

HISTORY MATTERS

An Undergraduate Journal of Historical
Research



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Appalachian State University

For the History Matters family

**The History of *History Matters*
Appalachian State University
Department of History**

Have you ever spent so much time and effort on something that you wanted to share it with other people? Have you ever felt unfulfilled receiving only a grade and your own satisfaction as rewards for your hard work? Have you ever wanted to get your work published?

For these reasons *History Matters* was founded. In the spring of 2003, Eric Burnette, a freshman at Appalachian State University, was looking for an outlet for his research paper. He was frustrated by the lack of venues for undergraduate research, and he figured that other students probably felt the same way. Dr. Michael Moore, who had edited *Albion*, a professional journal of British history, for over 25 years, began advising Burnette on how best to go about starting an academic journal for undergraduate historical research. Another Appalachian student, Matthew Manes, was asked to join the interesting experiment, and together they laid the groundwork for *History Matters*.

Our first deadline was in late January 2004. For the editorial staff, it was an extensive and time-consuming process of reading, revising, and communicating with both the authors and the Faculty Editorial Board. In the end, the collaboration published one research paper, one research essay, and three editorial book reviews. This first issue of *History Matters: An Undergraduate Journal of Historical Research* was published online on April 28, 2004.

From the beginning, Burnette and Manes wanted to expand the journal. The more students who were involved, the more students who had the opportunity to be published and the better those papers would be. The 2004-2005 school year saw the participation of the University of North Carolina Asheville and Western Carolina University, as well as submissions from half a dozen schools nationwide. The 2005 issue was published with two research papers, one from Appalachian State University and one from a student at Villanova University. Five book reviews from all three participating departments were also published.

Since 2004, *History Matters* has grown drastically. Over the years our submission base has increased from 11 papers in 2004-2005 to 136 papers in 2016-2017. We now receive submissions from all over the United States from distinguished universities including Yale, Harvard, Brown, and Stanford. *History Matters* has also expanded internationally. We have received submissions from Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and South America while also employing international staff members as contributing editors.

Today *History Matters* continues to grow and prosper thanks to a supportive faculty, department, university, and, most importantly, the students who have worked hard on their papers and work with us to get them published.

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THE “MOST DISRESPECTED” BODY IN AMERICA: BLACK FEMINIST POLITICS AND THE MOYNIHAN REPORT

Josie Naron
Carleton College

*"The most disrespected person in America is the black woman.
The most unprotected person in America is the black woman.
The most neglected person in America is the black woman."*

- Malcolm X, speech in Los Angeles, 1962

Introduction

A powerful, controversial policy document, Daniel Moynihan's *The Negro Family: The Case For National Action* (1965) linked cyclical urban poverty and the discourse of dependency to the decay of working-class black family structures, caused in large part by the supposed dominance of female-headed households. Such matriarchal structures supposedly consigned the race to a subordinate, welfare-dependent existence within hotbeds of urban social pathologies. Provoking outrage from liberal pundits, yet tacitly accepted by prominent black centrist leaders, the report's abrupt release threw a nation's shifting ideological divisions into harsh new light. Though a critical body of scholarship on Moynihan's influence—and its relationship to what some term its predecessor, E. Franklin Frazier's *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939)—has amassed, its scope remains limited.¹ Scholars too often opt to address Moynihan's report and its sociopolitical ramifications solely through twin lenses of family structure and black masculinity. This limited interpretation perpetuates a dangerous myth that Moynihan's report existed within a vacuum of patriarchal anxieties, obscuring the possibility of the report's influence within an era of ascendant black feminist consciousness. To shift beyond a relatively unchallenged narrative, I suggest the following question guide a new

¹ For further historiographical reference, see: Rainwater and Yancey's *The Moynihan report and the politics of controversy* (1967), Massey et al.'s *The Moynihan Report revisited: lessons and reflections after four decades* (2009), Patterson's *Freedom is not enough: the Moynihan report and America's struggle over black family life: from LBJ to Obama* (2010), and Greenbaum's *Blaming the poor: the long shadow of the Moynihan report on cruel images about poverty* (2015).

interpretive lens: how can we imagine a connection between the impact of Moynihan on black female activists, self-identified as black feminists, and the emergence of a temporally specific concept of black womanhood?²

Examining secondary scholarship and black feminist texts reveals that the Moynihan report, written and received within an era characterized by systemic devaluing of the black female body, provided a crucial reference point for emerging black feminists to ground their critiques of black and white patriarchal control over selfhood, labor, and domesticity.³ The following pages examine how the release of the Moynihan Report engaged with and influenced an existing culture of patriarchal devaluation of black female bodies, as well as the ways in which the report channeled black feminists' historical mistreatment and trauma into critiques of male control over personal and political mechanisms of agency. This paper will focus on four texts outside of the report itself: Frances Beale's "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female;" Pat Robinson's statement on "Poor Black Women;" Maxine Williams' "Why Women's Liberation is Important to Black Women;" and Linda La Rue's "The Black Movement and Women's Liberation."⁴ These four voices are neither representative nor monolithic; Beale, Robinson, Williams, and La Rue make claims on black feminism from varied standpoints. Yet in sum, these key works, all written between 1968 and 1971, allow us to examine, with attention to multiple

² Alice Walker's concept of womanism, a theory of black feminism oriented toward race and class-based oppression and drawing from notions of collective black liberation while centering the experiences of black women, was not defined until her collection of prose, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*, in 1983.

³ Though not explicitly functioning as a theoretical framework, Beverly Guy-Sheftall's *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought* helps us understand the individuals encompassed by the category "black feminists" in practice. Guy-Sheftall notes, "They are academics, activists, artists, community organizers, mothers. They are race women, socialists, communists, Christians, atheists, lesbian and straight, traditional and radical. They share a collective history of oppression and a commitment to improving the lives of Black women, especially, and the world in which we live." (Guy-Sheftall xv)

⁴ Frances Beale, *Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female*, (Detroit: Radical Education Project, 1971); Patricia Robinson, "Poor Black Women" (*New England Free Press*, 1968); Maxine Williams, "Why Women's Liberation Is Important to Black Women," (*The Militant*, 1970), and Linda La Rue, "The Black Movement and Women's Liberation," (*The Black Scholar*, 1970).

causations, how the Moynihan Report and the strands of public ideology that it represented may link the four texts.

The Era of Moynihan: Contextualizing a Historical Moment

To understand the breadth of Moynihan's social, political, and cultural influence, it is imperative to examine the multiple contexts swirling around the report's release. To preserve its central focus, the following analysis stems primarily from the text of the Moynihan Report itself, Daniel Geary's monograph, and Beverly Guy-Sheftall's theories on black feminist discourse.

The report's historical moment is key, as it was situated squarely within the legacy of John F. Kennedy's assassination, the "peak" of the classical Civil Rights era, the Johnson administration's antipoverty regime and the culture of racial, labor, and gender protest movements surrounding it. Shifting party alignments and demographic upheavals within traditional partisan coalitions led to national political instability: the dominance of the Democratic New Deal coalition found itself at odds with the conservative Southern Strategy, laying bare lines of racial polarization within a two-party system.⁵ In the wake of the Depression and New Deal economic policies, poverty was never too far from the forefront of political discourse and was inevitably loaded with striking racial implications.

Legal historian Michelle Alexander identifies the "two schools of thought" that formed around poverty in the 1960s: conservatives interpreted poverty as a cultural failing tied to social pathologies, while liberals constructed poverty as a social problem generated by socioeconomic conditions and urban crime.⁶ Though these schools of thought may seem disparate in their ideological roots, they share common ground in one crucial aspect: both interpretations mandated white paternalism, whether in rhetoric or in policy, as the accepted solution.⁷ At heart, a core function of the Moynihan Report was to provide empirical support for a sweeping array of paternalistic Great Society employment and antipoverty reforms.

⁵ Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (New York: New Press, 2010), 44.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁷ *Ibid.*

In the text of *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action*, more commonly referenced as the Moynihan Report, Moynihan himself frames the report within a commitment of “the Federal government to the cause of Negro equality.”⁸ With this, Moynihan attempts to legitimize the racial implications of the report by framing the Kennedy-Johnson administration as renewing focus on antipoverty legislation through Great Society programs and championing racial civil liberties, though Moynihan would stop a step behind supporting full racial equity. Looking beyond paternalism, Moynihan’s focus on the perceived instability of black family structure⁹ and urban centers that were “approaching complete breakdown” spoke to a national narrative of white anxiety surrounding respectable protest, the collapse of “American” values, loss of social control, and fear of radicalization within high-poverty, majority black urban neighborhoods.¹⁰ Accepting Frazier’s claim that slavery and female family dominance had emerged as early as emancipation, Moynihan brings Frazier’s groundwork into the mid-century, stigmatizing urbanization, single motherhood, and welfare dependency as the harbingers of socioeconomic and moral decay.¹¹ Under such conditions, the Moynihan Report paints a “disappearing” notion of patriarch-headed, middle-class stability as the only means available to black children to overcome the “stumbling block” of their race.¹² Fearing that “in a matriarchal structure, the women are transmitting the culture,” the Moynihan Report placed responsibility for generational urban social pathologies almost entirely in the hands of black women.¹³

Drawing the content of the text into contemporary relevance, Daniel Geary’s *Beyond Civil Rights* (2015) shifts the terrain of accepted

⁸ Moynihan, 2.

⁹ Moynihan’s claims on the black family did not emerge from an intellectual vacuum: his work owes a great debt to W. E. B. Du Bois’ *The Study of the Negro Problems* (1898) and *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), as well as his more obvious predecessor in E. Franklin Frazier’s *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939). Du Bois’ and Frazier’s works are routinely upheld as pillars of black family studies. It is ironic, yet appropriate, that contemporary historians and social scientists now uphold Moynihan’s report in the same light.

¹⁰ Daniel Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Govt., 1965), 5.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹² *Ibid.*, 29.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 34

historical interpretation. Geary asserts that the difficulty in untangling what made Moynihan's *The Negro Family* so controversial stems from its disparate array of defenders and decriers, from left to right, white to black, liberal to radical to conservative, secular to religious. To paint the factions in broad strokes, the controversial content of the Moynihan Report divided established identity coalitions from within. Geary identifies the report as driving a wedge between Black Power advocates' critique of "new paternalism" and Civil Rights moderates' support of Moynihan's rhetoric of patriarchal respectability and self-improvement, in turn laying bare the lines between the white New Left and the white liberal institution.¹⁴ It is also critically important to understand Moynihan's relative lack of preparation for the secondary role thrust upon him by nature of the report's public reception: no longer just a policymaker, but a "race expert." More than a mere policy suggestion, the report turned Moynihan into "a leading U.S. racial expert."¹⁵ In a way, Moynihan's ascendance to his post as a "race expert" inverted the theory of George B. Nesbitt, a "racial relations" official for the HHFA, on race expertise: that a "Negro race expert... in a position not only to actually voice protest against racial barriers but ... in a position to perform the necessary and complementary task of race adjustment."¹⁶ Rather than amplifying a voice within the Black community—an admittedly monolithic notion—the Moynihan Report placed a white, liberal-aligned, male policymaker in a position to set the tenor of national political discourse on the social, economic, and moral condition of the black family. Few were affected by the ensuing conversation more so than black women.

Black Feminism in the 1960s: A Collective Response to Moynihan

As a national, and more broadly, a global, project, black women's activism around deliberately gendered causes stretches back

¹⁴ Daniel Geary, *Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania, 2015), 121.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹⁶ George B. Nesbitt, "The Negro Race Relations Expert and Negro Community Leadership," *The Journal of Negro Education* (1952), 148.

centuries, not decades.¹⁷ Rather than paint the history of a social movement in broad, universalizing strokes, this paper explicitly focuses on a) Patricia Hill Collins' and Guy-Sheftall's articulation of black feminist consciousness, b) the aspects of black feminist consciousness that were lent new significance in the context of the Moynihan Report's release, and c) the ideological connection between select black feminist texts and the gendered connotations of the report itself.

Emphasizing the historical significance of consciousness to larger liberation projects in her seminal work *Black Feminist Thought* (1990), Patricia Hill Collins points to a continuous American black feminist consciousness as a rejection of the principles of so-called American equality. For a nation defined along tenets of democracy and meritocracy, the classical American ethos finds itself far from equal when spliced along dividing lines of identity, from race to class to gender.¹⁸ Though such consciousness may find itself reconfigured to fit one historical moment to another, its core assumption remains that the "triple jeopardy" of race, gender, and class renders black women intersectionally vulnerable and systemically mistreated, regardless of surrounding social circumstances.¹⁹ Within the 1960s, the tumultuous

¹⁷ The scope of this paper is far too limited to allow for a detailed exploration of the complexities of 1960s-era multiracial feminist politics. For further reference in feminist historiography and critical thought, refer to the following: Paula Giddings' *Where and When I Enter* (1984), Danielle McGuire's *At the Dark End of the Street* (2010), Sue Morgan's *The Feminist History Reader* (2006), Henry Louis Gates' *Reading Black, Reading Feminist: A Critical Anthology* (1990), bell hooks' *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (1982), Sherie Randolph's "Not to Rely Completely on the Courts: Florynce 'Flo' Kennedy and Black Feminist Leadership in the Reproductive Rights Battle, 1969-1971" (2015), Marisa Chappell's "Rethinking Women's Politics in the 1970s: The League of Women Voters and the National Organization for Women Confront Poverty" (2002), Kimberly Christensen's "'With Whom Do You Believe Your Lot Is Cast?' White Feminists and Racism" (1997), and Hazel Carby's "White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood" (1997).

¹⁸ Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 21.

¹⁹ Guy-Sheftall's full quote offers a useful operational definition of the aims and means of the category "black feminism." She states: "While black feminism is not a monolithic, static ideology, and there is considerable diversity among African American feminists, certain premises are constant: 1) Black women experience a special kind of oppression and suffering in this country which is racist, sexist, and classist because of their dual racial and gender identity and their limited access to

era of the Moynihan Report's release and this paper's period of interest, Guy-Sheftall points to the "failure of the Civil Rights and women's rights movements to address the particular concerns of black women" as an impetus for heightened black feminist consciousness.²⁰ Hill Collins ties this "failure" to a lengthy history of exploitation on three levels—race, class, and gender—positing that governing black women's bodily autonomy and role within the family has always played a central role within an American project of capitalism and social control.²¹

With an understanding of the "triple jeopardy" of black women's historical vulnerability, Moynihan's influence on self-identified black feminists and the emergence of a time-specific discourse on black womanhood can be viewed as more of a direct conversation. Geary notes that for many black feminists, "Moynihan propagated a pernicious myth of black 'matriarchy' that combined racism with sexism," feeling that Moynihan's policy prescription unfairly targeted black women's right to choose between labor, family, or a combination of the two, and at the expense of widespread notions of black masculinity.²² Pointing to the impulse to reinstate patriarchal control—perhaps one reason that the Moynihan Report found such initially receptive ground amongst black moderates and conservatives—feminist critiques of the report are often grounded in a rejection of the assumption steeped in "family wage ideology" and the notion of "separate spheres" that suggest a collapsing of the separation between domesticity and the labor sphere would be pathologically detrimental to family structures.²³ Though administrative and public pressures compelled white female opponents of the report within the Johnson administration, such as Martha Griffiths and Elizabeth Wickenden, to silence their criticism, broader feminist critique

economic resources; 2) This "triple jeopardy" has meant that the problems, concerns, and needs of black women are different in many ways from those of both white women and black men; 3) Black women must struggle for black liberation and gender equality simultaneously; 4) There is no inherent contradiction in the struggle to eradicate sexism and racism as well as the other "isms" which plague the human community, such as classism and heterosexism; 5) Black women's commitment to the liberation of blacks and women is profoundly rooted in their lived experience" (Guy-Sheftall 2).

²⁰ Beverly Guy-Sheftall, *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought* (New York: New Press, 1995), 17.

²¹ Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 50.

²² Geary, *Beyond Civil Rights*, 140.

²³ *Ibid.*, 145.

of Moynihan was not entirely unexpected.²⁴ Within thriving labor and welfare rights movements led by both white women and women of color, Moynihan's work provided naturally fertile ground for raising issues of wage equity and women's role within the workforce.²⁵ Yet within black feminist circles, which were concerned not only with issues of capitalist exploitation but also with systemic racism, sexual abuse and assault, and state violence, the Moynihan Report held wider significance often unacknowledged—or unrecognized—within multiracial feminist coalitions, such as the National Organization for Women. Though radical black feminist spaces such as the National Black Feminist Organization or the Combahee River Collective did not emerge in the immediate aftermath of the report's release—NBFO was established in 1973 and CRC in 1974—intellectual and experiential lines of fragmentation between white feminists and feminists of color demanded that black women claim new intellectual ground in critiquing the Moynihan Report from the standpoint of black womanhood. Turning to the works of Francis Beale, Pat Robinson, Maxine Williams, and Linda La Rue grants key insight into the ways the Moynihan Report was processed and intellectualized by black female activists, self-identified as black feminists.

In chronological order, Pat Robinson's "Poor Black Women" (1968) falls closest to the Moynihan Report's 1965 release. Responding to the Black Unity Party's statement on "Birth Control Pills and Black Children," Robinson contextualizes the role of poor black women and feminist consciousness in the context of reproductive rights and the political landscape of the 1960s. Emphasizing intersectional oppressions—patriarchy, capitalism, and white supremacy intertwined—Robinson's work notes "capitalism is a male supremacist society," making explicit the linkages present in black women's apparent subordination.²⁶ The text identifies a racialized and classed hierarchy of value, headed by the "white male in power, followed by the white female, then the black male and lastly the black female."²⁷ Speaking again to the myth that the black woman is "less oppressed" than the

²⁴ Ibid., 144.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Patricia Robinson, "Poor Black Women," *New England Free Press* (1968), 2.

²⁷ Ibid., 1.

black man, articulated by Geary as “the syrupy miasma flowing from the Moynihan report that ‘Negro women have it good,’” Robinson issues a forceful denial.²⁸ Rejecting this narrative, Robinson dismisses the myth of matriarchy as a manifestation of male sexual anxieties, patriarchal control, and an inherent male desire to “own” and control black female bodies. Robinson points to a strain of racialized misogyny present amongst black men, noting how many black men “wanted to take the master’s place and all that went with it.”²⁹ Under this conception of power and weakness, echoing Moynihan’s rhetoric with uncomfortable similarity, black men view a black female body beyond social control as worthy of blame for their oppression and lessened status.

Similar to Robinson’s work, Maxine Williams’ “Why Women’s Liberation” (1970) posits a scathing critique of the prominence of the trope of the sexually, economically, and politically dominant black woman within communities of black men. Tracing the development of racialized and gendered tropes from the “mammy” stereotype, rooted in subordination and servitude, to the hyperdominant matriarch, helps emphasize a key fact: regardless of race, what men fear most is the reversal of patriarchal control.³⁰ Contrary to the popular myth that states “somehow the Black woman has managed to escape much of the oppression of slavery and that all avenues of opportunity were opened to her,” Williams asks the reader to consider black women’s experiences with multiple forms of exploitation: by race, by gender, by class, and by capitalism.³¹ Williams’ work emphasizes the bind of “double exploitation” the Moynihan Report and the moralizing comments of black patriarchs impose upon black women: penalized either for working or for laziness, chastised for either having “too many” children or exercising the right to reproductive autonomy.³² Issuing an emphatic defense of black working women’s rights, Williams speaks for the ubiquitous “black female subject” in stating “she does not feel that breaking her ass every day from nine to five is any form of liberation.”³³ Rather than adhering to the policy prescription to bring back jobs for

²⁸ Geary, *Beyond Civil Rights*, 144.

²⁹ Robinson, “Poor Black Women,” 1.

³⁰ Maxine Williams, “Why Women’s Liberation Is Important to Black Women,” *The Militant* (1970), 2.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

³² *Ibid.*, 4.

³³ *Ibid.*, 5.

black men, Williams advocates making labor more equitable, noting that there is no liberation under capitalism that depends upon exploitation of female labor and female bodies to subsist. For black women fighting for liberation against resistant black men, an exploitative capitalist system, and a white supremacist nation emboldened by patriarchal values, what is at stake is control itself—over their bodies, their children, their labor, and their futures.

Often referenced as a seminal work on the growing schism between white mainstream feminism and separatist black feminism, Linda La Rue's "The Black Movement and Women's Liberation" (1970) offers critical insights into the role of class within a supposedly "universal" feminist coalition. Attacking the notion of common oppression, La Rue speaks vehemently against the idea that the same forces—and to the same degree—oppress black and white women. Instead, La Rue argues that exploitative capitalism and being a beneficiary of white supremacy, à la sociologist Charles W. Mills' "signatories" to the racial contract, is what separates "bored" middle-class white women claiming feminist identities from their poor, black counterparts.³⁴ Stating "if white women have heretofore remained silent while white men maintained the better position and monopolized the opportunities by excluding blacks," La Rue points us toward an entangled system of white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism internalized by white men, black men, and white women.³⁵ La Rue's arguments on racial, class, and gender hierarchies speak directly to Moynihan's and his political contemporaries' various theories on social control of a gendered underclass. Responding to Moynihan, La Rue's text engages with the "interest convergence" served in protecting black manhood; black men, white men, and white women all share common interests in ensuring the subordinate status of the black woman within hierarchies of power.³⁶ La Rue also notes, "the term 'matriarchy' Frazier employed and Moynihan exploited, was used to indicate a dastardly, unnatural role alternation," pointing to the danger in implying the

³⁴ See Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (1997), particularly Mills' thoughts on the intentional exclusion of people of color from the social contract: a tacit agreement more accurately viewed as a racial contract assigning social, political, and economic privileges based on race and class, according to Mills.

³⁵ Linda La Rue, "The Black Movement and Women's Liberation," *The Black Scholar* (1970), 37.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

“unnatural” nature of women in the workforce.³⁷ Taking Moynihan to task for not recognizing “the liberation struggle and the demands that it has made on the black family,” rather than blindly accepting the myth that black matriarchal structures are the root cause of social pathologies, La Rue paints a portrait of black women antithetical to Moynihan’s analysis.³⁸ Under La Rue’s interpretation, black women and their various forms of labor are what bind black family structures together.

Finally, we come to Frances Beale’s work in “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female” (1971). Beale’s work discusses two central areas: gender role formation (through a racial lens) and the violent impact of exploitative capitalism on black family structures. For the sake of placing Beale’s text in conversation with the Moynihan Report, this text primarily engages with the latter. The final of the four authors to address the myth of matriarchy, Beale dismisses the notion that black women are the foremost oppressors of black men through pragmatic choices to work, noting that claims of emasculation and brutality should be placed squarely where deserved: at the hands of capitalism.³⁹ Speaking to Moynihan, his white contemporaries, and black men grappling with internalized misogyny, Beale calls for public recognition of the economic exploitation of black women at the hands of a capitalist, white supremacist, patriarchal system that treats them as a “surplus labor supply, the control of which is absolutely necessary to the profitable functioning of capitalism.”⁴⁰ On the subject of bodily autonomy, Beale labels movements such as Black Power as hypermasculinist, framing black men who seek to consign black women to the domestic sphere (through enforcement of language of motherhood as a “radical duty” and similar rhetoric) as reactionaries in their own stead.⁴¹ Framing the struggle for gender liberation as an intersectional project dependent on the eradication of racism and capitalism, Beale calls for the development of “high political consciousness” in order to prepare revolutionaries to comprehend, address, and act to dismantle oppressive institutions and systemic inequality.⁴² Taking a macro-structural approach, rather than

³⁷ Ibid., 38.

³⁸ Ibid., 39.

³⁹ Frances Beale, *Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female* (Detroit: Radical Education Project, 1971), 110.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 114.

⁴¹ Ibid., 119.

⁴² Ibid., 122.

accepting the Moynihan Report's tacit victim-blaming and focus on micro- root causes, Beale argues that black women cannot continue to be placed at fault for the systemic ills of society.

After engaging with Robinson, Williams, La Rue, and Beale's works in context of Daniel Moynihan's report, their lasting significance is striking. All four authors—though positioned at different social, class, and theoretical standpoints—posture a notion of intersectional feminism predating the concept of intersectionality itself.⁴³ Similarly, the four authors articulate systems of black feminist consciousness that are neither static nor monolithic; yet all draw upon similar roots in anti-capitalist rhetoric, a recognition of “triple” exploitation, and a refusal to claim the derision heaped upon their black female contemporaries, either for reproductive or labor-related decisions, as gospel truth. Though the reality of multiple causations prevent pinning the development of a temporally specific concept of black womanhood entirely at the hands of Moynihan, it is foolish to argue for anything but a connection between the two. The Moynihan Report legitimized national anxieties on many levels, including white men fearing a loss of social control, black men fearing perceived public emasculation, and white women fearing a gender liberation project that would place white women and women of color on an equitable playing field. Historian Tracye Matthews reminds us of a critical consideration: that “this should not be considered the beginning of such discussions about a black matriarchy, black male castration, and the like. Moynihan inserted himself...into previously existing discussions within black communities.”⁴⁴ This distinction is crucial: rather than *developing* a culture of patriarchal devaluing of the black female body, Moynihan's work primarily served to *consolidate* existing rhetoric into a cohesive debate. By claiming that “both as a husband and as a father the Negro male is made to feel inadequate” by

⁴³ Articulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989's “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,” the concept of intersectionality calls for the shift from a single-axis model of analysis—i.e. race not gender, gender not class—to a multiaxial model that considers the ways in which identity categories such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and others exert influence in combination (Crenshaw 140).

⁴⁴ Tracye Matthews, “No One Ever Asks What a Man's Role in the Revolution Is: Gender Politics and Leadership in the Black Panther Party, 1966-71,” in *Sisters in the Struggle: African-American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement* (New York: NYU Press, 2001), 240.

nature of black women's dominance within traditionally masculine *and* feminine realms, the workplace and the household, Moynihan played upon existing patriarchal anxieties to redefine an appropriate role for black women.⁴⁵ If anything, the selected four works stand as a collective testimony against such claims, though representing a fractional segment of a larger body of black feminist work. Using the report as grounds to support experiential, theoretical, and rhetorical claims, black feminist consciousness flourished in opposition to a culture working to deny their very humanity. Moynihan may have argued "Negro children without fathers flounder—and fail," but Robinson, Williams, La Rue, and Beale's works are a forceful rejection of the myth of matriarchy and a testament to the power of black womanhood.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Though Moynihan's work came nowhere near universal acceptance during Lyndon Johnson's presidency, it found friendlier territory in successive presidential administrations. From Nixonian "law and order" to Clinton's sweeping welfare reforms, the black woman has been caricatured in federal discourse since the Moynihan Report's release. Black liberals, centrists, and conservatives often draw upon the rhetoric of racial self-improvement, recalling Dr. Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s query, "why has it been so difficult for black leaders to say such things [about racial self-improvement] in public, without being pilloried for 'blaming the victim'?"⁴⁷ Even Barack Obama, America's "post-racial" hope, strayed into familiar territory of praising Moynihan in retrospect. In *The Audacity of Hope* (2006), Obama utilized rhetoric taken directly from the Moynihan Report to draw parallels between issues of black personal responsibility and lost family values in the 20th and 21st centuries.⁴⁸ Indeed, the report has found lasting impact in many ways; the continued politicization of black female bodies and the imperative for black women to claim a notion of womanhood articulated

⁴⁵ Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, 34.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁷ Houston A. Baker, *Betrayal: How Black Intellectuals Have Abandoned the Ideals of the Civil Rights Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 100.

⁴⁸ Geary, *Beyond Civil Rights*, 1.

through a racial lens are not projects of a bygone era, but a modern necessity. When we consider the racialized tropes present within contemporary political discourse—the “angry” black woman, the hypersexualized black girl, the “welfare queen,” and more—vestiges of the Moynihan Report are reiterated in contemporary rhetoric with more frequency than some would care to admit. This topic demands greater consideration than allowed in the scope of this paper. One area for potential future exploration may be to examine the influence of the Moynihan Report on visual representations of black womanhood in popular media. How is racialized discourse normalized in cultural consumption? Countering the modern iteration of rhetoric on black womanhood and femininity introduced in the Moynihan Report decades earlier, black feminists continue to define their own territory of resistance today.

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BOND-MEN: AN ANALYSIS OF THE JAMES BOND FILMS' IMPACT ON BRITISH MASCULINITY OF THE 1960S

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“Bond. James Bond.” This weighty line is one of the most iconic cultural turns of phrase in all of twentieth-century film history.¹ James Bond, the titular character from Ian Fleming’s postwar spy novels, had mediocre success in the motion picture medium prior to his adoption by *Eon Productions*, but it was the 1962 release of *Dr. No* that spurred the pervasive international obsession that would come to be known as Bondmania.² While Bond holds a beloved connection with the public, academia’s attachment to the Bond legacy did not appear until the late 1980s.³ Since then, Bondian scholarship has produced some rather interesting themes of nationalism and paternalism. However, this paper will specifically focus on assessing the degree in which Sean Connery’s *James Bond* films influenced British men’s conceptions of masculinity during the 1960s.

The first comprehensive academic study of the Bond films was Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott’s edited collection entitled *Bond and Beyond: The Political Career of a Popular Hero*, first published in 1987.⁴ Though there had been some intellectual investigations into Bond in media studies, Bennett and Woollacott’s work (which discusses the aforementioned themes of nationalism, paternalism, and western dominance) became the foundation for future Bondian research. Bennett and Woollacott’s collection is quite limited in its scope of research, mainly focusing on nationalist identities within the Bond films while claiming little insight on Bond’s relations with women or the much debated “Bond Girl” trope. Their conclusions on Bond’s success as a defender of western ideas are expanded upon in both James Chapman’s

¹ *Dr. No*, directed by Terence Young, premiered October 6, 1962.

² *Ibid.*

³ Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott eds., *Bond and Beyond: The Political Career of a Popular Hero* (New York: Methuen, 1987).

⁴ *Ibid.*

Licence to Thrill: A Cultural History of the James Bond Films and Christopher Lindner's *The James Bond Phenomenon: A Critical Reader*.⁵

Chapman's work focuses mainly upon orienting the films in their cultural and filmographic contexts while Lindner's collection spans a wide array of topics ranging from James Bond's penis to Orientalism in *Octopussy*.⁶ Chapman establishes the legacy of the Bond films, creating a linear chronicle for the development of each film in its contemporary stylization by grouping films together by common temporal and cultural periods, eventually concluding that Bond's legacy is rooted in the filmmakers' ability to "continually modernize...the [Bond] formula."⁷ In contrast, Lindner's collection is more loosely compiled and focuses on a variety of specific topics such as international politics, racism, consumer trends, and feminist theory.⁸ This grab-bag style of Bondian research marked a significant shift in the films' historiographies whereby academic assessments transitioned from broad investigations into holistic observations of the films through highly specific research. However, this period continued to be dominated by patriarchal topics and suffered from scholarly oversight of the female realm within the Bond films.

The early 2000s saw the advent of the most recent shift in Bondian historiography with the introduction of feminist critiques on the "Bond Girls" and the treatment of women within the franchise, both of which have become the prevailing investigative themes in the current study of the Bond films.⁹ The latest addition to the historiography came in the form of a highly experimental study on the "haptic geographies" of Bond's body. This interdisciplinary investigation intersected feminist theology with gender studies in an interestingly fresh pursuit. Despite its attempts to stray away from the strictly feminist lens, its conclusions on

⁵ James Chapman, *Licence to Thrill: A Cultural History of the James Bond Films* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).; Christopher Lindner ed., *The James Bond Phenomenon: A Critical Reader* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2009).

⁶ *Octopussy*, directed by John Glen, premiered June 6, 1983.

⁷ Chapman, 272.

⁸ Lindner.

⁹ Lisa Funnell and Klaus Dodds eds, *For His Eyes Only* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

the lack of female agency and the use of women in the Bond films as a tactic for Bond to wage greater war upon his enemies does root it firmly within the annals of the feminist critiques of the Bond films.¹⁰

Feminist critique of the Bond films continues to provide the basis for current trends in Bondian research; countless articles have been penned about Ursula Andress's swimsuit shot in *Dr. No* and about Bond's love of controlling women.¹¹ Interestingly, this is the predominant way that historians approach Bond's masculinity, by understanding just how Bond's masculinity is asserted over women's femininity. These portrayals of Bond as a womanizing misogynist call into question the legitimacy and possibility of Bond's longevity. It seems impossible that the Bond franchise could have added its newest edition *Spectre* in 2015 without the title character having some admirable qualities.¹² In order to rectify this lack of attention to Bond's character in the current historiography, it is important to not only understand Bond's identity in the films but also the exact choices that were made to make him appealing to the target audience. However, the goal of this paper is to research further than this and explore how Bond's character fits into popular conceptions of British masculinity at the times of the films' releases and in what ways the subsequent Bondmania phenomenon did or did not modify this existing popular ideology of masculinity in Britain.

In the interest of continuity, the only films that will be analyzed are the Bond films that star Sean Connery as James Bond, or those released by 1969. These include *Dr. No* (1962), *From Russia with Love* (1963), *Goldfinger* (1964), and *Thunderball* (1965). While these films did have their own individual cultural impacts, they had the greatest influence as a whole Bondian era and will be treated as a collection rather than a series of individual films. These films' impact on the cinematic industry and by greater extension popular culture as a whole, particularly in a time when the movie industry was facing severe

¹⁰ Lisa Funnell and Klaus Dodds, "'The Man with the Midas Touch': The Haptic Geographies of James Bond's Body," *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 43, no. 3 (2015): 121-135.

¹¹ *Dr. No*.

¹² *Spectre*, directed by Sam Mendes, premiered October 26, 2015.

audience and financial return deficits, is significant.¹³ Much of this cultural impact and influence can be attributed to the social attitudes of Britons in the early postwar years. Thus, one must look back to the postwar generation's transition from a wartime society in the 1940s to a thriving international metropolis in the 1960s to begin to comprehend how James Bond could have gripped the hearts of millions.

Postwar British masculinity experienced a period of increased idealization towards the notions of family life and a family home. After the familial uncertainty that had developed during the duration of World War II, British men were pushed to aspire to become family men. However, scholars such as Martin Francis have identified a certain level of restlessness “and a yearning for the all-male camaraderie of service life” within the postwar male generation.¹⁴ This emerging internal wistfulness directly contradicted the images of domesticity postwar males were bombarded with.¹⁵ Regardless of these men's desires to escape the gentility of domesticity, they did not actually rebel against these prescribed notions of manhood. Rather, these “flights from commitment” were fulfilled within the men's imaginations and were “only fully revealed in fantasized adventure narratives.”¹⁶

This is the cultural atmosphere into which *Dr. No* was released into in 1962, and James Bond's sensational adventures with beautiful women into exotic locations under the guise of patriotic espionage perfectly satisfied British men's needs for excitement and adventure akin to the kind they experienced during war. Bosley Crowther, an acclaimed film critic for the *New York Times*, reported just one day after the premiere of *Dr. No* that James Bond was an “elegant fellow” that the “idle-daydreamer might take to.”¹⁷ This “pure escapist bunk” is exactly the kind of “tinsel action-thriller” that would appeal to the male

¹³ Drew Moniot, “James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture,” *Journal of the University Film Association* 23, no. 3 (1976): 25-33.

¹⁴ Martin Francis, “‘A Flight from Commitment?’ Domesticity, Adventure and the Masculine Imaginary in Britain after the Second World War,” *Gender & History* 19, no. 1, 2007: PDF e-book.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Francis.

¹⁷ Bosley Crowther, “The Screen: ‘Dr. No,’ Mystery Spoof: Film Is First Made of Ian Fleming Novels Sean Connery Stars as Agent James Bond,” *The New York Times* (New York City, NY), May 31, 1963.

Britons reeling from the sedentary domesticity that had been thrust upon them.¹⁸ It is important to note that Bond did not bring about this shift in masculine ideals, but rather that Bond's character reflected the ideals already being imagined by Britain's adult male population and provided these men with a face for their fantasy selves.

Similarly, Britain in the 1960s saw a breakdown of class consciousness that was influenced by the camaraderie of the war and in part by the sensationalism of the Profumo Scandal. In 1963, the Secretary of State for War, John Profumo, entered into a sexual affair with a woman named Christine Keeler. Keeler was a prostitute who was also having an affair with a Russian spy named Evgeni Ivanov. During the course of this affair, Keeler and Profumo attended a dinner at the Cliveden estate where Profumo, in "an attempt to show off for his mistress," challenged Ivanov (who was also attending the party) to a race in the swimming pool.¹⁹ The story was leaked to the tabloids after Keeler's international drug dealer "came looking for her with a gun at a friend's house."²⁰ Once the tabloids got hold of the story, the British public was fascinated by this example of the failings of the government elite. Comically, the details of the story almost resembled their own spy film - a love affair and a British government agent versus a Russian spy - and it was the constant presence of this scandal that welcomed the first of Sean Connery's Bond films into British society.

The Profumo Scandal is linked with the initial success of the Bond fantasy not only because of how much it resembled a spy feature but also for the role it played in bringing about the deconstruction of the firm divides between social classes in British society. Tabloids claimed that if a reputable government official could be caught with his pants around his ankles, so to speak, then the elevated reputation of the elite class could not be upheld with nearly as much confidence as it would prior to the scandal. However, though the scandal did participate in this breakdown of class consciousness, many conventional class-dividing systems remained in place. This meant that class divisions, though not entirely subverted, became a prevalent social issue in British society and Bond's dichotomous character reflected this development.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Derek Brown, "1963: The Profumo Scandal," *Guardian* (Manchester: UK), April 10, 2001.

²⁰ Brown.

The James Bond of the 1960s had the unique ability to connect to men across all classes in a way a popular character had never done so before. He was hedonistic in his sexual tendencies and aggressive in his mannerisms, but he was also culturally sensitive and had impeccably aristocratic taste. He was equipped with the weapons of both the old and the young generations: suits produced by acclaimed British tailors located along Savile Row and a Walther pistol. Connery's Bond was "staunchly patriotic" and "emotionally cold" yet engaged in contemporary trends and colloquialisms.²¹ He had one foot in the world of the elites and one foot in the factories of the working class. Sean Connery, a working class Scotsman himself, embodied a similar sense of dichotomous classlessness that helped to reinforce this particular character trait on the screen. According to fashion historian Bronwyn Cosgrave, who worked on cataloging fashions from the film with designer Lindy Hemming, the producers and directors "groomed Connery to play Bond."²² Connery was taken to Savile Row and outfitted with a suit to help him get into character and was taught polite mannerisms by producer Albert Broccoli.²³ Connery had the physical prowess to command the role but he lacked the knowledge of aristocratic life to portray it with ease and was therefore instructed in its nuances.

This unilateral relatability provided Bond with a gateway into the hearts of British men. Tony Bennett, leading Bondian scholar, argues that Bond "was a key cultural marker of the claim that Britain had escaped the blinkered and class-bound perspective of its traditional governing elite, and was in the process of being modernized."²⁴ This modernization was manifested in the way in which Bond's duality

²¹ Suzie Gibson, "Bond and Phenomenology: Shaken, Not Stirred" in *James Bond and Philosophy: Questions Are Forever*, ed. James B. South et al., *Pop Culture and Philosophy* 23 (2006): 52.

²² Paulina Szmydke, "Designing 007: Fifty years of Bond Style" opens on April 16," *Women's Wear Daily (WWD)* (United States) April 8, 2016.

²³ David Kamp, "The Birth of Bond," *Vanity Fair* (New York City: NY), October 2012.

²⁴ Tony Bennett, "The Bond Phenomenon: Theorizing a Popular Hero. James Bond" *Southern Review* 16, no. 2, (1983):195-225.

connected with “the metropolitan intelligentsia” and Britain’s working class.²⁵

Interestingly, the Bond films did not particularly succeed at reflecting some of the contemporary trends that echoed British physical masculinity in the mid-1960s. For example, the runways of Swinging London were patterned with brightly colored prints and Edwardian inspired cuts. Mod fashion was the most desired choice of Carnaby Street goers and the mop tops of the Beatles, and the Byrds were mimicked by a percentage of young Britons across the country.²⁶ Bond’s “finely tailored Savile Row tuxedos” represented a more traditional masculine physique, particularly in comparison to the more eccentric choices of those who followed Swinging London.²⁷ However, Bond’s connection to these young men cannot be questioned. Cosgrave addresses Bond’s success by describing it as being inherently because the Bond films were always “very fashion-forward.” Supposedly, “the franchise has always been one step ahead of contemporary styles. It was not about the now, but about the next.”²⁸

“It was a sense of ‘Buy your ticket – we’re going to take you places!’” remembers the director of *Goldfinger*, Guy Hamilton.²⁹ The production crew on the Bond films understood the importance of instilling Bond’s timelessness by never allowing him to be rooted in the time at which the film was released. Bond was and is always depicted with qualities and goods that were and are not currently popular, and this allows him to command what is going to be popular next. In order to be like Bond, one must follow Bond’s lead. In this way, Bond influenced the type of products that were being consumed and the trends that were being followed. Bond was both outside of and inescapably within any temporal confines, giving him great consumer appeal. This appeal tapped into a burgeoning facet of postwar British society – the rise of the consumer.

²⁵ L. Tornabuoni “A Popular Phenomenon,” in *The Bond Affair*, ed. by Oreste Del Buono, Umberto Eco and Robert Angus Downie (London: Macdonald & Company, 1966).

²⁶ R. Powell, “Strike a Pose,” photograph, 1967, *The Standard*, UK.

²⁷ *Goldfinger* screencap, 1964, *Bond Lifestyle*, Danjaq, LLC and United Artists Corporation.

²⁸ Bronwyn Cosgrave interview “Designing 007: Fifty years of Bond Style” opens on April 16,” by Paulina Szmydke, *Women’s Wear Daily (WWD)*, April 8, 2016.

²⁹ Kamp.

Postwar Britain experienced an impressive economic boom that lent itself to giving families greater incomes and allowing them to buy more products. By increasing their incomes, and thus spending capacities, British consumer culture skyrocketed. For example, cinema audiences had dropped “from 30 million per week in 1950 to 10 million in 1960,” but by the time *Thunderball* had been released in 1965 the number of ticket sales had dramatically increased.³⁰ In fact, 139,801,980 people (internationally) went to see *Thunderball* in the year of its release.³¹ While Bondmania cannot take sole responsibility for this upward trend, it can certainly be respected as a large perpetuator of this culture.

Before one can comprehend how revolutionary Bond’s participation in this social development was, one must first understand how this national consumer culture intersected with British gender ideologies. There was a reigning ideology of “Separate Spheres” that had appeared during the industrial age in Europe and the United States, and it controlled the composition of men’s and women’s domestic and public roles.³² It directed women to have sole purpose within the home and to be the paragons of morality within their families while it determined that men were to venture into the public sphere to work and provide for their families. These divides were staunch and not to be crossed. As economic prosperity caused an increase in average family income, families began to be able to spend more money in the public sphere. Men became the producers in this formula for economic success and women became the consumers. This ideology morphed into the international consumer craze of the 1950s, which attempted to keep women firmly in their domestic roles by providing them with a vast number of products to choose from, many of which were advertised to help with some domestic chore. Advertisements created the popular image of the technologically progressive housewife and embedded her

³⁰ Paul Jobling, *Advertising Menswear: Masculinity and Fashion in the British Media since 1945* (London: Bloomsbury Academic 2014); David Leigh, “The James Bond Dossier,” <https://www.thejamesbondossier.com/james-bond-films/box-office-figures-for-the-james-bond-series.htm>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860,” *American Quarterly* 18, no.2 (1966) : 153.

importance in western societies.³³ During this time, men were still supposed to be the producers in this formula and were expected to work even harder to support the increased spending habits of their wives. Connery's Bond challenged this carefully constructed gender divide and broke the taboo of male consumption for British society.

As *TIME Magazine* put it in 1963, James Bond is “an appliance snob.”³⁴ He “doesn't really mind if he shoots the wrong bloke so long as he shoots him with the right gun” and “wouldn't be caught dead...in anything but the very latest scuba suit” when diving after a killer.³⁵ In *Dr. No*, Bond ironically does not demand that his martini be “shaken not stirred,” but “mixed not stirred.”³⁶ No matter the specificities, the importance is that Bond still had an indulgent product preference he would not concede on. Earlier in the same film, the secret agent very begrudgingly hands over his favorite pistol to his superior, M, after being instructed to use a more reliable weapon.³⁷ Bond is in his very essence a man with uniquely specific tastes, and he voraciously consumes the things he loves (alcohol, guns, cars, and women) at indescribable speeds. According to a marketing study by Holly Cooper, Sharon Schembri, and Dale Miller, “luxury brands...have become objects of desire not only through traditional promotion such as advertising but also through depiction on the big screen and in association with particular lifestyles.”³⁸ In accordance with this inclination of human nature, production companies across the globe sought to use James Bond as an advertising ploy for their products. People could feel closer to being Bond by having and consuming the things he had and consumed. Though it is difficult to say that the Bond films intended to control consumer interests, the fact remains that consumers were intrigued with Bond's habitual consumption. This relationship is one of the possible explanations for how Bond transcended from a beloved character to a pop icon.

³³ *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*, ed. Linda K. Kerber, Jane Sherron De Hart, Corndelia Hughes Dayton (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 32.

³⁴ “Hairy Marshmellow,” *TIME Magazine*, May 31, 1963.

<http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,896851,00.html>

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ *Dr. No*.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Holly Cooper, Sharon Schembri, and Dale Miller, “Brand-Self Identity Narratives in the James Bond Movies,” *Psychology & Marketing* 27, no. 6 (2010).

Albert Broccoli reflects on the incredible struggle he went through to get endorsements in the early films by explaining in an interview how he put his own Rolex watch on Connery in the first film after having been turned down by Rolex despite incessant pleading for partnership.³⁹ Regardless of this initial struggle, the success of the first Bond film gave credibility to future sponsor endorsement. Currently, Bond's watch tastes have changed to Omega (particularly the Seamaster), but his connection to big name brands has not disappeared over the course of the films. James Bond did not drive the iconic Aston-Martin DB5 until *Goldfinger*, but its appearance marked a relationship that would transcend popular culture for generations.⁴⁰ While the majority of Britons could not afford to buy an Aston-Martin, many of them could afford to indulge in the increasing automobile culture of the 1960s, which is yet another example of the trickle-down effect Bond's consumerism had on the British male population.⁴¹

This consumer phenomenon that followed came to be known as "The Bondanza" and "describes a European-American buying spree unrivaled since Davey Crocket and the coonskin cap."⁴² According to film critic and historian Drew Moniot, "some 6,000 stores sold \$3 million of 'Bondiana' in only two months."⁴³ These stores were not the only ones of their kind either; Bond merchandise could be found in stores across the world in various states of accuracy. In 1963, a Chicago company attempted to capitalize on the Bond name and secured the rights to put "James Bond, Secret Agent 007" on their childrens' toys.⁴⁴ The word Bond became synonymous with consumption across temporal, spatial, and generational lines in such a way that even its titular actor, Sean Connery, could not escape participation in it.

³⁹ Kamp.

⁴⁰ "James Bond & Aston Martin," *Goldfinger* screencap, 1964, *Aston Martin*, Danjaq, LLC and United Artists Corporation.

⁴¹ "007 & Aston Martin," *Aston Martin*, accessed November 10, 2016 <https://www.astonmartin.com/en/heritage/james-bond>.

⁴² Moniot, 26.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Austin G. Wehrwein, "James Bond Given New Mission: Toys," *The New York Times* (New York City, NY), April 27, 1965.

Sean Connery partnered with Jim Beam bourbon starting in 1966 using his 007 image to help promote the beverage.⁴⁵ Though it does seem a bit questionable that a Scotsman would partner with an American alcohol company, the fact remains that, because Connery's face was popularly attached to the 007 identity, he could capitalize on the millions of fans inclined to buy his product and thus inflate his profits off of his business relationship with Jim Beam.⁴⁶ All of these situations illustrate just how important consumption was to selling the James Bond identity. In order for men to embody this fictional icon, they had to begin to have a consumer consciousness that had never been expected of them before. British men may not have actively bought the products that Bond promoted (keeping in mind that he was known for his outlandishly lavish tastes), but they began to search for products and brands that fit their particular sensibilities, and they sold their loyalty to them for the meager price of market value. Bond's hand in the blurring of the producer/consumer gender divide marks a significant development in British masculinity that has continued to evolve to match the fluxes in British economic prosperity.

Interestingly, Bond's biggest competitor in shaping British masculinity during the 1960s was the Beatles. Though the two seem to operate in completely different spheres, both icons of popular culture were vying for the same space in public consciousness. The Beatles, who connected to the impressive number of British youths far more than James Bond ever did, entered British awareness around the same time as the James Bond films were first being released. 1964 saw the release of the quintessential Bond film, *Goldfinger*, and the Beatles' breakthrough onto the American charts with the single "I Want to Hold Your Hand."⁴⁷ The four lanky, boyish, mop-topped "lads from Liverpool" were a far cry from the bodybuilder ten years their senior that brought James Bond to life. Media Studies professor Susan J. Douglas describes the Beatles as not being "as threateningly masculine as Elvis," who held a similar

⁴⁵ Reid Mitnubuler, "James Bond's Drinks: Heineken Wasn't 007's First Endorsement," *Spirits of Philadelphia*, November 29, 2012, <http://philly.thedrinknation.com/articles/read/9318-James-Bonds-Drinks-Heineken-Wasnt-007s-First-Endorsement>.

⁴⁶ "You Only Live Twice," advertisement, 1967, *The James Bond 007 Dossier*.

⁴⁷ *Goldfinger*, directed by Guy Hamilton, premiered September 17, 1964; John Lennon and Paul McCartney, "I Want to Hold Your Hand," *Meet the Beatles!*, performed by the Beatles, (EMI Studios, George Martin, 1963).

presence and build as that of Connery's Bond.⁴⁸ Sociologist Candy Leonard reveals that both "young boys and girls were attracted to the Beatles' softer style of masculinity and the fun that always seemed to surround them."⁴⁹ She engages with the same rhetoric that Douglas does in stating that "nothing about them was threatening."⁵⁰ In contrast, Bond was nothing if not threatening. His life as a British spy, whose female attachments almost always became casualties to his job, was much less secure than the Beatles' international tours. Bond has an undeniably aggressively masculine presence; he stands with arms crossed, gun brushing his cheek, staring down the viewer of the movie poster for *From Russia with Love*.⁵¹ Feminist critics of Bond have said that his "aggressive nature toward...female character(s)...has always been a vital component of the story line regardless of the era from which it emerged."⁵² Despite the purely negative connotations that these feminist scholars attribute to this formula, the tendency towards aggressiveness does prevail in the Connery narratives. In this regard, women were more attracted to the Beatles nonthreatening passive masculinity, and young men in the interest of attracting young women dressed to reflect the 'celebrity crushes' of their peers. Therefore, British masculinity softened among younger Britons and reflected greater influence by icons like the Beatles over such imposing figures like James Bond. This is not to say that these boys did not partake in aspects of Bond's ethos, but they did not represent his physicality in the way that older generations did.

Unfortunately, not all aspects of Bond's identity are particularly positive, nor did they promote progressive masculine traits to male Britons. For example, the major villains of these films possess some degree of physical impairment or disfigurement that identify them as inferior to the flawless physical specimen that was Connery's Bond. Dr. No has bionic hands after losing each to his research in radiation, and Emilio Largo (one of the villains of *Thunderball*) wears an eyepatch.⁵³

⁴⁸ Susan J. Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1995): 116.

⁴⁹ Candy Leonard, "7 Ways the Beatles Changed Boomer Childhood Overnight," *The Huffington Post*, March 28, 2015.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *From Russia with Love*, directed by Terence Young, premiered October 10, 1963.

⁵² Klaus Dodds, "Licensed to Stereotype: Popular Geopolitics, James Bond and the Spectre of Balkanism," *Geopolitics* 8, no. 2 (2003): 125-156.

⁵³ *Dr. No; Thunderball*, directed by Terence Young, premiered December 29, 1965.

Interestingly, Bond is not devoid of his own physical disfigurements acquired from violent encounters on his missions, but rather than detract from his masculinity, they serve as confirmation of “his physical plights...[and] his masculinity in action.”⁵⁴ By continually opposing physically “inferior” villains, the audiences were exposed to an ableist narrative that implied anyone possessing physiques other than conventional ones like Bond’s was perhaps villainous in nature.⁵⁵

Bond’s multi-faceted masculinity cannot be considered fully explored without first examining his relationship with the women he encounters. Unsurprisingly, one of the prevailing perceptions of James Bond’s character is that he is a womanizer, and his number of sexual partners does not help to dispel this idea. Considering that in the first moment James Bond appears on the screen in *Dr. No* he is gambling for both money and sexual gratification with the beautiful Ms. Trench, one cannot fault the audience for holding onto this stereotype.⁵⁶ This stock-character reading of Bond’s masculinity reflects the conclusions that much of the feminist scholarship on Bond reaches. However, Bond’s actual masculinity is more complicated than being ruled simply by the desire for sexual fulfillment. Rather, his sexual intimacy with the various women of the four films depicts a newfound male acceptance of female sexual autonomy. There is also a sense of masculinity being associated with vulnerability. These progressive ideas on sex and sexuality were not as obvious in changing the face of British masculinity as elements like consumerism were, but they marked a launching point for future media integration of more radical conceptions of sexuality.

Bond’s “interest in sex suggests a humanity and vulnerability that endangers him.”⁵⁷ His willingness to be seduced by women, even amid the pronounced deceptions of women like Fiona Volpe’s in *Thunderball* or Tatiana Romanova’s in *From Russia with Love*, illustrates a certain level of masculine naïveté that provides an interesting juxtaposition to his imposing physical stature.⁵⁸ This display of emotional vulnerability serves to undermine conventional

⁵⁴ Funnell, “The Man with the Midas Touch,” 126.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ *Dr. No*.

⁵⁷ Tony W. Garland, ““The Coldest Weapon of All”: The Bond Girl in James Bond Films,” *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 37, no. 4 (2010): 179-188.

⁵⁸ *Thunderball*; *From Russia with Love*.

understandings of masculinity; in essence, this perceived demasculinization actually promotes a new level of masculine ideology in an oddly subversive fashion. Male viewers began to feel more comfortable expressing a more emotionally trusting façade, and this appropriately intersected the emergence of the female sexual revolution. By demasculinizing male sexuality, Bond provided women with a space to be able to express their sexual autonomy, and the subduing of male dominance gave way to the elevation of female sexual expression.

Of course the four Bond films in question have their faults in presenting this newfound movement towards female sexual liberation; many of the sexually liberated women in the films “are judged harshly for their sexual appetites and desires.”⁵⁹ The most debated of these is Bond’s conversion of Pussy Galore from lesbianism to heterosexuality through his sheer sexual will in *Goldfinger*.⁶⁰ However, these shortcomings expertly reflect the historical precipice that the Bond films teetered upon. For every few steps towards radical gender liberalism there was a step back to allow more traditional audience members a period of time to adjust. The fact of the matter remains that the Bond films had to express a certain level of adherence to traditional values in order for their progressivism to be permitted and accepted by the British community of the 1960s.

James Bond continues to be a cultural pioneer who rebels against the boundaries of convention and tradition. The first, and perhaps most iconic, Bond was brought to cinema screens by the working-class Scotsman, Sean Connery, whose transformation into the complex, classless consumerist James Bond captivated British audiences everywhere in the fall of 1962.⁶¹ Bond’s multi-layered masculinity proves both under-researched and underappreciated by the academic community in favor of focusing upon feminine narratives within the franchise, but Bond’s influence on shaping British masculinity in the 1960s cannot be ignored. His acceptance of female sexual autonomy and sexual vulnerability showed unparalleled sensitivity to the burgeoning sexual revolution. His blatant consumerist tendencies helped pave the way for overturning the confines of the separate sphere ideology that had prevailed over British society for almost a century. Lastly, his

⁵⁹ Funnell, 127.

⁶⁰ *Goldfinger*.

⁶¹ *Dr. No*.

comfortability with both the working class and the aristocracy reaffirmed the deconstruction of Britain's social classes that was occurring at the time of the films' releases. James Bond's influence on British masculinity may not have always been outwardly obvious, but it was inherent in shaping British masculine identities during the early and mid-1960s and should be heralded for having such an impact.

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FROM EMBERS TO FLAMES: THE ARMENIAN MINORITY IN BYZANTIUM AND THE ANNEXATIONS THAT CHANGED THE BYZANTINE WORLD

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The Armenians had lived in the Byzantine Empire for centuries, reaching the highest levels of the military, church, and state. Despite this history and success, however, ethnic Armenians inside the Byzantine Empire still faced hostility from the non-Armenian Byzantine majority. This hostility did not absolutely block the Armenians from success, but it was a present factor in the lives of Armenians within the Byzantine Empire. The annexation of independent Armenian territories by Byzantium starting in the second half of the tenth century, however, exacerbated pre-existing ethnic and religious tensions and ultimately destroyed the strained but beneficial relationship Byzantium had previously had with its Armenian minority.

Armenians Make Their Mark on Byzantium

The Byzantine Empire was a highly cosmopolitan entity. Like most empires, it was composed of people from a number of different ethnicities. While ethnicity theoretically mattered little in Byzantium, as Byzantine social homogeneity was based on Roman political theory and religious Orthodoxy, contemporary sources are replete with negative ethnic labels.¹ The Armenian minority occupied a unique position, experiencing ethnic tensions with other segments of the Byzantine population while also holding a position of power that was only matched

¹ For example, there is the case of Nilus of Rossano, a religious figure who was surrounded by a mob in Byzantine Southern Italy. Due to his strange clothing, he was derided as an “Armenian,” highlighting the issue of ethnic hostility that existed throughout Byzantine history, despite the cosmopolitan nature of the empire. For a summary of the story of Nilus of Rossano in English, see Alexander Kazhdan, “The Armenians in the Byzantine Ruling Class Predominantly in the Ninth Century,” *Medieval Armenian Culture (University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies 6)* (1983), 439-440.

by the Byzantine Greek majority.² Armenians immigrated into the Byzantine Empire in increasing numbers during the eighth and ninth centuries and served as the core of the Byzantine military for generations.³ During the period from 582 to 1071, they also occupied some of the highest positions in the Byzantine Empire. Ethnic Armenians served as leading generals,⁴ intellectuals,⁵ and even emperors.⁶

² For a brief summary of major ethnically Armenian figures in Byzantine history, see Peter Charanis, "Armenians in the Byzantine Empire," *Byzantinoslavica* XXII (Prague, 1961): 200.

³ Romilly Jenkins, *Byzantium: The Imperial Centuries (AD 610-1071)* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), 373. Armenian immigration into the Byzantine Empire was encouraged during the eighth and ninth centuries, due to the severe depopulation in the remaining Byzantine territories due to war and disease in the previous century. Settlers were offered fertile land for farming in exchange for military service. For more information, see Peter Charanis, "Ethnic Changes in the Byzantine Empire in the Seventh Century," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* XIII (1959): 29. The reader should be wary, however, since Charanis closely follows the now antiquated views of George Ostrogorsky regarding soldier farmers. Still, many Armenians did become part of the property-holding classes and also served in the Byzantine military. Perhaps the most quintessential example is that of the great landed aristocracy of the tenth and eleventh centuries, such as the families of Kourkouas and Skleros, which were ethnically Armenian.

⁴ Notable ethnically Armenian Byzantine military commanders include Vahan and Mzhez Gnumi in the seventh century and John Kourkouas in the tenth century. Robert R. Thomson, trans., *The Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 91. Robert Bedrosian, *The Chronicle of Michael the Great, Patriarch of the Syrians* (Long Branch, NJ: Sources of the Armenian Tradition, 2013), 137, 169. Alice Mary Talbot and Denis F. Sullivan, *Leo the Deacon: Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2005), 141.

⁵ Ethnically Armenian intellectuals were especially prominent in the Byzantine Empire in the ninth century and included John the Grammarian, Leo the Mathematician, and Patriarch Photios. Sirarpie der Nersessian, *Armenia and the Byzantine Empire: A Brief Study of Armenian Art and Civilization* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1945), 20. Photius, *Epistulae et Ampilochia*, 3, ed. Basilus Laourdas and Leendert G. Westerink, (Lepizig: B.G. Teubner, 1985), 284.83, 284.371.

⁶ Twenty Byzantine emperors are suspected to have Armenian origins. Notable emperors of Armenian descent include Heraclius (r. 610-641), Leo V (r. 813-820), and Basil I (r. 867-886). Walter E. Kaegi, *Heraclius: Emperor of Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 22. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests*, 187. David Nicetas, *The Life of Patriarch Ignatius*, trans. Andrew Smithies (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2013): 6-7. Michael P. Goodyear, "An

The wide geographic dispersion of important Byzantines of Armenian descent throughout the empire meant that Byzantium welcomed, or at the very least did not actively oppose, the talents and energies of the Armenians, especially in the eighth and ninth centuries, when they buttressed a native population ravaged by disease and war. The movement of Armenians from Armenia to Byzantium exposed them to a very different culture, and in some contexts this manifested itself as Armenians developing new political and cultural orientations, or a degree of assimilation, which was stronger in the core than at the peripheries of the empire. Although they could not bring all of their possessions with them, immigrants always brought their customs, unique identity, and native language. During the period between the late sixth to late tenth centuries, urbanization, economic integration, conversion, education, and linguistic Hellenization resulted in the Armenians becoming, to a degree, amalgamated into Byzantine society. This assimilation was by no means comprehensive, and ethnic and religious differences between the Armenians and the rest of the Byzantine population set them apart.

A History of Hostility

Hostility against the Armenians had existed for ages, with Gregory of Nyssa, a fourth century Cappadocian bishop, describing Armenians as “practiced in inventiveness for evil in the stealthy manner of wild beasts.”⁷ Another early indication of Byzantine hostility against the Armenians was in Emperor Maurice’s (r. 582-602) letter to Sasanian Persian ruler Khosrow II (r. 590-628) about Armenia. Maurice labeled the Armenians as a “perverse and disobedient race” and said, “If they die, our enemies die.”⁸ Maurice even went so far as to attempt to assassinate Mushel Mamikonean, the leading *nakharar*, or Armenian noble, of his time.⁹ The Byzantine historian Theophanes mentioned

Armenian from Macedonia: The Origins of Emperor Basil I,” *Vanderbilt Historical Review* (Spring 2017), 32-40.

⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *Gregory of Nyssa: the Letters*, trans. Anna M. Silvas (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 180.

⁸ Thomson, *Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*, 31-32.

⁹ Levon Avdoyan, *Pseudo-Yovhannes Mamikonean: The History of Taron* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 162. *Nakharar* was a hereditary title given to the nobility of ancient and medieval Armenia. Referring to the *nakharars* as a group generally

“Armeniac plotters” during the reign of Constantine VI (r. 780-797), referring to a plot to overthrow the emperor by soldiers from the Armeniac Theme, a Byzantine province.¹⁰ This label possibly held an ethnic connotation as well as a geographic one, given that the majority of the soldiers in the Armeniac Theme were in fact ethnically Armenian.¹¹ Then in the ninth century, the famous Byzantine poetess Kasia wrote a scathing poem about the Armenians. The translated poem reads, “the most terrible race of the Armenians...is deceitful and evil to extremes...mad and capricious and slanderous...and full of deceit, being greatly so by nature.”¹²

In the tenth century, Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963-969), potentially fearing the supposed deceitful nature of the Armenians, issued a decree about ethnically Armenian Byzantine soldiers neglecting their duties or deserting.¹³ In this same vein, Nikephoros referred to the Armenians as a whole as carrying out sentry duty in a poor manner, implying that Armenians inherently did not perform this duty well, even if they were paid promptly.¹⁴ Even in the twelfth century, after the loss of most Armenians from the Byzantine population due to the conquest of Byzantine Anatolia by the Seljuk Turks, the *porphyrogenita* Anna

signifies the Armenian nobility as a group or a whole. Each *nakharar* generally controlled his own estate and could call upon a private army, which created a hierarchy of dependent land-owners and lords with regional power.

¹⁰ Themes were Byzantine territorial administrative divisions that replaced the old provincial division sometime in the late seventh or early eighth centuries.

¹¹ Cyril Mango and Roger Scott, trans. *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, A.D. 284-813* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), AM 6285.

¹² Constantine A. Trypanis, *Medieval and Modern Greek Poetry: An Anthology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 43. This edition is in the original Greek text. Speros Vryonis, Jr., “Byzantine Images of the Armenians,” in *The Armenian Image in History and Literature*, ed. Richard Hovannisian (Malibu: Undena Press, 1981): 73. Speros Vryonis has argued that this poem was written because Kasia was rejected at Theophilos’ bride-selection ceremony in favor of the Armenian Theodora. This is a rather spurious and unsupported theory, but even if it does hold some credence, Kasia’s criticisms of the Armenians were rooted in the hostile impressions that were common for her time, in spite of any additional personal feelings she may have had.

¹³ Eric McGeer, “The Legal Decree of Nikephoros II Phokas Concerning the Armenian Stratiotai,” in *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis* (1995), 125-127.

¹⁴ George T. Dennis, *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1985), 152-153.

Komnena still labeled the Armenians with harsh terms, referring to an influx of Armenian immigrants as “a brackish stream” and a “polluted water,” illustrating how the Byzantines negatively pictured Armenians as not quite completely part of Byzantine society.¹⁵

Like many stereotypes, there was a grain of truth in these Byzantine assertions of Armenian disloyalty and wickedness. There were a large number of rebellions in Armenia and by individuals of Armenian descent in Byzantium. The list of rebellions in Armenia by *nakharars* such as Theodore Rshtuni is long and substantiated by contemporary Armenian historians such as Sebeos.¹⁶ Another factor was that Armenia had long played the tricky game of being hedged between two great powers, often changing allegiances at the drop of a pin in order to preserve its local autonomy. This led Armenians to sometimes support Sasanian Persian and later Muslim armies against the Byzantines. Two examples are when Armenians joined Abbasid lord Salih ibn ‘Ali’s forces in a raid against Constantine V (r. 741-775) and when ethnically Armenian troops surrendered the Byzantine fortress of Kamachon to the Abbasid Caliphate in 793.¹⁷ Many Byzantines saw this as a flagrant act of perfidy by Armenians, betraying their fellow Christians in support of the infidel. Of course the entire population did not support Sasanian or Muslim armies against the Byzantines, but the fact that some supported the non-Christian enemy gave substance to the prejudicial Byzantine denunciation of Armenians as disloyal. This stereotype of the Armenians as disloyal continued up through 1071, with contemporaneous Byzantine historian Michael Attaleiates relating that Romanos IV (r. 1067-1071) and his troops worried that the Armenians planned on defecting prior to the Battle of Mantzikert in 1071.¹⁸

¹⁵ Anna Komnena, *The Alexiad*, ed. Peter Frankopan, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (London: Penguin Books, 2009), 426. The terms πορφυρογέννητος (porphyrogenitos) and πορφυρογέννητη (porphyrogenita) mean “the purple born,” the former for men and the latter for women. These terms refer to royal Byzantine children that were born in the Πορφύρα, or the Purple Chamber, of the imperial palace. In other words, this title signified that the holder was the child of an emperor, born after his or her father became emperor.

¹⁶ Thomson, *Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*, 136, 147.

¹⁷ Mango, *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, AM 6248, AM 6285.

¹⁸ Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, trans. Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 17.12.

Ethnic and Religious Tensions

This expression of hostility was the product of the traditional antagonism between the Greeks and Armenians. Although the Armenians had been of prime importance in the Byzantine Empire since the sixth century, they had never been very popular with the Byzantine populace. There were ethnic and religious antagonisms between the Greeks and Armenians that stemmed from their different cultures and different sects of Christianity, the Orthodox and Armenian Churches. These tensions had flared up over the centuries and caused significant problems for the Byzantine Empire. One example was in the late sixth century, when both groups were helping Khosrow II regain the Sasanian throne, and Byzantine soldiers refused to camp with ethnically Armenian troops due to the negative Byzantine view of the Armenians.¹⁹ Professor Walter Kaegi has noted that ethnic tensions between Armenians and the Byzantine Empire had inhibited a more robust defense of Armenia during the early Muslim conquests.²⁰ During the reign of Nikephoros II, a major riot broke out in Constantinople against the Armenian troops stationed in the city, potentially inflamed by underlying ethnic tensions between the Armenian soldiers and the Byzantine populace.²¹

Many of these tensions were not just rooted in ethnicity, but were religiously based. Although both peoples were Christian, the types of Christianity they professed had important differences that led to a lack of recognition and strains between the Byzantine Orthodox Church and the Armenian Church. As with many Christian denominations, there are actually only a few critical differences between the two systems of beliefs. The main beliefs, such as Jesus being the son of God, life everlasting, and the sacrament of communion, were for the most part the same. The major disagreements between the Armenian and Orthodox Churches can, for the sake of medieval theology, be broken down to two major points of contention. First, the Armenians rejected the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which was recognized by the Patriarch of Constantinople, the leading figure in Orthodox Christianity, as well as the Pope in Rome, even though many Christians in Syria and Egypt

¹⁹ Avdoyan, *Pseudo-Yovhannes Mamikonean*, 158.

²⁰ Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests*, 199.

²¹ Talbot, *Leo the Deacon*, 113.

opposed it. Second, the Armenian Church maintained that it was an autonomous church, which ran counter to the Byzantine opinion that the Armenian Church was subordinate to the Byzantine Archbishopric of Caesarea. Although there were other issues, such as the Armenian use of unleavened bread and unmixed wine for the Eucharist, the aforementioned two matters were the main points of contention.

The Fourth Ecumenical Council was held at Chalcedon in 451 and determined the nature of Christ, a question that had led to religious divisions and disputes well before even the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea in 325. The Fourth Ecumenical Council decided that Christ had two distinct natures and wills, one human and one divine, perfectly united in hypostasis with neither being superior or inferior. This decision was central to Chalcedonian Christianity.²² Naturally, any position that differed was deemed heretical. This decision provoked much resentment in the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire where many locals believed in the Christological position of Monophysitism. Monophysite constituencies believed that Christ has one nature in which divinity and humanity are perfectly united. Among these dissenting people were the Armenians. The Armenians recognized the Third Ecumenical Council at Ephesus as the last legitimate one, but did not recognize the Council of Chalcedon or any succeeding councils that are considered ecumenical in the Orthodox tradition. They did not recognize the Fourth Ecumenical Council because they disagreed with the Chalcedonian definition of Christ's nature and also because Armenians had not participated in the Council.²³ The Armenians first officially rejected the Fourth Ecumenical Council at the First Council of Dvin in 506.²⁴

The second major issue was the autonomy of the Armenian Church. Armenia was the first Christian kingdom in the world due to St. Gregory the Illuminator converting King Trdat III (r. 287-c.330) in 301.

²² Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant sects, among others, follow the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon. There are still churches that do not follow the Council's decisions, however, such as the Armenian Apostolic and Coptic Orthodox Churches.

²³ No Armenian delegates were present at the Council due to a national disaster at the Battle of Avarayr, which happened just a few weeks before the council met, where many leading Armenians had been slain by the Sassanid Persian army. Vahan M. Kurkjian, *A History of Armenia* (New York: Armenian General Benevolent Union, 1958), 276.

²⁴ Krikor Maksoudian, trans., *Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i's History of Armenia* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), XVI.10.

St. Gregory himself was the source of contention for this second issue. Leontios, Archbishop of Caesarea, had consecrated St. Gregory, and the Byzantines believed that this made him and those that he converted beholden to the diocese of the Archbishop of Caesarea.²⁵ The Armenians argued that although St. Gregory had converted their king, the tradition of Armenian Christianity was actually much older, beginning with the conversions of the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew back in the few decades after the death of Christ. In their eyes, this apostolic origin gave them an inviolable right to an autonomous church, since their church was in fact created by some of the first Christian missionaries who ventured outside of Palestine. Another point, made by the seventh-century Armenian historian Sebeos, is that Jesus taught the apostles; therefore, it is perfectly fine that St. Gregory was taught in Caesarea, as education is an essential, not subservient, part of Christianity.²⁶

For the Armenians, preserving the autonomy of their ethnic church was also tied to the preservation of their political autonomy and ethnic identity. To the Byzantines, it was important to have the Armenian Church recognize the superiority of the Archbishopric of Caesarea so that the Armenian Christians would technically be under the influence of the Byzantine Empire. When the Armenians were under Persian or Arab rule, they were allowed greater leeway in their ecclesiastical administration due to the non-Christian nature of the two peoples as well as their desire to have Armenian support against the Byzantines. Naturally, the Armenian Church was given full support by the independent Armenian states of the ninth, tenth, and early eleventh centuries. Although the autonomy of the Armenian Church had always been a contentious subject between the Byzantines and Armenians, it was especially problematic during the periods of Byzantine rule over Armenia in the eleventh century. Since Byzantium now ruled most of Armenia, it directly enforced policies to reduce the autonomy of the Armenian Church. This in turn contributed to religious tensions bubbling to the surface and the subsequent failure of Byzantium in the east.

²⁵ John Deno Geanakoplos, *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen through Contemporary Eyes* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984), 63-64. In this excerpt from the *Notitia Dignitatum*, Armenia is listed under the political and military authority of the Diocese of Pontus, which also included Caesarea.

²⁶ Thomson, *Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*, 114-132.

Names and Religion: Assimilation as a Solution?

Some Armenians decided to become more assimilated into Byzantine culture in hopes of neutralizing Byzantine hostility against them. This manifested itself primarily in two ways: naming and conversion. Ambitious Armenians began to change their names to ones that sounded more Greek and would, therefore, be more familiar and seem more Byzantine to the Greek majority. This took two forms: some Armenian families began to give their children Greek names instead of traditional Armenian ones while other gave their children Greek renderings of Armenian ones. Nina Garsoïan notes that the former princes of Taron, who became Byzantine nobility, began to use Greek names such as Romanos, Theophlaktos, and Michael in the tenth century instead of traditional Armenian names such as Bagrat, Ashot, and Grigor.²⁷ All of the Byzantine emperors of Armenian origin had Greek names. Emperor Philippikos Bardanes (r. 711-713) most likely specifically changed his name from the Armenian Bardanes to Philippikos to avoid popular outrage against an emperor whose name sounded foreign.²⁸ There may have also been a tradition of holding a private Armenian name and a public Hellenized one during this period. Stylianos Zaoutzes, the minister and father-in-law of Emperor Leo VI (r. 886-912), had two names, the Armenian name Zaoutzes and the Greek name Stylianos.²⁹ Mezezius Gnuni and Artavasdos, two rebels who briefly claimed the imperial throne in the mid-seventh and mid-eight

²⁷ Nina Garsoïan, "The Problem of Armenian Integration into the Byzantine Empire," in *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Hélène Ahrweiler and Angeliki E. Laiou (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998), 97-99.

²⁸ In modern scholarship we refer to him as Philippikos Bardanes, even though he was most likely only officially known by one name at any given time. It is the same case for Emperor Tiberius III Apsimar (r. 698-705), who changed his name Apsimar to Tiberius. Mango, *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, AM 6203. On the theory of the name change, see Judith Herrin, *Margins and Metropolis: Authority Across the Byzantine Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 181. See also Mikaël Nichanian, "Byzantine Emperor Philippikos-Vardanes: Monothelite Policy and Caucasian Diplomacy," in *Armenian Constantinople*, ed. Richard Hovannisian and Simon Pavaslian (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2010), 40-41.

²⁹ Patricia Karlin-Hayter, *Vita Euthymii Patriarchae CP* (Bruxelles: Editions de Byzantion, 1970), 4, 5.

centuries respectively, were rare exceptions of high-profile Armenians who did not change their names to more Hellenized ones.

Artavasdos and Mezezius, however, were without a doubt Orthodox Christians. The other route the Armenians took to fit into Byzantine society was adopting Chalcedonian Christianity. These converted Armenians became known as *Tzatoi*. The first recorded signs of this conversion are in the seventh century, but cases certainly existed earlier. Isaac, an early seventh-century Exarch of Ravenna, boasts about his Armenian ethnicity on his sarcophagus, but he is buried in the Catholic [Orthodox] Church of San Vitale.³⁰ In addition, one of the requirements to be a Byzantine emperor, given that he was God's representative on earth, was that he was Orthodox. Therefore, all of the emperors were undoubtedly Orthodox as well, regardless of their ancestors' religion.

Many Armenians adopted one or both of these options during the seventh through tenth centuries to better integrate themselves into Byzantine culture and to reduce or dissipate the resentment and hostility that existed against them; however, many still clung to their Armenian heritage. Nina Garsoïan proposed that the name shift was usually associated with those that maintained their Armenian faith, pointing to the importance of preserving religious identity and the relative ease of changing one's name to fit into Byzantine society.³¹ Even when Armenians took these steps, however, it was often not enough to reduce hostility. For example, in the eleventh century even the Patriarch of Antioch heard that some Byzantines still attacked the *Tzatoi*, slandering and rejecting them as unorthodox.³² Of course their fellow Armenians also rejected the *Tzatoi* as traitors, so the *Tzatoi* did not fit into either Byzantine nor Armenian society. The number of religious converts remained rather small, and the name shift was a more common and easier way to become more Hellenized.

³⁰ For the study on this sarcophagus, see Salvatore Cosentino, 'L'Iscrizione ravennate dell'Esarco Isacio e le guerre de Rotari', *Atti e Memorie Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Antiche Procincie Modenesi*, Serie 11, 15 (1993): 23-44.

³¹ Garsoïan, "Problem of Armenian Integration," 98-99.

³² *Ibid.*, 106. Garsoïan includes an English and Greek translation of pertinent passages on Byzantine local relations with the *Tzatoi* from the 1911 Russian edition of the *Taktikon* of Nikon of the Black Mountain.

While ethnic and religious tensions existed among the people, the Byzantine government itself did not actively encourage such tensions. In fact, the Armenian royalty who visited the Byzantine court during the ninth and tenth centuries were welcomed with lavish receptions. In *De Ceremoniis*, a treatise on Byzantine court ceremonials by Emperor Constantine VII (r. 913-959), the Armenian princes were given a middle-grade status in regards to the hierarchy of Byzantium's neighbors.³³ Despite these good relations during the ninth and tenth centuries, however, ethnic tensions still existed. Hostility from Byzantine society had driven Armenians so far apart that some chose assimilation as the best option to try and get along with their neighbors and not stand out in Byzantine society as a non-Byzantine foreign element. Byzantines and even the Armenians themselves viewed ethnic Armenians as an alien element in Byzantine society. But without influential leaders of their own inside Byzantium, some Armenians tried to assimilate to improve their status inside this foreign empire.

Armenia is Annexed and the Strom Grows

The delicate balance of ethnic tensions between the Armenian minority and the rest of the Byzantine population was destroyed by the Byzantine annexation of most of the independent Armenian states during the period from 966 to 1071 and subsequent assimilation-driven Byzantine domestic policies. A more aggressive Byzantine policy against Armenia, which had existed since the Byzantine annexation of Taron in 966,³⁴ accelerated at the start of the eleventh century. The annexation of Taron had been part of Byzantium taking advantage of local situations and exploiting them when possible but certainly not actively seeking the absorption of Armenia. But regardless of intent, the annexation had the same effect on Byzantine-Armenian relations. The weakening of the Armenian states, and the presentation of many opportunities for the Byzantines to exploit them in the eleventh century,

³³ Constantine Porphyrogenetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, trans. Ann Moffatt and Maxeme Tall (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2012), 686-692. See the entirety of Book II, Chapter 48 for how the Byzantines addressed and honored different foreign leaders.

³⁴ John Harper Forsyth, *The Byzantine-Arab Chronicle (938-1034) of Yahya b. Sa'id Al-Antaki* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1977), 375, 377

led to a series of Byzantine moves that together constituted a string of annexations of Armenia begun under Basil II (r. 976-1025) and carried to completion by his successors. The infighting of the *nakharars* and Armenian dynasties, a constant theme in medieval Armenia,³⁵ had torn Greater Armenia apart, to the benefit of the Byzantines, who capitalized on the division and weakness. By 1022 Basil II had annexed the Georgian-Armenian state of Tao (also known as Tayk').³⁶ It set the tone for the rest of the century.

In 1021, King Sennacherib-John of Vaspurakan (r. 1003-1021) opened communications with Basil, offering him his exposed Armenian kingdom in exchange for a safer estate near the Cappadocian city of Sebastia.³⁷ In the case of Vaspurakan, no contemporary source mentions Byzantine aggression as the cause of this annexation. In fact, sources show Basil II as a savior, coming to protect his fellow Christians and their lands from the deadly Turks.³⁸ While this was the exception for the eleventh century, it led to the same result: large-scale Armenian immigration further into Byzantium and Byzantine dominance of the old Armenian heartland. Meanwhile Basil II had already moved troops to Vaspurakan before Sennacherib-John's offer and he quickly reduced Vaspurakan to a theme. It was usually governed by a non-Armenian στρατηγός, or military governor,³⁹ and as the third Byzantine theme in

³⁵ Sergio La Porta, "Re-Constructing Armenia: Strategies of Co-Existence amongst Christians and Muslims in the Thirteenth Century," in *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures, and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, ed. Barbara Crostini (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2013), 252.

³⁶ Bedrosian, Robert Bedrosian, trans., *Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History* (New York: Sources of the Armenian Tradition, 1985), 14-15.

³⁷ Sebastia is the present-day city of Sivas, Turkey. Forsyth, *Byzantine-Arab Chronicle*, 565. Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, trans. Ara Edmond Dosturian (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993), 45. Bedrosian, *Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History*, 12. Cf. S. Peter Cowe, "Armenian Immigration to the Sebastia Region, Tenth-Eleventh Centuries," *Armenian Sebastia/Sivas and Lesser Armenia* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2004), 119. Although he has the process correct Cowe is mistaken on one detail surrounding the end of Vaspurakan, claiming that King Sennacherib-John's son, David, offered the kingdom to Byzantium even though there is no record of this in any primary source.

³⁸ Forsyth, *Byzantine-Arab Chronicle*, 573. Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 45.

³⁹ Στρατηγός (strategos) literally means army leader. In the middle Byzantine Empire it referred to a military governor of a theme, or territorial unit.

the region, after Taron and Iberia, it helped to encircle the remaining Armenian states.

Basil II also became involved in the affairs of Greater Armenia, the largest Armenian state, when King John-Smbat (r. 1020-1040) offered to leave his kingdom to the Byzantine Empire in his will in exchange for Byzantine political support.⁴⁰ On John-Smbat's death in 1040, the Byzantines eagerly raised the question of what became known as the Trebizond Will.⁴¹ The Armenians refused to honor the will and declared Gagik II (r. 1042-1045) the new king of Greater Armenia. For the next five years Gagik managed to hold Byzantine forces at bay before succumbing to deceit. In comparison to Basil II's benevolent takeover of Vaspurakan, Constantine IX Monomachos's (r. 1042-1055) conquest of Ani is described as despicable by Armenian chroniclers, having been achieved "perfidiously and by false-oath."⁴² In 1045, the Byzantines convinced Gagik, with a sacred oath on the cross, that he would be granted safe passage and given a document granting Armenia to him and his descendants in perpetuity. After Gagik arrived in Constantinople, Emperor Constantine IX, in cahoots with some *nakharars*, demanded that Gagik give him Ani in exchange for land in Cappadocia.⁴³ Without their king, the Armenians quickly surrendered,⁴⁴ and Byzantine forces entered the Greater Armenian capital of Ani.⁴⁵ Emperor Constantine compensated Gagik with land in the central Byzantine region of Cappadocia while the former Armenian kingdom was melded with the Theme of Iberia into a new, larger theme and was placed under the control of a typically non-Armenian Byzantine στρατηγός.

The loss of the largest Armenian kingdom also accelerated the loss of the smaller ones since they were now crushed between a large Byzantine frontier and the ever-encroaching Seljuk Turks to the east. Grigor Pahlawuni, a leading Armenian intellectual and minor lord, was

⁴⁰ Bedrosian, *Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History*, 11. Forsyth, *Byzantine-Arab Chronicle*, 565, 580.

⁴¹ Robert Thomson, trans., "The Historical Compilation of Vardan Arewelc'i," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989), 193.55.

⁴² Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 76.

⁴³ Bedrosian, *Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History*, 24. Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), 253.

⁴⁴ Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 63.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

one of the first to cede his territory to Byzantium. With the loss of Ani, Grigor gave up his lands in exchange for safer territory further to the west in the former state of Taron.⁴⁶ One of the last independent Armenian lords, Gagik-Abas II of Kars, briefly submitted to the Seljuk sultan, but he then abandoned Kars to the Byzantines after the Seljuk Turks took Ani, deeming the situation hopeless if only the Armenians defended Kars.⁴⁷ At the start of the eleventh century, there had been six independent Armenian states, not including the previously annexed state of Taron, and now only the two smallest, Lori-Tašir and Siwnik'-Balk', remained.⁴⁸

Decline in Armenian Status

In addition to the annexation of most of Armenia, the eleventh century also witnessed the decline in status of the Armenian minority inside the Byzantine Empire, marked by a precipitous decrease in the number of Armenians in high positions. Some Armenians still served in the Byzantine administration, and they were even given official Byzantine recognition and titles for their services.⁴⁹ Overall, however, there was a massive drop in the number of important Armenians in the Byzantine government and even the military, previously the hallmark of their influence, during the eleventh century, despite the influx of thousands more Armenians into the Byzantine Empire.⁵⁰ The dismissal of the local Armenian militia in Armenia by Constantine IX in 1055 is the closest exact year we have for a decline in the Armenian presence in the Byzantine military, which led to a sharp drop-off in the utilization and recruitment of Armenians in the Byzantine army. This decline,

⁴⁶ Bedrosian, *Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History*, 24-25.

⁴⁷ Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 103-104. Thomson, "Historical Compilation of Vardan Arewelc'i," 195.58.

⁴⁸ Bedrosian, *Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History*, 39. On the domestic situation in Armenia after the Byzantine Conquests, see Nina Garsoïan, "Byzantine Annexation of the Armenian Kingdoms in the Eleventh Century," in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times* 1, ed. Richard Hovannisian (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 192.

⁴⁹ The most obvious example is that of Gregory, whose commonly recognized name of Gregory Magistros came from his official Byzantine title, magistros, which was a high-ranking dignity.

⁵⁰ Kazhdan, "Armenians in the Byzantine Ruling Class," 448.

however, was present throughout the eleventh century. Armenian troops still existed in the Byzantine army,⁵¹ but they were not as prevalent as they had been before, and Constantine's dismissal of local Armenian troops was part of a general transformation of the army from locally recruited forces such as Armenians to mercenaries. There were still important ethnically Armenian generals, such as Leo Tornikios and Katakalon Kekaumenos, but their importance and number had greatly fallen in comparison to previous centuries. Imperial policy and circumstances worked against the Armenian military establishment. There was no organized Byzantine campaign against the Armenian presence in the military; instead a host of circumstances merely acted against the status quo that had privileged Armenians for centuries. The loss of all of Armenia and most of Anatolia, those Byzantine regions that were most populated by Armenians, to the Seljuks following the Battle of Mantzikert in 1071 was the final nail in the coffin of the Armenian presence in the Byzantine military. Although a token presence would continue to exist for a few decades, the Armenian element no longer held the power or influence it once had.

Not a Trickle But a Flood

With the Byzantine conquests in the eleventh century, the system of settlement by Armenians inside the Byzantine Empire rapidly changed during the eleventh century. The absorption of the Armenian states by the Byzantines led to a massive increase in the empire's Armenian population. Not only did Byzantium annex land populated by Armenians, a massive number of Armenians also moved westward into central Anatolia. The resettlement of the former royal families such as the Bagratids and Artsrunis in Cappadocia greatly strengthened the Armenian demographic character in the region, creating a strong concentration of Armenians that perhaps even constituted a majority over the local Greeks. Most of the ex-princes of Armenia settled in Anatolia, bringing with them massive retinues. Sennacherib-John, ex-prince of Vaspurakan, for example, had brought 14,000 followers with him to Sebastia, in Byzantine Cappadocia.⁵² Although he was no longer their sovereign, his people still looked to him as their leader and

⁵¹ Attaleiates, *The History*, 17.7, 20.14.

⁵² Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 45-46.

journeyed with him to Sebastia. Another large exodus occurred after the fall of Ani, capital of Greater Armenia, when many Armenians followed their deposed king, Gagik II, to exile in Cappadocia.⁵³ The advance of the Seljuk Turks caused a massive flight of the Armenians further into the Byzantine Empire, where they could be beyond the reach of the dangerous Seljuk horsemen. The Byzantines now faced large numbers of foreigners, many of them resentful towards the Byzantine Empire, settling on their land under their former princes and kings to which they still showed signs of loyalty. All of these factors contributed to the Byzantine failure to assimilate the Armenians as they had with previous smaller groups of immigrants.

Byzantine Failure to Integrate Armenians

The Byzantines attempted to integrate the Armenians in Cappadocia into mainstream Byzantine society through regularization and homogenization in order to counter centrifugal forces on recent immigrants and increase central control. Unlike the previous Armenian populations, however, these people came in too large of numbers to gradually be Hellenized, and the presence of their own leaders undermined respect for and obedience to the Byzantine emperor. The ex-Armenian princes were still treated with importance by the Byzantines, who gave them titles such as patrician and even στρατηγός.⁵⁴ These ex-princes, unlike lesser Armenian aristocrats of previous eras, stayed in the east, not moving to Constantinople or its vicinity.⁵⁵ They also intermarried, not marrying into the Byzantine nobility or imperial house.⁵⁶ Their lands naturally formed centers of hostility inside the Byzantine Empire, as they maintained their religion, ethnic identity, and resentment against the Byzantine occupation of their homeland.

⁵³ Bedrosian, *Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History*, 22.

⁵⁴ For more information, see Garsoïan, "Problem of Armenian Integration," 111-116. The title of patrician was a Byzantine honorific title that stretched back to the days of the old Roman Empire. Στρατηγός (strategos) was the title for a Byzantine military governor.

⁵⁵ For more information, see Gérard Dédéyan, "The Founding and Coalescence of the Rubenian Principality, 1073-1129," in *Armenian Cilicia*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2008), 81-82.

⁵⁶ For more information, see Garsoïan, "Problem of Armenian Integration," 111-116.

The movement of Armenians out of Armenia and into more central regions of the Byzantine Empire complicated the already delicate socio-ethnic composition of the region and led to new tensions, especially over ecclesiastical differences. The Byzantines now had a large, complex Monophysite constituency inside its borders for the first time since the Muslim conquests back in the mid-seventh century. In response, the Byzantines tried to force the Armenians to adhere to Chalcedonian beliefs and to Byzantine culture. The period from 1025 to 1071 was the most oppressive period for Armenians in the Byzantine Empire. This was exemplified by a scene recorded by Matthew of Edessa, in which two princes from Vaspurakan, Atom and Abusahl, wept at the tomb of Basil II during the reign of Michael IV (r. 1034-1041), bemoaning the plight of the Armenians due to assimilationist Byzantine policies that had begun in the years after Basil's death.⁵⁷ After obtaining Greater Armenia, Constantine IX instituted a policy of religious persecution that Constantine X Doukas (r. 1059-1067) continued. The strong enmity between the Greeks and Armenians increased greatly due to this persecution, also negatively affecting local Armenian support for the Byzantines. Byzantine emperors appointed several unpopular officials in Armenia during this period. The local governor of Armenia under Constantine VIII (r. 1025-1028) expelled Armenians from their patrimonies in Armenia and moved them to other lands inside the empire.⁵⁸ Eleventh-century Armenian historian Aristakes Lastivertci referred to Constantine IX's appointees as "filthy" and complained that Constantine squandered Armenian tax money on whores and harlots.⁵⁹ Constantine IX forcibly detained the last king of Greater Armenia, Gagik II, and later Catholicos Petros of Armenia (r. 1019-1058), not allowing them to return to Armenia.⁶⁰ The Byzantines held Petros' successor, Khachik II (r. 1058-1065), in Constantinople for several years as well, trying to abolish the leading Armenian ecclesiastical position of Catholicos of All Armenians.

In many ways, the Byzantines had come to see the Armenians more as foreigners than merely a distinct element in their cosmopolitan empire. While in previous centuries the Armenians had been seen as

⁵⁷ Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 65.

⁵⁸ Bedrosian, *Aristakes Lastivertci's History*, 16.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

different from the Byzantine majority, one major factor had changed. In the ninth century many Armenians wanted to integrate themselves into Byzantine society or were smaller groups of Settlers in the mid-eleventh century. However, there was no longer much desire on the part of large body of immigrant Armenians' to assimilate. The Armenians who lived in Armenia had now been separated from the Byzantine Empire for centuries, and they were strangers to Byzantine culture. They had immigrated into the empire in large numbers or had their kingdoms annexed, and they constituted a religious minority. The Byzantine state and church meanwhile tried to pressure the Armenian population to convert to Orthodoxy.

Armenian alienation in Byzantine society had reached its climax. Perhaps the best-known example is that of Mark, the Metropolitan of Caesarea, treating the Armenians in his diocese with disdain. He even named his dog Armen, like the word Armenian, and treated this as a long-standing snub against the Armenian people.⁶¹ This treatment was only made worse by the fact that the Byzantines considered all of Armenia under the diocese of Caesarea, making Mark at least their nominal spiritual leader, despite the fact that the Armenian Church did not agree with the Byzantines on this point. With this and the large amount of Armenians that had moved to surrounding Cappadocia during the eleventh century, most of Mark's diocese was Armenian. One day Gagik II, former Armenian king, attended a banquet at the residence of Mark and asked him why his dog was named Armen. Mark replied that the dog was soldier-like, relating to the Byzantine view of Armenians as good soldiers. Gagik became outraged, having known how Mark treated Armenians, and threw Mark in a bag with Armen. He then beat the bag, causing the dog to go mad and bite Mark, ripping his flesh to shreds. The example of Mark and Armen is emblematic of the disastrous flare-ups of ethnic and religious tension triggered by the Byzantine annexations of the Armenian states and just how far things had fallen.

The End of an Era

As a minority in Byzantine society, the Armenians managed to do very well, even becoming great generals and emperors. The vast

⁶¹ Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 122-123.

majority of those Armenians who rose so high were *Tzatoi*, but this still shows that every level of Byzantine society was open to ethnic Armenians. Although many Armenians began to assimilate into Byzantine society, there was still a sense of the Armenians as a foreign element in Byzantium. In the words of Nina Garsoïan, they “remained alien and alienated – incorporated but not assimilated.”⁶² The Byzantines ultimately failed to completely absorb the Armenians due to their differences in ethnicity, religion, and historical background. These tensions had always existed, but Byzantium’s annexation of the independent Armenian states from 966 to 1071 pushed these tensions over the edge. A large, mostly hostile population of Armenians with little interest in assimilating migrated right into the center of the Byzantine Empire and Byzantine attempts to assimilate them into their empire only served to persecute their beliefs and further inflame pre-existing ethnic and religious tensions.

By undermining one of their most prominent and powerful minorities, the Byzantine Empire weakened itself. Without much Armenian support, the Byzantine army was crushed by the Seljuk Turks in 1071 at the Battle of Mantzikert. From there, Byzantium lost most of Anatolia and embarked on a long, four-century road of political and military decline.

⁶² Garsoïan, “Problem of Armenian Integration,” 124.

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THE SYLVIA LIKENS CASE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF CHILD ABUSE IN AMERICA

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A full courtroom watched in silence as the next witness approached the stand, appearing fatigued and distraught. It was 10:55 in the morning on May 10, 1966,¹ and defense attorney William Erbecker was attempting his argument again, an argument that had received little success in previous cross-examinations. After all, he was defending the perpetrator of what policemen, detectives, and the prosecution had dubbed “the worst crime in the state of Indiana.”² As his witness turned to face her audience, the public strained their necks to finally see the woman; most had examined her face in the local newspapers before, her solemn, empty eyes in a recent mug shot crying for help from the black-and-white pages, but this viewing was different. The suspected mastermind of the state’s worst crime had been called to the stand, and the audience of Criminal Court Division Two now had the opportunity to listen to her first-hand account and revel in her presence. Slightly shivering under her blue sleeveless sweater, the witness resembled a skeleton.³ Weighing only eighty-nine pounds⁴ at thirty-seven years old, with sunken cheeks and jaded eyes, her features were understandably haunting to those who encountered her. Erbecker began his questioning: “Please speak loudly so the last juror can hear you. State your name.”⁵ An asthmatic, the ghostly figure heaved to answer the command, but what emerged was a soft, weak voice: “Gertrude Baniszewski,” came

¹ John Dean, *House of Evil: The Indiana Torture Slaying* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2008), 171.

² “Indiana’s Shocking Torture Murder of A Teenage Girl,” *Master Detective*, September 1966, 50, accessed August 5, 2016, http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/gallery/image_page.php?album_id=15&image_id=216.

³ John Dean, *House of Evil*, 173.

⁴ “Woman Anticipates New Trial,” *The Indianapolis News*, September 2, 1970.

⁵ *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

the reply.^{6 7} Little did Gertrude or even the rest of the courtroom know that later her name would shock a man she sang for on a trip to church with her Bible class from prison, or that more than 10,000 concerned citizens would sign a petition against her parole, or that her story would be featured in numerous serial killer and “women in crime” encyclopedias across the globe.^{8 9} The utter hatred for this woman and her family would prove to be a common sentiment for Indianapolis citizens and people who were familiar with the crime, for not only had she viciously participated in the murder and brutal torture of a child, but she also had the audacity to deny it.

Gertrude’s story was just one part of the sensational crime that was the Likens case. Unbelievable and terrifying, the crime shocked Indianapolis in the 1960s; it told the story of sixteen-year old Sylvia Likens, who was tortured and murdered while staying in the home of Gertrude Baniszewski and her seven children.¹⁰ Her murder brought awareness to child abuse in Indiana and served as inspiration to many books, plays, and movies.¹¹ Sylvia’s story especially inspired feminist Kate Millett, who wrote a book on the crime and even created an accompanying exhibit that was on display during a New York City art show in 1978.^{12 13} The story also inspired two movies, both of which were released in 2007. The more famous of the two, *An American Crime*, featured Ellen Page as Sylvia Likens and Catherine Keener as

⁶ John Dean, *House of Evil*, 172

⁷ *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

⁸ “No Parole For Gertrude Yet,” *The Indianapolis News*, August 6, 1976.

⁹ “Reasons Why Gertrude Was Released on Parole,” *The Indianapolis Star*, September 22, 1985.

¹⁰ John Dean, *House of Evil*, back cover.

¹¹ Jake Thompson, “Likens’ Tragic Death Leaves Legacy in Child Abuse Laws,” *The Flyer Group*, October 16, 2015, accessed May 10, 2016, http://www.flyergroup.com/news/local_news/likens-tragic-death-leaves-legacy-in-child-abuse-laws/article_18716b20-b967-50e8-9f2c-1a4d4e1bdf4f.html.

¹² Kate Millett, *The Basement: Meditations on a Human Sacrifice*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979).

¹³ “Relive Slaying of Sylvia Likens,” *The Indianapolis Star*, February 19, 1978.

Gertrude Baniszewski.^{14 15} The memory of Sylvia and the crime is further preserved in an online forum, where hundreds share their thoughts and questions about the case.¹⁶ Yet Sylvia's notoriety would be inexistent without the reports of the press, who covered the crime and its trial from 1965 to 1966. In a time when child abuse was rarely discussed or even prosecuted, the press involved in Sylvia's case undertook a difficult task in reporting the graphic details of Sylvia's abuse. Her case was one of the first to feature graphic accounts of physical child abuse in the media.¹⁷ Since this coverage was so significant to child abuse awareness, it is important to analyze how the information of the case was reported. In doing so, this paper will argue that the press, while openly discussing graphic physical abuse, seldom discussed the sexual abuse Sylvia faced, that it emphasized and exaggerated the community's failure in helping Sylvia, and that it was fascinated with the perpetrator of the crime, Gertrude, due to her status as both a woman and a mother. Through these patterns of reporting, the Likens case played a significant role in shaping media discussion of physical child abuse and of community responsibility.

The Crime

Lester Likens was confused and concerned. Arriving in Indianapolis from his home in the northern town of Lebanon with his son Danny, he realized that the house where his estranged wife and two daughters were living was vacant. In an effort to locate these family members, Lester and Danny began a search in the surrounding neighborhood streets. One neighbor informed Lester that she had seen his daughters enter the house of Mrs. Wright, a nearby neighbor, who

¹⁴ *An American Crime*, directed by Tommy O'Haver (2007; Los Angeles: First Look International), Medium.

¹⁵ Pat Broeske, "A Midwest Nightmare, Too Depraved to Ignore," *New York Times*, January 14, 2007, accessed October 10, 2016, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/848058055/32AA9938CFA2449CPQ/1?accountid=9940>.

¹⁶ SylviaLikens.com, accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/>.

¹⁷ "Lisa Pasko, "Damaged Daughters: The History of Girls' Sexuality and the Justice System," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 100 (2010): 1110.

resided at 3850 East New York Street.¹⁸ Hurriedly thanking the neighbor, Danny and Lester approached the duplex home. They intended to take the girls and leave to find Mrs. Likens. While standing outside the duplex, young Shirley Baniszewski noticed them in the shadows outside of her home. Alarmed, she alerted the others, but fifteen-year-old Jenny Likens recognized the men as her brother and father. She opened the door, inviting both of them to come in. Lester instead told her and her sister, sixteen-year old Sylvia, to join him on the porch. He ordered the girls to get ready, for he was taking them back to Lebanon. Before his daughters could adhere to these orders, the front door cracked open and Mrs. Gertrude Wright, formerly known as Gertrude Baniszewski, stepped out onto the porch. She had recently been awoken by the sound of male voices outside of her home and she insisted that the men come inside and have something to eat. Recognizing their weariness, Gertrude also prodded Lester and Danny to stay the night, and they agreed.

As he and his son were settling down for bed, Lester told Gertrude of his plans to reunite with his wife and to persuade her in joining his desire to run a concession stand that would travel to various Indiana county fairs over the following summer months.¹⁹ Although he wanted the girls to stay with their grandmother in Lebanon, he had realized that this would be a terrible burden to place upon his elderly mother.²⁰ According to Lester's later testimony, Gertrude immediately offered to take care of the girls herself. Desperation gleaming in her eyes, she suggested that Sylvia and Jenny stay with her for twenty dollars a week while Lester and his wife worked with the carnival.²¹ Lester evidently did not notice Gertrude's poverty or that she already had seven children of her own, for he accepted her offer on the condition that he would need his wife's approval. Sylvia, Jenny, and the Baniszewski children, newly acquainted that day, were excited at the prospect of living together for the next few months. The following morning, Lester finally located his wife at her mother's home. Telling

¹⁸ *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016,

<http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

¹⁹ John Dean, *House of Evil*, 18-19.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 20.

²¹ *Ibid*, 19.

his wife of his plan, they both arrived at the Baniszewski household to agree to the terms set by Gertrude. Handing Gertrude twenty dollars in advance, Lester commented, “You’ll have to take care of these girls with a firm hand, because their mother has let them do as they please.” Then the two of them departed. He and Mrs. Likens had only seen the living room.²²

Settling into a new environment, both Sylvia and Jenny initially enjoyed the constant companionship in the Baniszewski home. Sylvia, a pretty, quiet, and likable girl, especially enjoyed it, eagerly assisting with the housework in the summer months of 1965, and additionally encouraging the polio-stricken Jenny to join her and the elder Baniszewski girls on walks around the neighborhood.²³ The beginning of Sylvia’s torture and subsequent death remains a mystery to all who study her case.

Sylvia’s sister, Jenny, would later state that Gertrude merely “didn’t like Sylvia.”²⁴ Others discuss more complicated motives, claiming that Sylvia launched her own attack on the Baniszewski family first by calling Gertrude a “bad name” and by spreading rumors about the two eldest Baniszewski daughters, Paula and Stephanie. Many believe that Paula and Gertrude were simply envious of the slender and attractive Sylvia, while Paula’s attorney George Rice views the incident as something that began as a game for the bored Gertrude and her brood.²⁵ Feminist Kate Millett, in her book *The Basement*, also comments on the reason behind the crime, stating that Gertrude’s torture aimed to teach Sylvia about life as a young woman.²⁶ Whatever the Baniszewskis’ true motivation was, it remains apparent that their hatred for young Sylvia Likens escalated into a strange and terrible abuse.

Gertrude’s first act of violence occurred when Lester Likens’s twenty-dollar check for the week was late. Both Sylvia and Jenny were forced to lay on an upstairs bed naked, while Gertrude slammed a wooden paddle into their bare buttocks. Soon, Gertrude focused all her

²² John Dean, *House of Evil*, 19-20.

²³ *Ibid.*, 21-22.

²⁴ “Mom of 7, Boy Held in Torture Death of Girl,” *The Indianapolis Star*, October 27, 1965.

²⁵ Linda Graham Caleca, “House of Torture,” *The Indianapolis Star*, September 15, 1985, 1.

²⁶ Kate Millett, *The Basement*, 47.

attention on Sylvia, paddling her for irrational and unexplainable reasons, such as eating too much at a church function. Yet Gertrude wielding a wooden paddle was simply the beginning.²⁷

When Sylvia mentioned having a boyfriend in California, Gertrude kicked her in her genitals. Eventually Gertrude's methods of punishment crossed from whippings and beatings to pure and evident torture as October approached. Enlisting the help of both her children and the neighborhood teenagers, Gertrude authorized and encouraged a siege on the Likens child. With Gertrude's support, kids flocked to the Baniszewski house just to torment Sylvia. Frequently the teenagers practiced judo on the young girl, flipping and ramming her into walls and floors. They also joined Gertrude in kicking her and burning hot cigarettes on various areas of her skin, laughing at the pain Sylvia endured. One day, they laughed with horrible cruelty as Gertrude demanded that Sylvia strip naked and insert a glass coke bottle into her vagina. When Sylvia's dignity had finally crumbled and her abuse had ended for the day, Gertrude and her collection of followers often flung her into a bath of scalding water, watching without remorse as she scrambled and screamed in hopes of escaping the burning bath.²⁸

While the baths continued, Sylvia was subjected to a new kind of escalated punishment when she wet the bed one night. Deciding that her boarder was no longer capable of living with the others, Gertrude locked her in the cellar with the family dog. Given only rags to sleep on, crackers to eat, and minimal water to drink, Sylvia's health quickly deteriorated. The last—and longest—weekend of her life began when Gertrude hissed, "You've branded my daughters; now I am going to brand you." With needle in hand and kids gathered around, Gertrude began etching on Sylvia's bare stomach. Sickened by the thought of going any further, Gertrude appointed fourteen-year old Ricky Hobbs, a neighbor, as her successor. Slapping Sylvia each time she cringed, Ricky was finally able to finish his work of art. There, eerily scratched on her small abdomen, were the words, "I'm a prostitute and proud of it." Empowered by his new role, Ricky began heating a hook-end of an anchor bolt, intending to also brand Sylvia's chest with an "S." Instead,

²⁷ Linda Graham Caleca, "House of Torture," 1.

²⁸ Linda Graham Caleca, "House of Torture," 3.

his completed marking appeared as a three. At this moment, Sylvia had quit pleading, had quit crying.²⁹ She knew that death was near.

On October 26, 1965, Sylvia was dying, and Stephanie, the elder Baniszewski daughter, knew it. According to Stephanie's later testimony, both she and Ricky removed the mumbling Sylvia from the basement and carried her upstairs to the bathroom on the evening of October 26th. Placing her in a tub of warm water, Stephanie attempted to save the girl's life, but her efforts were futile. A few moments later, Sylvia stopped breathing. Stephanie yelled for someone to call the police; when they arrived, Sylvia was pronounced dead.³⁰

After Sylvia's death, Gertrude angrily argued for her innocence, claiming that she was far too sick and tired to injure Sylvia.³¹ Her subsequent trial, however, proved otherwise. Tried with daughter Paula, son John, Ricky Hobbs, and another neighborhood boy, Coy Hubbard, the jury found Gertrude Baniszewski guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced her to life in prison.³² After only twenty years in prison,³³ however, Gertrude was released on parole for good behavior.³⁴ Five years later, she would succumb to lung cancer.³⁵ Her daughter, Paula Baniszewski, was found guilty of second-degree murder, receiving life imprisonment, while John Baniszewski, Coy Hubbard, and Richard Hobbs were all found guilty of manslaughter, receiving two to twenty-one years in prison.³⁶ All three boys were released on parole in 1968, serving the minimum sentence of two years.³⁷ In 1971, Paula decided to plead guilty to voluntary manslaughter in exchange for a two to twenty-one year sentence. After two more years in prison, she was released.³⁸

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

³¹ "Only Spanked Girl, Says Mrs. Wright," *The Indianapolis News*, November 1, 1965.

³² *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

³³ John Dean, *House of Evil*, 229.

³⁴ Linda Graham Caleca, "Sobbing Baniszewski Freed," *The Indianapolis Star*, December 4, 1985.

³⁵ John Dean, *House of Evil*, 230.

³⁶ Ibid, 221.

³⁷ Ibid, 229.

³⁸ Ibid, 229.

Sylvia's parents, Lester and Betty, were present during the trial and similar to daughter Jenny, served as witnesses for the prosecution. They eventually divorced in 1967.³⁹ Jenny Likens lived with Prosecutor Leroy New in the months following the trial before entering the Job Corps at age sixteen.^{40 41}

As for Sylvia, her story would continue to haunt all and would ultimately contribute to the growing public concern about child abuse in America. In an era when topics such as child abuse were not openly discussed, Sylvia's story would have remained untold without the courage of one institution—the press.

The Press

The Sylvia Likens case received extensive press coverage from both local and national sources. Apart from the two main newspapers in Indianapolis (*The Indianapolis Star* and *The Indianapolis News*), Sylvia's story also interested newspapers in New York and Washington, D.C. The story even interested a newspaper in Italy, which asked the Associated Press for daily coverage of the trial.⁴² Magazines such as *Time* and the *National Police Gazette* additionally devoted sensational articles to the crime and its trial.^{43 44} This national coverage is relatively limited, however, when compared to the intense attention that the local press gave to the Likens case. Almost immediately, local news sources were preoccupied with the crime and its trial. Detailed accounts of the case were reported so frequently that more students in a journalism class at an Indianapolis high school could identify Sylvia Likens than they could their own governor.⁴⁵ This publicity inevitably increased as the

³⁹ Ibid, 230.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 227.

⁴¹ Ibid, 230.

⁴² Ibid, 118.

⁴³ "Trials: Addenda to de Sade." *Time*. May 6, 1966, accessed August 5, 2016, http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/gallery/image_page.php?album_id=15&image_id=331&sk=t&sd=d&st=0.

⁴⁴ "The Teenage Torture Murder that Shocked Indianapolis," *National Police Gazette*, September 1966, accessed August 5, 2016, http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/gallery/image_page.php?album_id=15&image_id=333&sk=t&sd=d&st=0.

⁴⁵ John Dean, *House of Evil*, 119.

trial approached and newspapers and television stations alike scrambled to cover it.⁴⁶

As more gruesome and horrific details emerged about the case, the public became enthralled. Topics such as Sylvia's burnt flesh, ripped from her body as a result of scalding baths, were openly discussed in the newspapers.⁴⁷ Other gruesome topics included the carved words on Sylvia's stomach, which were mentioned in the first article ever written about the crime, the number of cigarette burns, and the way in which the Baniszewski and neighborhood kids rammed Sylvia against walls.^{48 49 50} "The victim might have suffered intense pain because her lower lip was chewed into shreds," *The Indianapolis News* also mentioned. "...her fingernails were broken upwards," another article from the *News* reported.^{51 52}

Unaccustomed to this graphic material, the Indianapolis and surrounding communities were drawn to the shocking reports of abuse. The 1960s had seen a wave of honesty and straightforwardness in media reports, especially with the onset of the Vietnam War. This honesty had been lacking in previous eras; child abuse reports were just one example, as witnessed in the cases of Dennis Jurgens from Minnesota, who died earlier in 1965, and Michele LeAnn Morgan from Illinois, who died in 1961.^{53 54} In both incidents, the mothers of Dennis and Michele tortured their children to death, using many methods that Gertrude implemented on Sylvia. These women, however, avoided conviction and thus media scrutiny. Afraid to charge mothers with murder, lawyers

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ "Courtroom Jammed As Torture Trial Opens." *The Indianapolis News*, April 27, 1966.

⁴⁸ "Find Girl's Body Slashed, Beaten." *The Indianapolis Star*, October 27, 1965.

⁴⁹ Mike Brooks, "150 Lesions On Sylvia Likens' Body Laid to Cigarette Burns." *The Indianapolis News*. April 29, 1966.

⁵⁰ "Dying Hours of Sylvia Described." *The Indianapolis News*, May 9, 1966.

⁵¹ "Sickening Likens Case Details Given," *The Indianapolis News*, April 30, 1966.

⁵² "Courtroom Jammed As Torture Trial Opens."

⁵³ "Minnesota Woman Found Guilty of Killing Her Adopted Son in 1965." *The New York Times*, May 31, 1987, accessed November 18, 2016,

<http://www.nytimes.com/1987/05/31/us/minnesota-woman-found-guilty-of-killing-adopted-son-in-1965.html>.

⁵⁴ "A Stepmother Faces Charges In 1961 Death." *The New York Times*, December 8, 1996, accessed November 18, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/08/us/a-stepmother-faces-charges-in-1961-death.html>.

decided against prosecution in both situations and the deaths were ruled accidental.⁵⁵ It would not be until 1986 and 1991 that Dennis's biological mother and Michele's brother would uncover the truth behind the two deaths and bring both crimes to the forefront in the media.^{56 57} In doing so, both Dennis and Michele's abusers were eventually convicted for crimes that were committed years before.⁵⁸ Sylvia's case, however, was tackled immediately, and was thus one of the first cases to demonstrate such graphic accounts of child abuse from news sources.⁵⁹ Therefore, it is important to consider the implications of the press coverage and the way in which the material was reported as the media handled a difficult topic for the first time. In tackling this difficult topic, the coverage of the Likens case ultimately demonstrated three main concepts: that an exaggerated emphasis was placed on the community's failure to help Sylvia, that while the newspapers reported on physical abuse, they rarely mentioned the sexual abuse Sylvia endured, and that the press was fascinated with perpetrator Gertrude Baniszewski, a mother and a woman.

In the aftermath of the crime, press coverage of the Likens case not only emphasized the community's failure to take action, but also misreported and exaggerated the number of neighbors that witnessed and heard Sylvia's abuse. Yet those covering the Likens case were not the first to emphasize and exaggerate the community's lack of involvement. Only a year and a half earlier, the press reporting on the Kitty Genovese case had done the same. Genovese, a twenty-eight year old bar manager, was stabbed to death when walking home late at night in a residential area. Thirty-eight people, all of whom neglected to call for help, had apparently witnessed the murder. As a result of this inaction, the press slandered and perhaps even exaggerated the witnesses' neglect without considering the actual perpetrator, Winston

⁵⁵ "A Stepmother Faces Charges In 1961 Death." and "Child Murder: The Town That Lived in Silence." *Los Angeles Times*, February 28, 1988, accessed November 18, 2016, http://articles.latimes.com/1988-02-28/news/mn-355_1_child-murder/8.

⁵⁶ "Minnesota Woman Found Guilty of Killing Her Adopted Son in 1965."

⁵⁷ "Minnesota Woman Found Guilty of Killing Her Adopted Son in 1965."

⁵⁸ "A Stepmother Faces Charges In 1961 Death." and "Child Murder: The Town That Lived in Silence."

⁵⁹ Lisa Pasko, "Damaged Daughters," 1110.

Moseley.⁶⁰ Coverage of the Likens case reiterated similar points and even took advantage of the anger that had developed throughout the Indianapolis community. By including opinion pieces that angrily questioned the community around the Baniszewski home, newspapers were able to fuel more anger from readers and thus develop an agenda that overemphasized the crimes of the community. One opinion piece in *The Indianapolis Star* included the title: “Didn’t anyone care?”⁶¹ Citing the Kitty Genovese case, the author of this piece questioned how such a horrific crime could have been allowed to happen when most of the Baniszewskis’ neighbors were well aware of the abuse. The author argued that “...this investigation should touch not only the principals involved but all who had anything to do with or knew about the case.”⁶² Another author echoed this thought, arguing that justice would never be served, even if Gertrude and her children were convicted. “Who will discuss the poor misguided society?”, the author angrily asks. This question argues that while Gertrude and her followers would be analyzed for years to come, the true criminals—Sylvia’s bystanders and a slowly deteriorating society—would be forgotten.⁶³

Since most of the anger following the discovery of the crime was directed towards the faults of the community, the press presented numerous articles that demonstrated these faults. In the aftermath of the crime, both local newspapers ran a series of reports that focused on the inaction of Sylvia’s neighbors. “Friends and neighbors said that Sylvia was treated like a slave,” an *Indianapolis Star* article claimed on October 28th, just two days after Sylvia’s murder.⁶⁴ *The Indianapolis News* followed suit, reporting that Sylvia “was treated like a slave,” and that the police were called “about eight times in the last month” to the Baniszewski home.⁶⁵ ⁶⁶ This report hints at the incompetency of the

⁶⁰ Larry Getlen, “Debunking the myth of Kitty Genovese,” *New York Post*, February 16, 2014 accessed November 13 2016, <http://nypost.com/2014/02/16/book-reveals-real-story-behind-the-kitty-genovese-murder>.

⁶¹ “Didn’t Anyone Care?” *The Indianapolis Star*, October 29, 1965.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ M.K. McClintick, “Torture Murder of Teen Girl Gives Rise to Angry Questions.” *The Indianapolis Star*, November 1, 1965.

⁶⁴ “Police Told of Tortured Girl’s Last Days,” *The Indianapolis Star*, October 28, 1965.

⁶⁵ “Many Beat Slain Girl, Police Told,” *The Indianapolis News*, October 28, 1965.

⁶⁶ “Police Often At Slain Girl’s Home,” *The Indianapolis News*, October 27, 1965.

police in protecting the Indianapolis community. Strangely, this *Indianapolis News* article is the only one that mentions the frequent visits of the police to the Baniszewski home. Although the police visited the home a few times due to issues unrelated to Sylvia, their visits spanned over months.⁶⁷ Thus, this report is erroneous, and once more contributes to the angry sentiment directed towards the community. Additionally, although Sylvia may have been “treated like a slave,” the only individuals to witness this treatment would have been those visiting the Baniszewski home. These individuals were limited to the neighborhood children who participated in Sylvia’s abuse and Mrs. Phyllis Vermillion, the only adult neighbor called as a witness for the prosecution.⁶⁸ Although other neighbors may have known about the abuse, there is no evidence to suggest that these neighbors witnessed the abuse.

The *Indianapolis Star* reported early in the trial that the neighborhood children were interviewed about Sylvia’s treatment.⁶⁹ It is thus misleading to use “neighbors and friends” and “many” to describe the interviewees. These terms imply that adults were commenting on Sylvia’s treatment, not the twenty-five children that were interviewed. If the press wanted to reveal the true identity of the interviewees, they would call the group “children,” not “neighbors and friends.” Evidently, it would be more shocking if “neighbors and friends,” or a group of adults, witnessed Sylvia’s treatment and said nothing, as adults are expected to have a certain level of responsibility that younger children do not. Therefore, it is apparent that the press used the slave comment to exaggerate the number of adult neighborhood eyewitnesses who were aware of Sylvia’s abuse.

Another common report in the days following the crime was that neighbors four houses down the street could hear Sylvia’s screams. This report is still used when describing the case today, and was mentioned in

⁶⁷ John Dean, *House of Evil*, 54.

⁶⁸ *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

⁶⁹ “Why Did Sylvia Die? Woman and Boy Face Hearing Tomorrow In Girl’s Torture Death,” *The Indianapolis Star*, October 31, 1965.

an article dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the crime.⁷⁰ Although this report appears credible due to its presence in almost every article written about the Likens case, a comment from Prosecutor Leroy New during the trial claims otherwise. Quoting New, an *Indianapolis Star* article states “Contrary to earlier reports, no neighbors heard Sylvia scream for help.”⁷¹ Whether Sylvia’s screams were heard or not, the discrepancy in these reports questions the validity of the press’s accounts and further points to its focus on the community’s lack of concern.

Apart from blaming the community, the press also tended to blame the victims—Jenny and Sylvia. During the trial, the press published articles that speculated on why Sylvia stayed in the Baniszewski home. An article in *The Indianapolis Star*, which focused on Sylvia’s life, mentions her passivity (“she would not fight back”) and her actions that may have led to the abuse.⁷² The article states, “Evidence also indicates she had a tendency to taunt others, and there is evidence she passed the word around that Paula was a prostitute. That may have been her undoing.”⁷³ This statement is an example of the press’s interest in understanding what Sylvia had done wrong to warrant such heinous abuse. Her sister, Jenny, would also attract interest.

During Jenny’s testimony, *The Indianapolis Star* ran a headline that pertained to her inaction: “Jennie Didn’t Try to Help Sylvia Because She ‘Was Scared.’”⁷⁴ It is suggested by the seemingly mocking tone that there was contempt for Jenny and her inaction, and the audience is given a picture of how Jenny did not even try to help her dying sister. The quote “was scared” points to Jenny’s perceived selfish nature and to her immaturity in understanding the severity of the situation. Discussing why she did not seek help for her sister, the article mentions Jenny’s cross examination, where defense lawyers questioned the girl’s neglect.

⁷⁰ “Fifty Years Later: Family, friends remember murder of Sylvia Likens,” *WishTv.Com*, October 25, 2015, accessed November 12, 2016, <http://wishtv.com/2015/10/25/50-years-later-family-friends-remember-sylvia-likens/>.

⁷¹ John Dean, “Jurors Shown Four Gruesome Pictures of Sylvia Likens As Murder Trial Opens,” *The Indianapolis Star*, April 28, 1966.

⁷² John Dean, “Was She ‘Cinderella’ For the Prince Who Never Showed?” *The Indianapolis Star*, May 15, 1966.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ John Dean, “Jenny Didn’t Try to Help Sylvia Because She ‘Was Scared,’” *The Indianapolis Star*, May 6, 1966.

The article, quoting the defense lawyers, notes that there were many people in the area (Jenny's grandmother, her sister, the police) whom she could have contacted to ensure Sylvia's safety.⁷⁵

From these examples, it is clear that the local press aimed to portray—and exaggerate—the failure of the community—and Jenny—to help Sylvia. Moreover, the press underscored Sylvia's inability to help herself. Although it was important for the newspapers to address the community's neglect, it appears as though this neglect was overstated, for in reality, only a select group had witnessed Sylvia's abuse. Additionally, while Sylvia's and Jenny's passivity is of psychological interest, neither the press nor any interviewee could blame the girls for never fighting or fleeing. Speculating on why both Sylvia and Jenny avoided seeking help further shows the naiveté of the press in an age where psychological control and abuse were not yet understood.⁷⁶ By analyzing the language used in the newspapers, it can be determined that the press in the Sylvia Likens case emphasized and exaggerated the lack of support from the community, from Jenny, and from Sylvia herself.

Although the press addressed the faults of the community, they had difficulty addressing some of the sexual abuse Sylvia endured. At the time of Sylvia's case, American media were beginning to uncover and report physical child abuse, but continued to remain silent on child sexual abuse.^{77 78} It was not until the late 1970s that an honest discussion emerged.⁷⁹ As research and laws pertaining to child sexual abuse were put into practice, the media began to tackle the issue. By the 1980s, the media was completely involved. *Time Magazine* confirmed this in 1983: "Private violence: child abuse, wife-beating, rape...the unspeakable crimes are being yanked out of the shadows. 'The wall of silence is breaking down.'"⁸⁰ Since it would be another twenty years until the "wall of silence" diminished, it is clear why the media in the Sylvia Likens' case avoided mentioning some of the sexual aspects of

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ J. Robert Schull, "Emotional and Psychological Child Abuse: Notes on Discourse, History, and Change," *Stanford Law Review* 51, no. 6 (1999): 1696-1698.

⁷⁷ John E.B. Myers, "A Short History of Child Protection in America," *Family Law Quarterly* 42 (2008): 454-455.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 460.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 460.

⁸⁰ Jenny Kitzinger, *Framing Abuse: Media Influence and Public Understanding of Sexual Violence Against Children* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 35.

the crime. Graphic material discussing physical abuse was seen throughout the press reports and was frequently repeated, but there was little to no discussion of the Baniszewskis' sexual actions against Sylvia. While the newspapers reported every detail of the torture as the trial testimonies continued, they failed to mention one significant incident during Sylvia's stay at the Baniszewski home: the abuse with the Coca-Cola bottle. Even though the newspapers were able to discuss how the Baniszewskis carved and burnt Sylvia's flesh, they were unable to discuss how she was forced to insert a glass Coca-Cola bottle into her vagina. This abuse was clearly mentioned in both Jenny and Stephanie Baniszewski's testimony, yet was never reported on paper.⁸¹ Five articles in both the *Star* and the *News*, however, did mention some aspect of the sexual abuse. Two separate articles vaguely indicated that Sylvia was "kicked in the groin" and that she had "swelling and a bruise in the lower groin."⁸² ⁸³ Substituting the word "groin" for the word "vagina" (Deputy Coroner Arthur Kebel's testimony reported that the vagina was swollen) further displays the press's aversion to reporting on sexual abuse.⁸⁴ The other two articles hinted at the sexual abuse, reporting that Sylvia was not allowed to wear any clothes and that "her private parts with numerous sores were exposed" when the coroner arrived at the Baniszewski home on October 26th.⁸⁵ ⁸⁶ By creating this ambiguous understanding of the sex crimes committed against Sylvia, the press was able to successfully avoid tackling a serious issue that neither Indianapolis nor the nation were prepared for.

Indianapolis and the nation, however, were apparently prepared for Gertrude Baniszewski. A woman and a mother of seven, Gertrude's

⁸¹ *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

⁸² Mike Brooks, "Stephanie Testifies Against Family," *The Indianapolis News*, May 17, 1966 and "Likens Evidence to End Today," *The Indianapolis Star*, May 17, 1966.

⁸³ John Dean, "Likens Death Called Work of A 'Madman,'" *The Indianapolis Star*, April 30, 1966.

⁸⁴ *State of Indiana v. Gertrude Baniszewski*, (Marion County Criminal Court Division Two, 1966), accessed May 10, 2016, <http://www.sylvialikens.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=205>.

⁸⁵ Mike Brooks, "Girl's Sores Salted, Sister Tells Court," *The Indianapolis News*, May 5, 1966.

⁸⁶ John Dean, "Jurors Shown 4 Gruesome Pictures of Sylvia Likens."

indictment, subsequent trial, and life in prison drew significant attention from the press and the public. The mere fact that she was a frail, emaciated woman on trial for “Indiana’s worst crime” contributed to the continuous fascination. Throughout the course of the trial and its aftermath, the newspapers constantly underscored Gertrude’s womanhood and further portrayed her in a pitiful light.

The language used to describe Gertrude’s actions and appearance displayed her delicate nature as a woman. One article, in examining the defendants’ dispositions during the choosing of the jury, states, “Mrs. Baniszewski held a wadded tissue in her hand which she put to her mouth most of the time.”⁸⁷ This observation highlights the press’s desire to demonstrate Gertrude’s anxiety and to underscore her sickliness. Similarly, another article emphasizes her frailty: “when [Prosecutor New] asked if she [Gertrude] were lying, the frail woman retorted, ‘I have no reason to lie.’”⁸⁸ Once more Gertrude’s delicate nature is considered, and her frailty is conveniently described before her innocence and honesty is discussed.

If Gertrude’s frailty were not enough to represent her gender, her emotions would suffice. Depicting daughter Shirley Baniszewski’s testimony, the *Indianapolis News* reports, “Her mother cried audibly during most of her daughter’s testimony and shook her head constantly.”⁸⁹ Even the national press was interested in Gertrude’s emotions and their contrast to the gruesome nature of the murder. *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* both ran a report related to her conviction, mentioning an emotional story that was strangely absent from local newspapers. “When the verdicts were announced Mrs. Baniszewski gasped, hung her head, then burst into sobs and threw her arms around her son. She cried, ‘John, John, my baby!’”, both newspapers declared.⁹⁰ The quote that refers to John, whether true or

⁸⁷ Mike Brooks, “Teeners Trial in Torture Case Is A ‘First’ In County,” *The Indianapolis News*, April 22, 1966.

⁸⁸ Mike Brooks, “Witnesses Lied: Mrs. Baniszewski,” *The Indianapolis News*, May 11, 1966.

⁸⁹ Mike Brooks, “Dying Hours of Sylvia Described.”

⁹⁰ “5 Are Convicted in Torture Death,” *The New York Times*, May 20, 1966 and “Woman is Convicted of Torture Murder,” *The Washington Post*, May 20, 1966, accessed September 25, 2016,

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/142693849/32AA9938CFA2449CPQ/6?accountid=9940>.

not, highlights Gertrude's motherhood and attempts to elicit sympathy from the reader. Moreover, it is the only narrative within the short article; every other paragraph, including the description of Sylvia's abuse, is superficially brief.⁹¹ It is apparent, therefore, that national and local fascination lay with Gertrude. This fascination would only continue as Gertrude entered prison.

As soon as Gertrude arrived in prison, *The Indianapolis News* published a story on her new life. It had only been a week since she was convicted, but the newspaper was enthralled. Reporting on her new environment, the article stated that Gertrude "was photographed, fingerprinted, given a complete physical examination and a delousing bath."⁹² The article proceeds to discuss her room arrangements and job assignments, in a seemingly obvious attempt to demonstrate Gertrude's normality. Yet Gertrude did not fascinate all—a concept that was evidently shocking to *The Indianapolis News*. "No ripples of excitement lapped around the prison buildings yesterday over Mrs. Baniszewski's arrival," the newspaper stated. Although this was a minor disappointment, the newspaper discovered other ways in which to foster the fascination. Interviewing other women at the prison, the newspaper reported that many of the inmates there were sympathetic and willing to give Gertrude a chance. One woman, however, stated that there were other inmates who were angry with Gertrude's crime.⁹³ Yet *The Indianapolis News* never pursued these angry individuals, perhaps demonstrating its desire for a sympathetic portrayal of Gertrude.

Two years later *The Indianapolis News* would return for an interview with Gertrude herself. A picture of Gertrude, appearing refreshed and healthy, sits at the top of the article. "Bible is Comfort to Convicted Slayer," the headline reads.⁹⁴ All memory of Gertrude as a murderer is lost as the article delves into her schoolwork, her religion, and even her gardening. "I want to finish my high school and someday take some courses in college," Gertrude explains. "My mother just came just before Christmas," she adds. "...she used to cry and couldn't talk, but the last time she was here she thought I looked better so she didn't

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Evie Birge, "Just Another Inmate Now," *The Indianapolis News*, May 26, 1966.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Margaret Moore, "Bible is Comfort To Convicted Slayer," *The Indianapolis News*, May 31, 1968.

cry.”⁹⁵ Whatever the actual purpose behind this article was, it is clear that it depicts Gertrude as a relatable and changed woman. By avoiding the topic of her brutal crime, the article is able to provide the reader with a completely different view of Gertrude, a view that demonstrates her ability to be civilized and womanly.⁹⁶

Ten years later, Gertrude’s civility and womanliness would be assessed in yet another interview from *The Indianapolis News*. “The slender woman with freshly shampooed hair, crisp white blouse and casual red skirt, has little resemblance to the gaunt faced, emaciated figure during her two trials,” the *Indianapolis News* reported, again focusing on Gertrude’s transformation in an attempt to separate the woman from her past.⁹⁷ The newspaper also outlines Gertrude’s plan for a book. “Her eyes sparkled as she discussed her brand new project,” the article states. Using “sparkled,” the report animates Gertrude, thus dispelling misconceptions of her cold and vicious demeanor. Gertrude’s concern for her children, some of whom had now been released from prison, is discussed as well, demonstrating that her motherly nature remained.⁹⁸ Two years later, *The News* would complete another interview in an attempt to analyze Gertrude’s past and how it affected her actions against Sylvia. Although she never admits to participating in the crime, Gertrude’s guilt is a principal theme in the article. The headline reads: “Guilt, Remorse still stalk slayer,” and the last paragraph includes a statement about Sylvia. “As I look back now, I can’t remember one time when I talked as a mother or guardian to Sylvia,” Gertrude states.⁹⁹ In highlighting Gertrude’s guilt, the author hopes to provide the reader with yet another example of her reformed attitude and her ability to change. The article, however, fails to mention that, despite this guilt, Gertrude, in the interview, never accepted responsibility for the crime. Therefore, her reformed attitude remains questionable.

Despite never admitting to her crime, this fascination with Gertrude continued until her death in 1990. The fascination, perhaps stemming from the contrast between the severity of the crime and the

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Margaret Moore Post, “No Parole for Gertrude Yet,” *The Indianapolis News*, August 6, 1976.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Margaret Moore Post, “Guilt, Remorse Still Stalk Slayer.”

so-called delicate gender of the perpetrator, further indicates that crime and criminals, no matter how gruesome or horrible, are of significant interest to the public. Gertrude's case in particular further implies that woman criminals are especially of interest. After all, it was Gertrude's status as both a housewife and a mother that contributed to the fascination. This womanly status may have crumbled with her murder, but it remained alive in the newspapers.

Conclusion

The fascination of the press and public with Gertrude, the limited information on Sylvia's sexual abuse, and the excessive emphasis placed on the neglect of the community, help to explain the ways in which brutal crimes were covered during the 1960s. The topic the press had to cover was not just any brutal crime; it was child abuse. In an era when sadistic crimes against children were not reported, let alone prosecuted, the Sylvia Likens murder was an especially unusual and gruesome crime. Therefore, although the press reports exaggerated the responsibility of the community, blamed the victim, were deficient in information, and portrayed the perpetrator as a frail woman, they ultimately led to a greater understanding and an honest discussion of physical child abuse amongst the Indianapolis community and the nation. This type of honest discussion may have paved the way for future conversations concerning child sexual abuse. Sylvia's story and the media's response also paved the way for a greater emphasis on community involvement when child abuse is suspected. This emphasis was seen when Sylvia's death helped to inspire the passage of an Indiana State law in 1971. This law stipulated that anyone who discovers child abuse must report it, and that failure to do so is a criminal offense.¹⁰⁰ Due to cases like Sylvia's, responsibility is now placed on all for the safety and well-being of children across the nation. Thus, as Prosecutor New stated in an interview, "Sylvia may speak far louder in death" than she ever did in life.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Jake Thompson, "Likens' Tragic Death Leaves Legacy in Child Abuse Laws."

¹⁰¹ Linda Graham Caleca, "House of Torture."

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IMAGES, CYCLES, AND HYBRIDITY: VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CALENDARS IN NEW WORLD CODICES

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The history of the peoples and cultures of New Spain in the early modern period is one comprised of a plethora of voices. Between the Aztecs, the Spanish colonizers, Creoles born in the New World, missionaries, and the scholars writing about everything, this cast of characters can produce a daunting web of information and narratives to sort through. However, it is not merely the textual voices of all these groups that are creating a history, but also the images designed to accompany their stories. The various preserved codices of New Spain contain a wealth of images that allow for the cultural analysis of the indigenous people. In particular, vibrant and distinct imagery is used to represent time and stands out amongst the pages, demonstrating the reverence the Aztec people had for their conception of time and the cyclical nature of the universe. Examining the way time is illustrated in three sixteenth-century codices provides evidence for this interpretation; the *Florentine Codex*, the *Codex Mendoza*, and the *Tovar Codex* all contain stunning imagery that captures the imagination and knowledge of New Spain's native peoples. The hybridity of art styles and information displayed in all three texts demonstrates the attempts of their authors to make Aztec concepts of time understandable to a European audience, frequently altering minor aspects of how they were visually represented.

Beginning with the Franciscan friar and ethnographer Bernardino de Sahagún's *Florentine Codex* in the 16th century, an understanding of the importance and nature of time becomes evident from the detailed descriptions of the Aztec calendar system. The Mexica people of the Valley of Mexico impressively developed an extensive empire with political and economic networks connecting townships across modern day Mexico, resulting in the parallel construction of a sophisticated cultural network. When their capital city, Tenochtitlán, fell to Cortés in the early sixteenth century, the Spanish did not hesitate to quickly send in both colonials and missionaries to manage the territory now known as New Spain. Sahagún was one of these early settlers, sent to evangelize

the Mexica. His personal interest as a scholar, though, was in researching their religious practices, language, and broader culture. Over several decades, he worked in conjunction with indigenous Mexica people to compile a massive twelve-volume encyclopedia of Aztec knowledge. The codex, cataloging a general history of “all things” in New Spain, contains an entire volume titled “The Sun, Moon, and Stars, and the Binding of the Years.”¹ Though it also contains information about astronomical events and the weather, its principal concern is with the year counter system and its associated events. Originally written in both Spanish and Nahuatl, the text explains the four year signs used in the Aztec calendar system. Translated into English, the cycle begins with the month known as Rabbit, then moves through Reed, Flint, and House before beginning again. Sahagún indicates the mythical origins of the system, notably explaining that the Reed year sign was the sign of the sun.² A large portion of this book is then spent detailing the New Fire Ceremony that occurred in the year 2 Reed, a religious rite meant to commemorate the return of the sun and begin the next 52 year cycle and “bind the years.”³ This ceremony is now notorious in both scholarly and popular culture due to its use of human sacrifice, but this dramatic practice only underscores the importance of the calendar cycle to the Mexica people who founded the Aztec empire.

The imagery used to portray this cycle is especially notable in the *Florentine Codex* for its concentric circles and the arrangement of the year signs around the outer perimeter of the calendar wheel [Figure 1]. Sahagún’s artist chooses to orient the wheel with the beginning of the cycle – the year 1 Rabbit – towards the East. However, the Rabbit year sign actually corresponded to South. The Reed sign should be in the East, so as to correspond with the rising sun at the binding of the cycle.⁴ This matter of orientation seems to have been a decision adjusting the Reed years to be at the top of the wheel to signify the importance of the New Fire Ceremony. In addition, concentric circles are used instead of the alternating spiral pattern the calendar actually follows. These circular forms reflect the macrocosm of the Aztec universe, but are also

¹ Bernardino de Sahagún, Arthur J. O. Anderson, and Charles E. Dibble, *Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain*, vol. 8 (Santa Fe: The School of American Research, 1953), title.

² *Ibid.*, 21. Taken from Book VII Chapter 7.

³ *Ibid.*, i.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 21. Book VII Chapter 7.

understandable to any European familiar with Aristotle's models of the universe. The early modern academics back in Spain would surely have been influenced by the Neoplatonic return to classical knowledge of the universe and foundations of what we know as modern science. With the years increasing in number moving away from the center, the circles become a metonymy for the layers of the heavens as one gets further away from Earth and the beginning of a new cycle.⁵ Thus, Sahagún and his artists clearly display a command of the ability to incorporate thematic aspects of Aztec cosmology and time into the images in the codex in a manner comprehensible across the Atlantic.

The symbols interpreting time in the *Codex Mendoza*, an earlier work coordinated by unknown friars in consultation with indigenous people, also illustrate the respect and reverence for measurements of time the Aztec people had. The Mendoza is interesting particularly because it chronicles the lineage of the Aztec ruling class just fourteen years after the Spanish conquest in 1521. Compared to the *Florentine Codex*, it is much less of an encyclopedia and much more of a set of government annals. It contains specific inventories and details of political and economic history that shape the way modern scholars think about the Aztec empire. The iconic image depicting the founding of Tenochtitlan contains many symbolic features creating a collage of this sacred event, including depictions of the rulers of the city as well as the Spanish conquistadors who ultimately brought its downfall. Year signs surround the page, counting the length of the rule of Tenuch – the first leader of fledgling Tenochtitlan.⁶ These signs are colored with a pigment – a remarkable shade of iridescent blue – that stays consistent throughout the codex [Figure 2]. The consistency in painting all the year sign glyphs the same shade of blue seems to indicate a deep respect for the passage of time itself; scholar Diana Magaloni-Kerpel has identified this particular hue as “Maya blue.” Her analysis shows this type of blue-green represented the colors of Quetzal tail feathers, a sacred bird that shares both its name and its feathers with the god Quetzalcoatl, a creator

⁵ Alessandra Russo, *The Untranslatable Image – A Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500-1600* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 202.

⁶ Frances Berdan and Patricia Rieff Anawalt. *The Codex Mendoza*. vol. 2, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 5.

deity to the Mexica.⁷ The link to the calendar glyphs is mythological; Quetzalcoatl is also responsible for the invention of the calendar and the passage of the sun transitioning into night. If the specific pigment used throughout the *Codex Mendoza* to color calendar glyphs is also closely tied to a sacred bird and the god of calendars, then it only makes sense that the artists intended to draw this connection to emphasize the sanctity of time. Furthermore, Elizabeth Hill Boone argues that the first section of the codex is meant to be a “victory chronicle” rather than a fully detailed history of the Aztec civilization.⁸ It emphasizes the strength of the Aztec empire and the pride in their heritage, culminating in the founding of their capital city. The sacred color used to depict time in the very first image in the *Codex Mendoza* associates time with both the political power of the Aztec civilization and the cultural heritage of its people.

The sanctity of time is also seen in the next section of the codex recording the conquests of each Aztec king up until the Spanish siege of Tenochtitlan in 1521. The page about Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin, the final king before the siege, contains all the usual images found in the records of previous rulers. These include showing Motecuhzoma sitting on a woven reed mat, wrapped in a white cloak, and wearing a symbol of nobility on his headdress. However, it differs in the addition of three calendar glyphs appended to the end of the regular list of years. These three years are the only three glyphs in the entire codex that are left unpainted [Figure 3]. They are clearly added to the list at a later date than the rest of the years, as the lines and borders are uneven.⁹ The artist originally ended the count on the year 13 Rabbit (1518), the year before the arrival of Cortés.¹⁰ The next two years, 1 Reed and 2 Flint, were later drawn in place with the phrase “end and death of Motecuhzoma” scrawled in Spanish above them.¹¹ According to Boone, the final additional year, 3 House (1521) is added by “someone other than the

⁷ Diana Magaloni-Kerpel, “Real and Illusory Feathers: Pigments, Painting Techniques, and the Use of Color in Ancient Mesoamerica,” *Nuevo Mundo, Mundos Nuevos* (Coloquios, 2006), 3.

⁸ Elizabeth Hill Boone, “The Aztec Pictorial History of the *Codex Mendoza*” in *The Codex Mendoza*, vol. 1, ed. Berdan and Anawalt, 51.

⁹ Frances F. Berdan, “Glyphic Conventions of the *Codex Mendoza*” in *The Codex Mendoza*, vol. 1, 94-95.

¹⁰ Boone, *Aztec Pictorial History*, 36-37.

¹¹ Berdan and Anawalt, folios 14v-16v.

painter” to bring the count all the way through to the conquest.¹² This new scribe adds “fin y pacificación y conquista de la Nueva España,” ignoring the later reigns of Cuitlahuac and Cuauhtemoc.¹³ The imagery in the *Codex Mendoza* represents time in such a way as to make the end of the Mexica dynasty coincide with the death of Motecuhzoma, demonstrating the historical power images can have.¹⁴ This event is first and foremost a collision of the Old and New Worlds, so its prominent representation in the *Mendoza* also emphasizes the importance of the conquest to European readers. It was not an event that should have been left off, but rather was specifically added to complete the narrative picture of conquest.

One of the most striking examples of Aztec imagery depicting time is preserved in a manuscript from the 16th century written by the Mexican Jesuit Juan de Tovar. For brief historical context, the *Tovar Codex* is an original manuscript collecting the correspondences of Tovar and the Spanish Jesuit José de Acosta, as well as providing a pictorial history of the culture and calendar of the Mexica people. The evidence within the codex indicates it was an original holograph, “de mano escrito,” by Tovar himself; his handwriting is consistent in the title page and the letters included between him and Acosta. However, native scribes under his supervision most likely did the illustrations, including for the section on the Aztec calendar. As identified by George Kubler and Charles Gibson, professors at Yale studying art and Mesoamerican history, respectively, the Tovar Calendar at the end of the codex was probably sent from Tovar to Acosta sometime after 1582, after the rest of the work was completed.¹⁵ This means that the calendrical portion of the *Tovar Codex* can, in many ways, be considered a stand-alone work meant to explain the indigenous calendar to Spaniards, demonstrating the interest in translating knowledge across cultures.

The information on the calendar truly begins with the last few illustrations bound together before the separate section detailing each month. The image drawn is reminiscent of that seen in the *Florentine Codex*. The calendar shows the division between the four types of year glyphs, though this version organizes them by color as well as in a

¹² Boone, 36-37.

¹³ Berdan and Anawalt, folios 14v-16v.

¹⁴ Boone, 36-37.

¹⁵ George Kubler and Charles Gibson, *The Tovar Calendar* (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Sciences, 1951), 5-11.

circular orientation [Figure 4]. Once again, the Reed glyphs are drawn towards the top of the page, showing the rising of the sun first. In Tovar's drawing, however, there seem to be more non-indigenous qualities at play. The four faces on the outer border of the page look much more Hispanic than other faces in the book; the face of the sun also seems reflective of the same style. Thus, this image synthesizes the traditional circular portrayal of the calendar previously seen in Sahagún's work with a more Spanish art style, setting the stage for the overlapping of culture to come in the next section of the text.

The Tovar Calendar is an attempt by Tovar and his scribes to show the Aztec calendar in direct association with the more familiar twelve month system in Europe, using specific holidays to make the calendar more understandable to a European audience. The collection of eighteen months plus one short five day "idle" period shows each month brought to life, usually as a human being dressed as the god honored that month. For example, the fifth month of Yetzalcualiztli depicts a human standing with a stalk of corn, wearing imagery from the cult of Tlaloc, god of rain [Figure 5]. In turn, Yetzalcualiztli is the month of eating the beans and corn workers had cultivated. Tovar himself ties this to June, commenting: "This was the month and these were the festivals of the working people and the people and the lower class, and hence everyone was idle during these days, because now they had rested after having worked the land."¹⁶

This type of imagery proves the intimate relationship the Aztec calendar had with the lives of everyday people such as field workers. The worker depicted has green eye and mouth rims, carries a handled jar of beans, and holds a cornstalk. Though these features are not uncommon, they are all attributes of Tlaloc.¹⁷ The use of iconographic features such as these is certainly representative of the Aztec pictorial art style. However, showing them on a full-proportioned man is evidence of Spanish influence. In pre-Hispanic manuscripts, the "relative scale of figures, accessories, and architecture was variable."¹⁸ This man clearly stands at a realistic height in comparison to the corn stalk and the jar, in line with the shift in artistic style seen after the Spanish arrival. This

¹⁶ Kubler and Gibson, *The Tovar Calendar*, 25-26.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Kathleen Stewart Howe, "The Relationship of Indigenous and European Styles in the *Codex Mendoza*: An Analysis of Pictorial Style" in *The Codex Mendoza*, vol. 1, 30-31.

personification of Yetzalcualiztli represents a combination of traditional Aztec religious iconography and Spanish artistic influence, running parallel to the combination of indigenous and European calendars shown in the same section of the codex.

The conjunction of identifiable features of the European calendar system is clear in the *Tovar Codex*, particularly when examining the correlation of the months with their astrological signs. Though not consistent on every month, several signs of the horoscope are included in the calendar section, always in symbolic form. The month of Tlaxochimaco (August) is described by Tovar as the month “for the bestowal of flowers.” There were many festivals this month, all centered around flowers, feathers, and other finery.¹⁹ Above the usual image representing the month – in this case, a young boy holding bouquets of flowers – there is a woman also holding two plants with the words “acosto – virco” beneath her [Figure 6]. She is drawn in the indigenous style and clearly does not appear to be Spanish. Considering the traditional zodiac symbol of Virgo is a maiden, this is an overlaying of the European calendar onto the Aztec. As Prescott points out, “The astrological scheme of the Aztecs was founded less on the planetary influences, than on those of the arbitrary signs they had adopted for the months and days.”²⁰ If this is the case, then the *Tovar Codex* shows the hybridity of its representations of time by using non-indigenous astrological signs in tune with their traditional calendar.

The influence of the Spanish on the calendar is most explicitly clear in the month of Izcalli, a short period of time in the middle of January when the plants were said to begin sprouting. Tovar inserts a figure of a Spaniard pointing towards the division between Izcalli and the previous month. He comments that “the figure of the Spaniard clothed in red serves only to indicate and to show by a line extending from his finger, where the year of the Spaniards begins.”²¹ The Spaniard is drawn diminutively, holding an iridescent Maya-blue book as he points to the calendar [Figure 7]. There is no mention of the traditional festivals or gods of Izcalli; the only additional notes are on the opposite page describing the Nativity and the demarcation of January. The simple

¹⁹ Kubler and Gibson, *The Tovar Calendar*, 27.

²⁰ William H. Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1863), 121.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

and distinct symbolic imagery used to identify this Spaniard clearly sets him apart from the other indigenous people depicted in the work, highlighting the conquest's cultural collision with an important facet of society like the calendar. The color of the book he is holding indicates sanctity, as if to say that European knowledge and marking the end of the year after the birth of Christ is more correct or holy. The many layers of religion and visual culture contained in this one simple example is a testament to how the aesthetic record of the Mexica speaks volumes about their response to European. Although Tovar's informants and scribes were definitely versed in native knowledge, their primary goal was to emphasize the relationship between the calendar systems of Europe and New Spain; that much is clear from the inclusion of images such as this one.²²

The pictorial techniques seen in the aforementioned codices are representative of audience-driven hybridity that was necessary to make Aztec representations of time conceptually understandable to Spanish audiences. The historiographical difficulties of discerning the authentic perspective of the people of the Aztec civilization, then, can be bridged by approaching visual culture and aesthetics to speak to cultural context lost in the written record. Given that all the textual records from this civilization were written after the Spanish introduced the Roman alphabet, a sense of indigeneity must be obtained by literally reading between the lines of text and turning to the images. From the codices examined in this paper ranging from general histories to specific cultural records of the calendar, the use of images demonstrates the otherwise silenced indigenous voice. Beyond the overlay of icons like Virgo and the Spaniard in the *Tovar Codex*, the philosophical approach to the information displayed is drawn with purpose. Despite the months being unequal lengths, the *Tovar Codex* incorporates traditional zodiac signs with the Aztec calendar using a hybrid art style. Dissecting this hybridity is the key to better understanding the Aztec civilization and the way the Mexica people constructed their worldviews, particularly after the conquest. All three of these codices show a sort of *nepantla* or, "in between," system of representing time and the calendar.²³ Since the

²² J. H. Parry, "Juan de Tovar and the History of the Indians," in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 121, no. 4 (American Philosophical Society, 1977), 318.

²³ Russo, *The Untranslatable Image*, 4.

creators of these works aimed to translate the indigenous knowledge of New Spain, the mixing of imagery seen with representations of the calendar is a logical side-effect of the translation process.

This sort of cultural collision was unavoidable given the desire of the Spanish court to fully conquer the New World. Without the important records and interpretations of indigenous Mexica knowledge, the Spanish could never even attempt to operate a successfully functional government. Just as contemporary scholars access the indigenous perspective via visual culture, friars like Sahagún and Tovar knew that illustrated codices would make the foreign cultural information more digestible to a European audience. The Spanish authorities presiding over New Spain had a vested interest in understanding the Mexica culture, both to gauge what evangelizing work needed to be done to ensure the Christianization of New Spain proceeded without delay and to craft effective policies and subdue conflicts. The *nepantla* in this case is seen when depictions of indigenous ritual holidays are drawn next to the figures of Spanish authority. In this way, visual culture was a critical force in bridging the gap between conquered and conquerors; even more significant, though, is the agency subtle manipulations of symbols and color granted the indigenous people. The depictions of time in codices penned, inked, and dyed with the help of indigenous hands emphasizes how indigenous actors in the colonization of New Spain used their agency as artists and informants to both share and preserve their worldviews.

This work was made possible by the generous help of the John Carter Brown Library, particularly Ken Ward, curator of Latin American collections. All the correspondences regarding the Tovar Codex were included in the acquisition file provided by the library, as well as in the 1948 Annual Report of the library to the Corporation of Brown University.

Appendix A: Images

Figure 1

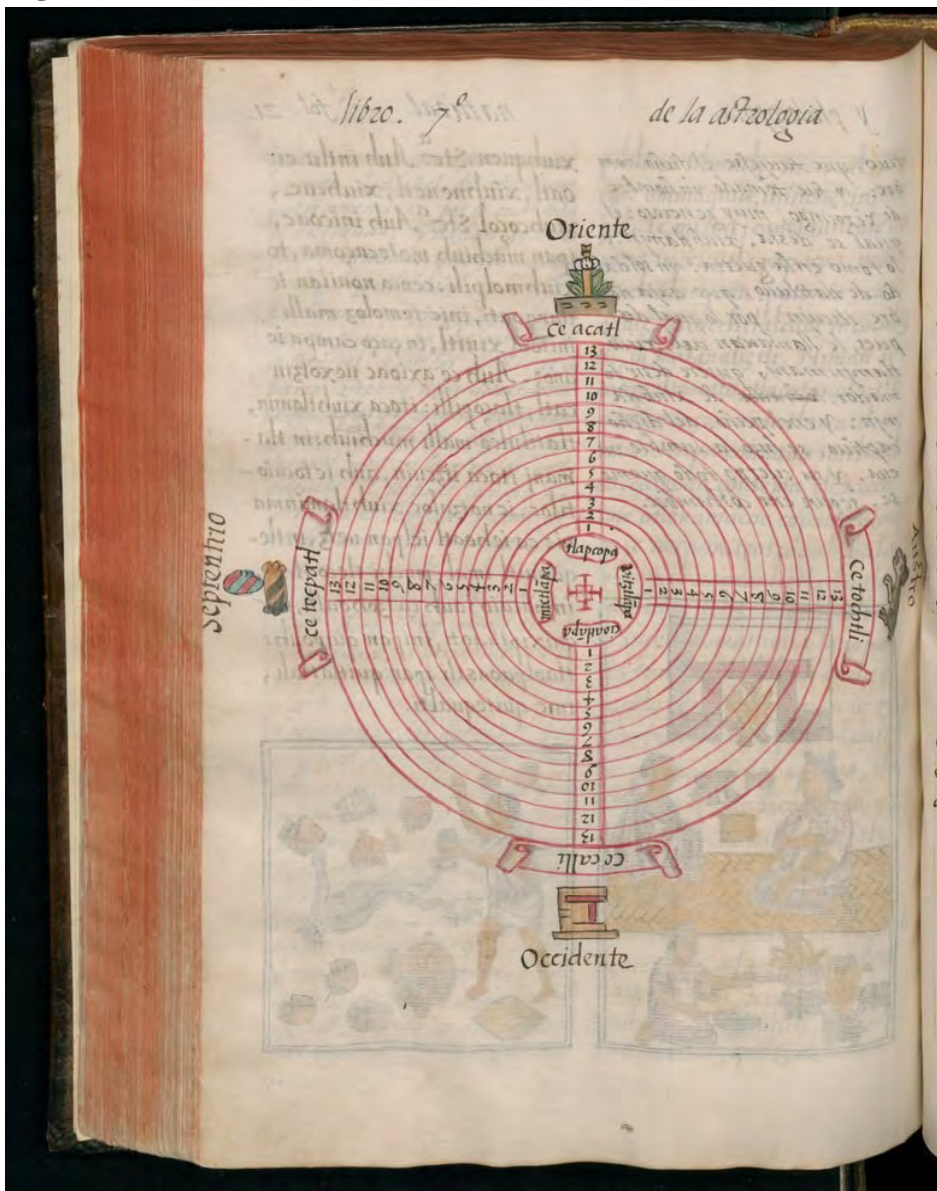


Fig. 1. Bernardino Sahagún, *General History of the Things of New Spain*. 1577, Pigments on paper, 310 x 212 mm. Medicea Laurenziana Library, Florence. From: World Digital Library, <http://content.wdl.org/10096/service/thumbnaill/1431369762/1024x1024/2/500.jpg> (accessed December 4, 2015).

Figure 4

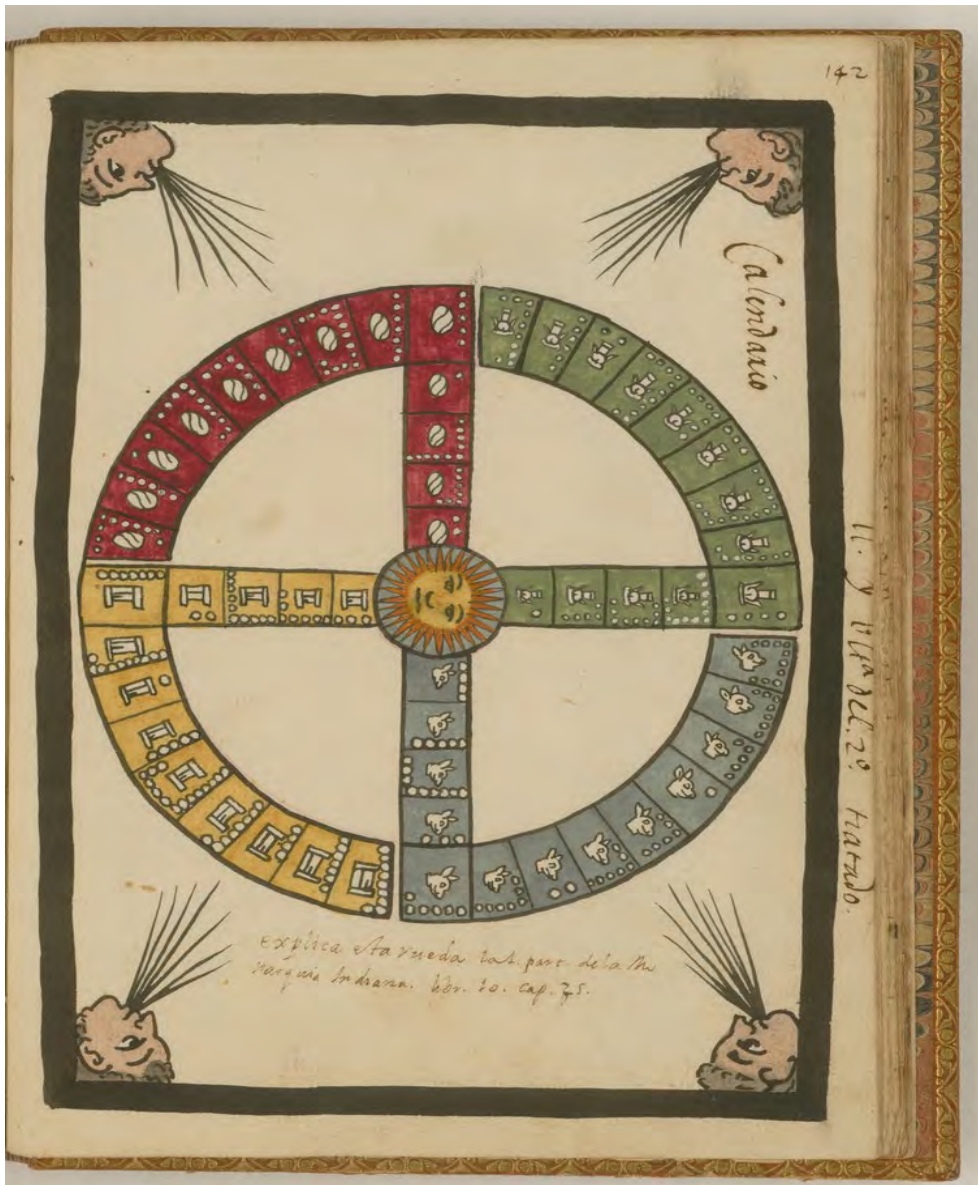


Fig. 4. Juan de Tovar, *The History of the Arrival of the Indians*, folio 142. c. 1582, Pigments on paper, 21.2 x 15.3 cm. John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. From: World Digital Library, <http://www.wdl.org/en/item/6759/> (accessed December 12, 2015).

Figure 5



Fig. 5. Juan de Tovar, *The History of the Arrival of the Indians*, folio 158r.

Figure 6



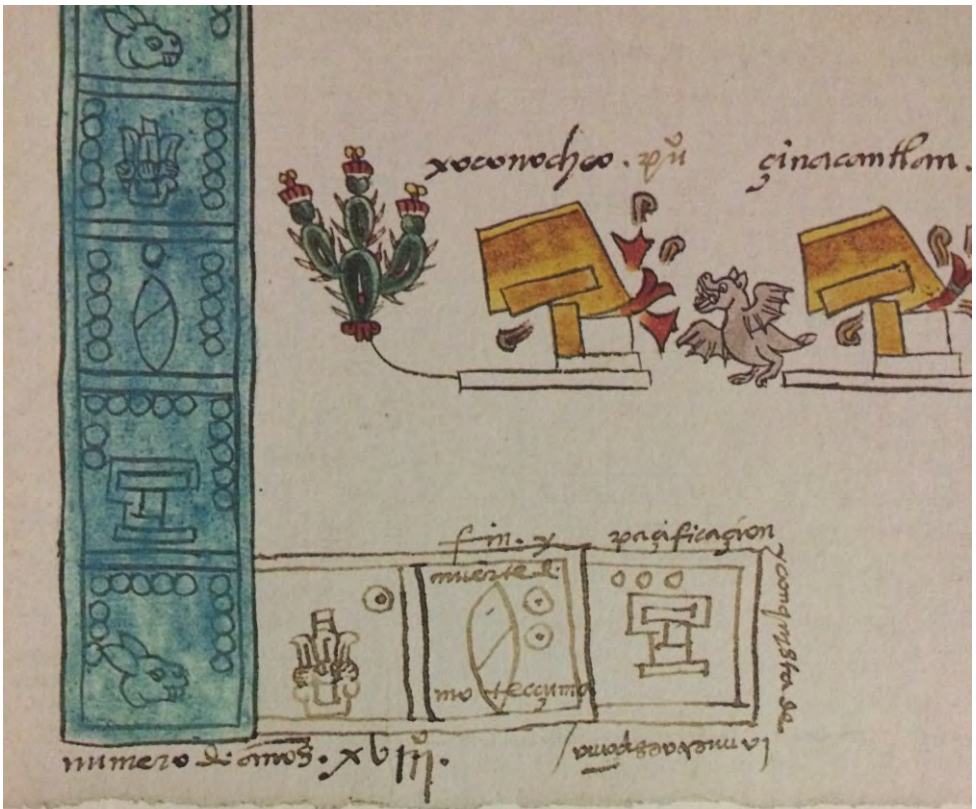
Fig. 6. Juan de Tovar, *The History of the Arrival of the Indians*, folio 160v.

Figure 7



Fig. 7. Juan de Tovar, *The History of the Arrival of the Indians*, folio 165.

Appendix B



• MOTECUHZOMA XOCOYOTZIN—FOLIO 15V

Source: Berdan and Anawalt. *The Codex Mendoza*. vol. 3, folio 15v.

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THE EMERGENCE OF SCIENTIFIC, AESTHETIC RACISM IN KANT'S *OBSERVATIONS ON THE FEELING OF THE BEAUTIFUL AND SUBLIME*

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Postcolonial literature and philosophy have focused on revising world history, which has marginalized, or even excluded, people of color. Determined to explain where these modern attitudes came from, postcolonial thinkers must review and reinterpret texts that include explicit and implicit discussions of race. This also involves deconstructing the myth that the Enlightenment was a period of rationality, progress, and tolerance, which although true to a point, provides only a partial history of this era. One Enlightenment thinker who has increasingly come within the scope of postcolonial reinterpretation is Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Born in Königsberg, Prussia, his best known and studied works are his later critical writings, *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and *Critique of Judgement* (1790). Although Kant seemingly softened his views on race in these later writings, this essay is primarily concerned with the impacts of his earlier work, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1763-1764).

Kant was not a philosopher of race, but his works include prejudices toward non-Europeans and he devotes the entire fourth section of *Observations* to developing a racial hierarchy based on the beautiful and the sublime. This specific text involves the categorization of what Kant calls “races,” which he bases on different nationalities’ abilities to experience the finer feelings of the beautiful and the sublime, both of which, he claims, are essential to human life. The difference between the two for Kant is that “the sublime touches, the beautiful charms.”¹ In other words, the beautiful does not involve the deep simultaneous awe and terror of the sublime, but is rather characterized by a lighter appreciation and cheerfulness. Kant then concludes that those of African descent were less apt to experience these feelings and thus belonged at the bottom of his racial hierarchy. Kant’s racist

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, ed. Paul Guyer and Patrick Frierson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 16.

ideology was not new at the time, but his amalgamation of race and aesthetics as a philosophical discourse was innovative. As a result, Kant was at the forefront of constructing a lasting racial theory rooted in aesthetics that became a pillar of Western thought.² This essay illustrates how Immanuel Kant's *Observations* served as a primary text for integrating aesthetics into racial discrimination through his construction of a "scientific" racism, or a racism supposedly evidenced by anthropological, geographical, and empirical data.³ Kant did this by rejecting black individuals' intellectual ability, denying their possession of artistic genius or cultural taste, and reducing their feelings of beauty and sublimity to ridiculousness and grotesqueness. Thus, Kant's aesthetic discourse had political, social, and cultural implications beyond being an isolated intellectual theory.

Kant's *Observations* developed out of Enlightenment thought that stressed empiricism and reason. American philosopher Cornel West suggests that the revival of ancient ideals, the developments of the scientific revolution, and Enlightenment use of reason led to a scientific, and therefore supposedly rational, understanding of race. Kant extended the basic principles of empiricism and reason to include and explain his race theory. This in turn led to *Observations*, which Kant believed was his report on the scientific understanding of racial differences in conjunction with aesthetics.⁴ This therefore created a convincing theory that appeared sound to most educated elites and the public during the Enlightenment era.

A key part of Kant's overall philosophy is his essentialism, that is, his belief that all humans are defined by and operate according to specific traits. Kant proposed one universal human species that shares essential characteristics, but he also believed that there were variations of this species based on skin color, which he labeled "races."⁵ He explained skin color as dependent on climate: darker skin resulted from

² Joe R. Feagin, *Racist America: Roots, Current Realities, and Future Representations* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 30.

³ Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race' in Kant's Anthropology," *Postcolonial African Philosophy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 105.

⁴ Cornel West, "A Genealogy of Modern Racism," *Race Critical Theories*, ed. Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), 97.

⁵ Immanuel Kant, "Of the Different Human Races," (1775), 9.

warmer climates and lighter skin from cooler climates.⁶ This was an observation that Kant and other Enlightenment philosophers put forth as genuine scientific knowledge. However, *Observations* went even further and followed “a distinctly eighteenth-century genre,” which historian Mark Larrimore describes as one “concerned with ‘the way of cognizing the interior of the human being from the exterior.’”⁷ In other words, in line with his essentialism, Kant averred that national character was inherently connected to outer appearance, meaning that one’s skin color supposedly coincided with his or her mental capabilities and behaviors.

From this understanding of race and Kant’s observations of enslaved or oppressed freed blacks in Prussia, he alleges that white skin corresponded with intelligence, whereas black skin reflected stupidity. He writes, “So essential is the difference between these two human kinds [whites and blacks], and it seems to be just as great with regard to the capacities of mind as it is with respect to color.”⁸ Therefore, Kant thought that there was a natural cognitive and exterior distinction between white people and black people in which skin color determined one’s cognitive functions. According to Kant, as long as Africans were black, they could not amount to intelligent beings since skin color and intelligence levels were inseparable and hierarchical. He entirely overlooked and dismissed any signs of black peoples’ intelligence, as indicated by his statement concerning a black carpenter who wisely refuted a white man. Kant states, “There might be something here worth considering, except for the fact that this scoundrel was completely black from head to foot, a distinct proof that what he said was stupid.”⁹ Thus, Kant believed in an inherent stupidity and inability to exit this condition due to dark skin color. Kant failed to evaluate the actual oppressed condition of black people and instead authorized skin color as “proof” of black people being the most inferior and unintelligent race.

Moreover, according to Kant, aesthetic feeling and judgement were also reflections of nationality, or rather, race. The aesthetic feelings of the beautiful and sublime were entangled with intellectual ability and therefore determined levels of taste and civility. In *Observations*, Kant

⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁷ Mark Larrimore, “Antinomies of Race: Diversity and Destiny and Kant,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 42.4-5 (2008): 347.

⁸ Kant, *Observations*, 50.

⁹ Ibid., 61.

notes that appreciating the sublime requires a mature cognitive acuteness, which he claims black people did not have. The beautiful similarly entails the need for a mature sensibility that was said to be superior in white people.¹⁰ Kant distinguishes simple feelings like gratification from the “finer feelings” composed of the sublime and beautiful. He stated that simple feelings “can occur in complete thoughtlessness,” whereas finer feelings are reflective of and entail “talents and excellences of the intellect.”¹¹ For example, Kant describes the French, English, Spanish, and Germans as being tasteful and moral, although they expressed beauty and sublimity differently in their respective cultures.¹² Developing scientific principles, engaging with and creating beautiful and sublime works of art all represented the refined cultural taste of Europeans, according to Kant. To fill out his hierarchy, he propounds that Native Americans and Persians also had decent qualities and talents, though they were still inferior to white Europeans because they could not experience finer feelings to the same degree. On the other hand, he asserts that Africans had no “demonstrative talents” or “praiseworthy qualities,” which Kant assumed meant that black people were incapable of expressing any sort of Western aesthetic taste or intellectualism.¹³

Specifically concerning artistic genius, talent, and culture, Kant’s *Observations* was heavily influenced by David Hume. Hume was a Scottish empiricist who was especially insistent upon the inferiority of black people. Clearly agreeing with Hume’s position, Kant cites his contention that “the Negroes [are] naturally inferior to the Whites. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of that complexion, nor even any individual, eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences.”¹⁴ Expanding upon Hume’s argument, Kant goes on to say that even the worst white Europeans have been able to produce great accomplishments and earn respect, whereas the best Africans could never be as good as the most immoral and inadequate Europeans. Thomas Jefferson also had a similar statement in his *Notes on Virginia* (1784), expressing that “never yet

¹⁰ Ibid., 16-17.

¹¹ Ibid., 14.

¹² Ibid., 50-52.

¹³ Ibid., 58-59.

¹⁴ Ibid., 59.

could [he] find that a black had uttered a thought above the level of plain narration; never seen even an elementary trait of painting or sculpture.”¹⁵ The common eighteenth-century belief that black people lacked genius and thus could not create culture resulted in the notion that black people allegedly represented “an aesthetic threat, imperiling [European] culture.”¹⁶ Kant asserts that black culture involved a “religion of fetishes” with ridiculous practices that included worshipping objects and engaging in disorderly ceremonies.¹⁷ Because African spirituality greatly varied from European Christianity, the tribal rituals appeared not only odd, but also immoral to Kant and others. Based on their skin color and its supposed cognitive disadvantages, Kant and others alleged that black people did not have honorable cultures and feared they would undermine European culture.

This perception also stemmed from Kant’s perspective of purity, morality, and beauty, which was steeped in European tradition that dates back to ancient Greece and Rome. The revival of classical Greek and Roman ideas began in the Renaissance and continued throughout the Enlightenment as educated elites looked to ancient thinkers for the roots of their ideas. Kant claimed that there was a universal ideal of beauty which was adopted from Greek and Roman ideals of beauty and oftentimes emphasized whiteness.¹⁸ In *Observations*, Kant praises the ancients and their aesthetic successes: “The ancient times of the Greeks and Romans displayed clear remarks of a genuine feeling for the beautiful as well as the sublime in poetry, sculpture, architecture, legislation, and even in morals.”¹⁹ Greek and Roman people as well as the arts they created typically exemplified the pinnacle of beauty and sublimity idealized in Western states. Cornel West points to this “appreciation and appropriation of the artistic and cultural heritage of ancient Greece” as the reason that whiteness as an ideal quality gained a firmer foundation in eighteenth-century racism.²⁰ Eighteenth-century Europeans sought to emulate Greek and Roman culture in order to

¹⁵ Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 1781.

¹⁶ Monique Roelefs, *The Cultural Promise of the Aesthetic* (Bloomsbury: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 36.

¹⁷ Kant, *Observations*, 59.

¹⁸ Nell Painter, *The History of White Paper* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010), 61.

¹⁹ Kant, *Observations*, 61.

²⁰ West, “A Genealogy of Modern Racism,” 96.

maintain a prosperous, moral society. Thus, they linked prosperity and morality with whiteness and connected immorality with blackness.

Early in *Observations*, Kant also notes that “blue eyes and blonde color [are closer] to the beautiful” than darker features.²¹ In effect, when these ideals of beauty were translated into the human form, they predominately referred to white people of Western European origin. Black features were viewed with disgust as they did not match any classical or neo-classical visions of beauty. Therefore, West writes, “the net result [of Kant’s ideal beauty] was that since black people were farthest from the Greek ideal, ... they were, by implication, inferior in beauty to Europeans.”²²

Furthermore, by emphasizing the beauty and purity of Greek ideals and whiteness, blackness came to be more readily recognized as a symbol of degeneracy, of a deviation from moral righteousness.²³ It created a dichotomy in which “Kant’s position manifests an inarticulate subscription to a system of thought which assumes that what is different, especially that which is ‘black,’ is bad, evil, inferior, or a moral negation of ‘white,’ light, and goodness.”²⁴ Blackness was thus viewed not only as an aberration, but also as a devious asset that threatened European virtues. White Europeans elevated themselves and their culture to moral superiority and viewed their prejudices as protectants against black “degeneracy.” Kant, as an authority in moral thought, was able to fashion a racism linked with moral philosophy as well as with ancient conceptions of beauty and goodness.

This view of degeneracy in Kant’s work is specifically derived from his discussion of defective versions of the beautiful and sublime. He wrote that such deviations then become “the most extreme imperfections.”²⁵ For instance, if the sublime collapses into its worst form, it “becomes entirely unnatural” and is found only in “grotesqueries.”²⁶ In the section “On National Characters,” Kant then relates this degeneracy to black people by saying that they had no feeling of the sublime because they had no feeling other than the

²¹ Kant, *Observations*, 20.

²² West, “A Genealogy of Modern Racism,” 101.

²³ Eze, “The Color of Reason,” 118.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 117.

²⁵ Kant, *Observations*, 21.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

“ridiculous,” which is the degenerate form of beauty.²⁷ This then suggested that black people represented the degeneration of the sublime in its most imperfect, grotesque, and unnatural state. Subsequently, black individuals themselves were said to be at least partially imperfect, grotesque, and unnatural. Kant correlates degenerate feelings of the ridiculous and grotesque with the supposed degeneracy of the actual black human being.

Kant also articulates such “degeneration” in connection with beauty when he writes, “The feeling of the beautiful degenerates if the noble is entirely lacking from it, and one calls it ridiculous.”²⁸ Kant then states that “the Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous.”²⁹ According to this proposition, black people could never be more than ridiculous since such deviances were inherent and fixed. Moreover, when the beautiful sinks to the “ridiculous,” it loses its nobility, meaning that it loses its worth and becomes absurd.³⁰ Following from this, Kant suggests that black people and their culture were unable to progress and that “he [who] descends to the ridiculous, is [also] dawdling and childish.”³¹ This bolstered stereotypical descriptions of black people as indolent and infantile. Describing ridiculous feelings and people as childish also implied that black people needed to be cared for by white people to ensure their well-being, thus corresponding with pro-slavery arguments.

Not only does Kant’s discussion of the grotesque and ridiculous degrade black people, but it also attacks their fundamental personhood. He contends that the feelings of the beautiful and sublime are essential parts of human nature, but that black people were minimally, if at all, able to feel such feelings in their true, noble states. Thus, when he declares that Africans and their cultural practices “sink so deeply into the ridiculous as ever seems to be possible for human nature,” he proclaimed that black people were inherently less human than other races and reduced them to the lowest form of human beings.³² It was not simply that black people lacked intelligence, feelings, and beauty

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

³² *Ibid.*, 59.

according to Kant, but that they were actually less human than other races. They seemingly did not possess fundamental human abilities to make them complete human beings. This view of black people relegated them to an uncivilized, animalistic status in comparison to white Europeans. Though this conception was fallacious, it was a popular view held at the time.

As a landmark in racial thinking of the eighteenth century, such statements and implications had dreadful repercussions throughout the 1700s and beyond. First, by limiting their ability to “feel” in a general sense, Kant perpetuated the stereotype that black people were naturally prepared for the harsh conditions of slavery. Physical and emotional feelings themselves were vital human characteristics that African descendants were deprived of. Europeans dehumanized black people and used this to justify corporeal and mental torment within the institution of slavery and racial oppression throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.³³ Kant’s proposition that those of African descent were incapable of feeling the beautiful and sublime led to a slippery slope in which black people were continuously denied the ability to feel other sensations, such as both pain and pleasure. Historian Susan Shell sums up Kant’s argument as: “Only Europe... which *mixes* sublimity with beauty, is fully expressive of and open to a feeling for the beauty and dignity of human nature.”³⁴ Stripped of their dignity and humanity, black people were subjected to horrific domination by white people.

Not only did views such as Kant’s initiate inhumane domination of black individuals, but this racial ideology also attempted to preserve a racial hierarchy that could justify slavery. Cultural historian Simon Gikandi notes,

Defined as nonsubjects in European discourses on art, culture, and taste, African slaves were not capable of reflection, and because they were incapable of reflection they fell short of personhood. This insidious dialectic would continue to drive pro-slavery ideologies, and more devastatingly, the logic of the laws that regulated slavery.³⁵

³³ Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 208.

³⁴ Susan Shell, “Kant as Propagator: Reflections on *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35.3 (Spring 2002): 463.

³⁵ Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste*, 225.

Circular arguments such as the above often bolstered cases in favor of black inferiority as well as slavery. Kant implied that black Africans lacked genius and motivation and could only be educated or useful as dependent beings.³⁶ Although proponents of abolitionism and racial equality grew during the Enlightenment, Kant's text elucidates that even some of the educated elite still held strong racist beliefs. *Observations* is a novel text in regard to aesthetics, but a conservative text in regard to racial ideology. Its arguments in favor of black inferiority bolstered pro-slavery cases and further drilled aesthetic judgements into racial discrimination.

In addition to slavery, imperialism and colonialism increased during the Enlightenment, which were as much causes as results of developing race theories such as Kant's.³⁷ Imperialism and colonialism were causes because the quest for new markets and land prompted a need to rationalize subjugating others in order to acquire resources. Consequently, imperialism and colonialism were also results of race theories because, with a seemingly solid justification for treating darker-skinned peoples as inferior to white Europeans, they were further pursued on the grounds that white Europeans had a responsibility to restrain and civilize these allegedly inferior peoples. Meg Armstrong also notes that Kant's ideas were in fact "repeated in later aesthetic comments comparing various nations, for instance at European and American fairs and expositions in the nineteenth century."³⁸ This signifies that Kant's ideas were widely circulated and impacted how the Western world viewed peoples of color, who then put those ideas into practice throughout the next century.

Although Kant's theory was widespread during the eighteenth century, not all Europeans held these same racist views. More equitable and tolerant visions of other cultures arose simultaneously with Kant's discriminatory beliefs during the Enlightenment period. Because Kant rarely left Königsberg, he had no genuine understanding of African culture or the people themselves, and based his views solely on

³⁶ Eze, "The Color of Reason," 116.

³⁷ Sally Hatch Gray, "Kant's Race Theory, Forster's Counter, and the Metaphysics of Color," *The Eighteenth Century* 53.4 (2012): 394.

³⁸ Meg Armstrong, "The Effects of Blackness: Gender, Race, and the Sublime in Aesthetic Theories of Burke and Kant," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticisms* 54.3 (Summer 1996): 224.

subjugated Africans brought to the Western world. Historian Sally Hatch Gray discredits Kant's race theory by contrasting him with German travel writer Georg Forster, who had traveled to Africa and the Pacific Islands for scientific expeditions in the early 1770s. Gray puts forth that Forster "had first-hand experience of different peoples" and opposed "any theory of race based on skin color," which is emphasized in his ethnological accounts. Forster acknowledged the complexities of various cultures, environments, languages, and attributes that contributed to differences in physical, emotional, and intellectual characteristics.³⁹ Experiences like Forster's were infrequent among white Europeans and Americans, but Forster's position on race is crucial because it helps to thwart Kant's theory. Having direct contact with peoples outside of European control or oversight, the example of Forster highlights the limited scope of Kant's *Observations*. Nevertheless, so intricate was Kant's interweaving of aesthetics and racism that it has taken centuries to defeat his philosophy and establish strong counter arguments to expose his faulty reasoning.

The logical foundation of Kant's racial theory is indeed unsound because he employed flawed observations that were based on mere prejudices, making his racism inexcusable and unjustifiable. Because he did not know black people separate from European subjugation, even his empirical understandings of black people contradict his attempt to argue for their natural traits because he relied on viewing them in forced debased states due to their enslavement or oppression. However, in terms of how he structured his argument within a text focused on aesthetics, *Observations* was one of the most distinctive approaches to the notion of race. By interweaving the alleged physical, emotional, and intellectual capabilities of people with aesthetic feeling and judgement, Kant merged the theoretical proposition of race with an ostensibly practical explanation of racial differences. As a result, *Observations* is an offensive yet seminal work. Although not all European intellectuals supported Kant's essentialism, Kant's theory must be understood in the context of the eighteenth century, meaning that his views were not unusual. What was new about Kant's racial theorizing was that he grounded it in aesthetic theory and that he was among the first who attempted to philosophically and historically explain perceived racial differences. Furthermore, his hierarchical notion of beauty was a

³⁹ Gray, "Kant's Race Theory, Forster's Counter," 395.

quintessential component in the ideology of racism because he made beauty an integral part of the racist argument against people of color.

Western notions of beauty, thus, are not separate from racist social-political views. Political, social, and cultural underpinnings drive Kant's philosophy, despite attempts to read *Observations* as a text concerned merely with aesthetics. Kant should be viewed neither as a pure aesthete nor as a vehement racist, but should rather be understood as a reflection of Enlightenment thought that was based both on rational, empirical explanation as well as white European racial prejudices. Perceiving his theory as one grounded in reason and observation, Kant and his contemporaries did not believe his thought was steeped in irrational prejudice. Despite their prevalence during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Kant's racial arguments have since been refuted and have much less influence today, although postcolonial thinkers still have much to modify. Nonetheless, Kant's *Observations* remains a pithy text with a prominent place in Western discourse and history due to its ideological and practical ramifications in subsequent centuries. Moreover, through illuminating the intersection of European culture and intellectualism, *Observations* underscores the pervasiveness of racism in even the most educated of Enlightenment thinkers.

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