Cover image: Witchcraft: a man on horseback visits a
woman via Wikimedia Commons

Our Team

Ethan Sanitt	President
Tallulah Di Tomaso	Vice President
Julius Balchin	Treasurer and Senior Editor
Jack Crosswaite	Senior Publicity Officer
Eli Rasmussen	Deputy Senior Editor
Amelia Ing	Editor
Joseph Manley	Editor
Ingrid Sykes	Podcast Editor

Mentalities

Durham University History in Politics Society Journal

Issue no. 5

Winter 2022

Mentalities

noun • plural

1   a   (1) :   modes or ways of thought

Contents

Senior Editor's letter

'Mentalities' offers a broad look at the ideas that have shaped history, treating such as powerful historical forces. It focuses on a variety of different locales, periods and actors, showing the breadth of mentalities' importance. Each article provides a different viewpoint and approach. This journal has received more submissions than any other the society has produced, meaning the work here represents some of the filtered-down best of the society's ever growing membership.

'Mentalities' opens with Joseph Manley's 'Shifting Mentalities of Money: A 'Currency Revolution' in Colonial Africa?'. This essay adopts a historicist approach to examining different theories of money in Colonial Africa, offering a succinct analysis of the field. Manley is followed up by Tallulah Di Tomaso's study 'Is it fair to label fin-de-siècle Europe as an age of pessimism?', which examines the European mentality in the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries, analysing how optimistic, or sceptical, Europeans were about the world.

Thirdly, Jack Crosswaite looks at the reasons for the rise of Romantic Nationalism, centring his conclusion around the importance of discursive and literary ideas as a response to the changing context of the late eighteenth century. Crosswaite shows the importance of linking mentalities to their wider context, and not treating them in the abstract. Afterwards, Harrison Pincombe critiques Foucault's theory of "productive power" as lacking consideration for the subaltern angle of colonial societies. Foucault's approach is deemed excessively Eurocentric.

Next, Oscar Scott asks the question 'How subversive was the medieval Robin Hood tradition?', examining the historical basis of a popular British legend. Scott will show that far from being the revolutionary, subversive entity 'Robin Hood' is commonly associated with being, it instead reflected an attempt to maintain the existing social order. Following up, Florence Clifford turns focus to the mentality towards race in Colonial Myanmar. Clifford examines two parts of this change: its impacts on perceptions of race, and its impacts on race relations.

'Mentalities' then turns to Isaac Waterhouse's highly topical study 'Depraved, foreign and intolerant: How popular perceptions of Muslim rulers are informed by contemporary and modern sources, and their impact on Hindu Muslim re-

lations.' Waterhouse reveals the importance of societal interpretations of history to mentalities in the modern day. Subsequently, Szymon Kwapiszewski returns the journal to the topic of romanticism examining, examining 'The Influence of The 'Hegemonic' Imperialism on German, Russian and Polish Romantic Movements'. Kwapiszewski complements Crosswaite by again showing the importance of examining mentalities in their historical context, this time imperialism specifically.

Finally, Ingrid Sykes examines 'the history of immigration before 1914' and whether it proves 'the idea that Britain is a tolerant 60 society?'. Sykes treats the 1905 Alien Act as a key turning point in the history of xenophobia in Britain, ending the 'tolerant' consensus of Britain towards immigration before the Act. The article reveals the interplay between popular and government mentalities.

This journal would not be possible if it wasn't for the Society's editorial team and their hard work and skill. I, therefore, thank Amelia, Eli and Joseph. I also thank Ethan and Tallulah for their hard work as President and Vice President respectively, the two being responsible for organising the wider society and offering constant support to the editorial team. Finally, I would like to thank Jack for his work as publicity officer, responsible for advertising the journal and assuring a record number of submissions.

Julius Balchin

Senior Editor

A 'Currency Revolution' in Colonial Africa?

Joseph Manley

Shifting Mentalities of Money: A 'Currency Revolution' in Colonial Africa?

I n 1944, Polanyi's seminal thesis posited a "Great Transformation" in humanity's economic mentalities that occurred during the rise of the market economy.[1] Before this, he argues, market societies did not exist; transactional modes of redistribution, reciprocation, and household economies dominated social organisation. Material want satisfaction was not the exclusive driver of all economies, nor was price/quantity equilibrium or any other classical economic theories universally applicable in communities without a common market. To substantivists, market mechanisms and presuppositions of utility maximisation were not a natural or inalienable part of society or human nature, but a deliberate construction facilitated by a mental transformation involving the "fictitious commodification" of land, labour, and money.[2] The latter of these, and its posited role as a catalyst of this social and mental transformation, has triggered extensive debate in African historiography and anthropology. Previous discussion in the field was dominated by diffusionism, structural functionalism, marxist articulation theory and neoclassical analysis of African markets. The occurrence of a currency revolution that fundamentally transformed the socio-economic makeup of African communities as colonial monetary systems were introduced was brought forward in the 1950's and 1960's by substantivists Bohannan and Dalton.[3] Their work overhauled anthropological and economic study, yet by the turn of the century, the pendulum had swung firmly back against them. Guyer and Shipton opposed the currency revolution, noting how new currencies were interpreted and incorporated into existing economic structures in more diverse ways than were prescribed by substantivists. Most recently, Nathalie Swanepoel argued in 2015 that 'currency transition' was a more suitable characterisation of a process that she estimated to have lasted at least half a century.[4] The result is that Polanyi has been harshly relegated to description as "a compendium of exotica".[5] The conception of monetisation in Africa as Simmel saw it, the "principal catalyst for the transformation of social life… from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft", has been eroded to a greater degree.[6] However, its legacy is pronounced, having brought cultural analysis to the centre of our understanding of the significance of money and its changes. Through historicisation it has extricated African monetary history from formalist presuppositions of a universal mentality drawn from specific western developments, and countered prescriptive assertions of what the monetary transition theoretically should be with the recognition that "Money is what money does".[7]

Returning to the origins of substantivism, prior approaches sought out market mechanisms in traditional African forms of social organisation. Schneider argued that if specific cultural forms were put to one side, East African pastoralists lived in market societies recognisable to the west, and that differences in their economies were of "degree rather than kind".[8] Influenced by the postcolonial developmentalist movement that surrounded contemporary African political movements, he regarded their familiarity with market mechanisms as beneficial to future "national development".[9] "Individual Turu homesteads may be thought of as small firms", he claimed, and significantly insist-

---

1   K. Polanyi, The Great Transformation (Farrar & Rinehart, 1944) C. H. Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century (reprint. 1957); E. Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art (New York, 1972); C. Morris, The Discovery of the Individual 1050-1200 (1972).

2   Idem

3   P. Bohannan, "The Impact of Money on an African Subsistence Economy" The Journal of Economic History, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Dec 1959), pp. 491-503 C. H. Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century (reprint. 1957)

4   N. Swanepoel, "Small Change: Cowries, Coins, and the Currency Transition in the Northern Territories of Colonial Ghana" in F.G. Richard (ed.), Materializing Colonial Encounters: Archaeologies of African Experience (Springer, 2015)

5   B.Maurer, "The Anthropology of Money", Annual Review of Anthropology, Vol.35,, (2006), p.17

6   Simmel quoted in M. Bloch and J. Parry , "Introduction: Money and the Morality of Exchange" in Money and the Morality of Exchange, (ed). J. Barry and M Bloch, pp. 1–32. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989) p.4

7   Reynolds, quoted in G. Dalton, "Primitive Money", American Anthropologist, Vol.67 (1965), pp. 44-65

8   Harold Schneider, "Economics in East African Aboriginal Societies", in Melville Herskovits and Mitchell Harwitz (eds), Economic Transition in Africa (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1964), pp. 53-75

9   Idem

ed that the monetary mentality of the Turu represented a counter to Polanyi.[10] "East Africans seem normally to be oriented toward making profit", and they were already using their cattle as "functionally equivalent to money".[11] This meant that it would be feasible to construct a comprehensive economic model for their society, based on classical principles. Criticisms arising from the limited engagement of the Turu with the German imperial import economy were explained away via rational self interest, as that economy could not yet guarantee subsistence security, and the persistence of cattle after the introduction of imperial currency was justified not by culture but because, through bearing calves, cattle provided superior interest than cash.[12] Even after Bohannan's intervention, formalism would continue to hold great influence. In 1975, Curtin pointed to the renting of land in Gambia in 1797 as evidence that 'the existence of currencies and mechanisms for exchange (were) already functioning in a market sector'.[13] He goes further, arguing that "formal theory can be adjusted" to account for cultural difference.[14]

Bohannan, writing in response to structural functionalists and formalist analysis, strongly refutes any such universal notions of money mentalities. Rather, the introduction of imperial currencies transformed pre-existing economic structures, with deeply disruptive social consequences. He argues against Schneider, claiming that general purpose monies in precolonial Africa "evaporate or emerge as tricks of definition" under close analysis.[15] The uniscalar valuation was unthinkable in the midst of the Tiv's "multi-centric" economy with its three disparate "spheres of exchange".[16] This was broken up in the 19th and 20th centuries by traders, and the introduction of a single scale of equivalence was deeply disruptive to Tiv social

hierarchies. The cultural memory of this persisted, and the Tiv complained that the neighbouring Ibo would "spoil a market" through their use of imperial money.[17] Similarly, Dalton highlighted the significance of "limited purpose monies" in smaller scale communities without market integration.[18] In a key case study, Hopkins would apply the currency revolution thesis to the replacement of cowries with imperial currency in Nigeria.[19] The lack of a centralised directive for the currency supply in the cowrie system was blamed as a "fundamental weakness", leading to incentives for those in commercial competition to over-issue cowries and consequently enact uncontrolled inflation. For Hopkins, as for Bohannan, the introduction of general money would inevitably result in the eradication of inferior special purpose monies, and so the cowries and brass rods in prior circulation would naturally fall away. Hopkins claimed that the revolution was not the consequence of efforts by colonial forces to impose the imperial currency, and that the government was eager to avoid becoming "too closely involved with problems of monetary policy".[20] Indeed, the currency revolution was contemporaneously regarded by Europeans as natural, and new currencies were expected to require little active encouragement or support once introduced. The Ijebu, who opposed the introduction of silver currency to their markets, were told that there was "little point in trying to resist the inevitable".[21] Similarly, Lord Lugard warned the government not to concern itself too deeply with the continuance of the use of cowries, as the problem would "solve itself by natural laws".[22] Yet Guyer, Shipton, and Saul's work has comprehensively demonstrated this not to be the case, especially with Hopkins' example of the cowrie of West Africa.

10   Idem
11   Idem
12   Idem
13   P. Curtin, Economic Change in Pre-colonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1975), Chapter 6: 'Currency and exchange'
14   Idem
15   P. Bohannan, "The Impact of Money on an African Subsistence Economy" The Journal of Economic History, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Dec 1959), pp. 491-503
16   Idem
17   Idem
18   G. Dalton, "Primitive money", American Anthropologist, 67 (1965), pp. 44-65
19   A.G. Hopkins "The Currency Revolution in South-West Nigeria in the Late Nineteenth Century", Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 3, 3 (1966) pp. 471–83.
20   Idem
21   Idem
22   Idem

Guyer and Shipton sought to dispel the formalist conception of money's qualitative invariance and highlight the cultural different meanings ascribed to money, including to the kinds of centrally issued cash that early structuralists deemed so destructive and inevitably uniscalar. Guyer argues that in place of a currency revolution, coherent commercial cultures developed with multiple scales of value, in which difference proved to be a resource rather than an obstacle to the operation of the economy. While Bohannan regarded conversion as an attempt to insulate the Tiv from the socially corrosive consequences of modern money, Guyer posits an alternate thesis. He posits conversions between Tiv spheres were one instance of a wider class of transactions that develop and incentivise the perpetuation of differences, and by "bridging disjunctures" between spheres of exchange, a crucial "marginal gain" can be obtained.[23] These gains were culturally and politically expressed through various registers of value, notably in the the ranked offices and titles of Ibo secret societies.[24] On the issue of West African Cowries, Ofonagoro noted that it took half a century for pre-colonial currencies to lose their significance. Contrary to Hopkins, he argues that demonetisation of cowries was a "deliberate policy measure undertaken by successive British administrations".[25] Going further, Saul's work in 2004 is clearly influenced by Guyer and Shipton's ideas, noting how 'African agents strove and often succeeded in partly shaping the outcome' of the introduction of imperial monies. Over five decades, the French colonial government in the Volta region failed to replace cowries in the face of local opposition. Cowries occupied a function as a "great converter", and remained deeply popular into the 1940s, far longer than Hopkins and Ofonagoro had asserted. Meanwhile, imperial currency was stuck in its own 'narrow loop between produce sales and administration coffers', as Africans refused to use it for any other purpose. By a process of creative economic reinvention, imperial currency itself became special purpose money, for use only as a medium of exchange with the government and not as a legitimate store of wealth.

Similarly, Shipton argues that "Sybolics and economics need not be discrete topics'", and analysis of political and cultural economy should be balanced.[26] Amongst the Luo, cultural associations with money and restrictions on its use persist; money from the sale of land remains problematic, and can't be used to pay bridewealth. Contrary to Bohannan's assertions, money does not inevitably "scramble the spheres" of economic activity.[27] With the Luo, a vibrant mixture of market and non-market economy emerged, in which money was regarded as an inappropriate medium for certain social relations. The Luo case demonstrates a form of special purpose cash in a system that by Bohannan's model should have been ousted by general purpose money. Shipson and Guyer both argue that the transformation of the Tiv was overstated by Bohannan, and multiple societies in Africa integrated new monetary technologies into multi-scalar economies. Similarly to the Luo use of cash, Sharon Hutchinson emphasises the enduring significance of special purpose money with the Nuer. Central governments sought to create an export market for Neur cattle through monetisation, and partially succeeded. Yet this new money did not create a unicentric system, instead diversifying the weighted exchange system in which cattle remained the dominant metaphor of value. As recently as 1983 "money had not developed into a generalised medium of exchange".[28] The cultural concept of Riem, or blood, still imbued various cattles and currencies with qualitative value. This is not to say that money was not transformative, and the altered nature of the cattle market diminished the patriarchal authority of senior men derived from amassing cattle-wealth.[29] But money did not come to universally dominate the market, and disparate blood and non-blood spheres of exchange persisted.

Research springing from Guyer and Shipton ideas proved "remarkably adept at reinventing

23   J. Guyer, Marginal Gains: Monetary Transactions in Atlantic Africa" (University of Chicago Press, 2004) p.Xi

24   Ibid, Ch.1

25   W.I. Ofonagoro, "From traditional to British currency in Southern Nigeria: analysis of a currency revolution, 1880-1948", The Journal of Economic History, 39, 3 (1979),pp. 623-654.

26   P. Shipton, Bitter Money. Cultural Economy and Some African Meanings of Forbidden Commodities, (American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, 1989), p.9

27   Idem

28   S.Hutchinson, 'The cattle of money and the cattle of girls among the Nuer, 1930–83'. American Ethnologist 19, 2) (1992), pp. 294–316

29   Idem

the wheel" in light of substantivist developments, and have discredited the conception of a currency revolution in Africa.[30] They did not encourage a return to formalist analysis, and retained the cultural focus advocated by Polanyi. They further investigated the spheres of exchange Bohannan had noted amongst the Tiv, and posited that multiple registers of value could coexist. However, unlike Bohannan, they investigated the diverse ways in which colonial currencies were both financially and culturally incorporated to pre-existing economies before 1950, and Pallaver asserted that the circulation of multiple types of currencies were not incidental or transitional as implied by Bohannan, but "functional".[31] This process did not need to be placed within the context of a revolution; African societies accepted, transformed, and rejected various currencies through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Economic mentalities did shift, but with greater dynamism than previously suggested, and the nature of the social shift was dependent on the context of the economic, cultural, and physical environment.[32] Guyer's work is especially significant in forming a bridge between formalist and substantivist discourses, through which classical economic principles are not made obsolete in the face of culture. Analysis of the operation of such principles in Africa is deepened and enhanced by the recognition that enduring multi-scalar economies, qualitative valuations of money, and the systems of "conversion and conveyancing" between scales of value are not incidental but critical to the operation of both the economy and society.[33] They are profitable to many who operate within the system, and those differences continue to make up the "structuring resources of Atlantic African economic rationality".[34]

30   B.Maurer, "The Anthropology of Money", Annual Review of Anthropology, Vol.35,, (2006), p.16
31   K. Pallaver, 'Introduction: money, colonialism and African societies', in Karin Pallaver (ed.) Monetary Transitions: Currencies, Colonialism and African Societies (Springer: 2021), p.16
32   Idem
33   J. Guyer, Marginal Gains: Monetary Transactions in Atlantic Africa" (University of Chicago Press, 2004)
34   Idem

Bibliography

A.G. Hopkins ' The currency revolution in south-west Nigeria in the late nineteenth century', Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 3, 3 (1966) pp. 471–83.

Akanmu Adebayo, 'Currency devaluation and rank: The Yoruba and Akan experiences." African Studies Review 50, 2 (2007), pp. 87-109

Bill Maurer, 'The anthropology of money', Annual Review of Anthropology, 35, 2006, pp. 15-36

Eric Helleiner, The Making of National Money: Territorial Currencies in Historical Perspective (Ithaca, NY : Cornell University Press, 2002), pp.1-16.

George Dalton, 'Primitive money', American Anthropologist, 67 (1965), pp. 44-65

Harold Schneider, 'Economics in East African aboriginal societies', in Melville Herskovits and Mitchell Harwitz (eds), Economic Transition in Africa (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1964), pp. 53-75

Jacques Melitz, 'The Polanyi school of anthropology on money: an economist's view', American Anthropologist 72, 5 (1970), pp.1020-1040

Jane Guyer, Marginal Gains. Monetary Transactions in Atlantic Africa (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 2004), chapter 2, pp. 27-47.

Karin Pallaver, 'Introduction: money, colonialism and African societies', in Karin Pallaver (ed.) Monetary Transitions: Currencies, Colonialism and African Societies (Springer: 2021), pp. 1-28

Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation (Farrar & Rinehart, 1944)

Mahir Saul, 'Money in colonial transition: cowries and francs in West Africa', American Anthropologist, 106, 1 (2004), pp. 71-84

M. Bloch and J. Parry , 'Introduction: money and the morality of exchange' in Money and the Morality of Exchange, ed. J. Barry and M Bloch, pp. 1–32. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989)

N. Swanepoel, "Small Change: Cowries, Coins, and the Currency Transition in the Northern Territories of Colonial Ghana" in F.G. Richard (ed.), Materializing Colonial Encounters: Archaeologies of African Experience (Springer, 2015)

Paul Bohannan: 'The Impact of Money on an African Subsistence Economy'.

Parker Shipton, Bitter Money. Cultural Economy and Some African Meanings of Forbidden Commodities, (American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, 1989), pp. 3-15.

Philip Curtin, Economic Change in Pre-colonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1975), chapter 6: 'Currency and exchange'

Sharon Hutchinson, 'The cattle of money and the cattle of girls among the Nuer, 1930–83'. American Ethnologist 19, 2) (1992), pp. 294–316

Walter I. Ofonagoro, 'From traditional to British currency in Southern Nigeria: analysis of a currency revolution, 1880-1948', The Journal of Economic History, 39, 3 (1979),pp. 623-654.

Fin-de-siècle Europe and pessism

Tallulah Di Tomaso

Is it fair to label fin-de-siècle Europe as an age of pessimism?

As contemporary writer H.G. Wells articulated in his 1902 lecture titled "The Discovery of the Future", the fin-de-siècle was in the midst "of the greatest change that humanity had ever undergone".[1] This change was most explicitly illustrated through accelerated advances in technology, politics, and welfare across Europe. Though these developments were considered optimistically progressive by contemporaries, with hindsight, it is apparent that these progressions were merely illusory. By analysing the political motivations behind these advances, it is evident that these developments to better the nation were not driven by the genuine benevolence of politicians to improve the welfare of their populous, but rather to prosper in the global competition contextualized by Social Darwinism. Though these advances bought innovative change to contemporaries, many would fail to reap their intended benefits, as the underlying socio-political tensions surfaced by these developments would bring many European nations close to turmoil. It is therefore fair to consider the fin-de-siècle period as an age of optimism from a contemporary's perspective but it should be labelled as pessimistic from the historian's point of view.

Though fin-de-siècle contemporaries saw political developments intent on improving the health and welfare of the nation as indisputably optimistic, with Social Darwinism underpinning motivations for these advances, these progressions would prove merely illusory. Ameliorations to national welfare are demonstrated in legisla-tion across various European nations. Beginning under Bismarck with the Health Insurance Act in 1883 and compensation for accidents in 1884, the expansion of state welfare manifested into coordinated national health policies such as the French public health reforms, introduced in 1902.[2] However, though these reforms explicitly contributed to an optimistic development of the national welfare, its motivations were underpinned by the hostile global competition created by "Social Darwinism". Social Darwinism is a concept constructed from the nineteenth-century nationalist mutation of Charles Darwin's theory of "survival of the fittest".[3] His evolutionary theory was manipulated and applied to human society and its social attributes, such as reason, religion, and morality, inciting competition between individuals and states.[4] This rhetoric, combined with pre-existing concerns over the degeneracy of the nation-state in this period, would lead to global competition regarding the welfare of a state, thus exacerbating tensions between European nations.[5] These particular tensions were illustrated in Franco-German relations during this period, notably following France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871.[6] France's declining fertility in the period bolstered a national insecurity due to Social Darwinism's rhetoric which correlated birth rate to productivity and quantity of workers.[7] This would lead France to counter Germany's demographic superiority with cultural caricatures of Germany as a nation that overconsumed in both beer and "disgusting food", advantageously utilising growing concerns over diet and the social ills caused by alcoholism.[8] In the climate of Social Darwinism with increasing concern over the welfare of the nation,

1   H. G. Wells, The Discovery of the Future (New York, 1913), p. 59.
2   Reinhard Busse et al., 'Statutory health insurance in Germany: a health system shaped by 135 years of solidarity, self-governance, and competition', Germany and Health, Volume 390, Issue 10097 (2017), p. 882; Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, Volume III: The Period of Fortification, 1880-1898 (Princeton, 2014), p. 150; Ann-Louise Shapiro, 'Private rights, public interest, and professional jurisdiction: The French Republic Health Law of 1902.' Bulletin of the History of Medicine 54, 1 (1980), p. 4.
3   Richard G. Oslon, Science and Scientism in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Urbana, 2008), pp. 252-3
4   Mike Hawkins, Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860–1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat (Cambridge, 1997), p. 61.
5   Oslon, Science and Scientism, p. 277.
6   Wolfgang J Mommsen, Imperial Germany 1867-1918: Politics, Culture, and Society in an Authoritarian State (London, 1995), p. 59.
7   Ibid., p. 55; Michael E. Nolan, The Inverted Mirror: Mythologizing the Enemy in France and Germany, 1898-1914 (New York and Oxford, 2005), p. 55.
8   Nolan, The Inverted Mirror, pp. 62-3.

these typically inconsequential accusations would inflame, thus motivating government leaders to create welfare reforms. Ultimately, though it is fair for contemporaries to perceive this as a period of optimistic progress for the welfare of the nation, historians can fairly label this as a period of pessimism as, under an analytical approach, it is revealed that legislation enacted to improve citizen's welfare was merely a tool in the global competition of Social Darwinism.

The development of international cooperation in the fin-de-siècle allowed many contemporaries to believe they were entering a period of optimistic peace.[9] However, due to the sustained hostility under the global competition of Social Darwinism, these pursuits of peace would ultimately be fruitless. With Social Darwinism invoking competition between European states, in conjunction with the rise of imperialist leaders such as Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and King Leopold II of Belgium, antagonisms burgeoned between nations, especially regarding colonial borders.[10] Following his policy of Weltipolitik, Kaiser Wilhelm's rapid pursuit to "acquire colonies and a strong navy" meant European states were soon pushed into colonial conflict.[11] This can be demonstrated in crises such as the "Fashoda-Incident", bringing Britain and France to the brink of war over colonial possessions in 1898.[12] International efforts attempting to diminish these tensions followed, with the first Hague Conference in 1899 that would establish the Permanent Court of Arbitration to settle international disputes, which contemporaries perceived as a triumph in international law and peace.[13] This encouraged treaties of reconciliation between nations such as the post-Fashoda-Incident Entente Cordiale between Britain and France in 1904.[14] However, as optimistic as these agreements seem, these alliances were instead binarily dividing Europe and setting the stage for war.[15] The renewal of the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria and Italy in 1887 would instigate this dividing dynamic as the Entente Cordiale would go on to provide a French-British alliance used against Germany in the Moroccan crisis in 1905-1908.[16] These political divisions demonstrate that though it was fair for contemporaries to label the fin-de-siècle as an age of optimism due to the international pursuit of peace, in understanding the political relations through hindsight, it is appropriate at present to label the age as one of pessimism.

The fin-de-siècle witnessed profound technological development, most notably with advances in electricity, petroleum, the automobile, and aeroplane, propelling contemporaries' optimism for the future.[17] This can be demonstrated with the application of electrical understanding, manifested in Thomas Edison's electric light debuting at the International Electrical Exhibition in Paris in 1881.[18] A decade later would materialise the electrification of city tramways, proliferating the building of power stations, thus stimulating European economies.[19] Simultaneously was the creation of Daimler's engine, which would pave the way for the automobile industry, whilst providing a catalyst for the development of aerial technology simultaneously in the United States.[20] However, in tandem with declining European relations, these developments would later be directed toward the industrial pursuit of new weaponry to use in potential future conflicts. Due to the almost two decades of peace prior to the fin-de-siècle period, there was a growing romanticisation of warfare that would allow for a push towards the creation of deadlier weapons.[21] It is evident a modest arms race began in the late 1880s, demonstrated in British military expenses rising from £32 million to £44.1 million in the decade following 1887 to

---

9   Oron J. Hale, The Great Illusion, 1900-1914 (New York, 1971), p. 16.

10   Nolan, The Inverted Mirror, p. 18; J.M. Roberts, Europe, 1880-1945 (London, 1967), p. 104.

11   Mommsen, Imperial Germany, p. 51.

12   Keith Eubank, 'The Fashoda Crisis Re-Examined' The Historian 22, no. 2 (1960), p. 145.

13   Hale, The Great Illusion, p. 20.

14   R. Wolfson and J. Laver, Years of Change: European History 1890-1945 (London, 1996), p. 98.

15   Ibid., pp. 166-9.

16   Chris Cook and John Paxton, European Political Facts, 1848-1918 (London, 1978), p. 167.; Wolfson and Laver, Years of Change, p. 98.

17   Hale, The Great Illusion, p. 56.

18   Ibid., p. 56.

19   Ibid., p.57-8.

20   Ibid., pp. 60-62.

21   Nolan, The Inverted Mirror, p. 32.

contest Germany's similar rising budget.[22] Britain would use this rising budget through investment in arms production whereby in the decade following 1900, private arms producers took on 60% of supply contracts for the armed force whilst simultaneous interests and investments in aerial warfare would be taken up by Germany and France.[23] The growing investment in arms production and weaponization of aerial technology demonstrates that despite the fitting contemporary optimism about technological advances, growing anxieties regarding a coming conflict were evident, demonstrating from the historian's perspective, it is fair to label the fin-de-siècle as an age of pessimism.

Contemporary optimism for a progressive future during the fin-de-siècle can be found through the growth of suffrage which would in turn proliferate mass political movements and the creation of new parties from across the political spectrum. Extensions of suffrage can be demonstrated with the vast electoral reforms during this period such as with Britain in 1884, the Netherlands in 1887, Spain in 1890, Austria in 1896, Norway in 1900 and more continuing into the early 20th century.[24] Though, superficially, these legislative processes were objectively optimistic in the hope for an increasingly democratized society, in analysing the interests of the politicians who granted them it is revealed that these extensions of suffrage, had ulterior motivations that would ultimately undermine the established liberal political system in Europe.[25] This was demonstrated in Italy when in 1889, there was an extension of suffrage at the level of local elections for literate men, which more than doubled the electorate, thus stimulating hopes for the enfranchisement of the broader populous.[26] However, this measure in combination with the creation of larger councils for larger populations was ultimately driven by political motivations under Prime Minister Crispi to strengthen local Catholic and Socialist authority and in the long term, to undermine the prevailing liberal regime.[27] Pessimistic

threats to the liberal order also emerged through new political movements and parties which materialised from the newly enfranchised populous. Although they were initially formed to serve and represent their interests, they would ultimately mutate into more radical forces, thus creating an uncooperative polarised political realm. This was demonstrated in Germany with the rising popularity of their Socialist party the SPD, which would manifest in 1890 with an increase in their seats in the elected Reichstag body from 35 to 44 in 1893.[28] Coincided with the expanding socialist movement in Germany, the assassination of French president Carnot by an Italian anarchist in 1894 would lead Kaiser Wilhelm to construct a case against socialism, proclaiming a battle against "parties of the revolution".[29] This demonstrates that new parties that emerged from wider enfranchisement, stimulated the polarisation of political bodies into a state of non-cooperation, contributing to the decline of the liberal state. These divisions that proliferated radical political movements were demonstrated throughout Europe evident in the rise of Syndicalists emerging out of the French and Italian socialist parties, tensions in the Austrian government between Czech, Pole and German nationalist movements and the rising international movement of antisemitism.[30] These examples provide evidence for the political polarisation that propelled increasing hostilities within the government. Growing radicalism in politics, combined with the malintent of government leaders who used the extension of suffrage to undermine the liberal political regime, would ultimately lead to the breakdown of the pre-existing political order. Therefore, though it was appropriate for contemporaries to view this as an age of optimism due to the actions taken towards universal suffrage, once analysed it is fair for historians to label the fin-de-siècle as an age of pessimism.

Ostensibly optimistic progress is demonstrated in the challenges to church authority through the

---

22   Eric J. Hobsbawn, The Age of Empire 1875-1914 (London, 1994), p. 307.
23   Nolan, The Inverted Mirror, p. 40.
24   Giovanni B. Pittaluga, Giampiero Cama, and Elena Seghezza, 'Democracy, Extension of Suffrage, and Redistribution in Nineteenth–Century Europe.' European Review of Economic History 19, no. 4 (2015), p, 324.
25   Hobsbawn, The Age of Empire 1875-1914, p. 104.
26   Martin Clark, Modern Italy, 1871-1982 (London, 1984), p. 93.
27   Ibid., p. 93.
28   Wolfson and Laver, Years of Change, p. 84.
29   Ibid., p. 84.
30   Cecil J.S Springe, The Development of Modern Italy (London, 1943), p. 92; Wolfson and Laver, Years of Change, p. 18.; Hobsbawn, The Age of Empire 1875-1914, pp. 158-159

secularisation movement during the fin-de-siè-cle.[31] However, analysing the underlying tensions exacerbated by these developments allows the historian, from their perspective, to label the fin-de-siècle as an age of pessimism. Secularisation in the fin-de-siècle, defined by legislative actions taken to reduce the powers of the church in society, spanned across Europe. Early advances are demonstrated notably with Bismarck's "Kulturkampf", with laws limiting the power of the church from 1871 with the prohibition of Jesuit orders and the May laws in Prussia which would discipline church members and train and appoint local priests.[32] These laws later extended into the spheres of education, illustrated in the "Ferry Laws" passed during 1881-86, which established compulsory and secular primary education in France.[33] Though these were seen as moments of great progress, they would soon result in the exacerbation of underlying tensions between the church and liberal forces, leading to a binary, uncooperative split between the two sides. Tensions were demonstrated in Italy where legislation was enacted to reform charitable bodies to limit church power over them during the 1880s.[34] The Catholics resisted through the creation of associations such as the "Opera", a movement with various branches of activity such as education, rural banks, and local elections.[35] The Di Rudinì government of 1897 would crack down on these associations, thus galvanising the divisions created by the underlying tensions.[36] These divisions were reflected across Europe with the characterisation in the historiography of France undergoing the 'war of the two Frances' between republicans and the church both in the political and domestic spheres, alongside the rise of notorious politicians such as devout Christian Karl Lueger.[37] This formation of division that would inhibit any possibility for cooperation, demonstrates that though for contemporaries, progressive secularisation may have stimulated public optimism, the disunity created demonstrates it is fair from the historian's perspective to label the fin-de-siècle as an age of pessimism.

Ultimately with developments in politics, welfare, and technology perceived by contemporaries as optimistic advances toward a more promising future, it would be unjustifiable to label the fin-de-siècle as an age of pessimism if viewed solely through a contemporary lens. However, in analysing the motivations behind these developments, as beneficiaries of hindsight, historians can recognise that these ostensibly optimistic developments were leading toward a bleak future. This pessimistic future was a result of both the ulterior motivations of political leaders in the global competition driven by Social Darwinism, and simultaneous emerging threats of national strife due to provocations to pre-existing tensions in domestic politics, and religious realms. Ultimately, whilst contemporaries may have appropriately viewed this as an age of optimism, with the gift of hindsight, it is fair for historians from their perspective, to label the fin-de-siècle as an age of pessimism.

---

31   Hale, The Great Illusion, p. 111.

32   Rebecca Ayako Bennette, Fighting for the Soul of Germany: The Catholic Struggle for Inclusion after Unification (Cambridge, MA, 2012), p. 43.

33   Barry H Bergen, 'Review of Primary Education in Third Republic France: Recent French Works', History of Education Quarterly 26, no. 2 (1986), p. 271.

34   Clark, Modern Italy, p. 105.

35   Ibid., p. 107

36   Clark, Modern Italy, p. 107.

37   James McMillan, 'Priest Hits Girl': on the Front Line in the 'War of the Two Frances', in Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser (eds.), Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe, (Cambridge, 2003), p. 77; Hobsbawn, The Age of Empire 1875-1914, p. 91.

Bibliography

Bennette, Rebecca Ayako, Fighting for the Soul of Germany: The Catholic Struggle for Inclusion after Unification (Cambridge, MA, 2012)
Bergen, Barry H., 'Review of Primary Education in Third Republic France: Recent French Works, by Mona Ozouf, Pierre Chevallier, Danielle Delhome, Nicole Gault, Josiane Gonthier, and Dominique Maingueneau', History of Education Quarterly 26, no. 2 (1986), pp. 271–85.
Reinhard Busse et al., 'Statutory health insurance in Germany: a health system shaped by 135 years of solidarity, self-governance, and competition', Germany and Health, Volume 390, Issue 10097 (2017), pp. 882-897
Clark, Martin, Modern Italy, 1871-1982 (London, 1984)
Cook, Chris and Paxton, John, European Political Facts, 1848-1918 (London, 1978)
Eubank, Keith, 'The Fashoda Crisis Re-Examined' The Historian 22, no. 2 (1960), pp. 145–62.
Hale, Oron J., The Great Illusion, 1900-1914 (New York, 1971)
Hawkins, Mike, Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860–1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat (Cambridge, 1997)
Hobsbawn Eric J., The Age of Empire 1875-1914 (London, 1994)
McMillan James, 'Priest Hits Girl': on the Front Line in the 'War of the Two Frances', in Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser (eds.), Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe, (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 77-101.
Mommsen, Wolfgang J., Imperial Germany 1867-1918: Politics, Culture, and Society in an Authoritarian State (London, 1995)
Nolan, Michael E., The Inverted Mirror: Mythologizing the Enemy in France and Germany, 1898-1914 (New York and Oxford, 2005)
Oslon, Richard G. Science and Scientism in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Urbana, 2008),
Pflanze, Otto, Bismarck and the Development of Germany: The Period of Unification, 1815-1871 (Princeton, 2021)
Giovanni B. Pittaluga, Giampiero Cama, and Elena Seghezza, 'Democracy, Extension of Suffrage, and Redistribution in Nineteenth–Century Europe.' European Review of Economic History 19, no. 4 (2015) pp. 317-334
Roberts, J.M., Europe, 1880-1945 (London, 1967)
Shapiro, Ann-Louise, 'Private rights, public interest, and professional jurisdiction: The French Republic Health Law of 1902.' Bulletin of the History of Medicine 54, 1 (1980) pp. 4-22
Springe, Cecil J.S, The Development of Modern Italy (London, 1943)
Wells, H. G., The Discovery of the Future (New York, 1913)
R. Wolfson and J. Laver, Years of Change: European History 1890-1945 (London, 1996)

Romantic attitudes and the Enlightenment Era

Jack Crosswaite
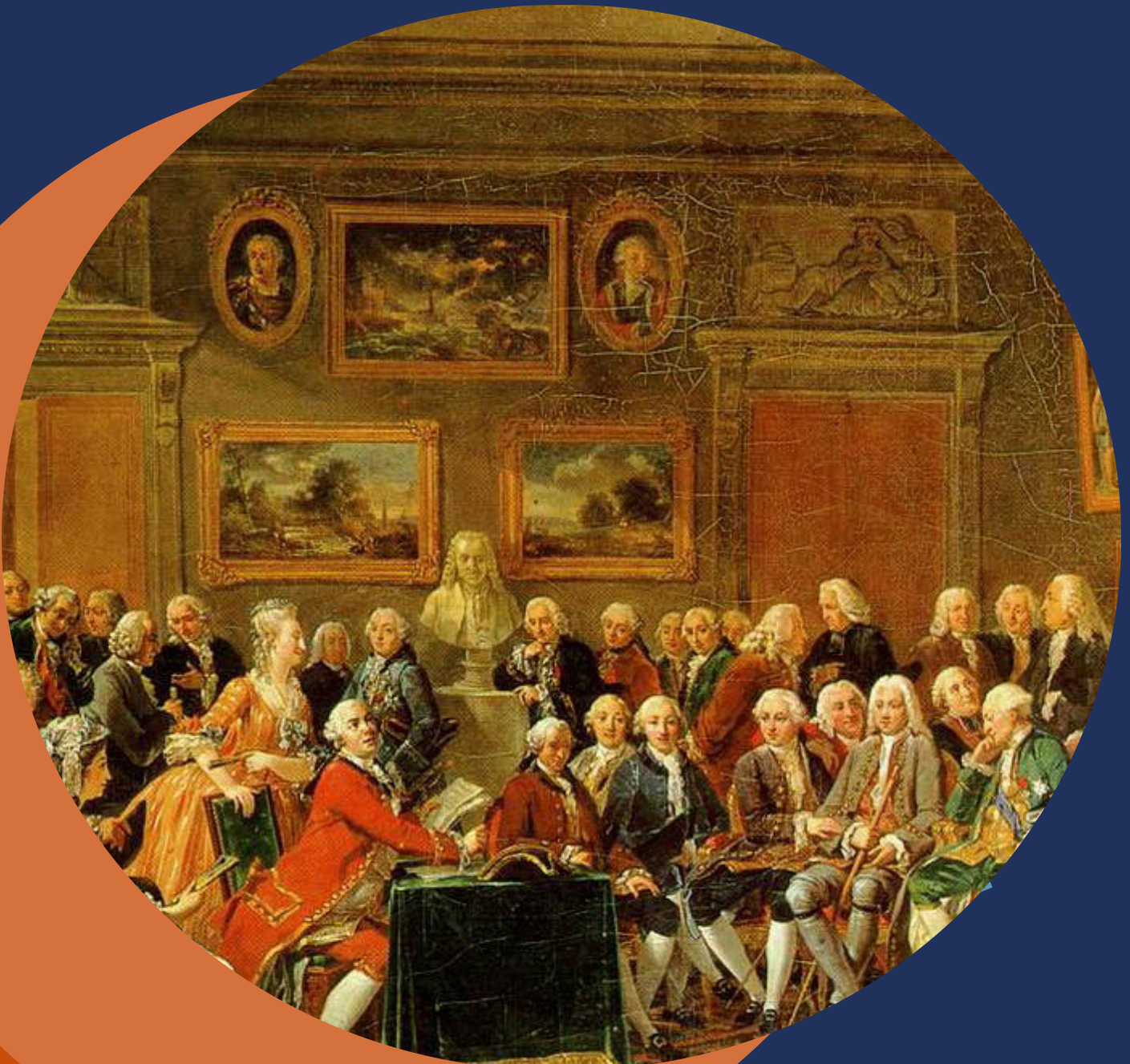
What were the most important reasons for the rise of Romantic attitudes?

The discussion of the reasons for the rise of Romantic attitudes is inseparable from the debate over its definition. This is a difficult task with the movement being almost indefinable. Kierkegaard states 'I must first protest against the notion that romanticism can be enclosed within a concept, for romantic means precisely that it oversteps all bounds.'[1] The term arose in Jena 1798 around Schlegel and his circle who wanted to define a form of literature that they thought to be distinct from the classical form that was prevalent at the time.[2] Much debate litters the historiography of the Romantic movement and serves little purpose other than to distract and disrupt. An example of this would be Lovejoy's suggestion that '"Romanticism" as a whole- is a fatuity' and that the term had little meaning.[3] This misses the point of Romantic thought as a whole; it cannot be described. It is a feeling rather than a definition which is what Kierkegaard was so eager to demonstrate. Romanticism is much better described through common themes that permeate throughout it. These could include the importance of imagination to poetry, nature as the view to the world, a dislike for Newtonian science, a preference for organicism over mechanicism, the importance of symbolism and myth to poetry, the night, ruins and so on.[4]

This essay aims to demonstrate that at the heart of the rise of Romantic attitudes was a growing disappointment with industrialisation and the modernity that it created. Many, such as Isiah Berlin, have understood this as arising from counter-Enlightenment thought but the misgivings of the period were much more potent and entrenched than that.[5] The Enlightenment was just one of the representations of modernity that many of the Romantics hated. The criticisms of modernity and Romanticism cannot be understood without sociohistorical grounding as the period experienced seismic industrial changes. Furthermore, the French Revolution acted as a catalyst that accelerated growing feelings of disillusionment. This essay will further argue that Romanticism was a way of detaching oneself from the perceived crises of the time. Romantic art acted as a form of escapism; it was a means of escaping to the gothic and the medieval with myths and also rejecting the bourgeoise norms of the time such as with the Bohemians and Social Romantics. However, Romanticism did not simply act as a hallucinogen; it actively strove for better and to progress. As Novalis wrote, in his Hymns to the Night, 'I know the last day shall come- when Light no longer shall be scared by Night and Love' which is symbolic of how pessimism and escapism were not the only Romantic traits and that Romanticism did act to solve the problems that it perceived in the period.[6] This is best demonstrated through religion and the rise of Romantic Nationalism in the period. Religion was one of the dominant forms that Romantics used to attempt to galvanise a disheartened and fragmented world. In this sense, it is right to see Romanticism as a religious enterprise.[7] Moreover, Romantic Nationalism aimed to unite a community that was seen to be isolated by the modern industrial world. Overall, the disenchantment from the world caused by industrialisation and the French Revolution led to Romantic attitudes in the period, especially in the form of escapisms and solutions to the problems that modernity was manufacturing.

Romanticism was more than simply a literary phenomenon and it grew in protest to the increasingly industrial society of the time.[8] Romantics perceived modern life to be unfulfilling. One of the ways that modernity was criticised was through the destruction of social bonds and an increased sense of alienation. Loneliness was a big theme in Romantic writing such as in Rousseau's Julie, where there are discussions of alienation with Saint-Preux

1   B. Reardon, Religion in the Age of Romanticism: Studies in Early Nineteenth-Century Thought (Cambridge, 1985), p. 1.
2   M. Ferber, 'Introduction', in M. Ferber (eds.), A Companion to European Romanticism (Williston, 2008), p. 1
3   A. Lovejoy, 'On the Discrimination of Romanticisms', PMLA 39(2) (1924), p. 252.
4   Ferber, 'Introduction', p. 7.
5   R. Norton, 'The Myth of the Counter-Enlightenment', Journal of the History of Ideas 68 (2007), p. 637.
6   Novalis, 'Hymns to the Night', in F. Hardenberg and M.J. Hope (eds.) Novalis: His Life, Thoughts, and Works (Chicago, 1891), p. 241.
7   H.N. Fairchild, ''Romantic Religion'', in R.F. Gleckner and G.E. Enscoe (eds.), Romanticism (Detroit, 1949), p. 207.
8   R. Sayre and M. Löwy, 'Romanticism and Capitalism', in M. Ferber (eds.), A Companion to European Romanticism (Williston, 2008), p. 433.

writing that 'If I suffer, I have at least the consolation of suffering alone, and I have no desire for a happiness that could diminish yours.'[9] The first thirty years of the nineteenth century were crucial for the later Industrial Revolution.[10] It was a period very much in rapid transition and this transition left many lost. George Walker's 1814 Costume of Yorkshire shows how many in society were propelled into new forms of work such as people working with steam locomotives (fig.1). However, it also shows people working in more primitive and medieval-like jobs such as with leech-finders (fig.2).

(Fig. 1 George Walker, The Collier, University of Leeds, 1814.)

Wordsworth cherished these old-fashioned occupations and would sentimentalise them.[11] This can be seen in Wordsworth's preface to Lyrical Ballads; Wordsworth writes that 'Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil.'[12] Wordsworth suggests that the common man who works in these pre-modern activities is more in touch with their passions and their community as a whole. Artists were very much in tune with their social surroundings and that is what had the biggest impact on them. The impact of disillu-

sionment with the modern can be seen in Romantic art.[13] One form it took was through the form of the night. Ludwig Tieck came up with the vision of the moonlit-enchanted night, which had an incredible impact on the imagery of Romantic art. The darkness could be interpreted as an opposing force to the idea that the modern is progressing on the correct path such as when Novalis writes, in his Hymns to the Night, 'Light has its own fixed limits, but Night has a boundless unfathomable dominion; the reign of Sleep has no end.'[14] Novalis is criticising modernity and the idea of infinite progress which can be seen in some Enlightenment thought, such as Kant's belief in the inevitability of human progress, and suggests that this idea has been shattered by the infinite darkness.[15] The infinite opposes the idea of the finite and the way that human progress had previously been conceptualised. Fichte expanded upon the infinite in his Idea of Universal History, where he connects the infinite with human development and progress, writing that 'Human life on earth, and earthly time itself, are but necessary epochs of the one time and of the one eternal life.'[16] However, to suggest these ideas came from disillusionment with Enlightenment thought does not go far enough. There was widescale despair with the modern and this can be seen in the ways that Romantics sought to escape and through their attempts to solve problems of the modern-day.

One form of escapism was through tales and myths. One myth was that of Ossian. It was fabricated by James Macpherson but its impact across Europe in concerning national culture was undeniable. Macpherson was shaped by crises, namely when he was a child in the wake of the battle of Culloden.[17] It marked the last rebellion of Highland Scotland against England and what occurred there has been described as genocide.[18] This Proto-Romantic was influenced by this crisis which led him to look to former glory times through Ossian. This shows how the gothic was used to appeal to national identity and to strive against political and

---

9   J. Rousseau in P. Stewart, and J. Vaché (eds.), Julie, or the New Heloise: Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps, (Hanover, 1997), p. 25.

10   F.D. Kilngender, Art and the Industrial Revolution (London. 1972), p. 92.

11   Ibid., p. 96

12   W. Wordsworth, 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads' in S. Prickett, (ed.), European Romanticism: A Reader (2010), p. 74.

13   Sayre and L Öwy, 'Romanticism and Capitalism', p. 436.

14   Novalis, 'Hymns to the Night', p. 240.

15   H.G. Schenk, The Mind of the European Romantics: An Essay in Cultural History (Oxford, 1979), p. 10.

16   J.G. Fichte, 'Idea of Universal History', in R. Sältzer (eds.), German Essays on History (New York, 1991), p. 56.

17   H. Gaskill, The Reception of Ossian in Europe (London, 2004), p. 3.

18   Gaskill, Reception of Ossian in Europe, p. 3.

social upheaval in the period that would cause disillusionment and resentment in a community. Osian had a major impact on German thought and inspired tales across Europe. For example, Herder wrote Über Ossian und die Lieder alter Volker in 1772 where he championed the 'Enthusiasm for the savage.'[19] Wilhelm Grimm sees fairy tales to be incredibly important and suggests that the loss of this storytelling is representative of a greater sense of loss, writing that 'The custom of storytelling is on the wane just like all the familiar places in homes and gardens are succumbing to an empty splendour.'[20] Grimm sees these tales as a memory of past glory and does not want them to be 'Obliterated by the perversities of life.'[21] This is a clear criticism of modernity and the bourgeoise lifestyle that it promotes. Grimm suggests that modern life is corrupting and polluting the better parts of community and alienating individuals from a shared identity of the past which could be seen in these fairy tales. This criticism is very prevalent in the writings of Hoffman. Hoffman took fairy tales and placed them into nineteenth-century bourgeoise Germany, thus comparing the supernatural and exciting with the rational and banal.[22] In The Sandman, Olympia turns out to be an automated puppet and is very clearly a critique of the mechanistic Newtonian view of the world. Olympia was described to be 'Only acting like a living being' which has the connotations of a detachment between man and the mechanistic world of the present.[23] The criticisms of a Newtonian view of the world are not simply criticisms of Enlightenment thought; it is representative of a greater awareness of not being able to fully understand the changes that are permeating the society of the day. The use of tales acted as a means to critique bourgeoise society and to instead promote a common sense of community between isolated peoples.

Another form of escapism from the modern was utopianism, especially Social Romanticism. Utopian spirit was very much a part of Romanticism with Coleridge writing that 'The present is not the highest state of society' and that he can 'See the

point of possible perfection at which the World may perhaps be destined to arrive.'[24] This utopian thought can be seen in opposition to the modern bourgeoise lifestyle that was emerging at the time. Coleridge wrote that 'I have positively done nothing but dream of the System of no Property' suggesting that Coleridge had proto-socialist views in opposition to the modernity he was living through. Fourier wanted to throw off the shackles that modernity placed on men. He blamed the French Revolution for helping and supporting commerce and industrialisation which he felt led people to 'Infamy and crime.'[25] Writers like Fourier and Saint-Simon blamed the Enlightenment for allowing society to travel into crises.[26] Social Romanticism was an attempt to escape from the modern world and the chaos that it brought.

(Fig. 2 George Walker, Leech Finders, University of Leeds, 1814.)

The rejection of modern norms allowed for another form of flight away from the realities of the present. This rejection of modernity can be observed in Romantic travels, particularly those of Lord Byron. Scandalous behaviour was evident in his Turkish Tales where Byron talks of the 'Allure of the East' and how it is 'Corrosive of order and Virtue' which opposes the restrictions placed on him by modernity. Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is a long narrative poem that describes the travels of

---

19   K. Lokke, 'The Romantic Fairy Tale', in M. Ferber (eds.), A Companion to European Romanticism (Williston, 2008), p. 140.
20   J. Grimm and W. Grimm in J. Zipes (eds.), The Original Folk and Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm (Princeton, 2014), p. 4.
21   Ibid, p. 4.
22   K. Lokke, 'The Romantic Fairy Tale', p. 148.
23   E.T.A. Hoffman in P. Wortsman (eds.), The Sandman (London, 2016), p. 24.
24   R. Sayre and M. Löwy, Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity (Durham, 2002), p. 119.
25   R.C. Bowles, 'The Reaction of Charles Fourier to the French Revolution', French Historical Studies 1(3) (1960), p. 345.
26   J.S. Bakunin, 'Pierre Leroux on Democracy, Socialism, and the Enlightenment', Journal of the History of Ideas 37(3) (1976), p. 455.

a disenchanted man who seeks a distraction from modernity.[27] The true Romantic hero was an exile from society such as Rousseau who disliked the company of others saying 'I long for the moment when delivered from the fetters of the body, I shall be myself, without contradiction, without division, and shall have need only of myself in order to be happy.'[28] The wandering hero character was very popular in the Romantic period as it represented a way of relieving oneself from the sense of loss that the present-day presented. Caspar David Friedrich's Wanderer above the Sea of Fog shows a man that stands between the viewer and the sublime landscape of mountains in the distance (fig.3).[29] The wanderer is used as a medium between the viewer and the sublime landscape, representing the role that Romantics took up when they wrote their tales for the public at home; it was a way of escapism not just for the Romantic wanderer themselves but also for the reader who is escaping the mundane modern through this medium.[30] Another rejection of modern norms came from Bohemianism which set out to juxtapose itself with modern bourgeoise society. Bohemians were disillusioned with the modern to an extent that Grana has suggested that Stendhal, Flaubert and Baudelaire would have claimed to have wanted to kill themselves if it was not for curiosity about what the future would bring.[31] They represented a feeling of intellectual hopelessness with Gerard de Nerval writing 'Our Period was a mixture of activity, hesitation and idleness… Ambition was not of our age.'[32] Moreover, Nerval suggested that poetry was a way of distancing oneself from this hopelessness; 'The poet's ivory tower where we mounted even higher to isolate ourselves from the crowd.'[33] This sub-culture of individuals who did not want to fit into bourgeoise society had an allure to the masses such as with Murger's Scenes of Bohemian Life which shows an attempt to appeal to a mass audience, writing that they had 'No relation with […] crooks and assassins.'[34] Much like the travel tales, stories of Bohemian life acted as an escape for the reader. These forms of escapism point to moderni-

ty being the main problem that led the Romantics to seek the foreign or strange because the modern had left many lost.

Fig. 3 Caspar David Friedrich, Wanderer above the Sea of Fog, Hamburger Kunsthalle, c.1818.

Many Romantics sought to try to find solutions to the problems that modernity presented. Religion was used to re-enchant the world. The period faced a crisis of faith in thought and practice. The Romantics thought that the Enlightenment conceptualisation of Religion would lead to its destruction. Kant suggested that reason was located within humanity which could be seen to fight against Christian theology by diminishing God in comparison to a 'human-engineered salvation.'[35] However, it was not just Enlightenment thought that led to this crisis in religion. Industrialisation and the rise of big cities played a major part in the crisis of faith in the period. There were not enough churches

27   J. Watt, British Orientalisms, 1759-1835 (Cambridge, 2019), p. 4.

28   Reardon, Religion in the Age of Romanticism, p. 8.

29   J.J. Haladyn, 'Friedrich's "Wanderer": Paradox of the Modern Subject', Canadian Art Review 41(1), p. 47.

30   Idem

31   C. Grana, Bohemian versus Bourgeoisie: French Society and the French Man of Letters in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1964), p. 124.

32   J.E. Seigel, Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930 (Baltimore, 1999), p. 18.

33   Idem

34   Ibid., p. 125.

35   T. Pfau, 'Religion' in P. Hamilton (ed.), The Oxford Handbook to European Romanticism (Oxford, 2016), p. 739.

and schools being built and not enough clergy to meet the fast-growing demands of industrial cities.[36] Cities and industrial centres were allowed to grow without a strong religious influence which could lead to a sense of religious apathy or even irreligion. Romantics like Schleiermacher saw this crisis of religion and thought religion as a whole was at stake; Schleiermacher wrote 'Especially now, the life of cultivated persons is removed from everything that would in the least way resemble religion.'[37] Schleiermacher in response to this tried to reassert faith such as in On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers which contained a Romanticist reaction against rationalism and suggested that the world was divine.[38] Schleiermacher also attacks industrialisation writing that 'Manifestly the great aim of all industry spent in cultivating the earth is to destroy the dominion of the powers of nature over man' suggesting that industry is responsible for the great crisis of religion in the period.[39] Moreover, the Romantics had a Catholic revival in the period. Chateaubriand was a part of this catholic revival in the period with The Genius of Christianity 1802. The preface of the 1871 edition suggested that the '[French] Revolution had swept away in its desolating course all the landmarks of the ancient society' and that 'It was an auspicious moment for the fearless champion of Christianity, to herald the claims of that religion whose doctrines constitute the only safe guide of the governing and the governed.'[40] This preface shows this revival of Catholicism was seen to be in the face of modernity of the French Revolution suggesting that Catholicism was a path to better governance. Romantics saw that Catholicism in the past had led to order rather than crises like the present age. It was glorified shown by Chateaubriand who wrote that 'There was a need for faith, a desire for religious consolation, which came from the very lack of that consolation for so many years' in response to Napoleon's concordat with the Vatican.[41] This Romantic attempt to revitalise religion can be seen not only

in response to the Enlightenment thought on the subject that they very much detested but also as an incredible urgency to stop what they saw as a rise of irreligion and the downfall of religion due to modernity.

The French Revolution and the long-lasting political turmoil it caused was to further exaggerate the problems that modernity caused for the Romantics. It was originally seen as a ray of hope by many Romantics, as an era of 'Universal liberation' but with the crowning of Napoleon as emperor and French military domination in Europe, France could not be seen as the home of liberty.[42] The French Revolution and the impact of Napoleon on Europe would deeply entrench Romantic views with the likes of Fichte's Addresses to the German Nation being a major part of Romantic Nationalism in Germany. It would also exaggerate Romantic attitudes in Spain and particularly Russia, with Pushkin identifying Napoleon as one of the most important factors in the development of Russia's identity.[43] Not only did the French Revolution entrench Romantic Nationalism, but it also helped Romantics attack rationalism in the period, as the French Revolution adopted Enlightenment ideals as a form of propaganda. The French Revolution had been heralded by thinkers like Kant, Condorcet and Hegel as a new Age of Reason.[44] However, the Revolution would soon be targeted for its irrationality and would go hand in hand with the battle of the Romantics against many of the things they hated about the modern.

Romantic Nationalism can be seen as emerging from discourse about language. Herder emphasised the importance of language to a community and the importance of diversity between these communities.[45] These ideas would contribute to Romantic Nationalism and take off in response to the French Revolution and the Napoleon-enforced modernity that would be a consequence of it. Moreover, it would combine with national Historicism. This can be seen in Germany with Johann Chris-

36   H. McLeod, 'Introduction' in H. McLeod (ed.), The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe 1750-2000 (Cambridge, 2003), p. 17.

37   Pfau, 'Religion', p. 739.

38   Ibid., pp. 739-741.

39   F. Schleiermacher in R. Crouter (eds.), On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers (Cambridge, 1996), p. 63.

40   F. Chateaubriand in C.I. White (eds.), The Genius of Christianity or, The Spirit and Beauty of the Christian Religion (Baltimore, 1871), p. 6.

41   Reardon, Religion in the Age of Romanticism, p. 12.

42   J. Leerssen, National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History (Amsterdam, 2018), p. 114.

43   S. Bainbridge, 'Napoleon and European Romanticism', in M. Ferber (eds.), A Companion to European Romanticism (Williston, 2008), p. 464.

44   H.G. Schenk, The Mind of the European Romantics, p. 3.

45   J. Leerssen, National Thought in Europe, p. 107.

toph von Aretin's edited ancient manuscript on the life of Charlemagne in 1803 when the Holy Roman Empire was under the weight of Napoleon.[46] The preface sought to celebrate and connect the modern-day to when Charlemagne founded the Holy Roman Empire; 'It is now just a thousand years ago that Charlemagne founded the German Empire. I draw the reader's attention to this fact not only to point out how amazingly things are changing at the present day nor to bring to mind the recent events which threaten to destroy this same empire.'[47] The preface demonstrates how political crises in the modern-day were being solved by looking to the past. Romantic Nationalism attempted to unite community in a modern period where alienation and isolation appeared to be rife. Resistance to France and Napoleon led to a feeling of Romantic Nationalism, where communities appealed to the past and to language in opposition to the modernity that was represented by the occupying France.

In conclusion, the reason for the rise of Romantic attitudes in the period was the modernity and industrialisation that was associated with it. Romanticism was much more than a literary phenomenon and should not be defined solely against the Enlightenment but instead as a response to the transitions that Modernity promoted and the feeling of alienation and disillusionment to which it led.

---

46   Ibid., p. 128.
47   Idem

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Chateaubriand, F. in White C.I. (eds.), The Genius of Christianity or, The Spirit and Beauty of the Christian Religion (Baltimore, 1871)

Fichte, J.G., 'Idea of Universal History', in Sältzer, R. (eds.), German Essays on History (New York, 1991), pp. 53-62

Friedrich, C.D., Wanderer above the Sea of Fog, Hamburger Kunsthalle, c.1818

Grimm J. and Grimm W. in Zipes J. (eds.), The Original Folk and Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm (Princeton, 2014)

Hoffman, E.T.A. in Wortsman, P. (eds.), The Sandman (London, 2016)

Novalis, 'Hymns to the Night', in Hardenberg, F. and Hope, M.J. (eds.) Novalis: His Life, Thoughts, and Works (Chicago, 1891), pp. 239-246

Prickett, S. (ed.), European Romanticism: A Reader (2010)

Rousseau, J. in Stewart P., and Vaché J. (eds.), Julie, or the New Heloise: Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps, (Hanover, 1997)

Schleiermacher, F. in Crouter, R. (eds.), On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers (Cambridge, 1996)

Walker, G., Leech Finders, University of Leeds, 1814

Walker, G., The Collier, University of Leeds, 1814.

Secondary Sources

Bakunin, J.S., 'Pierre Leroux on Democracy, Socialism, and the Enlightenment', Journal of the History of Ideas 37(3) (1976), pp. 455-474

Blanning, T., The Romantic Revolution: a history (New York, 2011)

Bowles, R.C., 'The Reaction of Charles Fourier to the French Revolution', French Historical Studies 1(3) (1960), pp. 348- 356

Ferber, M., A Companion to European Romanticism (Williston, 2008)

Gaskill, H., The Reception of Ossian in Europe (London, 2004)

Gleckner, R.F., and Enscoe, G.E., (eds.), Romanticism (Detroit, 1949)

Grana, C., Bohemian versus Bourgeoisie: French Society and the French Man of Letters in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1964)

Hamilton, P. (ed.), The Oxford Handbook to European Romanticism (Oxford, 2016)

Haladyn, J.J., 'Friedrich's "Wanderer": Paradox of the Modern Subject', Canadian Art Review 41(1), pp. 57-61

Kilngender, F.D., Art and the Industrial Revolution (London. 1972)

Leerssen, J., National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History (Amsterdam, 2018)

Lovejoy, A., 'On the Discrimination of Romanticisms', PMLA 39(2) (1924), pp. 229-253

McLeod, H., (ed.), The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe 1750-2000 (Cambridge, 2003)

Norton, R., 'The Myth of the Counter-Enlightenment', Journal of the History of Ideas 68 (2007), pp. 635-658

Reardon, B., Religion in the Age of Romanticism: Studies in Early Nineteenth-Century Thought (Cambridge, 1985)

Sayre, R. and Löwy, M., Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity (Durham, 2002)

Schenk, H.G., The Mind of the European Romantics: An Essay in Cultural History (Oxford, 1979)

Seigel, J.E., Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930 (Baltimore, 1999)

Watt, J., British Orientalisms, 1759-1835 (Cambridge, 2019)

Michel Foucault's theory of 'productive power'

Harrison Pincombe

To what extent can Michel Foucault's theory of 'productive' power be considered Eurocentric?

Throughout his work, Michel Foucault revolutionised the study of power and its mechanisms. His tracking of the emergence of 'productive' technologies of power under modernity, which 'fashion, observe, know, and multiply… on the basis of their own effects' provided a crucial methodological framework through which to analyse power's ability to influence social change without abstracting from the minutiae of its operation.[1] His arguments inspired such figures as Judith Butler and Edward Said, the latter considering him 'an exemplary opponent of ahistorical, asocial formalism' and an inspiration behind his groundbreaking Orientalism.[2] However, a critical examination of his output reveals a worrying silence on the issue of the combined and mutually co-constitutive development of communities linked through coloniality. This essay will critically analyse Foucault's theory of power, and consider the extent to which it commits - or, through its silences, tacitly accepts - epistemic violence against subalternised subjects. It will be argued that while Foucault's concepts are indispensable for the study of knowledge production, his omissions are far from benign, and therefore, engagement and synthesis with postcolonial critiques are essential to allow a supersession of eurocentrism in this critical field.

Epistemicide, the continual suppression of oppressed forms of knowledge, is a defining attribute of coloniality, which works 'to classify and rank lesser humans' according to their ability to think and consciously act upon the world.[3] Such 'gagging' of pluriversal approaches to knowing 'otherwise' has been a silent but salient feature of European modernity from its beginning. From Locke's exclusion of indigenous communalist models of social organisation through his definition of property as private and individual, to Kant's assertion that 'humanity is at its greatest perfection in the race of the whites' colonial exclusion of non-europeans - who were 'made white' in and through colonisation - is at the heart of enlightenment modernity.[4] The perceived essence of European identity is constructed apophatically against that which it is not, with Western constructions of the Orient working to 'define… the West as its contrasting image, idea, personality'.[5] The extent to which Foucault analyses this foundational epistemological framework can thus be considered a litmus test for his success in uncovering knowledges hidden by the operation of power. Unfortunately, he follows a long tradition of Western radicalism in his near-absolute silence on coloniality's role in constructing the disciplinary power he so magnificently critiques. To take Foucault's Society Must be Defended lectures for example, where there is an entire lecture on Hobbes' theory of sovereignty, we find a deep examination of the State of Nature, and yet no analysis of Hobbes' explicit view that indigenous nations, 'the savage people… of America… live at this day in that Brutish manner'.[6] The construction of modern conceptions of the good in contradistinction to the colonial other is nakedly obvious here, as is Foucault's silence on it. This hegemonising of such constructions of Western identity would find full expression in the 'civilising' discourse epitomised by Kipling's 'White Man's Burden'. Thus, to conceive of European modernity without centering this process reflects a methodological internalism that is far from benign, as it erases the ways in which colonial constructions of the other as essentially inferior provided the theoretical lynchpin of hegemonic Western identity. Foucault instead examines Hobbes' arguments as defending a Feudal order brought to crisis by

---

1   M. Foucault, 'Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974-75' edited by Salamoni, A., Davidson, A.I., and Marchetti, D., translated by Burchell, G. (London, 2003), p. 48.

2   E.W. Said, 'Travelling Theory', in M. Bayomi and A. Rubin (eds.), The Selected Works of Edward Said: 1966-2006 (London, 2019), p. 214.

3   W.D., Mignolo, and C.E. Walsh, On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis (Durham, USA, 2018), p.153.

4   C. Murray, 'John Locke's Theory of Property, and the Dispossession of Indigenous Peoples in the Settler-Colony', The American Indian Law Journal, 10(1) (2022), pp 2-11; S. Manzoor-Khan, Tangled In Terror: Uprooting Islamophobia (London, 2022), p. 11.

5   E. W. Said, Orientalism (London, 2003), p. 2.

6   T. Hobbes, Leviathan or The Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil, edited by J.C.A. Gaskin (Oxford, 1998), p. 58.

a native European political historicism, 'from be-low', that invalidated monarchical 'divine rights'.[7] He discusses Hobbes' arguments on Sovereignty - specifically, how it is founded through fear after the fact of conquest - as a counter to the claims of the Levellers and the Diggers that the English Monarchy - descended as it was from Norman in-vaders - was illegitimate because of its colonising history. While Foucault states his desire 'to trace the history of this discourse of political historicism, and praise it', seemingly on anti-colonial grounds, he pays no attention to those outside of Europe who do so under the harsher conditions of a more developed and insidious colonial matrix of power, bearing the full brunt of what Zapatista activists in Abya Yala have recently termed the 500 year 'long night' of exploitation and domination.[8] Such a critical, contrapuntal reading of one of Foucault's most famous lectures, paying careful attention to who Foucault theorises as agent, reveals a trou-blingly salient methodological internalism, which has functioned - regardless of intent - to silently consolidate the racialised exclusion of colonised communities from the category of full, thinking subject.[9]

Indeed, even on those rare occasions when the colonial encounter is explicitly analysed by Foucault, it is in terms that consistently minimise the 'total violence' that this brings upon the col-onised.[10] In the same lecture for example, Foucault does acknowledge the extra-European origins of Western politico-social assemblages, asserting that the 'political and juridical weapons' of colo-nisation 'had a considerable boomerang effect on the mechanisms of power in the West, and on the apparatuses, institutions and techniques of pow-er'.[11] But such an assertion, while a great advance on silence, does little to integrate this insight into his overarching theoretical schema. The first vol-ume of The History of Sexuality for example con-tains the famous theory of biopolitics, in which it is argued that modernity gave rise to an effort

to construct 'the body as a machine: [with] disci-plining, the optimisation of its capabilities… the parallel increase of its usefulness and docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls'.[12] This again erases the experience of in-digenous subjects, whose interaction with moder-nity was structured mainly along logics of elimina-tion or expropriation, not docility. Settler colonists did not desire the productive extraction of labour power but rather the constructive expulsion of a surplus population from land which would be made productive territory - property, in the exclu-sionary, Lockean sense - after the fact. As Patrick Wolfe puts it, 'settler colonialism… destroys to re-place', with productive and repressive dimensions of power working simultaneously to cement dom-ination for the settlers. Bodies can be, and in the colonial case, still are, productive through their en-forced absence as well as through the docile pres-ence.[13] Thus, 'sovereign' power to kill is not simply the trace of a previously dominant Feudal econo-my of power, as Foucault implies through his as-sertion that the right to administer death 'was… for a long time one of the characteristic privileges of sovereign power'.[14] Rather, the spectacle of vis-cerally violent colonial repression is modernity, its dark side. Disciplinary power is a racialised/racial-ising mechanism; these tactics are co-constitutive of modernity, and obfuscating this fact is epistem-ic violence.

Even in the final lecture of Society Must Be De-fended, which explicitly analyses State racism, Foucault stubbornly retains a eurocentric inves-tigative framework. He argues for example that 'racism first develops with colonisation', whilst steadfastly refusing to elaborate on the specifici-ties of this technique's historical development in differing colonial contexts, as, for example, Wolfe does in his comparison of Native American and Af-rican slave experiences of racialisation in the US.[15] Thus, while recognising the importance of colo-niality, Foucault homogenises the mechanisms of

---

7   M. Foucault, Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-76, edited by M. Bertani and A. Fon-tana, translated by Macey, D., (London, 2020), p. 111.

8   Idem

9   E.W. Said, Culture and Imperialism (London, 1993), p. 122.

10   S. Legg, 'Beyond the European Province: Foucault and Eurocentrism', in J.W. Crampton, and S. Elden (eds.), Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography (Farnham, 2012), p. 266; F. Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, translated by C. Farrington (London, 2001), p. 41.

11   Foucault, Society Must be Defended, p. 103.

12   M. Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume One: The Will to Knowledge (London, 2020), p. 139.

13   P. Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', Journal of Genocide Research, 8(4), (2006), p. 388.

14   Foucault, The History of Sexuality, p. 135.

15   Foucault, Society Must be Defended, p. 256.

colonial encounter, and its multifaceted power-effects upon the colonised, in order to analyse its effects on a metropolitan us. The 'society' Foucault is speaking for and to is here made clear. Indeed, the only evidence he employs are the European examples of the Dreyfus Affair and the Nazi Holocaust, thereby obscuring the fact that all European society 'tolerated Nazism before it was inflicted on them… they were responsible for it… it oozes from every crack'.[16] Thus, while Foucault accepts the importance of colonial boomeranging, he minimises coloniality's constitutive role in modernity by implying that it is only 'a mechanism which allows biopower to work' rather than a grid within which all power articulates itself and differentially presses itself upon racialised bodies.[17] This framework - in spite of itself - pushes subaltern struggles further into the shadows of exclusion. Foucault's theories, while undoubtedly historicised, abstract and universalise from always European - and almost exclusively French - cases in over-totalising ways that render them 'a unique territory in which Foucault has imprisoned himself and others with him'.[18] As such blatantly Eurocentric suggestions as his argument that 'the period of great ravages from starvation and plague had come to a close before the French revolution' - despite the 1943 Bengali famine killing over 2.5 million Indians not 40 years previous to the publication of these words - make clear, Foucault remains entangled within a hegemonic coloniality always-already structured through the necropolitical power over 'who is disposable and who is not'.[19] Such malignant omissions reflect his - undoubtedly unwilling - role as a relay through which this imperialist tactic of power-knowledge passes as it strives to dominate the wretched of the Earth.

The concept of the necropolitical is perhaps the most serious decolonial charge against Foucaultdian thought. To discuss biopower, as Foucault does, in the aftermath of such events as the 1965 massacre of 500,000 suspected communists in Indonesia; the dispossession of Palestinians by Israeli Settler Colonialism since 1947; and the Vietnam war - a conflict with an estimated two million civilian killings, often in viscerally horrific ways,

as with women who were raped to death on 'unwritten, yet clear' US military orders - the refusal to center the capacity to define disposability implies a tacit acceptance of the effects of that power.[20] In a 1979 interview on the Vietnamese refugee crisis for example, Foucualt correctly argues that 'a state should not exercise an unconditional right of life and death', and identifies this as the motive behind US resistance to its bombing campaign there.[21] He reckons neither with the fact that the State does hold this necropolitical authority, nor the ways in which such power - not to negatively 'disallow life to the point of death' but instead to decide 'who must die'- justifies itself through civilising Orientalist narratives.[22] He does not discuss why, here or anywhere. He does not discuss what this achieves. He does not discuss for whom this is achieved. Hence, despite his clear sympathy with the suffering of subalternised subjects, the interconnectedness of power's global operation is elided. Foucault consequently slips into vague, ahistorical arguments about what ought to happen - starkly contrasting the careful historicism with which he treats the disciplinary changes within European society - thereby marginalising coloniality's central role in racially structuring global society to the point of invisibility. Foucault thus appears to ignore what Mbembe argues is the ultimate expression of sovereignty: not control over docile, productive bodies, but instead 'the power and capacity to decide who is able to live and who must die'.[23] Following Spivak, we can consider Foucault's omissions as 'absent centres'; subaltern subjects are invisibalised, yet continually present as salient factors structuring theoretical parameters, conditionalities and limits. Despite his myriad insights on the inseparability of knowledge and power, it appears Foucault was unable to fully free himself from its grasp; the necropolitical power to define disposability and marginality precluded him from tracing the mechanisms by which these subjects - who are made 'other' through a structural coloniality - apophatically define and construct Western society.

Ultimately, while Foucault's insights on the nature of power are essential - indeed, I have myself

16   A. Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism (New York, 2001), p. 36.
17   Foucault, Society Must be Defended, p. 258.
18   Said, 'Travelling Theory', p. 217.
19   A. Mbembe, Necropolitics, translated by Corcoran, S., (Durham, USA, 2019), p. 80.
20   A.Y. Davis, Women, Race and Class (London, 2019), p. 20.
21   Idem
22   Foucault, The History of Sexuality, p. 138; Mbembe, Necropolitics, p. 66.
23   IMbembe, Necropolitics, p. 66.

utilised such concepts of 'dispersed' power and 'power-knowledge' throughout this essay - they must be contextualised within a wider critical field upon which multifaceted operating mechanisms of power work in tandem. Foucault's theories afford anti-colonial perspectives insufficient weight, arguably as a consequence of his own eurocentric methodological mentalities, with the result that both colonised knowledges and colonised lives are silenced to the point of near-total erasure. The essential task must be to uncover underlying structural linkages between different instances of power, so that we may better understand the full complexity of its global operation. It is his failure to centre this struggle that necessitates his theory's transgression by - or, better, synthesis with - anti-colonial knowledges born through resistant praxis.

Bibliography

Césaire, A., Discourse on Colonialism (New York, 2001)

Davis, A.Y, Women, Race and Class (London, 2019)

Fanon, F., The Wretched of the Earth, translated by Farrington, C., (London, 2001)

Foucault, M., 'Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974-75' edited by Salamoni, A., Davidson, A.I., and Marchetti, D., translated by Burchell, G. (London, 2003)

Foucault, M. 'Interview with H Uno' Dits et écrits III 798 (271) 798-800, translated by Ryóji Nakamura. Translated from the French by Colin Gordon, 2015 for openDemocracy, [online] (2015) https://www.opendemocracy.net/michel-foucault/refugee-problem-is-presage-of-great-migrations-of-twentyfirst-century

Foucault, M., Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-76, edited by M. Bertani and A. Fontana, translated by Macey, D., (London, 2020)

Foucault, M., The History of Sexuality, Volume One: The Will to Knowledge (London, 2020)

Foucault, M., Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (London, 2020)

Hall, M. and Hobson, J.M., ' Liberal International theory: Eurocentric but Not Always Imperialist?', International Theory, 2(2), (2010), pp.210–245.

Hobbes, T., Leviathan or The Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil, edited by J.C.A. Gaskin (Oxford, 1998)

Keucheyan, R., The Left Hemisphere: Mapping Critical Theory Today, translated by Gregory Elliott, (London, 2013)

Legg, S., 'Beyond the European Province: Foucault and Eurocentrism', in J.W. Crampton, and S. Elden (eds.), Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography (Farnham, 2012), pp. 265-289.

Manzoor-Khan, S., Tangled In Terror: Uprooting Islamophobia (London, 2022)

Mbembe, A., Necropolitics, translated by Corcoran, S., (Durham, USA, 2019)

Mignolo, W.D., The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options (Durham, USA, 2011)

Mignolo, W.D., and Walsh, C.E., On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis (Durham, USA, 2018)

Murray, C., 'John Locke's Theory of Property, and the Dispossession of Indigenous Peoples in the Settler-Colony', The American Indian Law Journal, 10(1), (2022), pp 2-11. [online] https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1241&context=ailj

Rodney, W., The Groundings With My Brothers (London, 1969)

E.W. Said, 'Travelling Theory', in M. Bayomi and A. Rubin (eds.), The Selected Works of Edward Said: 1966-2006 (London, 2019)

Said, E.W., Culture and Imperialism (London, 1993)

Said, E.W., Orientalism (London, 2003)

Spivak, G.C., 'Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism', Critical Inquiry, 12(1), (1985), pp.243–261.

Spivak, G.C., 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', Die Philosophin, 14(27), (1988), pp. 42–58.

Wolfe, P., 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native.', Journal of Genocide Research, 8(4), (2006) pp. 387–409.

Wolfe, P., Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race (London, 2006)

The Robin Hood tradition

Oscar Scott

How subversive was the medieval Robin Hood tradition?

n his modern iteration, Robin Hood is syn-onymous with "robbing from the rich to give to the poor" and tormenting Prince John. However, in the legend's medieval concep-tion this explicit rejection of the social order cannot be found. Whilst in some instances the tales clearly inspired subversion – as il-lustrated by Norfolk labourers singing "We are Robynhodesmen, war, war, war" in 1441 – the surviving medieval stories are altogether less rad-ical.[1] Through an analysis of royal authority, class consciousness, and attitudes to the Church, I will show that the medieval Robin Hood tradition cer-tainly contained many resistive mentalities and expressed widely shared grievances of the time, mostly concerned with the honesty and behaviour of those in positions of power, but was neither rev-olutionary or wildly subversive, instead advocating a purification and maintenance of the existing so-cial order.

Firstly, throughout the medieval rhymes of Rob-in Hood royal authority is repeatedly undermined. Most glaringly, the outlaw's principal activity is poaching the king's deer. When the king first arrives in his forest in A Gest of Robyn Hode, it is noted that "He coud unneth fynde one dere", demonstrating the scale of poaching undertaken by Robin Hood and his men.[2] A medieval audience would have plainly understood this as a crime against the king, as under Forest Law forests were established as a legal concept completely under royal jurisdiction and maintained primarily for the king's hunting.[3] Similarly to the forest, the sheriff is also portrayed as an extension of the royal authority in the stories, and Robin's conflict with him can be interpreted as a form of resistance. In Robin Hood and the Monk the king angrily exclaims that "Litull John hase be-gyled the schereff, / In faith so has he me", clearly asserting the sheriff's role as a representative of the king.[4] Therefore, when Robin kills the sheriff in the Gest it is an explicit and violent affront to royal au-thority.[5]

Likewise, Robin blatantly reject's the king's com-mand at the end of the Gest. In order to restore order, the king offers Robin and his men roles in his court; in response Robin boldly presents the king with a conditional arrangement that if he is not pleased in the court he will return to the for-est and poach the king's deer again.[6] This brazen arrogance in the presence of the monarch would have shocked medieval audiences. Furthermore, eventually Robin does tire of being in the king's service and requests temporary leave, which the king grants, however, Robin never returns, explic-itly ignoring the king's prerogative.[7] If this rejec-tion of the king's power couldn't be any clearer, Robin's first action when back in the forest is to kill "a full grete harte".[8] This explicit resistance to roy-al authority appears to an extent to be especially intense in the Robin Hood tradition as other me-dieval outlaw tales ultimately support the idea of the king having the final word and restoring order. For example, in Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesley, Cloudesley and his brothers, after violently killing "thre hundred men and mo", are given positions in the royal court which result in them dying "good men".[9] This rejection of outlawry greatly contrasts its celebration at the expense of the king's authority in the Robin Hood tales.

Less explicit than Robin's active disobedience, the king is also portrayed as weak in other ways in the surviving tales of Robin Hood. Kneeling, as an expression of deference and loyalty, can be identi-fied as a motif that serves to disrupt the social or-

1   Quoted in David Crook, Robin Hood: Legend and Reality (Woodbridge, 2020), p. 196.
2   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', in S. Knight and T. H. Ohlgren (eds.), Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales (Kalamazoo, 1997), l. 1431.
3   Tom Johnson, 'The Redistribution of Forest Law and Administration in Fifteenth-Century England' in Linda Clark (ed.), The Fifteenth Century XV: Writing, Records and Rhetoric (Woodbridge, 2017), p. 95; A. J. Pollard, 'Political ideology in the early stories of Robin Hood', in P. Dalton and J. C. Appleby (eds.), Outlaws in medieval and early modern England: crime, government and society, c.1066-1600 (Farnham, 2009), p. 116.
4   'Robin Hood and the Monk', in S. Knight and T. H. Ohlgren (eds.), Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales (Kalamazoo, 1997), ll. 333-334.
5   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 1385-1392.
6   Ibid., ll. 1665-1668.
7   Ibid., ll. 1769-1772, 1797-1800.
8   Ibid., ll. 1785.
9   'Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesley', in S. Knight and T. H. Ohlgren (eds.), Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales (Kalamazoo, 1997), ll. 554-555, 660-663, 678-679.

der in the Gest. From the off the authenticity of this act is brought into question as Little John kneels before the sheriff despite clearly not respecting his authority.[10] This establishes kneeling for traditional authorities as untrustworthy and mocking, an idea which is reinforced when the knight kneels for Robin, a yeoman, plainly inverting social hierarchies.[11] This satirical motif is even utilised in direct relation to the king. In the seventh fytte, in front of the king, who hasn't been recognised yet, all Robin's men kneel before him creating visual comedy for the audience as a yeoman outlaw is commanding more respect than the divinely ordained monarch. Moreover, the seditious humour of this moment is accentuated by the King's self-deprecating acknowledgement that Robin's "men are more at his byddynge / Then my men be at myn".[12] This imagery returns once more when Robin returns from the court and all his men appear and again kneel before their leader, intended as a comical jibe at the lack of loyalty to the king who Robin has just deserted.[13] When traced throughout the Gest, significantly more people kneel in respect to Robin than the king or his representatives, illustrating the weakness of royal authority.

Mocking humour is also used to present a weak king in Robin Hood and the Monk. After brutally murdering a monk, Little John simply tells the king "He dyed after the way".[14] This example of dramatic irony demonstrates how the king is dependent on what others tell him, creating vulnerability.[15] This comment on the king's lack of control on information is mirrored in Adam Bell where the king is furious at finding out about the three outlaws' crimes only after pardoning them, although this is less satirical as the audience is ultimately meant to be grateful for the good influence of the king in making respectable men out of the outlaws.[16] Humour

is used again in the Gest to portray a weak and incompetent king. After travelling north for Robin, the king then fails to find him for six months.[17] This is embarrassing in itself, but the earlier ease with which the knight's wife locates Robin heightens the satirical value of this dig at royal competence and power.[18]

On the other hand, Robin simultaneously professes great loyalty and reverence to the king. He hyperbolically expresses that he "love[s] no man in all the worlde / So well as I do my kynge" and has a strong belief in the king's unique judgement and mercy.[19] This attitude appears common of the period and specifically outlaw literature. In Adam Bell the outlaws trust the king will take a different perspective to the local authorities, uphold natural justice and pardon them.[20] These sentiments are particularly reminiscent of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. The rebels were eager to meet the boy-king Richard II as they believed he would represent their interests better than his councillors and ministers. Paralleling Robin Hood's words, Wat Tyler is reported to have told Richard that "we will have no other king but you", leading some to brand the rebel's view as "naïve monarchism".[21] Thus, whilst the presence of these mentalities in the Gest may well simply be the result of late-medieval tropes of kingship, it nonetheless muddies any claim to subversiveness.

Nuance can be provided to explain these seemingly contradictory positions – the Robin Hood tradition exemplifies resistance to ineffective kingship and the corruption of those who operate with his authority, but ultimately still respects and upholds the institution of the English crown. As Taylor, Leahy, and Gray argue, Robin forwards a kind of retributive justice against what he views as the degradation of laws and offices he doesn't have

10 'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 727-728.
11 Ibid., l. 1052.
12 Ibid., ll. 1557-1564.
13 Ibid., l. 1794.
14 'Robin Hood and the Monk', l. 226.
15 A. J. Pollard, Imagining Robin Hood: the late-medieval stories in historical context (London, 2004), p. 118.
16 'Adam Bell', ll. 479-483, 536-539.
17 'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 1457-1464.
18 Ibid., ll. 1333-1340.
19 Ibid., ll. 1541-1542, 1282-1284
20 'Adam Bell', ll. 434-435.
21 Anonimalle Chronicle quoted in R. B. Dobson (ed.), The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 (London, 1970), p. 158.

systemic qualms with.[22] This is best illustrated in the villain of the tales, the Sheriff of Nottingham, characterised by his harsh and corrupt justice. This reflects contemporary attitudes to kingship at both the high and lower ends of society. The late-medieval period experienced a flurry of usurpations, with a common accusation in deposition records of the king being "controlled and governed by others who have given him evil counsel", leading him to act against the common weal.[23] Some, such as Watts, have suggested this was in part lip-service in order to avoid the charge of treason, however if this was simply the case popular revolts certainly put on a strong and impassioned performance.[24] For example, Cade's Revolt of 1450 was squarely targeted at corrupt advisors, with multiple being murdered, such as William Ayscough, Bishop of Salisbury. Harvey supports this notion of the king avoiding blame for popular grievances, citing a Cheshire crowd in 1416 which prevented taxes being collected because they refused to believe the king would have assented to it; in their minds he was "the people's champion".[25] Thus, the anger and opposition to elements of royal authority in the Robin Hood tradition reflects contemporary grievances with the corruption of kingship by other figures, with the king himself, and certainly the institution of monarchy, remaining intact. As Bush persuasively argues, medieval attitudes to royal authority, in Robin Hood and more widely, could not be subversive as they ultimately formed a "defence of the society of orders".[26]

Marxist historians have identified subversive mentalities in the Robin Hood tradition through a peasant class consciousness, however this is misconceived. Hilton argued that Robin Hood represented a peasant hero for a peasant audience advancing peasant interests through class-conscious violence.[27] Likewise, Hobsbawm based his "noble robber" model of "social banditry" on Robin Hood, similarly entirely existing in and for the peasantry, and thus representing a subversive force to the feudal system.[28] These arguments fall short due to this identification of the peasantry in the tradition. Hobsbawm's thesis to an extent confuses the more recent legend of Robin Hood, with its economic redistribution, with the surviving medieval sources, leading to an assertion of peasant interests not found in the rhymes. Similarly, in the rhymes Robin is exclusively described as a yeoman and Holt finds certain peasant grievances surprisingly absent. For example, serfdom, which influenced the events of 1381 so heavily, gets no mention.[29] Additionally, the widely held argument for a gentry audience, at least for the written surviving rhymes, throws more doubt on peasant connections, and subversive class attitudes. The Gest opens with an appeal to "gentilmen / That be of frebore blode", clearly excluding serfs.[30] Moreover, a letter from the Paston family from April 1473 points to a gentry participation in the tradition.[31] This is heightened by Henry VIII's love for the legend, including his organising a mock "ambush" of the king of France by 500 "merry men" whilst Prince of Wales. Thus, the claim that Robin Hood was a peasant created for peasants does carry weight when the medieval evidence is considered, and it must be questioned how radical and subversive the tradition can be if kings enjoyed

22   Joseph Taylor, '"Me longeth sore to Bernysdale": Centralization, Resistance, and the Bare Life of the Greenwood in A Gest of Robyn Hode', Modern Philology 110, 3 (2013), pp. 327-329; Mark Leahy, '"Where Shall We Rob?" Fantasies of Justice in the Early Robin Hood Ballads' in Alexander L. Kaufman (ed.), British Outlaws of Literature and History: Essays on Medieval and Early Modern Figures from Robin Hood to Twm Shon Catty (London, 2011), pp. 206, 211; Douglas Gray, 'The Robin Hood Poems', Poetica: An International Journal of Linguistic Literary Studies 18 (1982), p. 37 quoted in Taylor, '"Me longeth sore to Bernysdale"', p. 322.

23   'Articles of Accusation against King Edward II' in George Burton Adams and H. Morse Stephens (eds.), Select Documents of English Constitutional History (New York, 1904), p. 99; 'Deposition of Richard II: The 'Record and Process" in C. Given-Wilson (transl. and ed.), Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400: The Reign of Richard II (Manchester, 1993), pp. 168-175; Pollard, Imagining, pp. 178-179.

24   J. Watts, 'Usurpation in England: A Paradox of State-Growth', in F. Foronda, J.-P. Genet, and J. M. Nieto Soria (eds.), Coups d'Etat à la fin du Moyen Age? Aux fondements du pouvoir politique en Europe occidentale (Madrid, 2005), p. 123.

25   I. M. W. Harvey, 'Was There Popular Politics in Fifteenth-Century England?', in R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (eds.), The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society (New York, 1995), pp. 166-167.

26   Michael Bush, 'The Risings of the Commons in England, 1381-1549', in Jeffrey Denton (ed.), Orders and Hierarchies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe (Basingstoke, 1999), p. 113..

27   R. H. Hilton, 'The origins of Robin Hood', Past and Present 14 (1958), pp. 30-44; Pollard, 'Political ideology', p. 112.

28   E. J. Hobsbawm, Bandits (London, 1969); Pollard, 'Political ideology', pp. 157-158.

29   J. C. Holt, Robin Hood (London, 2011), p. 35.

30   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 1-2.

31   The Paston Letters, ed. J. Gairdner (London, 1904), p. 185 in R. B. Dobson and J. Taylor, Rymes of Robyn Hood: An Introduction to the English Outlaw (Stroud, 1997), p.18.

Robin Hood's outlawry.

Where instances of grievances that could relate to the lower classes do present themselves, much like opposition to royal authority, they represent a desire for isolated reform rather than systemic change. As Pollard explains, in the medieval society of orders domestic disruption amounted to "petty treason".[32] Thus, the chaos Little John causes in the Sheriff's household in the Gest can be seen as a rebellion against his authority.[33] However, this plainly does not convey a rejection of servitude as Little John proceeds to attempt to persuade the other servants to enter into the same arrangement under Robin Hood in the forest.[34] Clearly he has no issue with the system, instead this episode of domestic disruption adds further weight to the argument that the tradition attacks corrupt individuals seen to be failing to meet the ideal standards of medieval society. Ultimately, therefore, attitudes to class are not subversive in the medieval Robin Hood tradition.

Robin's strong anti-monasticism is one of the most consistent characteristics throughout the stories, although it is questionable whether this represents an overall subversive stance. Robin Hood and the Monk displays this most clearly. The tale begins with Robin being betrayed at Mass by a monk who tells the sheriff of Robin's whereabouts.[35] Later, Little John murders the same monk to avenge Robin.[36] As Field notes, the writer does not present this act in a negative or condemnatory light.[37] Instead, the audience is intended to celebrate the monk's death. This can be inferred from the portrayal of the monk earlier. The monk abandons the most important aspect of personal piety, attending Mass, in order to side with corrupt officials. Moreover, as Ohlgren persuasively argues, the idea of Church sanctuary rights adds to this disapproval of the monk's behaviour by a medieval audience. The

monk should have given Robin the chance to claim sanctuary before setting the authorities on him. Parker suggests the monk's neglect of this right would be especially obvious and outrageous to a contemporary audience as this takes place in St. Mary's church, and the Virgin Mary was connected to the protection of criminals through sanctuary.[38]

The portrayal of the clergy in the Gest supports this anti-monastic sentiment in the Robin Hood tradition. The abbot of St. Mary's Abbey blasphemes and is only concerned about his money, denying the knight charity.[39] Little John is also angered by a monk's extravagance and engagement in estate business, noting "There rydeth no bysshop in this londe / So ryally".[40] This plays into contemporary criticisms of monastic life, as illustrated by the description of the monk in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. This monk is also mocked for his unbefitting wealth, gluttony, and business activities "out of his cloystre".[41] Furthermore, Parker identifies the presentation of "housekeeping" and hospitality as a reflection of contemporary grievances. He describes how travellers expected to find shelter and food in castles and monasteries, but in the later Middle Ages this became less and less common to the extent that in 1402 the House of Commons complained to the king that there was "a decay of the duties of hospitality".[42] In comparison to Robin and the knight who open their dwellings and invite guests for impressive meals (even if this is a pretence for robbery), the abbot of St. Mary's Abbey does not offer any food to the downtrodden knight.[43] Converse to these critical presentations of the clergy, when the king is disguised as a monk he becomes the model of Christian generosity and honesty.[44] This suggests that Robin is not attacking all monks simply for being monks but instead opposes individual monks whose religious convictions and values are lacking. Parker argues the prior who subtly questions the abbot's harsh treatment

32   Pollard, Imagining, p. 173.

33   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 637-638

34   Ibid., pp. 672-684

35   'Robin Hood and the Monk', ll. 77-86

36   Ibid., pp. 203-206

37   Sean Field, 'Devotion, Discontent, and the Henrician Reformation: The Evidence of the Robin Hood Stories', Journal of British Studies 41, 1 (2002), p. 12.

38   T. H. Ohlgren, "God send us a good scheryf thys yere': Oppositional Ideology in the Early Robin Hood Poems' in R. Evans, H. Fulton and D. Matthews (eds.), Medieval Cultural Studies: essays in honour of Stephen Knight (Cardiff, 2006), p. 115; David Parker, 'Popular Protest in "A Gest of Robyn Hode"', Modern Language Quarterly 32, 1 (1971), p. 10.

39   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 361-362, 411-412.

40   Ibid., ll. 661-664, 1015-1016.

41   Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales, ed. N. F. Blake (London, 1980), p. 37, l. 181.

42   Quoted in Parker, 'Popular Protest', p. 12.

43   Ibid., pp. 12-13.

44   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 1521-1532

of the knight, saying "Ye do to hym moch wronge", serves this same purpose, demonstrating the tale's criticism not of the Church as a whole "but particular and well-defined practices".[45]

This notion is added further weight by Robin's deep personal piety in the surviving rhymes. Both the Gest and Robin Hood and the Monk make note of his regular attendance at Mass and his devotion to the Virgin Mary.[46] This is perhaps best demonstrated through Robin's use of the saint as security on his loan to the knight in the Gest.[47] This deep religious belief contrasts the corrupted piety of the presentation of the monks and abbot. Moreover, Robin is so confident and comfortable in his superior religiosity that he teasingly mocks the lying monk he steals from, saying that Mary has returned his loan and more.[48] Thus, Robin's personal piety serves to juxtapose the hypocrisy and worldliness of monastic figures, something which caused contemporaries much offence, yet also demonstrates his devotion to Christianity and an honest Church, tempering apparent subversive attitudes in the rhymes.[49]

The inclusion of Robin Hood in medieval May Day Games being organised by the Church could be seen to question this thesis. However they instead reveal the nuances of attitudes to the Church at this time and in the Robin Hood tradition, distinguishing the decaying high Church from the vibrant parish. Orchestrated by parish administrations in order to raise money for their churches, the May Day Games were clearly not revolutionary or religiously subversive. As Pollard highlights, key parish figures, such as churchwardens, took the outlaw roles which he suggests meant the games became"'another manifestation of order".[50] However, this argument is complicated by the passionate disapproval of these games by many important ecclesiastical figures. For example, Bishop Latimer famously condemned the games in 1549.[51] Whilst certainly not subversive, this does suggest some viewed it as a threat to their authority. Indeed, French convincingly asserts that the games both "reaffirmed and

subverted" authority. She links this to the difference in attitudes and participation from the parish to monastic level before the Reformation.[52] In fact, Pollard notes that parish priests often preached sermons criticising the senior clergy for many of the same offences identified above in the rhymes, and that whilst archbishops may not have been resisted specifically in the medieval Robin Hood tradition, they were murdered in the popular revolts of 1381 and 1450, therefore suggesting inferences to an opposition to the high Church in the tradition hold water.[53] Hence, as in relation to class and royal authority, the attitudes to the Church in the broad Robin Hood tradition do not represent a subversive advocation for systemic change, but rather highlight opposition to the corruption of an institution which is devoted.

In conclusion, the medieval Robin Hood tradition certainly expresses resistance and opposition to royal and religious authority and aspects of the social order. The humorous parodying of the king and explicit attack on monks in the rhymes illustrate this well. Although ultimately, this hostility is isolated to those who corrupt the ideals of natural justice and religion. The king is still revered, and the crown trusted as the fount of justice. The social order is maintained and the absence of peasants and their issues defies an identification of the class-conscious radicalism of "social banditry". Robin's personal piety in the surviving stories sets a standard to which the corrupt Church must aspire, and the May Day Games highlight contemporary criticisms of senior clergy but also an active engagement in parish religious life. Thus, the medieval Robin Hood tradition is neither revolutionary nor subversive, its goal is the reform of corrupt individuals in order to restore the glory of medieval society. As Leahy succinctly posits, it "never directly identif[ies] a general condition of oppression, only specific instances, specific oppressors with whom Robin must deal."[54]

---

45   Ibid., p. 360; Parker, 'Popular Protest', p. 20.
46   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 31-32; 'Robin Hood and the Monk', ll. 21-24.
47   'A Gest of Robyn Hode', ll. 263-264.
48   Ibid., pp. 992-996.
49   Pollard, Imagining, pp. 118, 122.
50   Ibid., pp. 168-179.
51   Hugh Latimer, Seven Sermons before Edward VI, ed. E. Arber (London, 1869), pp. 173-4 in Dobson and Taylor, Rymes of Robyn Hood, p.39.
52   Katherine L. French, 'Localized Faith: Parochial and Domestic Spaces' in John Arnold (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity (Oxford, 2014), pp. 166-182; Pollard, Imagining, p. 171.
53   Pollard, 'Political ideology', p. 115.
54   Leahy, "'Where Shall We Rob?'", p. 213.

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

'Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesley', in Knight, S., and Ohlgren, T. H. (eds.), Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales (Kalamazoo, 1997).
'A Gest of Robyn Hode', in Knight, S., and Ohlgren, T. H. (eds.), Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales (Kalamazoo, 1997).
'Articles of Accusation against King Edward II' in Adams, G. B., and Stephens, H. M. (eds.), Select Documents of English Constitutional History (New York, 1904), p. 99.
'Deposition of Richard II: The 'Record and Process'' in Given-Wilson, C. (transl. and ed.), Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400: The Reign of Richard II (Manchester, 1993), pp. 168-175.
'Robin Hood and the Monk', in Knight, S., and Ohlgren, T. H. (eds.), Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales (Kalamazoo, 1997).

Secondary Sources:

Bush, M. 'The Risings of the Commons in England, 1381-1549', in Denton, J. (ed.), Orders and Hierarchies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Europe (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 109-125.
Dobson, R. B., and Taylor, J., 'Robin Hood of Barnesdale: a fellow thou has long sought', Northern History 19 (1983), pp. 210-220.
Field, S., 'Devotion, Discontent, and the Henrician Reformation: The Evidence of the Robin Hood Stories', Journal of British Studies 41, 1 (2002), pp. 6-22.
French, K. L., 'Localized Faith: Parochial and Domestic Spaces' in Arnold, J. (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity (Oxford, 2014), pp. 166-182.
Harvey, I. M. W., 'Was There Popular Politics in Fifteenth-Century England?', in Britnell, R. H., and Pollard, A. J. (eds.), The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society (New York, 1995), pp. 155-174.
Holt, J. C., Robin Hood (London, 2011).
Johnson, T., 'The Redistribution of Forest Law and Administration in Fifteenth-Century England' in Clark, L. (ed.), The Fifteenth Century XV: Writing, Records and Rhetoric (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 93-108.
Kaeuper, R. W., 'An Historian's Reading of the Tale of Gamelyn', Medium Aevum 52 (1983), pp. 51-62.
Leahy, M., '"Where Shall We Rob?: Fantasies of Justice in the Early Robin Hood Ballads' in Kaufman, A. L. (ed.), British Outlaws of Literature and History: Essays on Medieval and Early Modern Figures from Robin Hood to Twm Shon Catty (London, 2011), pp. 204-218
Ohlgren, T. H., "God send us a good scheryf thys yere': Oppositional Ideology in the Early Robin Hood Poems' in Evans, R., Fulton, H., and Matthews, D. (eds.), Medieval Cultural Studies: essays in honour of Stephen Knight (Cardiff, 2006), pp. 107-119.
Parker, D., 'Popular Protest in "A Gest of Robyn Hode"', Modern Language Quarterly 32, 1 (1971), pp. 3-20.
Pollard, A. J., Imagining Robin Hood: the late-medieval stories in historical context (London, 2004).
Pollard, A. J., 'Political ideology in the early stories of Robin Hood' in Dalton, P., and Appleby, J. (eds.), Outlaws in medieval and early modern England: crime, government and society, c.1066-1600 (Farnham, 2009), pp. 111-28.
Taylor, J., '"Me longeth sore to Bernysdale": Centralization, Resistance, and the Bare Life of the Greenwood in A Gest of Robyn Hode', Modern Philology 110, 3 (2013), pp/ 313-339.
Watts, J., 'Usurpation in England: A Paradox of State-Growth', in Foronda, F., Genet, J. -P., and Nieto Soria, J. M. (eds.), Coups d'Etat à la fin du Moyen Age? Aux fondements du pouvoir politique en Europe occidentale (Madrid, 2005), pp. 115-30.
Wiles, D., 'Robin Hood as Summer Lord' in Knight, S. (ed.), Robin Hood: an anthology of scholarship and criticism (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 77-98.

British rule in Myanmar

Florence Clifford

The making of an ethnocracy: How British rule transformed understandings of racial difference in Myanmar

British rule in Myanmar revolutionised understandings of racial difference, introducing radically different conceptions of race and identity. The impact of colonial rule in this area can be separated into two related but distinguishable parts: impacts on perceptions of race, and impacts on race relations. This essay will focus on the former, in order to demonstrate the extraordinary impact of British rule, and briefly touch on some of the wide span of political, economic, social, religious, and gender-related consequences relating to the latter, which are so numerous as to require not an essay but a whole book of their own.

This essay will instead consider the way British rule transformed understandings of racial difference in Myanmar. The constructivist view of identity holds that it is a historical creation, borne out of administrative categorisation and political mobilisation, among other factors.[1] This was certainly the case in Myanmar, where fluid, context-based views of race and ethnic identity in pre-colonial periods were sharply crystallised into concrete forms by the British administration. This occurred at the most basic, almost subconscious level, by bringing race to the ideological forefront. It became the most significant way in which people were defined and treated, and became the epicentre of all kinds of societal issues. This impact was cemented by altering the meaning of language to conceptualise race in a Western way, by artificially dividing up the country into neat groupings, and by introducing Western racial pseudoscience to further transform the way citizens of Myanmar thought about race. This impact rippled out to transform Myanmar's political culture, with race becoming a lens through which the oppressive colonial state, and sub-identities within Myanmar, were viewed. This, in turn, radically changed Burmese understandings of the self and of the other, creating and stoking ethnic tensions which persist today in a recognisably ultranationalist, ethnocratic state. British rule in Myanmar therefore created the conditions in which racial thinking was utterly transformed, with consequences lasting far beyond independence in 1948.

The impact of British rule on understandings of racial difference in Myanmar begins at the semantic level, altering the fundamental linguistic and cultural categorisation of people. Prior to colonial rule, social hierarchy in Myanmar was based on karmic Buddhist criteria, and divided groups of people according to class lines and in relation to the king.[2] Religion and class or position were thus the main demarcators of status. Burmese ethnicity was "privileged", as Victor Lieberman writes, and there was some marginalisation of minority groups such as the Mon at elite levels. However, the Konbaung dynasty's empire was "polyethnic".[3] Burmese identity was fluid and fairly inclusive, not built on "permanent cultural traits", but instead on geographical location and local political networks, which could shift over time.[4] As Matthew J. Walton argues, identity could be modified "strategically". A non-Burman could identify as Burman "for social and political purposes".[5] This all changed under the British, who considered Burma's complex and shifting demography an obstacle to controlling and managing the restive population.[6] Pre-colonial Burma had no exact semantic equivalent of 'race', 'nation', or 'foreigner' as it was understood in the West, because religion, lineage and class hierarchy were the significant forms of classification of people, rather than race.[7] As Aurore Cand-

1   See Nyi Nyi Kyaw, "Adulteration of pure native blood by aliens? mixed race kapya in colonial and post-Colonial Myanmar," Social Identities 25, no. 3 (2019): 345.

2   Aurore Candier, "Mapping Ethnicity in Nineteenth-Century Burma: When 'Categories of People' (Lumyo) Became 'Nations,'"Journal of Southeast Asian Studies 50, no. 3 (2019): 349.

3   Victor Lieberman, "Ethnic Hatred and Universal Benevolence: Ethnicity and Loyalty in Precolonial Myanmar, and Britain," Comparative Studies in Society and History 63, no. 2 (2021): 331, 326.

4   Matthew J. Walton, "The 'Wages of Burman-ness:' Ethnicity and Burman Privilege in Contemporary Myanmar," Journal of Contemporary Asia 43, no. 1 (2013): 4.

5   Ibid., 7.

6   Ibid., 8.

7   Candier, "Mapping Ethnicity." 351-2.

ier explores, racial and ethnic classifications were introduced by the British in treaty negotiations after the First and Second Anglo-Burmese wars. 'Nations' became newly conceptualised as territories with defined borders, encompassing specific ethnicities. 'Lumyo', the Burmese word for 'people', developed a more distinct definition as "category of people" which served to make different ethnic groups suddenly keenly aware of their differences from each other.[8] British cartography was also responsible for this. Colonial political discourse decided that each 'Lumyo' had to have its own territory, such as the Shan and Kachin, so it created artificial divisions in its mapping of the country and allocated precisely defined territories to certain groups. British involvement with granting peripheral areas their own ethnicity and territory alienated the central Burmese government, who feared that alliances between the British and uncooperative regional leaders would spur rebellions and conflicts between more autonomous groups and the Burman state.[9] Longer term, this paved the way for ethnic nationalism, as each group developed a more concrete idea of its own separate identity amid constant internecine violence. Thus, colonial attempts to neatly categorise people, and the British inability to comprehend local conceptualisations of identity, radically altered those understandings and introduced race and ethnicity as a lens through which to view the world.

Perhaps even more significantly, the British brought the pseudoscience of race with them to Myanmar. The British viewed race in biological terms, assigning different groups with innate characteristics. In the case of ethnic groups that they colonised, these were largely negative and often contradictory, but they also created a hierarchy of colonised groups, with drastic results. Colonial officials viewed the Bama majority in Myanmar as lazy, indolent, and effeminate, but also resentful and rebellious, making them a poor fit for the armed forces.[10] Thus, from the late 1880s they were phased out of the army, and from 1925 the administration solely recruited the minority Chin, Kachin and Karen groups, who were seen as appropriately martial.[11] This inevitably changed ethnic dynamics within Myanmar. These minorities, who feared

Bama dominance, aligned themselves more closely with the British, with the natural result that the Bama despised them for their disloyalty. This came to a head post-independence in outbreaks of violence against supposed collaborators. Throughout British rule, as Walton notes, the Bama "[saw] the military as an instrument to facilitate their oppression at the hands of ethnic minorities". Ethnic minority status as "privileged servants of the British" ensured they were seen as "a threat to the existence of the Burman people and Burman way of life".[12] The culture of fear that this created, and the British policy of different treatment for different ethnicities, meant that Bama Burmese nationalists defined themselves by what they were not, setting up identities in diametric opposition. The terms 'Dobama' ('Our Burma') and 'Thudo-bama' ('Their Burma'), which came into frequent use, created sharp delineations between groups and antagonistic relations. Kei Nemoto's interview with Thakhin Wa Tin, a 1930s nationalist, confirms this: the use of the terms 'our Burma' and 'their Burma' reflects the Thahkin's identification of themselves as distinctly different from and opposed to those Burmese who stood on the side of Thudo-bama. In other words, the British were not the only enemy: the Thudo-bama were, too.[13] This hatred of collaborators and drive to defend the seemingly threatened Bama identity resulted in the growth of ethnically exclusive political nationalism, the politics that has dominated Myanmar from pre-independence to the present day. Thus, British rule was responsible for creating the ethnic divisions, and what I will term extremism of identity, that have drastically altered the shape of Burmese politics and understandings of race.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in Burmese and British treatment of Indians. Negative stereotypes about Indians stoked fears of cultural, sexual, economic, industrial, and religious replacement, which in turn aided the rise of racist ultra-nationalism. One major example of this was the stereotype of the Indian as unclean, which caused fears of Indian immigrants spreading diseases such as smallpox. A colonial report stated with certainty that "the Indian labourer is a centre and focus of disease wherever he has established him-

8   Ibid., 353.
9   Ibid., 358-363.
10   Kyaw, "Adulteration," 347.
11   Walton, "The 'Wages of Burman-ness,'" 8.
12   Ibid., 8.
13   Kei Nemoto, "The Concepts of Dobama ('Our Burma') and Thudo-Bama ('Their Burma') in Burmese Nationalism, 1930-1948," Journal of Burma Studies 5 (2000): 3.

self", leaving no doubt as to how these negative stereotypes entered Burmese cultural discourse - they came from the highest echelons of the British government.[14] A system of compulsory smallpox vaccination of Indian immigrants was introduced in the 1910s, which critics such as P. J. Mehta, the founder of the Burman branch of the Indian National Congress, argued would only "aggravate racial bitterness" rather than prevent disease.[15] He was later proven right. In protest at an early 1920s governmental land reclamation scheme, Burmese nationalists, as Noriyuki Osada writes, "actively deployed the racial discourse on insanitary habits of Indian labourers in a vernacular newspaper and maintained that it was Indians not Burmese who should be dispelled from the city".[16] Racial science, derived from the British, thus significantly heightened tensions around the supposed "Indian menace".[17] Another sphere in which this became prevalent was the domestic. British imperialists viewed Indians as simultaneously "effeminate" and "sexually aggressive", a fear which rippled out into Burmese society and triggered a wave of racialised concerns about Burmese women marrying Indian Muslims and sexually betraying their race.[18] Contemporary pamphlets spoke of the "ruination" and "degeneration" of the Burmese race and the replacement of Buddhism with Islam.[19] These extremely racist views became hugely prominent in nationalist rhetoric, sparking infamous race riots in the 1930s which targeted Indians of any religion. Bowser notes that the Islamophobic rhetoric behind this "was rooted in previous Indophobic tropes in Burmese nationalist circles that had been borrowed from British imperial race pseudoscience about Indian Muslims".[20] This indicates the hugely significant consequences of British rule. Western racial biology filtered out into the Burmese community and was appropriated by rightwing nationalism, transforming individual prejudices into identifying markers for entire populations, and altering the cultural and political consciousness.

Finally, the way in which the British carried out their rule of Myanmar changed the social makeup of the country and thus impacted how race was viewed. Myanmar, which had previously been its own state, was absorbed into Britain's Indian Empire as a province of India after annexation. This, naturally, set the scene for anger and demands for separation from India, which was often a more significant target to nationalists than independence from Britain.[21] This administrative decision caused citizens of Myanmar to view the Indians as colonisers and therefore enemies. This was not helped by the demographic makeup of Myanmar. The British oversaw a wave of Indian immigration, which revolutionised Myanmar's economy and industrial landscape, but also fuelled rampant fears of sociocultural and religious absorption into India, and anger at the Burmese working class being superseded by cheaper foreign labour.[22] The British also largely filled administrative positions with Indian civil servants, most notably in the bureaucracy, military, and police. All the elements of government structure that the average Burmese national would interact with were suddenly Indian, and as the British were largely sequestered in gentlemen's clubs rather than interacting with the general population, colonial rule in Myanmar had a visibly Indian face.[23] These changes to the social composition of Myanmar heightened fears of deracination, which were already on the rise due to Bama fears of ethnic minorities dispossessing them. This, in addition to the prevalence of racial science, further drove nationalist and conservative

14   From Report on the Committee Appointed to Investigate the Alleged Hardships caused by the Compulsory Vaccination, under the Provision of Section 9 of the Burma Vaccination Law Amendment Act, 1909, of Labourers arriving in Rangoon by Sea (Rangoon: Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, 1918): 11. Cited in Noriyuki Osada, "An Embryonic Border: Racial Discourses and Compulsory Vaccination for Indian Immigrants at Ports in Colonial Burma, 1870-1937," Moussons 17 (2011): 155-6.

15   Quoted from the same as above, 152. Cited in Osada, "An Embryonic Border," 157.

16   Osada, "An Embryonic Border," 157.

17   Term cited in Chie Ikeya, Refiguring Women, Colonialism, and Modernity in Burma (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 131.

18   Matthew J Bowser, "'Buddhism Has Been Insulted. Take Immediate Steps': Burmese Fascism and the Origins of Burmese Islamophobia, 1936–38," Modern Asian Studies 55, no. 4 (2021): 1133. See also Ikeya, Reconfiguring Women, 142.

19   Ikeya, Refiguring Women, 139.

20   Bowser, "'Buddhism Has Been Insulted,'" 1133.

21   Matthew J. Bowser, "Partners in Empire? Co-colonialism and the Rise of Anti-Indian Nationalism in Burma, 1930–1938," The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 49, no. 1, (2021): 119, 123.

22   Ibid., 124.

23   Kyaw, "Adulteration," 348.

fears of being "swamped" by immigrants.[24] There is next to no evidence to support these fears, but racial science and a highly visible racial hierarchy in the colonial system, which disadvantaged the Burmese, contributed to an ideological narrative of 'us vs them.' Society aligned Bama ethnicity with Buddhism and being a Burmese citizen, and likewise aligned Indian ethnicity with Muslim beliefs and conceptually being a foreigner and an enemy.[25] Thus, British treatment of and language used to describe different ethnic groups altered understandings of race and difference. The result was that racialised thinking dominated cultural discourse.

Therefore, British rule can truly be said to have completely overhauled understandings of racial difference in Myanmar. Previously complex, shifting and loose markers of identity were crystallised into sharply delineated groups with their differences, rather than similarities, highlighted. This occurred in the realms of cartography and semantics, completely changing citizens' conceptualisation of the country in which they lived, their neigh-bours, and their sense of self, and altering on an ideological level the way they spoke of and visualised others. Furthermore, Western views of race as biological introduced highly negative stereotypes of different races and ethnicities into the Burmese consciousness, leading to the rise of ethnonationalism and eugenicist conceptions of other groups. Finally, the way in which British rule was carried out, especially its reliance on ethnic minorities and Indians to form the visible face of the colonial state, transformed society from one based on class hierarchies to racial ones, and stoked fears of the deracination and destruction of the Burmese race, ramping up racial tensions and violence. While this paper is too short to adequately display the consequences of British rule's impact on understandings of race, these ideological shifts completely transformed the country at every level of society, and have led to the fraught and often bloody race relations we see in contemporary Myanmar.

---

24 U Ba Pe, representative of the Burmese Chamber of Commerce, in the Legislative Council of the Governor of Burma, August 1930, in the Burma Legislative Council (1932): 285. Cited in Kyaw, "Adulteration," 350.
25 Bowser, "Partners in Empire?", 124. See also Walton, "The 'Wages of Burman-ness,'" 21.

Bibliography

Bowser, Matthew J. "'Buddhism Has Been Insulted. Take Immediate Steps': Burmese Fascism and the Origins of Burmese Islamophobia, 1936–38." Modern Asian Studies 55, no. 4 (2021): 1112–50.
Bowser, Matthew J. "Partners in Empire? Co-colonialism and the Rise of Anti-Indian Nationalism in Burma, 1930–1938." The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 49, no. 1, (2021): 118-14.
Candier, Aurore. "Mapping Ethnicity in Nineteenth-Century Burma: When 'Categories of People' (Lumyo) Became 'Nations.'" Journal of Southeast Asian Studies 50, no. 3 (2019): 347–64.
Ikeya, Chie. Refiguring Women, Colonialism, and Modernity in Burma. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011.
Kyaw, Nyi Nyi. "Adulteration of pure native blood by aliens? mixed race kapya in colonial and post-Colonial Myanmar." Social Identities 25, no. 3 (2019): 345-359.
Lieberman, Victor. "Ethnic Hatred and Universal Benevolence: Ethnicity and Loyalty in Precolonial Myanmar, and Britain." Comparative Studies in Society and History 63, no. 2 (2021): 310–38.
Nemoto, Kei. "The Concepts of Dobama ('Our Burma') and Thudo-Bama ('Their Burma') in Burmese Nationalism, 1930-1948." Journal of Burma Studies 5 (2000): 1-16.
Walton, Matthew J. "The 'Wages of Burman-ness:' Ethnicity and Burman Privilege in Contemporary Myanmar." Journal of Contemporary Asia 43, no. 1 (2013): 1-27.

Muslim Rulers

in Indian popular culture

Isaac Waterhouse

Depraved, foreign and intolerant: How popular perceptions of Muslim rulers are informed by contemporary and modern sources, and their impact on Hindu Muslim relations.

Historical writing is not only about what has happened, but also what is believed to have happened. Popular history is a vitally important aspect of historical study as it influences the present as much if not more so than the events that actually transpired. Nowhere is immune to the effects of popular history. In much contemporary Indian popular culture, it is the Indo-Islamic rulers of the past who suffer from this. They are often perceived as foreign occupiers with depraved morals who unleashed a scourge of Islamism upon India, demolishing temples, massacring Hindus and imposing intolerant laws.[1] This investigation seeks to assess the origins and impact of these ideas by analysing two prominent Indo-Islamic rulers from different periods, governing in differing manners and contexts, namely Alauddin Khalji and Ahmad Shah Durrani. In particular, it will evaluate the impacts that their presentation in contemporary media has on current relations between Hindus and Muslims, and what can be learned about those relations from these depictions. This essay will argue that the popular media depictions of Indo-Islamic rulers damage relations between Hindus and Muslims in India, stoke hatred and blame for perceived historical crimes, and propagate harmful stereotypes about religious minorities and non-Indian ethnicities. This essay will not concern itself with disproving historical inaccuracies as that is beyond the scope of this investigation.

Cultural Context: Colonialism & Hindutva:

Since the election of Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) rise to power in the past decade, instances of islamophobia have increased dramatically across India.[2] Indian society is deeply divided along religious lines, especially between the Hindu majority and the large Muslim minority. The periods of Islamic rule are now viewed by many as times of oppression and subjugation of Hindus and their culture. Muslim rulers are characterised as foreign invaders and occupiers, and Muslims are depicted as an obstacle to the creation of the Hindu Rashtra – the Hindu Nation.[3] Although there has been an increase in islamophobic behaviour in recent years, it is not a new phenomenon. The demonisation of Muslim rulers of the subcontinent is a practice that has long predated the rise of Narendra Modi and the BJP in 2014. It dates to the advent of British colonialism, and the efforts of the British Raj to justify their position as rulers and to divide the communities of India, pitting them against themselves and generating animosity and hatred amongst communities to prolong colonial rule. Whilst saying this, we must also be aware that Indians were not passive recipients of colonial propaganda against their communities; there were many nationalists and opportunistic members and groups from all communities in the subcontinent who used the new socio-political environment created by the advent of colonialism to advance their agendas and their own rise to prominence.[4] The colonial project introduced new ideas and philosophies into the subcontinent, new worldviews, that merged with pre-existing notions to create new ideologies.[5] The most prominent of these ideologies is Hindutva. First propagated in 1923 with the publishing of 'Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?' by Vinayak Damodar Sarvakar, Hindutva is a Hindu nationalist ideology that promotes Hindu exclusivity.[6] It defines India

1   Audrey Truschke, Aurangzeb: The Life and Legacy of India's Most Controversial King (Stanford, 2017) pp. 2-7.

2   Rajini Vaidyanathan, 'India's Muslims fear for their future under Narendra Modi' (2019) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-48278441 (viewed 25 April 2022)

3   Zainab Sikander 'Islamophobia in Indian Media', Islamophobia Studies Journal, Vol. 6 (2021) p. 121.

4   Amiya Prasad Sen, 'Hindu Reform Movements in British India' in Gita Dharampal-Frick, Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach, Rachel Dwyer, and Jahnavi Phalkey (eds.) Key Concepts in Modern Indian Studies (New York, 2015), pp. 103-104.

5   Sen, 'Hindu Reform Movements in British India', pp. 103-104.

6   Christophe Jaffrelot, 'Hindutva' in Gita Dharampal-Frick, Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach, Rachel Dwyer, Key Concepts in Modern Indian Studies (New York, 2015), pp. 108-110 9 Jaffrelot, 'Hindutva', pp. 108-110 and Jahnavi Phalkey (eds.)

as a Hindu nation and, by extension, to be Indian is to be Hindu. Anu Thapa describes Hindutva as a 'Hindu theo-political fundamentalist ideology' and explains that its aim is a 'Hindi-Hindu-Hindustan' that excludes Abrahamic faiths, people of low caste and Dravidian peoples and draws inspiration from Nazism.[7] This is a belief that is exclusionary of other religions but especially of Islam, and it promotes a worldview where Muslims are seen to be foreign and not belonging to India. This subsequently extends into the presentation of Muslims in media.

Alauddin Khalji – The Depraved Muslim:

Alauddin Khalji, Sultan of Delhi from 1296-1316, has become a polarising figure in Indian history. This has been a gradual process, accelerated in recent years due to the release of the extremely controversial film Padmaavat (2018), directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. This film constitutes one of the main sources for his perception in the popular imagination in recent years and his name has become more recognisable due to the unrest the film caused. Ratan Sen, Padmavati and Alauddin Khalji as depicted in the film represent the common tropes associated with this period of Indian history.[8] The storyline incorporates many stereotypes about Muslims and Muslim rulers and even exaggerates them further: portraying Alauddin as aggressive, lustful, intolerant, and a sexually malevolent ruler. Through symbols, mannerisms, banners, vocabulary and contrasting of light and darkness, Padmaavat manages to craft a stark image of Rajput virtue and Muslim otherness.[9]

The most defining aspect of Alauddin's personality throughout the film is sexuality and lust. One scene shows him committing adultery on his wedding night, instantly setting the stage for the rest of his character development.[10] Throughout the rest of the film, there are allusions to him raping women and having sex with his chief minister, Malik Kafur.[11] This is used as a theme throughout the entire film to contrast the depravity of Alauddin with the virtues of Ratan Sen, the Hindu King of Mewar. Bhansali plays into fears of the hypersexual Muslim male; an incredibly dangerous and false stereotype, however a widespread and pervasive one.[12] This stereotype is prominent across India with the notion of 'love jihad' in which Muslim men 'purposefully seduce and convert Hindu women as a process of Islamisation', and it is used by the Hindu right to justify islamophobic policies and views and to stoke inter-communal hatred.[13] It is a product of both misogyny and islamophobia, implying that Hindu women lack agency and are vulnerable to being preyed upon by Muslim men, and that not only are Muslim men a 'barbaric and savage' other but that they are inseparable from their faith. Even in moments of alleged sexual violence they are perceived to be motivated by religious conversion. For these depictions to be shown so freely and so boldly in Padmaavat (a major Indian media production) is indicative of two key things. Firstly, of the prevalence of these ideas, and secondly, of the lack of widespread cultural disapproval of such beliefs. This has incredibly dangerous ramifications for Indian Muslims and wider Indian society. Through the propagation of such a strong association between Muslim men and sexual violence, Muslims are condemned and convicted for existing and practising their faith. Treatment of women, therefore, becomes a distinguishing factor between the two sides throughout. Muslim women are often portrayed as abused and in fear of their husbands, demonstrated in Padmaavat by the character of Mehru Nissa, Alauddin's abused wife.[14] Padmavati and Ratan Sen present the antithesis of this. Their relationship is defined by their virtue, genuine love for one another, and mutual respect. They are two equals, contrasted to Alauddin and Mehru Nissa who is, as mentioned, the 'abused Muslim wife'.

7   Anu Thapa, 'Resurrection, Remediation, and Religious Fundamentalism in Contemporary Indian Sci-Fi/Fantasy Films.' CrossCurrents, 70 (2020), pp. 293-300.

8   Samana Zafar and Khanday Pervaiz Ahmad,

9   Ibid., p. 40.

10   Padmaavat. Dir. Sanjay Leela Bhansali. Perfs. Deepika Padukone, Shahid Kapoor, Ranveer Singh. Film. Bhansali Productions, Viacom 18 Motion Pictures, 2018. 0:09:04.

11   Ibid., 0:43:31

12   Eviane Leidig, "Past and Present: Surveying Medieval India Amidst the Present Perceptions of the Past in Popular Medium." History and Sociology of South Asia 14, (2020) p. 39

13   'From Love Jihad to Grooming Gangs: Tracing Flows of the Hypersexual Muslim Male through Far-Right Female Influencers' Religions, 12 (2021) pp. 1-2.

14   Padmaavat. Dir. Sanjay Leela Bhansali. 0:43:31. 'From Love Jihad to Grooming Gangs: Tracing Flows of the Hypersexual Muslim Male through Far-Right Female Influencers', pp. 1-2.

Alauddin's relationships are an expression of lust compared with Ratan Sen and Padmavati's, which are expressions of romance.

Padmaavat is not simply recounting a story which happens to have a Hindu protagonist and a Muslim antagonist, the characters are representing Hinduism and Islam themselves and there are several scenes in which this is made explicit. Padmavati is used throughout the film as a voice for Hindu nationalism, describing Ratan Sen as Lord Ram and Alauddin as Raavan, then later comparing the struggle between the Rajputs and Khaljis to those of Ram against Ravana, and Pandavas against Kauravas, making direct references to Hindu texts like the Mahabharata.[15] By endowing the actions and virtues of the Rajputs in Padmaavat with those of prominent figures from Hindu tradition, figures who have become politically charged in recent decades via their appropriation by the Hindu right and organisations branching from the RSS, Bhansali draws dangerous links which have direct, real-world impacts. Phrases such as 'Jai Sri Ram' have even become the mantra of anti-Muslim lynch mobs.[16]

Interestingly, most of these depictions and beliefs about Alauddin Khalji are not inventions of Bhansali; he reinterpreted well-established notions about his character and disseminated them further in a format for the modern audience. Padmaavat the film was based on a Sufi poem of the same name (often spelt Padmavat), written by Malik Muhammad Jayasi in 1540 in the Awadhi language. Jayasi wrote his epic poem loosely based on events from the 1303 siege of Chittor by Alauddin Khalji. However, he heavily embellished the story in order to create a work which was not a historical recount, but a lesson in Sufi philosophy as well as pandering to the politics of the period. Jayasi's choice of setting appears due to a prominent siege of Chittor by Gujarati forces in 1531 which had brought the fort of Chittor to fame during Jayasi's period, and due to a popular genre of storytelling amongst Persian-speaking court poets revolving around the Islamic conquests of

fortresses such as Chittor, Ranthambore and Devagiri.[17] He also includes a scene in which Rajput soldiers make their way into a fort by hiding in palanquins, a method which Sher Shah Suri (ruled 1537-45) utilised when taking Rohtas fort in 1537. Sher Shah Suri was the ruler of North India during the period when Jayasi was writing his poem. He held court in Awadh and Bihar, where Jayasi was writing, lending inspiration to his work. Jayasi had adapted what was in his period a popular setting for allegory and infused it with references to contemporary political context to suit his patrons and audience. Ramya Sreenivasan, analysing Padmaavat, argued that local Rajput elites in the Suri administration who were impacted by Sher Shah's rise to power would likely have been amongst Jayasi's patrons, explaining the bias towards the Rajputs throughout the poem.[18]

Jayasi's poem Padmavat is characterised by its engagement with contemporary politics and discourse, as well as its allegory of Chishti Sufism. It is not and does not pretend to be a work of historical truth. In Jayasi's work, Alauddin is not the antagonist he is presented to be in Bhansali's Padmaavat. In the poem, Ratan Sen is killed not by Alauddin but by another Rajput king who wanted to marry Padmavati.[19] By the time Alauddin arrives to take Chittor and Padmavati, the women of the fort have committed Jauhar and all he finds is the ash of Padmavati. Upon this sight he laments on desire and the transience of the world, therefore embodying the Chishti Sufi teachings which the poem is the vehicle for. From this understanding of Jayasi's Padmavat and knowing that this poem is what has informed most of the popular image of Alauddin, we can say without a doubt that the popular image surrounding Alauddin Khalji is grounded almost entirely in fiction and misunderstanding of a fictional work which is now far removed from its original socio-political context.

There are other sources from which Alauddin's legacy in popular culture is derived, and that is in the works of colonial historians, who used inaccurate translations of primary sources and viewed

15   Padmaavat. Dir. Sanjay Leela Bhansali. 1:15:32, 2:24:16

16   Geeta Pandey, 'Jai Sri Ram: The Hindu Chant that became a murder cry' (2019) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-48882053 (Retrieved 7 May 2022)

17   Thomas de Bruijn, Ruby in the Dust: Poetry and History in Padmavat by the South Asian Sufi Poet Muhammad Jayasi, (Leiden, 2012) pp. 47-48.

18   Ibid., p. 48.

19   Purushottam Agrawal, 'Absurdity of epic proportions: Are people aware of the content in Jayasi's Padmavat?' (2017) at https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/20171204-padmavati- karni-sena-malik-muhammad-jayasi-sanjay-bhansali-1092364-2017-11-24 (viewed 8 May 2022)

them with a clear agenda of vilifying Islamic rulers so as to portray the British colonial administration as mediators between two irreconcilable religious groups. This originated in the orientalist view that religion was the main dividing factor in South Asian societies.[20] Prominent colonial historians even admit such, as in the preface for The History of India: As Told by its Own Historians by H. M. Eliot, his translations are undertaken with the intention of showing to the reader 'the crimes, vices and occasional virtues of Musulman despotism', even comparing outright the 'sloth and debauchery' of Muslim rulers to the 'supremacy of the British Government'.[21] Colonial historians such as Dr Vincent Smith posit strong views, describing Alauddin as a 'particularly savage tyrant with very little regard for justice' and claiming his reign was disgraceful in many respects.[22] Hindu nationalist historians also take a similar tactic of using colonial-era histories and translations of primary sources of chronicles, being selective in their sources in order to legitimise their own agenda. N. C. Banerji uses Smith as a source in his 1939 article Life and Times of Sultan Alauddin Khalji. Banerji talks about how Muslim rulers were engaged in 'incessant war with the Hindus', promoting a colonial-era clash of civilisations narrative. He goes on to say that by the time of Alauddin, northern India had 'fallen' into the hands of Muslim invaders, betraying his Hindu nationalist and colonial-influenced readings of history and identifying India as a single entity prior to colonialism, one that is inherently Hindu and always has been. This is a problematic, anachronistic prescription of nationhood based on modern perceptions of the Indian state as a 'nation', which was invaded and had 'fallen' to Muslim invaders.[23] Banerji and other historians of his ilk provide a veneer of academic legitimacy to the previously discussed fictionalised and islamophobic representations, despite the dubious authenticity of their work and reliance on inaccurate sources. They perpetuate these sources, remove them from context,

and give them more value than they deserve.

Viewing these historical sources through the religiously volatile lens of the Indian subcontinent today can result in misunderstandings of historical events, whether that be readings of Sufi allegorical poems or contemporary chronicles, and this results ultimately in a worsening of relations between communities. As can be seen from modern media based on these historical misinterpretations, such as Bhansali's Padmaavat, communal violence increased. Nationwide riots resulted in widespread violence and the film being banned in many Indian states. This began after rumours spread of a scene in which Padmavati was sexual with Alauddin, though this scene did not exist.[24] One BJP politician offered £1.3 billion bounties on the heads of the lead actress and director.[25] Hindu extremist group, Karni Sena vandalised the set of the film, assaulted Bhansali and threatened to cut off the lead actress's nose. Cars were burned on the street and armed security was stationed at cinemas across the nation.[26] This Hindu extremist violence all stemmed from a nonexistent scene wherein a Muslim ruler was seduced by a Hindu Queen. Knowing that many of these beliefs are rooted in historiography from the colonial period, a direct link of causality can be drawn from colonial and nationalist interpretations of history, then filtering into education and media. These ideas then penetrate further into mainstream popular culture, resulting directly in increases in communal violence and hatred.

Ahmad Shah Durrani - The Foreign Raider:

Ahmad Shah Durrani (Born 1722- died 1772) is widely regarded as the founding father of the modern nation of Afghanistan after his creation of the Durrani Empire in 1747, from which the modern Afghan state originates. He is revered across Afghanistan and affectionately referred to as Ahmad Shah Baba (lit. Ahmad Shah Father), a hero of the

20   Cynthia Talbot 'Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-Colonial India.' Comparative Studies in Society and History, 37 (1995) pp. 692-694.

21   Henry Miers Eliot, The History of India as told by its own historians: The Muhammadan Period. Volume II, (London, 1867) p. v.

22   Banerji 'Life and Times of Sultan Alauddin Khalji', p. 802 29 N. C. Banerji 'Life and Times of Sultan Alauddin Khalji' (1939) p. 799.

23   Ibid., pp. 799-800.

24   CBS News, 'Bollywood film sparks protest after bounty offered to behead actress, director' (2017) at https://www.cbsnews.com/news/padmavati-bollywood-film-sparks-protest-bounty-to-behead- actress-director/ (viewed 13 May 2022)

25   BBC News, 'Padmaavat: Why a Bollywood epic has sparked fierce protests' (2018) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-42048512 (viewed 13 May 2022)

26   Ibid. (viewed 13 May 2022)

Afghan people.[27] However, his reputation in India is less well received. He is remembered as a foreign raider who stole Indian wealth, took thousands of Hindu slaves to Afghanistan and weakened the Maratha Empire. Many point to this as a significant factor in India's subsequent colonisation.[28] In Indian popular memory, he is remembered as the victor during the Third Battle of Panipat, which severely weakened the Marathas. He has come to the fore in recent years largely due to the 2019 film, Panipat, by Ashutosh Gowariker. The film is a nationalist retelling of the Third Battle of Panipat which sticks loosely to historical events in favour of regurgitating nationalist sentiments about a Hindu 'motherland' and a barbaric Islamic invader. It builds upon colonial narratives, and it is this understanding that also directly impacts Indian society's memory of Ahmad Shah. Despite not being as notorious as Alauddin Khalji, he represents an Islamic ruler who was based outside of India and who did not consider himself Indian (although he ruled over large territories in what now constitute India and Pakistan). Hence he holds a unique position in Indian society, and it is worth assessing that in comparison to the previously discussed ruler.

Firstly, a look at the 2019 film Panipat, which has so heavily affected Ahmad Shah Durrani recently, and brought him to the fore in Indian popular imagination. The film begins with Parvati Bai (the love interest of the protagonist, Sadashiv Rao, leader of the Marathas) essentially outlining the aim of the film, to reframe the loss of the Third Battle of Panipat as a victory for the Marathas in the long run saying "even history could not classify it as victory or defeat".[29] In reality, the battle was a crushing defeat for the Marathas and weakened their power in the north of India for decades. However Gowariker is not aiming to retell history as it was, but to reframe the events with the Marathas representing the modern Indian state and the Durranis as Muslim invaders, who could

be argued to be representative of Pakistan.[30] The film also begins with much nationalist imagery: the Durrani Empire is shown much smaller than reality on a map, and the Bhagwa Dhwaj banner of the Marathas now associated with the Hindutva movement is prominent against a monochrome black and white background, standing out against the black Afghan flag.[31] The use of Bhagwa Dhwaj is ubiquitous throughout the film and serves as a dog whistle to Hindu nationalists, to whom the Bhagwa Dhwaj has become a prominent symbol.[32] It has even been described by some Hindu Nationalists as the "Guru" of the RSS.[33]

We are first introduced to Ahmad Shah Durrani (who is referred to as Abdali throughout) about 40 minutes into the film, in a dark cave-like throne room filled with advisors wearing animal fur and whispering to themselves as if conspiring. Roasted meat is everywhere and sinister music plays in the background. Then, an assassination attempt takes place led by a man Abdali calls a friend, who Abdali then proceeds to beat to death with the Koh-I-Noor against the advice of his more merciful ministers.[34] This image of a bloodthirsty ruler in a dark and unwelcoming environment speaks to how Gowariker views the Afghan society of the time – evil, savage and untrustworthy. The choice of the Koh-I-Noor diamond as the weapon is by no means an accident. The diamond which originated in the Deccan is representative of how the film character Abdali views India; he enjoys its wealth but has no care for it. Contrast this court scene with the earlier Maratha court scenes in Shaniwar Wada, Pune, full of light, open and filled with beautifully dressed nobles. Music plays and the returning Sadashiv is showered with fresh flowers.[35] This is no coincidence. Gowariker is drawing an image of division and difference, in this instance with Ahmad Shah Durrani as the evil Muslim other, the foreigner. It is constantly reinforced that he is not the same or even equal to the Hindu Marathas. He is pre-

27   Sodaba Haidare 'Panipat: The Bollywood battle over an 18th century war' (2019) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-50634829 (viewed 12 May 2022)

28   Ganda Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan, (Patiala, 1959) p. vii 36 Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan, p. vii.

29   Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker. Perfs. Sanjay Dutt, Arjun Kapoor, Kriti Sanon. Film. Ashutosh Gowariker Productions, Vision World Films, 2019. 0:00:57

30   Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan, p. 260.

31   Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker 0:01:39, Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 288-289

32   Arun Anand, 'Why the saffron flag is revered as 'guru' & worshipped by RSS swayamsevaks' (2021) at https://theprint.in/india/why-the-saffron-flag-is-revered-as-guru-worshipped-by-rss- swayamsevaks/698411/ (viewed 12 May 2022)

33   Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker 0:01:39

34   Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker, 0:39:57

35   Ibid., 0:07:18

sented as a barbarian with wealth, rather than the Marathas who are cultured, noble and with a welcoming court. The dualism between the Durranis and Marathas is the essential crux of the film. The Afghan black flag contrasts with the Maratha Saffron, the dark court contrasts the light, morals and dignity with savagery and ruthlessness and most importantly, the invader with the defender, the Afghan with the Indian.

Ahmad Shah is labelled as foreign in comparison to the Marathas throughout the film and this is not necessarily a false construction. Ahmad Shah considered himself an Afghan and chose to prioritise his throne in Kandahar over the throne of Delhi for that very reason.[36] However, he is presented throughout the film by 'uncivilised versus civilised' dichotomy, and as an invader seeking power and plunder against a brave defender of their motherland. Sadashiv Rao is utilised as a voice for Hindu and Indian nationalism with quotes such as "I am ready to die for even a single grain of dust from my motherland" and "every single drop of blood fallen here is screaming, Hindustan will never be yours!" both of which he says to Ahmad Shah before and after the battle respectively.[37] Gowariker is making the common mistake of ascribing modern ideas around nationhood to historical figures and in this instance, it serves to advance the modern Hindu Nationalist obsession with the Maratha empire as the revivors of Hindu rule in the subcontinent in the post-Mughal era.[38] This viewpoint is further reinforced with lines in the leading songs of the film such as "we're the ones who broke the millennial chains of bondage", clearly referencing the period of Islamic rule, and the Peshwa making references to "liberating" the south after defeating the Nizam of Hyderabad, a Muslim ruler.[39] With this referencing of the Marathas as liberators and the restorers of Hindu rule, and assigning them as the standard bearers for the modern Indian state, where does

that leave Ahmad Shah? He is frequently referred to as an invader and conqueror, despite being invited into northern India by Indian rulers, and is also assigned motivations of conquering all of India, something of which there is little evidence. His ambitions were solely limited to controlling the Punjab and its wealth.[40] In short, Panipat is a nationalist rewriting of history which, whilst having an accurate chronology, assigns motives and identities to characters that they likely did not have, and disparages their characters to become the pawns of nationalist propaganda which serves to divide and generate animosity and stereotypes between Afghans and Indians and by extension, Muslims and Hindus.

So, what was the response to this film? Its release was met with uproar and outrage from Afghans who loathed the representation of Ahmad Shah as a savage tyrant and importantly, his representation which gave in to islamophobia and was in fact more akin to an Arab ruler as opposed to an Afghan through the way he dresses and speaks.[41] Posters advertising the film with lines such as 'Death strikes where his shadow falls' angered even the government of Afghanistan so much so that Afghan diplomats reached out to the production company and the Indian government, voicing their concerns about the portrayal and the impact it would have.[42] Nafees Ur Rehman, a Pashtun researcher focusing on the vilification of Afghans in colonial literature, commented that films such as Panipat rely on a religious nationalism which finds the heroes in 'yourselves' and villains in 'others'.[43] Panipat and other Bollywood films with negative references to Afghan characters have damaged the relationship between Afghanistan and India, and especially between Afghan people and Bollywood.[44] The impact of Hindu nationalism under the auspices of the BJP is having a global impact. Much of this image has its origin in the more

36   Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan pp. 260-261.

37   Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker, 2:04:47, 2:43:34

38   Akhilesh Pillalamari, 'The truth behind the Maratha Empire in India' (2016) at https://thediplomat.com/2016/01/the-truth-behind-the-maratha-empire-in-india/ (viewed 12 May 2022)

39   Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker, 0:16:0, 0:14:48

40   Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker, 0:44:03; Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 260-261.

41   Sodaba Haidare 'Panipat: The Bollywood battle over an 18th century war' (2019) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-50634829 (viewed 12 May 2022)

42   Shereena Qazi and Mohsin Khan Mohmand 'Bollywood's Panipat irks Afghans over founding father's portrayal' (2019) at https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/12/bollywoods-panipat-irks- afghans-over-founding-fathers-portrayal/ (viewed 12 May 2022)

43   Idem

44   Sodaba Haidare 'Panipat: The Bollywood battle over an 18th century war' (2019) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-50634829 (viewed 12 May 2022)

generalised readings of colonial history such as in works by H. M. Eliot. However, there are some other sources which deal with Ahmad Shah directly. An interesting example is Rudyard Kipling's poem 'With Scindia to Delhi' in which he describes the Afghan forces as 'Mlech' meaning a polluting non-Vedic barbarian.[45] He goes on to describe them as 'black', 'swine fed' and 'jackals'.[46] Kipling is illustrative of the contempt with which the British ruling class regarded Afghans and it appears that this understanding has filtered into popular representations today.

Conclusion:

The presentation of Islamic rulers in Indian popular culture indicates explicitly the stereotypes held by most of the population against Muslims as a whole. Whether that is stereotypes about sexuality and sexual violence, religious radicalism, or perceptions of foreignness and the 'other'. This investigation has assessed two prominent Islamic rulers and their presentation in popular media. Both have had specific qualities assigned to them, although many stereotypes cover them both equally. Alaud-

din is presented as a sexual predator, throughout Padmaavat he rapes, commits adultery and is vulgar. The main object of the film's plot is Alauddin's lust and desire for Padmavati eventually resulting in her demise. This plays heavily into notions of the hypersexualised Muslim male and fuelled nationwide violence by Hindu extremists and government officials. Ahmad Shah Durrani is used as the archetype of the barbaric foreign Muslim, the perfect embodiment of the 'other' and that which isn't Indian and Hindu. His portrayal has caused such outrage that it has damaged relations between India and Afghanistan and led to diplomatic intervention. These portrayals build themselves upon colonial and nationalist understandings of history, such as the work of H. M. Eliot, who are openly biased and produce inaccurate translations and readings of history. In the use of colonial and nationalist histories, the presentation of Islamic rulers in popular media has a detrimental impact on current relations between Hindus and Muslims through accusations of sexual violence and moral shortcomings, protests, and accusations of foreignness and lack of civilisation.

45   Rudyard Kipling, 'With Scindia to Delhi' at https://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poem/poems_scindia.htm (viewed 13 May 2022); Britannica, "mlechchha." Encyclopedia Britannica, (2010) at https://www.britannica.com/topic/mlechchha (viewed 13 May 2022)

46   Rudyard Kipling, 'With Scindia to Delhi' at https://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poem/poems_scindia.htm (viewed 13 May 2022)

Bibliography

Books:
De Bruijn, Thomas, Ruby in the Dust: Poetry and History in Padmavat by the South Asian Sufi Poet Muhammad Jayasi, (Leiden, 2012)
Eliot, Henry Miers, The History of India as told by its own historians: The Muhammadan Period. Volume I, (London, 1867)
Eliot, Henry Miers, The History of India as told by its own historians: The Muhammadan Period. Volume II, (London, 1867)
Singh, Ganda, Ahmad Shah Durrani: Father of Modern Afghanistan, (Patiala, 1959) Truschke, Audrey, Aurangzeb: The Life and Legacy of India's Most Controversial
King (Stanford, 2017)

Online Articles and Media:
Agrawal, Purushottam, 'Absurdity of epic proportions: Are people aware of the content in Jayasi's Padmavat?' (2017) at https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/20171204-padmavati- karni-se-na-malik-muhammad-jayasi-sanjay-bhansali-1092364-2017-11-24 (viewed 8 May 2022)
Anand, Arun, 'Why the saffron flag is revered as 'guru' & worshipped by RSS swayamsevaks' (2021) at https://theprint.in/india/why-the-saffron-flag-is- revered-as-guru-worshipped-by-rss-swayamse-vaks/698411/ (viewed 12 May 2022)
BBC News, 'Padmaavat: Why a Bollywood epic has sparked fierce protests' (2018) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-42048512 (viewed 13 May 2022)

CBS News, 'Bollywood film sparks protest after bounty offered to behead actress, director' (2017) at https://www.cbsnews.com/news/padmavati-bollywood-film- sparks-protest-bounty-to-behead-actress-director/ (viewed 13 May 2022)

Encyclopaedia Britannica, "mlechchha." Encyclopedia Britannica, (2010) athttps://www.britannica.com/topic/mlechchha (viewed 13 May 2022)

Haidare, Sodaba, 'Panipat: The Bollywood battle over an 18th century war' (2019) athttps://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-50634829 (viewed 12 May 2022)

Kipling, Rudyard, 'With Scindia to Delhi' at https://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poem/poems_scindia.htm (viewed 13 May 2022)

Pandey, Geeta, 'Jai Sri Ram: The Hindu Chant that became a murder cry' (2019) athttps://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-48882053 (viewed 7 May 2022)

Qazi, Shereena, and Mohmand, Mohsin Khan 'Bollywood's Panipat irks Afghans over founding father's portrayal' (2019) at https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/12/bollywoods-panipat-irks-afghans-over-founding-fathers-portrayal/ (viewed 12 May 2022)

Vaidyanathan, Rajini, 'India's Muslims fear for their future under Narendra Modi' (2019) at https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-48278441 (viewed 25 April 2022)

Journal Articles:
Banerji, N. C., 'Life and Times of Sultan Alauddin Khalji' Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 3 (1939) pp. 799–812

Guha, Ranajit, 'Orientalist strains in Indian historiography.' Asian Studies Association of Australia. Review, 6 (1983) pp. 1-4

Jaffrelot, Christophe, 'Hindutva' in Gita Dharampal-Frick, Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach, Rachel Dwyer, and Jahnavi Phalkey (eds.) Key Concepts in Modern Indian Studies (New York, 2015) pp. 108-110

Leidig, Eviane, 'From Love Jihad to Grooming Gangs: Tracing Flows of the Hypersexual Muslim Male through Far-Right Female Influencers' Religions, 12 (2021) pp. 1-20

Sandhu, Akhtar Hussain, 'Reality of 'Divide and Rule' in British India.' Pakistan Journal of History & Culture, 30 (2009) pp. 61-80

Sen, Amiya Prasad, 'Hindu Reform Movements in British India' in Gita Dharampal-Frick, Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach, Rachel Dwyer, and Jahnavi Phalkey (eds.) Key Concepts in Modern Indian Studies (New York, 2015) pp. 103-108 Sikander, Zainab, 'Islamophobia in Indian Media', Islamophobia Studies Journal, Vol. 6 (2021) pp. 120-129

Talbot, Cynthia, 'Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre- Colonial India.' Comparative Studies in Society and History, 37 (1995) pp. 692- 722

Thapa, Anu. "Resurrection, Remediation, and Religious Fundamentalism in Contemporary Indian Sci-Fi/Fantasy Films." CrossCurrents 70, no. 3 (2020) pp. 289-301

Zafar, Samana and Ahmad, Khanday Pervaiz "Past and Present: Surveying Medieval India Amidst the Present Perceptions of the Past in Popular Medium." History and Sociology of South Asia 14, (2020) pp. 39-56

Cinematic Material:
Padmaavat. Dir. Sanjay Leela Bhansali. Perfs. Deepika Padukone, Shahid Kapoor, Ranveer Singh. Film. Bhansali Productions, Viacom 18 Motion Pictures, 2018.

Panipat. Dir. Ashutosh Gowariker. Perfs. Sanjay Dutt, Arjun Kapoor, Kriti Sanon. Film. Ashutosh Gowariker Productions, Vision World Films, 2019

Imperialism

and

Romanticism

Szymon Kwapiszweski

Feeling and Power: The Influence of The 'Hegemonic' Imperialism on German, Russian and Polish Romantic Movements

The question of the relation between Romanticism and imperialism has long been a matter of a scholarly debate, yet, it still poses difficulties and unveils new, untouched areas. The major cause for such a state of affairs is the vagueness of both terms. As Arthur Lovejoy points out, there was no single set of ideas that can be correctly and unambiguously labelled as 'Romanticism'. Similarly, imperialism can also be considered in at least two, very different ways. In countries such as the United Kingdom or France, the perception of the terms 'empire' and 'imperialism' was primarily marked by the colonial endeavours of these states. Thus the greatest impact on the development of the local Romantic movement had themes such as multi-culturalism, reflected for instance in the works of William Wordsworth, or the fascination with Orient, visible in the writings of Lord Byron or paintings of Eugène Delacroix. In this essay, however, I would like to focus on a different facet of imperialism, namely a 'hegemonic' one. Albeit less present in the English scholarship, this form was often much more important for the development of the Romantic mindset than the 'colonial' incarnation of imperialism. My understanding of the 'hegemonic' empire follows that of Herfried Münkler, and refers to those states that strived to establish a territorial supremacy within Europe. During the lifetime of Romanticism, the most striking examples of such political entities were Napoleonic France and Tsarist Russia. It was their ideological grandeur and their formidable political power that resulted in a great intellectual awakening and left a lasting imprint on the shape of the Romantic movement. The character of this influence varied, depending on the way the romanticising circles were affected by the activity of the imperialist ideology.

This paper draws on the example of three prolific Romantic traditions: German, Russian and Polish, each of them having a different relationship with the 'hegemonic' imperialism. In Germany, the short-lived period of Napoleonic rule was linked to the long-awaited introduction of some of the Enlightenment postulates. But, on the other hand it was also a time of a great national awakening, which directed its sword against the French. In Russia, the pride of the majesty of the Tsarist Empire was interwoven with the bitter sense of limited freedoms and a life under the autocratic regime. Finally, Polish romantics had an ambiguous relation to the embodiments of the 'hegemonic' imperialism, for on the one hand they despised the Tsarist Empire as an agent of the political oppression of the nation, but on the other hand they perceived the Napoleonic Empire as a mighty benefactor, believed to support the cause of the Polish independence.

Having explained the difference between 'colonial' and 'hegemonic' imperialism, one needs to take a closer look at the term 'Romanticism' itself. As it was indicated earlier, the meaning of this notion is at any rate uniform and differs depending on the context in which one deploys it. Therefore, in juxtaposition with the 'hegemonic' imperialism, as explored in this essay, the term 'Romanticism' designates primarily 'Romantic nationalism', which Joep Leerssen describes as "the celebration of the nation". Apart from that, my paper focuses also on the changes in consciousness that occurred in the so-called 'Romantic period', that is between 1770 and 1840, and which were triggered by various emanations of the idea of 'hegemonic' imperialism.

One of the first examples of an anti-imperial philosophical thought per se can be found in the works of Johann Gottfried Herder. The creator of the new study of language was greatly afraid of the brutality of Europeans, which was aimed at spreading "Eurocentric universalism". In Another Philosophy of History, Herder mocks the civilising intentions of the European powers. Not only indigenous peoples in the overseas colonies, but also inhabitants of domestic backwaters are subjugated to "[make them] such as we are: good, strong, happy men". Herder denounces imperialism on the basis of suppressing diversity, which in his philosophy is perceived as a divine endowment. Even though he believes in the existence of common human features, they are definitely not identical with European concepts. Instead, the true essence of human universalism can only be discovered through distilling the features that are shared by the entire humankind. This leads Herder to the affirmation of a modified ideal of the 'noble savage'. The German

philosopher believes that the wild peoples managed to maintain this diversity, which had been earlier lost by European civilisation. His dissent towards some behaviours of the indigenous populations notwithstanding, he strongly opposes slavery and 'civilising' interventions. As Herder wrote Another Philosophy already in 1774, his ideas, embracing particularity as opposed to imperialistic uniformity, were able to bear fruit among the next generation of the late-eighteenth-century German thinkers. However, even more than by Herder, they were shaped by the experience of the French Revolution.

The events of 1789 were under close observation of the whole of Europe. In Germany, in 'preromantic', avant-garde circles, they were at first warmly welcomed. Kant believed that every people had a right to create its own laws, while Hegel affirmed the Revolution as a representation of "the emancipation of the human mind". However, in the course of time, the support began to falter, as France leaped into the abyss of revolutionary terror. Building on Herderian theories of 'Northern power', thinkers such as Johann Gottlieb Fichte claimed that only the Germans are capable of fulfilling a historical moral mission, since they constitute the primary European people (Urvolk). It was the conception of the idea of German uniqueness which triggered the subsequent search for its roots. Tacitus's Germania served as a starting point for the later discovery of German folklore by authors such as brothers Grimm, Brentano, Arnim, and Görres. As it can thus be observed, admittedly, the fascination of German romantics with the history of the nation, traces its beginnings to the failure of the French Revolution, rather than to a contact with an organised form of a 'hegemonic' imperialism. However, it will be shown that the experience of the Napoleonic occupation significantly helped to disseminate this interest among the masses.

On 7th January 1798, at a meeting of the Patriotic Society, young Joseph Görres announced the death of the Holy Roman Empire, as a result of the transfer of Mainz to France, which happened eight days earlier, on 30th December 1797. It must be noted that Görres was not particularly unhappy about this fact. Indeed, he perceived the existence of the Holy Roman Empire as a farce, standing in the way of the development of the German national consciousness, and thus saw in the loss of Mainz a beginning of a long-awaited change. The deadly thrust was executed by Napoleon Bonaparte, whose armies swept across Europe, subjugating it to the Emperor of the French. Despite military aggression directed against German states, the great personality of Napoleon acted like a magnet for a number of German thinkers. He was admired by Goethe and Hegel themselves, for he was "der Weltgeist zu Pferde, der Mann der Gegenwart und der Zukunft". This statement, bringing to mind David's painting Napoleon Crossing the Alps, is only one of the praises directed towards Bonaparte. His genial personality was sustaining the Humboldtian ideal of an intermediary between heaven and Earth. Likewise, it perfectly fitted into Fichte's preconceptions of a "powerful individual" – a person endowed with extraordinary intellectual and spiritual abilities, who was to lead humanity into another stadium of development. With such attributes, Napoleon's imperialistic inclinations weighted much less for a number of German philosophers, for whom he was a harbinger of a new age.

However, these feelings were not uniform for all romantics. Those who particularly strongly embraced the idea of 'Romantic nationalism', did not share the exultation of Goethe and Hegel. Already in 1806 people such as Ernst Moritz Arndt began to address the Germans to evoke deep, national feelings. The choir of anti-Napoleonic intellectuals was soon joined by others: Schlegel, Arnim, Brentano, Grimms, Görres or even Fichte himself, who realising the French threat, doubled their efforts aimed at spreading Germanness among the wider population. Their actions resulted in the creation of new societies, often having a sport character, so-called Turnvereine. The rank and file members of those organisations only a few years later engaged into a regular combat with the retreating French army, which in German historiography is referred to as a 'war of freedom' (Freiheitskrieg). The expulsion of the Napoleonic troops, though, did not end the process of awakening, indeed, it only put it in motion. A tidal wave of national feelings had swept through Germany, leaving behind new patriotic education, gymnastic societies, and even new types of 'patriotic' garments. Also romantic artists joined this popular manifestation. The personification of the union between art and national Befreiung was Theodor Körner, fighting against the French 'with sword and pen' until, deadly wounded, he passed away in 1813. Likewise, national imagery was widely present in the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich from that period. The Chasseur in the Forest depicts a lost French soldier, overwhelmed by dangerously majestic Teutonic forest. The Tombs of the Old Heroes presents a grave supposedly belonging to Arminius, a Germanic warrior fighting against the Romans. The light beaming from the

white tomb suggests to the recipient that the glory gained in the fight for independence lasts forever. Nipperdey concludes that even though 1815 did not see the unification of Germany, the events of 1813 were crucial for the development of German Nationalbewegung.

To the east from Germany stretched vast territories of the Russian Empire. Ruled by the Romanov dynasty, the state had a notoriously autocratic reputation. Due to this feature, Enlightenment and Romantic ideas gradually penetrated into the realm of the Tsars concentrated particularly on political matters. As Solomon Volkov points out, "in order to be popular, you had to write dissident poems". This, however, did not necessarily apply to already renowned writers. Such person was Vasily Zhukovsky, one of the most important Russian translators of the first half of the nineteenth century and a poet himself. Gradually ascending next steps in the courtly hierarchy, around 1820 he became one of the most trusted advisors of Tsar Alexander I. Affected by unhappy love and the death of his beloved, Zhukovsky turned to religion and began to perceive himself as a tool of providence. His writings present an interesting juxtaposition of the two European 'hegemonic' imperialisms. Alexander I, the 'peacemaker' and initiator of the Holy Alliance was perceived by the Russian writer as an ideal Christian ruler. On the other side of the spectrum Zhukovsky located belligerent Napoleon, obsessed with warfare and conquest. The poet's perception of imperialism is not autonomous; it heavily depends on the motivations standing behind the deeds of the emperors. Zhukovsky neither dismisses imperialism, nor does his romantic interests develop in any meaningful way in resistance to it. The situation was, however, slightly different in the case of the most important Russian romantic, Alexander Pushkin.

Pushkin from the age of twelve was brought up under close supervision of the tsar, as he was admitted to the Imperial Lycée in 1811. His time there was filled primarily with poetry, while his brilliant pieces are believed to have been recognized by Tsar Alexander himself. However, after graduation he entered literary circles of the capital, roused by the spread of Western Romantic works. Pushkin quickly became one of the most important poets, as in 1817 he wrote an ode 'To Liberty', which explicitly touched the forbidden topic of the murder of the previous Tsar, Paul. Although this time Pushkin was pardoned by Alexander I, his poems balancing 'on a knife edge', in the end, the author's offences resulted in him being sent to internal ex-

ile in the Caucasus in 1820. Up until 1826 he lived outside the capital, while his works from that period were becoming more and more moderate. One of the few overtly anti-imperialist examples is the poem On Alexander I, in which Pushkin mocks the emperor's lack of military commandment skills. However, a truly life-changing moment for Pushkin occurred in 1826, as an aftermath of the Decembrist revolt.

Despite Pushkin's own gradual retreat from fierce anti-imperialist positions, his earlier works were in wide circulation among the revolutionaries involved in the 1825 plot. For this reason, Tsar Nicholas I had found it appropriate to summon Pushkin back to Moscow in September 1826. Despite declaring his support for the Decembrist revolt, the poet agreed to become a courtly writer for the Tsar. This event resulted in the change of Pushkin's approach towards Tsarism. The best exemplification of this shift was the poem Stanzas, giving praise to the Tsar and encouraging him to follow the example of Peter the Great. Such words aroused some indignation among Pushkin's old friends, with him being called a 'sycophant', betraying anti-imperialist ideals. Although T.J. Binyon believes that Pushkin critics were not numerous and that he managed to defend himself, other historians such as Simon Volkov or David Magarshack state that Stanzas marked the loss of the status of a dissident poet. It is beyond doubt that in the last decade of his life, Pushkin abandoned his former, firmly anti-imperialist agenda. On the other hand, the extent to which Pushkin really began to praise tsarist rule is subject to a scholarly debate. It may be, therefore, concluded that although Pushkin developed his poetic character in the opposition to imperialism, his late works were much more supportive towards the tsarist state ideology.

There existed, however, Romantic literary movements that had never accepted Russian ideological Pan-Slavism. One of them was Polish Romanticism, which positioned itself in strong opposition to Tsarism. The centre of an early-Romantic Polish thought was the University of Vilnius, where in 1817 the Philomath Society was established. Its most prominent member was Adam Mickiewicz, whose work Ballads and Romances ('Ballady i Romanse') published in 1822, is believed to mark the start of Romanticism in Polish literature. Due to his membership in the underground organisations calling for Polish independence from Russia, he was imprisoned and, similarly to Pushkin whom he later met, in 1824 sentenced to an exile in the Russian interior. His tumultuous and deeply trau-

matic experiences with the Russian 'hegemonic' imperialism found their reflection in his later, most exquisite works, one of which was the Polish national epic Pan Tadeusz written between 1832 and 1834. It tells the story of the last foray of the Lithuanian nobility taking place in the village Soplicowo in 1811 and 1812. Although the main theme of the work is the feud between two noble families, it nevertheless develops strong anti-Russian overtones. The head of the Soplica family, Jacek, in the past, in collaboration with Russians, killed in a skirmish a prominent member of the other family, Pantler Horeszko. In order to repent for his deeds, he becomes a Cistercian monk and joins the Napoleonic troops. Being above suspicions, he starts to serve as a French liaison to occupied Poland, to propagate among the Polish nobility the idea of an anti-Russian uprising upon the arrival of Napoleon. In the epic, the agents of Russian imperialism are primarily soldiers who are portrayed in a very negative light, as honour-lacking brutes and oppressors, in order to visualise the evil character of the Tsarist State. The plot of Pan Tadeusz clearly illuminates the complexities of the perception of 'hegemonic' imperialism among the Polish romantics, which varied depending on whether the activity of a hegemonic empire was deemed beneficial or destructive for the cause of Polish independence.

It is, however, noteworthy that in his earlier notable work, The Forefathers' Eve, in the appendix to the third part, Mickiewicz clearly states that his message is directed against the Russian officials, rather than "the Russian friends". The poet assures that the Russian people: "are entitled to citizenship of his dreams". He sympathises with them, for both Poles and Russians suffer under the imperial yoke. Noticeably, among various forms of punishments such as death or an exile in Siberia, Mickiewicz mentions "severer heavenly punishment", namely, becoming one of the tsar's officials. Through entering their ranks, such person "sold the free soul into Tsar's favour". Tsar is deliberately depicted as a devil, to whom one can offer their own salvation, in reward for worldly power. The writer concludes the poem with an analogy, comparing people protesting against his harsh words to a dog that gets so used to its collar that "it bites the hand tearing it". The legacy of The Forefather's Eve is similar to that of Pan Tadeusz in perceiving the Russian 'hegemonic' imperialism as an ideology suppressing the will of the individual people, desiring to live in freedom from the autocratic yoke. Despite advocating particularly for Polish independence, Mickiewicz leaves room for cooperation with non-Poles.

Yet, presumably due to the experience of his exile, he strongly advocates for the moral maximalism in this respect, demanding of everyone to set themselves clearly against the Tsar, or to agree to be denounced as his supporter.

Although this essay focuses primarily on Mickiewicz, writings of other Polish Romantics such as Juliusz Słowacki, Maurycy Mochnacki or Zygmunt Krasiński shared a similarly anti-tsarist agenda. Particularly strong formative effect on Polish Romanticism held the November Uprising in 1830-1831. Upon this event, Słowacki built the plot of Kordian, being his response to Mickiewicz's Forefather's Eve. In his work, Słowacki refers to the Swiss legendary hero Arnold von Winkelried, whose sacrifice during the battle of Stempach was believed to enable his compatriots to defeat the imperial Habsburg army. Through this comparison, Kordian laid the foundation for the idea of Poland being the 'Christ of Nations'. As Poland was betrayed and 'killed' during the partitions in the second half of the eighteenth century, it would follow Christ's resurrection at some point in the future. The belief that Poland was to lead other nations in overcoming the shadow of hostile, imperial powers, turned the conflict with imperialism into the core feature of Polish Romanticism. On the other hand, similarly to Zhukovsky, Polish Romantics were not entirely anti-imperialistic. In both cases, those writers embraced this version of imperialism, which better suited the main points of their agenda. For Zhukovsky it was Alexandrian peace-making, whereas for the Polish Romantics crucial was the hope for restoring Polish independence, laid in the persona of Napoleon.

As there does not exist a coherent definition of Romanticism, similarly the perception of the 'hegemonic' imperialism differed among the representatives of this movement, as well as its varied in time and location. Some German intellectuals, like Goethe or Hegel, saw in Napoleon a personification of their dreams. In contrast, German folklorists believed him to be an oppressor of their newly-discovered nation. Interestingly, among Polish romantics, the perception of the very same person was almost entirely different, as Napoleon took his place on the pedestal as a liberator of Poland, albeit an ultimately unsuccessful one. This does not mean, however, that Romanticism in Poland was significantly different to its German counterpart. Napoleon gained affection among the Poles only when he kindled hopes for Polish independence after declaring war on Alexander I, but the 'hegemonic' imperialism in the French incarnation could also potentially be revoked, had it positioned itself

against the national feelings. Similar confusion in the perception of different embodiments of the 'hegemonic' imperialism could be observed between Polish and Russian Romanticisms. The devilish image of Alexander I and his successor, Nicholas I, as established by Mickiewicz in his writings, did not find understanding of his fellow Russian romantic poets. Pan-Slavic inclinations of the tsars did not restrain Zhukovsky and Pushkin from offering them more or less support, even though the latter shared with Mickiewicz the same painful experience of a political exile. Therefore, as much as there did not exist a single approach of the Romantics to the 'hegemonic' imperialism, it is certainly true that as a principle they tended to set themselves against any form of imperial universalisation and autocratic oppression. On the other hand, as this essay attempts to illuminate, in the context of the contemporary political situation, the approach to the 'hegemonic' imperialism was often much more nuanced and adapted to fit other, more important elements of the agendas of the German, Russian and Polish Romantic movements.

Bibliography

Primary sources

David, Jacques Louis, Napoleon Crossing the Alps, 1801 (accessed: 3 December 2022)

Delacroix, Eugène, The Women of Algiers, 1834 (accessed 3 December 2022)

Friedrich, Caspar David, The Chasseur in the Forest, 1814 (accessed 3 December 2022)

Friedrich, Caspar David, The Tombs of the Old Heroes, 1812 (accessed 3 December 2022)

Herder, Johann Gottfried; Evergivenis, Ioannis D.; Pellerin, Daniel (eds., transl.), Another Philosophy of History and Selected Political Writings (Indianapolis-Cambridge, 2004)

Mickiewicz, Adam, Dziady (1823-6) (accessed 3 December 2022)

Mickiewicz, Adam; Kirkconnell, Watson (transl.), Pan Tadeusz: The Last Foray in Lithuania (New York, 2018)

Pushkin, Alexander, The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin: Lyric Poems: 1820-1826 (London, 2002)

Sältzer, Rolf (ed.), German Essays on History (New York, 1991)

Słowacki, Juliusz, Kordian (accessed 3 December 2022)

Secondary sources

Alber, Jan, 'The Specific Orientalism of Lord Byron's Poetry', in AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Vol. 38, No. 2 (2013), pp. 107-127

Bąk, Magdalena 'Nienawidzę i kocham. Miejsce Mickiewicza i rola autorytetu w korespondencji Słowackiego' ['I hate and I love. The place of Mickiewicz and the role of the authority in the correspondence of Słowacki'], in Agony PFLIT, No. 10 (13), (2020), pp. 95-106

Binyon, T.J., Pushkin: a Biography (New York, 2004)

Ellingson, Ter, The Myth of the Noble Savage (Berkeley – Los Angeles, 2001)

Fagin, Helen N., 'Adam Mickiewicz: Poland's National Romantic Poet', in South Atlantic Bulletin, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Nov., 1977), pp. 103-113

Fink-Lang, Monika, Joseph Görres: Die Biographie (Paderborn, 2013)

Fulford, Tim; Kitson, Peter J. (eds.), Romanticism and Colonialism: Writing and Empire, 1780-1830 (1998, Cambridge, 2005)

Koropeckyj, Roman, Adam Mickiewicz: The Life of a Romantic (Ithaca – London, 2008)

Krzyżanowski, Julian, 'Mickiewicz and Pushkin', in The Slavonic and East European Review, Vol. 6, No. 18 (Mar., 1928), pp. 635-45

Leerssen, Joep, 'Notes towards a Definition of Romantic Nationalism', in Journal for the Study of Romanticisms, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2013), pp. 9-35

Lovejoy, Arthur, 'The Meaning of Romanticism for the Historian of Ideas', in Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Jun., 1941), pp. 257-78

Ma, Laurel, 'The Real and Imaginary Harem: Assessing Delacroix's Women of Algiers as an Imperialist Apparatus', in Penn History Review: Vol. 19 : Iss. 1, pp. 9-26

Magarshack, David, Pushkin: a Biography (London, 1967)

Makdisi, Saree, Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity (New York, 1998)

McMahon, Darrin M., Divine Fury: a History of Genius (New York, 2013),

Münkler, Herfried, Imperien, Die Logik der Weltherrschaft - vom alten Rom bis zu den Vereinigten Staaten (2005, Hamburg, 2007)

Nipperdey, Thomas, Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866 (1983, München, 1984)

Noyes, John K., Herder: Aesthetics against Imperialism (Toronto-Buffalo-London, 2015)

Richardson, Alan, Romanticism, Race and Imperial Culture 1780-1834 (Indianapolis, 1996)

Troyat, Henri, Pushkin (London, 1974)

Volkov, Solomon, Romanov Riches: Russian Writers and Artists Under the Tsars (New York, 2011)

Zamoyski, Adam, Holy Madness: Romantics, Patriots and Revolutionaries, 1776-1871 (London, 1999)

Was Britain a 'tolerant society'?

Ingrid Sykes

Does the history of immigration before 1914 support the idea of Britain as a tolerant society?

This paper will argue that despite the laissez-faire attitude to 'alien' immigration and unrestricted entry to Britain until the late Victorian period, hostility and racism towards immigrants occurred through violence, in the media and was later institutionalised through the Aliens Act in 1905. To analyse this, I will evaluate the government's tolerant attitude to immigration throughout the nineteenth century in contrast to the shift to intolerance through the 1905 Aliens Act. I will then analyse the reactions to Jewish and Irish immigrants, as these groups far outnumbered any other migratory movement to Britain in the period.[1] I will mainly focus on the history of immigration from 1800 to 1914 to indicate that Britain was mostly an intolerant society, despite the liberal values it professed.

Government attitudes towards immigrants during the nineteenth century support the idea of Britain as a tolerant society. Porter refers to the government's laissez-faire approach towards immigrants, noting that "from 1826 until 1848 and again from 1850 to 1905, there was nothing on the statute book to enable the executive to prevent aliens from coming and staying in Britain".[2] Access to Britain was unrestricted and did not discriminate against refugees, any country nor their reason for immigration. Thus, Britain was naturally tolerant of immigrants, in allowing much greater personal and political freedom than other more politically repressive countries. This seems especially convincing in the context of the late nineteenth century, and when compared to the emergence of fascism in other European countries. Consequently, Britain was an attractive society for migrants. As the first industrialised nation, economic strength and demand for labour drew immigrants to the industries of British towns and cities. An account from the Anglo-German community in 1881 claimed that migrant's perceived a "rich England, where money lies on the street".[3] As

European society modernised through industrialisation and economic transformation throughout the nineteenth century, the scale of immigration significantly increased. The development of the steam and internal combustion engines increasingly made immigration easier. It is estimated that between 1800-1914, around a million people crossed the Irish Sea to settle in Britain.[4]

The idea of a tolerant society initially appears convincing due to this open-door policy, but the government's attitude became intolerant in response to popular xenophobic and racist opinion. The Aliens Act of 1905 dramatically broke from the "liberal tradition of most of the nineteenth century".[5] The Conservatives could not ignore mainstream intolerant views that immigrants threatened jobs, housing, and welfare. As a result, immigrant ships could only dock at designated ports where immigration officers could refuse entry to "undesirable immigrants" who lacked means of support and who were mentally or physically ill, or criminals.[6] New immigration policies were explicitly discriminative, contrary to Holmes' assertion of the "fabled toleration of the British".[7] Despite its avowed intention to prevent paupers or criminals, the main concern was to prevent Jewish immigration and other immigrants from Eastern Europe. The government could simply pick and choose who could be excluded from British society and thus, through government attitude after 1905, Britain shifted from embodying liberal values of laissez-faire and inclusion to intolerance and discrimination. Despite the Conservatives' defeat in the 1906 general election, the Liberals did not repeal the Aliens Act, and even introduced further restrictions in the revised Aliens Restriction Act 1914, meaning Britain remained intolerant regarding immigration.

Racist and discriminative responses to Jewish immigration before 1914 further reinforces the image of Britain as an intolerant society. Despite the lack of formal legal barriers to Jewish immigration before 1905, anti-Semitism was prevalent

1   Panikos Panayi, An Immigration History of Britain, Multicultural Racism since 1800 (Pearson, 2010), p.39.
2   Bernard Porter, The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics (Cambridge University Press, 1979), p.3.
3   Heinrich Dorgeel, Die Deutsche Colonie in London (London, 1881), pp. 17-21.
4   Panayi, An Immigration History of Britain (Routledge, 2014), p. 23.
5   Vaughan Bevan, The Development of British Immigration Law (Cambridge University Press, 2008) p.70-71.
6   Aliens Act 1905, Ch.13.
7   Colin Holmes, A Tolerant Country? Immigrants, Refugees and Minorites in Britain (Faber & Faber, 1991), p.15.

in British society throughout the nineteenth century. The press would focus intolerant views on one immigrant group at the time, emphasising anti-Semitism in the late nineteenth century. Examples of racial intolerance are most explicit in the magazine Punch aimed at middle-class Victorians. One image published in 1864 was titled the "gross ignorance of Hebrew."[8] Leading up to the Aliens Act, similar themes, and imagery racialised Jewish people from the 1870s onwards. Banister depicted extreme stereotypes in his England under the Jews, describing Jewish immigrants as "semitic sewage" carrying disease.[9] Webb drew attention to high fertility rates amongst the Jewish community, deploring consequent "national deterioration or... this country gradually falling to the Irish or the Jews".[10] Arnold White's investigation of the East End found that "the undue proportion of the dangerous anarchists in this country are foreign Jews".[11] These conclusions were unsubstantiated, and were indicative of racist attitudes amongst the British, rather than of genuine Jewish political opinion. Motivations for such intolerance were unjustified, with Londoners opposing the difference of Jewish immigrants' appearance and food.

Emancipation in the late 1800s meant Jewish immigrants were legally free to pursue careers they wished. Many admired the high work ethic of Jewish immigrants, such as of the merchant Ernest Cassel who arrived in Liverpool penniless in 1864 yet rose to become King Edwards VII's financial adviser and a member of English aristocratic society. However, many British people were suspicious of Jewish loyalty to British society, and questioned their commitment to sectional interests and powers abroad. Therefore, the toleration of a minority of richer, Jewish immigrants is entirely unrepresentative of most immigrant experience. Their work was mainly characterised by its continuity with traditional Jewish employment. After 1880, half of new arrivals were employed in tailoring, as most new arrivals could not speak English, and had to work with other Jewish immigrants. Many British people perceived this as 'alien' to indigenous culture and thus racist and xenophobic perceptions were heightened.

Many British people perceived Jewish immigrants as an economic threat, as well as perceiving them as racially inferior. Regarding employment, intolerance was explicit in the hostile and chauvinistic attitudes of the trade unions in the mid 1890s. The Trade Union Committee perceived immigrants to be a threat to employment, and subsequently passed motions deploring the entry of alien labour in 1888, 1892, 1894 and 1895. These intolerant attitudes were also apparent in the extensive rioting of August 1911 against shopkeepers and other propertied Jewish people who had settled among Monmouthshire mining communities. In London, sporadic violence against Jewish immigrants mainly occurred outside of areas they lived in. Walking home through docker's territory after work in the London docks meant the possibility of being attacked by stoning. Furthermore, Jewish immigrants selling fruit and vegetables on the street faced antipathy as British vendors felt threatened by competition. Intolerance is further evident regarding housing. Anxieties stemmed from the concentration of Jewish immigrants in certain districts of towns and cities, such as Whitechapel in London. When a street became occupied by Jewish immigrants, rent rose by 50-60%.[12] Groups such as the 1886 Society for Suppression of Destitute Aliens emerged in opposition to Jewish immigration. Most significant was the founding of the British Brother's League by Conservative MP Major William Evans-Gordon in 1901, which gained 45,000 members. These groups campaigned against Jewish immigration through marches and petitions, building momentum for the 1905 Aliens Act. Therefore, despite entry to Britain being unrestricted for Jewish immigrants before 1905 and their emancipation allowing them to pursue careers of their choice, evidence of the violence and racial stereotyping they experienced indicates Britain was not a tolerant society.

Hostile attitudes to Irish immigrants further indicate Britain to be an intolerant society before 1914. From 1800 to 1945, most immigrants were Irish due to geographical proximity and the Great Famine of the 1840s. In 1871 there were 774,310 Irish immigrants in Britain and 550,040 in 1911.[13] The 1801 Act of Union, uniting Britain and Ireland, meant they were technically internal migrants.

8   https://punch.photoshelter.com/image/I0000ZdgtAgxJWvU (last accessed 21/02/2022)
9   Colin Holmes, Antisemitism in British Society, 1876-1939 (Routledge, 1979), pp. 36-48.
10   Sidney Webb, The Decline in the Birth Rate, (The Fabian Society, 1907), p.17.
11   Geoffrey Alderman, Modern British Jewry (Oxford, 1992), p. 167.
12   Lloyd Gartner, The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914 (London, 1960) p. 156.
13   Holmes, A Tolerant Country? Immigrants, Refugees and Minorities in Britain (Routledge, 2015) p.17.

Thus, one would expect them to assimilate into British society easier than Jewish immigrants from Europe. However, they experienced hostility on a similar scale. Jewish immigrants were characterised as hard-working, whereas Irish immigrants were characterised as the opposite. Middle class prejudices against Irish immigrants, describing them as dirty and drunken, were frequently espoused by the press. The magazine Punch disdainfully caricatured the Irish "Paddys" as anarchists, with values threatening to law and order in Britain.[14] This intolerance stemmed from the evolving concept of the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. These racial ideas were heavily influenced by Social Darwinism. Despite these stereotypes being formed by a minority of intellectuals in British society, they were sustained and became widespread across all sectors of British society.

Regarding working-class attitudes towards the Irish, Marx indicated Irish immigrants split the working class in England along racial lines. The English worker came to have a joint interest with their employer in exploiting someone else perceived to be inferior. Engels expected the Irish to reduce native wages to subsistence level. Workers discriminated against Irish immigrants and dealing with fighting became the norm for Irish male immigrants in Victorian Britain. This was especially significant in the North Midlands, which had larger concentrations of Irish immigrants, evident in the Stockport Riot of 1852 and violent outbursts in Wolverhampton and Birmingham provoked by Protestant preacher William Murphy in the 1860s. Many workers felt threatened by Irish immigrants regarding availability of housing as well as employment. For example, 160 houses of Irish immigrants were destroyed in Tredegar by Welsh workers in 1882.[15] Thus, "anti-Irish riots were a feature of the nineteenth-century landscape".[16]

The sharp increase in Irish immigration in the 1840s coincided with the growth of anti-Catholicism in the mid-nineteenth century. Catholics did not have the same legal rights as Protestants until the passing of the Catholic Relief Act in 1829. Intolerance of Catholic immigrants is evident across all sectors of society, as they contrasted with the Protestantism of most British citizens. Within trade unionism in Scotland, historic tensions between Protestants and Catholics focussed upon Irish immigrants. Scientific ideas of race, emphasised by the moralism of the Victorian educated middle class, were not as significant for the working class. Gilley indicates that the Irish "suffered as Catholic republicans not Celts".[17] Circulation figures indicate the influence of cheap newspapers such as the Lloyd Entertaining Journal and the Working Man's Friend, in leading Lancastrian workers to view Catholicism as backward and immoral.[18] They perceived Irish immigrants to be corrupting British Protestantism, through a process "in which human reason escaped from the fetters of an ignorant and besotted spiritual tyranny".[19]

Intolerance towards Irish immigrants was institutionalised by government bodies. Operation of immigrant control after the 1905 Aliens Act led to biassed policing and convictions. Porter demonstrates that the Metropolitan Police Special Branch was created in the nineteenth century due to suspicion of Irish bombers.[20] Furthermore, Swift refers to the heavy surveillance of areas concentrated with Irish immigrants.[21] Many perceived Irish migrants as the most dangerous sector of society, which was a factor leading to the Vagrancy Act 1824, which made homelessness an offence in England and Wales. Irish immigrants were significantly more likely to be arrested than locals. Hostility towards Irish immigrants focussed on "anti-Catholicism, poverty and racial stereotyping at the end of the Victorian period".[22] Their access to Britain may have been unrestricted due to the 1801 Act

14   https://punch.photoshelter.com/image/I0000ryzt9UZ0tWE
15   Panayi, An Immigration History of Britain (Routledge, 2014) p. 239.
16   Ibid., p.241.
17   Sheridan Gilley, 'English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1780-1900' in Colin Holmes ed. Immigrants and Minorities in British Society (London, 1978), p. 94.
18   Paz, D. G 'Anti-Catholicism, Anti-Irish Stereotyping, and Anti-Celtic Racism in Mid-Victorian Working-Class Periodicals' in Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies 18, no. 4 (The North American Conference on British Studies, 1986) pp. 601-616.
19   Lloyd's Entertaining Journal 4 (20. Dec. 1845): 273.
20   Bernard Porter, The Origins of the Vigilant State: The London Metropolitan Police Special Branch Before the First World War (London, 1987), pp. 50-67.
21   Roger Swift 'Crime and the Irish in nineteenth-century Britain' in Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley, The Irish in Britain 1815-1931 (Rowman & Littlefield, 1989), pp. 150- 170.
22   Panayi, An Immigration History of Britain (Routledge, 2014) p.223.

of Union, but ultimately British reactions to Irish immigration were racist by the middle class and by the working class. Thus, it is entirely unconvincing that British society was tolerant before 1914.

Overall, unrestricted entry and availability of employment meant there were no formal barriers of migration to Britain. To Irish and Jewish immigrants, Britain therefore superficially appeared to be a tolerant society. However, evidence of xenophobic attitudes to immigration before 1914 demonstrate that this was not the case. Evidence of obscene racial stereotyping in the press, especially of Jewish people, indicates the British were not accepting of other cultures. Hostility and violence from workers underlines that they perceived immigrants as an economic threat to housing and labour. Activities of the Trade Union Committee and the British Brother's League led to the intolerance of British society being institutionalised in the 1905 Aliens Act. As a result, the history of immigration before 1914 reveals the foundations for racism that have remained "endemic in British state and society over the past two centuries".[23]

---

23   Panayi, An Immigration History of Britain (Routledge, 2014) p.241.

Bibliography:

Primary sources:

Aliens Act 1905.
Aliens Restriction Act 1914.
Dorgeel, Heinrich, Die Deutsche Colonie in London (London, 1881).
Lloyd's Entertaining Journal 4 (20. Dec. 1845): 273.
Sidney Webb, The Decline in the Birth Rate (The Fabian Society, 1907).

Secondary sources:

Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies 18, no. 4 (The North American Conference on British Studies, 1986) pp. 601-616.
Alderman, Geoffrey, Modern British Jewry (Oxford, 1992)
Bevan, Vaughan, The Development of British Immigration Law (Cambridge University Press, 2008).
Gartner, Lloyd, The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914 (London, 1960).
Holmes, Colin, Antisemitism in British Society, 1876-1939 (Routledge, 1979).
Holmes, Colin A Tolerant Country? Immigrants, Refugees and Minorites in Britain (Faber & Faber, 1991).
Holmes, Colin Immigrants and Minorities in British Society (London, 1978).
Panayi, Panikos, An Immigration History of Britain, Multicultural Racism since 1800 (Pearson, 2010).
Porter, Bernard The Origins of the Vigilant State: The London Metropolitan Police Special Branch Before the First World War (London, 1960).
Porter, Bernard The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics (Cambridge University Press, 1979).
Swift, Roger, and Gilley, Sheridan, The Irish in Britain 1815-1931 (Rowman & Littlefield, 1989).

Image credits