THE DARTMOUTH UNDERGRADUATE

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Summer 2024

Contents

About DUHR

The Dartmouth Undergraduate Historical Review is Dartmouth's student-run journal of History. We are dedicated to publishing scholarship by undergraduates. We publish work from Dartmouth students as well as undergraduates from other institutions.

The mission of the Dartmouth Undergraduate Historical Review is to encourage historical research and discourse among undergraduate students at Dartmouth and beyond. We inspire members to think critically about global history through scholarship. Our contributors employ investigative writing and editing skills to advance their arguments. Our goal is to motivate in-depth examinations of the global past from the viewpoints of undergraduate students.

We work in collaboration with our local Dartmouth chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the National History Honors Society, to encourage the study of history among undergraduate students.

Editorial Team 24S

Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

I am proud to present the Dartmouth Undergraduate Historical Review's Summer 2024 edition.This marks the third since our founding in Spring 2022.

The Historical Review is committed to supporting students' intellectual curiousity - we hope to provide an outlet for this work. Our aim is also to encourage students at the college and beyond to pursue the subject both here, academically, and in the future. We hope to inspire the next generation of historians.

This submission round, we recieved an unprecedented amount of high-quality essays. Those we selected reflect the very best of what undergraduate historical scholarship has to offer: robust evidence, rigorous analysis, and original thought. Each of the authors featured seamlessly weave their own line of thinking through a strong piece of writing, making the case for something new.

Our first essay deals with Victorian gender roles through the story of Dr James Barry. Our second, originally written in Spanish, deals with the Spanish evangelization of Latin America. The next paper discusses the rise to power of the Shiv Sena party, and our fourth deals with the role of female nurses in WWI. Our fifth essay tackles the Vietnam war through the lens of Eisenhower, and finally, our last paper deals with religious dynamics in Umayyad Syria. As you can see, we selected papers focussing on different geographical locations and historical periods in order to best represent our world's wide ranging history.

The creation of this edition could not have been possible without the hard work of our editorial team and board, as well as the diligent scholarship of our writers. We look forward to our next edition in Winter 2025.

Thank you for taking the time to read this latest edition of the Dartmouth Undergraduate Historical Review and we hope you enjoy.

The Editorial Board

About the authors

Gabriel Quealy

Gabriel Quealy ’25 is a rising senior at Dartmouth College, pursuing a History major and a Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies minor. Interested in transgender histories and theory, Gabriel hopes to write a thesis on female crossdressers and transness in the American military. Originally from Plymouth County, Massachusetts, he has worked for the Paul Revere Memorial Association as a museum interpreter, and is interested in pursuing public history to further historical education. In his spare time, Gabe loves to paint and watch baseball.

Alejandra Díaz-Pizarro

Hailing from Mexico City, Alejandra Díaz-Pizarro is a rising senior at Columbia University majoring in Economics & History. She has done research on indigenous land management as a Laidlaw Scholar and is currently beginning work on her undergraduate thesis, on the Mexican Communist Party and public education in the 1930s. She is especially interested in development economics, intellectual history, and the meeting points between her two fields. She is the Libraries Peer Fellow at the Columbia University Writing Center, and a Board member of the radio station WKCR-FM, where she is also a journalist and hosts a weekly opera show.

Ahaan Jindal

Ahaan Jindal is a rising sophomore (Class of 2027) at Dartmouth from Mumbai, India. Studying Mathematical Data Science with a Minor in Middle-Eastern Studies, Ahaan is interested in researching the intersection between data and history, economics, and global affairs. Ahaan is also an avid sports fan, watching cricket, Formula 1, basketball, and badminton. On campus, Ahaan writes for The Dartmouth as an opinion columnist, is a member of the sports analytics club and analyzes legislative data for the Polarization Research Lab. He is interested in Indian post-independence history and has also extensively researched the modern Middle-East.

Olivia Sieler

Olivia Sieler graduated from Columbia University in 2024 with a major in History. She is particularly interested in legal history. She wrote a senior thesis on the history of access to higher education for disabled students, analyzing how federal law, university policy, and school culture shaped their educational experiences. She served as Executive Editor of the Columbia Undergraduate Law Review, Chair of the Undergraduate Committee on Global Thought, and Managing Editor of the Journal of Science, Technology, Ethics, and Policy. Next year, she will pursue an MSc in Comparative Social Policy at the

Jan Niño Teodoro Nguyen

Jan Niño Teodoro Nguyen (he/him) is a 2023 graduate of Vanderbilt University, where he studied economics, history, and psychology for three years as a law school aspirant. After his undergraduate years, Jan Niño is currently working as a paralegal for an immigration advocacy nonprofit, assisting undocumented, low-income migrant and refugee students. Since three, Jan Niño has dedicated his life to being a perpetual student of history, politics, and geography. Outside of intellectual vitality, Jan Niño can be found dancing to Bad Bunny, Young Miko, and reggaetón; screaming for the Boston Celtics; and devouring Peruvian, Mexican, and Vietnamese

Asena Firouzi

Asena Firouzi is in her final year of her degree at the department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations (NMC) at the University of Toronto. She is interested in Islamic governance, economics, non-Muslim relations, and their evolving dynamics. She is currently completing an undergraduate thesis through the department of History and Philosophy of Science and Technology regarding Ottoman mapping. Passionate about scholarly work focusing on the Near East, her previous publications have covered topics including medical practices, gender and sexuality, and the management of religious diversity.

Trans Sensationalism: A Case of Dr. James Barry

Gabriel Quealy

Figure 1
"Cartoon of Dr. James Barry while Stationed in Corfu"[1]

[1] Cartoon of Dr. James Barry while Stationed in Corfu, 1856, RAMC/801/6/5, Folder 3, Royal Army Medical Corps Muniments Collection, Wellcome Collection, Museum of Military Medicine, Ash Vale, England.

Abstract

In 1865, a revelation took England by storm; Dr. James Barry, former Inspector General of Hospitals in the British Army, was found to be biologically female after his death. Throughout the next decades, the English public would theorize about all aspects of his life. Mainly, how was he able to "hide" his "true sex?"

This paper will analyze *how* the English press/public formulated this question and use this formulation to dissect broader implications about Victorian gender roles, specifically how innately gender roles were tied to biological sex. Within the first section, I discuss how Dr. Barry cultivated a masculine reputation, which would be later used to argue for his biological maleness. In the second section, I discuss the immediate reactions towards the discovery of Dr. Barry's female sex, and how his prior masculine reputation led to the argument that he was intersex with the "true sex" of male. Finally, in the third section, I will argue that later fictitious accounts of Barry's life reformulate his motivations to be in line with feminine gender roles of the later Victorian period in order to reconcile his masculine reputation with his female sex.

Preface

What makes a story? Should it be informative, or should it draw our attention? When a person becomes a story, how can the historian deduce what is factual and what is sensational? What happens when your legacy transcends your life– does the media that is written about you say more about your society than yourself? We must think about these questions when examining the case of Dr. James Miranda Barry.

Since his death in 1865, Dr. Barry's story has been an object of fascination by countless historians, medical professionals, authors, and the Victorian public alike. Dr. James Barry was a military surgeon who served in the British Army from 1813 to 1859, eventually rising to the rank of Inspector General, the second-highest ranking medical office in the army. During his lifetime, he was well-known for improving sanitary conditions in military hospitals, as well as performing the first cesarean surgery in the British Empire in which both the mother and child survived. Yet, upon his death in 1865, his nursemaid undressed his body against his final wishes and discovered female anatomy. As a high-ranking military official and public figure, this discovery sparked public discourse for decades to come: from discussions on his former identity to whether he was born biologically female or intersex.[2]

From the archival work of modern historians, we can piece together the biography of his former identity. Born as Margaret Ann Bulkley in 1789 in Cork, Ireland, Barry did not start living as a male until he was twenty years old, when he was accepted into the medical school of the University of Edinburgh. His uncle on his mother's side was the neoclassical painter James Barry RA, who upon his death in 1806 left his sister considerable assets, along with social connections in the academic and affluent spheres of London.[3] One of which was

[2] Rachel Holmes. "The Secret Life of Dr. James Barry: Victorian England's Most Eminent Surgeon," (2007), 1-20.
[3] HM du Preez. "Dr James Barry (1789–1865): The Edinburgh Years," (J R Coll Physicians Edinb, 2012), 258-259.

Venezuelan revolutionary General Sebastián Francisco de Miranda, who at the time had a townhouse on St. James Street in London, where young Margaret Ann was allowed access to the library.[4] Historians such as Michael du Preez and Rachel Holmes argue that he suggested that young Margaret Ann pursue a medical education in order to join his revolutionary efforts in Venezuela, plans which never came to fruition. In 1809, Margaret Ann, now under a new identity fashioned after her uncle and mentor, James Miranda Barry, moved to Edinburgh with their mother for university. She was helped by another of his uncle's friends, David Steuart [sic] Erskine, 11th Earl of Buchan, to establish himself at the University of Edinburgh under this new identity. Lord Buchan's influence as a Scottish aristocrat was essential in establishing Barry's credentials under this new identity as a young gentleman of good intellectual reputation.[5] It is clear that pre-existing connections to power and influence propped up the establishment and secrecy of Barry's new identity.

However, modern historiography still varies on the angle in which to frame Barry's identity. Historically often write from either one of two angles. Some write from the perspective that Barry was a woman dressing up as a man in order to gain entry into the male-exclusive spaces of University and the British Army, such as Isobel Rae, who uncovered Barry's familial relationship to James Barry RA in the 1950s. Others, particularly more modern historians coming from a gender studies framework, write from the perspective that he was a transgender man. While Barry did not have the vernacular to describe himself as "transgender," it is only possible to deduce how he chose to present throughout his life from the archival sources available to us. In this essay, the use of pronouns will change according to the source's perspective, although I will use "he" most often in narration for clarity's sake. Many sensationalist stories written about him, fictional

[4] Holmes, "The Secret Life of Dr. James Barry," 26.
[5] Ibid, 32.

accounts that use his life to create an overdramatized narrative, refer to Barry with “she,” so this will change accordingly.

From the archival sources available, we know that since the construction of his new identity in 1809, Barry lived out the rest of his fifty-nine years as a man. The revelation of his birth sex shocked the public, discussions about him exploding in the public sphere. While most scholarship is focused on Barry’s personal life, I seek to use Barry’s story as a case study into the broader societal context in which he lived, more specifically Victorian views on gender roles and gender nonconformity. By dissecting the public discourse surrounding Barry’s biological sex, such as the debate on whether he was biologically female or intersex, there emerges a clear connection between biological sex and gender roles in the later Victorian period, particularly from his death in 1865 to the resurgence of his story in the public sphere during the 1890s. Within the contextualization of his life by both his contemporaries and later media, this sex/gender connection eliminates possibilities of gender nonconformity in the mainstream, navigating Barry’s sex in the two boxes of “masculine” or “feminine.”

Cultivating Masculinity: Legality, Duels, and Sodomy in Cape Town

> "There was a Dr. B–, an Army Doctor, whose appearance and voice ised [used] to strike my childish wonder. He was very short and spare, a smooth not very prepossessing face, scanty carroty locks and a high thin voice which might have been termed squeaky, but he was considered very clever and a skillful surgeon and much respected. He seemed to seek the society of nice young girls and I have heard my eldest sister joked about his intentions to her."[6] (Sarah Esther Hornimon, a citizen of the Leeward Islands)

Sarah Esther Hornimon wrote this passage in her memoir, recounting her youth in the Leeward Islands in the 1840s, where she met Dr. James Barry, the Principal Medical Officer. Despite his "squeaky" voice and "smooth" face, Sarah still writes how she was fascinated by him and respected him in her youth. This perspective of Barry was not uncommon during his life. Even before his death, Barry's contemporaries were intrigued by his brazen and defiant attitude. Florence Nightingale, upon working with him in Corfu during the Crimean War, wrote to have regarded him as "the most hardened creature I have ever met."[7] While he was stationed in many parts of the British Empire throughout his life, he sealed his reputation as a controversial figure in Cape Town, South Africa with quite a highly contentious and public incidents– which either challenged or strengthened his contemporaries' view of his masculinity.

In 1817, Barry was stationed in Cape Town as Colonial Medical Inspector and personal surgeon to the governor, Lord Charles Somerset. Within this position, in 1823, Barry urged Somerset to reform Cape Town's medical laws, which would require doctors to receive a license from a European school. His reasoning for this was to combat quack physicians, in order for him to control who had the "proper" medical knowledge to practice medicine. However, this ordinance affected C.F. Liesching, the son of an established,

[6] Memoirs of Sarah Esther Horniman, 1880, RAMC/801/6/5, Folder 2, Royal Army Medical Corps Muniments Collection, Wellcome Collection Museum of Military Medicine, Ash Vale, England.
[7] Correspondence from Florence Nightingale, Date Unknown, RAMC/801/6/5, Folder 1, Royal Army Medical Corps Muniments Collection, Wellcome Collection Museum of Military Medicine, Ash Vale, England.

European doctor in Cape Town. He argued to Barry that even though he did not have a European medical license, his father's community standing should be enough, but Barry still refused to issue him one. Liesching wrote to Governor Somerset directly, who appointed the Chief Justice to preside over the case; Barry responded by writing to the Colonial Secretary stating that "the Chief Justice can in no wise be a Judge or lay down the Law respecting the Medical Profession."[8]

In another direct defiance of the colonial authority, Barry also outed the mismanagement of the entire Prison Department in an 1824 report, detailing the denial of medical attention for prisoners in the colony. Secretary Sir Richard Plaskett thought Barry's behavior so "impertinent" that he threatened the re-establishment of the Medical Investigation committee, which would threaten Barry's position as Colonial Medical Inspector. "It was not a question of money," Plaskett wrote, "but of public expediency and propriety."[9] Plaskett was by far not the only enemy Barry had made in Cape Town. At the same time of this case, he entered a pistol duel with Captain Josias Cleote, an action which would be parodied in later a fictional account of Barry's life, *A Modern Sphinx*.[10] This duel was fought over a slight of honor, claimed by Barry's colleague Ebenezer Rogers writing to *The Lancet* in 1895. Allegedly, Barry commented: "Oh, I say Cleote…that's a nice Dutch filly the governor has got hold of."[11] And in an attempt to protect the governor's honor, Cleote responded, "Retract your vile expressions, you infernal little cad."[12] Rogers, however, knew Barry from Jamaica, so these quotes are most likely fabricated, though they still give a sense of what Barry's direct colleagues thought about his character. His time in

[8] G. McCall Theal, *Records of the Cape Colony from February 1793 [to: Copied for the Cape government from the manuscript documents in the Public record office, London.* Cape of Good Hope, South Africa., Cape of Good Hope, Colony., Great Britain. Public Record Office. 189719. Printed for the Government of the Cape Colony.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Typescript of *The Lancet,* 1895, RAMC/801/6/5, Folder 1, Royal Army Medical Corps Muniments Collection, Wellcome Collection Museum of Military Medicine, Ash Vale, England.
[12] Ibid.

Cape Town, in which most later accounts from people who knew him reflected on, was marked by altercations: yet, definitively masculine ones, man versus man. Barry's direct defiances cultivated his masculine persona, which later would be vital in proving his biological maleness– or semblance of maleness.

In 1824, however, Barry's enemies were finally able to slander his character within Cape Colony completely, establishing the Medical Investigation Committee and forcing him to resign from all his civil posts. On June 1st, 1824, a placard was attached to a bridge above the major streets of Cape Town, stating that governor Charles Somerset was "buggering," or having homosexual relations with, his physician Dr. James Barry. As Barry was suspiciously a bachelor, religious official Bishop Burnett remarked on his sexuality, "[Barry] is, ever has been, and if *rumour speaks truth,* ever will keep single."[13] Judiciary action was immediately taken, and while the accusation of sodomy was ultimately proven false, the scandal of the two being homosexuals was enough to drive Barry out of Cape Town, leaving for the Caribbean. Yet, these scandals in Cape Town were just a snippet of Barry's defiant reputation that followed him throughout his life. Though regarded by many of his peers as "irritable and impatient" putting himself in "direct opposition to authority all his life,"[14] Barry was "admired and respected" for it– by his peers in the subsequent countries he was stationed in at least. Despite the effeminacy of his appearance, written in accounts such as Sarah Esther Horniman's, he was still seen by his colleagues as a masculine figure due to both his bravado behavior and his competency as a medical professional. This shifted, however, with the discovery of his biological sex after his death.

[13] Theal, "Records of the Cape Colony."
[14] Correspondence from Edward Bradford to the *Medical Times and Gazette,* 9 September 1865, WO 138/1, War Office: Personal Files, The National Archives, Kew Gardens, England.

Gender Roles and Their Disruption: The 1865 Reveal

On July 25, 1865, Inspector General Dr. James Barry died at his house on 14 Margaret Street, London. Having lived to around seventy-ish years of age, Barry had died in retirement after life of service within the Royal Army Medical Corps, sealing his reputation within Britain as an obstinate, but capable surgeon. No one, his colleagues nor the general public, expected to discover that he was biologically female. This revelation was uncovered by Barry's nurse/charwoman who performed his last offices and leaked the story to the press. Before she told the press, however, she contacted Barry's physician and colleague Staff Surgeon Major Dr. McKinnon, who she attempted to extort in keeping this "secret." Dr. McKinnon recounted this story in a letter to Registrar General George Graham on August 24th, 1865, who only a day previously sent Dr. McKinnon a letter asking if he knew the truth about Barry's sex, since McKinnon was the person who drafted Barry's Certificate of Death. "Perhaps you may decline answering these questions," wrote Graham, "but I ask them not for publication but for my own information."[15] Dr. McKinnon answered:

> "I informed her that it was none of my business whether Dr. Barry was was a male or a female - and that I thought it as likely he might be neither, via an imperfectly developed man. / She then said that she had examined the body and that it was a perfect female and farther that there were marks of her having a child when very young. I then enquired how have you formed this conclusion? The woman pointing to the lower part of her stomach, and from marks here, I am a married woman, and the mother of nine children. I ought to know…But whether Dr. Barry was male, female, or hermaphrodite I do not know, nor had I any purpose in making the discovery as I could positively swear to the identity of the body as being that of a person whom I had been acquainted with as Inspector General of Hospitals for a period of eight or nine years."[16]

As Dr. McKinnon never professionally examined the body, seemingly out of respect for his colleague, the initial reactions to Barry's sex were centered around fascination with

[15] Correspondence from George Graham to Dr. McKinnon, 23 August 1865, WO 138/1, War Office: Personal Files, The National Archives, Kew Gardens, England.
[16] Correspondence from Dr. McKinnon to George Graham, 24 August 1865, WO 138/1, War Office: Personal Files, The National Archives, Kew Gardens, England.

the body. To many of those who knew him, aware of his reputation and character, there seemed to be a thread of disbelief during the initial reveal in 1865. Their perception of his masculine character was highly contrasted with their perception of femininity, and therefore Barry could not have been biologically female to them. Most letters in the year of his death share the sentiment that they "never had any suspicion that Barry was a female."[17] However, some, such as Dr. McKinnon's account, suspected hermaphroditism instead of the nurse's claim that Barry was a "perfect female." In the 19th century, the term "hermaphrodite" was defined as individuals whose bodies held ambiguous sex characteristics that did not fit into the dimorphic mold of male or female. However, due to the Victorian period's strict social significance of sex, many doctors considered hermaphroditism to be a medical condition that hid an individual's one "true sex," either male or female.[18] Edward Bradford, Deputy-Inspector-General of Hospitals, who met Barry while stationed in Jamaica in 1832, wrote to the *Medical Times and Gazette* on Sept. 2, 1865, suspecting similarly that Barry was a hermaphrodite with a one true sex: "There can be no doubt among those who knew him that his real physical condition was that of a male in whom sexual development had been arrested about the sixth month of fetal life."[19]

Most likely, Barry's colleagues made these conclusions due to Victorian conflations between masculinity and the male sex. In his pivotal "one-sex" model theory, historian Thomas Laquer argues that throughout the 18th century, western medicine pivoted from believing in the existence of one sex to two. Before this shift, he argued, western science viewed female anatomy as an inverted, less perfect version of male anatomy. Historian Dror Wahrman further argues on this point that the late 18th century marked a shift in cultural

[17] Correspondence from Dr. McKinnon to George Graham, 24 August 1865, WO 138/1, War Office: Personal Files, The National Archives, Kew Gardens, England.
[18] Jane Seymour, "Hermaphrodite," *The Lancet* 377, no. 9765 (2011): 547, https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(11)60188-8.
[19] Correspondence from Edward Bradford to the *Medical Times and Gazette,* 9 September 1865, WO 138/1, War Office: Personal Files, The National Archives, Kew Gardens, England.

gender markers being linked to a new binary model of anatomical differences between the sexes.[20] In England, the mid-Victorian era further codified and moralized this binary, cultural forms of masculinity being strictly tied to the male sex. In regard to Barry, the theories surrounding his anatomical sex fell into this cultural model. For those who viewed him as a "hardened creature," fitting into Victorian ideals of masculinity, the idea that he may be a "perfect female," instead of a "hermaphrodite" whose "true sex" was male, contradicted their idea of biological sex itself. Edward Bradford, in fact, brought up Barry's masculine-compensating personality traits in conjunction with his claim that he was merely an underdeveloped male, stating: "He sought every opportunity to make himself conspicuous, and wore the longest sword and spurs he could obtain."[21] The hermaphroditic theory fits into a conflation between a binary gender and sex as well; Victorian medical practitioners saw hermaphroditism as in need of "correction" in order to fit into the two-sex binary. One medical journal even wrote, "the possession of a [single] sex is a necessity of our social order, for hermaphrodites as well as for normal subjects."[22] Some of Barry's physical feminine traits could be explained under these theories, but his masculinity could still be maintained within his colleagues' perception of gender and sex.

Although, unlike many of the personal accounts published directly after his death, the press published the narrative that Barry was secretly a woman. Two weeks after his death, on August 14, 1865, Dublin newspaper *Saunders's News-Letter* was the first to report that Dr. Barry was a female who "masqueraded" as a male her entire life.[23] On August 21, the *Manchester Guardian* reported similarly:

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[20] Dror Wahrman,"Percy's Prologue: From Gender Play to Gender Panic in Eighteenth-Century England," Past and Present, no. 159 (1998): 156.
[21] Correspondence from Edward Bradford to the *Medical Times and Gazette,* 9 September 1865, WO 138/1, War Office: Personal Files, The National Archives, Kew Gardens, England.
[22] Alice Domurat Dreger, "Doubtful Sex: The Fate of the Hermaphrodite in Victorian Medicine." *Victorian Studies* 38, no. 3 (1995): 335–70. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3828713.
[23] Typescript of La Revue des Armees de Terre et de Mar, 1865, RAMC/801/6/5, Folder 1, Royal Army Medical Corps Muniments Collection, Wellcome Collection Museum of Military Medicine, Ash Vale, England.

> "But thus it stands as an indisputable fact, that a woman was for 40 years an officer in the British service, and fought one duel and sought many more, had pursued a legitimate medical education, and received a regular diploma, and had acquired almost a celebrity for skill as a surgical operator. It was a supreme deception. How could it happen?"[24]

This narrative even gained attention internationally, the issue of *Saunders's News-Letter* being reposted along with commentary in a French political journal titled "La Revue des Armees de Terre et de Mar," in which, a French commentator claimed the story was "an incessant subject of chatter in clubs."[25] In contrast to his colleagues' theories, these newspaper reports would mark the beginning of Barry's sex being incorporated into a new Victorian phenomenon: the sensationalist story. As the reporter in *Saunders's News-Letter* wrote, "There is no doubt whatever about the "fact," but I doubt whether even Miss Braddon herself [a famous sensationalist novelist of the time] would have ventured to make use of it in fiction."[26]

Victorian Sensationalism: The Story Beyond the Life.

"What an autobiography such a life would have made!"[27] In 1876, a reader of the medical journal *The Lancet* wrote into the editorial columns, expressing their review of George Thomas Kepper, Earl of Albemarle's newly published autobiography *Fifty Years of my Life.* The reader was not speaking about Lord Albemarle, however, but Dr. James Barry, who featured in a brief section of it when Lord Albemarle met him in Cape Town, South Africa. In these brief two pages, Lord Albemarle fashions a narrative: one of a mysterious

[24] A.K. Kubba, "The Life, Work and Gender of Dr. James Barry MD (1795-1865)," *Royal College of Edinburgh* 31, no. 4 (2001), 353-354.
[25] Typescript of La Revue des Armees de Terre et de Mar, 1865, RAMC/801/6/5, Folder 1, Royal Army Medical Corps Muniments Collection, Wellcome Collection Museum of Military Medicine, Ash Vale, England.
[26] Ibid.
[27] "Notes, Short Comments, and Answers to Correspondents." *The Lancet* 107, no. 2747 (April 22, 1876): 623-26.

surgeon who was a subject of "universal attention" from both affluent circles and the people of Cape Town alike for his eccentricities, yet who no one knew was a woman. He takes great attention in describing the other man as having, "a certain effeminacy in his manner, which he seemed to always be striving to overcome,"[28] from participating in pistol duels to disobeying direct discipline from his superiors. Albemarle's impression of Barry seems clear: "Lord Charles describes him to me as the most skillful of surgeons, and the most wayward of mortals… "[29] In writing his reaction to finding out that Barry was biologically female, he reflected that it was striking how no servant who lived with Barry ever knew, and how his friend believed that Barry may be the granddaughter of a Scotch Earl [Possibly Lord Buchan].

This brief autobiographical retelling of an Earl's impressions on Barry is not unique. The 1876 correspondent in *The Lancet* was not the first person to be fascinated by the biographical tale of Barry's life; countless others wrote into newspapers regarding their personal stories of knowing Barry or rewrote his life into a fictional work altogether, a phenomenon that fits within the rise of sensationalist fiction during the time. Starting in the 1860s throughout the next two decades, sensation fiction rose in popularity in England. Characterized by its illogical plots or comically fantastic elements, Victorian sensation fiction sought to confront taboo topics, such as murder, illegitimacy, impersonation, bigamy, amongst others. Some historians argue that the transgressive nature of the fantastic plot points sought to signify the emancipation of silenced groups or impulses from the social institutions that subjugated them.[30] When it first appeared in the 1860s, the genre was met with both enthusiasm and criticism for being immoral or "disreputable," but many writers

[28] George Thomas Keppel, Earl of Albemare. "St. Helena." Essay. In *Fifty Years of My Life*, London: Macmillan, 1877, 204.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Lyn Pykett. "Sensation and the Fantastic in the Victorian Novel." Chapter. In *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel*, edited by Deirdre David, 2nd ed., Cambridge Companions to Literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 211-213.

claimed these criticisms were unfounded. One article in the weekly publication, *All the Year Round,* which published sensationalist fiction edited by Charles Dickens, claimed that fans of the genre were the "universal customer" and were unfairly accused of being immoral for liking it.[31]

It is no surprise then that one of the first cases of the reshaping of Barry's story into a work of fiction comes from the 1867 publication of *All the Year Round*. In a short story titled *A Mystery Still,* "Doctor James" is described in a similar manner to Earl Albemarle's account, an effeminate eccentric who hid behind masculine brashness, crafting characterization details that were similar to those mentioned in Edward Bradford's account, such as: "his boyish voice…contributed essentially to his juvenile appearance," and "complete all with a sword big enough for a dragon, and you have the doctor complete."[32] The narrative first focuses on his expulsion from Cape Town, which only mentions his pistol duel with Captain Cleote. By the end of the narrative, he dies at his house with his servant John, who discovers the truth of Barry's sex [In reality, it was his nurse.] The author presented as fact that Barry was a mother in the early period of her life, most likely derived from the pregnancy theory presented by Barry's nurse. The story asked the rhetorical question, "How had she spent the fortune she had made? As hush-money, or in support of the child who, if still living, must be an elderly person?"[33] As evident in the plot of *A Mystery Still,* sensationalist fiction authors took certain facets of truth in Barry's story, and then twisted certain theories to craft their fictional narrative. The genre of sensationalism led to a constant retelling of Barry's story, using theories presented about his body and life in personal accounts. When comparing the differences between these stories to the personal

[31] Michael Diamond, *Victorian Sensation: Or, the Spectacular, the Shocking and the Scandalous in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. London: Anthem, 2004, 3.
[32] Charles Dickens, "A Mystery Still." *All the Year Round, A Weekly Journal* XVII (May 18, 1867), Internet Archive, 493.
[33] Ibid., 495.

accounts, they can reflect cultural ideas of gender roles, specifically the attachment of femininity to motherhood, during the period.

A Mystery Still was not the only fictional story written about Barry during the Victorian period that put the theory about his motherhood front and center. Around two decades later, in 1881, Colonel Ebenezer Rogers published *A Modern Sphinx,* a fictional mystery set in Jamaica that included a character who the author based off James Barry. Colonel Rogers claimed to have known Barry personally while they were stationed in Jamaica together. Within the introduction of his novel, he compiled accounts of others who knew Barry that wrote into *The Lancet* during the 1880s as proof that Barry's sex was known before his death [But he also included Edward Bradford's accounts in this list.] He claimed, because of Barry's "abnormal back-door influence" and effeminate features mentioned throughout these letters, the upper-circles of London must have known that she was a woman and anatomically female.[34] Throughout 1895, Col. Rogers wrote into *The Lancet* multiple times, recounting either interviews he had conducted with those who had known Barry or what newspapers had reported in 1865. Each time, he ended his correspondence with a mention of his book holding more information on the subject, and even, in *The Lancet* issue 1021, mentioned that "Miss Braddon," a famous sensationalist novelist of the late Victorian era, edited his novel.[35] It is clear his perspective in gathering data about Barry's story is tied with sensationalist fiction, most likely, selling his own book.

Within the novel itself, Dr. Fitzjames is the stand-in character for Dr. Barry, a mysterious and eccentric doctor stationed in Jamaica. He falls ill and must return to England, and the novel ends with the other characters finding out after he dies that he is anatomically female. They find a letter of his, detailing his reasoning for a lifetime of "deception." The

[34] Rogers, "A Modern Sphinx," xi.
[35] Typescript of *The Lancet,* 1895, RAMC/801/6/5, Folder 1, Royal Army Medical Corps Muniments Collection, Wellcome Collection Museum of Military Medicine, Ash Vale, England.

letter is signed with her "real" name, Jessie Pownall, and details that she went undercover after her beloved husband died in order to take his place, and "found it most difficult to conceal my sex."[36] Her greatest regret was leaving her daughter as a baby, whom she felt tied to as a mother. As stated previously, the Victorian ideals of gender roles were rigid and tied to biological sex, and for the ideal Victorian woman, her femininity was tied with being a wife and mother.

The concept of the ideal womanhood was connected to the domestic sphere but filled with contradictions. The perfect woman had to embody "majestic childishness," feminine dependance and sexual purity, in conjunction with the expectation of motherhood.[37] Because of this, as argued by Deborah Gorham, the idealization of the daughter was especially tied to Victorian womanhood. As written in a passage from an 1887 women's magazine, "But the mother sees herself in her…A family without a girl lacks a crowning grace."[38] Col. Rogers' sensationalist narrative about Barry's life was steeped in these cultural conceptions of womanhood of his time; because of "Jessie Pownall's" failure (and regret) to perform the ideal cultural standard of femininity, her connection to mothering a daughter seeks to remedy this. This fictional narrative reconstructed Barry's story in a way that reveals the Victorian ideals of stringent gender roles and sex intertwining– in opposition to the earlier narratives in 1865 of Barry's masculinity directly tied to a "true" male sex, an adoption of feminine story of his life leads credence to the idea he was biologically female.

[36] Rogers, "A Modern Sphinx," 291.
[37] Gorham Deborah, "Women and Girls in the Middle-Class Family: Images and Reality," essay, in *The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 5.
[38] Ibid., 7.

Conclusion

What happens when your legacy transcends your life– does your story say more about the society that tells it than yourself? The answer is a resounding yes. In the case of Dr. James Barry, the way his story had been constructed was pieced together by various personal accounts, which teetered the line between fact and fiction. While some accounts presented themselves as factual and some were solely fiction, the line was nebulous for others, as the sensationalization surrounding his gender brought many accounts to light that otherwise may have been contextualized differently. Some Victorian writers connect theories about Barry's anatomical sex with ideals of womanhood, specifically their cultural connection between femininity and motherhood. Others, however, connect Barry's case to scientific theories of sex such as hermaphroditism, and associate their ideals of masculinity onto theories about Barry's one "true sex." These accounts serve to speak less about the factual components of Barry's life, but rather the cultural context in which they were written, specifically regarding late Victorian ideals of the connection between gender roles and biological sex.

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SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

Constructing Evangelization From the Needs of the Colonial Project

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Originally written in Spanish, and translated into English by the author

Abstract

Whether the Spanish evangelization of Latin America was successful is a question as old as evangelization itself. However, there is no one answer: whether evangelization was judged a success or not depended on the specific needs of the colonial project at the time in which that judgment was made. During the Conquest (ca. 16th century), evangelization was considered successful because it justified both the destruction of the indigenous element and the integration of the new territory under the Christian Spanish crown. In contrast, during the Colony (ca. 17th century), evangelization was deemed a failure, because considering indigenous Americans "true Christians" would erase the hierarchical divisions between them and the Spaniards on which the colonial enterprise relied. Additionally, the label of failure empowered local religious figures, whose control was legitimized by a continued "need" for Christianization. Lastly, during the New Spain (ca. 18th century), evangelization was again feted as a success, as a shared religion reconciled the diverse components of the new continent, allowing it to construct its unique identity beyond a mere Spanish satellite. Such debates did not end with the advent of independence movements, and continue to emerge; as Latin America remains mostly Christian, it is worth examining their historical origins.

Whether the Spanish evangelization of Latin America was successful is a question as old as the evangelization itself. In fact, those who, under the modern banner of indigenous resistance, subscribe to the idea that indigenous people merely adopted Catholic forms to preserve their original religion may be surprised to find that this view aligns with an unlikely party: the Church itself, at the beginning of the 17th century, also perpetrated the idea of a 'disguised paganism,' in this case to delegitimize indigenous forms of Catholicism.1 Because evangelization was one of the stated missions of the conquest, it is worth examining how the definition of a 'successful evangelization' has changed. In this work, I argue that the sense of 'success' of evangelization was built from the practical needs of each stage of colonial development, since labeling evangelization a success or a failure allowed colonial actors to carry out actions to advance that particular stage of the colonial project.

This paper's tripartite division derives from anthropologist-architect Jordi Gussinyer i Alfonso's work on syncretism, religion, and architecture in Mesoamerica.[2] The three stages, which I have labeled "the Conquest," "the Colony," and "the New Spain," broadly align with Gussinyer's periodization of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries;[3] however, they do not indicate a chronology as such—that is, these stages are not constructed from a specified period of years, but through the social fabric that characterized them. Gussinyer identifies these stages in relation with New Spanish architecture; however, they are particularly adequate to frame this work, as they reflect sociocultural patterns that broadly emerged throughout all of Hispano-America, with some variation in the specific years of the process depending on the region.

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[1] Juan Carlos Estenssoro, "El simio de Dios: los indígenas y la iglesia frente a la evangelización del Perú, siglos XVI-XVII," Bulletin de l'Institut français d'études andines 30, no. 3 (2001), 456.
[2] Jordi Gussinyer i Alfonso, "Sincretismo, religión y arquitectura en Mesoamérica (1521-1571)," *Boletín Americanista*, no. 46 (January 11, 1996), 229.
[3] Ibid.

The 'Conquest' involved a society that was still majority indigenous, and the 'Colony' was a society where this was no longer the case, or that at least had stopped focusing on the indigenous aspect.[4] This was not only due to the decimation of the indigenous population, which by this stage had endured multiple epidemics,[5] but also to what historian Serge Gruzinski calls "duplication"—the tendency to exactly reproduce Spanish structures in the New Spain, which coincided with the migration of many more Spanish settlers to the New World.[6] Lastly, the 'New Spain' reintegrated an indigenous dimension into thought and culture, no longer prehispanic but contemporary, and reimagined it as part of the construction of a new New Spanish identity, independent of Spanish duplication.[7]

I. The Conquest

The 'Conquest' is, perhaps, the period that can be temporally defined with the greatest specificity (ca. 1520-1570): it began with the arrival of the Spanish and ended with the arrival of the Jesuits, the latter of which coincided with the beginning of a clear colonial project.[8] What defined this period was the chaos produced by the clash between both cultures,[9] which played out in the encounters where the Spanish ultimately subjugated indigenous populations. Despite the Spanish military victory, the violence of this clash produced in the conquerors a certain insecurity surrounding their triumph, which led to the search for a 'spiritual' validation of their victory.[10] The principal need of the colonial project in this stage, then, was simply to establish itself against the backdrop of an indigenous culture. In this framework, a successful evangelization was one that achieved what Gussinyer called the

[4] Gussinyer, 229.
[5] Ibid., 223.
[6] Serge Gruzinski, *El pensamiento mestizo*, trans. Enrique Folch González (Ediciones Paidós Ibérica, 2000), 94.
[7] Gussinyer, "Sincretismo, religión y arquitectura," 229.
[8] Estenssoro, "El simio de Dios," 461.
[9] Gruzinski, El pensamiento mestizo, 74.
[10] Gussinyer, "Sincretismo, religión y arquitectura," 190.

"destructurization"[11] [Sp. *desestructuración*] of indigenous beliefs, which was carried out simultaneously through two forces: the destruction of indigenous forms and their identification with their Catholic counterparts. Its first component—destruction—finds an analogue in Gruzinski, who identified as a part of this cultural clash the material destruction of indigenous idols, in order to demonstrate the impotence of the old gods.[12]

The second letter by the conquistador Hernán Cortés to King Charles V contains a strong example of this impulse: Cortés tells how, when visiting the main Mexica temple, "the most principal of these idols, and in which they [the Mexicas] had more faith and belief, I toppled from their chairs and had thrown down the stairs, […] and put in them images of our Lady and other saints."[13] Cortés's intention is clear: he recognizes the Mexicas' most important idols and then proceeds to demolish them, thus seeking this destructurization of the Mexica element to then replace it with Christianity. If a successful evangelization is that which uproots indigenous modes, that definition then allows for the total dispossession and destruction of indigenous materiality—a convenient justification for the thirst for gold expressed repeatedly by Cortés in the same letter, and which emerged as an objective of the Conquest as early on as Christopher Columbus's travel logs.[14]

But if Cortés's letter primarily showcases destruction, it also contains a clue to the second force: identification. To replace the principal idols with the Virgin and the saints, Cortés must first have related the two, identifying idols as analogues of Christian devotional figures and then as corruptions of the same. This identification is crucial for early

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[11] Gussinyer, "Sincretismo, religión y arquitectura,"188.
[12] Gruzinski, *El pensamiento mestizo*, 84.
[13] Hernán Cortés, "Segunda Carta-Relación de Hernán Cortés al Emperador: Fecha En Segura de La Sierra á 30 de Octubre de 1520.," in *Cartas y Relaciones de Hernán Cortés al Emperador Carlos V*, ed. Pascual de Gayangos (París: Imprenta Central de los Ferro-Carriles A. Chaix y C[a], 1866), 106, https://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra/cartas-y-relaciones-de-hernan-cortes-al-emperador-carlos-v-974782/.
[14] Christopher Columbus, *The Voyage of Christopher Columbus: Columbus's Own Journal of Discovery Newly Restored and Translated*, ed. John G. Cummins, 1st U.S. ed (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

evangelization: looking for "formulas" that can dominate the indigenous man without too many "material pressures,"[15] Spanish priests were willing to find correspondences between both religions in order to Christianize existing rites and beliefs, and encouraged indigenous people to identify with both traditions.[16] In the eyes of historian Juan Carlos Estenssoro, this disposition toward coincidences is what characterizes this period, along with the consequent diversity of beliefs practiced within the same religious order.[17] Therefore, since the evangelization during the Conquest is primarily concerned both with debilitating and coopting indigenous religious forms, a successful evangelization in this first period is that which simply achieves an indigenous acknowledgment that it is God, not the idol, who must function as a deity.[18]

To this end, it was not required to abandon previous practices, but simply to change their addressee, which is why it can be said that the success of evangelization is defined merely by a nominal or superficial adoption of Catholicism. In Book XII of the Florentine Codex—a manuscript compiled by a Franciscan friar from oral accounts to explain Mexica culture and beliefs to readers in the Spanish court and in the Vatican, and which remains the foremost primary source of Mexica cosmogony, language, and knowledge—the effects of this adoption can be perceived. In the original Nahuatl text, the Spanish word "*diablo*" ["devil"] appears multiple times to refer to a Mexica god or deity, generally the "*diablo vitzilobuchtli*" [Huitzilopochtli].[19] But the word "*diablo*" does not appear in the Spanish translation by the Franciscan Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, who renders the references to the

[15] Gussinyer, "Sincretismo, religión y arquitectura," 192.
[16] Estenssoro, "El simio de Dios," 459-460.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., 460.
[19] Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, "Book Twelve of the Florentine Codex," in *We People Here: Náhuatl Accounts of the Conquest of Mexico*, ed. James Lockhart (Wipf and Stock, 2004), 52.

same gods as "*ydolo"* [sic, "idol"].[20] Interestingly, the demonization of the old gods is seen solely in the Nahuatl and not in the Spanish, where these deities are simply denominated 'idols.' This difference appears in high contrast in the relation of an episode where Spaniards set fire to a building housing many devotional figures, which in Nahuatl are represented as "*diablome*" and in Spanish as "*ydolos.*"[21] The use of the term 'devil'—obviously loaded with religious connotation—demonstrates the two forces: destruction, insofar as indigenous religion is vilified by its association with the devil; and identification, insofar as this vilification is executed through a Christian lens. It is important to mention that Sahagún's sources were "Hispanicized Indians;"[22] that is, with all certainty they were indigenous people whom Sahagún considered converts. The difference between the Nahuatl and the Spanish can therefore suggest a concerted effort to introduce Christian terms into the indigenous vocabulary—precisely an example of the nominal evangelization that characterizes this period.

Defining a 'successful' evangelization as a merely nominal one allows for several actions by colonial agents. It achieved the incorporation of the new continent into the Spanish Empire: in order to be politically integrated as 'subjects' of Charles V, indigenous people must be Christianized.[23] To this end, it was enough for indigenous people to self-denominate as Christians, an objective that was facilitated by the identification of their own forms with Catholic equivalents. Additionally, nominal Christianization removed from the burden of religious representatives certain logistical considerations, such as the size of the new continent and the fact that the Spanish evangelization, being the first of its kind, was largely

[20] Sahagún, "Book Twelve of the Florentine Codex," 53.
[21] Ibid., 236-237.
[22] Alfonso Salgado, "Class #3: Book XII of the Florentine Codex" (Seminar, Primary Texts of Latin American Civilization, Columbia University, January 30, 2023).
[23] Gruzinski, *El pensamiento mestizo*, 97.

improvised.[24] Lastly—though unintentional—a successful evangelization being nominal and identified with indigenous forms conferred certain power to the indigenous world, insofar as it tried to embed itself in the 'forms' of the conqueror.[25]

II. The Colony

As the Spanish presence in America stabilized, the need for an urgent evangelization was diminished. The diminishment of the indigenous population, due to epidemics and the arrival of new Spanish settlers (and their families), subtracted importance from the indigenous world to bestow it on the "duplication" of the Old World.[26] This stage is that which I have called the Colony, when the colonial project had taken root and now sought to build itself as an expression of a purely Spanish character. But there was an obstacle in the way of this duplication and the purity of its Spanish quality: with the development of autonomous forms of Christianity, previously encouraged by the friars, the gap between the Spanish and the indigenous population had narrowed, a proximity that indigenous people themselves recognized: various Jesuit documents contain anecdotes of indigenous Christians who not only took Communion, but who claimed to take Communion "like the Spaniards."[27] Catholicism and the practice of its sacraments became equalizing forces, which placed everyone under the common label of 'Christian.' The necessity of the colonial project at this point was to maintain itself; however, as soon as evangelization was considered successful, the colony could no longer persist. This is because, if all indigenous people were now Christian, the necessity for an Indian/Spaniard division would be eradicated,[28] and the purely-

[24] Stafford Poole, "Some Observations on Mission Methods and Native Reactions in Sixteenth-Century New Spain," *The Americas* 50, no. 3 (1994), 338.
[25] Gussinyer, "Sincretismo, religión y arquitectura," 188.
[26] Gruzinski, *El pensamiento mestizo*, 94.
[27] Estenssoro, "El simio de Dios," 463.
[28] Ibid., 457.

Spanish duplication could not then be realized. The Spanish order therefore needed a source of differentiation from its indigenous colonial subjects, and the easiest one to achieve was to reverse the acceptance of indigenous people as Catholics that had threatened the division in the first place. This differentiation took the form of an idea that Estenssoro has called the 'ape of God' ['*el simio de Dios*']:[29] though the religious representatives of the Conquest had availed themselves of the correspondences between Catholicism and indigenous religion, the Colony now argued that such correspondences and the indigenous Christian practices that emerged from them were the work of the devil, imitations of true holy forms intended to cloak paganism. Promoted by the Jesuits, this idea implied that indigenous people never truly converted to Catholicism, but simply adopted its forms to lend what Estenssoro dubs a "Christian varnish" to their pagan practices.[30]

Commissioned in the early 17th century in Peru by the Jesuit and renowned extirpator of idolatries Francisco de Ávila, the Huarochirí Manuscript was a collection of Incan mythology and religious stories, compiled by Ávila to identify pagan beliefs and practices to be eradicated.[31] Aside from being the most complete documentation of Andean religious practice, the Manuscript is a crucial source to exemplify the two pillars of the failure of evangelization argument that emerged during the Colony: the discrediting of indigenous religious autonomy and the idea of the 'ape of God.' The similarities between Andean religion and Christianity abound in the text: the *huaca* (or deity) Caui Llaca gets "pregnant even though she remained untouched by man,"[32] like the Virgin Mary; the man Huatya Curi

[29] Estenssoro, "El simio de Dios," 465.
[30] Ibid., 456.
[31] Gérald Taylor, ed., *Ritos y tradiciones de Huarochirí*, Travaux de l'Institut Français d'Etudes Andines 260 (Lima: Fondo Editorial Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 2008), 9.
[32] Frank Salomon and George L. Urioste, trans., *The Huarochirí Manuscript: A Testament of Ancient and Colonial Andean Religion* (University of Texas Press, 2010), 47.

arrives in a village and cures a man with a mysterious illness[33] in the purest style of Jesus Christ's miracles; and the *huaca* Pariacaca comprises five men at the same time as he is a unitary god,[34] a multiplicity reminiscent in concept to the Holy Trinity. Interestingly, two of these tales appear next to an self-identification as Christian by the indigenous narrators-informers of the text. An indigenous tale of how a man and several animals were saved from an apocalyptic flood by climbing Villca Coto mountain ends with the explanation that "we Christians believe it refers to the time of the Flood" and the story of Noah's Ark.[35] Immediately after, there is a tale about the death of the Sun, that once again "we Christians" consider to "tell of the darkness following the death of our Lord Jesus Christ."[36] The self-identifying label "we Christians" always appears next to the correlation of an indigenous element with a Christian one, suggesting the remains of a Conquest-style evangelization, where nominal identification was enough to make a 'Christian.'

However, the manuscript reveals the insufficiency of mere identification. When describing the local rituals honoring the *huaca* Pariacaca, it is said that "people perform this pasch by making it coincide with any of the major Christian paschal rites" (Easter, Pentecost, or Corpus Christi).[37] Taking the precedent of the Conquest, the parallelism between pagan and Catholic festivities was likely fostered by some friar in a past time; however, what had then been seen as religious syncretism was now interpreted not as a sign that indigenous Christians had developed religious autonomy but as proof that "in their hearts they don't really believe"[38]—that their conversion was inauthentic. Similarly, the manuscript describes how indigenous Christians, "although they say the Rosary, […] still carry some pretty *illa*

[33] Salomon & Urioste, *The Huarochirí Manuscript*, 56-57.
[34] Ibid., 59; 61.
[35] Ibid., 52.
[36] Ibid., 33.
[37] Ibid., 73.
[38] Ibid., 74.

amulet everywhere."[39] *Illas* were talismans or depictions of indigenous devotional figures, comparable to the effigies of saints in Catholicism;[40] however, rather than view this practice as an autonomous religious expression that reinterpreted *illas* as saints and integrated the rosary into its practices, the manuscript frames them as hypocrisies, as if the mere presence of the indigenous forms of the *illas* was incompatible with the devotion represented by the rosary. The Manuscript proposes that indigenous Christians still carry *illas* because "some people, although they've become Christians, have only done so out of fear," and adopt Catholic forms thinking that "the priest or somebody else might find out how bad [they]'ve been" otherwise[41]—that is, to dissimulate a continued paganism. By suggesting that syncretisms such as the *illa*-rosary connection come not from religious autonomy but from indigenous people's "fear," the manuscript invalidates their conversions, portraying them as pagans and not simply indigenous Christians.

Such arguments are also found in contemporaneous Jesuit writings. Father Pablo Arriaga deplored the indigenous custom of carrying *huacas* during Corpus Christi processionals, and the same Francisco de Ávila that commissioned the Huarochirí Manuscript maintained that some indigenous people still recurred to the "diabolical artifice" of using images of the Virgin and of Jesus Christ as idols.[42] Yet again, the indigenous practices comprised in both traditions were read not as autonomous devotions, but as proof that any indigenous Christianity was false, and was in reality pagan. All this added to the point of view, prevalent during the Colony, that evangelization was a failure, since Catholic forms were no more than superficial—even though this had been enough for (and moreover, constituted) the success of the same evangelization in the anterior period. What was

[39] Salomon & Urioste, *The Huarochirí Manuscript*, 74.
[40] Ibid., (footnote 257).
[41] Ibid., 74.
[42] Jeffrey L. Klaiber, "The Posthumous Christianization of the Inca Empire in Colonial Peru," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37, no. 3 (1976): 512, https://doi.org/10.2307/2708812.

previously syncretism had now become idolatry—syncretism would admit at least some Christianity within its forms, and Spaniards refused to see any part of themselves reflected in any indigenous mode of life.[43] Because the objective of the colonial project at that moment was to sustain itself, the label of failure was necessary because any such reflection would threaten the Indian/Spaniard division on which the Colony was built. Therefore, the label of 'failure' allowed the Spanish to accomplish the total 'otherness' of the indigenous people, asserting the domination that was required at that stage of the Colony.

For more practical effects, the 'failed evangelization' also permitted the expansion of religious representatives' power in indigenous populations. The Huarochirí manuscript, after deploring indigenous paschal rites, posits that "when it comes to celebrating [them], the people in this village would be delighted if the priest were absent from town or went to Limac,"[44] thus implying that the only safeguard preventing these rituals from deteriorating into total paganism was the presence of a religious figure. Similarly, when the manuscript criticizes the hypocrisy of indigenous Christians, it suggests that this hypocrisy may be due to the fact that "it's just a few years since they've had Doctor Francisco de Avila [sic], a good counselor and teacher," implying that the continued presence of a religious representative was necessary to combat these false beliefs, as "if they had another priest they might return to the old ways."[45] This personal justification of Ávila in the manuscript is perhaps not unexpected: around the time of the Manuscript's creation, a serious complaint had been raised against Ávila for exploitation and mistreatment of his parishioners.[46] It is therefore possible that labeling evangelization as 'failed' allowed Ávila to justify his actions as necessary to Christianize these false believers, defending himself against these allegations of

[43] Estenssoro, "El simio de Dios," 472.
[44] Salomon & Urioste, *The Huarochirí Manuscript*, 75.
[45] Ibid., 74.
[46] Alan Durston, "Notes on the Authorship of the Huarochirí Manuscript," *Colonial Latin American Review* 16, no. 2 (December 1, 2007): 229–30, https://doi.org/10.1080/10609160701644516.

abuse and conserving his position of power in the region. The 'failure' of evangelization during the Colony, then, not only achieved the 'otherness' of the indigenous people before the Spanish, but also justified the permanence of religious representatives as figures of power and authority in the regions they were based in, resulting in a double domination that allowed the colonial project to achieve its objective at this juncture: to maintain itself.

III. The New Spain

Over the years, Spanish "duplication" in its purest state became an increasingly infeasible project: as new groups emerged and were consolidated within the colony, it was organized no longer according to an Indian/Spaniard dichotomy, but to a gradated caste system—peninsulars, Creoles, mestizos, mulattos, etc. The processes of *mestizaje* [miscegenation], both cultural and genealogical,[47] became not only inevitable but also unignorable. This stage thus entailed a return to the consideration of the indigenous way of life, be it to find new avenues of artistic expression[48] or to integrate the indigenous element into a new, uniquely 'New Spanish' identity beyond merely being a Spanish satellite—defined no longer solely by its hispanicity or indigeneity, but by the distinctive characteristics cultivated in a panorama where both lineages were influential.

It was under this context that the baroque took over New Spanish expression. The baroque—an artistic movement that not only tended towards excesses but also embraced and explored oppositions and contradictions—found in fertile terrain in the *mestiza* New Spain, presenting itself as a useful tool to interpret the oppositions and dualities inherent to New

[47] Estenssoro, "El simio de Dios," 457.
[48] Gussinyer, "Sincretismo, religión y arquitectura," 229.

Spanish society.[49] It was Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, perhaps the most famous exponent of Mexican baroque literature, who presented a portrait of a successful evangelization in response to the colony's need for an identity. In the *Loa* that prefaces the morality play *The Divine Narcissus* (1689), Sor Juana constructs an allegory of the first contact between America and Spain, developed by four characters: Occident and America (represented as an indigenous couple), and Religion and Zeal (represented as a European couple). Although their encounter begins in a hostile manner, it ends in a general reconciliation when both hemispheres realize that their religious practices share much in common. The reference to the Divine Narcissus, enamored of his own reflection, operates as a tacit recognition of the 'mirroring' or similarity between both seemingly-opposed religions and reunites them in a single image.[50]

Initially, the *Loa* appears to reproduce the assumptions of the two preceding periods; however, a closer read yields a new understanding of evangelization. Sor Juana's text first seems to repeat the 'ape of God' argument espoused by the Church during the Colony: toward the end, she remembers how "unhappy America had / an Idol, which she adored […] / in whom the devil pretended, / of the Holy Eucharist / to forge the high Mystery."[51] Nonetheless, the rest of the portrait presented by the *Loa* does not coincide with this vision, and even validates indigenous practices rather than discredit them—the *Loa*, in fact, stands out among its contemporaries as one of the first works to represent indigenous people not as simple savages, but as rational beings with the capacity for agency.[52] Similarly, the *Loa* recalls Conquest-era religious correspondences, as the climactic point in the allegory occurs

[49] Kristin Norget, "Hard Habits to Baroque: Catholic Church and Popular-Indigenous Religious Dialogue in Oaxaca, Mexico," *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 33, no. 1 (2008): 132.
[50] Ilan Stavans, "Introduction," in *Poems, Protest, and a Dream: Selected Writings of Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz*, ed. Margaret Sayers Peden (Penguin Books, 1997), xi–xliv.
[51] Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Loa Para El Auto Sacramental de 'El Divino Narciso,'" in *El Divino Narciso*, ed. Héctor Baca Espinoza, Textos En Rotación (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2020), 32.
[52] Stavans, "Introduction."

when these similarities between devotional practices are established. However, when Sor Juana laid out the likenesses between the Catholic religion and indigenous practices, she did so not to instrumentalize the latter as vehicles for Christianity, but to demonstrate the mirroring between Spain and America that distinguishes the new Spain. Through a dialogue, the two hemispheres discover that both traditions worship gods who have the power to influence the natural world,[53] who become materialized (in the idol or the Host),[54] who require purification before being touched,[55] and who can be ingested as a part of worship (in the seeds of which the idols are made or in the transubstantiation of bread and wine for Communion).[56] Sor Juana's allegory teetered toward the blasphemous: the equiparation of indigenous rituals with the Eucharist—the most sacred of Catholic sacraments—could be a risky recourse in the Church's eyes. It is important here to reiterate that, in the allegory, Religion tells America that "it is not a new Deity, / but one not known / which you worship on this altar."[57] The implication was therefore not that there was such a thing as a 'right' or 'wrong' religion in the hemispheres' confrontation; rather, Sor Juana's dialogue implied that both religions shared one essence, and that any difference stemmed merely from its different expressions, which could be reconciled into the one, true form of Catholicism. Along this same thread, the allegory begins with an indigenous celebration for the "great God of Seeds"[58] and ends with a similar rejoicing when the same indigenous worshippers praise "the day / I met the great God of Seeds!"[59] now referring to the Christian God. Between the beginning and the end, the name of the deity did not change—only its meaning. This is important for two reasons: first, this parallelism allows for the preservation of indigenous

[53] De la Cruz, "Loa," 26.
[54] Ibid., 27.
[55] Ibid., 28.
[56] Ibid., 28-29.
[57] Ibid., 26.
[58] Ibid., 12.
[59] Ibid., 36.

forms, incorporating them as legitimate modes of worship. But, more importantly, the God of Seeds at the end serves as a classic baroque duality, standing in for the Christian God even as He continues to be identified with the name of the pagan god. In the figure of the "God of Seeds," then, Sor Juana encapsulated the beliefs of both hemispheres and used them to generate something unique, which did not belong wholly to one or the other tradition but that was built from the influence (and confluence) of both.

In the *Loa*, successful evangelization was that which managed to recognize this shared essence, and which established links between Catholicism and pagan religion not to subordinate the latter to the former but the form a new, unique belief. Because the colonial project in this period sought to secure its unique identity, defining successful evangelization in this way permitted the reunion of both cultures rather than having to choose one and reject the other, thus allowing the colonial project to utilize any resource to self-construct as it needed during this stage.

Conclusion

Throughout these three stages, it is evident that the label of 'success' or 'failure' applied to evangelization responded to the particular needs of the colonial project to develop at that moment. During the Conquest, the Colony needed to assert itself against an indigenous background; therefore, it was convenient to consider evangelization a success, because this justified both the destruction of the indigenous as well as their Christianization, and thus integrated America (even nominally) into the Christian Spanish Empire. During the Colony, this need changed from establishing the colonial structure to maintaining it; therefore, it was convenient to consider evangelization a failure, because this allowed for the preservation of the Indian/Spanish divisions on which the Colony depended, and therefore preserved structures of domination as well as religious representatives' authority. Lastly, during the

New Spain, the colony needed its own traits to identify it as a unique entity; therefore, it was convenient to consider evangelization a success again, as evangelization was the force capable of reconciling the diverse components of the new continent, allowing it to build itself as a result of both.

This success/failure debate remains current, and in its new expressions continues to demonstrate that the label afforded to evangelization is above all a response to or construction of the period in which a new iteration of the label emerges. Historian Jeffrey Klaiber cites the example of early 20th century Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui, who saw a form of indigenous resistance in the subsistence of paganism under a Catholic guise,[60] leading him to proclaim evangelization a failure. On the other hand, the devotional cult to the Virgin of Guadalupe in Mexico is a strong case for the success of evangelization: only through it is it possible to explain how a figure mapped directly from the indigenous goddess Tonantzin[61] could become the Vatican-approved patron saint of the country.

All this also generates additional questions around how evangelization should be understood, not only in the conception of a time period but also in the historiography that surrounds it. The historian Estenssoro, though he manages to discern that 'failure' as understood in the 17th century was no more than a construction to advance the colonial project, seems to continue arguing that evangelization *was* successful as an objective reality. Similarly, when referring to the primary evidence for indigenous Christianity in the Florentine Codex or the Huarochirí Manuscript, it should be taken into consideration that these sources were compiled in collaboration with Catholic religious representatives, a context which may have manipulated the indigenous profession of faith that is here taken as

[60] Klaiber, "The Posthumous Christianization," 507.
[61] Gisela Von Wobeser, "Mitos y realidades sobre el origen del culto a la Virgen de Guadalupe," *Revista Grafía* 10, no. 1 (June 2013): 148–60, https://doi.org/10.26564/16926250.355.

authentic. These uncertainties can be reduced to a single, larger one, with no apparent solution: the uncertainty of what can be considered a true conversion, a true Catholicism, a true religion. The answer to this question dwells in the interior of the spiritual individuality of those who profess the religion, and has found no final answer in literature, philosophy, or theology. It is perhaps somewhat naïve to believe that history will be the field to finally resolve this query.

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[i] Note: the English translation of quotes from sources in Spanish is the author’s own.

THE SEPULCHRAL SEAMSTRESS OF THE SEVEN SEAS:

How the Decline of Bombay's Textile Mill Sector led to the Growth of Shiv Sena

Ahaan Jindal

Abstract

This paper delves into the multifaceted factors contributing to the rise of the Shiv Sena party to power in Maharashtra, particularly focusing on the role played by the collapse of Bombay's textile mill industry by 1983. Through an in-depth analysis of historical sources, it examines how the decline of the textile industry provided fertile ground for Shiv Sena's emergence as a political force. The paper explores Shiv Sena's grassroots policy initiatives, such as its social service schemes and organizational structure, which appealed to disillusioned mill workers grappling with economic hardship. Additionally, it discusses Shiv Sena's strategic manipulation of community and linguistic identity politics to galvanize support among the working class, emphasizing Marathi pride and regional solidarity. Furthermore, the paper considers counterarguments, including the role of Shiv Sena's aggressive leadership style and Bal Thackeray's cult of personality in consolidating power. Ultimately, while acknowledging the significance of other factors, the paper concludes that the collapse of Bombay's textile mill industry was a crucial catalyst for Shiv Sena's rise to political prominence in Maharashtra. This paper endeavors, therefore, to address the notable gap in the prevailing literature from political economists and historians regarding a comprehensive analysis of Shiv Sena's ascent within this context.

Introduction

Shiv Sena Bhavan[1] – housing an impressive effigy of the founder of the Shiv Sena[2], Bal Thackeray – presides over the roads leading to Mumbai's Shivaji Park. More than merely a grandiose government building, the *Bhavan* represents the nerve-center of an organization that has weathered tumultuous Maharashtra's politics for over 56 years. As a party that cemented itself in the Marathi political sphere as an ultranationalist, right-wing force, Shiv Sena has pushed forth a manifesto favoring preferential treatment for the Marathi people.[3] This agenda, deemed *Maratha nationalism*, has been at the ideological core of Shiv Sena's, cementing the party's omnipresence in Maharashtra's politics. To better comprehend how Shiv Sena has become a mainstay in regional politics, the origins of the party deserve more thoughtful analysis. The factors for its rise are complex – be it their grass-roots level programs to garner traction with the youth or nationalist ideological appeal[4] – but what proved a catalyst to their rise-to-power was the decline of the Bombay Textile Industry by the early 1980s.

The textile industry – one that had been the lifeblood of the city's industrial development – saw a decline in its economic prowess post-Independence (1947). This can be whittled down to economic, socio-political, and cultural problems. As the ensuing research will illustrate, this benefited Shiv Sena: they managed to garner the support of disillusioned Marathi laborer, who gravitated towards the party's nationalist appeal. Thousands were thrust into the hands of Shiv Sena following the collapse of the industry, helping it gain popular support.[5] That being said, it would be imprudent to not account for the host of other factors – be it their

[1] *The headquarters of Shiv Sena since its establishment in 1966.*
[2] *Marathi; translates literally to 'Army of Shivaji.'*
[3] "Why Does Shinde Rebellion Hit so Hard? A Look at Shiv Sena's History." 2022. Deccan Herald. June 28, 2022 https://www.deccanherald.com/national/west/why-does-shinde-rebellion-hit-so-hard-a-look-at-shiv-senas-history1122180.html
[4] Vaibhav Purandare. 2012. *Bal Thackeray & the Rise of the Shiv Sena*. New Delhi: Lotus Collection, pp.132-35.
[5] H Van Wersch. 2019. *The 1982-83 Bombay Textile Strike and the Unmaking of Labourers' City*. New Delhi: Speaking Tiger Publishing Pvt. Ltd.

widespread ideological appeal and policies, and Bal Thackeray's charismatic brand of leadership[6] – that further culminated in Shiv Sena's precipitous rise-to-power.

A more in-depth review of the reasons for Shiv Sena's growth is therefore warranted. Speeches by Shiv Sena's political elite, in conjunction with contemporary news articles and cartoons, have been used extensively to gain an authentic perspective on the issue; this has been supported by a meta-analysis of secondary sources and data to synthesize reasoned conclusions regarding Shiv Sena's emergence.

This paper is structured thematically, starting with background information to contextualize Bombay's textile industry and Shiv Sena's beginnings, followed by a review of how the industry's decline benefited Shiv Sena's rise-to-power. Counter-arguments detailing other factors aiding its ascendance are subsequently explored; historians' perspectives will underly analysis throughout. The paper will end with a reasoned conclusion, arguing that the industry's collapse was a significant factor in Shiv Sena's rise-to-power by the 1990s, with other factors playing a significant yet minor role.

[6] Indian National Congress: *One of India's oldest and most storied political parties with what is considered to be a center or center-left agenda; established in 1885.*

Background Context

Shiv Sena's Origins

In 1960, cartoonist Bal Thackeray started publishing a satirical cartoon weekly called *Marmik*.[7] Thackeray began to use *Marmik* to disseminate anti-migrant sentiments, shedding light on the problems faced by the common Marathi man (Marathi *Manoos*).[8] The weekly focused its content on economic issues like unemployment and workers' rights.[9] *Marmik* soon gained considerable traction among youth and the ever-expanding working-class, who began to gravitate towards Thackeray's nativist ideals. By June 1966, Thackeray founded Shiv Sena.[10] Although not a well-organized political organization, Shiv Sena attracted many unemployed Marathi youth. The early years of the party saw it propagate a distinctively anti-south Indian stance, with Thackeray's war-cry of "*pungi bajao, lungi bhagao"*[11] striking a chord with the unemployed, who were given a scapegoat for their situation.[12] This stemmed from the issue of many South Indians migrating to the city seeking a job.[13] The Marathis felt disillusioned with their under-representation in the up-and-coming industrial, commercial, and service sectors. Shiv Sena and its supporters leveraged this anti-South agenda through oft violent methods, vandalizing establishments like restaurants and grocery-stores run by South Indians, subsequently forcing them to hire Marathis instead.[14] Thackeray also aimed to institute a policy that mandated that 80% of all public and private-sector jobs were to be reserved for Marathi-speaking people.[15]

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[7] *Marathi; translates roughly to 'straight from the heart'*
[8] Gyan Prakash. 2010. *Mumbai Fables*. Princeton University Press, 211.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Purandare, 12.
[11] "Blow the flute, and drive the *lungis* (clothing typically worn by South Indians) away."
[12] Das, Arham. 2014. "June 19 1966 - the Shiv Sena Is Established -." What Happened on This Day in History - Maps of India. June 19, 2014. https://www.mapsofindia.com/on-this-day/june-19-1966-the-shiv-sena-is-established.
[13] Mary Fainsod Katzenstein. 1979. *Ethnicity and Equality*. Oxford University Press.pp. 66, 79, Prakash, 200.
[14] Ibid.
[15] van Wersch, 85-87.

This radical populism would form the backbone of Shiv Sena's political doctrine and aided their emergence as a primarily political force. A noteworthy instance of this is their political rift with the Communist Party, and in particular its trade union activists; Congress had supported Shiv Sena, hoping that this coalition would prove capable of reducing the influence of communist trade-unions of the city.[16] Thackeray saw communists as anti-national" and opposed their narrative of fighting a class struggle. [17] However, what truly underlay his vitriol for the communists was a scrimmage to take control of the mills – and by extension, the economic destiny of the city. Violent conflicts with the communist leadership and Communist Party of India (CPI) ensued, with the most notable instance being Thackeray's involvement in the assassination of Krishna Desai, the CPI MLA[18] of Dadar.[19] This culminated in considerable backlash from communist-affiliated trade unions, with CPI's Girni Kamgar Union (GKU) calling a strike to protest Desai's killing.[20] As will be illustrated in subsequent sections, Shiv Sena's desire to bolster their influence in labor politics would eventually play a role in their rise to and consolidation of power.

What further drew people to Shiv Sena's leadership was Bal Thackeray's charismatic leadership. Thackeray managed to strategically cultivate a balanced image of himself – at least in the eyes of his Marathi followers – of someone who was like the common Marathi man, but also their all-powerful, imperious leader. His clothing was an excellent indicator of this impeccably-tailored reputation: he never dressed like the average Indian politician, instead wearing a full-length shirt and trousers – the very image of a typical middle-class Maharashtrian.[21] He wore this to most speeches, *morchas*, and protests. Notably, his clothing

[16] Katzenstein, 111.
[17] Prakash, 212.
[18] *Member of the Legislative Assembly*
[19] The Indian Express. "CPI to Present Documentary on Party MLA Krishna Desai's Life Tomorrow," June 4, 2022. https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/cpi-to-present-documentary-on-party-mla-krishna-desais-life-tomorrow-7951866/.
[20] Prakash, 215.
[21] Purandare, 74.

also aligned with his political ideologies as well; in the early 1980s, in order to effectively champion the cause of militant Hindutva nationalism, he wore a string of beads – *rudraksha* – on his right hand, which he often raised while delivering emotionally-charged speeches.[22] His speeches themselves drew mammoth crowds of followers, who yearned to hear his oft vitriolic polemics, characterized by below-the-belt remarks against his political rivals, and the slang and language of the middle and lower-class.[23]

Thackeray further bolstered his reputation by distancing himself from the political sphere, at least in the public eye, and leveraging the emotional appeal of being a *Shiv Sainik* to galvanize the masses. Purandare's in-depth review of Thackeray's speeches and writings, for instance, found emphasis on the phrase "My Shiv Sainik."[24] He combined this with a devout appreciation for his post and party; there came a point where he denied a job-opportunity working with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the Central Government, owing to his belief that the post of Shiv Sena commander-in-chief was the "greatest honor on Earth."[25] Thackeray therefore managed to develop an extremely strong bond between himself and his followers through a deep-rooted psychological connect; there are instances wherein after massive successes in elections, he has called upon his followers on-stage to thank them for the Party's – and ultimately their own – success.[26] At the same time, Thackeray also managed to project himself as the messiah and saviour of the people, promising them that he was their benevolent dictator who would restore the rule of Shivaji,[27] and a god-sent harbinger of prosperity for his

[22] Purandare, 74.
[23] NDTV.com. "The Legacy of Bal Thackeray." Accessed November 3, 2022. https://www.ndtv.com/people/the-legacy-of-bal-thackeray-504840.
[24] Purandare, 75.
[25] India Today. "From the Archives (1977) | I Admired Indira Gandhi but Never Struck Any Deal with Her during Emergency: Bal Thackeray." Accessed November 3, 2022. https://www.indiatoday.in/india-today-insight/story/from-the-archives-1977-i-only-want-to-safeguard-the-rights-of-my-people-bal-thackeray-1962813-2022-06-15.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.

"sons of the soil." It is therefore integral to understand that beyond the actual policies and ideology of Shiv Sena, their leader was an instrumental figure the Marathis could rally around.

Bombay's Mill Sector

Bombay's Mill Sector was one that proved instrumental to its industrial growth, laying the foundation for the city's pre-eminence as the 'financial capital of India.' Despite its initial ground-breaking prosperity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries – thanks to the early involvement of Indian industrialists and technological advancement – a maelstrom of misfortunes befell the industry, commencing a slow and protracted decline. Ultimately, the collapse of the industry stemmed from the fact that the larger it got, the more problems it accrued, be it worker disillusionment, institutional inefficiencies, or technological obsoleteness. The gradual erosion of workers' rights – set into motion by millowners' avarice, ineffective government policies, and political pandering – facilitated widespread labor instability.[28] The mill industry was therefore on the brink of collapse by the time the strikes occurred, with the clandestine informal sector and commercial and service sectors seeing more traction.

The Great Bombay Strike of 1982-83 was the nail-in-the-coffin for the decaying textile mill industry of the city, with ~250,000 workers united under militant labor-unionist Datta Samant holding an 18-month strike for better working conditions and improved labor laws.[29] The strikes failed, largely owing to the conflict Samant had with the government and millowners, as well as the excessive violence and ceaseless unrest that took place. The failure of the strikes proved detrimental to the economic health and stability of many in the city;

[28] van Wersch, 39.
[29] Rajnayaran Chandavarkar. 2009. *History, Culture and the Indian City*. Cambridge University Press., 17.

150,000 were plunged into unemployment, with run-down mills now subject to ineffectual urban-planning and redevelopment.[30]

How the Decline of the Industry Catalyzed Shiv Sena's Growth

There is no doubt that Shiv Sena's electoral success and rhetoric catapulted them onto Maharashtra's political scene as a powerful nationalist entity. However, the decline of the mill industry and the Great Bombay Strikes of 1982-3 truly enabled Shiv Sena to complete its precipitous rise to power.

The first main component of their political strategy with regard to the decline of the mill industry was its social and economic policies, aimed at improving the quality of life and financial stability of Maharashtrians working in the mills. Life in *Girangaon*, the part of Central and South Bombay where most mills and its inhabitants were concentrated, was characterized by sub-standard living conditions, owing to poor sanitation and public hygiene; communicable diseases proved commonplace.[31] This, in conjunction with an amalgam of ever-soaring rent rates and low, unsustainable wages, meant that mill-workers were entrenched in poverty.[32] They thus believed it was essential that effective policies to ameliorate living conditions and weed out poverty needed to be put in place by authorities.

Barring the social and health-related issues faced by mill workers, cascading economic problems were also rampant. The economic issues faced by the masses stemmed from a labor-surplus in the market, which necessitated the inefficient system of temporary workers or *"badli"* workers. This system was a fatal flaw in the industry, leading to considerable job-insecurity and absenteeism. This stemmed from the fact that avaricious mill owners believed that they did not need to pay *badli* workers regular wages, as a consequence of which labor

[30] D'Monte, 34.
[31] Salim Lakha, "Organized Labor and Militant Unionism: The Bombay Textile Workers' Strike of 1982," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 20, no. 2 (1988): https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.1988.10404447, 46.
[32] Ibid, 47.

costs going towards paying salaries would reduce.[33] Many who have academically researched and reviewed this area of exploration – most notably politician and trade-unionist B.T. Ranadive – have reason to believe that it was the thousands of young mill workers subjected to this system that played a "prominent role in organizing the 1982-83 strike."[34] Another rampant economic issue that workers bore the brunt of was the vested-interests of mill owners. Most mill-owners prioritized making quick, speculative profits as opposed to reinvesting in workers and mills; many also took advantage of laws like the 1978 Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) Act, misallocating capital from tax-breaks, subsidies, and loans to benefit themselves and their family-members.[35] It was therefore no surprise that unethical practices seeped into the textile mill industry, imperiling employment opportunities and the financial stability of mill workers across the city.[36]

The eventual collapse of the industry exacerbated these already dire conditions. The closure of mills worsened unemployment, leaving thousands of mill workers without a source of income overnight. This sudden loss of livelihood plunged many families deeper into poverty, making it increasingly challenging to afford necessities. Ghose et al., in a 5-year study from 1980 to 1985, found that the collapse of the sector directly affected 30% of the workforce.[37] Secondly, the closure of mills led to a decline in demand for goods and services in the surrounding areas, further dampening economic prospects for residents. With fewer job opportunities available and a shrinking local economy, the already marginalized communities of Girangaon faced heightened financial insecurity and social instability. Moreover, the closure of mills meant the loss of bargaining power for workers, as they were left with fewer alternatives for employment and were forced to accept exploitative working conditions in other

[33] Ranadive, BT (1991): B Ranadive on Trade Union Movement, Vol II, Delhi, 56.
[34] Ranadive, 54.
[35] D'Monte, 47.
[36] Ibid.
[37] A. K. Ghose, "Structural Adjustment, Industrial Policy, and the End of Import-Substitution Industrialization in India," Economic and Political Weekly 31, no. 3 (1996): 113-119.

sectors. This confluence of factors stemming from the collapse of the textile mill industry underscored the urgent need for effective policies to address the socio-economic challenges faced by the residents of Girangaon.

It was in this environment that Shiv Sena's social-service schemes and organizational structure helped it appeal to the masses, helping it garner more popularity among mill workers. The main instrument through which Shiv Sena instituted their policies and mobilized the masses was an efficient "*shakha"* (local branches) system, which organized movements at the grassroots level. *Shakhas* concerned themselves with the day-to-day affairs of allotted neighborhoods, and were led by popular or influential people in those neighborhoods.[38] With time, these positioned themselves as centres for redressing grievances, be it family disputes, the provision of water or sanitary-pads, electricity-connections, and help finding employment.[39] The *Shakha* system specialized and streamlined its efficiency.[40] Shiv Sena's physical presence in working class neighborhoods in *Girangaon* was therefore bolstered; historians like Katzenstein (2002) consider the social services provided by this organizational structure to be the most important reason for the party's popularity with the working-class, which composed upto 25% of the Marathi electorate.[41] Historical data further buttresses this: as per a 1980 research-study by economic historian Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, 32% of those residing in *Girangaon* claimed that the *Shakha* system "bettered adverse living-conditions." [42] The party further provided mandated payouts to workers in the *Girangaon* region.[43] In addition, those interested were recruited by party-members as foot-soldiers of *Shivaji's Army* during riots or direct confrontations with communist unions.[44] In most cases, these new members were also

[38] Shaikh, 1895.
[39] Hansen, 72-73.
[40] Lakha, 43.
[41] Shaikh, 1897.
[42] Chandavarkar, 67.
[43] Shaikh, 1898.
[44] Ibid.

given a low, yet steady, stream-of-income from the party. Shiv Sena benefited immensely from these policies; as Shaikh postulates, "this was the vote-bank that catapulted Shiv Sena candidates into the state assembly and municipal corporation." [45] Therefore, the problems faced on a grass-roots level by the mill workers and laborers of the textile mills necessitated the development of a policy to benefit them, enabling Shiv Sena to establish its hegemony over the neighborhoods of Central Bombay. [46]

Another reason Shiv Sena managed to capitalize on the problems faced by the economically disadvantaged was was their strategic superiority when compared to their closest political opponent, the communists. The Communists, through their representative trade-union, the *Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh* (RMMS), attempted to consolidate their economic influence and secure worker loyalty in *Girangaon*. The instrument through which they set about to achieve this was focusing their work and policies on improving conditions in the workplace; this proved ineffective. Shiv Sena, on the other hand, prioritized stamping their political and economic hegemony over the neighborhood. It therefore becomes abundantly evident that the working-class found it sensible to support an organization that promised them employment and a steady stream of income, as opposed to communists, who seemed mainly preoccupied with idealism and superfluous rhetoric.

Looking beyond Shiv Sena's policy operatives, their role in fostering community and collective identities in *Girangaon* furthered their mass appeal as the mill industry dwindled in influence. With as many as 6 mill workers occupying single rooms together, and hundreds cramped into one tenement building, community ties among mill workers were strong. In an ecosystem where the decline of the mill industry brought with it collective problems faced by everyone, a strong identity developed. Owing to issues like overcrowding, the inhabitants of

[45] Shaikh, 1900.
[46] Ibid.

Girangaon actually spent more time socializing on streets and participating in communal festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi, Gokulashtmi, and Moharram.[47] Workers also relied on these deep-rooted community ties for practical problems like temporary housing; migrant laborers relied on tight-knit communities to socially adjust to *Girangaon* and also obtain shelter and work.[48] Shiv Sena saw this social cohesion as a possible avenue to expand their vote-bank, and did so by rallying people behind one identity: that of the hardworking *Marathi Manoos* (Marathi native), who deserved more economic opportunities and a better quality of life.

This identity was one that appealed to a wide cohort of mill workers, who were drawn to the possibility of economic and political benefits, as well as regional pride and improved self-esteem: a sense of belonging despite tough conditions. This linguistic identity was propagated by the party in a variety of ways, principally through propaganda and media. *Marmik*, the newspaper previously founded by Bal Thackeray, was used extensively to alter the mindsets of the mill workers, fostering a collective identity and turning them away from the leftists and Shiv Sena's political opponents. Notably, the editorial style of *Marmik* set the tone for its perception as a forum for protest of Marathis 'wronged' by their enemies: communists, 'outsiders' (immigrants), greedy millowners, and political opponents.[49] The communists, for instance, were portrayed as "stooges of the Soviet Union and the Chinese governments."[50] An interesting example of such propaganda is a November 1982 edition of *Marmik*, whose cover portrays a GKU mill owner stealing the clothes of an emaciated, underfed mill worker, captioned "What will the worker eat – iron or rice?" The portrayal of the class divide and the apparent ill-treatment of the mill workers by greedy mill owners is quite evocative, helping Shiv Sena reinforce their ideal of a collective identity. It hence becomes

[47] Chandavarkar, 1998, 211.
[48] van Wersch, 248.
[49] Thackeray, B (1987): *Itihasa Shama Karnar Nahi (History will not forgive you),* in Y Thakur and V Mukadam (eds), Marmik Cirphada, Bombay.
[50] Ibid.

clear that Shiv Sena channeled their mouthpiece in *Marmik* to foster a sentiment of ethno-religious and linguistic solidarity, perpetuate anti-communist sentiments, and formulate a discourse of Marathi pride.

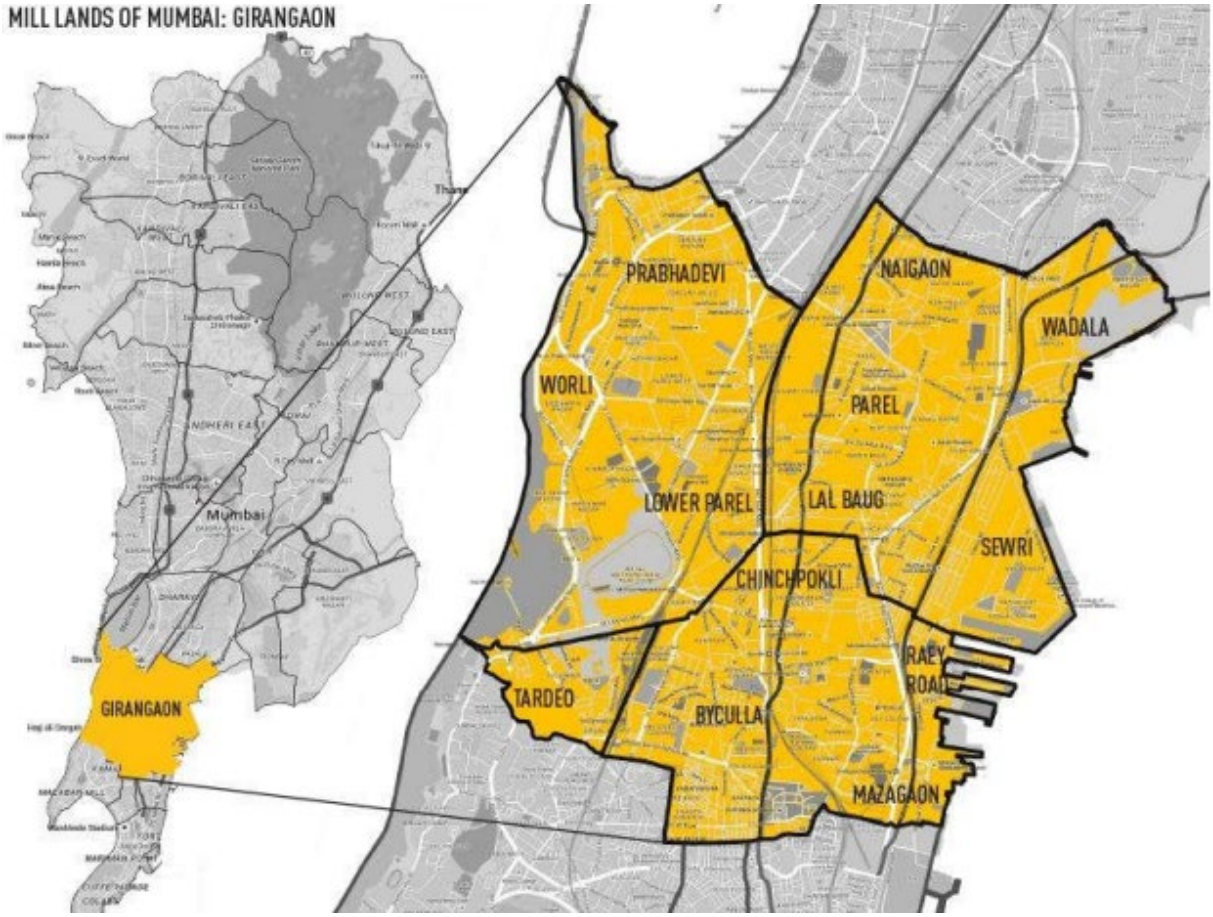
Conclusion

As this research demonstrates, Shiv Sena's precipitous rise to power was multifaceted, with political, economic, and socio-cultural factors playing their individual roles. The wealth of academic literature and sources that deal with this also indicate a range of historian's perspectives on Shiv Sena's growth and popularity. As the evidence indicates, the collapse of the textile mill industry left thousands of workers disillusioned and economically vulnerable, providing fertile ground for Shiv Sena's nationalist and populist appeals. The party strategically leveraged the grievances of the Marathi working class, offering social service schemes, organizational structures, and a rhetoric steeped in Marathi pride and regional solidarity. Through charismatic leadership, like that of Bal Thackeray, Shiv Sena managed to cultivate a loyal following and consolidate power, effectively filling the void left by the decline of the traditional industrial sector. This bolstered their rise to power before the 1980s, which was built on Shiv Sena's ideological appeal, aggressive leadership style, and strategic political maneuvering. The collapse of Bombay's textile mill sector therefore served as a crucial catalyst, highlighting the interconnectedness between economic hardship, identity politics, and political mobilization in shaping the course of regional politics. In addressing the notable gap in the prevailing literature, this paper underscores the importance of understanding the complex interplay of economic, social, and political forces in shaping political trajectories. Moving forward, further research into the dynamics of regional politics and socio-economic transformations will be essential for a comprehensive understanding of political movements and power dynamics in contemporary India.

Appendix

Source 1: Marmik cover page, November 1981, produced by Bal Thackeray.[51]

[51] "'Marmik', the Magazine That Launched a Political Party Turns 60, and the Lines Are Clear in India's First Family of Cartoonists: The Thackerays." 2020. IJR. November 16, 2020. https://indianjournalismreview.com/2020/11/16/marmik-the-magazine-that-launched-a-political-party-turns-60-and-the-lines-are-clear-in-indias-first-family-of-cartoonists-the-thackerays/.



Source 2 – Map showing the mill area of 'Girangaon' and its main areas.[52]

[52] Ar. Riddhima Khedkar, 2018. "Closing down of Textile Mills: A break Current Research, 10, (08), 72641-72648.

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Assertions of Power: Female Nurses in World War I

Olivia Sieler

Abstract

This paper analyzes the dimensions of female nurses' authority in the United States' Army Nurse Corps during World War I. I show that female nurses gained professional power when they were exposed to and excelled in circumstances that were stereotypically considered "unfeminine," proving themselves to the men around them. I argue further that women empowered themselves as they challenged traditional expectations about their capacity for critical thinking and willingness to engage in romantic relationships, relying more on their own abilities and each other than on male companions. The nurses' independence subverted gender norms and enabled them to wield power typically held by men. I conclude by demonstrating how work in Army hospitals signified a valuable adventure that profoundly shaped women's views about a post-war world. For them, it was a time of new opportunity that had profound ramifications on their domestic lives, giving the war a different meaning for them than the soldiers on the battlefield. In essence, empowerment in the hospital influenced their claim to full participation in American society.

On May 5, 1917, approximately one month after the United States officially entered World War I, the Army Nurse Corps (ANC) mobilized the first United States base hospital to serve the British Expeditionary Forces. That month, the ANC sent five more base hospitals to Europe for the same purpose. Run by a surgeon general, the hospitals were staffed by male physicians, enlisted men serving as orderlies, and nurses, who were unmarried Caucasian female citizens between 25 and 35 years of age.[1] The majority of these nurses had served in civilian hospitals as part of the American Red Cross (ARC) before the declaration of war and joined the ANC after the ARC organized and mobilized base hospitals with the support of the Department of War.[2] In base hospitals, the scope of nurses' work was vast, and they treated soldiers who suffered from gunshot and shrapnel wounds, gangrene, poison gas burns, infections, and much more. In the six months after the United States declared war, approximately 1,100 nurses were serving in nine base hospitals in Europe, and by November 1918, over 10,000 nurses had served with the ANC in 198 base hospitals worldwide.[3] Overall, World War I marked a turning point in expanding both the quantity and type of women's professional opportunities and the ANC was no exception.[4]

With an analysis of diaries and manuscripts, this paper examines the professional and personal power of ANC nurses from 1917 to 1918. I show that female nurses gained professional power by proving their abilities to the men around them when they were exposed to – and excelled in – circumstances that were stereotypically considered "unfeminine." However, this professional authority was insufficient for nurses to attain an equal status, so instead of relying on the hospital's organizational structure, women empowered themselves and other women in intellectual and interpersonal domains. They challenged traditional

[1] "Contributions of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in World War I," The Army Nurse Corps Association, Inc. (The Army Nurse Corps Association), accessed December 12, 2022, https://e-anca.org/History/Topics-in-ANC-History/Contributions-of-the-US-Army-Nurse-Corps-in-WWI.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

expectations about their capacity for critical thinking and willingness to engage in romantic relationships, instead relying more on their own abilities and each other than on their male companions. The nurses' independence subverted gender norms and enabled women to wield power typically held by men.

Literature Review

My argument about women's roles in Army base hospitals builds on noteworthy studies by historians Kimberly Jensen and Julia Irwin, which examine the role of women in civilian relief efforts during World War I and position women's work in the larger social and political context of the era. Jensen's book, *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War,* situates women's work abroad within the social and political tensions in the United States to show how their work influenced the fight for women's rights and suffrage. Women also advanced U.S. foreign policy goals, as demonstrated by Irwin's *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening.* In this book, Irwin details how the American Red Cross (ARC) advanced the state's diplomatic and cultural objectives and bolstered the American empire. The books together reveal how women's civilian relief roles shaped domestic and international landscapes.

Based on the discourse and strategies of female physicians, nurses, and "women-at-arms," *Mobilizing Minerva* illustrates how these three groups challenged the strict binary of the male protector and the female protected to legitimize women's claims for gender equality. Female physicians treated victims of the war, particularly women and children, and therefore assumed the role of protector. Female nurses most clearly challenged gender norms, as they insisted on earning officer status to ascend to similar statuses as the men who served.[5] In

[5] Kimberly Jensen, *Mobilizing Minerva : American Women in the First World War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), ix.

contrast to stereotypical gender norms, female physicians and nurses treated and protected their patients, thereby bolstering their claims for equality.

The subversion of traditional gender roles affected the social and political landscape in the United States. Women's wartime experience inspired them to not only fight for civic equality but also push to restructure the military and state so that these institutions more permanently supported their needs.[6] While abroad, nurses and physicians witnessed women's heightened risk of violence from both "the enemy" as well as their supposed protectors, and this experience inspired women to redefine the very meaning of violence to encompass their observations.[7] Ultimately, their service led them to define a more complete citizenship and shaped their efforts to attain it.[8] *Mobilizing Minerva* powerfully focuses on how women's professional identities deepened their understanding of their civic and personal identities to bolster their fight for rights.

Rather than focusing on the domestic effects of civilian aid, Irwin's *Making the World Safe* explores the mechanisms by which international civilian relief advanced U.S. foreign policy during and after World War I. Although it traces the history of the ARC from its establishment in 1881 to just after World War II, the book primarily centers on World War I, particularly from 1917 to 1918. During the Great War, the ARC expanded its mission from solely providing domestic civilian relief to administering foreign aid. This expansion was in part motivated by strategic interests, as humanitarianism cemented ongoing commercial relations and minimized threats to national security by instituting political and social order.[9] Improving the standard of living directly served American political and cultural aims, as it positioned the United States as a significant actor on the world stage.[10] Domestically, the

[6] Jensen, *Mobilizing Minerva* , 35.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.., 77.
[9] Julia F. Irwin, *Making the World Safe : The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3.
[10] Ibid., 7.

ARC mobilized citizens by positioning aid as a duty, and this work bolstered the image of the United States as a "moral empire."[11] Framing civilian aid in both moral and strategic terms united citizens around a shared understanding of their responsibilities and constructed a place for America in the international community, resulting in America's greater global influence.

To achieve its goals during World War I, the ARC was restructured around the progressive value of professional expertise, and the new design critically shifted the responsibilities of women. Inspired by the ideals of scientific management, the ARC sought to maximize efficiency and accountability: businessmen and social scientific professionals served as ARC administrators, medical personnel traveled abroad to provide medical services, and donors funded the effort.[12] This structure fundamentally altered the role of women, who had served as the backbone of humanitarianism up until this point. Untrained women, previously central to relief efforts, were denied any role in ARC leadership. Although service abroad offered female medical professionals a significant opportunity to advance their careers and assume leadership, male personnel enjoyed much greater benefits since humanitarianism became a legitimate career path for men.[13] Women's work advanced American strategic objectives, yet economic values fundamentally limited their professional potential.

These accounts illustrate how women's assertions of their agency shaped both domestic and international spheres. Irwin reveals that the ARC positioned the United States as a dominant global actor, an effort to which women contributed through their duties in the medical field. Jensen shows that women drew on their experience in war to further their claims for rights on the home front. Still, building on this research entails analyzing the extent to which nurses gained professional authority from working in Army base hospitals as

[11] Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 9.
[12] Ibid., 7.
[13] Ibid., 8.

well as how this authority intersected with their claims to intellectual and interpersonal independence.

Professional Agency: Gaining Respect through Expertise

Because the hospitals fundamentally relied on their work, women gained professional power through adeptly performing their essential roles. As part of the medical team, nurses relied on their education, experience, and instinct to provide the best patient care. Hospitals could admit two hundred men at once while more poured in, yet nurses effectively managed these high-pressure situations to ensure that patients received the necessary treatment.[14] They also made a significant impact on the soldiers who arrived at the hospital: many severely-wounded limbs were restored to at least partial function, and human faces that were "mutilated almost beyond recognition were miraculously restored to a point where their owners could regard them without wanting to die."[15] These successful results demonstrated that nurses contributed to a meaningful effort to affect patients positively.

The women's aptitude cemented their claims to professional power and enabled them to earn respect within the hospital's organizational structure. Patients recognized nurses for their poise and skill in administering medical services, and these men, in turn, did not challenge the women's competency. Instead, patients allowed nurses to work without complaint,[16] implicitly acknowledging the women's abilities, and criticized other men who expressed negative attitudes about them.[17] Moreover, patients respected the women's predictions about their treatment plan, even if a nurse could not provide a clear prognosis.[18]

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[14] Anne Penland, "The World War I Diary," July 31, 1917, Anne Penland Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library.
[15] Anne K. Williams, "The First Six Hundred," Acc. 1998 07.30., Box 6, Folder 6, Archives & Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library, p. 25.
[16] Helen Dore Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary of a Nurse* (New York, NY: I. Washurn, 1927), https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C4248903 29.
[17] Ibid., 63.
[18] Ibid., 152-153.

Working in hospitals allowed women to step into positions of power and be recognized for their competency.

Nurses also took the initiative to lead in administrative matters and medical care. Nurse Helen Dore Boylston, for example, urged nurses at her base hospital to wash their laundry according to the standards of Massachusetts General Hospital, where she received her training. While this measure may seem minor, she noted that it saved the British government several hundred pounds, emphasizing the significant impact of her program.[19] Boylston also took the initiative when treating patients. For example, when one patient complained of pain in his thigh and ran a fever, she examined the bone and found a walled-in pus pocket. She immediately found a scalpel and cut the pocket open, which quickly relieved the pain, dropped his temperature, and resulted in his fast recovery.[20] Due to her competency in medicine, Boylston's supervisor, a colonel, trusted her to "do anything I like with it [a soldier's 'gassed arm']."[21] After providing consistent treatment, she noted that the arm was healing nicely and was "quite certain I will save it."[22] As she earned the recognition and respect of those around her due to her proficiency as a nurse, Boylston could expand the scope of her work and have greater autonomy in treating patients. Professionally, therefore, women could assert their agency by positioning themselves as key personnel in the hospital.

The Dutiful Soldier: Advancing Female Leadership through Language and Action

Like the soldiers they served, female nurses perceived medical service as a *duty*. This duty had a dual significance: on a personal level, it fostered a sense of satisfaction as nurses cared for the wounded, and in the international arena, it positioned women as actors in the

[19] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary*, 6.
[20] Ibid., 27-28.
[21] Ibid., 50.
[22] Ibid., 50.

national project of championing U.S. goals and principles abroad.[23] Nurses recognized both meanings, and this mission united women with the men who served their country on the battlefield. Women were not alone in these perceptions of their work; indeed, men honored women's roles as well. In particular, when a twenty-six-year-old nurse quite suddenly died of streptococcus, those around her – men included – characterized her as "a true soldier."[24] Nurses, English soldiers, villagers, and patients in the Army hospital all came to pay their respects, and she was laid to rest "among the soldiers she had served."[25] Identifying this woman as a soldier evinced the dignified status women attained through working as ANC nurses, elevating her to an equal position as her male patients. That she was buried with male soldiers memorialized her, suggesting that she merited the same distinguished legacy as soldiers. This event and the reflections of the women themselves highlighted the individual impact and national significance of nurses' work.

Female nurses also situated their work in a gender-specific framework to highlight its implications on women's rights movements in the United States and Europe. During World War I, the professional opportunities available to women expanded dramatically, and nurses recognized and eagerly contributed to this movement. Julia Catherine Stimson, the Chief Nurse at Base Hospital No. 21 in Rouen, France, was an especially key figure in establishing medicine as a legitimate position for women in the Army.[26] About her service, Stimson reflected, "to be in the front ranks in the most dramatic event that ever was staged, and to be in the first group of women ever called out for duty with the United States Army, and in the first part of the Army ever sent off on an expeditionary affair of this sort, is all too much good fortune for any one person like me."[27] Stimson acknowledged the unique opportunity to

[23] Stimson, *Finding Themselves*, 28.
[24] Williams, "The First Six Hundred," p. 24a.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ellora Larsen, "Biographies: Julia Catherine Stimson," National Museum of the United States Army, accessed December 12, 2022, https://www.thenmusa.org/biographies/julia-catherine-stimson/.
[27] Stimson, *Finding Themselves,* 1.

contribute to a greater cause and prove her ability to contribute to a new domain for women – the Army. She understood herself as part of the vanguard that was expanding women's sphere and sought to establish a place for herself and thousands of other women in professional roles from which they were previously excluded. Seizing the opportunity, Stimson empowered herself and opened the door for many women to assert their abilities.

Her leadership began as soon as her unit set sail for Europe. Stimson quickly realized that enlisted men and officers participated in routine drills to remain prepared for danger, while nurses did not have access to this training. She therefore advocated for similar programs for women, a goal which was realized.[28] Her influence grew once they arrived in France: Stimson was solely responsible for managing every detail in her hospital unit, from determining discipline, uniforms, hours of duty, social practices, and more.[29] She excelled in overseeing the 55 nurses under her command during her eleven months at Base Hospital No. 21, which influenced her subsequent promotions. She was appointed Chief Nurse for the American Red Cross in France, where she supervised 10,000 nurses for six months, and then returned to the Army as the director of the Nursing Service for the American Expeditionary Forces, where she managed 10,000 Army nurses.[30] Due to her "meritorious" record, Stimson was granted the rank of Major when the Defense Act reorganized the Army in 1920, making her the first and only woman to hold this rank at this time.[31] This legacy cemented women's place in a sphere stereotypically considered "unfeminine."

[28] Stimson, *Finding Themselves*, 26.
[29] Ibid., 93.
[30] Ellora Larsen, "Biographies: Julia Catherine Stimson," National Museum of the United States Army, accessed December 12, 2022, https://www.thenmusa.org/biographies/julia-catherine-stimson/.
[31] Ibid.

Case Study: Nurse-Anesthetist Anne Penland

Similar to Julia Stimson, nurse Anne Penland distinguished herself with her exceptional performance and, in doing so, legitimized a new position for women in medicine. During and before World War I, the British Medical Department forbade women from serving as anesthetists, making Penland – an American anesthetist in Base Hospital No. 2 – an anomaly to the men around her. She wrote that her predecessor, a captain, was "very curious to see me as his officers had teased him about a woman succeeding him, and called me 'the female anesthetist.'"[32] The unusualness of being a female anesthetist isolated Penland, and she had to prove her abilities to cement anesthesia as a viable career path for women.

Though British physicians were initially dubious about the presence of a female anesthetist, she quickly demonstrated her competency. Working alongside male surgeons, she administered anesthesia in a wide range of cases, including multiple-limb amputations and emergency craniotomies, and once worked with "many famous surgeons" at the same time.[33,34, 35] Her male colleagues recognized her skill, leading a British physician unfamiliar with administering anesthesia to ask to observe and learn from her work.[36] Penland debunked suspicions about her abilities by proving her expertise, thereby casting doubt on the regulation against female anesthetists. Ultimately, her aptitude convinced physicians that nurses could be trained as anesthetists to relieve surgeons for other work.[37] This legacy demonstrated how she was not only influential in securing her own position and expanding the scope of her work, but she was a pioneer in shifting perceptions about the abilities of female nurses in wartime.

[32] Penland, "The World War I Diary," June 3, 1917, Anne Penland Papers.
[33] Ibid., July 14, 1917.
[34] Ibid., August 3, 1917.
[35] Ibid., August 29, 1917.
[36] Ibid., August 6, 1917.
[37] Williams, "The First Six Hundred," p. 28.

This case, along with the evidence from Stimson and Boylston, illustrates the role of the structure in granting or limiting professional authority. In other words, nurses had to demonstrate their expertise in providing medical care, and to have this authority respected, it had to be recognized by both their superiors and their patients.

Overcoming Otherness: Protecting Soldiers in the Realities of War

At the same time, women empowered themselves by subverting traditional gender norms in their depictions of significant events. Though women were not involved in battles themselves, they directly observed the consequences of battle and were also subjected to danger as planes circled their hospitals, machine guns shot at people below, and bombs were dropped nearby.[38] Rather than striving to hide the nurses from these events, "terrified" patients, many of whom were only boys, would shout for the women who would run to the rescue of the most "helpless."[39] As Boylston reflected, the nurses comforted the boys "by appearing calm ourselves."[40] In conditions that were stereotypically considered out of the sphere of women, the women assumed the role of the protector – a gendered male identity. They suppressed their own emotions to promote the well-being of their patients, thereby highlighting the women's assumption of power. Characterizing the boys as "helpless" and "terrified," reminiscent of language used to describe female dependency, also subverted gender norms. By challenging gender norms, women granted *themselves the* power to protect those around them rather than performing the role of the protected. By rendering this binary meaningless, nurses debunked initial assumptions about their abilities and granted themselves command through action and language.[41]

[38] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary,* 95-97.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] The juxtaposition of female courage with male vulnerability disproved initial assumptions about the extent of the realities of war that women could witness. Especially at the initial stage of women's involvement in World War I, male superiors deemed certain dangers too extreme to acknowledge to their female colleagues. For

In addition to complicating gendered assumptions about bravery, nurses countered stereotypical views of emotionality. Though the atrocities of combat shocked the nurses, diary writers clarified that their feelings were not gender-specific; instead, both nurses and their superiors were shaken by the circumstances. Stimson, for example, employed the literary technique of apostrophe to address her diary: "Do you wonder that our emotions are wearing us to a frazzle? It is not only feminine emotions that are affected because there are those of our directors who said they would not go to St. Dunstan's (the hospital school for blind soldiers) because they would not be able to sleep for nights afterwards."[42] This observation drew a likeness between the female nurses and their male superiors by showing the universality of shock and horror. In other words, these feelings were not gendered phenomena but rather *human* ones, as war took an indiscriminate emotional toll on *all* people. This argument invalidated the basis for women's exclusion from positions of authority, legitimizing their claims to power.

Visibly Invisible: Dissolving Barriers in Both Positions

In contrast to women's work in rendering gendered stereotypes meaningless, their non-military status and gender simultaneously fostered a sense of familiarity and comfort between themselves and their male patients. With the nurses, patients felt comfortable sharing the feelings of homesickness that arose from being away from home and immersed in a nightmarish environment, and they derived "such pleasure" from sharing photographs of their

example, traveling by ship to Europe meant that passengers faced constant threats from torpedoes, a reality of which women were well aware. However, when they noticed "something" shooting toward the prow of the ship and a destroyer released toward the same location, an officer told them it was a flock of seabirds. Penland argued that "He evidently sized us up as green and simple to swallow such a story." Even when participation in the war was new, women still held accurate expectations of the threats and challenged notions of their naivete. Men, however, soon realized that attempting to hide wartime realities from the nurses was futile since women were directly confronted with the horrors when treating soldiers. For more on this topic, see Penland, "The World War I Diary," May 30, 1917, Anne Penland Papers

[42] Stimson, *Finding Themselves,* 35.

wives and children and discussing their personal issues. [43] Nurses offered these patients emotional support, and they extended this influence by establishing an improv theater and piano salon for their teenage patients.[44] While not strictly medical, this care provided patients with necessary support and revealed women's many functions in the hospital. Their visibility empowered them to create these opportunities to expand the scope of their responsibilities and better care for patients.

The same characteristics that could engender a sense of comfort for the patients also distanced the nurses, so achieving another level of familiarity required nurses to blend into the environment. Soldiers believed battle stories were inappropriate for women to hear, so the men were initially reserved about sharing these accounts. However, when the nurses remained quiet, soldiers eventually "forgot" their presence and recounted the war experience: "It was a strange world that they revealed to me, there in the old brown tent. A world in which there were only men; a world of intense life and sudden, dreadful death. There were tales of the love of men for their horses; tales of the extraordinary ways of bombs and shells; tales of attacks and retreats."[45] Hearing these tales included women in the war experience: though the world contained "only men" and the only appropriate listeners to the stories were men, women's ability to blend into the environment allowed them to enter this world as well. Thus, they gained access to this previously foreign domain, highlighting their integration into this landscape. Such access revealed that women became more established members of the hospital community by demonstrating their belonging.

[43] Williams, "The First Six Hundred," p. 21.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary,* 11-12.

Intellectual Independence: Self-Empowerment through Written Insights

Women separated the professional familiarity they developed with patients from their personal relationships to assert their intellectual and physical autonomy. In keeping with societal views of women's intellectual and social authority, physicians and medical officers generally viewed nurses as intellectually inferior to and dependent on men. Rather than vocally challenging these notions, the women insightfully reflected on these perceptions, evincing their independence from the traditional views that shaped American culture. The introspective responses themselves debunked these notions and enabled women to recharacterize their work. In doing so, they took control and exerted their intellectual influence.

Nurse Helen Dore Boylston illustrated women's ability to participate in learned discussions by discrediting the fundamental assumptions that led to women's exclusion. Boylston, like every ANC nurse, was highly educated. After graduating from the School of Nursing at Massachusetts General Hospital, she served in France with the first Harvard Unit, yet those around her did not necessarily recognize her intelligence. She noted, "No one [man], except Jerry, gave us credit for having any real mentality. Yet we aren't fools by any means, and if they had talked to us about real things, I don't think they would have found us very stupid."[46] In her view, unfounded assumptions prevented the men from honestly evaluating the women's intellectual capacity, and shifting these views entailed sincerely speaking with the women. Without conversing with her male colleagues, however, Boylston demonstrated her own sharp intelligence, substantiating her very claims about her female peers' "mentality." She observed that men in the hospital viewed the nurses "as young and not supposed to be interesting, except through our youth. Men certainly have an awful idea of

[46] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary,* 20.

the intelligence of women."[47] By commenting on hospital-specific and societal gender dynamics, she cast doubt on their underlying assumptions, thereby seizing intellectual control of the narrative and empowering herself and other women.

Boylston pushed even deeper by probing the origins of the premises of gender relations. Convention, she argued, gave rise to ideas about gender-specific responsibilities in a relationship and proper manners. While she did not invalidate the concept of convention itself, she did question its justification. She recognized, "It is entirely beside the point that last night we were considered only in the light of an amusement. That's what we were there for. What interests me is the way in which they quite *naturally* assumed that attitude [emphasis added]."[48] Boylston problematized the belief in women's inherent subservience to men, instead hinting at the artificiality of such views and their origins in societal norms. By advocating a deeper consideration of the true potential of women, Boylston revealed her independence from convention. Thus, she challenged the notion of women's inherent dependency and, by extension, the fundamental assumptions that underlay a patriarchal society.

Assertions of Independence: Retaining Individual Identities in Interpersonal Relationships

With her claims about women's physical autonomy, Boylston pushed further than the limits of professional authority to self-empower and claim interpersonal respect. Since many men at the hospital had not been in the company of women for at least one year, they would become infatuated with "any of us who happen[ed] along first."[49] Extremely perceptive of these advances, nurses recognized that not all of the men were serious about their intentions,

[47] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary,* 20.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., 8.

so to ensure they could protect themselves and fulfill their professional responsibilities, women were more reserved in pursuing romantic relationships.[50]

Instead of uncritically falling in love, nurses made their own decisions about their companions, thereby asserting their independence from the men around them. Men often expected the women to reciprocate their feelings and remain loyal, but their female counterparts dismissed these notions. On this matter, Boylston interrogated and challenged the expectations of a man whom she was seeing, Major Jack MacPherson in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces:[51]

> Jack got into a fight with an Irish Major who quite innocently asked me to dance twice. I can't have that, and what's more, I won't. Where does Jack get this idea that I am his property? He doesn't care a hang about me, really. It's only his vanity. He likes the idea of having a girl, and he likes dancing with me the whole evening and feeling that he is a devil of a fellow, and that other men would like to dance with his girl but don't dare ask, because he is such a grand big strong man! *Huh* [sic]![52]

Boylston suggested that MacPherson's desire for power informed his understanding of their relationship, yet Boylston challenged his expectations even though both men, as Majors, outranked her. By ignoring their professional ranks and dismissing Jack's claims, Boylston seized control of the relationship and asserted her freedom of thought and freedom of choice, thereby affirming her individual identity. Women's keen awareness empowered them to claim their autonomy in these interactions.

Boylston also argued for more balanced partnerships, where she and her companion contributed equally to the relationship. When her companions did not respect these expectations, she was not swayed from her beliefs and stood firm in her convictions by ending the relationship. She analyzed:

> Now there is this about men who have roving eyes: they possess a most astounding vanity, and anything any girl says or does in their vicinity they take unto themselves

[50] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary*, 8.
[51] "We Remember John Alexander Clark MacPherson," Lives of the First World War (Imperial War Museums), accessed December 13, 2022, https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/5611222.
[52] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary,* 179.

> with great promptness. I meant nothing whatever when I brushed his fur glove across my cheek. And I only smiled because the movie was amusing, or something. He came up to tea at the mess the next day, and after having nearly drowned me gazing at me with large liquid eyes, he asked me out to dinner. Incidentally, he dances very well. So it went for a week. I was very badly hit. Then he returned to the front and I gloomed and was desolate for two days. Six weeks later he suddenly appeared in the mess asking for me, saying that he had hopped a lorry down expressly to see me. He masterfully interrupted me when I was talking to the first American officer I had seen since I had been in France, and I certainly was annoyed. And that was that.[53]

This relationship only developed because of her male companions' pleasure rather than because of their mutual feelings for each other. Not only did she assert her expectation that he also had to invest *time* in the relationship, but she also argued that he had to respect her freedom of action. Her claims to independence were not unique, as nurses generally saw their work as their primary duty and love as secondary.[54] By declaring her intellectual independence in writing and interpersonal independence in direct interactions, Boylston demonstrated how nurses empowered themselves to claim respect.

Rather than relying on men for companionship, female nurses instead leaned on their friendships with other women, granting each other the interpersonal power traditionally given to men. Women gave emotional solace to other women by together escaping the hospital—which brimmed with people and responsibility—to take nature walks "tramping over that desolate road under the wild sky, with the bare fields melting away into the mist."[55] These moments of connection gave women influential roles in relationships, showing that women also empowered other women to gain authority on an interpersonal level.

[53] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary*, 8-9.
[54] Ibid., 8.
[55] Ibid., 25.

The Limits of Power: Military and Societal Obstacles

While women's ability to take control of their environment manifested itself in their claims to independence, these women also faced systemic obstacles stemming from their lack of structural authority in Army hospitals. Nurses' responsibilities included tending to the housekeeping, and medical officers and enlisted men were expected to assist with these tasks. While some accepted their tasks and executed their chores in good spirits, others neglected their responsibilities and directly challenged the nurses who depended on their assistance. [56] Nurses did not have the authority to enforce their orders because, unlike officers and enlisted men, they did not hold a military rank. [57] This made discipline impossible and created an unwinnable, "almost intolerable" situation.[58] Indeed, if they attempted to protest, women faced "rebellion," and if they sought reinforcement from a sergeant, he tended to defend the men, which engendered greater challenges for the nurses trying to fulfill their tasks.[59] Professional authority was thus incomplete for nurses, as the realization of their orders depended on the good-will and respect of the men around them: either enlisted men and medical officers felt compelled to fulfill expectations of their own volition, or sergeants, who outranked the aforementioned groups of men, had to assist the women. The fact that neither was an assured outcome exposed the barriers to nurses' ability to attain total professional authority.

[56] Williams, "The First Six Hundred," 33.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.

Conclusion: An Adventure Ends?

The war significantly affected both women's understanding of the value of human life and their conception of their status in society. Their demonstration of professional, intellectual, and interpersonal agency gave them authority, and after the war, they poignantly reflected on their goal of continuing to assert this authority. They yearned to continue participating in domains previously unavailable to them, as their roles as nurses inspired a new understanding of the possibilities in life. On November 11, 1918, ten minutes before the Armistice, Boylston wondered:

> What are we all to do now? How can we go home to civilian life, to the never ending, never varying routine?" And the Twenty-second General Hospital, that vital living thing, saturated with the heights and depths of human emotion, will become a slowly fading memory of days when we really lived. There go the bells! And the drums! And the sirens! And the bagpipes! And cheering that swells louder and louder! The war is over -and I never felt so sick in my life. Everything is over. But it shan't be! I won't stop living![60]

Working in Army hospitals signified a new, valuable adventure that profoundly shaped their views about a post-war world. The war meant something very different to them than the soldiers on the battlefield: for them, it was a time of new opportunity that could have profound ramifications on their domestic lives as well. Empowering themselves in the hospital ultimately shaped their claims to their rights to full participation in American society.

[60] Boylston, *Sister: The War Diary*, 179.

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Ngo Dinh Diem in Eisenhower's Vietnam:

Push, Pull, and the Propensity for Intervention, 1954-1960

Jan Niño Teodoro Nguyen

Abstract

The mainstream analysis of the Vietnam War from the American perspective revolves around the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations. Such purview, though extremely valid and necessary, often overlooks the Eisenhower administration and its commencing steps into one of the most controversial wars in United States history. In this primary source-driven investigation of the precipitation of the Vietnam War from an Eisenhower lens, the present research introduces a push-pull spectrum defined by Eisenhower and South Vietnamese leader Ngo Dinh Diem, from American nation-building to the containment of communism. From 1954 to 1960, the two leaders charged forward in their fight against communism in lockstep. In particular, this examination hones into their various streams of communication—with each other and with external stakeholders. What emerges is a revelation of Eisenhower's actual magnitude of responsibility in Vietnam: a leader, by his own will and by the will of Diem, who committed to an irrevertible American facet in the conflict despite his outward non-intervention. Consequently, Eisenhower dragged the next three administrations into a point of no return in Southeast Asia. By extension, an important caveat is raised—is Diem a legitimate player in the spectrum, given his highly divisive leadership in governing a self-proclaimed "free" Vietnam?

Instead of championing the traditional Vietnamese garment *áo dài*, Ngo Dinh Diem draped himself in a shirt and tie paired with dress pants during his official presentations. Though seemingly trivial, such posture conveyed Diem's appeasement for support from the West, particularly the United States. Gone were the days of Sino-influenced Vietnamese society — in Diem's Saigon, blazers were to replace the *áo dài*, Catholicism was to replace animist Buddhism, and a president was to replace the emperor. He deliberated with the world as a Western man who brought Dwight Eisenhower's *D-Day* resolve in the fight against Ho Chi Minh and his communist North Vietnamese forces. Diem, most notable for his assassination just weeks before John Kennedy's in 1963, defined America's Vietnam and its eventual capitulation. Such a thread had its foundations fostered by the American leader who oversaw Diem's rise to the South Vietnamese throne in 1954: Dwight Eisenhower.

The existing literature depicts Eisenhower's role in Vietnam to be of significance, however minute direct American intrusion into the region was during his tenure. The Geneva Conference of 1954 split Vietnam into a USSR-backed communist North Vietnam and a US-backed capitalist South Vietnam, fomenting another proxy battleground for the two global superpowers.[1] The ultimate goal of the accords emphasized the reunification of Vietnam as a free and sovereign state, with the principle of self-determination composing its core. Eisenhower, though, elongated that long-held Wilsonian ideal in regards to Vietnam: he "firmly committed" to creating a "bulwark against Communist expansion and serve as a proving ground for democracy in Asia."[2] The Republic of Vietnam, colloquially referred to as South Vietnam, was the — attempted — realization of Eisenhower's vision. As he pursued this approach, he gradually left the agreements in Geneva futile. Key to the settlement in

[1] Kenneth P. Landon, "The 1954 Geneva Agreements," in *Current History, Vol. 50,* no. 294 (New York, NY, United States: New York Times Company, 1966).
[2] Robert J. McMahon, "Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism: A Critique of the Revisionists," in *Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 101,* no. 3 (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1976), 460.

Geneva was the promise of an election in 1956 in all of Vietnam to reunify the nation under one democratically-elected leader. Eisenhower, his administration, and his South Vietnamese allies refused to let that stipulation come to fruition. In Eisenhower's own telling, the US withdrew from the scheduled elections because "possibly 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh," according to Indochinese scholars and spies.[3] As emblematic as the United States was of democracy and self-determination, Eisenhower built a paradoxical foundation for American involvement in Vietnam, steering towards a path that undermined liberal democratic ideals.

The scholarship, moreover, points to the eventual miscarriages of Eisenhower's Vietnam policies. Bolder, more outspoken American history scholars argue that Eisenhower's invocation of "collective self-defense" on behalf of South Vietnam as an extension of the Free World was impractical: the conflict was a civil war between two competing domestic factions, effectively negating any external stakeholders like the United States.[4] It is understandable, then, that Eisenhower prioritized "nation-building" to subvert that argument, representing "a drastic escalation of American intrusions into Third World countries."[5] So far did he amplify American nation-building missions that "future administrations inherited crippling obligations that even Eisenhower could not have honored," like pushing back communism and establishing democracy.[6] Particularly with nation-building in South Vietnam, there "lacked a clear vision" with feeble foundations of the "fitful Cold War

[3] William L. Standard, "United States Intervention in Vietnam is Not Legal," in *American Bar Association Journal, Vol. 52,* no. 7 (Chicago, IL, United States: American Bar Association, 1966), 361.
[4] Ibid, 630.
[5] Edward Cuddy, "Vietnam: Mr. Johnson's War. Or Mr. Eisenhower's?" in *The Review of Politics, Vol. 65,* no. 4 (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 355.
[6] Christopher T. Fisher, "Nation Building and the Vietnam War," in *Pacific Historical Review, Vol. 74,* no. 3 (Berkeley, CA, United States: University of California Press, 2005), 445.

mantras" of containment and rollback.[7] It, therefore, was a "high-risk gamble" that was on "the verge of collapse" as Eisenhower ended his presidency.[8]

Lastly, as the Vietnam responsibility was transferred from Eisenhower to John Kennedy, there is a loose yet substantive consensus in the literature — the two administrations had divergent paths in conceptualizing and dealing with the growing crisis in the Indochinese peninsula. Kennedy, who had become the first Catholic president of the United States, resonated with South Vietnamese leader Diem's Catholic background during the Eisenhower period. That sentiment, nonetheless, proved to be overridden, as he described the Diem regime as "the worst one we've got, isn't it?" in conjunction with the increased ethno-religious and political tensions within South Vietnam.[9] The more mild-mannered Kennedy wished to "end Eisenhower's reliance on nuclear weapons to deter conventional and guerilla war" — in response, Eisenhower "warned Kennedy clearly" that a step back from Indochina would trigger immense backlash from Republicans that would tarnish the young president's legacy.[10] Fate seemed to fruitfully favor Eisenhower as he departed the White House: Eisenhower's "ultimate failure of his policies in Vietnam" did not decimate his legacy due to the "quirks of the electoral calendar," placing a greater burden on the subsequent Kennedy and Johnson administrations.[11]

Through a comparative analysis of different media of communication during the Eisenhower presidency, an assessment of US involvement in Vietnam will be made within a *push-pull spectrum*. This paper, in essence, will investigate the extent to which the foundation

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[7] Fisher, "Nation Building and the Vietnam War," 445.
[8] McMahon, "Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism," 460.
[9] James T. Fisher, "The Second Catholic President: Ngo Dinh Diem, John F. Kennedy, and the Vietnam Lobby, 1954-1963," in *US Catholic Historian, Vol. 15,* no. 3 (Washington, DC, United States: Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 136.
[10] Stephen Pelz, "John F. Kennedy's 1961 Vietnam War Decisions," in *Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol. 4,* no. 4, (Milton Park, United Kingdom: Routledge, 1981), 361; Ibid., 363.
[11] George Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York, NY, United States: McGraw Hill, 2019), 43, 72.

for full-scale American presence in Vietnam was precipitated — either by Washington's imposition on one end or by Saigon's invitation on the other. The argument will be prefaced with an explanation of the push-pull spectrum in regards to the early Vietnam War. Subsequently, investigations of various communicative channels will follow, relaying the American *push* towards Vietnam and the South Vietnamese *pull* into Vietnam. Within the current historical framework, this paper serves to qualify the American role in Vietnam: rather than solely perceiving it as an American war in Vietnam, the Vietnam War should also be understood as a Vietnamese war with an auxiliary American character.

The spectrum's structure is two-dimensional, with *push* representing the American desire to intervene and *pull* representing the South Vietnamese appeal for US support. In commencing the contention of a push-pull spectrum during the Eisenhower era in Vietnam, insightful commentary is drawn from *Trapped by Success*. Authored by the famed Vietnam War historian David L. Anderson, the book possesses a precise and nuanced compilation of the complexity of the conflict's early stages. Anderson highlights the significant role that Eisenhower assumed during the Vietnam War, especially as his contribution to the conflict is often overshadowed by later presidents. That role was intensified with Diem's rise to power in 1954 in the newly-established South Vietnam. In an effort to consolidate his and his family's power in Saigon, "it was inconceivable," Anderson states, that the leader "would have submitted willingly to an electoral contest with Ho Chi Minh under any terms," knowing the communist's overwhelming popularity.[12] This came as Diem presented himself as democratic, equating his landslide electoral victories in South Vietnam with the "mandate of heaven."[13]

[12] David L. Anderson, *Trapped by Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam, 1953-1961* (New York, NY, United States: Columbia University Press, 1991), 123.
[13] Ibid, 131.

Nothing short of a personal ploy, Diem rapidly turned the Saigon government into a dictatorship, supplemented by his *pull* of Eisenhower and the US into Vietnamese affairs. While Diem's early calls for help were answered on the provision that he adopt liberal political, economic, and social reforms, Eisenhower "accepted Diem's authoritarianism with equanimity" two years later.[14] This *push* by the US symbolized the heightened sense of urgency regarding containment in Asia and was exemplified by Eisenhower's new prioritization of stability over reform.[15] Eisenhower and his administration understood the losing narrative that Saigon had against Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi, who had "anticolonial credentials" and "tenets of social and economic equality."[16] Diem and Saigon, meanwhile, possessed a weaker justification of being the "guardian of Vietnamese tradition against an alien Marxist philosophy."[17] Notwithstanding biases, Eisenhower grasped the unfavorable tides in Vietnam in terms of an ideological battle. As much as Diem *pulled* Eisenhower and the US into Vietnam, Eisenhower *pushed* himself into the broiling conflict, catalyzed by a new vision of winning through military means rather than sentimentals, as previously desired. As Anderson exclaims, "The question was not just one of theories and ideologies but effectiveness. Who would be most persuasive or ruthless or both?"[18]

Given the push-pull layout in play, the analysis begins with an examination of the *pull* — of Diem luring Eisenhower and American interests into Vietnam. Two avenues of communication from Diem will be dissected: his state gift to Eisenhower in 1954 and his address to the US Congress in 1957. An investigation of the *push* follows, with a breakdown of three direct letters from Eisenhower to Diem and a public address by Eisenhower to the American public.

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[14] Anderson, *Trapped by Success*, 132.
[15] Ibid, 133.
[16] Ibid, 149.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

The first portrayal of the *pull* comes in the form of a gift of state from Diem to Eisenhower when the former first ascended into the presidency in late 1954 (Figure 1).[19]

Figure 1
A tusk lamp from Ngo Dinh Diem to
Dwight Eisenhower as a gift of state (1954)

After having his power legitimized after the partition of Vietnam earlier in the year, Diem gifted Eisenhower a tusk lamp on behalf of the newly-established Republic of Vietnam in Saigon. Depicted on the lamp were things eminent to a Vietnamese national identity. The *nón lá*, or rice hats, worn by warriors symbolize the distinct experience of the Vietnamese through the monsoon-heavy, sun-scorching Indochinese landscape, far different from their historical Chinese subjugators.[20] This, in conjunction with the *con voi*, or elephants, represent the age-old Vietnamese struggle for self-determination and desire for a unique national character. The legendary *Trưng* sisters, female warrior icons who fought for independence against Chinese rule in the first century, had been associated with elephants in various mediums of reverence, such as paintings and processions (Figures 2 and 3).[21]

[19] A tusk lamp from Ngo Dinh Diem to Dwight Eisenhower as a gift of state, November 14, 1954, Gifts of State Received by President and Mrs. Eisenhower, 1953-1961, Collection DDE-1331, Object 60-882 (Abilene, KS, United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Museum Collection).
[20] Arthur Asa Berger, *Vietnam Tourism* (Milton Park, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2005), 79-80.
[21] Painting in the style of Dong Ho of Trung Sisters, Date and artist unknown; Procession of elephants in the Trung Sisters' Parade in Saigon, 1957, Press and Information Office, Embassy of the Republic of Vietnam.

Figure 2
Painting in the style of
Đông Hồ of *Trưng* Sisters

Figure 3
Photograph of elephants at
Trưng Sisters parade (1957)

It is interesting to note, then, how Diem attempted to convey the idea of a free Vietnam to Eisenhower — as a millennia-long development entering the precipice of true independence. By presenting such a gift to Eisenhower, Diem compelled the US to stay true to its authoritative commitment for self-determination around the world, especially against the intrusion of foreign communist values. What is more, the fact that China became communist a few years before only served to strengthen the gift's memento — Ho Chi Minh's embrace of communism meant an embrace of China, an unacceptable sight for a nation who had long fought for national freedom against them and a stark repudiation of the beloved *Trưng* sisters.

About three years later, in 1957, Diem addressed the United States Congress and declared a strong testimony about the state of the Vietnamese people and society, especially as they pertained to full-fledged freedom from all things foreign.[22] He first invoked a general Asian sentiment:

> The Asian people — long humiliated in their national aspirations, their human dignity injured — are no longer, as in the past, resigned and passive. They are impatient. They are eager to reduce their immense technical backwardness. They clamour for a rapid and immediate economic development, the only sound base for democratic political independence.[23]

By employing vivid language like "humiliated" and "immense technical backwardness," Diem appealed to the American tendency for a savior complex. He presented a vacuum that

[22] Ngo Dinh Diem, Address to the United States Congress, 1957, in "The Vietnam War (1945-1975)."
[23] Ibid.

the US can — and should — fill. The people of the East, as Diem asserted, "are impatient" for the prosperity that the US and the West already enjoyed. Diem went as far as criticizing the traditions of Asian cultures as "resigned and passive," further indicating his desire for Eisenhower to escalate American involvement in Vietnam. This was to not only claim victory for Saigon and a deterrence of communism in Southeast Asia, but also establish "rapid and immediate economic development" which would stand as a backbone for the American liberal world order in the region. In Diem's lens, the ideological battle can only be won with economic prosperity — which, in turn, can only be achieved through full military victory against communist Hanoi.

Diem continued his speech by expressing gratitude not only to the US in general, but directly to the American people themselves: Vietnamese people were emboldened by "the moral and material aid" received from "the free world," especially from the "American people." The specification served a cunning purpose in Diem's *pull* of total American might. Like the tusk lamp gift, Diem attempted to back Eisenhower into a corner — by convincing the American public to increase support for Saigon, Eisenhower had no choice but to submit to such a sentiment if he yearned for a positive legacy. In an effort to coalesce all facets of American society to support his war against Ho Chi Minh's Hanoi, Diem made it clear that the Vietnamese had open arms to American aid, and that they had been "conscious of its importance, profound significance, and amount." This came even as he omitted democracy in his speech, evident in previous discussions with Dulles in which he suggested that democracy was incongruent with Vietnam and would "render government unstable."[24] Diem, nonetheless, *pulled* relentlessly, assuring Eisenhower that there was an existential threat to American global dominance if the US were to leave Vietnam unsupervised. Eisenhower

[24] John Foster Dulles, *Policy for the Far East* (Washington, DC, United States: United States Department of State, 1958), 55-57.

caved, giving Diem and Saigon the necessary American support they wanted and leaving the next three administrations with escalation as the only viable path politically.

While he did heed to Diem's persuasion, Eisenhower himself wanted to *push* the United States into Vietnam, regardless of the Vietnamese leader's infatuation with his administration. In Eisenhower's preliminary letter to Diem, the American leader highlighted the *Operation Passage to Freedom* mission in 1954 that evacuated hundreds of thousands of northern Vietnamese into South Vietnam.[25] The United States, as Eisenhower stated, was glad to partake in "this humanitarian effort" to help the refugees leave a "rule and political ideology which they abhor." By choosing to characterize the mission as a "humanitarian effort," Eisenhower deliberately reverberated a powerful message to the world — America must *push* itself to not only promote human rights, but also implement them. Invoking such a fundamental principle justified Eisenhower's increasing intervention in Indochina, for it left domestic foes, such as progressive anti-imperialists, at home unable to deny American humanitarianism. Almost four years later, in 1958, Eisenhower once again wrote to Diem, this time speaking to a Diem who had consolidated power in Saigon. More support for American *push* into Vietnam can be observed with Eisenhower's mention of Diem's Vietnam as "a new member of the family of free nations."[26] In stating this, Eisenhower implicitly revealed that the US not only wanted to push communism out of Vietnam, but also transform the Southeast Asian state into a fortress of freedom in the region. This meant that Eisenhower envisioned nation-building as his Vietnam policy, as the existing literature has cited. A policy as expansive as Eisenhower's conveyed his willingness to escalate in Vietnam to "place the burden on the Communists" to enable "the peaceful reunification" of a free Vietnam.

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[25] Dwight Eisenhower, Letter to Ngo Dinh Diem, October 23, 1954, in *The Department of State Bulletin* (Washington, DC, United States: United States Department of State, 1954).
[26] Dwight Eisenhower, Letter from President Eisenhower to President Diem, May 23, 1958, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958–1960, Vietnam, Vol. 1,* Document 16 (Washington, DC, United States: United States Government Printing Office, 1986).

Eisenhower's effort to *push* harder into Vietnam came as a consequence of his *domino theory*, in which he honed into Southeast Asia as the most vulnerable place for communist intrusions. In a press conference in 1954, Eisenhower elaborated on his vision of a "row of dominoes" falling faster and faster after the collapse of just one block.[27] Referencing Vietnam, he further emphasized that the "beginning of a disintegration" by communists in the country "would have the most profound of influences" in the strategic region. He, consequently, wanted his fellow Americans to understand Vietnam as a necessary entanglement. In the capacity he possessed, Eisenhower rallied the public behind Diem's cause, like in his 1960 letter to the South Vietnamese president. Eisenhower conjured up contrasts of "over 1,200,000 Vietnamese children [now] able to go to elementary school" with the "increasing violence" by the "communists of Hanoi."[28] This letter indirectly addressed the wider American audience, as Eisenhower appealed to sentiments of freedom in attacking Ho Chi Minh and his Hanoi government as "goaded by the bitterness of their failure to enslave all Vietnam." As Eisenhower concluded his tenure, he guaranteed Diem that the United States, "so long as [its] strength can be useful," will *push* more forcefully into Vietnam to ensure that communism would be vanquished — a commitment that continued even after Eisenhower relinquished power.

Having constructed the bidirectional continuum, a fascinating layer can arguably be affixed in the push-pull, Eisenhower-Diem spectrum. This *third dimension* revolves around Diem's legitimacy as a player in the spectrum. While it is no question that South Vietnam's political leadership as a whole favored US intervention and a *pull* of American power, Diem and his authoritarian practices irked other prominent figures, domestically and

[27] Dwight Eisenhower, Conference on the Importance of Indochina, April 7, 1954, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Indochina, Vol. 13,* no. 1 (Washington, DC, United States: Office of the Historian in the Department of State).
[28] Dwight Eisenhower, Letter to Diem on the fifth anniversary of South Vietnam's formation, October 1960, in "The Vietnam War (1945-1975)."

internationally. He exerted an affinity for the American ideology yet violated so many of its pillars in his quest for absolute power in South Vietnam. For instance, the US State Department branded Diem as a "man with an almost messianic sense of mission" but warned against Diem's brutality and "violent temper" in pursuing his own vision of a free Vietnam.[29] In the eyes of various American circles outside Eisenhower's own, Diem left even the most basic American tenets, such as the freedom of religion and the right to dissent, in a closed abyss.[30] In the infamous 1960 "Caravelle Manifesto," eighteen major South Vietnamese figures chastised the paradox of Diem's rule.[31] The declaration lambasted Diem's constitution as "in form only," with its liberal democratic underpinnings ignored by Diem and his family. It escalates its criticism of Diem by stating that,

> The people do not know a better life or more freedom under the republican regime which you have created… Anti-democratic elections [use] methods and "comedies" copied from the dictatorial communist regimes, which obviously cannot serve as terms of comparison with North Viet Nam… Effective power [is] no longer in the hands of those who are usually responsible…

This powerful admonition of their own leader demonstrates the falling legitimacy of Diem and his reign. The supposed "mandate of heaven" bestowed upon him and his family to lead a liberal democratic Vietnam defined their assumption of power and nothing else. Instead of utilizing that mandate for the betterment of his people, Diem's purview was devoid of anything beyond power — an aspect that Eisenhower and the US were willing to help Diem seize and maintain, if it meant the destruction of Vietnamese communism. Diem and his paradoxical reign increasingly soured perceptions of the lay people in South Vietnam and

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[29] Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950–1957* (Durham, NC, United States: Duke University Press, 2004), 254.
[30] John Ernst, Book review of *Diem's Final Failure: Prelude to America's War in Vietnam* by Philip E. Catton, in *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society, Vol. 101,* no. 4 (Frankfort, KY, United States: Kentucky Historical Society, 2003), 550.
[31] "Caravelle Manifesto" by eighteen prominent South Vietnamese figures criticizing Ngo Dinh Diem's regime, 1960, in "The Vietnam War (1945-1975)."

America, leading many to question the moral credibility of American intervention on behalf of Saigon.

With the *pull* and the *push* having been established, it seems credible to convey that Eisenhower and Diem engaged in a bidirectional relationship in confronting the emerging crisis in Vietnam. In contention with popular beliefs regarding US intervention in the Indochinese peninsula, the back-and-forth communication between the two leaders reveal two important elements that have been overlooked or underemphasized in the wider historical scholarship. First, Eisenhower was not a dormant figure in the history of the Vietnam War. He elicited significant actions to transform American involvement in Vietnam from mere advocates of a liberal democratic vision to active enforcers of an American-backed government, regardless of its commitment to the aforementioned vision. Second, Diem and his *pull* need to be taken into account when assessing America's interference in Vietnam. While it is completely and objectively valid to break down the war as a matter of "hubris and pride" and a realization that the United States is "not omnipotent,"[32] it must be qualified to carve a place for Diem's role in hastening the ultimate failure of the US in Vietnam. Washington's role in Vietnam was so far-reaching that it undermined the domestic Vietnamese layer: a battle between the liberator Ho Chi Minh in the north and the mandarin Ngo Dinh Diem in the south. The latter was overwhelmingly trounced in support and in legitimacy by the former, leading him to haul Eisenhower into direct commitment for his anti-communist regime in Saigon. Diem's ceiling as a dictatorial figure was realized during the subsequent Kennedy years, especially as his appeal for American support only further exposed his reign of terror against reform activists, the peasantry, and Buddhists.

[32] Stanley Karnow, "Vietnam War: 30 Years Later," Interview (Washington, DC, United States: Center for American Progress, 2005).

In his tenure as a leader of a free Vietnam and as an ally of the Free World, Diem magnified his decision-making towards Western appeasement, oftentimes silencing the very people he swore to protect against Ho Chi Minh's ruthless guerrillas. He claimed to usher in a new Vietnamese society devoid of French suppression yet seemingly prioritized his own personal power and pride. Eisenhower, for his part, enabled Diem's ascent into the initially liberal South Vietnamese summit, with a considerable amount of freedoms orbiting that regime. But Eisenhower's aspiration for nation-building quickly disintegrated: a liberal democracy need not be established, so long as the posse in power can guarantee that communism can be contained. Eisenhower, nonetheless, ensured a *freer* Vietnam in Saigon with Diem, in stark contrast to Ho Chi Minh and his North Vietnamese government's containment of liberties. Such juxtaposition, however, did not convey a truly free Saigon regime. The incongruence of admitting an objectively unfree Vietnam into the Free World would lead to Diem's inhospitable demise and turn his beloved Saigon into *Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh*[33] — the city of Ho Chi Minh, his lifelong foe.

[33] Malcolm W. Browne, "In Four Years Since Saigon's Fall, More Than a Name Has Changed," *New York Times,* April 30, 1979.

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Muʿāwiya and the Maronite Chronicle: A Study of Governance and Religious Dynamics in Early Umayyad Syria

Asena Firouzi

Abstract

This paper explores both Islamic and non-Islamic primary sources to better understand the intricacies of Islamic rule and how it was operating during the Early Umayyad period, specifically focusing on Muʿāwiya's administration. It is a study that challenges biassed historical narratives, advocating for a time sensitive understanding of the early Umayyad Caliphate on its own terms, rather than imposing contemporary conceptions of Islam and governance onto historical contexts. Rejecting interpretations that reduce the Umayyads to mere dynastic entities, this study examines the apparently adaptable governance under Muʿāwiya, highlighting the socio-political and religious milieu that shaped his methods, including accommodations made for non-Muslim communities such as the Maronites and negotiations concerning ecclesiastical matters. Through a critical analysis of the Maronite Chronicle, the paper critiques historical misrepresentations of taxation practices like *jizya* and evaluates Muʿāwiya's pragmatic policies that facilitated coexistence among Christians, Jews, and Muslims. I demonstrate that Muʿāwiya's governance showcased inclusive religious symbols and employed flexible strategies that were contextually responsive, albeit in a manner that contrasts with later developments when religious distinctions became more pronounced as Islam developed.

Introduction

Islam's development and eventual crystallisation[1] as a religious and socio-political system commenced in the time of Muḥammad, evolving through subsequent caliphates. The Umayyad Caliphate, starting in 661 CE, inherited and expanded upon foundations laid during Muḥammad's era and the preceding Rashidun Caliphate (632–661 CE). The Umayyads have received predominantly unfavourable assessments from later Islamic historians. Criticised for allegedly fostering a form of kingship that carries connotations of tyranny, as opposed to embodying the essence of a genuine caliphate, their exclusion from the recognition as caliphs in Islamic tradition persists until the advent of the Abbasids.[2] Dismissing the Umayyads as merely a dynastic entity rather than a religious institution is not only lacklustre, but also unconvincing. This perspective is devoid of the intricate historical context that situated the early Umayyad caliphate, particularly under Muʿāwiya, within a distinctive socio-political and religious milieu. In this period, it is not accurate to claim that the Umayyads, or more specific to the scope of this paper, Muʿāwiya, were not religious in their rule and lacked a religious foundation in their governance. Rather, it is the case that Islam had not yet solidified, and the rigid distinctions among Muslims, Christians, and Jews only manifested in subsequent developments.[3] Knowing this, it would be foolish to superimpose interpretations from a subsequent time period onto the early Umayyads, let alone attempt to do so with today's contemporary understandings of Islam that have undergone immense transformation.

While there is much to unpack, employing an analytical framework that recognizes the operational fluidity in governance during the early Umayyad period should enhance clarity in understanding. As such, the first half of this paper explores Islamic sources to unravel the fundamental concepts of what constitutes being a Believer, shedding light on

[1] Note that 'crystallisation' would only take place after the 9th century Abbasid period.
[2] Gerald R. Hawting. *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661–750* (2000), 13.
[3] Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 2010), 70.

early Islam's principles and applied policies within its imperial context. In the latter half of this paper, we witness the practical manifestation of doctrinal divisions. I argue, through an analysis of the Maronite Chronicle, that the Umayyad narratives within the document exemplify the aforementioned fluidity in governance, specifically in the military, fiscal, and religious elements of Muʿāwiya's rule. This is evident in the blurred definition and varying treatment of what is known as *dhimmis* (protected peoples).

Beyond Dogmas: Addressing Biases and Oversimplifications

Before delving further, while this paper will dispute historical distortions that characterise taxation (e.g. *jizya)* as discriminatory, burdensome, or humiliating — achieving total objectivity here is challenging. Hesitation arises in using terms like "tolerant" to characterise early Islam due to potential contemporary misinterpretations. Tolerance functions as a tool-like mechanism for upholding social and political stability. It is essential to recognize that substituting the term "tolerance", akin to replacing decline paradigms with the concept of a shift or transformation, is inherently political. Each and every Islamic historical era is shaped by localised regions, political regimes, and religious changes (at least in practice). This underscores the need for heightened attention to nuances, frequently overlooked in prevalent Western narratives.

Regarding mediaeval Middle Eastern Christians, Papaconstantinou observes that the prevailing paradigm places undue emphasis on doctrinal, theological, and philosophical elements, presupposing that individuals within this community exclusively define themselves through these criteria.[4] This critique sidesteps considerations of specific timeframes and regional variations, simplistically portraying *dhimmi* communities as well-defined and self-

[4] Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma: The Christians of the Middle East under the Umayyads," (ANNALES ISLAMOLOGIQUES 42, 2008): 127.

governing groups confined by Islamic law.[5] While this might find some truth in a different context, it undeniably falls short when applied to early Umayyad Syria under the rule of Muʿāwiya, and certainly, it cannot be stretched to encompass multiple centuries. It is no surprise then that this perspective can be misconstrued and thereby leading swiftly into pseudo-historical representations by scholars like Bat Ye'or, which are laden with inherent political biases and oversimplifications. Terms like "*dhimmitude*" and the selective use of evidence tends to highlight instances of extreme anti-Christian actions, particularly during periods of war and imminent threat.[6] This narrative, when conjoined with apprehensions about the perceived threat of Islam to"modern" Western civilization, bears the potential for real-life consequences like Islamophobia. Consequently, a thorough reassessment of early Islamic history is imperative to rectify these shortcomings and foster a more accurate understanding.

From Umayyads to Abbasids: Shaping the Landscape of Religious "Inclusivity"

Over a few decades, the Arabs transitioned to monotheism and expanded their territory significantly. That is to say that what may have resonated with Muḥammad may not have necessarily aligned with the perspectives of figures like Muʿāwiya or, later, ʿAbd al-Malik.[7] Unlike later periods characterised by religious divisions and a clearer understanding of *ummah* and *dhimmah*, early Islam distinguished itself as a dynamic and inclusive community. [8] The evolution of the term *ummah* sees a change in its nominal reference from the Umayyad period to the time of, and beyond, the Abbasid period. While this paper does not provide an in-depth analysis of this later conceptualization or the Abbasid period, it is

[5] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 127.
[6] Ibid., 127-128.
[7] Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 4-5.
[8] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 142.

crucial to grasp the transformation from the Umayyads to the Abbasids to contextualise the Umayyads' role in paving the historical landscape for the latter. This shift from *ummah* being used as a broader term, unitarily referring to all Believers in the early Umayyad period, is characterised by its gradual exclusion of others in favour of a religious singularity.[9] In overseeing a cosmopolitan Muslim community, the Abbasids navigated varied interactions with Christians and Jews, influenced by the perspectives of different caliphs.[10] This contrasts with the Umayyads, who adhered to a paradigm of Believers rather than the distinct categorization into Muslims and non-Muslims observed during the Abbasid era.[11]

Donner posits a prior religious inclusivity among the Believers and people of the book, illustrated by Christians' involvement in Umayyad bureaucracy and shared places of worship, until the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik.[12] Then, examining the Qurʾān, Surah 3:199 stands out as evidence that Believers were not restricted to a specific confessional community; instead, they constituted a diverse group of monotheists united by their belief in God, the last day, and a dedication to piety.[13] Believers are defined by various attributes, with the Qurʾān emphasising a crucial principle — unwavering monotheism. As a result, the gravest sin, characterised by an intentional unlawful deed (*ithm*), is identified as *shirk*, denoting the act of attributing divine qualities to anyone or anything other than God.[14] The Qurʾān asserts that, "He who associates partners with God has surely forged a great sin."[15] And on that note, the Qurʾān focuses on appealing to the Believers, often addressing them directly without using terms like "Muslims", rather, seeing followers of the religion as a community.[16] Together,

[9] Heather Sharkey, *A History of Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Middle East.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 27-29.
[10] Ibid., 27-30.
[11] Levy-Rubin, Milka. Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 102–103.
[12] Fred M. Donner, "Early Muslims and the Peoples of the Book," in *Routledge Handbook on Early Islam* (London: Routledge, 2018), 184.
[13] Ibid., 58-59.
[14] Ibid., 59.
[15] Marmaduke Pickthall, The Meaning of the Glorious Koran (New York: Knopf, 1930), Qurʾān 4:53-50.
[16] Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers*, 58.

this community fights against polytheism, which is a theme also seen in the so-called Constitution of Medina.[17]

This apparent inclusivity is underscored by diverse forms of governance, a subject that will be examined in the second section dedicated to the Maronite Chronicle. Speaking on later periods, Donner suggests that as Islam evolved and solidified, there was a concerted effort among the elite to redefine their identity as Believers and draw clear distinctions from those holding trinitarian doctrines.[18] It is only after this earlier period that modern conceptualizations, such as "convert, *jizya*, or die" come into view. Although the Abbasid era witnessed more systematic efforts and stringent policies towards non-Muslims, such a framework was not practically implemented during the conquests.[19] Instead, it seems to be a typical case of a construct formulated by scholarly circles and retroactively imposed on earlier conquest phases. While current perspectives suggest that the articulated policy was not officially sanctioned by the state, the shift from a political entity to a formalised state structure during the later period of the Umayyad era remains complex. Nevertheless, compelling evidence points toward the consolidation of both statehood and an official state religion under the later rule of ʿAbd al-Malik.

[17] Characterising the Ummah document as the Constitution of Medina has a fundamental flaw, that is, its non-conformance to the conventional definition of a constitution. The document primarily addresses tribal affairs, encompassing subjects such as blood money, ransom procedures, treatment of captives, rules of warfare, and associated expenditures. For that reason, I will, going forward, refer to it only as the Ummah document for the sake of clarity and consistency.
[18] Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers,* 214.
[19] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 144.

Shahādah and Statecraft: Rejecting the Trinity through Numismatic Evolution

The initial appearance of inscriptions referencing Muḥammad on coinage as part of the affirmation of faith further implicates the time period's importance in state building. The *shahādah* states: "There is no god but God, and Muḥammad is His messenger", wholly rejecting the concept of the Trinity and recognising Muḥammad's role as the final messenger of God.[20] Complementing this numismatic evolution is ʿAbd al-Malik's architectural patronage, the construction of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. Situated deliberately on the Temple Mount, the structure assumes heightened significance which also incorporates the *shahādah*, again, explicitly opposing the Trinitarian concept of divinity.[21] ʿAbd al-Malik's reign intends to resonate with a Christian audience as well as suggests state sovereignty, a departure from what is seen in the earlier period under Muʿāwiya. The distinction between Muslims, Jews, and Christians appears to be rudimentary in this stage, yet ʿAbd al-Malik assumes authority as their ruler in addressing them in their holiest place.[22]

***Ummah* and *Dhimmah*: Religious Pluralism and Protection under Islamic Rule**

The *dhimmah* status would have protected non-Muslims living in Muslim land. That included their life, religion, and property, with the reciprocal obligation of paying the *jizya*.[23] In legal (*fiqh*) and historical literature, the payment of the *jizya* is depicted as a practice dating back to the time of Muḥammad and one might think that it was practised consistently throughout Islamic history. As the legal basis for the obligation, Muslim scholars and legal experts (*fuqaha* and *ʿulamā*) typically reference Q 9:29: "Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, and forbid not that

[20] Jere Bacharach, "Signs Of Sovereignty: The Shahāda, Qurʾanic Verses, And The Coinage Of ʿAbdal-Malik," Muqarnas 27 (2010): 8.
[21] Ibid., 7.
[22] Robert Hoyland, "New Documentary Texts and the Early Islamic State," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, (University of London, 2006): 409.
[23] H. Patrick Glenn, *Legal Traditions of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 218–219.

which Allah hath forbidden by His messenger, and follow not the Religion of Truth, until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low."[24] Further, Al-Baqarah serves as an unequivocal guide that underscores the beliefs and certainties binding the community of Believers. It simultaneously outlines the fate of disbelievers, predicting an inevitable, punitive doom for those who reject the message, emphasising their refusal to believe and the consequences thereof.[25]

Among other Islamic sources, the Ummah document regulated interactions among diverse groups, establishing a framework for coexistence within the *ummah*.[26] With that said, *ummah*, used today for the global community of Muslims, did not always hold its contemporary meaning. Seen in one of the earliest political documents in Islamic history, it designates Prophet Muḥammad as the leader of both "believers" and "Muslims", forming the foundation of the *ummah*. The authenticity of this text, like many early works, invites scrutiny. However, Muḥammad's agreement with the people of Yathrib, preserved in later collections, stands out as authentic, supported by its historical context and distinct style.[27]

Some popular discourse characterises this document as a compilation or multiple components,[28] but there is a clear dichotomy of sections one and two. The initial segment delineates the rights and responsibilities of the believers (*mu'minūn*), termed by Michael Lecker as the "treaty of the believers", given its recurrent mention exceeding thirty instances.[29] This segment specifically focuses on nine distinct groups: the *muhājirūn*, *anṣār*, and eight clans aligned with the primary tribes of Medina — the Aws and the Khazraj.

[24] Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (New York: Knopf, 1930), Qurʾān 9:29.
[25] Ibid., 1-286.
[26] Arjomand, Said Amir. *Messianism and Sociopolitical Revolution in Medieval Islam* (2022), 11.
[27] Donner, *Muhammad and the Believer*s, 227.
[28] See Wikipedia page of "Constitution of Medina", which cites: Uri, Rubin. *The Life of Muhammad* (Routledge, 1998), 8.
[29] Gerhard Bowering et al., eds., *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 115.

The second section emphasises cooperation and details the rights and duties of the Jews (*yahūd*) and their clients, Lecker designates this as "the treaty of the Jews."[30] The clear shift from the first section is marked by a clause addressed directly to the Jews, stating, "The Jews shall pay [their] share with the Believers, as long as they are engaged in warfare [that is, alongside one another]".[31] This clause underscores a cooperative framework, highlighting a joint commitment to face the challenges of war. The mutual dedication to endure the hardships of conflict creates a shared experience, akin to a form of currency — shared pain and suffering — exchanged and borne collectively.

Beyond the *mu'minūn* and the *yahūd*, the document introduces another group, the Muslims (*muslimūn*) — mentioned far less frequently than the *mu'minūn* and the *yahūd*. Initially highlighted in the opening clause, "between the Believers and the Muslims of Quraysh and Yathrib"[32], the term surfaces predominantly in the second half of the document related to the yahūd. Specifically, it appears in the introduction to various Jewish groups, particularly in connection to the Jews of Banu 'Awf. The document underscores that while the Jews of Banu 'Awf form one community, or *ummah*, with the Believers, a distinction exists in their respective religious laws — "the Jews have their religion/law (*dīn*) and the Muslims have their religion/law".[33] This suggests that Jews could be a unique group parallel to or slightly subordinate to the greater *ummah*, as I previously highlighted by their distinct *dīn* (religion and law).

Expanding on the latter half of the opening sentence, the document importantly declares, "and those who follow them and attach themselves to them and struggle alongside them, verily they are one community (*umma*) to the exclusion of [other] people".[34] This

[30] Bowering et al., eds., *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, 115.
[31] Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers*, 230.
[32] Ibid., 228.
[33] Ibid., 230.
[34] Ibid., 228.

designates the *mu'minūn* and *muslimūn* as one *ummah*, holding specific implications outlined in the document. For instance, it prohibits a believer (*mu'min*) from seeking vengeance against another for a non-believer (*kāfir*),[35] signifying that the *ummah* surpasses old tribal relations and solidarities.

It looks as though the meaning of the term *ummah* in this document encompasses Believers, Muslims, and Jews, albeit constituting a separate *ummah* "alongside" the main one. The document aligns with teachings of the Qur'ān, emphasising belief, not kinship, as the core bond of the *ummah*. As a political-military agreement, its aim is to set guidelines for safety in Medina and surrounding communities, establishing a framework for coexistence. However, it is important to note that while the document facilitated some degree of inclusiveness, it does not align with the modern understanding of religious pluralism. Hoyland interprets the Constitution as a foundational blueprint for a unified community, uniting diverse religious denominations under the "protection of God" (*dhimmat Allāh*) to collectively confront the enemies of God.[36]

The inclusiveness in the assessed Islamic sources does not perfectly align with the historical record, as discussed earlier in the context of the Umayyads and Abbasids, and as will be evident in the upcoming analysis of the Maronite Chronicle. Muʿāwiya's rule exemplifies these misalignments with the historical record, marked by blurred definitions and varying treatment of *dhimmis*. This fluidity in defining believers reflects the period and Islam's emerging dominance — once polytheism was eradicated, the absence of distinctions disappeared, as the shared goal had been achieved.[37]

It is noteworthy that, during the Umayyad period, leaders employed diverse approaches in overseeing different religions; however, none of these efforts were entirely

[35] Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers*, 229.
[36] Robert Hoyland, *In God's Path*: The Arab Conquests and the Creation of an Islamic Empire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 57-58.
[37] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 142.

novel or unique. The struggle for religious and political unity was apparent in Christianity too, with attempts to unify and regulate subjects, such as Constantine I legalising Christianity in the Roman Empire (306-337).[38] Theodosius I (379-395) later solidified this by making it the state church.[39] Questions of the Trinitarian concept of divinity are not recent; preceding Islam, Christian rulers faced challenges in unifying beliefs, contributing to the diverse denominations of Christianity in the Middle East seen later. The christological debates surrounding Jesus' nature and the failure to establish a religio-political unity posed challenges for Christianity.[40] Drawing from this historical context, Islam arguably handled these religious variations more adeptly during this time period, a navigation that becomes evident in the following chronicle.

The Maronite Chronicle

1.1 Chalcedonians, Maronites, and Jacobites

Examining non-Islamic sources, the Maronite Chronicle offers valuable insights into Muʿāwiya's governance, along with significant observations on societal, economic, religious, and cultural dynamics among Christians and their interactions with the Umayyads. As the historical account exhibits notable deficiencies, especially in its imperfect coverage from the late fourth century to the mid-seventh century, it is crucial to acknowledge the lacunary nature of this chronicle and its role in preventing definitive conclusions. Despite possible temporal irregularities in this chronicle, such discrepancies are not uncommon in historical records of this period.[41] Consequently, the chronicle should be deemed reasonably reliable, particularly in the domain of Arab politics. The chronicler exhibits a comprehensive

[38] Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers*, 10.
[39] Ibid.,
[40] Ibid., 10-11.
[41] Stephen J. Shoemaker. *A Prophet Has Appeared: The Rise of Islam through Christian and Jewish Eyes, A Sourcebook*. (University of California Press: 2021), 152-153.

understanding of these dynamics, notably during the establishment of the new Umayyad caliphate under Muʿāwiya.

The chronicle derives its name from a noteworthy incident where Muʿāwiya intervened in a dispute between two groups of Syriac prelates, one Syriac Orthodox and one Syriac Maronite. This intervention favoured the Maronites, accompanied by the imposition of a substantial indemnity on the Orthodox community.[42] While the author's identity remains unknown, and the motives behind the narrative remain unclear, the chronicler displays a discernible affinity for the Maronites. Particularly, the account under AG 970 hints at the possibility that the chronicler themself is a Maronite.[43] If this holds true, it aligns with the fact that Muʿāwiya's tax administrator, Manṣūr ibn Sarjūn, was Chalcedonian, closer in orientation to the Maronites than the Jacobites.[44] Moreover, their participation alongside Muʿāwiya suggests a potential integration into the *ummah*, while also undermining their primary religious adversaries, the Jacobites.[45]

The narrative portrays Muʿāwiya as an arbiter, evident in his imposition of payment on the Jacobites. The author of the chronicle seems dissatisfied with the result, as the Jacobite Patriarch is ordered to pay twenty thousand denari annually to secure the caliph's protection of the Jacobites.[46] Though denari cannot be precisely correlated with contemporary conversion metrics, twenty thousand denari is undeniably substantial. This payment suggests a flexibility in taxation, which fundamentally disagrees with the assumption that upon conquest, Christians automatically fell under *dhimmi* status and were obligated to pay *jizya*.[47] The Chalcedonians, holding a powerful position, oppressed the Jacobites, while the Maronites faced neither persecution nor the obligation of payments. At the same time, whilst

[42] Andrew Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West Syrian Chronicles*, (Liverpool University Press, 1993), 29.
[43] Ibid., 30.
[44] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 137.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West Syrian Chronicles*, 30-32.
[47] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 137.

the Chalcedonians were exempt from payment, they were not considered protected, unlike the Jacobites who paid a substantial sum in exchange for protection. With this considered, it appears that the annual payment, mandated by Muʿāwiya, was determined on a case-by-case basis, underscoring that the *jizya* system is not a standardised, top-down model originating from the Caliphs' 'headquarters'. Instead, it manifests as a context-driven, ad hoc arrangement shaped by the specifics of each expanding frontier and the terms of surrender negotiated.

While it is not possible to precisely determine why Muʿāwiya favoured the Maronites over the Jacobites, one may point to religious solidarity, population considerations, and above all, political advantages. The Maronites adhered to the Chalcedonian creed, opposing the Monophysitism of the Jacobites. This distinction might have made the Maronites more acceptable to the Umayyads, which aimed to diminish the influence of groups perceived as heretical or rebellious. Or perhaps the Maronites, being a smaller and less politically powerful group compared to the Jacobites[48], might have been seen as easier to integrate and manage within the Umayyad administrative structure. Politically speaking, by supporting a less dominant group, Muʿāwiya could avoid the risk of empowering a potential rival faction. Also, the Maronites who were based in the mountainous regions of Lebanon, were known for their military capabilities and could provide valuable support against Byzantine incursions and internal revolts.[49] By favouring the Maronites, Muʿāwiya would be able to secure a reliable ally in a strategically important area.

The above is speculative; what is evident is that Muʿāwiya's preference for the Maronites reflects the broader Umayyad policy of pragmatism and flexibility in dealing with various religious and ethnic groups. One may ask the same question in other historical

[48] The Jacobites, particularly prominent in regions like Syria and Mesopotamia, constituted a larger and well-established religious community. This demographic advantage likely presented a greater potential threat to the state when compared to the Maronites.
[49] Peoples, R. Scott, *Crusade of Kings* (Wildside Press LLC, 2007), 68.

periods. Consider the much later Ottoman case[50]: why were Sephardic Jews favoured over Ashkenazi Jews?[51] In the case of Ottoman Jews, the origins of Jews in relation to the Ottomans (i.e. whether they arrived as a result of conquest or immigration) informed organisational schemes. The movements of people into and within the Ottoman empire's territory demanded and informed an Ottoman response. With expansion and immigration came coherent groups that the Ottomans were then forced to integrate into their structural organisation, then in its infancy. In this context, tolerance primarily served as a tool to uphold diversity, organise distinct communities, and maintain order.

While various affinities may influence the differential treatment of religious factions, prioritising the benefit to the state and minimising potential threats appears to be the most likely and comprehensive explanation. In both the Ottoman example and the case examined in this paper concerning the Umayyads under Muʿāwiya, the empire's immediate priorities significantly shaped its policies toward its diverse populations. By fostering good relations with the Maronites, Muʿāwiya demonstrated a willingness to work with different communities to maintain order in his empire, indicating that Islamic rule was not clear-cut, and what may be understood as rigid distinctions, only manifested in subsequent developments.

[50] Minna Rozen, "Immigration and the Making of a Community," in *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul: the Formative Years, 1453-1566* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 47.
[51] The Sephardic Jews, who were expelled from Spain in 1492, found refuge in the Ottoman Empire where their skills in trade and artistry were highly valued. Under Ottoman rule, they enjoyed special privileges, tax exemptions, and access to economic opportunities, which enabled them to maintain their cultural and religious traditions. As a consequence of this differential treatment, the Ottoman government imposed various restrictions on the economic and social activities of Ashkenazi Jews, and relocated them to segregated ghettos, effectively isolating them from the rest of society.

1.2 Muʿāwiya's Position in Ecclesiastical Affairs

This episode of arbitration holds significance beyond its insights into fiscal affairs; it also unveils Muʿāwiya's unique role in ecclesiastical matters, adding a foundational layer of importance to the narrative. His interference raises important questions about the role of non-Christian political figures into the internal affairs of the church — something typically reserved for patriarchs or bishops. There are several ways to interpret this, one being that he is demonstrating his religious neutrality as a leader.[52] But also, consider that Muʿāwiya's identity as a leader deviates from conventional expectations. Instead of being the Muslim caliph of an Islamic polity, he assumes leadership over an alliance of all Abrahamic monotheists. With his title not being caliph, or leader of Muslims, but rather, '*amīr al-muʾminīn'*, 'the leader of the Believers', this seems to be the case.

Muʿāwiya's non-declaration as an Islamic leader is evident through coinage, with the chronicle noting, "He also minted gold and silver, but it was not accepted because it had no cross on it".[53] Papaconstantinou makes the assumption that this is a diplomatic approach that employs religious neutrality, stating that as the coins had no Christian proclamation, they likely would not have had a Muslim one either.[54] Broadly speaking, the existing evidence indicates that inscriptions from his era do not explicitly mention Islam or Muḥammad. The only titles observed are 'servant of God' and 'commander of the faithful'.[55] Aside from assuming the role of leader of the Believers, as there is no '*rasul Allāh'* in the title like preceding leaders, this also implies a self-perception as divine proxies leading the community, without deeming it necessary to share or delegate authority to religious scholars.[56]

[52] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 137.
[53] Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West Syrian Chronicles*, 30.
[54] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 138.
[55] Hoyland, *In God's Path*, 98.
[56] Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, 13.

1.3 Muʿāwiya's Pragmatic Governance

The chronicle also maintains that Muʿāwiya "did not wear a crown like other kings in the world".[57] This aligns with Muʿāwiya's governance, which saw balance between structure and agency. The Christians under discussion in this context are depicted as occupying a nuanced position, neither fully independent agents nor confined within rigid Islamic structures. Muʿāwiya's title, suggesting religious fluidity or, at the very least, an inclusive form of governance of those who share a common belief, aligns with the Qurʾānic theme of "God's true sovereignty".[58] This perspective extends beyond Islam, carrying significance in Syriac Christianity, a potential deciding factor in Muʿāwiya's deliberate choice to distinguish himself from other worldly kings.[59]

The chronicler then reveals Muʿāwiya's assumption of leadership in Jerusalem, a sacred nexus for Christians and Jews.[60] Muʿāwiya's selection of Jerusalem is far from arbitrary; it is a deliberate and weighty decision, given the profound significance of the city. The sacred nature of Jerusalem is certainly intertwined with the connections between the emerging Believers and the Christian and Jewish communities of the seventh-century Near East. In choosing Jerusalem for his inauguration, Muʿāwiya deliberately aligns his leadership with the biblical tradition and the faith of Christians and Jews, underscoring Islam's early inclusiveness toward established monotheistic faiths. As described by Hoyland, Muʿāwiya strategically issues an Islamic challenge to the Byzantine emperor.[61] Muʿāwiya's tour of Christian sites in Jerusalem, according to Hoyland, serves to demonstrate that he, not the Byzantine emperor, is now God's representative on earth.[62] So, it is not a matter of

[57] Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West Syrian Chronicles*, 30.
[58] Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (New York: Knopf, 1930), Qurʾān 20:114; 23:116.
[59] P. Wood, *"We Have No King But Christ": Christian Political Thought in Greater Syria on the Eve of the Arab Conquests* (Oxford, 2010), 363.
[60] Papaconstantinou, "Between Umma and Dhimma", 137-138.
[61] Hoyland, *In God's Path*, 135.
[62] Ibid., 136.

Muʿāwiya's inherent "goodness" in being inclusive. Muʿāwiya approaches these matters with the inclusive community in mind, acknowledging other religions, but simultaneously asserting his leadership role.

It is also noteworthy that the chronicle mentions that the emirs and Arab nomads extended allegiance by "proffering their right hand" to Muʿāwiya, prompting his official proclamation as leader across his dominion.[63] Marsham contextualises this gesture as a symbol of allegiance in the ancient Near East, equivalent to the Islamic *bayʿa*.[64] Proffering right hands and the subsequent official proclamation embody adaptability, merging aspects from Near Eastern traditions — a testament to a pragmatic governance approach. Muʿāwiya's decisions seem influenced by the diverse constituencies present during this accession, underscoring the significance of the ritual's versatility.[65]

The Chronicle attributes Muʿāwiya's rise to power with the *Ṭayyāyē*, indicating the pivotal role of "Arab nomads", the backbone of Muʿāwiya's military might, in the accession ritual.[66] Similar to numerous Syrian tribal groups, the *Ṭayyāyē* had converted to Christianity during Roman rule, and there is discernible evidence of the continuation of their Christian identity during this period.[67] Additionally, the composition of Muʿāwiya's inner circle further reflects the multicultural dynamics at play within his administration, with high-ranking advisors like Sarjūn b. Manṣūr al-Rūmī ('the Byzantine') and ʿUbayd Allāh b. Aws al-Ghassānī ('the Ghassanid'), both of Syrian heritage, contributing to the diversity of influence around him.[68] Muʿāwiya's military backing, including both his senior advisors and overall support, did not primarily come from the Arabian conquerors of Syria. Instead, he relied

[63] Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West Syrian Chronicles*, 30.
[64] Andrew Marsham, "The Architecture of Allegiance in Early Islamic Late Antiquity: The Accession of Mu'awiya in Jerusalem, ca. 661 CE," in *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 104.
[65] Ibid., 90.
[66] Ibid., 104.
[67] Ibid., 104-105.
[68] D.W. Biddle, "The Development of the Bureaucracy of the Islamic Empire during the Late Umayyad and Early Abbasid Period," PhD dissertation, (University of Austin, Texas), 1972, 146.

significantly on the indigenous nomads of the Syrian steppes for his military support.[69] It seems that Muʿāwiya's forces did not constitute a Muslim army engaging non-Muslims; rather, it represented a collaborative endeavour directed towards those beyond the confines of the community of Believers.

1.4 Golgotha and Gethsemane: Muʿāwiya's Unconventional Prayers

Muʿāwiya's reported actions post-accession offer compelling evidence for the inclusive ethos of the community under his leadership and its corresponding faith. The chronicle recounts Muʿāwiya's choice to pray at Golgotha, the site of Christ's crucifixion, followed by prayers at Gethsemane's Tomb of the Virgin Mary.[70] In this context, Muʿāwiya's actions seem to echo those of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, whose presence at the fall of Jerusalem Muʿāwiya himself is reported to have witnessed as a senior commander.[71] In the earliest accounts, originating in the mid-eighth century, it is said that ʿUmar prayed on the Temple Mount. Islamic sources, existing in their current form from a slightly later period, also describe his prayers outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and within the Church of the Tomb of Mary, where he performed two *rak'a ts*.[72] These actions depict the leader of the Believers engaging in worship at two prominent Christian sanctuaries in Jerusalem, highlighting the early confessional openness of the community. Muʿāwiya's decision, as a leader, to opt for Christian shrines dedicated to prominent Christian figures implies a deliberate choice to present himself as a guide for all followers who share the common belief in one God.

[69] Martin Hinds, "Banners and Battle Cries of the Arabs at Ṣiffīn," Al-Abḥāth 24 (1971), 27.
[70] Marsham, "The Architecture of Allegiance in Early Islamic Late Antiquity", 101.
[71] Ibid., 88.
[72] Al-Hanbali, Mujir al-Din (1973). Al-Uns al-Jalil fi Tarikh al-Quds wa al-Khalil [The Significant Ambiance in the History of Jerusalem and Hebron]. Amman.

Closing Remarks

Muʿāwiya's treatment of non-Muslims stands out in early Islamic history. Traditional Muslim perspectives describe the Umayyads as a kingship rather than a caliphate, reflecting disapproval of the perceived secular nature of the Umayyad state.[73] This paper has argued against this perspective — retroactively viewing expanding empires, which include new territories and diverse religious populations, and stripping them of their Islamic identity is inaccurate. While the Muslim perspective on his rule may not be favourable due to his governing style and approach, Christians held a different view.[74] The Greek historian Theophanes describes him as a *protosymboulos*, or 'first among equals'.[75] John bar Penkaye praises him, highlighting that under his reign, "the peace throughout the world was such that we have never heard, either from our fathers or from our grandparents, or seen that there had ever been any like it".[76] With all this said, none of this is to question Muʿāwiya's Muslim identity or his governance as anything other than Muslim. Rather, the noteworthy aspect of the Early Umayyad period lies in its diverse populace, encompassing non-Muslim subjects who were, nevertheless, Believers. This intricate demographic landscape inevitably left its imprint on the governance dynamics of the time. My aim has been to discern how Islamic perspective and governance dynamically reshaped existing ideas and state tactics, creating a foundation for subsequent empires to consistently reinterpret and apply these concepts, thus breathing new life into them.

Upon reflection, the research explored in this paper poses a significant challenge for students of Islamic history. The sources often oscillate between leaning towards Orientalist perspectives and presenting an overly optimistic depiction of Islam's stance on religious

[73] Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, 13.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid., 40.
[76] Kennedy, Hugh. *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In*. (Da Capo Press, 2007), 349.

diversity, both of which are insufficient. Scholarly pursuits often grapple with ideological biases, particularly evident in modern and contemporary studies of Middle Eastern conflicts, often resulting in distorted anti-Muslim perspectives. These perspectives often include inaccurate or at least, selective interpretations of *dhimmah* and taxation, and a generally misguided understanding of Islam's modus operandi during its first empire. Recognizing these issues is essential — it prevents future scholarship from succumbing to overgeneralization and simplistic categorizations of Islam and its vast history.

What can be said to conclude this paper is that the various dimensions of Islamic rule in Early Umayyad Syria has no short and clear-cut answer. This paper approached the issue by first examining the Islamic stance and then delving into the Maronite Chronicle to gain insights into the relationship between Christians and Muʿāwiya. Key findings shed light on the importance of Jerusalem, prayers in Christian spaces, military unity, and Muʿāwiya's involvement in ecclesiastical matters. I have thereby challenged traditional views on the absolute norms of *dhimmah* and *jizya* under Muslim rule by highlighting the substantial policy deviations within the early Umayyad empire, spearheaded by Muʿāwiya. This prompts a reevaluation of the dynamics between early Islamic leaders and their populace, pointing to Muʿāwiya's leadership as emblematic of the nuanced nature inherent in early Islamic governance.

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