxes and legal fines of Orkney prior to 1195 went to the jarl alone, not the king.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, *Orkneyinga Saga* offers no evidence on the payment of regular taxes to the Norwegian crown. Even the supposed 'feudal relief', demanded from Haraldr by King Eystein Haraldsson of Norway in 1152, is described as a ransom.<sup>43</sup> This reflects the monetary situation in Orkney at the time: the concept of feudal dues,

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<sup>36</sup> W.P.L. Thomson, *A New History of Orkney*, (Edinburgh, 1987), 115.

<sup>37</sup> Crawford, 'Earls of Orkney-Caithness', 145.; 'Chapter 87', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>38</sup> Orning, *Unpredictability and Presence*, 187.; 'Chapter 153', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>39</sup> Thomson, *History of Orkney*, 127.

<sup>40</sup> B. & P. Sawyer, *Medieval Scandinavia: from conversion to Reformation cira 800-1500*, (Minneapolis, 1993, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.), 221.

<sup>41</sup> *A History of Norway and the Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Óláfr*, trans. D. Kunin, ed. C. Phelpstead, (London, 2001), 9.

<sup>42</sup> 'Chapter 125', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>43</sup> 'Chapter 91', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

such as relief, was not prevalent; rather, it was intermittent. During the construction of St Magnús's Cathedral, Rognvald rejected his father's idea that the farmers should pay a 'relief' to inherit their land as too severe.<sup>44</sup> This contrasts with the developing royal bureaucracy in Norway; in the Gulathing law, the king was entitled to a percentage of each legal fine, to be collected by the bailiff.<sup>45</sup> Harald's rebuke to Sverrir during his trial that 'the men of Orkney do not always act as I wish'<sup>46</sup> implies that Sverrir expected internal Orcadian rule to have changed along with Norway. Interestingly, unlike the Orcadians, who record collecting tribute in the Shetlands in the reign of Haraldr,<sup>47</sup> *Historia Norwegiae*<sup>48</sup> and *Sverrisaga*<sup>49</sup> seem to regard the Shetlands as separate from Orkney. This is clear from Sverrir's actions after 1195, annexing the Shetland Islands but exempting them from the heavy *skatt* payment imposed on Orkney.<sup>50</sup> The Orcadian jarls' difference in perception of their rights and responsibilities and those of the Norwegian royal court highlights the differences between these two northern polities.

Perhaps the clearest evidence of difference between the two rulers is through their own self-perceptions in the sagas. Both *Sverrisaga* and *Orkneyinga Saga* were composed during the lifetimes of Sverrir and Haraldr, respectively. Indeed, *Sverrisaga* begins with the statement: 'This book... Abbot Karl Jónsson wrote when King Sverrir himself sat over him.'<sup>51</sup> Therefore, a closer examination of these sources should provide some insight into the political legacy and beliefs of these men. It is curious that *Sverrisaga* does not preface its work with a description of Sverrir's line of descent. It does not even describe the narrative of Sverrir's conception, as the contemporary *Historia Norwegiae* describes the conception of Norway's first Christian king, Óláfr Tryggvasson (995-1000).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> 'Chapter 77', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>45</sup> 'Gulathing Law: The Church Law: Chapter 3', *The Earliest Norwegian Laws*.

<sup>46</sup> 'Chapter 125', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>47</sup> 'Chapter 92', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>48</sup> *History of Norway*, 21.

<sup>49</sup> 'Chapter 119', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>50</sup> Crawford, 'Earls of Orkney-Caithness', 197.

<sup>51</sup> 'Prologue', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>52</sup> *History of Norway*, 18.

In contrast, *Orkneyinga Saga* places the origin of the jarls of Orkney in the context of Nordic mythology. Unlike similar texts, like Asser's *Life of Alfred*, which suggests Alfred descended from Adam through Seth,<sup>53</sup> Orkney earls traced their descent from the giant Svadi<sup>54</sup>; a descent that strongly identifies them with a pagan, Nordic tradition. Interestingly, however, it also places them in a subservient position.<sup>55</sup> In comparison, Saxo Grammaticus identifies the early Danish kings as the masters of giants, Wagnhofde and Hafle.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, *Orkneyinga Saga* accepts that Jarl Rognvald the Powerful received the Orkney and Shetland Islands from Haraldr Fine-Hair of Norway, although they portray it as a gift rather than an estate received in fief.<sup>57</sup> This implies that Haraldr Maddaðarson, as probable patron of the work, consciously presented the jarldom as a subject of the king. Furthermore, unlike *Orkneyinga Saga*, that commends the jarls for composing poetry and echoing Nordic tradition, *Sverrisaga* details the speeches of Sverrir. Sverrir uses these speeches to establish his eloquence and right to rule, the man 'God sent from the outlying islands'<sup>58</sup> This change echoes the new style of rule that Sverrir sought to establish in Norway. They also increase Sverrir's power. Unlike *Orkneyinga Saga*, in which tradition binds as well as augments the earls' power, Sverrir's innate, divinely-given authority achieves power by the will of God and his own ability. Consequently, the depictions of the jarldom and the king in their respective sagas belie any attempt at comparison. The Orkney jarls identify with tradition even as Sverrir attempts to transform it, emphasising the differences between the two styles of rule.

Since the differences appear to override the similarities between jarl and king, it is necessary to contrast Haraldr with the aristocratic opposition to Sverrir in Norway. Again, there are differences. As jarl, Haraldr believed he retained a

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<sup>53</sup> Asser, *Annals of the Reign of Alfred the Great, from A.D. 849 to A.D. 887*, in J.A. Giles, (trans. & ed.), *Old English Chronicles: Ethelwerd, Asser's Life of Alfred, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Gildas, Nennius and Richard of Cirencester*, (London, 1906), 43-4.

<sup>54</sup> 'Chapter 2', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>55</sup> Beuermann, 'Jarla Sogur Orkneyja', 137.

<sup>56</sup> Saxo Grammaticus, 'Book One' in *The Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus*, trans. O. Elton (New York, 1905). Available: <<http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/saxo/index.htm>> [Accessed 29.10.2013]

<sup>57</sup> Chapter 4', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>58</sup> 'Chapter 99', *Sverrisaga*.

greater sense of personal dignity than the majority of the Norwegian aristocracy.<sup>59</sup> At that point, the title of jarl was reserved for the royal family<sup>60</sup> or distinguished ministers, like Erling Skakke.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, unlike the Norwegian aristocracy, Haraldr never appeared to identify with the church.<sup>62</sup> His quarrel with Sverrir was constructed in purely personal terms: it was from fear of Sverrir's 'hate' that Haraldr travelled to Norway in 1195.<sup>63</sup> However, like the nobility, Harald's opposition to Sverri can be based on his personal connection with the Erlingsson faction.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, it appears likely that Sverrir associated Haraldr with this opposition. His rhetoric of forgiveness during the trial of Haraldr mimics that between other trials in *Sverrisaga*, such as that of the traitor to Sverrir's cause, Thorstein Kugad.<sup>65</sup> His punishment for Orkney also consolidated Norwegian royal power there. In imposing *sysselmenn* to regulate taxes, Sverrir copied similar decisions in Norway to consolidate land, such as the estates of Eirik Kings-son, after his death in 1190.<sup>66</sup> Although the fines imposed on Orkney were higher than normal, Orning suggests that this reflects Orkney's position at the periphery of the Norwegian influence.<sup>67</sup> In addition, Barbara Crawford suggests that the fines were imposed instead of annexing land in this remote outpost.<sup>68</sup> Haraldr's previous support of Magnús Erlingsson and his murder of Haraldr Ungi, who had received a grant of half the jarldom of Orkney from Sverrir<sup>69</sup>, also suggests that Haraldr can be identified and compared more with the aristocracy than Sverrir.

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<sup>59</sup> Crawford, 'Earls of Orkney-Caithness', p. xvii.

<sup>60</sup> R.B. Wærdahl, *The Incorporation and Integration of the King's Tributary Lands into the Norwegian Realm c. 1195-1397*, (Leiden, 2011), 54.

<sup>61</sup> A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba: 789 – 1070*, (Edinburgh, 2007), 304.

<sup>62</sup> S. Bagge, *From Viking Stronghold to Christian Kingdom: State formation in Norway, c. 900-1350*, (Copenhagen, 2010), 60.

<sup>63</sup> 'Chapter 112', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>64</sup> S. Bagge, 'Kingship in medieval Norway: ideal and reality' in H. Duchhardt, R.A. Jackson, D. Sturdy (eds), *European Monarchy: Its Evolution and Practice from Roman Antiquity to Modern Times*, (Stuttgart, 1992), 47.

<sup>65</sup> 'Chapter 153', *Sverrisaga*.

<sup>66</sup> 'Chapter 115', *Ibid*.

<sup>67</sup> Orning, *Unpredictability and Presence*, p. 253.

<sup>68</sup> Crawford, 'Earls of Orkney-Caithness', p. 100.

<sup>69</sup> *The annals of Roger de Hoveden : Comprising the history of England and of other countries of Europe from A.D. 732 to A.D. 1201*, trans. H.T. Riley, (London, 1853), 393.

If Sverrir considered Haraldr similar to the old Norwegian aristocracy, can Sverrir, in his attempts at consolidating royal power in Norway and its outer sphere, be compared with William the Lion, the Scottish King and Haraldr's overlord for the earldom of Caithness? They embraced similar reforms and encountered similar problems. Like Sverrir, William experienced several rebellions in the periphery of his kingdom: one, the MacHeth rebellion, implicated Haraldr Maddaðarson as co-conspirator.<sup>70</sup> Like Sverrir, William encouraged the transition to a more European style of royal succession and ideology.<sup>71</sup> This transition also encouraged the growth of the royal bureaucracy and the importance of royal jurisdiction at the expense of local magnates.<sup>72</sup> However, despite Danish support for aristocratic opposition within Norway, Sverrir did not experience a similar level of exposure to hostile outside forces as William. The Scottish king faced the continual problem of English interference in Northumberland.<sup>73</sup> Sverrir, on the other hand, confined his interest to Norway and, despite the vulnerability of the new dynasty, Sweden and Denmark mostly refrained from interfering. Although this article gives only a cursory comparison, it is likely that Sverrir identified more with William than Haraldr Maddaðarson, particularly considering the ideological basis for his relationship with his *hirð* (royal bodyguard) and magnates.<sup>74</sup>

In conclusion, the jarldom of Orkney and the rapidly developing kingdom of Norway formed two distinct and separately powerful political entities during the last years of the twelfth century. These entities promoted different ideologies and found strength from increasingly different identities. These ideologies functioned within the same geographic sphere, yet, comparing the success or failure of one to the other belies the historical context. Neither Sverrir nor Haraldr themselves considered the Jarl of Orkney as a viable comparison to his overlord, the King of Norway. Even *Orkneyinga Saga*, as much propaganda as it is a historical record,

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<sup>70</sup> *John of Fordun's Chronicle*, 270.

<sup>71</sup> G. W. S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity: Scotland 1000-1306*, (Edinburgh, 1981), 59.

<sup>72</sup> Bagge, *Viking Stronghold*, 160. ; W.W. Scott, 'William I (William the Lion) (c.1142–1214)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004. Available: <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29452>> [Accessed 29.10.2013]

<sup>73</sup> *The annals of Roger de Hoveden*, p.322.

<sup>74</sup> G. Barrow, 'Scotland, Wales and Ireland in the twelfth century', in D. Luscombe, J. Riley-Smith (eds), *The New Cambridge Medieval History Volume 4: c.1024–c.1198, Part 2*, (Cambridge, 2004), 588.



posits the jarl as subservient to the king.<sup>75</sup> However, subservience should not be construed as a weakness or sign of decline. Haraldr Maddaðarson's style of rule and political identity may have become an exception in the rapidly transforming world of the twelfth century, but his rule remained strong until 1195, repelling numerous attempts by both the Scottish and Norwegian kings to weaken his position through the introduction of a rival claimant. Haraldr's success is evident in the final chapter of the *Orkneyinga Saga*: he is listed as one of the greatest of the jarls of Orkney.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> G. Steinsland, 'Origin myths and rulerships: from the Viking age ruler to the ruler of medieval historiography; continuity, transformations and innovations' in G. Steinsland, J.V. Sigurðsson, J.E. Rekdal and I. Beuermann (eds), *Ideology and Power in the Viking and Middle Ages: Scandinavia, Iceland, Ireland, Orkney and the Faeroes*, (Leiden, 2011), 50.

<sup>76</sup> 'Chapter 112', *Orkneyinga Saga*.

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# Competition and tradition: Carolingian political rituals, 751-800

Ian McIver

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In 751, the Carolingians supplanted the traditional ruling dynasty of Francia. This article surveys Carolingian political rituals between 751 and 800, and argues that ritual was one means through which this new royal family sought to construct and legitimate its authority against its dynastic competitors. This article also highlights the neglected spiritual dimension of many of these rituals. Whilst tradition often formed an important part in these ceremonies, early medieval ritual was not static, and there is evidence of innovation and improvisation. The meaning of rituals was also unfixed, as reflected and conditioned by competing textual accounts.

*Peasant woman: How do you become king then?*

*King Arthur: The Lady of the Lake, her arm clad in the purest shimmering samite, held aloft Excalibur from the bosom of the water, signifying by divine providence that I, Arthur, was to carry Excalibur. That is why I am your king.*

*Dennis: Listen, strange women lying in ponds distributing swords is no basis for a system of government. Supreme executive power derives from a mandate from the masses, not from some farcical aquatic ceremony.<sup>1</sup>*

King Arthur's encounter with the 'anarcho-syndicalist'<sup>2</sup> peasants in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* provides an unlikely entrée into our topic. In the past fifty years or so, ritual has become an increasingly popular subject of historical study.<sup>3</sup> However, recent work by historians such as Phillipe Buc and Christina Pössel has

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<sup>1</sup> *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Dirs. T. Gilliam & T. Jones (1975).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Janet Nelson (30 May 2008). Available:

<[http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews/Nelson\\_Janet.html](http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews/Nelson_Janet.html)> [Accessed 17.1.14].

sharply challenged how we conceptualise the notion of ‘ritual’ in the context of early medieval history.<sup>4</sup> In a controversial and strident critique of its traditional treatment by early medieval historians, Buc reconsiders rituals as inherently dangerous, given the potential for disruption, as well as for competition over meanings.<sup>5</sup> It is this latter danger that the Pythons’ exasperated King Arthur discovers. Buc also stresses that we do not have full access to early medieval rituals; their meaning is mediated and manipulated through texts.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Pössel argues in favour of the ‘demystification’ of ritual; rituals are not ‘constitutive’, as agency is the province not of ritual but of historical actors.<sup>7</sup> From this standpoint, Arthur’s kingship is not contingent on the ritual that gave him possession of Excalibur, but on the acceptance of his authority.

A renewed focus on Carolingian political ritual is particularly appropriate in 2014, which marks the twelve-hundredth anniversary of the death of the dynasty’s most prominent member, Charles the Great (d. 814), better known as Charlemagne. Hailed as the ‘father of Europe’ in his own time, Charlemagne conquered large swathes of Europe, and ‘revived the office of Roman emperor in the West (not known there since 476)’.<sup>8</sup> His legacy is complex and contested; indeed, a curious company including twelfth-century emperor Frederick Barbarossa, Napoleon and the European Union have all laid some claim to the figure of Charlemagne since his death.<sup>9</sup>

Yet this article is not concerned only with endings, but also with beginnings. It will offer an exploration of Carolingian political ritual between the inauguration of the first Carolingian monarch, Pippin III, in 751, and the imperial coronation of Charlemagne in 800. It will explore inauguration rituals, alongside royal funerals

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<sup>4</sup> See P. Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Oxford, 2001); C. Pössel, ‘The magic of early medieval ritual’, *Early Medieval History*, 17.2 (2009); cf. G. Koziol, ‘The dangers of polemic: is ritual still an interesting topic of historical study?’, *Early Medieval History*, 11.4 (2002).

<sup>5</sup> Buc, *Dangers*, 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> Pössel, ‘The magic of early medieval ritual’, 116 & n.17.

<sup>8</sup> J. Story, ‘Introduction: Charlemagne’s reputation’ in her (ed.) *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester, 2005), 1-2.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 2; M. Becher, *Charlemagne*, trans. D.S. Bachrach (New Haven, 2003), 5.

and baptisms, political submissions, and liturgical developments. The world of the Frankish aristocracy was inherently competitive,<sup>10</sup> and rituals were one means through which the new Carolingian dynasty could bolster its authority against potential challengers. As we shall see, tradition often played a significant role in these rituals. However the popular image, projected by such works as Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1894) and Hergé's Tintin adventure, *King Ottokar's Sceptre* (1938-39), of rulers as dependent on utterly inflexible rituals and traditions for their authority, is not reflective of medieval practice.<sup>11</sup> Rituals were often staged as ad hoc responses to crises, and innovation and improvisation clearly took place. This article will also stress the spiritual dimension of such 'political' rituals, which has often been underplayed in the traditional narrative. Ultimately, it will become clear that the meaning of rituals was often unfixed, and open to conflicting interpretations.

The ritual elevation of Pippin III, the father of Charlemagne, to the Frankish throne in 751 was fundamentally conditioned by crisis. The *Continuation of the Chronicle of Fredegar*, which is usually considered to be a contemporary narrative produced under the patronage of Pippin's uncle, claims that Pippin, with 'the consent and advice of all the Franks', sought and received papal endorsement for his elevation to the kingship.<sup>12</sup> The reported procedure for his inauguration is aligned with Frankish tradition: 'In accordance with that order anciently required, he was chosen king by all the Franks, consecrated by the bishops and received the homage of the great men.'<sup>13</sup> No reference is made to the deposition of the incumbent Merovingian monarch, Childeric III, whose dynasty, also known as the 'long-haired kings', had reigned for some 294 years.<sup>14</sup> The Continuator's refrain, laying stress upon the support of 'all the Franks', is an appeal to the established

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<sup>10</sup> S. Airlie, 'Charlemagne and the aristocracy: captains and kings', in (ed.) J. Story, *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester, 2005), 90.

<sup>11</sup> S. Airlie, 'Thrones, dominions, powers: some European points of comparison for the Stone of Destiny' in (eds) R. Welander, D.J. Breeze & T.O. Clancy, *The Stone of Destiny: Artefact and Icon* (Edinburgh, 2003), 123-4.

<sup>12</sup> *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar*, trans. J.M. Wallace-Hadrill (London, 1960), 102; R. Collins, *Charlemagne* (Houndmills, 1998), 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Fredegar*, 102.

<sup>14</sup> P. Fouracre, 'The Long Shadow of the Merovingians', in (ed.) J. Story, *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester, 2005), 5.

consensual model of Frankish politics at the level of the elite; a model underscored by repeated references to political assemblies throughout the chronicle sources.<sup>15</sup>

The so-called *Royal Frankish Annals* offer a similar but more elaborate account, with an embassy dispatched to Pope Zacharias 'to inquire whether it was good or not that the king of the Franks should wield no royal power'. The response was that 'it was better to call him king who had the royal power than the one who did not', hence Zacharias 'commanded by virtue of his apostolic authority that Pepin should be made king.'<sup>16</sup> This probably amounts to an appeal to the moral and spiritual authority of the papacy, as in this period - centuries before the age of papal monarchy - the pope possessed no legal jurisdiction over such affairs. The *Annals* subsequently report that Pippin was 'elected king by the custom of the Franks', again emphasising the importance of the traditional acclamation of the new king by the assembled Frankish aristocrats.<sup>17</sup> Pippin was then 'anointed by the hand of Archbishop Boniface of saintly memory' at Soissons, and 'Childeric, who was falsely called king, was tonsured' and placed in monastic confinement.<sup>18</sup> This requires some unpacking. To begin with Childeric, the ritualised shearing of his hair transformed him into an ecclesiastical figure, and thus stripped him of his secular identity.<sup>19</sup> But he was also shorn of his dynastic identity as one of the 'long-haired kings', as the distinctive hairstyle of the Merovingians was 'a badge of rank' (although, as Nelson has convincingly argued, it was unlikely to have marked them as sacral figures).<sup>20</sup> The choice of Soissons as the site for Pippin's elevation could represent an attempt to exploit, and assert ownership of, the traditional royal associations of a Merovingian palace site.<sup>21</sup> However, the reported anointing of a Frankish king with unction (holy oil) in an inauguration ritual was a novelty and, coupled with the appeal to the papacy, could suggest that Pippin

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<sup>15</sup> J.L. Nelson, 'The Lord's Anointed and the people's choice: Carolingian royal ritual', in (eds) D. Cannadine & S. Price, *Power and Ceremony in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1987), 147.

<sup>16</sup> *Carolingian Chronicles*, trans. B. Scholz (Michigan, 1972), 39.

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

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> The same fate would befall prominent opponents of Charlemagne such as his rebellious son Pippin 'the Hunchback' and Duke Tassilo of Bavaria.

<sup>20</sup> Nelson, 'Lord's Anointed', 140-1.

<sup>21</sup> R. McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2004), 152; cf. Airlie, 'Thrones', 125.



and his adherents felt obliged to embrace new forms of authority in order to, in Enright's phrase, 'bridge the charismatic gap' and overcome the traditional authority of the Merovingians.<sup>22</sup> Enright contends that the innovative inclusion of unction may have appealed to Pippin as it bolstered his position through the notion of 'untouchability', derived from the Old Testament, although the impact of this ideal is questionable.<sup>23</sup> As Nelson has argued, the Frankish reception of this new rite was ambivalent, as reflected by the surprising absence of references to it in Carolingian court writings and correspondence.<sup>24</sup> What 'mattered most' to contemporaries appears to have been the Frankish (indeed, Merovingian) tradition of the acclamation.<sup>25</sup> This reverence for the customary is paralleled by the symbolic reissue of the traditional Frankish law-code, *Lex Salica*, by Pippin and later Charlemagne.<sup>26</sup>

Yet it is not certain whether Pippin was anointed in 751; the Continuator only tells us that Pippin was 'consecrated', which is an ambiguous term that could merely signify that he received a blessing from the bishops present.<sup>27</sup> The role of Boniface, Archbishop of Mainz, in proceedings can also be challenged. Correspondence between Pippin and Boniface evinces tension between them; moreover, Boniface has been seen as more closely connected with Pippin's brother and rival, Carloman.<sup>28</sup> The fact that Boniface is referred to in the entry of 751 as 'of saintly memory', when he was martyred only in 754, betrays that this was not a contemporary composition; it seems more likely that this is a retrospective insertion to associate Pippin with an aura of saintly legitimacy and prestige.<sup>29</sup> McKitterick has argued that the *Continuation* is not a contemporary source, and also re-dates the *Clausula de Unctione Pippini* (which purports to be from 767 and

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<sup>22</sup> M.J. Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons* (Berlin, 1985), 122-3.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 117; Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', in her *Politics and ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), 290.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 292; 290.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 291.

<sup>26</sup> P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1999), 35; 47.

<sup>27</sup> Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', 291.

<sup>28</sup> McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 150; Becher, 36.

<sup>29</sup> *Carolingian Chronicles*, 39-40.

largely echoes the claims of the *Royal Annals*) to the late ninth century.<sup>30</sup> Her argument for a later date for the *Continuation* is not conclusive, although the silence in papal sources can cast further doubt on the notion that Pippin was anointed in 751.<sup>31</sup> In any case, Pippin's undisputed (re-)anointing in 754 by Pope Stephen II, which will be discussed later, could suggest that the first ceremony was in some way problematic.

Charlemagne's biographer Einhard, writing after his subject's death, similarly claims that Childeric was deposed on papal authority - although he credits this to Pope Stephen II - and denigrates the Merovingians as impotent rulers, with only 'the empty name of king'; power instead rested in the hands of the mayors of the palace, most notably Pippin.<sup>32</sup> Thus the *Royal Annals* and Einhard present and justify the deposition of 751 as a crisis of Merovingian legitimacy. But underlying this was a power struggle within the Carolingian family itself. When Pippin's elder brother Carloman, with whom he shared power, had retired to a monastic life in 746, it can be inferred that a deal was made whereby the childless Pippin would respect the succession of Carloman's son Drogo. However, the birth of Pippin's first son Charles in 748 dramatically altered the political situation and naturally caused Pippin to renege on this agreement.<sup>33</sup> The opposition of Drogo, who remained a danger until his capture in 753, was compounded not only by the prospect of Carloman's return from his monastic exile, but also by the threat posed by Pippin's half-brother Grifo, 'a powerful alternative focus of loyalty for the aristocracy' as another son of Charles Martel.<sup>34</sup> Grifo was only neutralised in 753 when he was killed in battle.<sup>35</sup> This dynastic struggle, which can be partly reconstructed through charter evidence, is masked by the pro-Carolingian sources; Einhard's refusal to describe Charlemagne's childhood doubtless lay in a desire to avoid acknowledging the acrimony of this period.<sup>36</sup> Despite the claims that Pippin

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<sup>30</sup> McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 138; a view endorsed by M. Costambeys, M. Innes, S. Maclean, *The Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2011), 33.

<sup>31</sup> McKitterick, *History and Memory*, 144.

<sup>32</sup> Einhard, *The Life of Charlemagne*, trans. D. Ganz in his *Einhard and Notker the Stammerer: Two Lives of Charlemagne* (London, 2008), 20-1.

<sup>33</sup> Collins, *Charlemagne*, 32; Costambeys et al., 62; Enright, 114.

<sup>34</sup> Collins, *Charlemagne*, 32-3; Costambeys et al., 55-6.

<sup>35</sup> Collins, *Charlemagne*, 33.

<sup>36</sup> Fouracre, 15-17; Becher, 42; cf. Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, 21.

was elected with unanimity then, there was patently opposition to his rule. Whilst it is significant that he was able to attract sufficient support to stage the ritual in the first place,<sup>37</sup> the usurpation of 751 was clearly a significant risk, designed to raise Pippin over his dynastic competitors.<sup>38</sup>

By 754, Pippin's position appears more secure and it was a foreign, not domestic, crisis that triggered the next significant Carolingian political ritual. In the face of Lombard depredations against papal lands, Pope Stephen II personally crossed the Alps during the winter of 753-754 to appeal to Pippin for support.<sup>39</sup> This episode is instructive in a number of ways. The divergent accounts of the first meeting between the pope and Pippin at Ponthion exemplify Buc's argument concerning the textual function of ritual as the 'keystone to a narrative'.<sup>40</sup> Papal sources report that Pippin received the pope with great honour and prostrated himself before Stephen, whilst Frankish sources claim that it was the pope and his entourage who prostrated themselves before the Frankish king.<sup>41</sup> This underlines the potential for narrative manipulations of ritual to delineate power-relationships, which gives rise to competing accounts of early medieval ceremonies.

In exchange for Frankish support against the Lombards, the pope himself anointed Pippin and his two young sons, Charlemagne and Carloman, at the monastery of Saint-Denis; an important Frankish spiritual site.<sup>42</sup> This ceremony conferred additional legitimacy on Pippin, as it linked him to both the prestigious figure of the pope and, through him, St Peter. Moreover, it allowed Pippin to underpin the succession of his dynasty by hallowing his two sons. According to the papal account, the young Charlemagne had also been dispatched almost a hundred miles at the head of an advance party to greet the pope.<sup>43</sup> Thus the spotlight in 754 was

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<sup>37</sup> Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', 151; Pössel, n.17.

<sup>38</sup> Becher, 33; Fouracre, 17; Costambeys, et al., 62.

<sup>39</sup> Nelson, 'The Lord's Anointed', 142.

<sup>40</sup> P. Buc, 'Political rituals and political imagination in the medieval West from the fourth century to the eleventh', in (eds) P. Linehan & J.L. Nelson, *The Medieval World* (London, 2001), 190; 198.

<sup>41</sup> Buc, *Dangers*, 260.

<sup>42</sup> *Carolingian Chronicles*, 40.

<sup>43</sup> *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., trans. R. Davis (Liverpool, 2007), 62.

fixed firmly on Pippin and his immediate family, distinguishing them as special and hence worthy of obedience.<sup>44</sup> Yet the events of 754 should not be viewed only in light of an attempt to legitimise the Carolingian line. It can also be understood as an appeal for divine favour by Pippin on behalf of himself and his family,<sup>45</sup> and the setting of Saint-Denis is suggestive of an attempt to invoke the intercession of the eponymous Frankish saint.

Similarly, the life-cycle rituals of the ruling dynasty, such as their funerary rites, clearly possessed both a spiritual and political dimension, which could be harnessed to bolster dynastic authority.<sup>46</sup> In 768, the dying Pippin III divided his realm between his sons 'with the approval of the Frankish [elite]'.<sup>47</sup> He died on 24<sup>th</sup> September and was buried 'as he had wished' at the royal abbey of Saint-Denis, 'with great honour'.<sup>48</sup> Nelson plausibly envisages a restricted audience, but a high degree of elite participation in this ceremony.<sup>49</sup> Like his father before him, Pippin was inserting himself into a tradition of royal burials at Saint-Denis, and thus co-opted part of their prestige, as well as spiritual legitimacy through association with an important Frankish saint.<sup>50</sup> His eldest son likewise expressed a desire to be buried there, which could point to an attempt, albeit unsuccessful, to cultivate a more coherent strategy of legitimisation.<sup>51</sup> Pippin's funerary arrangements would naturally have served to magnify the distinction of the royal family. However, the reputed manner of his burial, with the corpse notably positioned face-down and buried under the entrance of the church, is strongly suggestive of 'penitential humility' and a sincere desire to propitiate God - perhaps

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<sup>44</sup> S. Airlie, 'Towards a Carolingian Aristocracy' in his *Power and Its Problems in Carolingian Europe* (Ashgate, 2012), 123; cf. Airlie, 'Thrones', 125.

<sup>45</sup> S. Airlie, pers. comm.

<sup>46</sup> M. McCormick, *Eternal victory: triumphal rulership in late Antiquity, Byzantium and the early medieval West* (Cambridge, 1986), 367-8.

<sup>47</sup> *Fredegar*, 121.

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

<sup>49</sup> J.L. Nelson, 'Carolingian Royal Funerals' in (eds) F. Theuvs & J.L. Nelson, *Rituals of Power: From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Boston: Brill, 2000), 142.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 144. Competition between Carloman and Charlemagne undercut this, as the former chose Rheims as his burial place, probably to differentiate himself from his rival, see 176; Charlemagne's plans moreover came to nothing, as he was buried at Aachen.

for the unscrupulous actions that won him the throne.<sup>52</sup> The spiritual dimension of this funerary ritual should not be neglected then.

Nevertheless, Pippin's funeral was followed swiftly by the synchronised royal elevation of his sons Charlemagne and Carloman in the episcopal cities of Noyon and Soissons respectively on the 9<sup>th</sup> October; significantly the feast day of Saint Denis, when the intercessory powers of the saint were thought to be most potent.<sup>53</sup> Whilst this event was evidently choreographed, Charlemagne is not thought to have returned to Noyon, thus the setting of his inauguration ceremony seems like an improvised response to what was effectively a crisis – a temporary disruption to the kingship brought about by the death of his royal father.<sup>54</sup> The funeral can thus be viewed as 'ritualised crisis' that allowed an expression of aristocratic unity before the realm was reconfigured.<sup>55</sup>

The baptismal rituals of the Carolingians were also exploited as a platform to highlight the distinction of the dynasty. The baptismal shroud of Gisela, Pippin's infant daughter, was transported to Rome in 758, and was deposited by the pope in the burial chapel of St Petronilla; a saint particularly venerated by the Carolingian royal house.<sup>56</sup> This act evidently had both spiritual and dynastic resonances. The choice of high-ranking, battle-hardened Frankish aristocrats as 'couriers' for this shroud was also significant, as such ritualised acts served to inculcate an appreciation of the 'sacred dynastic aura around the new royal family' amongst the elite.<sup>57</sup>

The baptism of Charlemagne's third son Carloman in Rome in 781 also provided the occasion for a dynastic statement. Pope Hadrian personally baptised Carloman and anointed him and his younger brother Louis as sub-kings over Italy and

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 142. By contrast, Pippin's father was buried under the choir. For Pippin's dubious actions, see Enright, 115.

<sup>53</sup> *Fredegar*, 121, n.2 & n.3; Becher, 46.

<sup>54</sup> D. Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne*, 45; Nelson, 'Funerals', 135; cf. Collins, *Charlemagne*, 38.

<sup>55</sup> Buc, *Dangers*, 83; Nelson, 'Lord's Anointed', 151.

<sup>56</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 80, n.6.

<sup>57</sup> Airlie, 'Towards a Carolingian Aristocracy', 124.

Aquitaine respectively.<sup>58</sup> A papal baptism was clearly prestigious and appears to have been coveted by contemporary dynasts.<sup>59</sup> Together, the rituals of 781 stressed the specialness of the Carolingian royal line. The creation of the two sub-kings also represents the first expression of Charlemagne's succession plans. However, his eldest sons, Pippin 'the Hunchback' and Charles the Younger, had not yet been provided for.<sup>60</sup> Strikingly, Carloman was rechristened 'Pippin' at his baptism, and this has frequently been viewed as a signal implying that the elder Pippin was being edged out of the succession.<sup>61</sup> Conversely, as Nelson has demonstrated, he retained his prominent position at court.<sup>62</sup> The ins and outs of Pippin's fortunes need not concern us, but the very ambiguity of his position is significant. The uncertainties around these ceremonies may well reflect the often improvised nature of Carolingian political ritual. But this episode also suggests that the meaning of rituals was not always immediately transparent; indeed, with this ritual Charlemagne may have been deliberately circumspect. A clearer attempt to fix the status of the elder Pippin, which excludes him from the succession on the questionable grounds of illegitimacy, can be seen in the 'officially commissioned' history of the bishops of Metz, begun by Paul the Deacon three years later.<sup>63</sup>

The potential for uncertainty in the interpretation of rituals and the importance of texts in shaping their reception can be underscored by the case of the ritualised submission of Duke Tassilo, Charlemagne's cousin, in 787. Under Frankish military pressure, Tassilo 'delivered himself into vassalage... and confessed that he had sinned and acted wickedly'.<sup>64</sup> His 'humiliation' was amplified by the surrender of thirteen hostages, including his son, to Charlemagne.<sup>65</sup> In the ceremony of 787,

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<sup>58</sup> P.D. King, *Charlemagne: Translated Sources* (Kendal, 1987), 81.

<sup>59</sup> Duke Tassilo of Bavaria had similarly arranged for his son, Theodo, to be baptised in Rome by the pope in 772. See S. Airle, 'Narratives of triumph and rituals of submission: Charlemagne's mastering of Bavaria', *TRHS*, 9 (1999), 99.

<sup>60</sup> Pippin 'the Hunchback' was born of Himiltrude, Charlemagne's first partner. Charles the Younger, like Louis and Carloman, was born of Charlemagne's later wife Hildegard. See C.I. Hammer, "'Pippinus Rex': Pippin's Plot of 792 and Bavaria", *Traditio*, 63 (2008), 250.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Nelson, *Opposition to Charlemagne* (London, 2009), 23.

<sup>63</sup> Hammer, 250.

<sup>64</sup> King, 85.

<sup>65</sup> Airle, 'Narratives of triumph', 105; King, 85.

Tassilo also ceded 'a staff on the head of which was the likeness of a man', seemingly an object symbolic of the traditional authority of his dynasty, the Agilolfings, over the duchy.<sup>66</sup> Tassilo was allowed to retain his dukedom; however, he now clearly held it directly from the Frankish king.<sup>67</sup> Both a contemporary Latin poem produced for Charlemagne's court, possibly intended to shape the Frankish opinion of Tassilo, and a Bavarian source which survives only through its early modern transmission, place a more positive spin on events. Tassilo's submission is balanced by his rehabilitation, as symbolised through the gifts bestowed on the humbled duke by Charlemagne.<sup>68</sup> That the latter was ultimately dissatisfied is clear from his subsequent actions. After a short interval, Tassilo was summoned and appeared at Ingelheim in 788, apparently without first seeking assurances in the form of hostages as he had at earlier meetings, which suggests that he felt he had 'gained a level of security' in the events of 787.<sup>69</sup> At Ingelheim, he was condemned at what was effectively a 'show-trial'.<sup>70</sup> With Tassilo tonsured and removed from secular affairs, Charlemagne was able to annexe Bavaria. The meaning of the ritual of 787 thus appears to have been somewhat ambiguous. Both parties exited the ceremony with different views of what had been achieved.<sup>71</sup> The sources moreover reveal that this ceremony could be configured in different ways. This episode is therefore illustrative of the contingency of ritual acts, and - as Airlie has noted - the 'active' role of texts as part of the 'apparatus' that conditioned how rituals were perceived.<sup>72</sup>

Turning to liturgical developments under the Carolingians, we can again see the interplay of tradition and innovation, similar to the case of Pippin's inauguration. The liturgy also represents another area in which political and religious concerns

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 156; Airlie, 'Narratives of triumph', 111.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 112-3.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 108; 113-4.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. T. Reuter, 'Contextualising Canossa: excommunication, penance, surrender, reconciliation' in his *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, (ed.) J.L. Nelson (Cambridge, 2006), 165.

<sup>72</sup> Airlie, 'Narratives of triumph', 113.

fundamentally intermeshed.<sup>73</sup> Crisis can be seen to have catalysed developments in this sphere, particularly in the turbulent 790s.<sup>74</sup> A letter from Charlemagne to his queen, Fastrada, in September 791 on the eve of his crossing into Avar territory epitomises these changes. It relays in great detail the provisions for ‘three days of litanies’ by the army that included votive masses, litanic processions, a fast, and a sliding-scale of alms-giving in order to beseech divine favour for military victory.<sup>75</sup> Charlemagne also requested that Fastrada, at court in Regensburg, make similar arrangements.<sup>76</sup> The spontaneous character of the event is clear from both the letter and the account in the *Royal Annals*.<sup>77</sup> Whilst like anointing ceremonies, the initiative appears to have been clerical, royal authority was used to extend such liturgical practices.<sup>78</sup> This can be located within a wider context of royal sponsorship of victory liturgies under the Carolingians, as the production of the elaborate Sacramentaries (mass-books) of Angoulême and Gellone attest.<sup>79</sup> Victory services and prayers for rulers in time of conflict were not original; there is some evidence of similar Merovingian traditions in the eighth century.<sup>80</sup> What distinguishes Carolingian practice appears to be a marked expansion and intensification of these activities under direct royal patronage.<sup>81</sup> In such liturgies, the Carolingian royal family was once again foregrounded, along with key Frankish institutions, such as the judges and the army.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, McCormick contends that the likely purpose of such rituals was to intensify identification with the ruler amongst his subjects, bridging the gap between the centre and localities.<sup>83</sup> It is difficult to gauge the impact of these central commands on the ground, but the severity with which Charlemagne responded to the alleged refusal

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<sup>73</sup> M. McCormick, ‘The liturgy of war in the Early Middle Ages: crisis, litanies and the Carolingian monarchy’, *Viator*, 15 (1984) 3; E. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship* (Berkeley, 1946), 14.

<sup>74</sup> McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, 353; cf. Kantorowicz, 47.

<sup>75</sup> King, 309–10.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 310, cf. 87; McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, 353.

<sup>78</sup> King, 310; McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, 347.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 347; 352.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 344–5.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 347.

<sup>82</sup> Nelson, ‘The Lord’s Anointed’, 153.

<sup>83</sup> McCormick, ‘The liturgy of war’, 22; cf. Kantorowicz, 62.



of Abbot Potho of St Vincenzo to honour the monarch in the traditional psalm may suggest that efforts were made at enforcement.<sup>84</sup> Yet the spiritual intention of these liturgical acts as part of an effort to secure divine favour for the dynasty and the realm should not be underestimated.

It is fitting to end with some consideration of Charlemagne's imperial coronation at St Peter's in Rome on Christmas Day 800. The *Royal Annals* report that Charlemagne was crowned by Pope Leo III and subsequently acclaimed as emperor.<sup>85</sup> The meaning of this ritual is inherently uncertain and the accounts we have are 'subtly argumentative and were written as part of a contemporary struggle to control interpretation'.<sup>86</sup> For example, the Frankish claim that the pope subsequently 'adored', or prostrated himself before, the new emperor finds no echo in the papal record and may reflect an effort to downplay Leo's seemingly superior role in bestowing the imperial title by placing him in a deferential position to Charlemagne.<sup>87</sup>

The context for the imperial coronation was that of two concurrent crises in Rome and, at least from a Frankish perspective, Byzantium.<sup>88</sup> The entries in the so-called *Annals of Lorsch* are our nearest contemporary source, and were likely composed shortly after 801.<sup>89</sup> Collins contends that these annals may represent how the issue of Charlemagne's elevation was first communicated to those in Francia.<sup>90</sup> The journey to Rome was precipitated by remembrance of the 'injury that the Romans had done to Pope Leo', when the latter had been attacked by a mob, apparently with the intention of mutilating him so as to render him unsuitable for office.<sup>91</sup> The entry for 801 justifies Charlemagne's elevation by claiming that the imperial title, the 'name of emperor', was vacant given the unprecedented rule of a woman,

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<sup>84</sup> McCormick, 'The liturgy of war', 3-4.

<sup>85</sup> King, 93.

<sup>86</sup> Costambeys, et al., 160; cf. Buc, *Dangers*, passim.

<sup>87</sup> King, 93; cf. *Liber Pontificalis*, 188. This discrepancy recalls the competing accounts of the meeting of Pippin III and Stephen II at Ponthion.

<sup>88</sup> J. Herrin, *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium* (Oxford, 2001), 121.

<sup>89</sup> Collins, 'Charlemagne's imperial coronation and the Annals of Lorsch', in (ed.) J. Story, *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester, 2005), 64.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>91</sup> King, 144.

the Empress Irene, in Byzantium.<sup>92</sup> The Lorsch account also advances the territorial logic that Charlemagne held the traditional seats of empire in the west.<sup>93</sup> This challenge to Byzantine authority can also be situated within a broader context of Frankish competition with the Byzantines. The Franks had earlier taken aim at the eastern empire in the religious sphere, in the mistaken belief that the Byzantines had turned to idol-worship; a practice the Franks condemned in the *Libri Carolini*, or ‘Books of Charles’, and at the Council of Frankfurt in 794.<sup>94</sup> Frankish opposition to Byzantium should not be overstated though, as their efforts to secure Byzantine recognition of Charlemagne’s imperial title attest.<sup>95</sup>

However, Einhard claims that Charlemagne ‘was so averse to [the imperial title] that he said he would never have entered the church that day... if he had known the pope’s plan beforehand.’<sup>96</sup> It is very plausible that the protestation ascribed to Charlemagne was in fact a manifestation of a classical trope whereby worthy candidates would initially refuse an office, thus underlining their humility.<sup>97</sup> Alternatively, Charlemagne’s supposed displeasure may reflect some retrospective unease about the role of the pope in the ceremony. In 813, it was Charlemagne and not the pope who crowned his son Louis as co-emperor in Aachen, following in the tradition of the Roman emperors, whose authority was by no means dependent upon the papacy.<sup>98</sup> Whilst there is clear evidence of prior planning of the ritual, as suggested by the perfectly timed arrival of envoys with symbols of favour from Jerusalem, there does not appear to have been a completely coherent strategy behind the imperial coronation.<sup>99</sup> There was a surprising delay in the formulation of Charlemagne’s imperial title, and it was arguably not until 812 that

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Bullough, 111-2.

<sup>95</sup> Costambeys et al., 168.

<sup>96</sup> Einhard’s *Vita Karoli*, trans. J.L. Nelson in her ‘Why are there so many accounts of Charlemagne’s imperial coronation?’ in her *Courts, Elites and Gendered Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot, 2007), 7.

<sup>97</sup> Collins, *Charlemagne*, 144; as Bullough has noted (*Age of Charlemagne*, 183), a modern parallel is when the Speaker of the House of Commons is elected and has to be ‘dragged’ to the chair.

<sup>98</sup> King, 105; cf. *Liber Pontificalis*, 187, n.59.

<sup>99</sup> King, 93.

it was deployed on the Frankish coinage.<sup>100</sup> It is possible to view the imperial coronation rather as a tactical attempt to press Charlemagne's ambitions in Italy, exploiting Byzantine weakness and papal desperation; this is hinted at by the perceived threat to Byzantine Sicily recorded by the Eastern chronicler Theophanes.<sup>101</sup> Cumulatively, this reflects the often ad hoc character of Carolingian political ritual. There was some continuity in practice, however, in that ritual was once more used to underpin the future of the dynasty, as Charles the Younger was finally anointed king by the pope on the same occasion.<sup>102</sup>

In conclusion, the frequent foregrounding of members of the Carolingian family in key ceremonies served to shore up their dynastic authority in the competitive world of Frankish politics. This impression of Carolingian exaltation should not be pushed too far though: Charlemagne evidently remained a relatively accessible monarch.<sup>103</sup> Buc has rightly highlighted that the meaning of a ritual was unfixed and ultimately often contested, as witnessed by variations in the textual accounts. Whilst tradition could play a significant role in contemporary political ritual, the form of Carolingian rituals was likewise unfixed. There was a degree of improvisation and creativity, which would seem to be partly rooted in the fact that key rituals between 751 and 800 were often staged as ad hoc responses to both internal and external crises. That is not to say they were ineffective at fostering the legitimacy of the Carolingian line. The problematic origins of this new royal dynasty arguably continued to haunt the family's efforts to transmute its power into authority. This may also account for the new forms and authorities embraced in royal ritual, as well as Carolingian exertions to shape perception through the writing and rewriting of history.<sup>104</sup> In some respects, the Carolingians were inventing a new tradition: one of Carolingian authority. Yet, it should not be forgotten that there was clearly a spiritual dimension to many of these 'political' rituals, which is often lost given the prevailing historiographical emphasis on legitimisation. Moreover, it should be remembered that ritual was just one means of

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<sup>100</sup> R. McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge, 2008), 116.

<sup>101</sup> Costambeys et al., 167; Collins, *Charlemagne*, 148; King, 339.

<sup>102</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 188.

<sup>103</sup> Nelson, *Opposition to Charlemagne*, 6.

<sup>104</sup> See R. McKitterick, 'Political ideology in Carolingian historiography' in (eds) Y. Hen & M. Innes, *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000).

promoting legitimacy: judicious patronage, conspicuous Christianity, and military success likewise played an important part in securing the Carolingian line.

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# Rome: an instance of ‘identity dynamics’ through the application of the *logos* (λόγος) to the landscape

Nicolas Paul

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This article seeks to present the system of ‘identity dynamics’ through the instance of ancient Rome. From the geological landscape to the literary landscape, the different steps of literary creation that lead to the settlement of identity are presented. The cross-disciplinary standpoint offers a novel perspective of the description of landscape in ancient and modern literature, seen as a psychosocial component of human societies.

Eternal Rome (*Roma aeterna*) has cast its influence on Western culture throughout history. Its seven hills existed long before the arrival of mankind and will do so long after its extinction. But during a short and finite period of time – geologically speaking – a world of humans will populate their slopes. These men will live, fight, die, – and *write*. Thanks to this linguistic production, they will undertake the appropriation of the landscape: they will apply the modifying force of language, seen as *logos* (λόγος), that is, the linguistic rationalisation of *phainomena* (φαινόμενα), the things that appear, to a geological formation that merely *is*. We will consider *a priori* this appropriation as a dynamic that meets its measurable manifestation in the movement of *poiesis* (ποίησις), the literary creation. This interpenetration of language and landscape creates an identity which will then be theorised, glossed, and commented on – we call it identity dynamics. This identity creation process does not only involve these two factors, however, they will be the focus of our reflection in this article. We consider ‘identity dynamics’ as a dynamic system which contemporaneously lays down, performs and perpetuates the identity of a human group through the simultaneous operating of several ‘gears’. Language, landscape and their interpenetration constitute some of them.

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We will use a cross-disciplinary perspective – Classics, French Literature, Philosophy, and Psychology – which prevents us from using a subject-specific (and thus, limited) method. So, one must not conceive of the structure as being chronological or historical. Instead, we will use a particular method, idiosyncratic to this article, which will expose the modes of ‘identity dynamics’. Ancient Greek terminology is used for two reasons: it offers concepts that do not exist in the English language, and it constitutes the foundation of both Roman and French erudition. Finally, one could reproach this article for its non-scientific nature, arguing that its very object is intrinsically non-falsifiable, but one should bear in mind that the goal is more about exploring the possibilities of the topic than proclaiming truths.

A diachronic comparison of two texts by Stendhal and Martial will firstly allow us to study the modes of description of the same landscape: the Janiculum. Then, a grouping of selected Latin texts will expose the first steps of ‘identity dynamics’, before finally studying some French texts from the Renaissance era onwards in order to see how literature can add layers to itself, and how it can apply the process of identity dynamics *onto* itself.

Martial and Stendhal have in common the peculiarity of having described – nearly 1800 years apart – the same element of landscape: the Janiculum. The ‘eighth’ hill of Rome offered an entire view of the city, and has long been a place of contemplation for poets and writers. Martial wrote in *Epigrams*:

The few fields of Julius Martialis [...] rest on the long ridge of Janiculum: wide sheltered reaches look down on the hills, and the flat summit, gently swelling, enjoys to the full a clearer sky, and, when mist shrouds the winding vales, alone shines with its own brightness; the dainty roof of the tall villa gently rises up to the unclouded stars. On this side may you see the seven sovereign hills and take the measure of all Rome.<sup>1</sup>

The poet provides a pragmatic, albeit sensual, description of the hill. The reaches ‘look down’ (*imminent*), and the summit ‘enjoys’ (*perfruitur*) the sky and ‘shines’

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<sup>1</sup> Martial, *Epigrams*, bk. 4, trans. C. A. Walter (London: William Heinemann, 1919), 274-275.

(*lucere*); the observer ‘see[s]’ (*videre*) the hills and ‘take[s] the measure’ (*aestimare*) of the city. This ‘first-hand’ description gives us an *insider’s* point of view: Martial is a citizen of Rome and describes the landscape as such. The linguistic referents are physical qualities – ‘long’ (*longo*), ‘wide’ (*lati*), ‘flat’ (*planus*), and so on – that provide a technical description, as one would describe the Scottish Highlands. But then he writes ‘the seven *sovereign* hills’ (*septem dominos [...] montis*) and declares, ‘on the top’ of the description, the greatness of Rome; an eminently topical theme for a Latin writer. On the other hand, Stendhal, at the beginning of *The Life of Henry Brulard*, describes the Janiculum as follows:

This morning, 16 October 1832, I found myself at San Pietro in Montorio, on the Janiculum Hill in Rome [...] Facing me I see Santa Maria Maggiore and the long lines of the palace of Monte-Cavallo. The whole of Rome, ancient and modern, from the ancient Appian Way with the ruins of its tombs and aqueducts [...] is spread out in front of me.

This is a place like no other in the world, I mused to myself, and in spite of myself ancient Rome won over modern Rome, my memories of Livy all coming crowding back.<sup>2</sup>

The forms of the description are intrinsically different. Stendhal makes the distinction between the ‘ancient’ (*ancienne*) and ‘modern’ (*moderne*) Rome: he is an insider of the latter, and an *outsider* of the former, but he writes about both. He provides a mere toponymic description of the modern Rome – ‘San Pietro in Montorio’, ‘Monte-Cavallo’, etc. – but the description of ancient Rome is more complex. The use of the lexical field of the sepulchre (‘ruins’ [*ruines*], ‘tombs’ [*tombeaux*]) refers to a lost past: ancient Rome. Yet, that place does not exist anymore; indeed ‘this is a place like no other in the world’ (*Ce lieu est unique au monde*) – in fact, it does not *spatially* exist anymore, even though it still exists *inside* Stendhal’s mind. He does not innocently write ‘I mused to myself’ (*me disais-je en rêvant*): he is daydreaming about a mental representation, and that representation *is* the landscape on which he applies the *logos*. He does not write

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<sup>2</sup> Stendhal, *The Life of Henry Brulard*, trans. John Sturrock (New York: The New York Review of Books, 2002), 3–4.

about a pure landscape, but about the landscape *as it has already been modified* by previous writers – Martial being one of them.

What do these two texts tell us about the concept of ‘identity dynamics’? Firstly, we have to consider their form: they are temporally detached. However, they share a common spatiality: the Janiculum. This is what binds them together, and what makes them convenient for the study of ‘identity dynamics’. Martial writes about an element of landscape which represents the first geological base and, thanks to the *logos*, applies onto it an identity that he learnt throughout his life; the landscape is modified and thus obtains a second layer. Then, apart from describing a physical place, Stendhal mostly describes a landscape that exists solely within his mind: the layer created by Martial and his fellow citizens. To better grasp this idea, let us say that within Stendhal’s mind ancient and modern Rome – and all that existed in between – exist simultaneously, as presented by Sigmund Freud<sup>3</sup> in his famous example. By doing this, Stendhal transforms language into landscape; he applies the *logos* onto another product of language that has been moulded from pure landscape and has itself become landscape; he adds his own layer. That whole process *is* ‘identity dynamics’. Henceforth, it is possible to study the process itself, from the geological layer to the most intricate ones.

We will study now Cicero, Livy and Virgil as three literary ‘actors’ of the Roman identity dynamic. They are neither the only ones nor the most important. They, nevertheless, provide a good overview of the first layers that have been applied to that small landscape located in the centre of the Latium – seven hills, a river, a prairie, and a small mount that is called Rome. When Cicero writes in *De Re Publica*, ‘as regards the site of the city [...] he [Romulus] made an incredibly wise choice’<sup>4</sup>, the consequences are important: he attaches to the geographical location of the city the *ingenium* – the innate qualities – of its founder, Romulus, who also happens to be the ‘representative’ of the Roman identity:

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<sup>3</sup> S. Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XXI, trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press), 68-70.

<sup>4</sup> Cicero, *De Re Publica*, bk. 2, trans. Clinton Walker Keyes (London: William Heinemann 1928), 114-115.

With remarkable foresight our founder perceived that a site on the sea-coast is not the most desirable for cities founded in the hope of long life and extended dominion [...] for the mainland gives warning of the coming of the foeman.<sup>5</sup>

Cicero is *justifying* the place. He applies to the landscape his flawless rhetoric in order to transform it into a necessity: Rome had to settle down in that precise place, for no other was suitable. Moreover, Romulus is given a ‘remarkable foresight’ (*excellenti providentia*) that lets him foresee the greatness of Rome; thus insisting on the inevitability of its existence. Further in the text, he provides a description of the defences of the city:

The line and course of its walls were wisely planned by Romulus and the kings who succeeded him [...] and our citadel was well fortified by the sheer precipices which encompass it and the rock which appears to be cut away on every side that it remained safe and impregnable.<sup>6</sup>

As Romulus and his successors applied their *ingenium* to the fortification of Rome – they changed and improved a mere landscape to make it match an ideal – Cicero improved the landscape thanks to the *logos*. He creates and justifies the perfection of the city: Rome becomes a rhetorical evidence. Cicero is therefore an actor of the Roman identity dynamic. We would not get ahead of ourselves by saying that he set a major layer upon mere landscape: in his text Rome is magnified by the language.

On the other hand, Livy adopts a historian’s point of view, meaning that he will apply a retroactive *logos* to the landscape: by writing the past history of the city he performs the Roman identity dynamic on another scale. Yet, he does not seek the historical truth as we see it today:

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 120-121.

The traditions of what happened prior to the foundation of the City or whilst it was being built, are more fitted to adorn the creations of the poet than the authentic records of the historian, and I have no intention of establishing either their truth or their falsehood.<sup>7</sup>

As a matter of fact, his intentions are of a moralistic and didactic nature: he wants to inform his readers of ‘the life and morals of the community; the men and the qualities by which through domestic policy and foreign war dominion was won and extended’<sup>8</sup>. That goal recreates the past – application of the *logos* to the historical landscape – to exalt the present:

By intermingling human actions with divine they [the poets] may confer a more august dignity on the origins of states. Now, if any nation ought to be allowed to claim a sacred origin and point back to a divine paternity that nation is Rome.<sup>9</sup>

Rome deserves to have such a glorious past, even if it does not fulfil the expectations of historical truth. This approach is complementary to Cicero’s: they perform the movement of ‘identity dynamics’ on different scales, resulting in the establishment of a powerful and lasting identity. It is now clear that Livy represents a second major actor of the Roman identity dynamic.

Virgil is the third actor whom we will study. His *logos* takes place on another scale: the mythological one. He writes about the mythology of Rome using an epic register; he openly draws his inspiration from the great Greek epic poem, *The Odyssey*, without creating a pastiche of it.<sup>10</sup> This fact shows us that he did not create his text from nothing, but used the identity dynamic that was specific to Greek culture. Indeed, the Romans drew a part of their intellectual identity from the Greek civilisation<sup>11</sup>, and writing the ‘sequel’ of one of the most important

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<sup>7</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, bk. 1, preface, trans. Rev. Canon Roberts (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1905).

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

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

<sup>10</sup> M. Pernot and G. C. Happon, *Précis d'Histoire de la Littérature Latine* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1934), 79-85.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

Greek literary works was a brilliant way to do it. In book eight of his *Aeneid*, Virgil wrote:

Scarce had he finished, when, advancing, he points out the altar and the Carmental Gate, as the Romans call it, tribute of old to the Nymph Carmentis, soothtelling prophetess, who first foretold the greatness of Aeneas' sons, and the glory of Pallanteum. Next he shows him a vast grove, where valiant Romulus restored an Asylum, and, beneath a chill rock, the Lupercal, bearing after Arcadian wont the name of Lycaen Pan.<sup>12</sup>

Famous places of Rome are described and Virgil gives them a mythological value. For instance, when he talks about the 'Carmental Gate' (*Carmentalem [...] portam*), he pairs it up with the seer 'Carmentis'; the 'vast grove' (*lucum ingentem*) refers to that place between the two summits of the Capitoline Hill where Romulus created his 'Asylum' to draw people to Rome; the 'Lupercal' refers to the cave where, in accordance to the myth, the she-wolf hid with Romulus and Remus.<sup>13</sup> Virgil applies his *logos* to some well-known places of Rome and, thus, gives them a symbolic value. His action on the Roman identity dynamic is clear: the landscape is modified and justified by the mythology.

We now have a fair understanding of how Roman identity established itself through three actors of 'identity dynamics': Cicero added a rhetorical layer, Livy a historical one, and Virgil a mythological one. Identity is a complex concept and, of course, many other actors influenced it. We see how powerful 'identity dynamics' is: each actor applies his own *logos* on a unique scale, so the sum of the Latin texts produced – even within a short period of time – represents a considerable amount of layers added to the landscape. Furthermore, as we have said, language and landscape represent only a small sample of the 'gears' that constitute 'identity dynamics'; there are plenty of others that are moved by actors as brilliant as the ones we have seen. It is easy to perceive how complex, strong and lasting this identity really is. *Roma aeterna* deserves its name.

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<sup>12</sup> A. Virgil, bk. 8, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (London: William Heinemann, 1986), 82-83.

<sup>13</sup> P. Grimal, *Dictionnaire de la mythologie grecque et romaine* (Paris: P.U.F., 2005).

From the Renaissance period onwards, European countries showed a strong interest in ancient cultures, and notably in ancient Rome. However, this interest essentially expressed itself through Roman culture, and particularly through its literature. Indeed, if people visited Rome it was less for the landscape *per se* than for what was associated with it, that is, the several layers added by numerous centuries of intense cultural production. As we have seen, through the process of 'identity dynamics', these layers created a strong identity. This identity in turn became landscape; this is what Stendhal wrote about, and from now on this is what we will refer to by using 'landscape'. We will consider how French writers of the 16<sup>th</sup> century undertook the appropriation of this landscape, before seeing how Joachim du Bellay modernised it, and finally how it found, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a formidable representation through Joris-Karl Huysmans. In France in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the first steps of the appropriation of Roman culture were through translation and rewriting of the ancient models.<sup>14</sup> The writers who undertook this task were called 'humanists' and their goal was to equal the quality of the ancient literature. Jacques Amyot was the most influential Renaissance translator and played a major role in the diffusion of Roman culture in France at that time.<sup>15</sup> Clément Marot, one of the main 16<sup>th</sup> century French poets, also translated the first Eclogue of Virgil's *Bucolics*.<sup>16</sup> Among others, those writers revived Roman identity. They seized the layers set by the Romans thanks to the *mimesis* (μίμησις) – the appropriation of knowledge by imitation – it was now possible to modernise it. Joachim du Bellay wrote the following sonnet in *The Antiquities of Rome*:

You who look with wonder on the ancient pride of Rome, which  
threatened the heavens, these old palaces, these audacious hills, these  
walls, these arches, these baths and these temples,

Judge, in seeing these so ample ruins, what injurious times has gnawed  
away, since these old fragments still serve as models for the most  
ambitious artisans.

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<sup>14</sup> M. Braunschvig, *Notre Littérature étudiée dans les Textes* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1946), 133.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 135.

<sup>16</sup> C. Marot, *L'Adolescence Clémentine* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007).

Then observe how from day to day Rome, excavating her ancient abode, rebuilds herself with so many divine works.

You will judge that the spirit of Rome still strives with a fated hand to resurrect these dusty ruins.<sup>17</sup>

The adjectives in the poem do not convey any lyricism ('old' [*vieux*], 'audacious' [*audacieux*], 'ample' [*amples*], 'injurious' [*injurieux*], etc.): they acknowledge the old age of Rome. The poem presents itself as a reflection on the past and present status of the city. The penultimate stanza is meaningful:

Then observe how from day to day Rome, excavating her ancient abode, rebuilds herself with so many divine works.

The poet seems to be aware of his role: he is to 'rebuild' (*rebatist*) Rome. As a good student, he learnt and studied the ancient models – appropriation of the linguistic landscape bequeathed by the Roman culture – and now, as a good poet (an 'identity dynamics' actor), he modernises them; he adds his own layer onto the ones that predated him. The real topic of his poem – the landscape on which he applies his *logos* – is literature itself. The more the number of layers accrues, the more literature becomes 'meta-literature'.

For instance, Joris-Karl Huysmans, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, devoted the entire third chapter of his novel *À Rebours*<sup>18</sup> to the description of his character's Latin books collection. When Huysmans wrote his book, the whole set of layers – that at the moment was a landscape itself – had been through the humanism of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the classicism of the 17<sup>th</sup>, the enlightenment of the 18<sup>th</sup>, and the romanticism of the 19<sup>th</sup>. Its profundity was unfathomable. Huysmans' character, Des Esseintes, despises Virgil but admires the Latin authors of the 'decadent' period, even though they are generally seen as literarily poor.<sup>19</sup> Des Esseintes

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<sup>17</sup> J. du Bellay, *The Antiquities of Rome*, trans. Richard Helgerson (U.S.A.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 274-275.

<sup>18</sup> J. Huysmans, *À Rebours* (Gallimard: Paris, 1983), 101-115.

<sup>19</sup> M. Pernot and G. C. Happon, *Précis d'Histoire de la Littérature Latine* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1934).



offers to the reader a lecture of Latin literature history revised for the *fin de siècle*. It is not a coincidence that Huysmans is associated with one of the most flamboyant literary movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Decadentism. He sublimely captured the morbid agony of Rome as a literary *topos* that would slowly lose its importance afterwards.

These few examples show how, over a few centuries, the set of layers created by the Latin writers – which seemed so sturdy – can be seized by another country and then modified, modernised, and changed until a morbid mutation.

*Roma aeterna* was a beautiful example to illustrate the process of ‘identity dynamics’ through landscape and language. We see how, thanks to that process – which once again is not limited to these two factors – a mere geographical location can turn into a vast literary entity. Humans have begun by applying their *logos* to the landscape; they have created an identity that becomes bigger and bigger as books are produced. Then, after a few centuries of oblivion, this production was seized and modernised by French writers. Finally, we found in Huysmans one of the last champions of that huge set of layers that represented, over nearly 1800 years, the identity of Rome. I, as a human being writing this article, become an actor of ‘identity dynamics’: I perform my *logos* in accordance with a certain set of rules; by using a certain knowledge to aim towards a social ideal; to achieve a certain identity.

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# Competing performances of identity in Xinjiang

Alyce Shu

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In recent times there has been much unrest in the Xinjiang province of China, between Uighur separatists and Han settlers. In contrast, the Chinese government has portrayed a unified, multiethnic state. If identity is understood as a system of performance, then this contrast shows disconnect between the Chinese government's performances of Chinese national identity and the performances of Uighur national identity. There are multiple dualities in the way identity is performed in China depending on the kinds of performances that mark identity (nationality, ethnicity, gender, and violence), what spaces they are performed in, for whom the performances are made, and how they are perceived by different audiences. These identities also derive from encounters that create social boundaries between Uighurs and Han. These social boundaries build upon the competing identities and can result in conflict and sometimes even violence.

A few miles north of the Olympic Stadium in Beijing lies the Chinese National Ethnic Cultures Park. Employees dressed up in traditional costumes perform for the mostly Han-majority tourists, who get to wander around a fairground where they can gaze at Tibetan monasteries and then get in a good Dai water splashing festival before the day's end.<sup>1</sup> The portrayal of ethnic minorities in parks like the Chinese National Ethnic Cultures Park is typical of the Chinese government's approach to representing China as a peaceable mosaic of ethnicities, content and smiling like the employees in the park.

Simultaneously, Chinese state-media warn of 'growing religious extremism' in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, in the wake of violent riots that broke out on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2013. Xinjiang is an economically, politically, and demographically important area for the Chinese government; bordered by eight Central Asian countries and Russia, it makes up about one-sixth of China's landmass. The area contains several of the largest mineral reserves in China, and more than 25 percent

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<sup>1</sup> E. Wong, 'China's Han Flock to Theme Parks Featuring Minorities' (*The New York Times*, 23 February 2010). Available: <[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/24/world/asia/24park.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/24/world/asia/24park.html?_r=1&)> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

of the national total of petroleum and natural gas reserves.<sup>2</sup> The image of Hu Jintao's 'Harmonious Society' seen in the ethnic parks clashes dramatically with the image of Han-Uighur violence, as evidenced by the deadly July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009, and June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 riots.

The disconnect between the Chinese government's performances of Chinese national identity and the performances of Uighur national identity show how there are multiple dualities in the way identity is performed in China. With literal performances, like in the parks, the Chinese government insists on a unified, multiethnic state; in other words, an all-encompassing Chinese national identity. In contrast, the Uighurs desire self-determination for a separate Uighur national identity that is expressed by enacting a performance that directly reverses the performance disseminated by the Chinese government.

At the same time, the all-encompassing Chinese national identity the Chinese government hopes for holds another duality. For all the government's attempts to ensure that the various ethnic groups do not splinter off into an 'Other', which would compromise the complete mosaic of 'Us', those very attempts render the 'Other' more evident. Similarly, Uighurs built their cohesive Uighur national identity largely in response to government actions under Qing and Republic of China rule. The Chinese insistence on unity led to a separatist movement because the systems of performance, which each group hoped would impart a particular identity, were opposing and misconstrued.

The Chinese government and Uighur separatists both construct their national identities through performances of the 'nation'. Benedict Anderson defines the nation as 'imagined political communit[ies]...both inherently limited and sovereign'.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese and Uighurs construct their particular communities from feelings of continuity and 'deep, horizontal comradeship' through a shared sense of past, ethnicity, language, and culture.<sup>4</sup> These communities maintain 'large-

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<sup>2</sup> 'Xinjiang's Natural Resources' (*China.org.cn*). Available:

<<http://www.china.org.cn/english/MATERIAL/139230.htm>> [Accessed 18.03.2014]

<sup>3</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 2006), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

group identities', 'the subjective experience of thousands or millions of people linked by a persistent sense of sameness', and a sense of mutual sacrifice.<sup>5</sup>

A major source of conflict in the Chinese government and Uighur separatist identities is their competing sense of past, ethnicity, language, culture, 'sense of sameness', and sense of mutual sacrifice. The Chinese government is motivated by its 'century of humiliation'; the time between China's defeat in the First Opium War and when Mao Zedong founded the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. The 'century of humiliation' plays a major role in the PRC's national myth. In it, China, a civilization with a continuous 5,000 year old history, loses its longstanding preeminence to Western colonial powers. After a century of wars, foreign occupation, and revolution, the PRC reigns victorious, and with the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) leadership, China rises once again as a global power.<sup>6</sup> This strong sense of a return to greatness and a pervasive shame at the fall makes it natural for the government to attempt to perform the identity of a unified and proud Chinese nation in front of the 'West' that had brought on the 'century of humiliation'.

China has struggled incorporating ethnic minorities into its national identity. When the ethnic Manchu Qing dynasty fell, Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Republic of China, declared the Han-majority to be the main group identity. He claimed that ethnic minorities accounted for just 10 million, barely 2.5% of the total 400 million Chinese population at the time.<sup>7</sup> In 1949, the CCP came to power. The party championed China as a multi-ethnic country and continued to call for stronger national unity. The CCP developed the policy of 'impregnation' (sinicization by population transfers), sending Han to go west. In Xinjiang, between 1953 and 1964, the Han population increased as much as seven times, from 330,000 to 2.3 million, and doubled between 1964 and 1982.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> V. D. Volkan, 'Large-group identity: 'Us and them' polarizations in the international arena' (2009) 15 *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, 6.

<sup>6</sup> M. Schiavenza, 'How Humiliation Drove Modern Chinese History' (*The Atlantic*, 25 October 2013). Available: <<http://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/10/how-humiliation-drove-modern-chinese-history/280878>> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>7</sup> I. Attané & Youssef Courbage, 'Transitional Stages and Identity Boundaries: The Case of Ethnic Minorities in China' (2000) 21 *Population and Environment*, 258.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

Today, the CCP performs the unified multiethnic Chinese national identity in all the ways it can control. *Xinhuanet* runs articles like ‘Xi wants nurturing of ethnic minority talent’.<sup>9</sup> The government has put out a white paper assuring, ‘China protects cultural rights of ethnic minority groups’.<sup>10</sup> ‘Harmonious Society’ was put forward by images like the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, where 56 children representing 56 ethnic groups held the Chinese flag together.<sup>11</sup>

Yet for all of the CCP’s rhetoric, proclaiming the PRC as a ‘united multi-ethnic state founded jointly by the people of all its ethnic groups’,<sup>12</sup> its performances serve to further separate the Han-majority from the other ethnic groups. The Chinese government acts more on behalf of the Han-majority than the ‘united multi-ethnic state’, thus, rendering the Chinese government and the Han-majority interchangeable. Pierre Bourdieu writes that a basic political power is the ‘quasi-magical power to name and to make-exist by virtue of naming’.<sup>13</sup> In ‘naming’ the 55 minority groups, the CCP appropriates the power to confer identity onto the minority groups. The CCP creates an ‘other’, even as it ostensibly attempts to unite the ‘other 55 ethnic groups’, by distinguishing and delineating the ‘other’ even more obviously.<sup>14</sup> The CCP also uses demographics to accentuate just how many more Han there are than other groups,<sup>15</sup> in the same way Anderson says Western

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<sup>9</sup> ‘Xi wants nurturing of ethnic minority talent’ (*Xinhuanet.com*, 06 October, 2013). Available: <[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-10/06/c\\_132775485.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-10/06/c_132775485.htm)> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>10</sup> ‘China protects cultural rights of ethnic minority groups: white paper’ (*Xinhuanet.com*, 14 May 2013). Available: <[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-05/14/c\\_132380800.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-05/14/c_132380800.htm)> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>11</sup> R. Williams, ‘Patriot games: China makes it point with greatest show’ (*The Guardian*, 9 August 2008). Available: <<http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2008/aug/09/olympics2008.openingceremony>> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>12</sup> ‘National Minorities Policy and Its Practice in China’ (*Xinhuanet.com*, June 2000). Available: <[http://news.xinhuanet.com/employment/2002-11/18/content\\_633175.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/employment/2002-11/18/content_633175.htm)> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>13</sup> P. Bourdieu, ‘The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups’ (1985) 14 *Theory and Society* 729.

<sup>14</sup> ‘National Minorities Policy’, *Xinhuanet.com*.

<sup>15</sup> Attané and Courbage, ‘Transitional Stages’, 258.

colonial powers in Singapore and Malaysia used the categorization of census, map, and museum.<sup>16</sup>

The CCP rebukes any accusations of neo-colonialism due to the sense of past taken from the 'century of humiliation'. The Chinese national myth considers the CCP the 'vanguard of proletarian revolution', diametrically opposed to the neo-colonial charge.<sup>17</sup> The Chinese government and Han-majority consider themselves the victim of Western colonialism.<sup>18</sup> For them, they have difficulty understanding how waves of economic development through Xinjiang can cause so much outrage. For the Chinese, colonialism is so much a part of their shared sacrifice and shameful past that they cannot consider their actions to be close to colonialism.

The Chinese do not think their actions are colonialist because they perform the identity of a united multiethnic state. Thus, when violence in Xinjiang occurs, the Chinese government blames 'brainwashing', 'extremist', and 'terrorist' groups.<sup>19</sup> State-media exhorted that 'terrorists should not be defined by ethnicity, they are just terrorists'.<sup>20</sup> By ignoring the ethnic tensions, the Chinese can use the fight against 'terrorism' as a rallying point for every person, regardless of ethnicity. The Chinese performance continues to reinforce the 'us' and disavows separatist Uighurs from the autonomy to become the 'other'. By blaming fringe groups, the Chinese can add further security to Xinjiang under the guise of protection rather than oppression. For Uighur separatists, however, the Chinese response is an impetus to further separate into the 'other'.

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<sup>16</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 163.

<sup>17</sup> J. Hsieh, 'China's Nationalities Policy: Its Development and Problems' (1986) 81 *Anthropos*, 4.

<sup>18</sup> J. Sheehan, 'China's dangerous dilemma in Xinjiang' (*China Policy Institutes at the University of Nottingham*, 2009). Available: <<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cpi/publications/commentaries-reports/2009/sheehan-xinjiang-07-09-2009.aspx>> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>19</sup> J. Cui 'Pain lingers after Xinjiang terrorist attack' (*China Daily*, 05 July 2013). Available: <[http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2013-07/05/content\\_16735810.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2013-07/05/content_16735810.htm)> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

As more and more Han flooded into Xinjiang during the turbulent changes of the Chinese state in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, previously disjointed Xinjiang inhabitants began to coalesce a Turkic-Muslim Uighur group identity. Between 1990 and 1996, 61 violent incidents occurred in Xinjiang; these bombings and assassinations singled out those who were considered traitors by Uighur separatists.<sup>21</sup> The government connected these separatist activities entirely with ‘unlawful religious activities’. The government initiated the first ‘Strike Hard’ campaign, which sought to reduce religious influence in all spheres. ‘Strike Hard’ indiscriminately repressed Uighurs as a uniform group. As Chinese rule became more repressive, Uighur nationalism grew.<sup>22</sup>

East Turkestan became the calling card of Uighur national myth, through two short-lived independent governments in the 1930s and 1940s: the Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan, and the second East Turkestan Republic.<sup>23</sup> Uighur writer, Nabijan Tursun wrote that November 12, 2010 ‘marked the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of the greatest events in twentieth century Uyghur history, the establishment of the [ETR]’.<sup>24</sup> The World Uyghur Congress, a diaspora separatist group, cites East Turkestan’s 2,000 years of historical prominence on the Silk Road, and Uighurs more than 4,000 years living there. They cite a past of ‘resistance...handed down to them by their ancestors, against Chinese occupation’. Most tellingly, they declare that ‘the people of East Turkestan are not Chinese; they are Turks of Central Asia’.<sup>25</sup>

Repressive Chinese policies and Han-Uighur encounters created the social boundaries that denoted the Han and Uighur identities. As Han and Uighurs encountered the ‘other’ in daily life, individuals confronted Farhad Dalal’s

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<sup>21</sup> H. Enze, ‘Boundaries, Discrimination, and Interethnic Conflict in Xinjiang, China’ (2010) 4 *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 247.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Xinjiang Profile’ (*BBC News*, 13 August 2013). Available: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-16860974>> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>24</sup> N. Tursun, ‘Yearning for a Republic Erased from the Map’ (*Radio Free Asia*, . 12 February, 2011). <[http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/uyghurs\\_facts-07092009163637.html/uyghur\\_history.pdf](http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/uyghurs_facts-07092009163637.html/uyghur_history.pdf)> [Accessed 18.03.2014].

<sup>25</sup> ‘Brief History of East Turkestan’ (*World Uyghur Congress*). Available: <<http://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?p=488>> [Accessed 18.03.2014].



‘paradox of belonging’.<sup>26</sup> If groups are found and continually being made, then individual Han and Uighurs must navigate the confines of what makes the large-group identity ‘us’, versus ‘them’. Even as Han and Uighurs affirm their belonging in a group, once individuals realize that there *are* ‘others’ that do not belong, individual Han and Uighurs worry about his or her positions within the ‘us’ group. Thus, the large-group national identities become consolidated and perceived differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are emphasized.

Perceived differences are upheld in Frederick Barth’s idea of ethnic boundary construction through social encountering, where the process of exclusion forms groups. The ethnic boundary defines a group, rather than inherent cultural attributes.<sup>27</sup> This ethnic boundary delimits what performances an individual must undertake to remain in the group through external categorizations.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the intrinsic characteristics that those in the group believe create the group identity do not become as clearly or strongly performed until social encounters. Social encounters, then, have helped crystallize Uighur group-identity and foment nationalism. Han-Uighur encounters have increased a more uniform identification among Uighurs, who come from different oases with different dialects and cultural habits.<sup>29</sup> Uighurs, in relation to Han, perform their large-group identity within the limits of the ethnic boundaries brought by external categorization.

External categorization intensifies the perception of strong social boundaries between Han and Uighurs in many ways that go beyond the physical differences between a Han and a Uighur. In interviews, Uighurs often said that they could only be friends with Muslims. Muslim Uighurs observe a strict halal diet where Han diets are dominated by pork. Uighurs and largely secular Han cannot even break bread together. Inter-marriage is almost unheard of under threat of shame from the Uighur and Han society.<sup>30</sup> These differences in ways of living compound the resentment arising from the socioeconomic boundary. The Chinese

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<sup>26</sup> F. Dalal, ‘The paradox of belonging’ (2009) 14 *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* 74-81.

<sup>27</sup> F. Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Long Grove, 1998), 10-11.

<sup>28</sup> Han, ‘Boundaries’, 248.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 252.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

government's economic development in Xinjiang has seemed to largely benefit the Han-majority, who control the private sector.<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, this socioeconomic boundary has largely come about through the issue of language. Most jobs are only offered to Chinese speakers and unemployment among Uighurs is much greater than among Han.<sup>32</sup> Although bilingual educational choices are available, the Chinese government promotes full competence in Chinese as the 'key to economic and social development'.<sup>33</sup> Uighurs see the imposition of Chinese as the worst kind of cultural repression.<sup>34</sup> Whereas, before, most parents might choose to send their children to a Uighur school over a Chinese language school, today's Uighur parents can either choose a Uighur school and preserve the child's Uighur identity (the *minkaomin*), or choose a Han school and help the child to speak better Chinese, assimilate better into Han society, and have higher chances of employment (*the minkaohan*). For Uighurs, the purity of one's spoken Uighur symbolizes one's ascription into the group. The *minkaohan* perform a more Han identity, and thus become excluded.<sup>35</sup>

Social divisions are also significantly spatial. Han live, mostly, in the north of Xinjiang, and dominate the demographic in Urumqi. In Urumqi, Uighurs live in the Erdaoqiao district in the south. Uighurs concentrate in the south of the Tianshan line in Xinjiang, the site of oasis city Kashgar. In most oasis cities, Uighurs live in the 'old town' and Han Chinese live in the 'new town', and groups rarely mix, unless absolutely necessary.<sup>36</sup> Many Uighurs feel that the very spaces where they perform their identity have been co-opted by the Chinese. In Urumqi, traditional architecture has given way to the skyscrapers that characterize Chinese cities. The Chinese government has renamed the streets—'Liberation, Victory, New China'—to reflect the PRC's eminence.<sup>37</sup> The Xinjiang landscape, once a space for Uighurs to perform their identity, has now been molded by the Chinese.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 254.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 253.

<sup>33</sup> A. M. Dwyer, 'The Xinjiang Conflict: Uyghur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse' (2005) 15 *Policy Studies* 36.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 37-38.

<sup>36</sup> Han, 'Boundaries', 251.

<sup>37</sup> Sheehan, 'China's dangerous dilemma'.

The distance between Xinjiang and the Chinese center has perpetuated a spatial and temporal boundary that has shaped Uighur identity performances. With 1,971.4 miles between Urumqi and Beijing, Xinjiang is two time zones behind Beijing, yet, the Chinese government applies one time zone for all of China. In an act of defiance, Uighurs usually use local time, whereas Han use Beijing time to show their loyalty. For Han-Uighur interactions to take place, individuals must reach across this ethnic boundary and decide which time zone to use. The choice of time is a way for Uighurs and Hans to perform their identities.<sup>38</sup> The spatial and temporal distance is a physical and social boundary that prevents Han and Uighurs from undermining group identities predicated upon distinct differences and mutual discrimination.

As social boundaries force greater distance and little chance for Han-Uighur civic engagement, violence becomes a way of institutionalizing enemies.<sup>39</sup> When violence occurs, regardless of who started it, groups construct proxy narratives that compress their already strong 'us' and 'them' distinctions. The sense of sacrifice so pivotal to constructing nationalism<sup>40</sup> consolidates the violent incident into Volkan's 'Chosen Traumas', and every violent act after that becomes part of the national myth.<sup>41</sup> Violence becomes a means of group ascription. If one does not participate in the violence, then one does not make an adequate identity performance.

As Uighurs' available outlets for performing identity dwindle in the face of Chinese religious and cultural repression, their identity performances become more radical and violent. Headscarves and beards have become increasingly popular as the Chinese enact campaigns against them. The Uighurs use violence to refute the government's official disempowered feminized images of Uighur women and children.<sup>42</sup> For some Uighurs they have 'no choice but to use violence'

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 251.

<sup>39</sup> J. S. Murer, 'Institutionalizing enemies: The consequences of reifying projection in post-conflict environments' (2010) 15 *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* (15), 6.

<sup>40</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 10.

<sup>41</sup> Murer, 'Institutionalizing enemies', 6.

<sup>42</sup> Schiavenza, 'How Humiliation Drove Modern Chinese History'.

to show their masculine power and autonomy.<sup>43</sup> The more radicalized the group gets, the more violence becomes a necessary performance to stay in the group.

Violence between Han and Uighurs is a cycle of mutual discrimination. The blanket uniformity of each groups' perception of the complete otherness of the 'other's' identity makes violence likely to be incited by the slightest rumor and fear-mongering.<sup>44</sup> The government's assertions of terrorism make Han fear all Uighurs as potential terrorists. The Han-instigated violence makes Uighurs retaliate fiercely, or instigate their own. Violence becomes inevitable as the 'Chosen Traumas' collect; to not participate means to not perform the identity.

In conclusion, the Chinese government and the Uighurs imagined their communities in similar fashions – unified, revolutionary nations – but the way they have performed their identities have clashed and led to violence. In almost every part of daily life Han and Uighurs live in separate spheres. The Chinese government must institute mechanisms to allow open communication between groups to break down mutual discrimination and reinterpret the 'other's' identity performance. For that to work, the Chinese government must cease repression of Uighur identity performances, or face the radicalization of the entire Uighur nation.

Of course, Uighur identity performances are interpreted not just by the Chinese. In contrast to the benevolent view of Tibetans, Western media have given much less sympathy to Uighurs. Where peaceful Tibetans are awarded outraged support, 'restive' Uighurs do not receive as much support outside the Uighur diaspora.<sup>45</sup> The charges of terrorism have led the United Nations to recognize the East Turkestan Islamic Movement as a terrorist organization, and the United States State Department has released reports that connect Uighur separatist groups with al Qaeda and the Taliban.<sup>46</sup> Thus, Uighurs feel they have little international

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<sup>43</sup> D. C. Gladney, 'Cyber-Separatism, Islam and State in China' in J. Craig Jenkins & Esther E. Gottlieb (eds.), *Identity Conflicts: Can Violence be Regulation?* (New Brunswick, 2007), 108.

<sup>44</sup> Han, 'Boundaries', 254.

<sup>45</sup> Gladney, 'Cyber-Separatism, Islam and State in China', p. 109.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

support. The contradicting accounts of Chinese-Uighur experiences makes it difficult to account for the authenticity of anyone's history.

As difficult as it is to ascertain the truth, the picture of ethnic unity at the Beijing Olympics turned out to be false: they were all Han children wearing ethnic costumes. The Chinese government must fix that performance to allow Uighur participation and allow outlets for identity performance that do not resort to violence.

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# Presumptively deserving of protection: cushioning the nexus between EU asylum and irregular immigration policies

Katharine Weatherhead

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The protection of asylum seekers and the control of irregular immigration are not as easy to separate in practice as they are on paper. Within the European Union (EU), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and scholars often highlight the risk that the right to seek asylum is jeopardised by policies aiming to regulate irregular immigrants. The question becomes what the nexus should be between EU asylum policy and irregular immigration policy. The following article explores this question with reference to the concept of universality. It argues that the current policy nexus embodies ‘universality as equal treatment’, which has negative consequences for the migrants who fall subject to that nexus. It goes on to claim that ‘universality as generality’ is a more beneficial paradigm with which to shape the crossover between these two policy strands, both for the EU and for the migrants concerned.

In 2011, thousands of Tunisians arrived on the Italian island of Lampedusa, and the Italian government requested an immediate EU supported operation to control inflows of migrants.<sup>1</sup> The request was criticised as aiming to ‘dissuade people [from North Africa] from departing northwards, contravening the 1951 Geneva Convention and the principle of non-refoulement of asylum seekers’.<sup>2</sup> This example of a Member State tackling irregular immigration and the criticisms of such measures on grounds of asylum law illustrates a tension between irregular immigration policy, with its controlling core, and asylum policy, with its humanitarian core.

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<sup>1</sup> Migreurop, *At the Margins of Europe: The Externalisation of Migration Controls* (2010-2011 Report) 102. Available: <<http://www.migreurop.org/article2069.html>> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

<sup>2</sup> Migreurop, *At the Margins of Europe: The Externalisation of Migration Controls*, 108.

This tension appears more visible in practice than on paper. EU asylum policy is being transitioned into the language of ‘international protection’ rather than asylum, with an international protection applicant being defined as ‘a third-country national or a stateless person who has made an application for international protection in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken’.<sup>3</sup> Below, the term ‘asylum seeker’ is used to refer to these applicants, to reflect common usage. These applicants may potentially benefit from international protection on the grounds of persecution or suffering serious harm in their home country.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, an irregular immigrant is defined by his or her illegal stay, as a ‘third-country national who does not fulfil, or no longer fulfils the conditions of ... entry, stay or residence’.<sup>5</sup> The consequences of being an irregular immigrant are severe, with Member States being obliged to return all irregularly staying immigrants, subject to few exceptions.<sup>6</sup> The substantive difference between these two policy strands of asylum and irregular immigration is, thus, evident. Nonetheless, as the Lampedusa example shows, their implementation is often entwined, falling under general irregular immigration controls which can generate criticism from organisations concerned with human rights protection. This raises the question: what should the nexus be between EU asylum policy and irregular immigration policy?

The following article approaches this question from an analysis of the concept of universality. Despite seeming to be a fairly unambiguous concept, universality can have several meanings. Young raises this issue when discussing the rights of citizens in multicultural societies, specifically noting the difference between

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<sup>3</sup> Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection guaranteed (2011) OJ L 337/9, Article 2(i) (hereafter, *Qualification Directive*).

<sup>4</sup> *Qualification Directive*, Articles 9 and 15.

<sup>5</sup> Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (2008) OJ L 348/98 Article 3(2) (hereafter, *Return Directive*).

<sup>6</sup> *Return Directive*, Article 6.

‘universality as generality, and universality as equal treatment’.<sup>7</sup> This article evaluates the results of applying these two understandings of universality to asylum seekers and irregular immigrants in the EU. Firstly, it argues that universality as equal treatment, which is apparent in current EU policy, creates the harmful, simplistic and contingent binary between asylum seeker and irregular immigrant protection. Secondly, it argues that this problem can be solved by focussing on universality as generality, accompanied by a general presumption that these immigrants deserve protection, which would cushion the binary between asylum and irregular immigration policies in the EU. These arguments highlight that divisions of familiarity and foreignness are not only applicable to the somewhat clearer divide between nationals and immigrants, but they are also applicable *within* the ‘immigrant’ category itself.

## 1. UNIVERSALITY AS EQUAL TREATMENT: CREATING A QUESTIONABLE BINARY

Universality as equal treatment involves giving protection to groups through ‘affirmative acknowledgement of the group’s specificity’.<sup>8</sup> Many scholars seem to align implicitly with this understanding of universality by grudgingly pointing out that ‘[s]tates of the North tend to distinguish little in their policies between immigration management and refugee protection’.<sup>9</sup> Yet, the question of whether the distinction made between irregular immigrants and asylum seekers is justified necessitates rarely given explicit analysis.

### 1.A. CATEGORISATION IS EXCLUSIONARY

Universality as equal treatment, with its focus on treating each according to his needs, necessitates categorisation, but such categorisation is not a neutral process. First, categorisation is exclusionary at the level of social and political discourse. Academic writings suggest that categorisation between asylum seekers and

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<sup>7</sup> I. Young, ‘Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship’ (1989) 99(2) *Ethics* 250–251.

<sup>8</sup> I. Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, 1990), 174.

<sup>9</sup> V. Moreno-Lax, ‘Must EU Borders have Doors for Refugees?’ (2008) 10 *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 315, 317.

irregular immigrants is justified, and that the current blurring of the distinction is unjustified. For example, Kneebone argues that the ‘effect of the migration-asylum nexus is to treat protection needs of refugees as a secondary consideration to migration controls’,<sup>10</sup> thus, implying that giving all other migrants secondary consideration is warranted. However, the problem of certain migrant groups being deprived of protection because of the status of a closely associated group does not only work one way, with refugees being the deprived group. Refugees are given primary consideration above those failing to benefit from this status, which inevitably involves the labelling of failed asylum seekers, now irregular immigrants, as an undeserving group. Indeed, the United Kingdom announced plans last year to restrict legal aid in civil cases to irregular immigrants and failed asylum seekers who receive it ‘at our expense’.<sup>11</sup> Academics reinforce this phenomenon, as when they criticise asylum seekers being placed under the umbrella of immigration control, they bolster the idea that asylum seekers are to be ‘distinguished from the immigrant mass’<sup>12</sup> in some morally significant way. This, inevitably, implies that the others within the immigrant mass do not deserve the equivalent level of protection. Thus, what can be seen is pervasive discursive exclusion following group categorisation.

Second, such exclusionary discourse surrounding categorisation leads to tangible exclusionary consequences. It may be argued that categorisation for the purpose of providing protection is not necessarily exclusionary, as boundaries between these categories are not rigid and fixed. Indeed, this could be supported by the fact that the Qualifications Directive sustains a ‘middle’ category of individuals benefitting from protection: those who do not quite fall under refugee status but require help nonetheless.<sup>13</sup> Yet, the fact that these categories are not simply black and white does not negate the fact that categorisation itself is a tool of fixation, with the statuses that it creates becoming concrete in effect. For example, in France, a

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<sup>10</sup> S. Kneebone, ‘Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the International Context: Rights and Realities’, in S. Kneebone (ed), *Refugees, Asylum Seekers and the Rule of Law* (Cambridge, 2009) 1, 3.

<sup>11</sup> C. Grayling, cited by P. Hennessy, ‘Legal aid curb for foreign migrants’ (2013) *The Telegraph*. Available: <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9976786/Legal-aid-curb-for-foreign-migrants.html>> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

<sup>12</sup> Moreno-Lax, ‘Must EU Borders have Doors for Refugees?’, 318.

<sup>13</sup> *Qualification Directive*, Article 2(f), Chapter V and Chapter VI.

‘failed asylum seeker loses his entitlements to housing under the asylum system’,<sup>14</sup> and while emergency housing can be provided, it is often not given because of limited availability.<sup>15</sup> It is because of this categorisation that those who fall short of the ‘most deserving’ status seriously suffer. Furthermore, ‘[r]ejected asylum seekers ... have a greater chance of being helped than other groups of illegal migrants such as “economic adventurers”’.<sup>16</sup> Thus, well-intentioned NGOs entrench such harmful categorisation too. The point to note is that, even if the categories created under universality as equal treatment are not simply black and white, once categories of deserving and undeserving are made, questions arise regarding what to do with the ‘undeserving’ individuals who are problematised in discourse and harshly treated in reality. Discursive and practical exclusion, therefore, go hand-in-hand with the categorisation arising under universality as equal treatment in the EU immigration field. This exclusion is further seen as questionable when the groups subject to exclusion are not objectively fixed.

### *1.B. CATEGORISATION INVOLVES INEVITABLE ARBITRARINESS*

An additional problem in the categorisation required under universality as equal treatment is that there exists a level of difficulty and contingency in determining who qualifies for each group. It could be argued that the categories could simply be expanded to ensure that more people fall under the ‘deserving’ groups and are protected. Yet, much of the categorisation has a somewhat arbitrary nature which can appear unfair for the individuals at the margins of the defining boundaries, even if from a macro-level the categories seem clear-cut. At one level, because EU asylum and irregular immigration policy is decentralised, ‘[w]ho is considered to be a “genuine” refugee, and who is not, is entirely within the discretion of governments’,<sup>17</sup> which increases the uncertainty of the decisions on those who are

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<sup>14</sup> Jesuit Refugee Service Europe, *Living in limbo: forced migrant destitution* (Brussels, 2010), 151. Available:

<<http://www.jrseurope.org/publications/JRS%20Europe%20Living%20in%20Limbo%20-18-18h.pdf>> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

<sup>15</sup> JRS Europe, *Living in limbo: forced migrant destitution*, 151.

<sup>16</sup> A. Leerkes and D. Broeders ‘A Case of Mixed Motives? Formal and Informal Functions of Administrative Detention’ (2010) 50(5) *British Journal of Criminology* 830, 840.

<sup>17</sup> T. Hayter, *Open Borders: The Case Against Immigration Controls* (London, 2004), 65.

to fall under each category. This flexibility highlights that legal guidelines can be implemented differently, with some states going above the floor of EU asylum policy in determining individuals deemed requiring protection. For example, there are wide differences among Member States in their recognition of female genital mutilation as a reason for seeking asylum.<sup>18</sup> At a second level, even if discretion in implementing the categories is removed, the problem remains that the categories themselves encompass somewhat arbitrary distinctions. The categories are created by privileged groups, and the 'objective' criteria which they enact may not coincide with the subjective feelings of individuals seeking protection. A potent example is that of a failed asylum seeker in Sweden who committed suicide in 2005 out of fear of being sent back to Eritrea, where it is possible to face obligatory military conscription or politically motivated detention and torture.<sup>19</sup> These issues on arbitrariness, therefore, cast doubt on the justification of criteria for group qualification under universality as equal treatment.

While the goal of asylum policy is to provide protection to those who need it, it would be unwise to ignore the negative effects it has on the contingent group of people who are not protected. It may be said, as Young argues, that 'some of the disadvantages that oppressed groups suffer can be remedied in policy *only* by an affirmative acknowledgement of the group's specificity'.<sup>20</sup> Following this, a practical stance may be that we cannot be too fastidious about who decides which individuals are in and which are out, as a certain level of arbitrariness is inevitable. As long as people designated as needing help can get it, that is what is important; some protection is better than none. The problem is that this stance does not see the wider picture of where that protected group is positioned in society. Hierarchies are created through differentiation, and at times aiding one could injure another. In the Czech Republic there was a significant rise in the number of asylum applications lodged in 2001, which then led to the imposition of more

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<sup>18</sup> H. Cheikh, C. Querton and E. Soulard, *Gender-related Asylum Claims in Europe: Comparative Analysis of Law, Policies and Practice Focusing on Women in Nine EU Member States* (2012) GENSEN Project, 17. Available: <<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4fc74d342.pdf>> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

<sup>19</sup> JRS Europe, *Living in Limbo: Forced Migrant Destitution*, 117-8.

<sup>20</sup> Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 174 (emphasis added).

restrictions on the asylum system in 2002.<sup>21</sup> This development indicates that on the one hand a discontent with general immigration negatively impacted upon the inclusiveness of the asylum seeker policy, while on the other hand, although the right to seek asylum was still protected somewhat, a focus was strengthened on excluding 'mere' irregular immigrants because of the increase in asylum seekers. These categories, therefore, are not distinct and independent, but interdependent. Binary-oriented policy stances neglect the complexities of reality, and are not only questionable because of their arbitrary nature, but because of the concrete effects this binary has in reality. This is illustrated by the case of one rejected asylum seeker in the United Kingdom, who 'was sleeping on the streets for 6 months while he was still physically ill from his torture in Ethiopia'.<sup>22</sup> The arbitrary nature of categorisation embodied within universality as equal treatment can, thus, be seen to increase the problems with protecting the human dignity of all individuals within the EU.

Overall, categorisation resulting from universality as equal treatment in the asylum and irregular immigration sphere is both exclusionary and arbitrary, with a major negative effect on the protection of irregular immigrants in particular. Indeed, while the politics of difference aims at treating each according to his needs, under the current discourse in the EU it seems that irregular immigrants are deemed as having (or deserving) minimum needs, accompanied by a severe lack of ability to benefit from basic rights - including the right to life - which are supposedly common to all of humanity and which the EU has vowed to uphold.<sup>23</sup> The question then becomes whether a different understanding of universality fares any better.

## 2. UNIVERSALITY AS GENERALITY: CREATING 'PRESUMPTIVELY DESERVING' IMMIGRANTS

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<sup>21</sup> A. Szczepanikova, 'Between Control and Assistance: The Problem of European Accommodation Centres for Asylum Seekers' (2012) 51(4) *International Migration* 130, 133.

<sup>22</sup> JRS Europe, *Living in Limbo: Forced Migrant Destitution*, 124.

<sup>23</sup> The granting of binding legal status to the Charter of Fundamental Rights in 2009 is a clear example of this.

Universality as generality denotes applying the same rules to all, as though their needs and desires are ‘universal as opposed to particular, common as opposed to differentiated’.<sup>24</sup> This may seem counter-instinctive within the immigration realm, as asylum seekers are prioritised due to a believed level of need. Yet, such beliefs can be shaped by current categorisation. Moreover, it is not the notion of need, but the problems that arise when distinguishing those most in need that may justify using universality as generality. Universality as generality could solve some of the issues created by universality as equal treatment currently embodied in the EU asylum-irregular immigration policy nexus.

## *2.A. REDUCTION OF SELF-DEFEATING POLICY STANCES*

As highlighted above, current EU policy tends to create a hierarchy of individuals necessitating protection, leading to the situation in which discourse advocates the protection of asylum seekers, while practice endangers that objective. However, universality as generality could reduce this problem. Moreno-Lax argues that while refugees ‘to be recognised as such need to become international migrants, this does not constitute their most distinctive character’.<sup>25</sup> Such statements imply that refugee characteristics are distinct and familiar, which then marginalises the foreign non-refugees. Therefore, a circular process is created whereby claiming the distinctiveness of refugees mirrors a negative distinctiveness of non-refugees, which then injures the protection of would-be-refugees by encouraging border control. Universality as generality, encompassed in a guiding principle of presumptively deserving migrants, could help reduce this self-defeating categorisation by widening access to the asylum procedure. It may be interjected that reducing categorisation as a guiding principle between those deserving and those not deserving protection could waste state resources, as it would allow individuals who are out to abuse the system to gain from accessing the costly procedure. For instance, an asylum seeker in Prague claimed that some women in asylum seeker accommodation were sex workers and only applied for asylum upon arrest.<sup>26</sup> Yet, it must first be asked why those individuals are in such a position.

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<sup>24</sup> Young ‘Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship’, 253.

<sup>25</sup> Moreno-Lax, ‘Must EU Borders Have Doors for Refugees?’, 329.

<sup>26</sup> Szczepanikova, ‘Between Control and Assistance: The Problem of European Accommodation Centres for Asylum Seekers’, 134.



The fact that EU law does not grant a legal status and, therefore, legal rights to certain irregular immigrants can plausibly be said to contribute to this problem.<sup>27</sup> A presumption of deservingness could push policy towards fixing this gap, thereby reducing any actual abuse of the asylum system and consequent claims that many immigrants do not really need protection. Universality as generality could, then, lead to a reduction in the self-defeating ‘goodie/baddie paradigm’,<sup>28</sup> by minimising the creation of complex distinctions and replacing them with a presumption that all immigrants deserve protection.

The wider phenomenon that is then revealed by the self-defeating, group-creating asylum policy is that it is detrimental to the EU’s wider policies on being ‘a Europe of fundamental rights’.<sup>29</sup> It seems that from a universal rights analysis, it is the threat to life that is enshrined in all human rights legislation, not simply the nature of that threat.<sup>30</sup> Threats to life are not a unique characteristic of refugees. For instance, one participant in an irregular immigration roundtable stated: ‘People have no choice but to leave Senegal: a new saying by young people is “Barcelona or die”. Wealth is transferred from poor to rich countries and migrants follow it’.<sup>31</sup> Yet, these ‘economic migrants’ are subject to degrading treatment if they do not manage to migrate legally, such as being pushed into the informal economy,<sup>32</sup> while successful asylum seekers who flee persecution benefit from legal shelter, despite both groups fearing for their lives. Now, ‘[f]or Arendt the fate

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<sup>27</sup> For a clear example, see E. Mincheva, ‘Case Report on Kadzoev, 30 November 2009’ (2010) 12(3) *European Journal of Migration and Law* 361, 386 onwards.

<sup>28</sup> B. Anderson, ‘Illegal Immigrant: Victim or Villain?’ (2008) *COMPAS Working Paper No.64*, ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, University of Oxford, 2. Available: <[http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/files/Publications/working\\_papers/WP\\_2008/WP0864%20Bridget%20Anderson.pdf](http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/files/Publications/working_papers/WP_2008/WP0864%20Bridget%20Anderson.pdf)> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

<sup>29</sup> European Commission, *Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union*, (19 October 2010) Communication from the Commission COM (2010) 573 final, Brussels 2. Available: <[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/intro/doc/com\\_2010\\_573\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/intro/doc/com_2010_573_en.pdf)> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

<sup>30</sup> ‘Everyone has the right to life’: Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010) OJ C 83/02, Article 2(1).

<sup>31</sup> Migrants’ Rights Network, *Irregular Migrants: The Urgent Need for a New Approach* (2009) 6: <[http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/files/publications/irregularmigrants\\_fullbooklet.pdf](http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/files/publications/irregularmigrants_fullbooklet.pdf)> [accessed 15 January 2014].

<sup>32</sup> See generally the case studies in JRS Europe, *Living in Limbo: Forced Migrant Destitution*.

of the refugee was to endure “the abstract nakedness of being human and nothing but human”.<sup>33</sup> As can be seen from the above examples, this abstract nakedness applies primarily to irregular immigrants; asylum seekers and refugees are one step ahead. If a generalised image of presumptively deserving immigrants was promoted, all migrants would be seen to have a real claim to protection. They would be treated accordingly, even if later policy decides that this claim, while still legitimate, cannot be resourced by the government over the long-term. It is this presumption that could reduce the harmful immigration control effects on human rights protection. An example of this is the 1992 Mac Ruby case, in which Ghanaian migrants boarded a ship due to stop in France, and after their discovery the crew killed these migrants ‘to avoid having to pay a fine’ for carrying them.<sup>34</sup> Such situations could be avoided if a presumption of the deservingness of immigrants was followed, enshrining universality as generality, and EU policies like carrier’s sanctions,<sup>35</sup> which encompass today’s ‘deservingness binary’ within asylum and irregular immigration policies, were modified accordingly. By eliminating such an artificial binary as a founding policy principle, universality as generality within EU immigration policy could strengthen wider policies aiming at human rights protection.

## 2.B. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POTENTIAL PRACTICAL ISSUES

The elimination of the supposedly black and white categories of deservingness of protection, created by the politics of difference in EU asylum and irregular immigration policy, would be one step to achieving a policy of presumptively deserving immigrants with all of its aforementioned benefits, yet, it is no easy task. At the level of public perceptions, it may be argued that such a change would be detrimental to protecting immigrants in general, as ‘[c]urrent policies and practices seem to be built on a generalised distrust’<sup>36</sup> which would take over if no

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<sup>33</sup> W. Walters, ‘Deportation, Expulsion, and the International Police of Aliens’ (2002) 6(3) *Citizenship Studies*, 265, 269.

<sup>34</sup> Migreurop, *At the Margins of Europe: The Externalisation of Migration Controls*, 40.

<sup>35</sup> Council Directive 2004/82/EC of 29 April 2004 on the obligation of carriers to communicate passenger data (2004) OJ L 261/24.

<sup>36</sup> N. Perkowski, ‘A Normative Assessment of the Aims and Practices of the European Border Management Agency FRONTEX’ (2012) *Refugee Studies Centre Working Paper No.81*, 30. Available: <[http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/working-papers-folder\\_contents/wp81-](http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/working-papers-folder_contents/wp81-)

specific categories were present. The effect could be an increase in laws aimed at targeting anyone who is seen to help immigrants, like the 2007 decree in France ‘which allowed for the creation of ... a database aimed at facilitating the expulsion of migrants but which also allowed data to be stored on anyone providing accommodation to foreigners with no authorisation to stay’.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, Alexseev argues that ‘once this “securitizing” mind-set takes hold, assurances and pledges of innocence by migrants or migrant-sending states are unlikely to be trusted by the public and policymakers in migrant-receiving states’.<sup>38</sup> It must be admitted that such phenomena are inevitable considering statistics stating that, for example, 80% of survey respondents in Italy worry about illegal immigration.<sup>39</sup> The creation of a widespread belief in presumptively trustworthy immigrants appears to be a herculean task. Yet, by gradually removing supposedly objective labels of legitimacy and illegitimacy it could be possible to reduce distrust concerning immigration overall. This is the key problem that must be tackled, as universality as generality is preferable, but it is impossible unless general public perceptions become more favourable. For now, categorisation seems to be the practical option, while being less desirable. It is only by reducing the creation of moral labels through categorisation that a presumption of deservingness of protection can take hold, and push EU policy towards universality as generality in immigrant protection.

On a more concrete policy level, it is important to note that advocating for a policy of presumptively deserving migrants is not incompatible with either closed or open borders, contrary to what may be thought; it is compatible with both, as its aim is not to define wider immigration policy, but to protect those who fall under it. To tackle the problem of potential popular backlashes and of applying the suggested approach in states with a closed, limited immigration policy, it is first necessary to create more routes for asylum application before immigrants get to the EU’s borders; once they get there it becomes harder to justify refusing entry

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normative-assessment-frontex-190412-en.pdf/view?searchterm=perkowski> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

<sup>37</sup> L. Fekete, ‘Europe: Crimes of Solidarity’ (2009), 50(4) *Race and Class* 83, 85.

<sup>38</sup> M. Alexseev, *Immigration Phobia and the Security Dilemma* (Cambridge, 2009) 226.

<sup>39</sup> Transatlantic Trends Immigration, *Key Findings* (2011 Report) 7. Available: <[http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2011/12/TTImmigration\\_final\\_web1.pdf](http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2011/12/TTImmigration_final_web1.pdf)> [Accessed 15.01.2014].

and that is where the effects of categorisation are detrimental. By increasing extra-territorial asylum application resources, it would be possible to reduce any feared chaos. This does not mean that refusing entry to some is not justified; respect for equal human dignity does not require an absolute right of entry.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, even adamant open borders advocates admit that rights of entry should not be absolute: while strongly pushing for open borders, Hayter argues that '[i]f freedom to migrate meant that movements of people were so large that they led to catastrophic disruption, chaos and decline in living standards in the rich countries, then, however admirable the ideal, it would be understandable that it should be opposed'.<sup>41</sup> It may be interjected that this leads to the problem of saying that if you reach the EU you can be subject to more favourable protection presumptions, and it has been pointed out by El-Enany that those who actually reach the borders are the least vulnerable individuals.<sup>42</sup> Yet, this does not mean that the ones who reach the EU are not vulnerable at all, as can be seen from the numerous stories of irregular immigrants in the EU given throughout this article. Presumptively deserving migrant policies, therefore, do not pose an obstacle to governments' decisions on broader immigration issues, but help to soften their effects.

Overall, it is through embodying the principle of universality as generality within the immigration realm, treating each individual immigrant as presumptively deserving of protection, that the EU asylum-irregular immigration policy nexus could be reshaped: not only to increase its effectiveness in protecting the individuals who fall subject to such a nexus, but also to increase the effectiveness of the policies that are already implemented.

## CONCLUSION: CUSHIONING THE ASYLUM-IRREGULAR IMMIGRATION POLICY NEXUS

'The starting point of critique is an injustice or suffering'.<sup>43</sup> Some may start by saying that the injustice in the EU asylum-irregular immigration sphere is that

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<sup>40</sup> R. Pevnick, *Immigration and the Constraints of Justice* (Cambridge, 2011), 36 and 39.

<sup>41</sup> Hayter, *Open Borders: The Case Against Immigration Controls*, 152.

<sup>42</sup> N. El-Enany, 'Who is the new European refugee?' (2008) 33(3) *European Law Review* 313, 313.

<sup>43</sup> Perkowski, 'A Normative Assessment of the Aims and Practices of the European Border Management Agency FRONTEX', 6.

potential refugees might be overshadowed by the negative categorisation of irregular immigrants. This article aims to highlight that the inverse is also true; the current policy overshadows irregular immigrants. The current EU asylum-irregular immigration policy nexus fits well with the concept of universality as equal treatment, in which people are distinguished according to their needs and treated accordingly. However, as highlighted above, categorisation is detrimental to protecting any of the individuals falling under these policies, encompassing exclusion, an inevitable level of arbitrariness, and negative discourse regarding immigrants which also impact asylum seekers who may be seen as more socially acceptable. In other words, it creates a clear 'foreign versus familiar' policy divide which, in practice, subjects both of these groups to the measures imposed primarily to regulate the 'foreign' category. These consequences have serious implications on the protection of human rights in the EU and the effectiveness of policies implemented to forward that protection.

'We may describe the attempts to control present and future immigration as a sort of 'gatekeeping': some foreign citizens are allowed to enter, others are stopped'.<sup>44</sup> For the myriad of reasons outlined above, which benefit both a wider range of vulnerable individuals and host societies in general, these gates should exercise a general trust of those who arrive, especially the gate closest to the border, placing them all in the category of needing protection from the outset. In other words, they should be seen as presumptively deserving of protection. The nexus between EU asylum and irregular immigration policy should be one which is characterised by universality as generality, which embodies this presumption. The question then becomes whether the division between foreign and familiar categories of immigrants would fade away in wider public discourse. However, whatever aspect of this field is in focus, the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the EU are involved, and so the stakes are high.

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<sup>44</sup> T. Hammar, 'Legal Time of Residence and the Status of Immigrants', in R. Baubock (ed), *From Aliens to Citizens: Redefining the Status of Immigrants in Europe* (Surrey, 1994) 187, 188.

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# Masculinity and monasticism: an exploration of the ways in which traditional hegemonic masculinity was reconciled with the challenges of monasticism

Deborah White

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The Late Antique and early medieval periods saw the growth of monastic communities in the West, as ideas about asceticism and cenobitic monasticism spread from Egypt. At the same time, a strict system of hierarchical gender identity operated in the Roman Empire, in which masculinity, and in particular, elite masculinity, was dominant. This article will explore the ways in which monasticism initially provided a threat to the hegemonic masculinity of its day before considering how it adapted, particularly considering differences in dress, labour and the public voice. It will conclude that through these adaptations, the two concepts were largely reconciled, allowing those who identified into the masculine elite to adopt monastic lifestyles with enthusiasm, eventually becoming dominant in monastic communities at the expense of women and non-elite men.

When monasticism first began to transition to the West, it was, perhaps surprisingly, adopted with great enthusiasm by a number of aristocratic Roman women, such as Paula and Melania.<sup>45</sup> Their male counterparts were, however, slower to adopt this new lifestyle. This may be because monasticism's model of manliness conflicted with traditional Roman masculinity, making monastic life unpopular amongst men who were unwilling to give up not only their social positions and freedoms but also a key part of their identity. For women, the dynamics were different; their limited power in the secular world meant that adopting a monastic or ascetic lifestyle was, potentially, a means to self-empowerment. Women could reduce their subjugation under men, whether as

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<sup>45</sup> Paula and Melania were two of the earliest examples of aristocratic women who adopted an ascetic lifestyle. Paula is known for her involvement with the theologian Jerome, with whom she settled in Bethlehem after some scandal involving the death of her daughter. Melania the Elder was, like Paula, a young widow and early adopter of the ascetic life; unlike Paula, she did not gain Jerome's favour due to her views on the Origen controversy. Both women are notable as they were from very wealthy families but nevertheless adopted a lifestyle based on the denial of earthly pleasures.

wife, daughter or mother. Indeed, Lina Ecktenstein, writing in the late nineteenth century, drew a parallel between her contemporaries fighting in the suffrage movement and women in the late Antique and early medieval periods who adopted the monastic life. Ecktenstein wrote: 'the woman of today, who realises that the home circle as at present constituted affords insufficient scope for her energies, had a precursor, in the nun who sought a field of activity in the convent.'<sup>46</sup> In contrast, elite men in the secular world did not face such constraints on their power and self-expression. Adopting a monastic life, therefore, involved markedly different motivations for men; this analysis will observe the consequences involved in adopting the monastic lifestyle and how such a shift could be reconciled with their sense of male identity.

Jenny Moore states 'that gender roles and relationships developed through time, varied across regions, and were determined by aspects of social status and position in the life cycle. We should think in terms not of a single universal gender system but of a multiple gender system'.<sup>47</sup> For example, a Roman aristocratic male in the fourth century would have considered himself radically different from an Egyptian male peasant or woman of a similar background. Roberta Gilchrist argues that gender is a 'socially created and historically specific' concept, which intersects with class to form hierarchical social structures.<sup>48</sup> Elite Roman masculinity, then, was a distinct form of masculinity, applied to the upper classes of late Antique Roman society; it can be defined as much by what it was not as by what it was.

The Latin word for manliness is *virtus*, which has as its root 'vir', meaning man. *Virtus* means far more than simply one's gender identification as male, rather it is associated with the ideal conduct of a man.<sup>49</sup> *Virtus* was an ancient classicising value which allowed Rome to be what it was; in a speech by Cicero in 43BC, he stated 'with this *virtus* your ancestors conquered all Italy first, then razed

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<sup>46</sup> L. Ecktenstein, *Woman Under Monasticism: chapters on saint-lore and convent life between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1500*, (Cambridge, 1896), ix.

<sup>47</sup> J. Moore, "Death Makes the Man"? Burial Rite and the Construction of Masculinities in the Early Middle Ages', in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* (London, 1998), 37.

<sup>48</sup> R. Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture: the Archaeology of Religious Women* (London, 1994), 1.

<sup>49</sup> M. McDonnell, *Roman Manliness. Virtus and the Roman Republic* (Cambridge, 2006), 2.

Carthage, overthrew Numantia, brought the most powerful kings and the most warlike peoples under the sway of this empire'.<sup>50</sup> Slaves and women are not associated with *virtus*; rather, it signifies a hegemonic masculinity that applied only to elite and powerful men.<sup>51</sup> Hegemonic masculinity is formed and challenged by the Other, that is, those who it marginalises and excludes; Julia Smith includes 'barbarians, elite women, eunuchs, slaves or political opponents' as examples of those excluded by hegemonic masculinity; nevertheless, these groups also compete with it and its self-proclaimed place in the hierarchy.<sup>52</sup> Monasticism is one such challenge to these ideas.

To identify the challenges posed by monasticism to the identity of elite men in late Antiquity, therefore, requires us to identify certain characteristics of elite Roman masculinity. These can be examined to give us some idea of how 'maleness', the state of being identified as a man, was perceived and why monasticism may have posed a threat. It is through power relations that elite masculinity was structured, and these power relations are manifest in a number of ways: dress, sexual relationships, and the possession of a public voice amongst others. For each of these areas, monasticism expected a standard which was markedly different to that experienced in the elite, secular sphere.

Dress, the first of these manifestations, is a difficult area to examine. Mary Harlow's study considers the problems involved in assembling textile remnants: much of the material is no longer available and so we are left to reconstruct dress from literary and artistic sources.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, dress is an important marker to study, as through people's attire we may observe tangible processes of othering, processes which also serve to define elite masculinity. The Romans are referred to in sources as the *gens togati*; those who wear togas, while non-Romans are the *pallati*; those who wear the Greek-associated *pallium*. Barbarians were known as *bracati*, or trouser-wearers. The term *a toga ad pallium* was used to mean the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 167.

<sup>52</sup> J.M.H. Smith 'Introduction: Gendering the Early Medieval World', in *Gender in the Early Medieval World*, ed. L. Brubaker and J M H Smith (Cambridge, 2006), 19.

<sup>53</sup> M. Harlow, 'Clothes maketh the man: power dressing and elite masculinity in the later Roman world' in *Gender in the Early Medieval World*, ed. L. Brubaker and J.M.H Smith (Cambridge, 2006), 45.

transition from a higher social position to a lower one.<sup>54</sup> Such terminology shows the importance of dress in the aristocratic Roman world. One's social and ethnic identity is inextricably linked to their clothing and visual presentation. These ideas were also reflected in law, for example, the prescriptions in *Justinian's Digest* meant that 'to dress inappropriately would cause censure.'<sup>55</sup> Those who did not dress according to these prescribed standards 'cast doubt upon their manliness in general' and were considered 'inferior and feminised.'<sup>56</sup> That is, to dress in a way other than that prescribed by society at large had legal and social consequences; conformity to the norm was key if one wanted to maintain his status.

For monks, however, dress served a far more practical purpose. It did not confer status; rather, it was intended to serve 'as a prophylactic against effeminate oozings and troublesome erections.'<sup>57</sup> Monks could be identified by their dress in the same way as elite Roman men were by theirs, but the purpose behind it was different: one was identified as a monk, a member of a particular order or community, not as a Roman or a member of the elite. Henrietta Leyser argues that the *Rule of St. Benedict* was well suited to the 'systematic obliteration of all class distinctions within the monastery.'<sup>58</sup> All monks dressed uniformly, and as monks came from a variety of social and ethnic backgrounds, this meant that when abandoning the Roman style of dress and adopting the monastic one, one abandoned too the visual markers of status and, in effect, a component of their identity. While the removal of distinction based on class may have attracted men from the lower echelons of society, the nobility were unlikely to be attracted to a lifestyle which involved rescinding their superiority, and risking their masculinity.

By virtue of being male, Roman aristocratic men had the right to a public voice, giving them a platform which allowed for the exercise of power and masculinity. This right to employ one's public voice in certain spaces, for example, the temple, the forum and law courts, is described by Lynda Coon as 'a marker both of the

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>57</sup> L. Coon, 'Gender and the Body' in eds. T.F.X Noble and J.M.H Smith, *Cambridge History of Christianity III: Early Medieval Christianities c 600-c1100* (Cambridge, 2008), 448.

<sup>58</sup> H. Leyser, *Medieval Women: A Social History of Women in England, 450-1500* (London, 1996), 26.

masculinity of the speaker and his political authority.<sup>59</sup> Masculinity and political authority go hand in hand, at least when considering elite men. The denial of a public voice to women, children and slaves showed their status as supposedly inferior beings. By removing the public voice, one removes their access to political authority and representation. Thus, by speaking in public forums, and accessing political authority, men were able to demonstrate that they were indeed men, and belonged to that small but powerful subset of society: the masculine elite.

Sexual activity was another mark of elite Roman masculinity. Due to low life expectancy among the general population (only four in every 100 men lived beyond the age of fifty), reproduction was encouraged through a combination of social pressure and imperial legislation.<sup>60</sup> While bachelors did exist in aristocratic circles, they were rebuked by emperors and encouraged to marry, partly in order to keep demographics stable.<sup>61</sup> Sexual activity was a way of proving a man's virility, of ensuring the continuation of his family line and of demonstrating power. Caroline Vout argues that 'if sex is *imperium*, then power... is penetration.'<sup>62</sup> Men were seen as sexual agents, as penetrators, and as performers, whereas women were sexual receivers, taking a passive role which denied them agency. If engagement in sexual activity can be seen as a display of male power and dominance, then having such activity forcibly denied to one (or being expected to deny it to oneself) would sit uneasily with an elite Roman man.

The Vestal Virgins were committed to sanctity, and so the idea of religious chastity was not unknown in Rome; however, such a commitment was specifically designated as a role for women. Mary Beard argues that the Vestal Virgins are painted very much as women, with feminine language; they are variously conceptualised as wives or mothers, just as nuns in Christian thinking are seen as the 'Bride of Christ' or referred to as 'Mother'.<sup>63</sup> In Christian monasticism, however, chastity was expected of men as well as women. *The Rule of Augustine*,

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<sup>59</sup> Coon, 'Gender and the Body', 434.

<sup>60</sup> P. Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in early Christianity* (New York, 1988), 6.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>62</sup> C. Vout, *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome* (New York, 2007), 19.

<sup>63</sup> M. Beard, 'The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins' (1980) 70 *The Journal of Roman Studies*.

a late fourth century text, states that 'it is wrong, however, to desire women or to wish them to desire you.'<sup>64</sup> Therein, it was not only the act of copulation which was forbidden, but also the desire for it. This contrasts starkly to the normative Roman tradition, which encouraged the pursuit of sexual activity, albeit within certain confines, as a mark of virility. The ascetic and exegetist Jerome (347–420 CE) criticised Roman men for their sexual behaviour, saying that 'among the Romans, men's chastity goes unchecked, seduction and adultery are condemned, but free permission is given to lust to range the brothels and to have slave girls.'<sup>65</sup> He paints a picture of Roman masculinity as synonymous with sexual licentiousness, though this must be interpreted with care given that his perspective is somewhat distorted by his belief that all sexual activity is destructive.

Elite Roman masculinity was, therefore, concerned with demarcating oneself out as above the rest of society, as evidenced through dress and the utilisation of a public voice. It involved adopting a strict hierarchical and determinist viewpoint, in which elite men sit at the top and other groups are portrayed as naturally inferior. Peter Brown argues that 'in the second-century AD, a young man of the privileged classes of the Roman Empire grew up looking at the world through a prism of unchallenged dominance. Women, slaves and barbarians were unalterably different from him and inferior to him.'<sup>66</sup> As such, conceptions of masculinity were linked to the biological determinist view that elite men were naturally superior to othered groups. Roman masculinity, in particular, relied on the ability to exercise the power gained as a result of this superiority and the display of this power through dress and other means.

Differentiating oneself from the Other was necessary in order to maintain one's social and economic status. Elizabeth Schlusser Fiorenza argues that a particularly Roman misogyny arose as a result of men 'whose psychic and economic reality were heavily determined by daily competition, and who therefore sought to maximise the 'natural' difference between women and men in order not to be

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<sup>64</sup> G. Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford, 1988), 89.

<sup>65</sup> M. Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch: Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity* (Chicago, 2001), 164.

<sup>66</sup> Brown, *The Body and Society*, 9.

replaced by women.<sup>67</sup> If men were not seen as (and believed themselves to be) recognisably and naturally different from women, they risked losing their basis for their political, social and economic power.

If elite Roman masculinity is concerned with inherent superiority, displayed through the othering of those who do not or cannot display various markers of maleness, it is clear why the elite Roman male might have rejected monasticism as a structural threat to familiar masculinity. The monastic lifestyle conflicted in a number of ways with the conception of elite Roman masculinity, as this analysis has intimated. Monasticism provided an alternative to traditional hegemonic definitions of masculinity. Aaron Raverty suggests that those who adopted a monastic lifestyle were ‘susceptible to gender-variant assignment;’ that is, monks were a separate class of man and by adopting a monastic lifestyle, they relinquished their masculinity.<sup>68</sup>

As well as their renunciation of sexual activity and different style of dress, monks had to work, and by doing this, any privilege they once had due to being aristocratic and male was gone. St. Anthony’s ascetic quest has been described as ‘self-imposed annihilation of [his] social status’<sup>69</sup> This example is one which many elite Roman men were unwilling to follow. Some monastic work included stereotypically female activities, which Raverty calls ‘gender role mixing’.<sup>70</sup> Examples of monks taking on these characteristics and roles more typically associated with women can be found in the *Rule of St Benedict*. St. Benedict writes about the need for monks to exercise ‘gentleness’<sup>71</sup> and to ‘love the young’.<sup>72</sup> Beyond these traditionally feminine roles, monks were also called upon to perform manual labour, meaning that they had to take on the role of another othered group in society: the peasantry. For aristocratic men, this would be antithetical to their carefully constructed superiority. Manual labour removes the individual

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<sup>67</sup> H. Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago, 1991), 76.

<sup>68</sup> A. Raverty, ‘Are we monks or are we men? The monastic gender model according to the Rule of St Benedict’ (2006) 18 *Journal of Men’s Studies*, 269.

<sup>69</sup> Brown, *The Body and Society*, 214.

<sup>70</sup> Raverty, ‘Are we monks or are we men?’, 273.

<sup>71</sup> St. Benedict, *Rule of St Benedict in English*, trans. Timothy Fry (Minnesota, 1982), 92.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, 29.

from their lofty public sphere as orators and forces them to work the land alongside those of mixed social backgrounds.

Not only could non-elite men participate in monasticism or the ascetic life in the same way as their elite counterparts, but so too could women. Many of the great early ascetics were female, such as Paula and Melania (see n.1). Brown argues that 'women and the uneducated could achieve reputations for sexual abstinence as stunning as those achieved by any educated male.'<sup>73</sup> Women were able to exercise certain levels of power in monastic communities, as abbesses of double houses in particular. An important example of female monastic achievement can be found in Hild, the leader of a double house at Whitby in the seventh century. It was at this site that the synod which decided whether the English church would follow the Roman or Celtic tradition of dating Easter occurred; a pivotal event in the development of the English church.<sup>74</sup> Within monastic institutions, women and those of low birth could excel, as the traditional, elitist conception of masculinity was relegated to a position of less importance.<sup>75</sup> Those who keenly identified their worth with hegemonic masculinity would find the monastic alternative difficult to grasp and unappealing.

There were other, more practical, reasons for aristocratic Romans' uneasy feelings towards monasticism. Examples of formerly great patrimonies giving up all their wealth, as a result of decisions to adopt ascetic lifestyles, made monasticism seem like a huge danger to observing families. In one instance, Melania the Elder gave away the entirety of her wealth before becoming an ascetic.<sup>76</sup> In a more extreme case, Blesilla, the daughter of Paula, arguably adopted such an extreme ascetic lifestyle under the tutelage of Jerome that she died. Monasticism did not only pose

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<sup>73</sup> Brown, *The Body and Society*, 61.

<sup>74</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, trans. Bertram Colgrave (New York, 2008), 154.

<sup>75</sup> This was not the case for the entirety of the medieval period; as segregation along gender lines in monasteries became more common (particularly due to the influence of Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury from 668) women found their role being diminished, but certainly in the early period many of the key figures, both in England and on the continent, were women.

<sup>76</sup> M. Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism: from the Desert Fathers to the early Middle Ages*, (Oxford, 2000), 61.



a threat to elite Roman males' sense of self and masculinity, it was also a threat to the wealth, and even health, of the individual. Upon commencing an ascetic lifestyle, they would have to rescind any claim to family wealth and inheritance under monastic rules regarding private ownership.<sup>77</sup>

Despite the numerous challenges that monasticism posed to hegemonic masculinity, evidence shows that there was an increasing adoption of the movement amongst elite Roman men and, consequently, an increasing renouncement of Rome's masculine hierarchy. Raverty notes that 'by the beginning of the fifth-century, monasticism had become the new Christian masculine ideal.'<sup>78</sup> This can be seen by the foundation of monasteries by Roman aristocrats, for example, Lérins was founded by the Gallo-Roman nobleman Honoratus.<sup>79</sup> Many of the monks at Lérins in the early fifth-century went on to become bishops; a sign of the ever closer ties between monastic culture and episcopal power. Domination of the episcopate aided the aristocracy's monastic venture; they transposed their power and voice from the secular to the religious realm by becoming bishops. This shift was further condoned by the Council of Chalcedon which declared all monasteries to be subject to authority of the bishop of their diocese.<sup>80</sup> Evidence of monastic uptake among the male aristocracy can also be seen at Martin of Tours' monastery; although he was not from the aristocracy, his charismatic style of leadership drew many aristocratic monks to Marmoutiers.<sup>81</sup>

It is clear that something changed in monastic life in order to make it attractive, when it had once been the antithesis of masculinity. This occurred, in part, through the incorporation of secular elite Roman masculine elements into monastic culture. This allowed monks to retain their status as men, albeit 'men with a somewhat restructured masculine gender status that would have stretched the boundaries of the normative masculinity of his day.'<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Raverty, 'Are we monks or are we men?', 276.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 269.

<sup>79</sup> Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism*, 82.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>82</sup> Raverty, 'Are we monks or are we men?', 278.

The most important element which reconciled elite Roman masculinity with monasticism is the idea of self-control. This was a 'masculinising and classicising value.'<sup>83</sup> It was seen as a male virtue, as shown in numerous writings; for example, the testimony of Galen promotes the stereotype that while women were quick to anger, men were able to control their tempers. Galen stated that his father had been 'the most just, the most devoted and the kindest of men. My mother, however, was so very prone to anger that sometimes she bit her handmaids.'<sup>84</sup> An extract from a third-century Latin school exercise book also demonstrates the importance of self-control as a masculine trait; it describes the speech of a father to his misbehaving son, stating 'one who gives counsel to others must know how to rule himself.'<sup>85</sup>

Self-control in the field of sexual activity was also important. Though a full family life - and by extension, sexual intercourse - was encouraged for men, and Vout's thesis that power is penetration must be considered, over-indulgence in such things was seen as dangerous. Hypersexuality was disapproved of and seen as a feminine vice. Indeed, Marcus Aurelius wrote that 'sins of desire, in which pleasure predominates, indicate a more self-indulgent and womanish disposition.'<sup>86</sup> For an aristocratic Roman male, to be able to control one's desires and tempers was important. The same applies to overindulgence in food; while rich food was a mark of wealth and therefore a mark of eliteness, controlling one's intake demonstrated core masculine virtues. Likewise, while sexual activity was important in displaying virility and manliness, to allow desire to overpower oneself was seen as feminine and weak. Self-control is also a core tenet of monasticism, and it was increasingly stressed as monastic leaders and writers tried to encourage the male elite to join their crusade.

As with self-control, discipline and hierarchy were very important to elite Roman society, and these were taken and adapted by the writers of monastic rules. This is particularly true of the *Rule of St Benedict*, written in the sixth-century. Coon

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<sup>83</sup> Coon, 'Gender and the Body', 440.

<sup>84</sup> Brown, *The Body and Society*, 12.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

states that ‘the Benedictine hierarchy parallels the social pyramid’ of the classical Roman world.<sup>87</sup> Boys under the age of 15, who were not yet ‘men’, were at the bottom of this hierarchy, just as ‘not-men’ (whether women, slaves or those men who did not fit into hegemonic concepts of masculinity) were at the bottom of the secular order.<sup>88</sup> *Regulations for a Monastery* outlines ideas of regiment and obedience: ‘all are to obey with fidelity, honour their father after God, defer to their superior in a manner worthy of holy men.’<sup>89</sup> These are ideas which elite Roman men would have been familiar with, as they were also important in secular society. The military language throughout the *Rule of St Benedict* would also have enticed such men. Raverty states that the ‘military ethos’ pervading the work is an ‘emulation of the martial role’ and that elements of a ‘masculine soldier gender role’, such as the insistence on rank, are present throughout the *Rule of St Benedict*.<sup>90</sup> While the creators of the monastic rules did not copy the Roman hierarchical model in its entirety, they did draw on it to create parallels within their religious orders.

As well as incorporating elements of elite masculinity into monasticism, concessions were made for aristocratic men. The *Regulations for a Monastery* allowed monks to consume wine at weekends, relaxing the strictness of the laws.<sup>91</sup> In Augustine’s *Praeceptum*, the idea is elucidated that those who ‘come to the monastery from a more comfortable manner of life’ should be allowed some extra comforts due to having ‘altered their lifestyle in order to embrace the present one’ more than brothers from poorer backgrounds.<sup>92</sup> This was not the case at all monasteries and in all periods. Seventh century Whitby, for example, is recorded in Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* as being far more reminiscent of the early church: ‘no one was rich, no one was in need, for they had all things in common and none had any private property’.<sup>93</sup> Shifts away from egalitarianism, such as those made by Augustine, may have encouraged those from elite backgrounds to join monasteries, partly by allowing greater material comfort than they otherwise

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 441.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 442.

<sup>89</sup> Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule*, 77.

<sup>90</sup> Raverty, ‘Are we monks or are we men?’, 281.

<sup>91</sup> Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule*, 77.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>93</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, 211.

would have been allowed, but also because it separated them, at least in part, from those of less well-off backgrounds.

Manual work was another issue that discouraged aristocrats from becoming monks. Many monasteries allowed monks to abstain from manual or agricultural work, for example, ‘the monks of basilical monasteries in Italy and Gaul did not live the type of common life practised in the stricter monasteries.’<sup>94</sup> They were supported by the diocese financially and so did not have to perform manual work. This was more attractive to aristocrats. At Marmoutiers, ascetic life was easier than elsewhere as manual labour was not expected of all monks.<sup>95</sup> Former peasants performed manual labour, whilst aristocratic monks copied manuscripts. These concessions aided the transition of monasticism from something that primarily attracted elite women to a place in which men could, and did, exercise their own power in a realm alternative to the secular.

Monasticism competed with an established tradition of elite Roman masculinity. However, concessions made by both ideological systems allowed these elites to find their own place within the ascetic society of the monastery. Eventually, these men came to dominate, synthesising a new, alternative masculine identity. This new masculinity provided the opportunity for elite men to expand their power into the religious world, while retaining certain aspects of how their secular identity was structured. Monasticism, which once risked undermining the substantive tradition of male identity, offered a new site and form from which to express that identity. Through exercising self-control, bound within an increasingly strict system of hierarchy and discipline, men could indeed become monks, without renouncing their masculine identity.

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<sup>94</sup> Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism*, 93.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 63.

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# Glasgow University Dialectic Society

Founded c.1451

Reinstituted 1861

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Glasgow University Dialectic Society is a student debating organisation at the University of Glasgow. It was formally re-instituted in 1861, although the earliest known records date to 1770, and there are claims that it has existed in some form since 1451. Whilst we are an ancient society, our goal of promoting and fostering debate within the University has remained constant. *Groundings* was founded in 2007, and seeks to further this objective.

The Dialectic also organises a variety of events throughout term-time: these range from formal social events such as the New Members Dinner, to grand showcase debates, such as the Founders of the Union Debate, in addition to lectures and panels such as the Dialectic Question Time event. We also promote involvement in debate through more informal events, such as a weekly speaker training and a plethora of social events. In 2013, the Dialectic Society and seven other student societies spearheaded the first student referendum on Scottish independence, alongside a discussion series.

For more information about the Society, visit [www.gudialectic.co.uk](http://www.gudialectic.co.uk)