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New York City 1985: AIDS, Sex, and Public Policy

Daniel Mauk

1985 was a significant year in the history of the AIDS epidemic. AIDS - a new, mysterious, and frightening disease had only been named by the Centers for Disease Control three years earlier. The viral agent that causes AIDS had been identified the year before, and in January 1985, it was announced that a blood test to detect the presence of the virus soon would become available.¹

Although later evidence revealed that the first cases of AIDS in New York City actually appeared in a group of children in 1977,² 2 gay men were perceived in 1985 to be the first group affected by the epidemic. As a result, for a time, a probing spotlight was directed on the sexual practices of gay men and on some places where those practices occurred. Disease, sexuality, law and fear intersected to produce an emergency public health amendment to New York State's Sanitary Code; on October 25, 1985, the state empowered local health officials to close gay bathhouses and other establishments where "high-risk sexual activities," defined as fellatio and anal intercourse, were allegedly taking place. Such establishments were labeled a "public nuisance, dangerous to the public health."³ Understanding why the state viewed closure of quasi-public sex establishments and more specifically, gay bathhouses, as a legitimate and effective public health measure necessitates examining the policy's social context. The common understanding of AIDS in 1985, the extent of the disease's threat, and the existing technology for detection and treatment will be reviewed. The policy of forced closure will be examined in depth, as will the events preceding and following the closures, and the attending media coverage. As we will discuss, the "bathhouse issue" exemplifies the unusual configuration that takes place when public policy is formulated around a sexually charged health issue.

AIDS in 1985: Prevalence and Threat

In 1981, the first article concerning AIDS appeared in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.⁴ It described five gay men in Los Angeles diagnosed with *Pneumocystis carini pneumonia*, an affliction that previously had been limited to severely immunosuppressed patients. Though much had been teamed about the disease in the four years since that first report, AIDS in 1985 still was viewed with "confusion, frustration, and dread."⁵

The New York Native, the city's preeminent gay newspaper, provided the only regular tally of the disease. Each new biweekly issue contained an up-to-date count of cases and deaths. On January 28th, the paper cited 7,857 cases of AIDS nationwide, 3,040 of which

¹ "Blood Test for AIDS Virus Expected Soon," *New York Times*, 11 January 1985, 11 (A).

² P. Thomas et. al., "HIV Infection in Heterosexual Female Intravenous Drug Users in New York City," *New England Journal of Medicine*, II August 1988, 374, and D. Des Jarlais et. al., "HIV- 1 Infection Among Intravenous Drug Users in Manhattan, New York City, from 1977-1987," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 17 February 1989, 1009.

³ State of New York, Public Health Council, Minutes, October 25, 1985. Hereafter abbreviated as Minutes.

⁴ "Pneumocystis Pneumonia-Los Angeles," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 4 June 1981, 250-252.

⁵ "As epidemic of acquired immune deficiency syndrome continues unabated, some medical experts fear that the disease may now pose a threat to heterosexuals," *New York Times*, 22 January 1985: C 1.

were in New York State, 2,834 of which were in New York City. 48% of the infected individuals were dead, and an astounding 73% of the cases were among gay and bisexual men.⁶ By the year's end, the number of cases more than doubled to 15,948, with gay and bisexual men still bearing the brunt of the disease.⁷

In 1985, homosexuals, intravenous drug users, hemophiliacs, and recently immigrated Haitians were considered to be the primary risk groups. However, the disease was feared to be spreading to the heterosexual population, frequently referred to (4→) as "the general population."⁸

Detection and Treatment

In 1985, a new diagnostic test was introduced which could detect what were then called HTLV-111 antibodies, thereby providing more definitive information about the spread of the disease. But many viewed a positive "AIDS test" equivocally. Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler claimed that though many had been exposed to the AIDS virus, 11 only a few will actually become ill.⁹ Others still viewed AIDS Related-Complex, or ARC, as a lesser form of the disease rather than as AIDS in its early stages.¹⁰

The new test for HTLV-111 was immediately controversial. The *Native* warned members of the gay community, "If your blood is tested for antibodies to HTLV-111 by a commercial lab the results may be available to your insurance company. Proceed with utmost caution."¹¹

Not only insurance companies, but also the military potentially could use the test to the detriment of gays. Intending to test all 2.1 million members of the armed services, the Pentagon announced that those who tested positively would be considered to have "the AIDS disease" and therefore would be immediately discharged.¹²

In terms of effective treatment for AIDS, useful anti-viral medications were not yet available. As result, gay men tried one experimental drug treatment after another. Locally, some viewed the drugs Ribavirin and Isoprinosine with hope."¹³ Those who could afford it traveled to France, desperately hoping that the drug HPA-23 might provide a cure.¹⁴ (5→)

New Networks of Support

In 1985, a growing segment of the medical establishment in New York City began catering to the rising number of ill gay men. As the HTLV III antibody test revealed the magnitude of the unfolding epidemic, many New York physicians recognized that an AIDS "market" would exist for many years. Physicians, many gay themselves, began to "specialize" in treating people with AIDS. Physician advertisements appeared regularly in the *New York Native*, promising professional and compassionate care to gay men. Thus, AIDS-infected gay men ironically found themselves in the hands of a profession that had once pathologized their lives.¹⁵

⁶ "7,857 and Counting," *New York Native*, 28 January - 10 February 1985, 13.

⁷ "15,948 and Counting," *New York Native*, 30 January 1985 - 10 February 1986, 17.

⁸ J.Z. Grover, "AIDS: Keywords," in D. Crimp, ed., *AIDS: Cultural Analysis; Cultural Activism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 23.

⁹ Heckler quoted in "Blood Test for AIDS Virus Expected Soon," *New York Times*, 11 January 1985, 11 (A).

¹⁰ "Military Services Will Be Screened for AIDS Evidence," *New York Times*, 19 October 1985, 1 (A).

¹¹ "New York Native, 11 - 24 February 1985, 7.

¹² "Military Services," 1(A).

¹³ "Doctors Hopeful of AIDS 'cure'," *New York Native*, 2-8 September 1985, 10.

¹⁴ "Going to Paris to Live: the Hope of HPA-23," *New York Native*, 11-25 August 1985, 12.

¹⁵ R. Bayer, *Private Acts, Social Consequences* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 53.

At the same time, politicization was taking place as some gay men struggled to become more independent of the medical community. No longer "AIDS victims," now "people with AIDS" were demanding better treatment. Developed by the National Association of People with AIDS, "The Denver Principles" outlined how people with AIDS deserved the right to sexual lives, quality medical treatment, privacy, respect, and dignity."¹⁶

Furthermore, in 1985, the People With AIDS (PWA) Coalition in New York was formed. From this support group grew the Community Research Initiative (CRI). Perceiving that the FDA was dragging its feet in testing promising AIDS drugs, the CRI sought to put drug testing into the hands of community members.¹⁷

Social Anxiety

Understanding why sex establishments and, more particularly, the bathhouses became the focal points of the state's emergency public health act necessitates examining the intense social anxiety that existed about AIDS in New York City. A sense of panic pervaded the protracted and vituperative campaign against people with AIDS and against men who were (6→) having sex with men.

In 1985, the *New York Times* alone ran 367 articles on AIDS, as compared with 68 articles in 1984. The coverage reflected the homophobic mood of the country and, more specifically, the citizens of New York City. Each month's coverage was more anxiety-laden than the previous. For instance, in March, the *New York Times* reported that a WNBC-TV television crew walked off the set rather than tape an interview with two "AIDS victims."¹⁸ A new crew resumed taping, but only after it was agreed that the microphones used for the interview would be discarded afterwards.

Anti-gay demonstrations occurred frequently at locations and events where gay men gathered. At the annual Gay Pride Day parade, protestors' signs read, "Smile if You Have AIDS."¹⁹ At a demonstration outside of a bathhouse, the message was "Stop Koch from Sodomizing New York."²⁰ Even popular TV personality Phil Donahue was not spared the vitriol. At a Human Rights Campaign Fund dinner honoring Donahue's contribution to the gay and lesbian cause, picket signs proclaimed, "Phil Donahue: Champion of Sodomy, Promoter of AIDS."²¹ In a blunt outburst, *New York Magazine* theater critic John Simon ranted, "Homosexuals in the theater! My God, I can't wait until AIDS gets all of them."²²

By summer, local telephone "hot lines" providing AIDS information lit up as New Yorkers reacted to hearing that actor Rock Hudson had contracted the illness.²³ According to Randy Shilts, author of *And the Band Played On*, the Hudson announcement was "the single most important event in the history of AIDS."²⁴ Indeed, becoming "the human face of (7→) AIDS," Hudson struck an odd chord in the American consciousness.²⁵ Although gay himself, Rock Hudson ironically seemed to prove to the world that "AIDS is not a gay white male disease."²⁶

¹⁶ M. Navare, "Fighting the Victim Label," in D. Crimp, *AIDS*, 148-149.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ "TV Crew Leaves Set of AIDS Victims' Interview," *New York Times*, 28 March 1985,6(B).

¹⁹ "AIDS Demonstrations and Gay Pride Week," *New York Native*, 15 - 28 July 1985,15.

²⁰ *New York Native*, 28 October - 3 November 1985, 18.

²¹ *New York Native*, 21 - 27 October 1985, 3.

²² "The Real John Simon," *New York Native*, 6 - 19 May 1985, 13.

²³ "New York: Day by Day," *New York Times*, 27 July 1985,26(A).

²⁴ R. Shilts, *And the Band Played On* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987),579,577.

²⁵ "Rock Hudson: The Human Face of AIDS," *New York Native*, II - 25 August 1985,12.

²⁶ Quoted in Shilts, 579, 577.

While Hudson's illness thus served to broaden popular awareness of AIDS, at the same time, his death in October fueled panic in the entertainment industry. The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists reminded its members that they had the right to refuse contact with anyone who they felt possessed a communicable illness. The Screen Actors Guild classified open-mouth kissing as a health hazard.²⁷

A community's anxiety can frequently be measured by the actions it takes against perceived threats to its children. The July cover of *Life* depicted a white couple holding a child, announcing, "Now No One is Safe from AIDS." While national attention focused on the banishment of AIDS patient Ryan White from an Indiana school,²⁸ New York City had its own spectacle of infected children barred from certain public schools. In the first days of the fall 1985 term, as city officials reassured parents that their children would be safe next to classmates with AIDS, disbelieving parents and other citizens organized to prevent several children with AIDS from returning to school. When officials enrolled these children anyway, thousands of students boycotted classes.²⁹ In a separate incident, district superintendents, suspicious that boyfriends of certain students' mothers had AIDS, expelled three children.³⁰

As these episodes indicate, quarantining people with AIDS (even children) was an idea that was sweeping the nation. In Congress, Republican Representative William Dannemeyer (8→) introduced bills to make it a felony for any person in a high risk group to donate blood; prohibit anyone with AIDS from working in healthcare; deny federal funds to cities that did not shut down bathhouses used by gay men; and bar children with AIDS from public schools. Further indicating his anxiety, Dannemeyer stated, "Considering the magnitude of the epidemic we are starting to face, if there is an error to be made, it should be on the side of the people of this country, the 95% of us who follow a heterosexual lifestyle."³¹

Meanwhile, the Centers for Disease Control quietly issued a quarantine order barring foreign gays from entering the western United States.³² On the state level, an AIDS quarantine was proposed as a ballot initiative in California,³³ while in Texas, the director of the state Board of Health attempted to make AIDS a quarantinable disease.³⁴ In New York City, Ed Koch opposed a quarantine, but on practical, not moral grounds, because it supposedly would be impossible to isolate so many people.³⁵ The *New York Times* called quarantine "the New Apartheid."³⁶

Yet quarantine was a less frightening option than the remark of Houston mayoral candidate Louie Welch, who blurted into an open microphone that the solution was to "shoot the queers."³⁷

1985: A Mayoral Election Year

²⁷ "Hollywood in Conflict over AIDS," *New York Times*, 7 November 1985,19(C).

²⁸ "AIDS Victim Starts School Over Telephone," *New York Times*, 27 August 1985,19(A).

²⁹ "More than 9,000 Students Boycott School in Queens," *New York Times*, 11 September 1985: B 11.

³⁰ "AIDS Fears Forced Pupils Out," *New York Times*, 4 October 1985: B 1, B4.

³¹ "Concern Over AIDS Generates a Spate of New Laws Nationwide," *New York Times*, 26 October 1985, 30(A).

³² "Feds Quarantine Foreign Gays from Pacific Seaboard States," *New York Native*, 11 - 24 February 1985, 10.

³³ "AIDS Quarantine Proposed as Ballot Initiative in CA," *New York Native*, 25 November - 1 December 1985, 8.

³⁴ "Health Director Wants to Quarantine PWA's," *New York Native*, 28 October - 3 November 1985, 9.

³⁵ "McGrath Proposing to Close Bathhouses of Homosexuals," *New York Times*, 2 October 1985, 1 (B).

³⁶ "AIDS and the New Apartheid," *New York Times*, 7 October 1985,30(A).

³⁷ Welch quoted in "AIDS Remark is Issue in Houston Vote Today," *New York Times*, 5 November 1985, 6(B).

Political posturing against gay men pervaded the mayoral election race of 1985. The candidates included the incumbent Democrat Ed Koch, Republican Diane McGrath, and Right to (9→)Life candidate Rabbi Yehuda Levin. Mayor Ed Koch's role in the early days of AIDS has been frequently criticized. Author and activist Larry Kramer once blamed Koch for being the one person most responsible for letting the AIDS epidemic get out of hand.³⁸ However, Koch's approach was magnanimous in contrast to those of his opponents in the 1985 race.

Koch's Republican opponent was Diane McGrath. Claiming that "the AIDS virus has no civil rights," McGrath proposed such draconian solutions to the AIDS crisis as closing the bathhouses, banning children with AIDS from schools, and mandatory AIDS testing of doctors, dentists, nurses, teachers, food handlers, barbers, beauticians and prostitutes. If testing positive, these people would be not be allowed to continue practicing their professions.³⁹

Right to Life Candidate Rabbi Yehuda Levin led demonstrations at gay bathhouses and adult theaters around the city. In a September rally, he and his supporters stood in front of the St. Mark's Baths with signs that read, "The Gay baths may spawn an epidemic that will devastate New York."⁴⁰

Amending the State Sanitary Code: The Debate Leading to October 25th

Members and organizations of the gay community, health officials, and politicians all joined in the debate that preceded the Public Health Council's emergency health act. While the mainstream press often described gay bathhouses as sex palaces and thus centers for high-risk sexual activity, the baths possessed an alternative meaning when viewed from the perspective of gay cultural and political history. As Allan Berube explains in his study of the history of gay bathhouses:

For the gay community, gay bathhouses represent a major success in a century-long political struggle to overcome isolation and develop a sense of community and pride in their sexuality, to gain their right to sexual privacy, to win their (10®) right to associate with each other in public, and to create "safety zones" where gay men could be affectionate with each other with a minimal threat of violence, blackmail, loss of employment, arrest, imprisonment, and humiliation.⁴¹

Attitudes and opinions in the gay community were complex in regard to the bathhouse issue. Although some members of the gay community were troubled with the sexual behavior that took place in the baths, they at the same time wanted to protect the baths from state intervention. The negative consequences of such intervention were evident in the aftermath of a February police raid on two Atlanta, Georgia bathhouses; 12 arrested men were charged with sodomy.⁴²

One of the most outspoken gay critics of the baths was activist Michael Callen. Though Callen opposed government intervention, he blamed the baths for "stoking the raging fire of AIDS" and challenged the gay community to take the initiative in closing them.⁴³

³⁸ L. Kramer, *Reports from the Holocaust-the Making of an AIDS Activist* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 85.

³⁹ "McGrath Proposing," *New York Times*, 1(B).

⁴⁰ "Anti-abortion Group Pickets Gay Bathhouse," *New York Native*, 30 September-6 October 1985, 16.

⁴¹ A. Berube, "The History of Gay Bathhouses," in *Coming Up!*, December 1984, 15-19, quoted from 15.

⁴² "Two Atlanta Bathhouses Closed by Vice Squad," *New York Native*, 25 February - 10 March 1985, 7.

⁴³ Quoted in Bayer, *Private Acts*, 56.

The Coalition for Sexual Responsibility was influential in forming the state's temporary position on the baths. Formed by a group of gay activists, the Coalition sought to intervene in the bathhouse issue before the state did. Viewing the baths as places of opportunity to educate men about safer-sex practices, Coalition members distributed posters and literature to the bathhouses and often manned information tables at bath entrances. Mario Cuomo's AIDS Advisory Council had recommended the Coalition's guidelines to the Governor, and this recommendation reflected the Cuomo administration's policy until the summer of 1985.⁴⁴

Stephen Caiazza, president of the New York Physicians for Human Rights, criticized the Coalition's bathhouse position. Having grown weary of witnessing his patients die, he maintained that "gay men have a duty and responsibility... to boycott (11®) and condemn the baths."⁴⁵

At Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), the agency's board of directors demanded a boycott of only those bathhouses that did not provide AIDS information, condoms, and adequate lighting, and advised people to avoid the baths unless they could practice safer sex. But from a public health perspective, GMHC's executive director Roger McFarlane viewed the bathhouses as "number 20 on a worry list." "I don't think bathhouses are necessary at all," he said, "but they are not our main problem."⁴⁶ Meanwhile, in early 1983, Governor Mario Cuomo had directed State Commissioner of Health David Axelrod to evaluate the bathhouses to determine if they really represented a public risk. Axelrod concluded that "voluntary efforts by the owners... as well as efforts by the at-risk populations, might achieve the desired public health results," a position he maintained until the summer of 1985.⁴⁷

At the city level, Health Commissioner David Sencer advised Mayor Ed Koch to keep the bathhouses open. Sencer declared, "I can see no reason why we would close the bathhouses. I don't think that changing the habitat is necessarily going to change the behavior... To try to legislate changes in lifestyle has never been effective. Public education through the route of organized groups who are at risk is the most important thing."⁴⁸ Yet Sencer's position against closure of the baths was out-of-step with the political mood, and he eventually resigned in protest as Koch as well as Cuomo reconsidered their relaxed approach to the baths.⁴⁹ In the fall of 1985, although previously viewing the baths as important conduits for disseminating AIDS educational literature to gay men, Cuomo now asked Commissioner Axelrod to review the matter. Not coincidentally, Cuomo's actions occurred only a few days after New York Republican mayoral (12®) candidate McGrath expressed her strong support for closing the baths. She declared, "it is our duty to protect these people from themselves."⁵⁰ An October 14th *New York Times* article reflected the mood of both activists and bathhouse owners. Joining a litany of complaints against "promiscuous" homosexuals, an employee of the East Side Sauna, Jim Schwartz, offered an odd reassurance to readers: "We do not condone multiple-partner sex... If we found someone being a real pig, we would ask him to

⁴⁴ "Cuomo and Koch Reconsidering Their Opposition to Closing of Bathhouses," *New York Times*, 5 October 1985, 25.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Bayer, *Private Acts*, 58.

⁴⁶ "Albany Creates Bathhouse Sub-Committee," *New York Native*. 1-14 July 1985: 17.

⁴⁷ Minutes.

⁴⁸ Bayer, *Private Acts*, 54.

⁴⁹ "Sencer Resigns," *New York Native*, 9-15 December 1985, 8; "AIDS Advisory Council Proposes Gay Bathhouse Closure," *New York Native*, 21-27 October 1985, 14.

⁵⁰ "McGrath Proposing..." Bl.

leave."⁵¹ Michael Callen claimed that only two of the city's bathhouses were adhering to the Coalition's guidelines, noting that even those "did it with a gun to their heads."⁵²

On October 25th, David Axelrod indicated that he had reversed his opinion that the baths could serve an educational purpose. He wrote Governor Cuomo, "I have concluded that establishments which allow, promote, and/or encourage sexual contacts that produce blood-to-blood or semen-to-blood contact are a serious menace to the public health and must be prohibited." Axelrod carefully added that both homosexuals and heterosexuals would be affected by the prohibition since it would apply to establishments that allowed "dangerous heterosexual or homosexual sex."⁵³ On the same date, New York's Public Health Council passed an emergency resolution.

Policy Enacted October 25, 1985

Reflecting the escalating panic concerning AIDS and homosexuality, the Public Health Council's October 25th resolution declared that the baths were "dangerous to the public health" and empowered local health officials to shut down any location that was permitting "high-risk" sex.⁵⁴ An examination of the minutes of the Public Health Council meeting on this date reveals several significant aspects of the policy. From the opening minutes, the political nature of the resolution was (13®) obvious; the bathhouse topic was presented to the Council at "the request of the Governor and the Commissioner."⁵⁵

While prior public announcements had stressed that both heterosexual and homosexual establishments would be affected, the resolution's overwhelming focus was on gay men, their sexual behavior, and the bathhouses. Though briefly mentioning other forms of potential exposure to HTLV-III, the resolution's focus was "limited to the high risk behavior associated with bathhouses and the like."⁵⁶ Although ample evidence existed that AIDS could spread through heterosexual intercourse, the Council defined high-risk sex as "anal intercourse and fellatio,"⁵⁷ which highlighted the fact that the regulations primarily targeted gay men.

In addition, the Council minutes reflect a fear that bisexual men would spread AIDS to the heterosexual population. While acknowledging the gay community's efforts to educate themselves in safe sex practices, Commissioner Axelrod informed the Council that a similar educational effort was not being conducted in the bisexual community:

The risks to the public health may be much greater within the bisexual community than it is within the homosexual community which has gone to great pains to make sure that its own at-risk population is informed of preventative measures.⁵⁸

The minutes describe a fear that infected bisexuals would spread AIDS "ultimately to their spouses who may then become pregnant and produce off-spring that may have AIDS."⁵⁹ Thus, as one author has pointed out, "it was necessary to invoke the specter of the general threat of AIDS and the image of dying children."⁶⁰

⁵¹ "Bathhouses Reflect on AIDS Concerns," *New York Times*, 14 October 1985, B3.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Quoted in "State May Shut Bathhouses in a Drive to Combat AIDS," *New York Times*, 25 October 1985,3 (B).

⁵⁴ Minutes.

⁵⁵ Minutes.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Bayer, *Private Acts*, 63.

Only one Council member objected to the resolution. Dr. Victor Sidel, former president of the American Public Health (14®) Association, recommended taking a slower course for several reasons. He first argued that concerned citizens and other groups that would be affected by the resolution had not yet been given a chance to offer their opinions. He then noted that rates of rectal gonorrhea were not increasing, indicating that the change in the epidemic curve might not be as dramatic as was presented. Finally, he reminded the Council that public health discussion of the issue could lead to further education, which had been touted as "the most important weapon in the fight against the disease by both the Governor and the Department of Health."⁶¹ However, Dr. Sidel's opinion was ignored, and emergency regulations went into effect shortly after 11 a.m. on October 25th.⁶²

Events Following October 25th

The Public Health Council's resolution engendered immediate debate. Some gay activists and public officials viewed the state's policy on AIDS as more of a political decision than a scientific one.⁶³ Lawyer Thomas Stoddard questioned whether the policy would be effective in decreasing unsafe sex: "The headlines say 'War on AIDS' which of course this isn't at all because it's not grounded in medical science. There is no evidence that this will change people's conduct."⁶⁴

David Sencer adhered to his position that closing the baths would have little impact on controlling AIDS and might even be counterproductive.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Mayor Koch, who had not been consulted in the final decision-making process at the state level, scrambled to devise ways to enforce the new policy.⁶⁶

Investigative actions to close sex establishments began quickly after October 25th, and newspaper coverage of their findings reads like a modern-day witchhunt. The first place to be closed was the Mineshaft. The *New York Times* described the club in lurid detail: (15®)

In graphic depositions written by city inspectors, a portrait emerged of a dark place with black walls, back rooms, cubicles without doors, and the accoutrements of sadomasochism. The inspectors reported seeing many patrons engaging in anal intercourse and fellatio-the "high-risk" sexual practices cited in the state rules-and hearing sounds of whipping and moaning... Mayor Koch praised the inspectors, who had the option of refusing the assignment... "it must be horrific, horrendous in its actuality to witness."⁶⁷

The next to be shut down was the most popular bathhouse in New York, the St. Marks Baths. The closure occurred on December 6th after an inspector reported that he had seen "many men nude or semi-nude with their buttocks in the air or legs spread, inviting patrons to join them."⁶⁸

Attempting to show that they were just as inclined to close a dangerous heterosexual establishment as a homosexual one, the city dispatched its inspectors to Plato's Retreat in search of acts of anal intercourse and fellatio. The inspectors found no such activities.

⁶¹ Minutes.

⁶² "State permits closing of bathhouses to cut AIDS," *New York Times*, 26 October 1985,1(A).

⁶³ "AIDS and the State," *New York Times*, 30 October 1985,4(B).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ "City Closes Bar Frequented by Homosexuals Citing Sexual Activity Linked to AIDS," *New York Times*, 8 November 1985,3(B).

⁶⁸ "St. Mark's Baths Closed," *New York Native*, 23 -29 December 1985,12.

However, prostitutes approached them, and for this reason, the club was closed. In the opinion of some, Plato's closure was a means of appeasing gay critics who accused city officials of singling out homosexuals when applying their new emergency powers.⁶⁹

As patronage at baths and gay bars declined after the October 25th resolution, health officials gradually sensed that their crackdown on clubs might be leading people to have sex in other places. Earlier in the year, lawyer Thomas Stoddard had warned that state intervention might not end with the baths.⁷⁰ Now, as predicted, Commissioner Axelrod announced that city and state officials would act against other establishments, such as hotels, that might be sites of sexual activity that could spread (16®) AIDS:

We won't inspect hotel rooms. But if we find that the hotel, by virtue of information that we obtain, is catering to that kind of activity, then I think we will have reason to take action and, if necessary, a warrant to go into the rooms if it becomes essential.⁷¹

Construed broadly, then, the Public Health Council's resolution appeared to give health officials the legal right to "inquire into every homosexual man's apartment."⁷²

Conclusion

Ultimately, such worse-case scenarios as apartment-searching did not take place. However, due to the new regulations, some baths and sex clubs were closed immediately. Others slowly went out of business as patrons became disinterested in facilities that were under constant government surveillance. Some baths, however, survived and remain open today. Despite periodic inspections and closures, sex clubs appear throughout the city, many now meeting the sexual interests of a younger gay crowd.

Did the Public Health Council's actions in 1985 accomplish anything? Rates of HIV infection among gay men did decrease.⁷³ It could be argued that this was due to the unavailability of bathhouses or due to the restrictions placed on these facilities. More likely, however, the real reason that HIV rates decreased was the massive educational campaign that was primarily conducted by gay men themselves.

What then, was the significance of the bathhouse issue? I suggest that the bathhouse debate fits within the parameters of what author Dan Beauchamp refers to as "legal moralism":

The Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is (17®) clearly a public health threat. The view that it is also a threat to the majority's values is a form of legal moralism. Like public health, legal moralism relies on the use of law and regulation to promote community aims. But legal moralism restricts liberty as a defense against a moral rather than a physical harm. It uses law to protect the majority's morality from the deviant group.⁷⁴

I do not mean to deny that AIDS was developing into a monumental health crisis, or that unsafe sex practices were not and are not dangerous. However, the AIDS panic of 1985 may be viewed as a social defense against a threat that was as much moral as it was physical. The

⁶⁹ "City Shuts Heterosexual Club for Prostitution," *New York Times*, 23 November 1985,34(A).

⁷⁰ Bayer, *Private Acts*, 55.

⁷¹ "Axelrod Says Hotels Are Subject to Curbs on Sex Linked to AIDS," *NewYorkTimes*, 18 November 1995,4(B).

⁷² Bayer, *Private Acts*, 64.

⁷³ "Gay VD Rate Plummets in S.F.," *New York Native*, 25 - 28 July 1985,8.

⁷⁴ D.E. Beauchamp, "Morality and the Health of the Body Politic," in N. McKenzie, ed., *The AIDS Reader: Social, Political, Ethical Issues* (New York: Meridian, 1991), 408-421. Quoted from 408.

events surrounding the bathhouse issue were about AIDS, but they were also about social attitudes toward gay men and their sexuality.

During the decade between the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969 and the appearance of AIDS, a bold gay sexuality became visible in most urban areas, especially in cities like New York that were home to a large gay population. Reacting to years of oppression by society's heterosexual majority, gay men no longer accepted the status of a "deviant group." Instead, they were energized and politicized by both Stonewall and the overall sexual freedom that emerged from the 1960s.

Bigotry remains, and so do backlashes, so it should not be surprising that AIDS became more than just a biological threat to gay men. The disease became a moral weapon wielded against gay men by those unaccepting of anything other than a heterosexual world. Words are powerful, as evident in the poisonous rhetoric directed against gay men in 1985. There were "innocent AIDS victims," the "good" who were infected by the "bad," and then there were "promiscuous," "sexually out of control" gay men who were a threat to the "general population." To some people's satisfaction, gay men now had to "pay the price" for their sexual licentiousness. Some religious zealots viewed AIDS as God's vengeance upon those who defied "natural law." In 1985, AIDS was a "gay plague." (18®)

If the bathhouse debate were only about AIDS, more public attention would have focused on the fact that gay men were reducing their risk for HIV infection, and relatedly, that AIDS educational literature and events were prevalent in the gay community. Yet social anxiety and homophobia were rampant, and the baths and sex clubs were easy targets. Closing the baths reassured society that politicians "were getting tougher about AIDS."⁷⁵ The 1985 policy concerning baths and sex clubs thus provided certain segments of our society a brief respite from anxiety about not only the transmission of AIDS, but also the sexual practices of gay men.

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⁷⁵ "Getting Tougher on AIDS," *New York Times*, 10 November 1985,26(E).

Between Admiration and Contempt: Herder's Thoughts on the Jewish Volk

Noah B. Strote

The influential eighteenth-century German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder has been called at different times both a "philo-Semite" and an "anti-Semite." The confusion here testifies not only to the insufficient specificity of the terms, but also to the complex and seemingly contradictory nature of Herder's attitude toward Judaism and the Jews. On the surface, his partial reevaluation of the role of Judaism in history, along with his glorification of Hebrew poetry, suggests a deep admiration for the Jews, especially in contrast with other so-called "anti-Jewish" German thinkers of his time.

However, this admiration is often mixed with popular Christian and secular prejudices, and later, with an opposition to Jewish emancipation. An examination of his three most important texts relating to Judaism—*The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry* (1782-83), *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784-91), and the essay on "The Conversion of the Jews" (1802)—will show that, despite his veneration for ancient Jewish contributions to world history, Herder harbored many inclinations that were consistent with those of contemporary German anti-Jewish thought. When analyzing the extent of Herder's anti-Semitism, one must also make a distinction between different degrees of anti-Semitism. It would be just as fallacious to place Herder's contempt for Jews on par with Kant's or Hegel's as it would be to label him a "philo-Semite."¹

With some notable exceptions, most of Herder's anti-Jewish statements seem to fit within the framework of his general (20®) philosophy. To condense all of Herder's work into a basic, consistent philosophy is beyond the scope of this paper. However, for the purposes of placing Herder's thoughts on the Jews into a theoretical context, we can rely on Isaiah Berlin's characterization of Herder as the father of the ideas of "nationalism, historicism, and the *Volksgeist*."² Herder, though a close contemporary of such French and German thinkers as Montesquieu, Lessing, and Moses Mendelssohn, was opposed to the universalizing and "wretched generalizations"³ that he felt characterized the mainstream of "enlightened" French and German thought. He believed instead in the singularity of historical phenomena (and therefore in the impossibility of comparing them), in the unique genius of each people, or *Volk*, and in the necessity of being part of a *Volk*. Important for his argument regarding the

¹ Scholars have often ignored evidence in Herder's work that contradicts their particular viewpoint, in order to represent him as an unproblematic "anti-" or "philo-Semite." For an interpretation of Herder that privileges his admiration for the Jews, see P.M. Barnard, "The Hebrews and Herder's Political Creed," *Modern Language Review* 54 (1959) 533-46 and the same author's "Herder and Israel," *Jewish Social Studies* 28 (1966) 25-33. Isaiah Berlin's "authoritative" examination in *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (New York: Viking Press, 1976), largely ignores Herder's relationship to the Jews, mainly, it seems, because it does not conform to Berlin's idea of Herder as a liberal, pluralist humanitarian. On the other end of the spectrum, despite breaking down many misconceptions about Herder's "philo-Semitism" and presenting a convincing argument for the opposite claim, Paul Rose in his *Revolutionary Antisemitism in Germany from Kant to Wagner* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990) fails to paint a balanced or complete picture of Herder's thought concerning the Jews. Instead, he lumps Herder together with Kant, Hegel and the other "moralist" anti-Semites.

² Berlin, 145.

³ This is Herder's description of Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, taken from Berlin, 176.

Jews, Herder defined a *Volk* primarily by the expressive characteristics of a people's religion, music, poetry, and especially its language. Although each unique civilization "has its own inner center of happiness, as every sphere its own center of gravity,"⁴ he warned against the intersection of different cultural spheres. He frowned upon cultural miscegenation, even blaming it for the downfall of several ancient civilizations.⁵ (21®)

It is clear from his *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* that Herder admired the genius of the ancient Jewish Volk. He especially admired the Jews' innovation:

The descendents of Heber [the Hebrews] make a very diminutive figure, when we consider them immediately after the Persians... Yet they have had more influence on other nations, than any people of Asia: nay in some degree, through the mediums of Christianity and Mohammedanism, they have been the ground work of enlightening the greater part of the World. That the Hebrews had written annals of their actions, at a time in which most of the now enlightened nations were totally ignorant of writing... distinguishes them in an eminent manner.⁶

He proceeds to relate an abridged and for the most part objective version of Jewish history from the Babylonian period to the diaspora in Christendom. Unlike Voltaire, Herder-known as the founder of autonomous historical narrative-does not blindly accept such pagan accounts of Jewish history as Manetho's, and warns against believing the "slanders of foreign enemies, by whom the Jews were despised."⁷ He attributes the Jews' dependence on usury to "their insecurity in Mohammedan and Christian countries."⁸ Herder's explanation is in stark contrast to that of his contemporary, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, who, like Immanuel Kant, claimed that Jewry had "condemned itself to petty trade."⁹ Herder found the Jews' historical continuity not despicable but remarkable, and explained it by describing the Jews as "ingenious, adroit, and laborious." "No one," he writes in the "Hebrews" chapter in *Reflections*, "will deny to a people [the Jews], that has been such an active instrument in the hand (22®) of Fate, those great qualities, which are conspicuous in its whole history."¹⁰ When compared to Fichte's and Kant's, this approach to Judaism in history seems liberal-minded and might even be called pro-Jewish.

The respect that Herder granted the Jews is unmistakable, but represents only part of his entire outlook. In the same chapter on the "Hebrews," Herder departed from his more objective historicism to make several accusations based upon common Christian and secular images of the Jews. For example, discussing Judaism after the return from Babylonia, Herder called the religion "pharisaical; [the Jews'] learning, a minute nibbling at syllables, and this confined to a single book; their patriotism, a slavish attachment to ancient laws misunderstood."¹¹ Here we see the classical Christian interpretation of the Jews as clinging to

⁴ Herder, *Yet Another Philosophy of History*, in Berlin, 186.

⁵ Frank E. Manuel, ed., *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*, by Johann Gottfried von Herder (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1968)xvii-xxi.

⁶ Herder, *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*, 135-36.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 142.

⁹ Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Beitrag zur Berichtigung der Urtheile des Publikums fiber die franzosische Revolution* (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1973), 114.

¹⁰ Herder, *Reflections*, 143..

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 139.

an obsolete law, and like Synagoga, blind to the truth of their own scriptures.¹² He also called Judaism "an intolerant spirit;" in other words, the religion was historically unique and innovative, but it had become obsolete in a more enlightened era. Herder also promoted an image of the Jews employed frequently in secular anti-Jewish circles: their dispersed yet unified "nationhood" in different countries, a "widely diffused republic of cunning usurers." He explained this phenomenon with almost a trace of sympathy:

The people of God, whose country was once given them by Heaven itself, have been for thousands of years, nay almost from their beginning, parasitical plants on the trunks of other nations... who, in spite of all oppression, have never been inspired with an ardent passion for their own honor, for a habitation, for a country, of their own.¹³ (23®)

While the judgmental reference to Jews as "parasites" was not necessarily made in as hostile a tone as Fichte's, nonetheless, the comment effectively denied Jews humanity in the way that Herder himself defined the term. He saw "humanity" as originality and "freedom of choice and creation;" he saw the history of the world as a progression toward greater freedom and independence of thought, a progress evidenced by an increased number of inventions and a rise in individual self-sufficiency. But according to Herder, Jews, as part of a dispersed, parasitical people, depended on the thoughts and labors of their European host nations.¹⁴ In the *Reflections*, Herder had already described these kinds of people—men who "live on other men's accounts"—as people who produce no great art, no great scientific inventions. In Isaiah Berlin's words, they are "men whose feelings have been drained away, dehumanized creatures, victims of nature or history, moral or physical cripples, parasites, fettered slaves."¹⁵ By calling the Jews "parasites," therefore, Herder also gave them the characteristics Berlin describes.

Clearly, Herder's admiration for the ancient Jews in Palestine had shifted to a cold disdain for modern Jews in the diaspora. This shift can be explained by two related factors: one, the importance Herder placed on a *Yolk's* inhabitation of its own land, in which the *Volk* can express its national genius without relying on other peoples; and two, the idea that the Jews' contribution to history is located only in their scriptures, and that they had since become useless. The first idea is a relatively new one. The second, and more important idea, however, stems from the conception of Jews as the "Old Israel," a Christian notion we can trace back to St. Augustine. In this formulation, the Jews had once been God's chosen people and, in that sense, contributed to the development of Christianity. But after Christ, the Jews became merely a remnant and reminder of a past age.

One must not underestimate the influence of Christianity on (24®) Herder's thought.¹⁶ First, as a serious Biblical scholar, he had to reckon with the influence of Judaism on Christian ideology. From 1776 until his death in 1803, Herder served as general superintendent and court preacher at Weimar.¹⁷ While serving as preacher, Herder wrote one of the clearest articulations of his thoughts on ancient Judaism in a two-volume tome called *The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry*. He presented these thoughts in the preface, addressing young Biblical scholars:

¹² In medieval Christian cathedral sculpture, "Synagoga" was a female figure who represented Judaism. She is often portrayed as blind, symbolizing the Jews' inability to see the truth of scripture. See Heinz Schreckenberg, *The Jews in Christian Art: An Illustrated History* (New York: Continuum, 1996).

¹³ Herder, *Reflections*, 143.

¹⁴ Herder, *Reflections*, 137.

¹⁵ Berlin, 178. Berlin is not speaking of the Jews here, but rather of all people that Herder sees as "living on others and by the labor and ideas of others." This is a theme to which Fichte would return again and again.

¹⁶ Inexplicably, almost every scholar who has written about Herder's relations with the Jews, including Rose, has removed Herder almost entirely from his Christian context.

¹⁷ James Marsh, trans., *The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry*, by J.G. Herder (Naperville: Aleph Press, 1971), introduction.

The basis of theology is the Bible, and that of the New Testament is the Old... Christianity proceeded from Judaism, and the genius of the language is in both books the same... Let the scholar then study the Old Testament, even if it be only as a human book full of ancient poetry, with kindred feeling and affection.¹⁸

Evident in this description is another duality similar to the one found in the *Reflections*. On the one hand, the Jewish scriptures contain a "genius of language" and the "basis of theology." On the other, they are presented as a merely "human book," while the New Testament represents "more than earthly beauty."¹⁹ Unlike Kant, who flatly denied merit to the Old Testament, Herder can appreciate the innovative genius of the Hebrew Bible, both in its theological significance and its linguistic beauty. In fact, for Herder, the Bible and Hebrew poetry express the very essence and spirit of the ancient Jews: their *Volksgeist*. It is language, first and foremost, that expresses a culture's individuality. "Has a nation anything more precious than the language of its fathers?" he wrote in the *Reflections*. "In it dwell the entire world of tradition, history, religion, principles of existence; its whole heart and soul."²⁰ According to Herder, all (25®) national characters are inherently valuable, and the ancient Jewish character, illuminated by Hebrew language and poetry, was no exception.

However, by retaining a national character that was originally suited for a specific place and time in ancient Palestinian history, modern Jews remained stuck in a culture that had flourished in the past, and had since been transcended by Christianity. Christianity was a purely "moral system" as opposed to the "Judaical religion of the state."²¹ Herder's contrast of the Old Testament as a "human book" with the "unearthly" New Testament was a classical but updated Christian argument. Herder departed from his philosophy about the historical singularity of all phenomena to assert that Christianity, unlike Judaism and, indeed, most religions of the past, "knows no restraints" and is therefore a more free, humane, and moral religion, independent of space, language and time. Judaism, on the other hand, had maintained its national character, failing to progress along with the rest of humanity.²² "When any political body has outlived its maturity," Herder asked, "who would not wish it a quiet dissolution? Who does not shudder, when, in the circle of living active powers, he stumbles over the graves of ancient institutions, which rob the living of light, and narrow their habitations?"²³ Here Herder did not specifically mention the Jews, but surely he had them in mind.

Meanwhile, while Herder was writing about the "distinguishable" and remarkably consistent cultural heritage of the Jews throughout history, a debate was raging in Germany on the "Jewish Question." The question was whether the Jews should be considered part of an emerging German state. Just a year before Herder began writing *The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry* in 1782, Christian Wilhelm von Dohm had published his controversial book, *The Civil Improvement of the Jews*. Moses Mendelssohn wrote *Jerusalem* two years later, as Herder was finishing his book. Apparently, Herder did not engage in the public discussion on Jewish emancipation-in either the political or civil sense-until 1802, a year before his death. However, it (26®) has often been claimed that several of his statements in the *Reflections*, finished in 1791, suggest his support for Mendelssohn's cause. This passage, especially, has been liberally cited to adduce evidence for Herder's "pro-Jewish" stance:

There will come a time when in Europe one will no longer ask who be Jews and who Christian. For the Jew too will live according to European law and

¹⁸ Herder, *The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry*, 22.

¹⁹ Rose, 100.

²⁰ Quoted in Berlin, 165.

²¹ Herder, *Reflections*, 142.

²² *Ibid.*, 143.

²³ *Ibid.*, 19.

contribute to the good of the state. Only a barbarian constitution may impede him from doing that or render his ability dangerous.²⁴

However, there is no reason to believe that Herder saw the Jews abandoning their "barbarian constitution" anytime in the near future. The Jews had retained their national culture, and most important, their language, for "millennia"; why would a nation, which is what Herder conceives the Jews to be, abandon that which is most precious to it - language, religion, and culture? Paul Rose is correct in explaining the above-cited passage as a distant, Utopian hope for the spread of humanity, not as a realistic anticipation for the homogenization of two distinct *Völker*, the Germans and the Jews.²⁵

This view is vindicated by Herder's short essay on the "Conversion of the Jews," or "Bekehrung der Juden," published in his own journal, *Adrastea*, in 1802. Napoleon had recently conquered parts of Germany and begun enforcing his *code Napoléon*, which included the emancipation of Jews in French-occupied areas.²⁶ As a result, the anti-French pitch of the essay is palpable.

The title, "Conversion of the Jews," can be misleading; the essay had nothing to do with religious conversion, but "political" (27®) conversion. For the purpose of the essay, Herder was not concerned with whether or not Jews would accept Jesus Christ, a point on which Fichte placed much more value.²⁷ It had to do rather with a "simple question of state."²⁸ The Jews, Herder said, just like any "foreign" people (as he had described them in the *Reflections*) brought a specific cultural viewpoint and lifestyle that remained "inalienable" and different from that of Germans. Here Herder approached an almost intransigent conception of the *Volksgeist*, so steeped was it in language, culture, and shared history. Having established the Jews as indisputably "outside" the *Volksgeist* of Germany, with an inalienable spirit of their own, Herder went on to present his concerns for cultural miscegenation:

what is the purpose of vague discussions—for instance, on the rights of mankind—if the question is purely: How many of this foreign race may be permitted to pursue their business in this European state without detriment to the native population? For that such an unrestricted mass of these may corrupt an ill-organized state is proven unhappily by many sad historical examples.²⁹

How can anyone construe these statements in a pro-Jewish, or "philo-Semitic" light? In this passage, Herder argued against the contamination of a developing and yet "ill-organized" German state. He alluded to "sad historical examples" of cultural corruption, most likely referring to examples in his own *Reflections*. Herder spoke frequently and contemptuously of the dangers of cultural corruption, most notably in the history of Rome, whose Latin language was "corrupted" and became a "mixed jargon" through its interaction with other cultures.³⁰ To demonstrate that his argument was not solely targeted at the Jews, however,

²⁴ Herder, *Reflections*, 437. In his article "Varieties of Antisemitism from Herder to Fassbinder," in Edward Timms and Andrea Hammel, eds., *The German-Jewish Dilemma: From the Enlightenment to the Shoah* (New York: Edwin Mellon Press, 1999), 107-121, Richie Robertson uses this citation to claim that Herder "was no antisemite" because "he shared with Lessing and Dohm the desire to see the Jews integrated into European civilization."

²⁵ Rose, 99-100.

²⁶ David Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780-1918* (London: Fontana, 1997), 74-75.

²⁷ Fichte, 115f.

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²⁸ Herder, "Bekehrung der Juden," *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernard Suphan (Berlin: Weidmann, 1886), 61 - 67.

²⁹ Quoted in Rose, 104.

³⁰ Herder, *Reflections*, 266.

Herder informed his readers that the presence of the Gypsies and the Mamelukes, two other minority groups in Germany, posed the same danger of cultural miscegenation. (28®)

Herder also couched the argument in utilitarian economic terms. If the Jews brought no cultural value to the German state, did they at least bring economic value? The assumption that they did had been a reason for tolerance of Jews in the past. Herder's answer was negative. Perhaps in a seafaring nation heavily involved in international commerce the Jews would prove beneficial, but not in Germany. Usury had done nothing but to "enslave" European states.³¹

Herder was reacting strongly against French political domination in this essay.³² His quip about the "vague discussions on the rights of mankind" is an attack *a la* Burke on French Enlightenment universalism, against which he fought all his life in his philosophical and historical works. After all, according to the most fundamental tenets of Herder's thought, no state is the same and no one philosophy can be imposed on another. Herder suggested, mockingly like Fichte, that the Jews be removed to Palestine: "Good luck to them [the Jews], if a Messiah-Bonaparte may victoriously lead them there, good luck to them in Palestine!"³³ Herder clearly resented Napoleon's conquest of parts of Germany and the emancipation of their Jews. Herder was suggesting that men should not be given full rights blindly based on abstract ideals, as was done in France, but only after the state decides that a group is beneficial to its well-being. According to Herder, the Jews at this time were neither culturally nor economically beneficial to the emerging German nation. According to Herder in Part II of his essay, for the Jews to become beneficial, a process of humanization would be necessary:

What a prospect it would be to see the Jews... purely humanized [*rein-hwnanisiert*] in their occupations and ways of thinking. Strip away the old national prejudice, throw away the customs that do not belong to our time and constitution.³⁴

The way Herder phrases this possibility-"what a prospect it (29®) would be"-reflects its unlikelihood. However, we should not dismiss this unlikelihood as an impossibility. If one ceased to be a Jew and assimilated entirely into German culture, there should be no reason why a Jew would retain Jewish national characteristics. Herder consistently shunned ideas of racial determination, denying Kant's claim that there were "four or five races" or "exclusive varieties on this Earth."³⁵ However, Herder did believe that the national characters of the Germans and Jews were so distinct and so steeped in history that it had become neither particularly possible nor desirable to mix the two *Volker*.

To summarize Herder's essay on the "Conversion of the Jews," his argument against their political emancipation is threefold. First, Herder believed that it was harmful for a German state to mix its high culture with a foreign one. Second, he saw emancipation as means to an end-and the Jews effected no cultural or economic ends for the Germans. Third, he was reacting against the French imposition of Jewish emancipation. When it came to the pragmatic question of creating an actual state, Herder was not the liberal "pluralist" that

³¹ Herder, *Reflections*, 137.

³² Rose completely ignores the anti-French context in his discussion of the essay.

³³ Quoted in Rose, 104.

³⁴ Quoted in Rose, 106.

³⁵ Herder, *Reflections*. Rose says in conclusion to his section on Herder that "in Herder's eyes, national character is so deeply ingrained by tradition and by religion ('imbibed with mother's milk'), that it might as well be racially or biologically transmitted." Here Rose takes the phrase "imbibed with mother's milk" to mean something other than Herder's intention, which was not a racial connotation.

Isaiah Berlin makes him out to be.³⁶ Nonetheless, throughout the entire essay, Herder discussed the Jewish Question not with the fury and hostility of a Fichte or Kant, but rather with cold detachment.³⁷

Before labeling anyone an "anti-Semite," one must assess the exact extent of his anti-Jewish thought, and then determine whether he called for harm against the Jews, or for the destruction of their religion. On the first point, Herder has undeservedly been characterized as pro-Jewish, even "philo-Semitic." It is impossible to prove such a claim: his anti-Jewish sentiments reveal themselves in several texts. But one should not exaggerate these sentiments. He claimed that the Jews (30®) were usurers and that their religion was archaic and outmoded, but he refrained from drawing upon the plethora of other anti-Semitic stereotypes used by contemporaries like Fichte and Kant. The two claims he appropriated were embedded deeply within the Christian European culture, and only the most enlightened of Germans would have been able to escape them.

On the second point-whether he called for harm against or destruction of the Jews-Herder called for neither. While his philosophy of history led him to believe in the dangers of cultural miscegenation, it also required that he respect the rights of all *Volker* to maintain their national culture. This respect did not lead to advocacy for emancipation, but it certainly precluded any advocacy for further oppression. In fact, Herder advocated the repeal of any laws that forced Jews into the heinous vocation of money-lending, which had destroyed their "human nature."³⁸

If our definition of "anti-Semite" for late eighteenth-century, early nineteenth-century Germany (a definition that is inherently anachronistic, since the term is not coined until 1879) is a person who wanted to exclude Jews from the German state, then Herder might qualify. But anti-Jewish thought during this time period is much too complex to be categorized with such simplistic terminology. To be sure, Herder was no friend of the Jews, but his anti-Jewish statements are phrased with a detached tone of voice that is absent from the work of his anti-Jewish contemporaries. This might be explained by the fact that many of Herder's statements derive from prejudices that were almost inherent in his German, Christian upbringing, and that he had no particular objection to the Jews. He praised ancient Judaism, something that we cannot say for Voltaire, Fichte, or Kant. Looking at Herder's insistence on German mythology and folk tales, and at the creation of his notion of *Volksgeist*, we might deduce that Herder helped to provide a foundation for future anti-Jewish thought in Germany. However, thinkers can rarely be held responsible for the reception of their ideas. Herder can be called, then, neither a "philo-Semite" nor a "anti-Semite"- terms -have become too obscured-but must be placed somewhere in between. More aptly, Herder might have been what Sigurd Scheichl called a "casual," as opposed to a (31®) "doctrinaire," anti-Semite.³⁹

³⁶ Berlin, *passim*.

³⁷ Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 60n.

³⁸ Rose, 107.

³⁹ Sigurd Paul Scheichl, "The contexts and nuances of anti-Jewish language: were all the 'anti-semites' anti-semites?" in *Jews, Antisemitism, and Culture in Vienna*, ed. Ivan Oxaal et al. (London: Routledge, 1987), 89-110. Scheichl distinguishes between "casual" anti-Semites, who make occasional, almost dispassionate anti-Jewish remarks, and "doctrinaire" anti-Semites, who are more vociferous and immoderate in their rancorous contempt of Jews.

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Dutch Involvement in the Spanish Civil War: National, Local, and Individual Reactions

Jennifer L. Foray

As in the First World War, official Dutch policy during the Spanish Civil War was one of strict neutrality. During this conflict, the Netherlands followed the lead of the larger European powers, France and Britain, as a member of twenty-seven-nation Non-intervention Committee. The country was not represented, however, on the Chairman's Sub-Committee, which consisted of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, Russia, and Sweden. Perhaps because of its exclusion from this sub-committee of European nations, it is difficult to ascertain if and how Holland figured into the Spanish Civil War. Few English-language secondary sources even mention that the Dutch were members of the International Brigades, an omission made all the more striking by the fact that the same sources often list, in detail, the composition, by country and sometimes even by number, of the various International Brigades.¹ However, the primary sources demonstrate that, despite the government's formal policy of nonintervention, Dutch men and women became involved in various war efforts, both at home and in Spain, on the side of the Republic.

This essay is an attempt to situate their behavior within the larger framework of Dutch governmental participation in the European Non-intervention effort and, where possible, within Dutch society. First, I will look at national policy concerning the (33®) war and the country's participation in the Non-intervention efforts. In particular, I will focus on the problems created by the presence in Spain of thousands of foreign nationals and how the Netherlands, both as an individual country and as a member of the larger Non-intervention Committee, chose to react to these problems. Next, I will look at how local organizations attempted to amass various types of support for the Spanish Republic. Finally, I will discuss Dutch involvement on the most individual and personal level, using first-hand accounts written by two men who became involved in the Spanish Civil War.²

According to Richard Herr, "the policy of foreign powers was crucial to the Civil War from the outset."³ Within a few weeks of the generals' uprising of mid-July 1936, the Germans and Italians began to send troops and planes to support the uprising. France seemed to support the Republican government at Madrid, while Britain and Portugal, according to William Walters, gave "discreet but effective assistance to Franco's side."⁴ The French Air Force Minister had originally planned to send airplanes to Spain, but his attempts were blocked by the head of the newly-elected Popular Front Government, Leon Blum, who had been assured by the British government that if the French sent planes, the British would not come to France's defense in case

¹ See, for example: Vincent Brome, *The International Brigades: Spain 1936-1939* (London: Heinemann, 1965), "Composition of International Brigades," xiv; Jason Gurney, *Crusade in Spain*. (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1974); Academy of the Sciences of the USSR, The Institute of the International Working-Class Movement, Soviet War Veterans, ed. *International Solidarity with the Spanish Republic 1936-1939* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), 8,18.

² From the available sources, it certainly seems as if the numbers of Dutch nationals who fought on the side of the Insurgents was negligible compared to the number of those who fought for the Republic. Responsibility for the translation of all Dutch sources rests solely with the author, except where noted that the text had already been translated into English.

³ *An Historical Essay on Modern Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 199.

⁴ *An International Affair: Non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War 1936-1939* (New York: Exposition Press, 1971), 35.

of war with Germany. Blum proposed non-intervention instead, and, from this point, the French and British governments led the efforts towards an international non-intervention agreement. In August 1936, they proposed to the other European nations a policy of non-intervention that would prohibit military assistance to either side and designate a committee to insure the (34®) maintenance of neutrality.

By the end of the month, they had gained the approval of twenty-seven European countries for such a plan. The French and the British then began to pressure seventeen of these countries, including Holland, to solidify their support by means of an immediate embargo.⁵ On September 1st, Great Britain announced that nine other nations besides France and herself had also agreed to the formation of an international regulatory committee. Holland was not one of these nine countries. A little over a week later, on September 9, 1936, the first meeting of the "International Committee for the Application of the Agreement regarding Non-intervention in Spain" was held in the London Foreign Office. Twenty-six of the twenty-seven governments were represented, with Portugal as the one absentee nation. Of these twenty-six nations, William Watters states, "fifteen of those countries had practically accepted the French proposals in their entirety." Furthermore, "oddly enough, we find among the fifteen the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, and Czechoslovakia, all of whom had sizable armament industries with the Soviets and the Czechs being ardent supporters of the Spanish Government forces."⁶

In light of the Netherlands' policy of neutrality during the First World War, it is difficult to comprehend how the country's behavior in these first few months of the Spanish Civil War and during the subsequent non-intervention negotiations can be described as "odd." The government's adherence to the same principles during this conflict perhaps may be seen as naive or overly optimistic, especially when one realizes that this neutrality policy was also proclaimed by the Dutch until their country was invaded by the Germans on May 10, 1940. In the Spanish conflict, however, it seems that, in spite of the financial benefits they stood to gain by the manufacture and provision of arms, the Netherlands government simply wished to ensure the country's continued non-involvement. Robert Rosenstone's statement that "the small democracies of the continent [were] tamely (35®) following the lead of the big powers"⁷ also seems unfounded for the case of the Netherlands, who did not tamely follow any policy merely for the sake of obedience to the larger European powers.

Non-intervention efforts continued as the conflict escalated. In the second meeting of the Non-intervention Committee, a subcommittee was also created. This "rather select group with the most powerful nations of Europe represented"⁸ included France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and the Soviet Union. Thus, the Dutch were represented on the larger Committee, but not on this Chairman's Sub-Committee, as it was later called. Most of the discussions by the Committees at this point concerned the prohibition of the shipment of war materials to Spain and possible infractions of this agreement committed mostly by Portugal, Italy, and Germany. It was not until December 1936 that Britain became concerned about the increasing number of foreign volunteers in Spain and began to lead the effort to stem the tide of foreign involvement.

By this point, the volunteers had already begun to stream into Spain. On the side of the insurgent forces, the foreigners came predominantly, but not exclusively, from Germany, Italy, and North Africa; on the side of the Republic, nationals from many European countries were joined by nationals from other parts of the world, such as the United States. The first

⁵ William Watters, *An International Affair: Non-intervention in The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939* (New York: Exposition Press, 1971), 58.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁷ *Crusade of the Left: The Lincoln Battalion in the Spanish Civil War* (Latham, Maryland: University Press of America Inc., 1980), 26.

⁸ Walters, 71.

volunteers for the Republic joined the various Popular Front militias, each of which were usually controlled by a certain political faction. Until the reorganization and coordination of these militias into a central army in the fall of 1936, the general picture of the Republic forces was one of chaos and political fragmentation. The independent volunteers who had flocked to these militias and to Franco's forces were the least of the Non-intervention Committee's problems concerning the presence of foreign nationals in Spain. In mid-October, Largo Caballero, Premier and Minister of War for the Republic, agreed to incorporate Comintern-sponsored International Brigades into the newly reorganized army.

Since the Comintern had already established a recruiting (36®) center in Paris, the first volunteers arrived at the International Brigades' base in Albacete shortly after Caballero's official approval was obtained. The first of the Brigades, the 11th, or Hans Beimler, Brigade, was created that month, and consisted of three battalions of mostly Germans, French, Belgians, Poles, Hungarians, and Yugoslavians.⁹ The first five International Brigades were reserve brigades, although both the 11th Brigade and the 12th Brigade, the Garibaldi Brigade, created in November 1936, were sent to the front lines in early November. Russian arms and supplies also began arriving at this point. The remaining three Brigades were in battle by February 1937.¹⁰ Meanwhile, German and Italian troops and tens of thousands of volunteers for both sides continued to arrive in Spain during the four-month period of October 1936 to February 1937.¹¹

The Non-intervention Committee, therefore, had failed to stem the tide of escalating foreign involvement in what had begun as a localized civil war. Britain continued to lead the campaign against foreign interference in Spain amidst criticism from the British press that the government had failed to take any measures to prevent British nationals from volunteering in (37®) Spain. On January 11, 1937, the government issued a statement proclaiming that, under the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1870, "any British subject volunteering for military, navy or air service on either side, or any person within the United Kingdom inducing others to volunteer" is liable "on conviction to imprisonment up to two years or to a fine, or to both fine and imprisonment."¹² At the same time, France agreed to a similar measure for its own nationals. At midnight, February 21, 1937, the Committee-wide ban on foreign volunteers went into effect, a ban which had been agreed to by even the previously-resistant nation of Portugal.¹³ The first action taken by the Dutch to control the problem of foreign volunteers actually occurred one week before the Committee accepted the ban. On February 14, 1937, the *New York Times* reported that

In order to prevent recruiting for the Spanish warring factions, the government of the Netherlands instructed provincial Governors to refuse passports either to

⁹ Brome, chart on page xiv. None of the seven Brigades (Brigades XI-XV, plus 150th and 129th) specify the Dutch as a "principle initial composition."

¹⁰ Afterword, *International Solidarity with the Spanish Republic 1936-1939*, 366.

¹¹ Estimates of the actual numbers vary. See, for example, R. Dan Richardson, "Foreign Fighters in Spanish Militias: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939" *Military Affairs* 40,1 (Feb. 1976), 7-11, 11; Charles A. Thomson, "Spain: Civil War," *Foreign Policy Reports* XII, no. 21 (15 January 1937), 268. A brief discussion of the various reasons for the discrepancies on the side of the Republic are provided in the afterword to *International Solidarity with the Spanish Republic 1936-1939*, 370. Since many of the volunteers were either not counted at this base or were counted incorrectly, it is also impossible to know how many men fought in these Brigades during the course of the war. It is also obviously impossible to know how many volunteers did not register at the base at all, having come to the country by channels other than those of the recruiting center.

¹² *London Times*, 11 January 1937, 14.

¹³ "Blockade of Spain Begins as Powers Complete Accord," *New York Times*, 21 February 1937, 1.

unemployed persons who profess to desire to seek work in Spain or to any persons reasonably suspected of intending to enlist in Spain.¹⁴

This story appeared under the somewhat misleading heading "Netherlands Halts Aid to Spain," a title which implied that, previous to this date, the country had been actively providing assistance to Spain. On March 5th, the Dutch government introduced a bill which, in accordance with the agreement reached by the Non-intervention Committee, authorized measures to ensure non-intervention in Spain. The bill contained the by-now customary restrictions on the active recruiting and departure of volunteers intending to fight in Spain. Those who violated these new measures would be subject to prison sentences or fines.¹⁵ These provisions apparently had little effect. Four months (38®) later, the *New York Times* reported that the Amsterdam police had noted increased activity "in seeking recruits in the Netherlands for the Spanish Government Army" since France's recent decision to suspend international control of the Franco-Spanish border. The proof for the police's allegation was the disappearance from their villages near Amsterdam of approximately twenty young men, who typically did not tell their relatives their destination. It is not clear from the article who was actually doing the recruiting in Holland, but the police did say that the recruits were taken to Paris by bus, and from there, they were brought to Spain by means of a "Communist committee." Despite the vagueness of this report, the event and its subsequent reportage is significant in that it is the first public mention of the Dutch policy revoking the citizenship of those who volunteered in Spain: "the Netherlands Minister in Paris has been asked to warn the recruits that they will lose their nationality on entering the government army."¹⁶ What is interesting about the wording of this announcement is the reference to the "government army." From this brief mention, it appears that those nationals who chose to fight on the side of the Insurgents would not be subject to the same threat and punishment as were those who fought in the International Brigades. This quote may also signify that no Dutch nationals did, in fact, volunteer on the side of the Insurgents or that the government did not know of anyone who went to fight for Franco.

The Netherlands government also permitted about 75 refugees on the side of the Insurgents to enter the country, an act which may have also endangered the official policy of neutrality. Beginning in late 1936, nearly 400 Spanish citizens "of the Right" had taken refuge at the Netherlands Legation in Madrid. On March 23, 1937, the government authorized their transport to Valencia and their further journey to Marseilles on a Dutch steamer; the government had permitted their journey on the condition that these refugees would not return to Spain to join the Insurgent forces. The majority of the group remained in France and Belgium, and about 75 proceeded to Holland, where a special Roman-Catholic Committee, which included relatives of (39®) three Spanish *Marquéses*, was to look after them. Upon arrival in Holland, the entire group was interned in the southern province of Brabant. Before leaving Spain, they had "pledged themselves in writing not to seek to leave the country,"¹⁷ lest the Netherlands be accused of temporarily sheltering Insurgents until they were able to regroup and re-enter Spain to fight. However, in December of the same year, 53 of these same refugees were arrested after another 15 members of the original group had crossed the border and returned to Spain. The remaining 53 were held in a fortress near Utrecht, and Franco was informed that these refugees would be released when the remaining 15 returned to Holland.¹⁸ Three weeks later, it seemed that Franco had heeded the message: on December 29, 1937, the

¹⁴ "Netherlands Halts Aid to Spain," *New York Times*, 14 February 1937,34.

¹⁵ "Netherlands Backs Patrol," *New York Times*, 6 March 1937,7.

¹⁶ "Recruiting by Loyalists Spurred in Netherlands," *New York Times*, 20 July 1937,13.

¹⁷ "400 Quit Legation Safely: Spaniards in Netherland Building Allowed to Leave Country," *New York Times*, 31 March 1937,4; see also "Spanish Refugees in Holland," *New York Times*, 31 March 1937,9.

¹⁸ "Insurgents Break Parole: 53 Interned in Netherlands as 15 Slip Across Border," *New York Times*, 8 December 1937,10.

London Times announced that "fifteen supporters of General Franco, who while on parole in Holland after having left Madrid returned to Spain, are to be sent back to Holland by General Franco."¹⁹ Therefore, a potential crisis for Holland's status as a neutral nation was averted when Franco chose to enforce the promises given by the refugees as a precondition of their original departure from Spain.

In the summer of 1937, the British began to urge the withdrawal of all foreign volunteers "so that the Spaniards should arrive in the end at a Spanish solution of their differences."²⁰ From its conception, the plan was blocked by Franco and his forces, who insisted that they be formally granted belligerent rights before they would agree to the withdrawal plan. The British response to this argument was to insist that the issue of belligerent rights was to be resolved after the withdrawal of the foreign volunteers of both sides; only then would limited rights be granted to both sides. In October 1937, the French submitted a plan for the withdrawal of foreigners which proposed, among other points, that the number to be initially withdrawn should be (40®) based on the disproportionate numbers of foreigners on each side. The German and Italian counter-proposal for the withdrawal of equal numbers of volunteers was then refused by the French. By the winter of 1937-1938, the Non-intervention Committee was discussing the British plan with the authorities of both sides in Spain, and on March 31, 1938, the *London Times* reported that "all the Great Powers represented on the Committee have accepted the British formula in principle."²¹

The discussions about specific points, such as the methods by which the volunteers would be counted and then sent home, continued throughout the summer.²² Meanwhile, on July 9th, 1938, the Department of Justice of the Netherlands announced that those Dutch volunteers in Spain would be allowed to return home but would be deprived of their civil rights, "since the constitution denies citizenship to those who enter foreign military service without the Queen's special consent."²³ On September 12, 1938, Republican Prime Minister Negrin announced that the Spanish government had decided to withdraw all foreign combatants, and asked for the League of Nations to help oversee the counting and removal of the volunteers. One month later, the removal and repatriation of the foreign volunteers began.²⁴ The (41®) December 6th edition of the *New York Times* reported that 118 "former Netherland [sic] subjects who fought in Spain as volunteers in the Loyalist army" arrived at the Dutch border the previous afternoon

¹⁹ "Telegrams in Brief," *London Times*, 29 December 1937,9.

²⁰ "Powers and Control," *London Times*, 6 July 1937,16.

²¹ France still refused to accept German and Italian demands that the French land border be closed while the counting of volunteers was underway; "Volunteers' in Spain: Subcommittee in Spain," 13.

²² See, for example: "Foreigners in Spain: Discussions Drag, A British Compromise Proposal," *London Times*, 1 April 1938,15. "The Plan for Spain: Agreement on Main Points, Meeting on Tuesday," *London Times*, 1 July 1938,16; "Withdrawal of Foreigners," *London Times*, 11 July 1938,14.

²³ "Volunteers Lose Citizenship," *New York Times*, 9 July 1938,4. Although Watters states that "the Netherlands government said that it would permit all volunteers of Dutch nationality to return home, and they would not be punished without the Queen's consent," there is no confirmation of this idea in any other sources. Furthermore, the idea that such volunteers would need the Queen's permission to be punished does not make sense: *An International Affair: Non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War*, 368.

²⁴ The numbers for the total number of foreign volunteers who were withdrawn, as counted by the League of Nations, varies. A number of sources cite a figure in the 12,000 range, although, for example, Brome places this number at 12,673, while Johnston provides the similar figure of 12,763: Brome, 266; Verle B. Johnston, *Legions of Babel: The International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War*. (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 141. Since the numbers of withdrawn foreigners does not include those who chose to remain in Spain, those who had left prior to the official tallying, and those who had been killed in action, the official count does not represent the actual numbers of foreign volunteers who fought in Spain.

and were admitted to the country, albeit as stateless persons. These former nationals would be "permitted to apply for reinstatement as citizens."²⁵

We can see that the Netherlands government viewed the involvement of its own citizens in the Spanish Civil War as a direct threat to the country's neutrality and to its participation as a member of the Non-intervention Committee. However, numerically small but very active groups called for various types of support, both material and otherwise, for Republican Spain, disregarding and/or denigrating official government policy.

The most prominent group that promoted the Republican cause, as was true in other officially-neutral countries, was the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPH; after the Second World War, the CPN).²⁶ As of the outbreak of fighting in Spain, the CPH held 4 out of 100 seats in the lower house of the Dutch parliament, their pre-World War II peak. After the elections of 1937, they lost one of these seats. Before the Second World War, they never gained more than 3% of the nationwide vote.²⁷ Despite their small numbers, the CPH was certainly the most prominent group in the Netherlands urging intervention in the Spanish Civil War; moreover, it was the CPH, along with the (42®) Dutch Social Democratic Party, that helped its members and other supporters join the International Brigades in Spain.

Shortly after the Uprising, the Dutch communists formed the "Red Help" ("*Rood Hulp*") organization, an organization which was affiliated with the "Red Help" Organization of the Comintern.²⁸ When the Comintern announced the formation of the International Brigades, the CPH and the Dutch Social Democratic Party, the SDAP, joined forces to create the "Help to Spain" ("*Hulp aan Spanje*") Committee. This organization was the Dutch branch of another organization that had been established in Paris, the "Comité International de l'aide au Peuple Espagnol." According to one source, the CPH's decision to work with their rival party, the SDAP, was a direct result of the Comintern's choice to create a broad "unity front" against the Insurgents in Spain.²⁹ For the numerically-weak CPH, this type of collaboration was the most effective way to promote the cause of Republican Spain.³⁰ Their efforts were successful: the "Help to Spain" committee appears to be the only means by which Dutch volunteers were brought to Spain to fight. From the various but far from comprehensive sources which discuss the "Help to Spain" movement, there appears to have been one central committee, most likely located in Amsterdam (the Social-Democratic and Communist stronghold), and other smaller regional divisions, which reported to the central organization.³¹ If the men who disappeared from their villages in July 1937 were, in fact, spirited away by a "Communist committee,"³² then the committee in question was, most likely, either the main "Help to Spain" committee or one of the regional divisions that (43®) facilitated their departure.

²⁵ "Hollanders Back from Spain," 14.

²⁶ After the Second World War, the party was known as the CPN.

²⁷ The government at the time was led by a Catholic-Socialist majority. For figures and seat allocations, see Hans Daalder, "The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society" in Robert A. Dahl, ed., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 231,420; Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 74, 166.

²⁸ Hendrik Henrichs, *Johan Brouwer, Zoeker, ziener en bezieler: Een biografie* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij De Arbeiderspers, 1989), 214.

²⁹ Ger Harmen, *Nederlands Kommunisme: Gebundelde Opstellen* (Nijmegen: Socialistiese Uitgeverij Nijmegen, 1982), 186.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 133.

³¹ Johannes Post, an extremely active member of the Dutch resistance during the Second World War, was the head of the Haarlem Division of the "Help to Spain" committee. During the German occupation, Post worked with Last on the illegal paper, *De Vonk*.

³² See page 38.

As previously stated, the English-language sources on the International Brigades fail to mention Dutch participation in the Brigades; Dutch sources have proven equally elusive. One estimate of the number of Dutch nationals who fought in the International Brigades is contained in a photographic history of the CPH/CPN, *Tot de strijd ons geschaard: Beeldverhaal over het communisme in Nederland*.³³ According to this source, 800 Dutch citizens volunteered as members of the International Brigades. Two photographs supplement this text: one is of the International Army Base at Madrigueiras, where certain Dutch volunteers received their training for battle, and the other photograph is of a "Dutch Spanish fighter in a reconnaissance group near Teruel."³⁴ There are no sources for the figure of 800, nor are there further details concerning the men in the photographs, so it is difficult to gauge the accuracy of these numbers and identifications. However, even if the figure is not wholly accurate, it is difficult to dispute the authority on which it is given, since the CPH was so closely involved with the recruitment of men for service in Spain.

As the war continued, the "Help to Spain" movement adapted its activities to the changing situation in Spain. Even before the withdrawal of foreign volunteers in the fall of 1938, the committee began to focus on rallies and other signs of public support. These meetings were held in assembly halls in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and other large cities, mostly in the spring of 1938. Apparently these meetings were intended to force the Netherlands government to abandon its policy of non-intervention, a policy that, contrary to its purpose of preventing foreign help to either side, had been "largely to the advantage of the Fascists, because Hitler and Mussolini had put a great number of troops at Franco's disposal."³⁵ It is unclear, however, exactly how they wanted the government to become involved. According to a poster at a rally in Rotterdam in May, 1938, "Helping Spain is (44®) working towards peace,"³⁶ but again, it is unclear as to what this "help" entailed. Even if Holland were to suddenly reverse her policy of neutrality and non-intervention, it is highly doubtful that Franco's assumption of power would have been anything more than slightly prolonged. Two months after this rally, in July 1938, the Netherlands government sent its first representative to insurgent Spain. The government explained that this was not because it formally recognized Franco's government, but because Franco now controlled a significant portion of Spanish territory.³⁷ It may not have been official recognition of Franco as the victor, but the leadership and supporters of "Help to Spain" must have viewed this as a partial but rather crucial defeat.

The "Red Spain Committee" ("*Comité Rood Spanje*") is another example of a joint effort between smaller parties that supported the Republic. Located in Amsterdam, "Red Spain" consisted of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), a small party that supported a dictatorship of the proletariat; the NSV, the National Syndicalist Union; and the National Council (*Nationaal Arbeidssecretariaat*). Unlike the "Help to Spain" Committee, "Red Spain" was more active in efforts such as fund-raising at home. One of their pamphlets is reproduced by A. Aarsbergen in his article discussing the reactions of the Dutch leftist parties to the various ideological divisions seen in the Spanish Civil War. This pamphlet, issued after May 1937, solicited support for those anarchists, left-socialists, and members of the POUM

³³ Trans.: *Until the Struggle Gathered Us: A Story in Pictures about Communism in the Netherlands* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Pegasus, 1979), 87.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 86-87.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 91.

³⁶ *Tot de strijd ons geschaard*, 91.

³⁷ "Will Deal with Franco: Netherlands Will Send Agent to Burgos -Not Recognition," *The New York Times*, 28 July 1938,10; "Dutch Agent to Burgos," *London Times*, 28 July 1938,14.

who had been persecuted and imprisoned. This support was to be sent by means of a bank transfer to the account of the Red Spain Committee.³⁸ How they planned to support the incarcerated with these funds is unclear.

"The Local Committee of the International Anti-Militarist Association in the Netherlands" ("*Het Landelijk Comité der LAM. V. in Nederland*"), an anarchist anti-militarist organization, also called for support of Republican Spain, but urged only specific types of help. This group's emphasis on anti-militarism was founded on the belief that the war was actually a misguided political revolution; the real revolution was to be a social one accomplished through such acts as the appropriation of land. In the brochure "Spain: Revolution against Fascism,"³⁹ writer Henk Eikeboom discusses how, although the Local Committee supported the resistance of those "Spanish workers and farmers" in their fight against Fascism, it did not support the delivery of war materials to the Spanish people, regardless of which side these weapons were to go to.⁴⁰ Its argument, however, is strongly directed towards those groups and individuals who, based on the reasoning that the Germans and Italians had been supplying Franco's forces with arms, supported the provision of arms to the Republican forces. The ultimate result of the provision and use of these weapons would not be the triumph of the revolution or the defeat of fascism. On the contrary, the result would be the mass destruction of the Spanish people, and moreover, a European-wide war which would only strengthen of Fascism.⁴¹

Eikeboom states that, rather than urging the "imperialistic allies" of Holland, Britain, France, etc., to provide arms, the Dutch men and women could demonstrate "direct solidarity" with the Spanish people by sending clothes, food supplies and medicine to Spain. Through any family connections, they could also take into their homes Spanish children who had been made orphans as a result of the war.⁴² By performing these acts of solidarity, the Dutch would help to alleviate suffering and would (46®) make possible the construction of social life in liberated Spain. Most importantly, the spirit in which the Dutch men and women would ask their fellow countrymen for these types of assistance would strengthen the Republican position, both at home and in Spain.⁴³

In countries such as Great Britain and even in the United States, the Spanish Civil War acquired a crusade-like status among intellectuals. The war has been referred to as the "first and last crusade of the British left-wing intellectual;" "never again was such enthusiasm mobilized, nor did there exist such a firm conviction in the rightness of a cause."⁴⁴ Even though the greater number of intellectuals sided with the cause of Republican Spain, those who supported the Insurgents, according to Stanley Weintraub, "were no less passionate and

³⁸ A. Aarsbergen, "De Nederlands Socialisten en de Spaanse Revolutie," *Spiegel Historiae* 18, no. 5 (May 1983), 267-272; 270.

³⁹ "Spanje: Revolutie kontra Fascism," subtitled "Doeleinden van strijd" ("Purpose of the Struggle") and "Onze hulp" ("our help"), (Amsterdam: Uitgave S.A.A., September 1936), part of "The Spanish Civil War Collection": Reel 14, Items Nos. 550-577. (Woodbridge, Connecticut: Research Publications, 1987).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 38-39,46-47.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁴² On January 29,1937, the *London Times* reported that "An Amsterdam committee, which is cooperating with the Paris committee for aiding children, is making arrangements to bring 250 Spanish children to Holland, where they will be cared for by Dutch families. So far the Dutch government has not given their consent" (13).

⁴³ "Spanje: Revolutie kontra Fascism," 37.

⁴⁴ Neal, Wood, *Communism and British Intellectuals* (London: Columbia University Press, 1959), 57.

no less committed."⁴⁵ Similarly, Jason Gurney states that "the whole of the liberal and radical intelligentsia was emotionally involved to a very high degree."⁴⁶ While the degree to which the Dutch intelligentsia were "emotionally involved" in the Spanish Civil War cannot be measured, we can examine their participation in war efforts. Their behavior during this period points to a number of dedicated individuals, but it by no means creates the image of a fully-polarized or politically-charged climate, such as that which is described by Weintraub. The "Committee of Vigilance" ("*Comité van Waakzaamheid*") was an organization of anti-Fascists intellectuals who were concerned not only about the situation in Spain, but also in Germany, Austria, and in Holland itself. The Committee was established in the summer of 1936 by a group of intellectuals opposed to National Socialism and was chaired by the University of Amsterdam's Professor of Philosophy, H.J. Pos. Other members of its board of directors included fellow Amsterdam faculty members, such as Professor of Sociology and Criminology W. A. Bonger, Classics Professor D. Loenen, (47®) and Historian Jan Romein. During the years of 1937 and 1938, they numbered over 1200 members, produced more than 30 brochures, and held a number of weekend conferences.⁴⁷ Speaking after the Second World War, Romein maintained that "the 'Committee of Vigilance' was of critical importance for the fight against Fascism," as it had been able to bring together a thousand intellectuals who would stand by their beliefs.⁴⁸

The Committee focused more on spiritual forms of protest than on actual physical support for Spain; its members met, discussed, and printed and distributed their protest brochures. Their aim was to warn of the dangers of National Socialism and Fascism everywhere in Europe. Above all, the "Committee of Vigilance" was effective in bringing together like-minded students and faculty, a notable achievement in an academic world which, at the time, maintained a great deal of distance and formality in the relationships between students and professors. Many of the Committee's members were also Communists and Social Democrats, and so, during the Spanish Civil War, the Committee of Vigilance also worked closely with the Help to Spain Committee. Richard Herr's statement that the war "caught the imagination" of "idealistic students"⁴⁹ might be true, but this increased attention towards the events in Spain did not actually draw the Dutch students into the war itself. Rather, if they did choose to become involved, they did so mostly by joining the Committee of Vigilance, the CPH, and another organization, the Anti-Fascist Students Committee (*Het Anti-Fascistisch Studentencomité*).⁵⁰ (48®) Both this last group and the "Committee of Vigilance" played important roles in mobilizing intellectual support for Republican Spain, but, unlike the "Help to Spain" group and the "Local I.A.M.V." group, their actions did not threaten the country's official policy of non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War.

⁴⁵ *The Last Great Cause: the Intellectuals and the Spanish Civil War* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1978), 8.

⁴⁶ *Crusade in Spain* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1974), 17.

⁴⁷ Interview with J.M. Romein in Louis de Jong, *De Bezetting I (The Occupation, Part I)*. Amsterdam, Em. Querido's Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1964,25-26.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 27-28.

⁴⁹ *An Historical Essay on Modern Spain*, 201.

⁵⁰ If there were students from the Municipal University of Amsterdam (the university seen as the most leftist at this time) who fought in Spain, P.J. Knegtman, the author of an extremely comprehensive examination of the University of Amsterdam during the years 1935 and 1950, does not mention this: *Een kwetsbaar centrum van de geest: de Universiteit van Amsterdam tussen 1935 en 1950* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998). I have also searched through works on the various other schools in the Netherlands, but I have found no mention of students going to Spain to fight as volunteers.

There are few published accounts of those Dutch men and women who were active in the war efforts.⁵¹ Based on those existing accounts, however, the individual's decision to become involved, at least on the side of the Republic, was often contingent upon a number of beliefs or opinions, as opposed to just one opinion or ideology concerning the war. These accounts do not paint pictures of International Brigadiers devoted to the cause of world-wide solidarity. Their choices and actions do not necessarily reflect Rosenstone's statement that "among the many liberals and left-wingers in the countries of the West -England, France, and Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, and Belgium - there were men too committed to the ideals of the Popular Front against fascism, too impatient or too wise to stay at home and work for a change in their country's non-intervention policy."⁵² For these Dutch nationals, the decision to become involved in the Spanish Civil War was much more nuanced than this rather cut-and-dry explanation would suggest.

We have the account-in Dutch and in an English translation-of one Dutch citizen who fought in Spain as a member of an International Brigade. Jef Last, author of *The Spanish Tragedy*,⁵³ was born on May 2,1898. At the age of 19, he joined the SDAP, the Social-Democratic Workers Party, but, thirteen (49®) years later, he became one of the heads of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), or what he describes as the "Anarchist-Trotskyist School."⁵⁴ The same year, he visited Russia for the first time; after his return to Holland, he began to lean towards the Dutch Communist Party. In 1932, he spent nine months in Russia, and upon his return, he officially became a member of the CPH, though he continued to experiment with different schools of thought within the movement. Four years later, he again went to Russia, this time with the French writer Andre Gide. Both returned very disillusioned and critical of the Soviet system. By the 10th of October of that same year, 1936, he was in Madrid as a member of an International Brigade. Within the next month, he was in the trenches around the city.

Last served as a captain in one of the Brigades. The channels by which he arrived in Spain are unclear, but presumably, as a member of the Dutch Communist Party, Last had heard about the formation of the International Brigades shortly after (or even before) the Comintern announced their plans for such Brigades. His work, *The Spanish Tragedy*, indicates the importance he attached to the struggle against Franco and the generals. Last recounts an episode in which his comrades in the Brigade asked him to explain to them why he was in Spain. He first used a map to show them that "if the Fascists win in Spain, France will be encircled on all sides," and then, using an amalgam of what seems to be every possible reason for the defense of the Spanish Republic against Franco, he proceeded to justify his stance:

With Spain as a jumping-off ground, Germany can cut England off from her colonies. That is the moment when the world war should break out under the most favorable conditions possible for Fascism. That is why we are defending here not only Spain, but democracy, and even the frontiers of the Soviet Union.⁵⁵

In "Retrospect," the final chapter of his book, he also states that those who were still fighting at the time were "battling on the front of humanity" and "struggling for freedom." Moreover, the (50®) fighting would "decide the fate of Europe," and if the youth still fighting in Spain do not

⁵¹ Although I focus on the accounts on male volunteers, it seems as if Dutch women also went to Spain, mostly to serve as nurses. A photograph reproduced on page 92 of *Tot de strijd ons geschaard* contains the caption "The greeting of Dutch nurses upon their arrival from Spain, December 1938." The photograph shows a crowd of both men and women waving to the camera; five of the women in the first row of people are holding bouquets of flowers.

⁵² *Crusade of the Left: The Lincoln Battalion in the Spanish Civil War*,27.

⁵³ Translated from the Dutch by David Hallett (London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd, 1939), first published in Dutch in 1938.

⁵⁴ Last, 247.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*,116-117.

win, it would be "owing to an even greater betrayal of the democratic countries,"⁵⁶ including, and in particular, the Soviet Union.

The situation surrounding his departure from Spain is also not clear. While in Stockholm in early 1938, months before the forced withdrawal of foreign volunteers, Last wrote the final chapter of his book about his experiences in Spain. At this point, he had formally left the Communist Party, frustrated, among other things, by "Russia's inadequate support of the Spanish Republic which became manifest at the fall of Teruel."⁵⁷ In January of 1938, Last decided to publish his "letters from Spain," in spite of his feelings that he would be attacked by all sides-by the Communists, who would label him a Trotskyist; by the Trotskyists, who would reject him as one of their own; by the Dutch newspapers, who would either accuse him of being a jaded but unintelligent revolutionary or a propagandist ready to lead others to die in Spain. This, Last believes, "is only a tame description of what awaits me as a stateless person without legal rights." However, he considered it "an act of betrayal to myself not to communicate to others my spiritual experience,"⁵⁸ and so his letters were first published in Dutch that year, to be followed the next year by the English translation.

In sum, Last was anti-Fascist and pro-democratic, yet supportive of England's colonial system. He respected the Soviet Union, but was critical of most of her activities in the war. He personally rejected Communism after his experiences in the International Brigade, but he also recognized the tremendous import of the Comintern's decision to create these Brigades.⁵⁹ Last may have entered the war as a communist, but he returned as a supporter of a system that must "embrace all who feel the spirit of comradeship, whatsoever the party to which they may belong." It was only in this way that Fascism, the divider and corrupter of peoples and races, would be broken.⁶⁰ After his (51®) return to Holland, he did not cease his struggle against Fascism: during the German occupation of Holland during the Second World War, Last belonged to the editorial board of the illegal newspaper, *De Vonk*.

Johannes Brouwer, also born in 1898, was a similarly enigmatic figure. In 1920, he completed his undergraduate studies of Eastern languages and literature at Leiden University. Two years later, he and his brother committed a robbery-murder, for which Johannes Brouwer served six years in prison. In prison, he studied Spanish language and literature, and was particularly interested in the 17th century mysticism of St. Theresa of Avila and San Juan de la Cruz. Brouwer was released from prison in 1928 and shortly thereafter devoted himself to formal university study of Spanish language and literature. In 1930, he visited Spain for the first time, and one year later, he completed his doctoral dissertation, "The Psychology of Spanish Mysticism." His dissertation was favorably received in Catholic circles, and he soon began to write for the Catholic "family paper," *The New Century*.⁶¹

After his second trip to Spain in the summer of 1931, Brouwer publicly addressed what he saw as the main problems in Republican Spain. In *The New Century* and in another journal, *Het Schild*, he described the ever-present chaos brought about by the anarchists and communists, and in particular, the rampant anti-Catholicism, as seen in the vandalism and destruction of churches. According to Hendrick Henrichs, Brouwer's biographer, Brouwer's opinion about Spain at this point was clear: the Spanish people were Catholic, and only when the Spanish people stopped allowing themselves to be misled by atheists, communists, and other pseudo intellectuals, would Spain be restored to its original greatness.⁶² For the next few years, Brouwer continued to write

⁵⁶ Last, 287.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 249.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 244-245.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 286.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 287-288.

⁶¹ Hendrik Henrichs, "Johan Brouwer en de Spaanse burgeroorlog," *De Gids* 145, no.2(1982): 79-101,81.

⁶² *Ibid.*,83.

about the situation in Spain for other Dutch journals, making known his stance against the Republic.

Shortly after the uprising, of which he was a supporter, Brouwer traveled to France and then to Navarra. While in Spain, he spent time in Pamplona, Saragossa, Burgos, Valladolid, (52®) Salamanca and Badajoz, and sent reports of his observations and experiences to the *NRC Handelsblad*, a Dutch national newspaper. His first report expressed his admiration for the Insurgent army, but as the reports continued, he began to sympathize with the Republic. The slaughter of the Spanish people at Badajoz by the Moroccan Division of the Foreign Troops was a crucial event for Brouwer, leading him to retract his initial support for the Insurgents.⁶³ In October of 1936, Brouwer wrote a brochure entitled "The Spanish Civil War," in which he explored the various factions and beliefs informing both the pre-uprising Republic and the People's Front as it looked in the fall of 1936.⁶⁴ That same month, "fascists" in Badajoz arrested Brouwer on the grounds that he was in possession of Leftist as well as Rightist materials.⁶⁵ He was released only after the men learned that he had traveled to Spain as a supporter of the uprising. These men were neither aware of his about-face, nor did they know that their actions would further contribute to his support of the Republic. Henrichs states that when Brouwer returned to Holland after this first arrest, he was of the belief that the Republic, the lawful Spanish government, had maintained order and calm in its part of Spain.⁶⁶

Brouwer then visited Republican Spain-Barcelona, Valencia, and Madrid - in mid-December 1936 until mid-January 1937. He was arrested again, but this time for espionage. He had been framed by a German, the head of Military Censorship for the Republic, for reasons unknown to Brouwer, and, despite his fears that he was to be shot, he was soon released. He continued to express his support for the Republic, now praising its leaders, Azana, Largo Caballero, and Compañys, as well as the International Brigades. Upon his return to Holland, he was now convinced that the Republican government "deserved all possible support in her struggle against the insurgent Right coalition."⁶⁷

Once in Holland, Brouwer contacted the "Help to Spain" organization, and on the 22nd of July, 1937, he spoke at the opening of a "Help to Spain" exhibit in Amsterdam. He was also an active participant in the International Anti-Fascist Writer's Congress, held in Valencia between July 2 and July 13, 1937. Jef Last was also a participant in the Congress. In Valencia, Brouwer declared that the Spanish Republican cause did not conflict with the truly Christian spirit, since the cause was a legitimate one of the most Christian people who existed.⁶⁸ Thus, by the fall of 1937, Brouwer's transformation was complete. He had entered into his reportage of the Spanish Civil War as a self-proclaimed opponent of the atheistic, anarchist Republic, and had ended his tour of Spain as an opponent of Fascism.⁶⁹

⁶³ Henrichs, "Johan Brouwer en de Spaanse burgeroorlog," 89.

⁶⁴ Johannes Brouwer, "De Spaansche Burgeroorlog: zijn oorzaken en mogelijke gevolgen," trans. "The Spanish Civil War: its origins and possible results" (Hilversum: N. V. Paul Brand's Uitgeversbedrijf, 1936).

⁶⁵ Henrichs, "Johan Brouwer en de Spaanse burgeroorlog," 88.

⁶⁶ Henrichs, Johan Brouwe, *Zoeker, Ziener en Bezieler*, 197.

⁶⁷ Henrichs, Johan Brouwe, *Zoeker, Ziener en Bezieler*, 197.

⁶⁸ Henrichs, "Johan Brouwer en de Spaanse burgeroorlog," 93.

⁶⁹ Until his death in 1943, Brouwer continued to be a visible figure in Dutch society. In the fall of 1940, he was scheduled to replace a Jewish professor of Spanish at the University of Amsterdam after the dismissal of all Jewish faculty members. Brouwer's appointment was canceled by the Mayor of Amsterdam, however, after the Dutch Nazi Party brought to light his murder conviction and time in prison. In actuality, the Nazi Party had looked for a reason to avenge Brouwer for his "betrayal" during the Spanish Civil War (Knegtmans, *Een kwetsbaar centrum van de geest*, 116). Brouwer was involved in a number of resistance efforts during the Second World War and was the motivating force behind the creation of a university-wide illegal student resistance organization, the Council of Nine. He was executed by the Germans in 1943 for his role in the attack on the Population Registry of Amsterdam.

The 1930s saw a rise in right-wing movements across Europe, and Holland was no exception. Robert Rosenstone points out that "in traditionally peaceful Belgium there were the Rexists, and in Holland and Sweden, Norway, and England, there were small but militant groups of pro-fascists, each with its own military garb, its Roman salute, its plans for military ventures, its own would be dictator."⁷⁰ Unlike Rosenstone's examples of London, Paris, and Brussels, cities disrupted by "street clashes," (54®) there was never an "an atmosphere of terror and violence"⁷¹ in the Dutch cities at this time. Despite the relative calm throughout the country, certain Dutch organizations and individuals were alarmed by what they saw as the spread of Fascist movements across Europe. Unfortunately, however, for these Dutch men and women, the Spanish Civil War did prove to be the last great stand against the Fascist movements. The German invasion of May 10, 1940 represented both the end of this struggle as it had existed for the past four years and the beginning of a new phase of resistance activity. The invasion also signified the abrupt end of the Dutch policy of neutrality, a policy that the government had so desperately sought to maintain during the 1930s.

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⁷⁰ *Crusade of the Left*, 59.

⁷¹ *Crusade of the Left*, 59.

Saidian Orientalism and East Asian Studies, or "Can Orientalism Survive?"

Thomas Mullaney

Edward Said's groundbreaking work *Orientalism* makes little mention of East Asia, focusing almost entirely on the European discourse surrounding the Near East. Benjamin Schwartz is perhaps the only East Asianist mentioned by name in the course of Said's writings, in *Orientalism* or elsewhere. In that sense, Said's work does not provide a blueprint with which one can apply Saidian theory to Euro-American scholarship on China and Japan. Nevertheless, a sizeable contingent of East Asian scholars has done so, in a number of different ways. In this paper, I examine (1) how the theory of Orientalism has been applied to the fields of Chinese and Japanese studies and (2) how scholars of China and Japan, whose countries and societies of study differ markedly from those described in Said's work, have adjusted and/or mounted critiques against the concept of Orientalism as Said first developed it. This paper's organization is as follows: in part one, I outline the major aspects of Saidian Orientalism; in part two, I turn attention to East Asian studies, to determine if Saidian Orientalism in its original form is applicable thereto; having shown in part two that direct application is not possible (or, at least, not particularly profitable), in part three I discuss the various reconfigurations of Orientalism which have emerged from the field of East Asian studies; in part four, I will pose and attempt to answer the rather sensitive question: given the scope and nature of the critiques and interpretative adaptations introduced in part three, is the theory of Orientalism still a meaningful tool of analysis?

Before proceeding, it is important to clarify the two-pronged nature of the critique I will raise, particularly in part four. On the one hand, I raise questions about scholarship which, exemplified here by Louisa Schein's work on inter-ethnic relations in China, invokes the theory of Saidian Orientalism despite the topic of study being entirely unrelated to Orient-Occident binaries. Thus, what scholars such as Schein and others regard as fruitful applications of Orientalist theory to their respective topics, I regard as steps in a process wherein the theory of Orientalism (56®) has been stretched to cover an overly broad historical terrain, with the result that the theory itself may be nearing its elastic limit. Despite the fact that many of these studies are highly well-researched contributions to their respective disciplines (indeed, I have great respect for Schein's work), they have nonetheless both contributed to and been influenced by a terminological inertia wherein scholars invoke the term "Orientalism" even when such an invocation is not called for by the topics in question: when their topics have little or nothing to do with the Orient-Occident binary with which Said first concerned himself. In a cyclical fashion, such invocations and applications go on to perpetuate the theory's vacancy of meaning-its deterioration as a rigorous tool of analysis and subsequent transformation into an academic cliché.

In this regard, my critique centers on those examples of scholarship that perpetuate this undesirable transformation. However, the second prong (and indeed the core of my critique) centers on the theory of Saidian Orientalism itself, insofar as Said's tendency to overgeneralize, decontextualize, and undercut complexities in his original work account for much of the theory's incredible elasticity. Said's theory is itself of such an expansive breadth and with so little to keep it rooted in any particular historical terrain that it establishes the conditions for its own over-extension in the work of others. In this regard, I demonstrate that

works like that of Louisa Schein, despite employing what I see as an overextended or unnecessary application of Saidian theory, are nevertheless faithful to Said's original ideas—which is to say, they comply with the definitional aspects of Orientalism as Said first described them. Thus, these applications of Orientalism to far-a-field topics indicate just how readily one can bifurcate Saidian Orientalism and the idea of an East-West binary upon which it is supposedly predicated. One can, in effect, uproot the theory of Orientalism, and re-root it in practically any historical or temporal terrain where binaries are to be found—not simply the binary separating "Orient" and "Occident" which the theory was first designed to address. This optional nature and the lack of historical rigor it implies, I contend, brings into serious question the integrity of the original theory of Orientalism as a whole. It gives us pause as scholars, prompting us to reassess the limitations of Said's theoretical framework, not as a way of negating the immense contributions (57®) it has made to numerous disciplines, but as a way of preserving those contributions and of keeping the analytical tool of Orientalism incisive rather than dull.

Saidian Orientalism: An Overview

While Edward Said's language is complex and elegant, the essence of his theory of Orientalism is profoundly straightforward. It claims that, throughout history, but particularly since the Napoleonic conquest of Egypt in 1798, there has developed in what we now call the "West" a systematic discourse whose representation of the East was and in a large part continues to be wholly ahistorical and Other-ing. Ostensibly a veridic discourse aimed at understanding the Eastern world, in fact Orientalism was and is a means by which the Western world has aggrandized itself by denigrating the Oriental Other. By framing the East in terms of eternity, sensuality, and sublimity, the West has demarcated its own vibrancy and rationality. "The very possibility," Said contends, "of development, transformation, human movement—in the deepest sense of the word—is denied the Orient and the Oriental." In this way, the Orient has been made to possess what Said describes as a "bad sort of eternity"¹

It is important to note, however, that in focusing on the West's discursive representation of the Orient, Said does not go so far as to deny the existence of the Orient as a place. For Said, the Orient truly does exist.² It is not merely a linguistic construction, vivified in the most essential sense of the word by the Orientalist discourse alone. Admittedly, its voices have been rendered silent by the Orientalist discourse, its histories appropriated by the West for ulterior motives, and its identities objectified in a longstanding, systematic act of symbolic violence. It nevertheless possesses its own voices, has produced its own histories, and has always defined its own identities on its own terms, and for its own varied purposes. Yet even though Said regards the Orient as a real place with real people, he is patently uninterested in analyzing the Orientalist discourse in terms of its veracity. (58®) in analyzing the Orientalist discourse in terms of its veracity. Said argues to the contrary, "the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, not the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original."³ He is most concerned with investigating "the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient (the East as career) despite or beyond any correspondence or lack thereof, with a 'real' Orient."⁴

¹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978. [1994 edition, with new afterward by Said]), 208.

² *Orientalism*, 5.

³ *Orientalism*, 21.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

How and when was the Orientalist discourse born? In what context did it mature into its now fully systematized, coherent, self-generating corpus? Said focuses mainly on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but at the same time peppers his study with references to the likes of Aeschylus, Marco Polo, and Shakespeare. The production of this Orientalist discourse, Said concludes, was and is intimately related to specific historical conditions-particularly geopolitical power differentials which found several nineteenth and twentieth century European nations comparatively able to pursue their commercial and colonial interests in the non-European world. Phrased simply, the White man (whether colonialist, traveler, or otherwise) "could be [in the Orient], or could think about it, with very little resistance on the Orient's part."⁵

Thus, the Orient, while passively providing the inspiration for itinerant Orientalist writers, was not "there at its own making," but was spoken for by a host of colonial policymakers, academics, and artists. As for the identity of the Orientalist, Said is utterly clear in his definition: "Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient-and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist-either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism."⁶ Said then expands his definition to include all "poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators," who make the Occidental-Oriental distinction (i.e., all those who readily employ the capitalized terms "East" and "West" when framing (59®) their discussions). Using this basic outline of Orientalism as a point of departure, we can now turn our attention to the discipline of East Asian Studies, wherein the countries and societies under question differ markedly (in terms of historical experience, religion, relations with the West, etc.) from those described in Said's work. The question to pose is: can Saidian Orientalism make the transition to a socio-historical environment in which material and historical factors do not correspond to those in Said's chosen geographical area of study?

Applying Saidian Orientalism to East Asian Studies

Perhaps the most obvious difference between the "Far East" and those nations mentioned in Said's study (at least, in terms of their respective historical relationships with the Western world) is that the latter were at one point full colonial subjects whereas those in the former were not. Scholars of Japan and China in particular point out that the Euro-American presence and penetration of those two nations was quite different than it was in Egypt and India, for example. Euro-American colonialists penetrated China and Japan, to be sure, but they most certainly did not control either-a conclusion undeniable even when faced with figures such as Commodore Perry and political-economic realities like the Unequal Treaties. It is premature, then, to assume as Said does that these dissimilar historical experiences produced identical (or, at least, fundamentally identical) discourses. As Minear points out, "Matthew Perry's *Narrative of the Expedition* (1856) may bear superficial resemblances to Napoleon's *Description de l'Egypte* (1809-1828); but we look in vain for a colonial overlord like Britain's Lord Cromer. In short, Japanese studies never experienced the naked "authority over the Orient" which Said sees as an integral part of Orientalism."⁷ "[T]he partnership of

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷ Richard H. Minear, "Orientalism and the Study of Japan," in Edward R. Beauchamp, *History of Contemporary Japan, 1945-1998* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1998), 514 (citation of Said, *Orientalism*, 3).

Orientalist studies and imperial military power," he explains, "simply did not hold. Will to power, perhaps; arrogance and condescension, certainly; but actual domination, no."⁸ (60®) As studies like those of Minear and others demonstrate, to assume that the Western discourse on East Asia can be categorized along with its discourse on, for example, India is to overlook objective factors of which the imperialists themselves would have been aware—namely, the difference involved between being and not being in complete colonial control. It seems clear, therefore, that Saidian Orientalism must first reconcile itself with the absence of complete colonial domination before it can be applied to the cases of China and Japan. There is also the obvious question of religion, a topic too large to investigate here. Suffice it to say that there is a large difference between Western perceptions of Islam on the one hand, and such religions as Buddhism, Taoism, and Shintoism on the other—differences that Said completely overlooks but which have no doubt led to marked dissimilarities between the West's discourses on, for example, China versus the Middle East.

A second kind of critique focuses on Said's simplistic rendering of those Europeans whom he sees as having been involved in the process of creating and recreating the orientalist discourse. For Said, the collective -ism known as Orientalism was, in its essence, a means and process by which Europeans could develop an idea of themselves as advanced and rational by juxtaposing themselves against an image of wholly backward, irrational Orientals. Studies of writers like Kafka, Tolstoy, Brecht, and others, however, have illustrated the ways in which certain Europeans took part in the production of the Orientalist discourse as a means of criticizing—not favorably defining through juxtaposition—European modernism, capitalism, militarism, etc.

Being fully aware of this critique, Said denies having ever having suggested something akin to uniformity within the Orientalist discipline. In his afterword to the 1994 printing of *Orientalism*, Said contends that "Nowhere do I argue that Orientalism is evil, or sloppy, or uniformly the same in the work of each Orientalist. But I do say that the guild of Orientalists has a specific history of complicity with imperial power, which it would be Panglossian to call irrelevant."⁹ Said's overall point is well taken, but breaks down almost immediately when, on the (61®) following page, he undermines it in the course of responding to Bernard Lewis. In an explosive invective, the author argues that "Lewis' verbosity scarcely conceals both the ideological underpinnings of his position and his extraordinary capacity for getting nearly everything wrong. *Of course, these are familiar attributes of the Orientalist's breed*, some of whom have at least had the courage to be honest in their active denigration of Islamic, as well as other non-European, peoples."¹⁰ It hardly requires pointing out that this sort of language promotes rather than challenges the idea of a syncretic Orientalist identity. And it is not an isolated case. Said makes repeated references to Orientalism's "sheer knitted-together strength,"¹¹ its "redoubtable durability,"¹² its "cumulative and corporate identity,"¹³ and the like. Critiques of Said's rather conflating representation of Euro-American Orientalists have been borne out in numerous studies that pay increasing attention to authors such as Henry Salt, Annie Besant, and Edward Carpenter, who employed various Orientalist tropes as a means, not of aggrandizing, but of attacking "a modernized, aggressive, capitalist,

⁸ Minear, 515.

⁹ *Orientalism*, 341.

¹⁰ *Orientalism*, 342. Emphasis added.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, 202.

materialist, and carnivorous Europe for which they bore little love."¹⁴ Goebel's study of Kafka arrives at similar conclusions.¹⁵

For the reasons outlined above, most East Asian scholars agree that the application of Saidian Orientalism to East Asian studies requires a certain degree of theoretical reconfiguration. Even scholars in Indian Studies, dealing with a nation whose experience under colonialism would seem to square perfectly with Said's analysis, make similar contentions. As one critic phrases it, Saidian Orientalism never in fact reaches the Orient, but rather "remains a history of Orientalism from the West and affirms in the very way it is set out the categories of West and East it ostensibly attacks. It also does not allow the possibility that Orientals, once Orientalized by Western domination, could (62®) use Orientalism itself against that domination."¹⁶ As this passage suggests, Richard G. Fox subjects Said to the very same line of critique that Said has mounted against the Orientalist guild-namely, that by so firmly subscribing to the idea of an East-West binary, and at the same time overlooking the "East" side thereof, he perpetuates the binary. As Fox argues, Said tends to exaggerate the "Otherness" of the Orient as well as certain "cultural differences and separate histories that certainly no longer existed by the nineteenth century."¹⁷ Scholars in East Asian studies have mounted similar critiques against Said's penchant for East-West binaries. In her study of ethnic minorities in China's southwestern regions, anthropologist Louisa Schein argues convincingly that Said's East-West/representer-represented binary "can conceal... the historical multiplicity of axes of domination even within the East."¹⁸ Said's argument relies far too much on the idea of the "silencing power of the orientalist production,"¹⁹ Schein argues, so that Said's analysis is in danger of reproducing "the muteness or invisibility of the agents of cultural production that might be operating within the so-called Orient."²⁰

Nevertheless, critiques such as these in no way prove (or indeed even seek to prove) the inapplicability of Said's theory to the study of East Asia. Indeed, both Fox and Schein root at least a portion of their works in the concept of Orientalism, but in a somewhat reconfigured form. What, then, does this creative reconfiguration look like? Phrased differently: when critiques such as those mentioned here are said and done, how have East Asian scholars gone on to adapt Saidian Orientalism to the particular historical and sociopolitical realities of nations such as China and Japan? It is to this question which we will now turn our attention.

(63®)

When Orientalism "Reaches" the Orient

In a highly influential essay entitled "Traveling Theory," Edward Said sparked an academic debate which, for reasons we will discuss here, has attracted the attention of a number of East Asian scholars-particularly China scholars Lydia Liu and Xiaomei Chen. In a well-known passage in his essay, Said postulates that, "like people and schools of criticism, ideas and

¹⁴ Richard G. Fox, "East of Said," in Michael Sprinker, ed., *Edward Said. A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 152.

¹⁵ Rolf J. Soebel, *Constructing China. Kafka's Orientalist Discourse* (South Carolina: Camden House, 1997).

¹⁶ Fox, 145-6.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 146.

¹⁸ Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules. The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 103.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 303.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 103.

theories travel from person to person, from situation to situation, from one period to another."²¹ Said describes his idea of traveling theory as a four-step process: step one, the theory's point of origin; step two, the distance the theory travels; step three, the conditions of acceptance (or, sometimes, resistance) thereof; step four, a theory's ultimate transformation by means of its "new uses, its new position in a new time and place."²² Although the essay does not directly address the question of Orientalism, it has received the attention of scholars who are interested in understanding what happens once the theory of Orientalism as set forth by Said "travels" to the Orient.

More than merely filling in the gaps found in Said's original treatise, Liu and others are interested to see whether a study of "Orientalism" as experienced in the Orient may lead to radically different conclusions than those put forth by Said. When one looks at Liu's work, as well as that of many others, this in fact appears to be the case: Orientalism becomes much more complicated once one takes into account the "Oriental's" experience thereof. This, although Said would perhaps disagree, is for the majority of East Asian scholars arguably the most important factor in any such study.

It is in this important way that Liu and Chen refocus our attention away from the one-sided emphasis on the West's hegemonic, silencing discourse to the question of how this Western discourse was "deployed by Chinese intellectuals in theories of the modern nation-state during early decades of the twentieth century."²³ Rather than defining the historical significance of Orientalism in terms of its production-side forces alone, Liu in particular seeks instead to investigate the "process through which new words, meanings, and discourses arise, circulate, and acquire legitimacy within the target language."²⁴ Xiaomei Chen echoes this point, arguing that "sophisticated Western theory [including more than just Orientalism], albeit important, can be useful when understood in terms of the role it plays within the cultural and political environment of China."²⁵

Once Orientalism is viewed from the perspective of the "Oriental," there emerge a number of fascinating theoretical subtexts that Said neglects. Particularly intriguing is the idea of "Occidentalism," alternately referred to as reverse Orientalism and secondary Orientalism.²⁶

Occidentalism, Chen explains, is "a discursive practice that, by constructing its Western Other, has allowed the Orient to participate actively and with indigenous creativity in the process of self-appropriation, even after being appropriated and constructed by the Western Other."²⁷ Principal among her examples of Occidentalism is the six-part miniseries *Heshang (Yellow River Elegy)* broadcast in 1988 on China's Central Television network.

Heshang made a huge stir when it was broadcast, praised by some and criticized by others as historically fatalistic, geographically deterministic, Eurocentric, and anti-socialist.²⁸ Part documentary, part fiction, the miniseries conveyed the message that, as Jing Wang phrases it,

²¹ Edward Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 226. Cited henceforth as *WTC*.

²² Said, *WTC*, 227.

²³ Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice. Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity-China, 1900-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 161.

²⁴ Liu, 165.

²⁵ Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 20.

²⁶ For an example of a pioneer study of Occidentalism in the Japanese case, see Robert Sharf, "The Kyoto School and Reverse Orientalism" in Charles Wei-Hsun and Steve Heine, ed., *Japan in Traditional and Postmodern Perspectives* (Albany: State University of New York, 1995).

²⁷ Chen, 4-5.

²⁸ Jing Wang, *High Culture Fever. Politics, Aesthetics, and Ideology in Deng's China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 118.

"Old China can only revive its dying culture by modernization and westernization."²⁹ Among its most notable features is the way it sought to recast the once fetishized symbols of Chinese grandeur—the Great Wall of China, the (65®) Yellow River, the dragon, etc.—as signs of backwardness and insulation.³⁰ "The dragon and the yellow earth," Xiaomei Chen explains, "are interpreted as representing cynicism, parochialism, conservatism, confinement, and land and ancestry worship in Chinese culture."³¹ The program made liberal (and often inaccurate) use of historical evidence to fortify the image of China as a backward, "inland"³² civilization, pitted in dialectical opposition to the "blue ocean civilization"³³ of Europe. As Chen explains, therefore, "in all this it seems clear that He Shang created and propagated a misleading image of the alien West, which might well be termed Occidentalism since it provides a politically and culturally motivated image of the Other."³⁴

Robert Kisala, in his study of postwar Japanese pacifism, has come to similar conclusions regarding Occidentalism/reverse Orientalism, demonstrating the process in which anti-war activists came to appropriate certain Orientalist stereotypes as a means of portraying Japan (and the East as a whole) as the new world savior. Among those stereotypes embraced in particular were the ideas of Japan as irrational, spiritual, and materially backward. Pacifist activists employed these notions to fashion a world scenario in which, as Kisala phrases it, "the spiritual East will save the scientific West from destruction."³⁵ Japan would "place Zen at the center of a new mission to save the world from the dead end of Westernization."³⁶ Chen's interpretation of Occidentalism is not limited to the field of East Asian Studies alone. Richard G. Fox uncovers a similar pattern in his study of Indian anti-colonialism, demonstrating Gandhi's use of "affirmative Orientalism" as a means of resisting British colonial interests.³⁷ Fox analyzes Mahatma Gandhi's appropriation of a host of pejorative, Orientalist con-(66®) ceptions of India as a means of articulating and rallying support for his anti-imperialist cause. He translated the European indictment of India as other-worldly into the idea of India as "spiritual;" he translated the stereotype of India as a passive society into the concept of India as non-violently resistant; he translated the derogatory image of India as backward and parochial into the notion of India as ideally suited for a highly consensual, harmonious, and decentralized form of democracy.³⁸ As Fox explains, "whether negative or positive, these stereotypes are equally Orientalist, that is, equally products of the cultural domination of India by the West, and they equally compel and enable Gandhi's Utopian resistance to that domination."³⁹

Returning again to Xiaomei Chen's work, the issue of Chinese Occidentalism/Affirmative Orientalism becomes further nuanced by Chen's reference to not one but three forms thereof: Official Occidentalism, anti-Official Occidentalism, and a combinatory form of the two. Official Occidentalism, Chen explains, is akin to the sort of "affirmative Orientalism" described above, with the significant difference that, instead of appropriating

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Chen, 29.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 30.

³² *Ibid.*, 36.

³³ *Ibid.*, 31.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

³⁵ Robert Kisala, *Prophets of Peace, Pacifism and Cultural Identity in Japan's New Religions* (Hawaii: University of Honolulu Press, 1999), 161.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 159.

³⁷ Fox, 152.

³⁸ Fox, 151.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Western/Orientalist stereotypes of one's nation and culture as a means of mounting anti-colonial resistance, Official Occidentalism employs them as a means of controlling (even suppressing) one's own people.⁴⁰ In anti-official Occidentalism, which is best represented in the example of *Heshang* above, the Western Orientalist discourse is employed as a means of mounting intra-state resistance-in this case, against China's one-party system of governance. Without delving too deeply into any one of these categories, suffice it to say that Chen demonstrates instances in which purposeful, engineered "misconceptions of Other" can and are used for more than simply anti-imperialist reasons⁴¹-yet another aspect which Said and even many of his critics overlook in their original formulations.

By this point, it should be clear that in applying Orientalism to (67®) the study of China and Japan, East Asian scholars have in large part deemphasized the East-West binary in favor of more intra-regionally and intra-nationally focused analyses. Such scholars are increasingly interested in employing the analytical lens of Orientalism to observe the inner dynamics of the nations and societies in question. Trends similar to these can be found in the East Asian discipline's reconfiguration of Subaltern Studies as well, the processes and difficulties of which have been most clearly elucidated in an essay by Gail Hershatter. Like Lydia Liu and Xiaomei Chen's approach to Saidian Orientalism, Hershatter is interested in adapting subaltern theory to the particulars of Chinese history. Accordingly, she points out how, in China, certain unique political realities make the task of uncovering subaltern voices highly complicated. Unlike the situation in India, post-1949 Chinese history (written about China by Chinese historians) has been one long "glorious defense of subaltern interests."⁴² "For a China historian," Hershatter explains, "this legacy of official subaltern-speak complicates enormously the search for subversive voices, since those who we might call subalterns always already speak (and often understand their own experience) in the language of the state, which simultaneously [sic] recognizes their suffering, glorifies their resistance, and effaces any aspects of their history that does not clearly fall into these two categories."⁴³ Again, like Chen's emphasis on the complexity of Chinese Occidentalism, Hershatter's points about the complexity of Chinese subalterns incline us to refocus our attention away from Saidian binaries and towards a more nuanced understanding of each nation's unique, ground-level characteristics-an understanding wherein the distinction between representers and those represented becomes necessarily blurred.

Thus far, I have discussed two broad ways in which Saidian Orientalism has been critiqued. First, the theory has been charged with depicting European Orientalism in an overly simplistic, conflating manner. It increasingly appears that Said (68®) has assumed a continuity and internal cohesiveness within the Orientalist guild that, as many scholars have since demonstrated, was and is probably much more varied than he originally thought. Second, and more importantly, Said has been critiqued for having entirely overlooked the Orient itself-in particular, the ways in which the Orient interacted with, negotiated, and even appropriated the Orientalist discourse for its own multiplicity of purposes. Nevertheless, neither this discussion nor the scholars cited herein have suggested doing away with Orientalism altogether. Critiques aside, each of the scholars introduced to this point agrees on the basic tenability of the theory as a meaningful analytical tool. Is this, however, the end of the story? I will now outline an argument that, although indirect, mounts a powerful

⁴⁰ Chen, 7.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴² Gail Hershatter, "The Subaltern Talks Back: Reflections on Subaltern Theory and Chinese History," *Positions* 1:1 (Spring 1993): 107.

⁴³ Hershatter, 108.

challenge to Said's East-West binary mode of analysis and, in its final most developed form, threatens to turn Saidian Orientalism on its head by taking the Western variable out of the equation altogether. A question that at first glance might seem innocuous in fact questions Saidian Orientalism as a meaningful category of analysis: is it possible for one to consider certain "Oriental" countries, in light of so-called East Asian "sub-imperialism" and "internal colonialism," "Orientalist" in their own right? If so, what then does the term "Orientalism" mean anymore?

Saidian Thought Turned Upside-Down (or "What Happens When the Oriental is the Orientalist?")

Following its victory in the 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War, Japan took possession of Taiwan and maintained it as a colonial subject until 1945. For those fifty years, Japan was by any measure an imperialist nation. What implications does this have, then, for our study of Orientalism? For one, it provides scholars with a non-Western historical case study in which to apply Saidian Orientalism—to see if the history of Japanese imperialism and its corresponding discourse fits within Said's definition of Orientalism. If it does correspond and, furthermore, if it does so without our having to make drastic changes to Said's theory, it raises the unavoidable question: is Orientalism a meaningful analytical category if it can be applied so broadly, and to questions quite independent of the West? What is the meaningful difference between Orientalism and, for example, post- (69®) colonial studies, the latter making no implicit or explicit claim of unique relevance to one particular area of the globe? With this question in mind, let us focus our attention on the question of Japanese imperialism and determine if it can be properly termed an Orientalist historical phenomenon.

To begin with, we must review the "ingredients" by Said's definition of a properly Orientalist discourse. As introduced in the beginning of this paper, Orientalism involves (1) a very real and expressed power differential between those who produce the discourse and those whom the discourse seeks to objectify; (2) a will to power over the discursive Other and the corresponding sentiment that one is better able to speak on behalf of the Other than the Other is prepared to speak for itself; (3) a markedly self-reflexive process wherein the Orientalist produces his own identity as antithetical to the constructed identity of the Other; and (4) the condescending tendency to extol the Other's history while denigrating its present. This list, while not altogether complete, covers the key defining aspects of Saidian Orientalism.

Furthermore, having stated as much, there is undeniably strong evidence for each of these qualities when one investigates Japanese imperialism in China and Korea. Point by point, (1) Japan had, at least since its victory over China in the first modern Sino-Japanese war (and clearly by the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese war), proven itself to be the most militarily advanced nation in East Asia; (2) in ways which I will discuss below, Japan regarded itself as the proper leader of the "Yellow race" and, consequently, as a more fully credentialed representer of China than even China itself; (3) as borne out in numerous studies (one of which I will discuss below), Japanese studies on China and Korea at this time were part of a broader reflexive process of national and civilizational self-definition; (4) Japan tended to valorize Chinese society of old while regarding contemporary China as something of a senile old man. Thus, the Japanese discourse on China at this time corresponded to many, if not all, of the major defining aspects of Orientalism as set out by Said.

When one investigates Naito Konan, for example, founder of Orientalist studies at Kyoto University and one of the most influential modern Japanese scholars of China, one finds an historical view of China which was serviceable to his nation's imperialist discourse (although not necessarily actively complicit).

Naito contended that China had successfully modernized as early as the ninth and tenth centuries—the key factor for him being the point at which, according to Naito, China's hereditary aristocracy achieved the status of a true "middle class."⁴⁴ He approached Chinese (and Japanese) history in terms of biological metaphor, likening the Shang through Han dynasties (1300 BC - 220 CE) to the developmental period of infancy through young adulthood—and, by extension therefore, the period of the Han on as one of developmental apex followed by inevitable decline.⁴⁵ Clearly, "for all the respect it seemingly paid to the East Asian mother country," William Rowe explains, "there was implicit in Naito's theory a patronizing view of China's stagnation since this medieval breakthrough, which postwar scholars have tended to see as providing the ideological underpinnings for militant Japanese expansion onto the continent."⁴⁶ In this way, Naito's biological metaphor helped excite Japan's imperialist imagination by creatively reconfiguring the existing, Confucian idea of Japan as the "filial son" of China. Up until the mid-nineteenth century, at which point Japan started down the path of the Meiji Restoration, and peaking in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century, when the one-two punch of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars sent shock waves through China's understanding of their island neighbor, the Sino-Japanese father-son relationship had been envisioned in largely Sino-centric terms. Regarded as the passive recipient of Chinese advances in the fields of politics, economics, culture, and so on (kanji, bureaucratic administration, architecture, poetic forms, etc.), Japan was in effect accruing an inestimably large filial debt. Unlike the Confucian ideal in its human form, however, Japan's debt was one which China never expected nor indeed wanted Japan to be able to repay, for obvious reasons. Confucian rhetoric aside, China would have been satisfied to "provide" for Japan *ad infinitum*. By the turn of the century, (71®) however, and especially by the 1920s and 1930s, China found itself in the undesirable position of finally being able to be "thanked" in full by its now fully grown and more filially pious son. The continuing presence of Western imperialists in China made this filial duty even more pressing for the Japanese, many of whom expected an imminent racial showdown between Yellow and White. It was felt that the chances for the "Yellow race," which had fared so poorly thus far, rested with Japan's ability to awaken "the 500 million East Asians from the slumber of stagnation."⁴⁷

Clearly, the Japanese discourse on China at this time was, to return to the previous passage by Xiaomei Chen, "a politically and culturally motivated image of the Other."⁴⁸ Furthermore, as shown above, the history of Japanese imperialism and its attendant discourse clearly corresponds with the definition of Orientalism as set forth by Said. For all intents and purposes, therefore, this early and mid-twentieth century Japanese discourse can be considered Orientalist, pure and simple. In demonstrating as much, however, do we not throw into question the significance of the term itself? Are we not one small step away from abandoning the term in favor of its component characteristics? And do not these component, defining characteristics of Orientalism apply to nearly every instance of imperialism in the modern world?

⁴⁴ William T. Rowe, "Approaches to Modern Chinese Social History," in Olivier Zunz, ed., *Reliving the Past* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 240.

⁴⁵ Joshua A. Fogel, *Politics and Sinology. The Case of Naito Konan (1866-1934)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 53.

⁴⁶ Rowe, 240.

⁴⁷ Fogel, 50.

⁴⁸ Chen, 34.

Perhaps, but we are not yet in a position to make such a sweeping claim. First, it is useful to investigate one additional way in which Saidian Orientalism has been applied to, and in the process has been reconfigured by, China studies. This final example, Louisa Schein's concept of "Internal Orientalism," completes the picture in at least one important respect: for perhaps the first time in the application of Orientalism, Schein's analysis removes the Western variable from the equation altogether and, consequently (and perhaps unwittingly), throws into even further question the tenability of the theory itself.

Broadly speaking, Schein's work is a study of the Miao ethnic minority, one of the fifty-five officially recognized non-Han Chinese population groups. Most important for our study is

(71®)

Schein's use of the concept of "internal orientalism," which she applies to the investigation of Han-Miao relations. Much like the Orient in Said's account of Orientalism, China's ethnic minorities represent (in the eyes of the predominantly eastern, cosmopolitan, Han Chinese who write about them) a form of sociocultural capital which can be discursively harnessed and deployed for various purposes. As Schein explains, China's minorities represent for Han Chinese a "source of lost vigor and identity in an atmosphere of repeated humiliations by foreign powers."⁴⁹ Phrased differently, the savagery they are thought to embody represents, in the eyes of certain Chinese reformers both past and present, a "cure for civilization." Evidence of this notion can be found in the writings of the New Culture movement activist Gu Jiegang, popular novelist Shen Congwen, poet and essayist Wen Yiduo, post-1949 Chinese filmmakers, and numerous others.⁵⁰ Drawing upon the theories of Renato Rosaldo, Schein finds evidence of "imperialist nostalgia" in Han China's discursive treatment of the Miao and other ethnic minorities, the paradoxical phenomenon whereby a nation mourns the loss of something whose disappearance was itself part and parcel of the nation's striving for progress.⁵¹ She notes the numerous ways in which Han Chinese have reified the concept of "traditional" minority cultures: travel photography in which evidence of modern lifestyles (buildings, roads, etc.) are neatly edited out, Han Chinese sojourners determined to see local minorities dressed in "traditional" or "typical" garb (and consequently left unsatisfied by the sight of locals in seemingly Han-style garb), etc.⁵² As Schein cogently points out, "What was implied by the language of the 'typical' was a certain intensity of folk culture and an unbroken connection to the past."⁵³ (72®)

Without detailing Schein's analysis, it is important to note that her study demonstrates that the concept of Orientalism can operate in a discursive environment which is completely independent of the West, while at the same time maintaining the basic defining qualities of Orientalism that Said first put forth: just as the Occident aggrandized itself discursively by means of denigrating the Orient, so too have cosmopolitan Han Chinese defined themselves in inverse proportion to non-Han Chinese groups; just as the Euro-American writings on the Orient operated (to various extents) in complicit harmony with the West's broader imperialist design, so too have Han Chinese accounts of non-Han minorities facilitated the process of what has been termed "internal colonialism;" just as the Occident drew upon the demonstrably unequal East-West power relationship, so too have eastern, urban, and again

⁴⁹ Schein, 112.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 112-113. For a discussion on Chinese minorities in film, see Paul Clark, "Ethnic Minorities in Chinese Films: Cinema and the Exotic," *East West Film Journal*, I (June 1987), 15-31.

⁵¹ For a discussion on imperialist nostalgia, see Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: the remaking of social analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 68-87.

⁵² Schein, 119.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

predominantly Han Chinese drawn upon a host of military, economic, political and bureaucratic technologies to consolidate its western, largely minority areas. And the list goes on. What this demonstrates is that the theory of Orientalism, framed in terms fundamentally identical to Said's original formulation, can be accurately applied to socio-historical environments which are completely independent of the West-or, phrased differently, environments in which the East-West binary is of no significance in the course of the study. What implications does this have for the theory of Orientalism-namely, can it be considered a meaningful analytical tool any longer? Is Saidian Orientalism an overly elastic, and therefore unhelpful, analytical framework whose over-generalizations and exceedingly broad scope we are only now beginning to see?

Conclusions

There can be no doubt that the application of Saidian Orientalism to the field of East Asian Studies has been immensely profitable. First of all, it has provided a theoretical vocabulary with which to critically analyze the discipline's discursive past-the traditions in which we all operate.⁵⁴ It teaches us to question any and all received wisdom, forcing us to consider not only its veracity, but the conditions of its production as well. It puts into perspective, (74®) in the case of Japan studies, such disciplinary forefathers as Basil Hall Chamberlain, George B. Sansom, and Edwin O. Reischauer, among others;⁵⁵ for China studies, forefathers such as John King Fairbank, Lucian Pye, and Marion J. Levy.⁵⁶ Secondly, it forces scholars of the modern period to recognize and incorporate in their works the concept of East Asian semi-colonialism (a dimension which, as Tani Barlow points out in her highly incisive article, has largely been avoided by scholars in the postwar era, for political reasons).⁵⁷

At the same time, however, as the theory of Orientalism is applied to an ever larger number of more disparate topics, it has become an increasingly hollow analytical concept. In response to this critique, one is inclined to defend Said at first, and rightfully so: one cannot necessarily be held accountable for the ways in which one's theory is received and applied. After further consideration, however, the picture is not nearly as clear, for one major reason: when we analyze the wide array of studies introduced above, we find that they all comply with Said's original definition of Orientalism-which is to say: if there exists such a thing as Orientalism in the first place, then the twentieth century Japanese discourse on China and Korea, much of the anti-colonial Indian discourse, the Han Chinese discourse on non-Han Chinese peoples, and a host of other discourses must be considered examples of Orientalism as well.

However, once it becomes possible to apply the term "Orientalism" to studies in which, in a sense, the discussion of the Orient-Occident binary is optional, it is clear that we as scholars need some form(s) of new terminology-not just for studies like those of Louisa Schein, but perhaps across the board. After all, what becomes of a term once its very root (Orient) and the dichotomy it proposes to study (Orient versus Occident) can, on the basis of Orientalism's internal logic, be rendered tangential and even unnecessary?

In suggesting such a step, my point is not to diminish the inestimable contribution Said has made, but rather to warn (75®) against the now almost universal tendency to treat "Orientalism" as if it were an umbrella term. If the term "Orientalism" is to have any meaning, scholars must come to recognize that, as the sheer scope and variety of the

⁵⁴ Minear, 514.

⁵⁵ Minear, 508-514.

⁵⁶ Tani E. Barlow, "Colonialism's Career in Postwar China Studies," *Positions* 1:1 (Spring 1993): 226-234.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 226.

foregoing academic studies have demonstrated, it is simply no longer sufficiently descriptive to label something "Orientalist" (whether it be a discourse or an individual). Ultimately the label itself tells us nothing about the object of study, but rather requires such a host of ancillary explanations that, by the end, there is little reason to employ the term "Orientalist" in the first place.

Perhaps the most accurate way to critique this trend of Orientalist over-generalization is by citing Said's critique of Michel Foucault. After delineating Foucault's description of prisons as "factories of delinquency" (in which "delinquency" is itself the "raw material for disciplinary discourse"⁵⁸) and subsequently agreeing with it on the basis of historical accuracy, Said remarks: "With descriptions and particularized observations of this sort I have no trouble. It is when Foucault's own language becomes general (when he moves from his analyses of power from the detail to society as a whole) that the methodological breakthrough becomes the theoretical trap."⁵⁹ In precisely the same way, while the concept of Orientalism continues to inspire breakthroughs in our approach to the concepts of discourse and power, it too has fallen into a theoretical trap of over-generalization. In moving from the particular to the universal, the theory of Orientalism has become so broadly used and applied that, in an analytical sense, it is practically empty.

At present, it remains uncertain whether or not Saidian Orientalism as a theory can be resuscitated. Clearly any successful remedy will require (1) attentiveness on the part of scholars to the unique historical conditions of those nations and societies they choose to research (whether they be the "representing" or "represented" party); (2) the reconceptualization of the idea of discourse as a two-way (and perhaps even three, four, or five-way) channel; and, most drastically, (3) perhaps an acknowledgement on the part of scholars that the theory of Orientalism, as it was first formulated by Said in 1978, has taken (76®) us as far as it can—and that it is now time to expand our analytical and terminological framework as a means, not of negating or overturning Saidian theory, but of building upon it in ways that terminological faithfulness prevents us from doing. Otherwise, the theory of Orientalism will soon become more of an academic cliché than an insightful tool of analysis.

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⁵⁸ Foucault, as cited in Said, *WTC*, 244.

⁵⁹ Said, *WTC*, 244.

The Empire of Shattered Dreams: *Burakumin* Emigration to Manchuria

Aaron Skabelund*

Introduction

Several years ago, while wandering through a park in the Japanese city of Gifu, I stumbled upon a rock monument commemorating the departure of local emigrant-farmers for the Japanese colony of Manchuria. Only later did I discover that Japan is littered with such monuments. Between 1931 and 1945 some three hundred thousand Japanese left the country for Manchuria. Many of the departures were monumentalized even before the emigrants left the country. These carved stones, built in an effort to spur further emigration, celebrated the commitment of normal Japanese to the civilizing project of empire. Phrased in the romantic language of ethnic-nationalism, they lauded those who were willing to sacrifice themselves to bring enlightenment to their benighted Asian brothers, citing the migrants as the embodiment of a superior Japanese culture. This rhetoric of ethnic similitude encompassed groups that had long been marginalized in Japanese society, most notably the long-persecuted *burakumin*, or outcastes.¹ Indeed, as a marginal group vulnerable to the vicissitudes of historical change, the *burakumin* experience of empire provides a lucid picture of what can happen when imperial dreams meet with harsh realities.

The historical significance of *burakumin* emigration far outweighs their numbers. There were perhaps two thousand outcastes among those who left for Manchuria. The government's decision to recruit these victims of economic, social, and political discrimination for participation in the imperial project demonstrates the pervasiveness of the state's attempts to mobilize its populace during wartime. The government marshaled support from every sector of society, no matter how marginal or disadvantaged. And, because no group had been marginalized as long as the *burakumin*, an examination of their history may offer insight on the experience of other groups within the Japanese empire.

Historical analyses of the Japanese empire ossified into a standardized two-part narrative in the decades following the end of the war in 1945. First, a runaway military cabal was said to have led the nation into the "dark valley" (*kurai tanima*) of military aggression and imperial expansion. And second, ordinary Japanese, it was said, had little choice but to acquiesce and follow. This interpretation is often called "victim's history" because it casts the Japanese populace as the helpless victims of an efficient and oppressive state apparatus.² In the mid-1980s scholars began to challenge this interpretation, choosing to emphasize the ways that various societal groups—from progressive intellectuals to women's organizations—

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¹ Many Western scholars capitalize "*burakumin*" (outcastes), perhaps to emphasize the perception that *burakumin* are racially distinct from Japanese. The final kanji character in *burakumin*, "mm" means people or nation, and could have the connotation that outcastes are different in appearance from other Japanese. However, they are not. To capitalize *burakumin* only furthers this prejudice. The term "outcaste" is equally problematic, as Japan was not a caste society, but I choose to use it because it is the best English equivalent for *burakumin*. Though beset with the same problems, I also use the term "pariah" for variation.

² Carol Gluck, "The Idea of Showa," *Daedalus* 199, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 11-15.

willingly participated in the Japanese imperial project.³ Louise Young (79®) has identified these same processes in her examination of Japan's attempts at *Total Empire* in Manchuria.⁴

Reevaluations notwithstanding, popular memory still paints Manchuria as a land of suffering. The titles of immigration memoirs are telling: e.g. *A Note of Homesickness Left by the Dead*, and *Tomb of Grass: A Record of the Abandoned People of the Manchurian Settlements*.⁵ These recollections describe how ordinary people were "tricked" into emigration by tales of the "new heaven on earth" that awaited them in Manchuria, only to find themselves abandoned by the military as the empire crumbled. The stories are filled with depictions of death and desperation. The Soviets were murderous, the Chinese vengeful, and the settlements were swept by disease and famine. And, in fact, entire families died and nearly every survivor lost a relative on the continent. Some were left dead or dying and others were simply left to fend for themselves. Crying infants were sometimes suffocated as desperate settlers tried to hide from foreign troops and angry Chinese. Those who were lucky enough to survive and return to Japan often found themselves destitute—lingering reminders of Japan's failed imperial project.⁶

Manchukuo, as the Japanese puppet-state was called, was a (80®) land of contradictions. Portrayed as the horizon of a harmonious Asian future, it was in fact a land targeted for military occupation and exploitation by the metropolitan economy. The Kwantung Army, Manchuria's puppeteer, claimed that Manchukuo was the realization of a new Asia-centric world order that was immune to the distortions of Western capitalist imperialism and fractious communism.⁷ It was a land ruled by the ideology of "harmony between the five peoples" (*gozoku kyowa*)-Japa-nese Chinese, Mongolians, Manchurians, and Koreans. This Utopian rhetoric rested on assumptions of Japanese ethnic superiority. Stirring up a potent admixture of Confucian social ideology and up-to-date notions of race and ethnicity, Japanese ideologues positioned Japan as the "older brother" to its younger (and therefore

³ Some recent examples include William Miles Fletcher, III, *The Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). Chief among the Japanese scholarship challenging the dichotomy are Yoshimi Yoshiaki, *Kusa no ne no fashizumu: Nihon minshu no senso taiken [Grass-roots Fascism: The War Experience of the Japanese People]* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1987); and Takahashi Hikohiro, *Minshu no gawa no senso sekinin [The People's War Responsibility]*, (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1989).

⁴ *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

⁵ Yoshioka Genji, *Bokyô no isho* (Tokyo: Yamate Shobo Shinsha, 1992); and Fujita Shigeru, *Kusa no hi: Manmô kaitakudan suterareta tami no kiroku* (Kanazawa: Noto Insatsu Shuppanbu, 1989). Also see Goda Ichidô, "Mantakudan kaimetsu" [The Annihilation of the Manchurian Settlement Parties] in *Hokuman nomin kyuzai kiroku [A Record of the Rescue of Farmers in Northern Manchuria]*, (Sapporo: Hokkaido Shinbunsha, 1991); and Mantaku Kaihen, *Manmô kaitaku shichi kara no dasshutsu [The Flight of Manchurian Settlers from the Jaws of Death]*, (Tokyo, 1984).

⁶ The most recent example of the lukewarm reception given emigrants at their homecoming is found in the experience of *zanryu koji*, children who had been abandoned by their families. Years after the war, after the normalization of Japan-China relations, many *zanryu koji*, now elderly, came to Japan to search for their families and seek repatriation. But they were hardly welcomed with open arms. Instead they are often perceived by many Japanese as impoverished, greedy, and not quite "Japanese," because they were acculturated as Chinese, had limited memories of their families, and had forgotten the Japanese language if they ever had remembered it. Ironically, they were suspected of the same "impure" motives that drove their parents to Manchukuo over a half century ago: of seeking for a higher standard of living in the now prosperous Japan. Many of those who have been granted repatriation face social and economical marginalization.

⁷ Gavan McCormack, "Manchukuo: Constructing the Past," *East Asian History* 2 (December 1991): 112.

inferior) Asian siblings. This new order would smooth the frictions of modernity through a revised understanding of ancient Confucian tenets. As a government report put it, "to treat those who are unequal unequally is to realize equality."⁸ Emigrants, though hardly blameless, bore the human costs of the collision between this idealistic rhetoric and the harsh realities of colonization. Most settlers were land-hungry, debt-ridden tenant farmers. These "pioneers" settled land that was not "empty," as the military had led them to believe, but had been cultivated by Chinese for years. Locals were often forcefully evicted to make room for the metropolitan "settlers," and then re-hired as wage laborers to work the same land they had owned weeks before. Emigrant dreams of self-sufficiency were (81®) betrayed as well. They often ended up as tenant farmers, not independent cultivators, on smaller plots than had originally been promised.

The *burakumin* experience highlights the emptiness of *gozoku kyowa* rhetoric even as it illustrates its appeal. The *burakumin* decision to emigrate was often based on the hope that they would become true "Japanese" once they joined the imperial project. But outcasts were rarely treated as equals by other Japanese nationals and, like other poor colonists, they were effectively cut off from fraternity with their Asian "brothers" by the very logic that posited such familial relations.

Peasant Motivations for Migration

Before narrowing the focus to the *burakumin* experience, let us first examine the history of peasants, who made up the vast majority of emigrants to Manchuria, and whose economic background is most similar to outcasts. Many historians describe the campaign to encourage migration to Manchuria as a top-down if broad-based process, but the economic situation and political attitudes of settlers should not be neglected. Young observes that the "idea of mass migration was always more appealing to those who wanted others to leave than to those who were expected to go, and people needed to be enticed, cajoled, bribed, and bullied into moving."⁹ She aptly characterizes the movement as an "emigration bandwagon" careening through the 1930s, driven by an array of different drivers—"agrarian ideologues, university professors, the mass media, colonization and patriotic societies, and prefectural and national bureaucrats."¹⁰ Sandra Wilson, while concurring, asserts that the Kwantung Army was the chief wagoner. It was the army that first encouraged emigration to protect its military gains after the 1931 Manchurian Incident. In 1936, the army put critical pressure on the Hirota Koki cabinet to adopt emigration as a major national policy.¹¹ Influenced, and sometimes pressured, (82®) by this barrage of voices, many impoverished farmers made the move to Manchuria. There were elements of control from above. But many peasants were motivated by sympathy, if not genuine enthusiasm, for nationalism and imperialism.

Still, the most fundamental motivation for peasants to depart for Manchuria was economic. The material welfare of Japanese peasants had rarely been good and progressively worsened after World War I. The postwar recession, the 1923 Kanto Earthquake, and the Financial Crisis of 1927 not only shook the capitalist foundations of urban Japan, but this

⁸ From the Ministry of Health and Welfare's "Investigation of Global Policy with the Yamato Race as Nucleus" (July 1, 1943) as quoted by John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 264.

⁹ Louise Young, "Imagined Empire: The Cultural Construction of Manchukuo" in *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945*, Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie eds., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 88.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹¹ "The 'New Paradise': Japanese Emigration to Manchuria in the 1930s and 1940s," *The International History Review*, 17, no. 2 (May 1995): 249-86.

series of natural and financial disasters brought tremendous misery to the countryside. These events were only a prelude to more difficult times during the 1930s. When the Great Depression spread to Japan in 1930, it hit rural Japan with the greatest impact. The bottom went out from under raw silk and then cocoon prices, and the surplus harvest of rice caused grain prices to drop drastically. Many peasants faced impoverishment that drove them to "abandon their families, collapse, commit suicide with their children, sell their daughters off [often to prostitution], scavenge the hills for bracken and anything edible, and somehow fend off starvation."¹² The misery of peasants was compounded by the thousands of urban unemployed who streamed back to their native villages in a desperate search to eke out a living. Increased demand prompted landlords to increase tenant costs and expel tenants who could not pay. Statistics provide a glimpse of the tremendous poverty of the day. Rural incomes fell from an index of 100 in 1926 to 33 in 1931 and although they recovered slightly to 44 by 1934, tenancy bound nearly 70 percent of the farming population in 1937.¹³ Not surprisingly, eighty percent of those who immigrated to Manchuria in the 1930s were peasants, and almost all of those were land-hungry tenant farmers hoping to escape debt. Numerous emigrants came from northeast or central Japan, regions hit especially hard (83®) by famine in the 1930s.¹⁴ Many were second or third sons with no hope of inheriting land-not even the tiny tenanted plot of their fathers.

Patriotism complemented economic impoverishment as an impetus for leaving for the continent. As Araragi Shinzo observes, "the image of the Manchuria emigrant as an economically destitute second or third son of a poor peasant is an oversimplification."¹⁵ One peasant, for example, left for Manchuria to, in his own words, further Japanese interests after the army rejected him because of his poor eyesight. Such political expressions may have been imposed from above or perhaps were mere rationalization, used to conceal less romantic reasons. Still, the enthusiasm ignited by the immigration campaign was fueled by the "rice-level" political attitudes of peasants. Many scholars have downplayed peasant support for agrarian nationalism and emphasized the political passiveness of peasants.¹⁶ Admittedly, agrarian nationalism did not develop among peasants independent of influences from above; it was an ideology formulated largely by self-proclaimed spokesmen for the countryside such as Gondo Seikyo, Tachibana Kosaburo, and Kato Kanji, rather than by the peasant masses.¹⁷ But left-wing ideology, embodied in the anti-tenancy movement of the late 1920s and early 1930s, failed to attract a widespread support among peasants, because of the leftists' "insistence on the need to protest Japanese imperialism."¹⁸ Most peasants were far (84®) from zealous ultra-nationalists, but they were sympathetic toward right-wing ideology and

¹² Mahara Tetsuo, *Buraku mondai no rekishi [The History of the Outcaste Problem]* (Tokyo Shin Nippon Shuppansha, 1975), 62.

¹³ Ann Waswo, "The Transformation of Rural Society, 1900-1950", in *The Cambridge History of Japan* 6, ed. Peter Duus, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 597 and 548.

¹⁴ Araragi Shinzo, "*Manshu imin " no rekishi shakaigaku [The Social History of the Immigrants to Manchuria]*" (Tokyo: Korosha, 1994), 123-127.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁶ See Barrington J. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), 304-5, and Richard J. Smethurst, *A Social Basis for Prewar Japanese Militarism: The Army and the Rural Community* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 356.

¹⁷ See Thomas R. H. Havens, *Farm and Nation in Modern Japan: Agrarian Nationalism, 1870-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). Among these three, Kato was especially enthusiastic about emigration. For more on his cooperation with the Takumu -sho (Ministry of Overseas Affairs) and the Kwantung Army, see 286-94, and Wilson.

¹⁸ Waswo, 558.

supportive of Japanese imperialism. The conservative proclivities of peasants were crucial in the state's successful drive to enlist them in the army and encourage them to depart for Manchuria. Without these preexisting conservative sympathies, hundreds of thousands of poor farmers would not have immigrated.

***Burakumin* Motivations for Migration**

If economic and political marginalization had been the only considerations for immigrating to Manchuria for *burakumin*, then the entire outcaste population might have departed for the continent. Pervasive and persistence discrimination had segregated outcastes to the bottom of society in every sense. The very societal isolation of *burakumin*, in fact, made it more difficult for the state to enlist them to resettle in Manchuria.

Burakumin had long faced a legacy of discrimination. The origin of the outcaste population in Japan is closely related to Buddhist prejudices against the taking of animal life and Shinto taboos against pollution caused by contact with death. Although such ideas existed in Japan from as early as the Nara period (710-784), notions of ritual pollution and definitions of social class did not converge until Japan's early modern period (1600-1868) when the ruling Tokugawa regime embraced Neo-Confucianism and froze the hierarchical social structure of samurai, peasant, artisan, and merchant. As a result, official and popular prejudice became institutionalized against those engaged in leatherwork and other "unclean" occupations. The Tokugawa shogunate strongly discouraged and often prohibited any social and sexual interaction with *eta* or *hinin*, as outcastes were called. It was no longer possible for the son or daughter of an outcaste to escape their designation as a *burakumin* by changing to a "clean" livelihood. Blood rather than occupation was now impure.

Not surprisingly, it was also during the Tokugawa era that "race" was first used to justify discrimination against the outcastes. National Learning (*Kokugaku*) scholars were probably the first to contend that the *burakumin* descended from a foreign race, in their highly ethnocentric writings that (85®) stressed the unique and divine nature of Japan and the Japanese.¹⁹ Some asserted that outcastes were the descendants of Korean prisoners brought back to Japan or that the *burakumin* were descendants of the Ainu, the indigenous population of northern Japan.²⁰ Notions of "unclean" occupation, impure blood, and inferior race combined to create the widespread view that *burakumin* were "dirty, vulgar, untrustworthy, dangerous, treacherous, subhuman creatures."²¹ In 1871, the new Meiji state ended official discrimination against outcastes, but the decree did little to change ingrained popular attitudes.

Discrimination against *burakumin* began with their physical segregation from society. They generally lived in miserable housing conditions in city slums or in segregated hamlets in the countryside. In 1935, these segregated villages numbered 5,368 and were often located near or in areas considered unfit for human inhabitation, such as along riverbanks, ravines, or

¹⁹ Perhaps the best-known study of the *burakumin* in the West bears the title *Japan's Invisible Race*. To explain this title, George De Vos wrote, "Japan has discriminated in the past and continues to discriminate against a pariah caste that is completely indistinguishable in an physical sense from the population as whole, whose segregation nevertheless has long been justified in racial terms. There is commonly shared social myth that the *Eta*... are descendants of a less human 'race' than the stock that fathered the Japanese nation as a whole," xx.

²⁰ Mikiso Hane, *Peasants, Rebels, and Outcastes: The Underside of Modern Japan* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 139.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 143.

near garbage dumps, slaughterhouses, and hospitals for communicable diseases.²² The economic opportunities of outcastes were also limited to low-paying and "undesirable" work.

Not surprisingly the economic situation for *burakumin* was much more difficult than it was for *non-burakumin*. It was (86®) estimated that half of all outcastes were subsistence farmers in the early 1930s. In 1931 "a survey revealed that only 16 percent of *burakumin* farmers were owners of the farms that they worked. Thirty-one percent were part-owners/part-tenants; and 53 percent, full tenants."²³ Equivalent figures for *non-burakumin* farmers were 31 percent, 42 percent, and 27 percent respectively. The Depression devastated both rural and urban pariah communities. The 1933 survey found the average income of *burakumin* to be approximately one-quarter the national average;²⁴ in 1935, 35 percent of the outcaste population was unemployed;²⁵ a 1937 Tokyo survey discovered that among the six main outcaste communities there, "the number of extremely poor households (with a total monthly income of less than 20 yen) increased by nearly ten times from four percent in 1927 to 39.2 percent a decade later, while on other end, the number of households with a monthly income of more than 50 yen dropped by half from 64.6 percent to 32.6 percent."²⁶

While there appears to be an economic incentive for immigration for outcastes, the same cannot be said for politics. *Burakumin* were not as politically active as *non-burakumin*. The daily struggle for economic survival and their isolation and alienation from society molded a conservative but rather apolitical group. When young outcastes became politically active, however, these same factors contributed to create a political consciousness opposed to the state. Following the Rice Riots of 1918 in which *burakumin* played an unusually large role and for which they were severely punished, several outcastes established the Suiheisha (literally "water level" but sometimes translated as the Leveler's Association²⁷). Influenced by socialism, Christianity, and anarchism, the Suiheisha battled government suppression in its fight for "complete emancipation," and an end to all discrimination.²⁸ (87®)

But the strength of the Suiheisha was short-lived and it was soon eclipsed by a government-supported outcaste organization, the Yuwakai (Conciliation Society). Support for the Suiheisha was also undercut by internal fissures and a rise in patriotic sentiment after the Manchurian Incident in 1931. Similar to its dealings with other left-wing movements, the government combined policies of suppression and cooptation to undermine the Suiheisha. By the mid-1930s, the government eliminated the leadership of the Suiheisha and used Yuwakai to diminish support for the left-wing movement among *burakumin*. In stark contrast to the combative denunciation campaigns of the Suiheisha,²⁹ the Yuwakai cooperated closely with

²² *Ibid.*, 151. Also among the intriguing oral histories recalling life in Tsuchiura (in Ibaraki Prefecture) recorded by Junichi Saga, one Takagi Fukusaburo recalls that groups of *burakumin* (and lepers) lived in the depths of the forest of nearby Mt. Daitoku or "roamed from place to place in the hills and along dry beds of rivers... living like savages," and would now and then come to the Tsuchiura to try to sell baskets and other household items. See *Memories of Silk and Straw: A Self-Portrait of Small Town Japan* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1987), 33.

²³ Hane, 152-4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 154.

²⁵ Ian Neary, *Political Protest and Social Control in Prewar Japan: The Origins of Buraku Liberation* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989), 205.

²⁶ Mahara, 181-2.

²⁷ It was only later that the founders of Suiheisha learn of the seventeenth-century European group.

²⁸ Neary, 52-4.

²⁹ Denunciation campaigns were the most common discrimination-fighting tactic of activist *burakumin* in both the pre- and post-war periods. The usual pattern of a denunciation campaign consisted of outcastes confronting the party accused of discriminatory behavior. If the incident were serious enough or if the accused refused to acquiesce, denunciations often turned into large-scale protests that sometimes turned

the Home Ministry and local governments to emphasize self-reform and to lobby for government funding of infrastructure and welfare projects. By 1938, after several of its top leaders emerged from prison to announce their conversion (*tenko*) to Emperor-centered state socialism, Suiheisha's activities became identical with the Yuwakai movement.³⁰ This marked the end to any effective pariah resistance to the government and the beginnings of outright collaboration. Soon the Suiheisha joined Yuwakai to participate in the drive for national mobilization and its government-sponsored campaign to encourage and provide monetary assistance for *burakumin* groups to immigrate to Manchuria.³¹ (88®)

Although much of this activity was isolated from the experience of the average outcaste, it demonstrates that whatever political motivations there were for *burakumin*, they were often more complex than for *non-burakumin* peasants. While no groups, *burakumin* or *non-burakumin*, were free from outside influences, the desire to jump on the bandwagon and serve the nation did not come easily for outcastes. Rather, when *burakumin* cited a desire "to serve the nation" as the reason for emigration-and they often did-it was usually because of their distinctive concern: discrimination. Outcastes apparently believed that by claiming patriotism as a reason for emigrating, *non-burakumin* would begin to see them as "full" Japanese and prejudice would disappear. Outcastes cited economic, patriotic, and social reasons for emigrating, but the desire to escape bigotry was often the most important factor in their decision. *Burakumin* desperately wanted to believe that life in Manchuria would bring an end to the intolerance of their fellow Japanese. As has been indicated, this hope was a natural consequence of the Utopian visions of Manchuria as a land of racial equality and economic opportunity spread by the state and its allies in the Yuwakai. But the ideology's inherent contradictions doomed this vision and the hopes of *burakumin* from the start.

***Burakumin* Emigration**

Despite significant economic and social motivations for immigrating to the continent, relatively few outcastes left for Manchuria. Because of their isolation from the rest of society and their strong community consciousness, most *burakumin* were not anxious to venture out on their own. But even if they had been, they faced numerous obstacles in obtaining the necessary documents to complete the journey before the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937. Because there was no official government recruiting-program before the war erupted in China, it is difficult to know exactly how many outcastes immigrated to Manchuria. The task of estimating outcaste emigrants in particular before 1937 is all the more difficult because the chief motivation for emigration for most pariah was to escape the tyranny of the government's family registration system (*koseki tohon*) that identified them as *burakumin*, and to successfully do so required them to conceal their backgrounds when they departed. (89®)

Despite the existence of official programs after 1937, it is still difficult to calculate the number of *burakumin* who immigrated to Manchuria. It was during the late 1930s that the campaign to recruit emigrants really began. The Japanese government formulated a well-organized emigration plan to resettle one million households (five million Japanese) in

violent. For contemporary examples of denunciation tactics, see Frank Upham, *Law and Social Change in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 78-123.

³⁰ George O. Totten and Hiroshi Wagamatsu, "Emancipation: Growth and Transformation of a Political Movement," in George De Vos, *Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in Culture and Personality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 59-60. Also Neary, 190-213. Neary's book offers the most comprehensive prewar study of the Suiheisha, the Yuwakai, and the state's response.

³¹ Neary, 211.

Manchuria over the next twenty years. But *burakumin* were largely absent from these resettlement groups; perhaps less than five hundred outcastes immigrated between July 1937 and March 1939.³² As noted earlier, the Yuwakai worked closely with the state to encourage emigration. It formed an additional level to the three-level bureaucratic apparatus—the national, prefectural, and village/district—to recruit and prepare resettlement parties. At the prefectural level, local Yuwakai group aided Emigration Affairs (*kaitaku-ka*) to formulate plans to include *burakumin* into larger "non-*burakumin*" settlement groups.

The efforts to encourage *burakumin* resettlement garnered little success during the late 1930s. The events in Mie and Wakayama were typical of the difficulties that the government and the Yuwakai encountered. In each of the prefectures, only thirty outcaste households joined non-*burakumin* settlement groups, and all did not go well. In Wakayama, traditionally a source of many foreign emigrants, proponents of outcaste emigration touted Manchukuo as a place where "abusive discrimination like here on the home islands does not occur." However, after sending fourteen households (thirty-four people), further plans were canceled because "the expected results did not materialize."³³ Throughout the country, lack of concrete plans and poor preparations were blamed for the limited "test" scale and failure of the effort. But a larger problem was that less than a year after the government initiated the program, the eruption of full-scale war in China created a demand for soldiers and munitions workers that began to absorb the "surplus population" from the villages. Immigration to Manchuria was no longer a priority for the government, and even less attractive for Japanese peasants.³⁴

While the war in China discouraged all poor farmers from immigrating, there were additional obstacles specific to *burakumin*. Non-*burakumin* migrants resisted the inclusion of outcastes in their settlement groups. There were also suspicions among *burakumin* that the emigration strategy was a sinister government plot to rid Japan of the outcaste population.³⁵ Some *burakumin* perceived emigration to Manchuria as a form of "island exile" (*shima nagashi*), a medieval punishment second in severity only to execution.³⁶ Mistrust plagued recruitment campaigns. In Kamitakai county in Nagano prefecture, the government office "high-handedly" pushed forward a plan to send all forty-one *burakumin* households to Manchuria. But because the hamlet was fairly well off and 113 of the 185 people in the village were either elderly or children, the proposal sparked stiff opposition and was never implemented.³⁷

In June 1939 the Yuwakai and Suiheisha joined the government in a new campaign aimed at improving outcaste living conditions and "supporting national policy" (*kokusaku*

³² Osaka Jinken Rekishi Shiryo-kan, *Manshu imin to hisabetsu buraku [Manchuria Immigration and the Outcaste Community]* (Osaka, Osaka Jinken Rekishi Shiryokan 1989), 53. This estimate is based on a 1939 Yuwakai document. Unfortunately, the original table's math is incorrect. But it is the only surviving source.

³³ *Ibid.*, 55.

³⁴ Wilson, 277.

³⁵ Takahashi Yukihara, *Zetsubo no imin-shi [The History of the Desperate Immigrants]* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1995), 194.

³⁶ Osaka Jinken Rekishi Shiryo-kan, 56. For many years, young *burakumin* concealing their backgrounds emigrated overseas, at their own initiative, in hopes of escaping discrimination. For most *burakumin* the only way to escape discrimination was to leave Japan and hide their status in a foreign land, as demonstrated by the outcaste protagonist who migrates to Texas in Shimazaki Toson's famous novel *Hakai*. Government encouragement of widespread *burakumin* immigration had a precedent, but it too had been viewed with mistrust. As early as the 1780s, the Tokugawa shogunate proposed to send the entire outcaste population in the Kanto region to establish colonies in Hokkaido. The government never implemented the plan, but the Meiji resurrected similar schemes. Throughout the Meiji era, many saw emigration to Asia, the South Seas, and the Americas as the only solution to the outcaste problem.

³⁷ Takahashi, 195.

nisokuo). The government outlined a two-pronged "resource coordination program" to achieve these goals: channeling excess outcaste (91®) labor into war industries and further promoting immigration to Manchuria. Once again, the scarcity of surviving documents is an obstacle in calculating the number of *burakumin* who emigrated after the campaign commenced, but Japanese scholars estimate that less than four hundred outcastes immigrated to Manchuria annually.³⁸ Hyogo, Okayama, and Kochi prefectures were all successful in sending off thirty-five to fifty households.³⁹ Nearly every prefecture created plans, many on a smaller scale, but most were never implemented. Greater demands in the total mobilization for war took priority; many prefectures were simply unable to find enough able-bodied *burakumin* men who had not already been sent off to fight.

The Kutami Pioneer Party

Kamoto-village in Kumamoto prefecture represents a notable exception to these failures. Compared with the recruitment drives in other prefectures, the efforts in Kumamoto, especially in Kamoto-village, met with great success. A total of 316 people (eighty-two households) in what was called the Kutami Pioneer Party emigrated from Kamoto in three stages between May 1941 and 1945, settling near the Keihin Rail way between Harbin and Choshun in Kitsurin province. The group is also exceptional because there is an abundance of evidence about the recruitment, settlement, and fate of the Kutami party. Nevertheless, the Kutami Pioneer Party was by no means an anomaly; its well-documented history merely allows it to be considered representative of the *burakumin* experience in Manchukuo.

The success of recruitment efforts in Kamoto can be attributed to several factors. First, the pariah community there was traditionally more supportive of the Yuwakai than of the radical Suiheisha. The government and Yuwakai hoped that it would be easier to attract settlers from Kamoto and aimed to make the village a model of Manchukuo emigration. Second, emigration was an established practice in the village. A number of villagers had settled permanently in Brazil or the United States, while many others had worked as short-term migrant (*dekasegi*) (92®) laborers overseas to support their families. Even as late as 1939, ten households had settled permanently in Brazil before that country closed its doors to Japanese immigration.⁴⁰ Some officials speculated that if they were successful in encouraging many of the Kamoto *burakumin* to emigrate to Manchuria it would establish a precedent that could help fulfill the national goal of sending "two-thirds of excess *burakumin* peasants" to Manchukuo. The government first included Kamoto in national plans in 1937 that sought to establish "branch" settlements, rather than to create settlements composed of emigrants selected from many different villages. But, it is not until after the joint government-Yuwakai "resource coordination program" began in late 1939 that the significant numbers of *burakumin* departed from Kamoto.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, the recruitment campaign was successful in Kamoto because it was overseen by the prefecture's Social Welfare Division, which had a long history of working with the Yuwakai to improve the standard of living in the village. This was in contrast with most other prefectures where a new and unfamiliar bureaucracy, the division of emigration affairs, supervised the recruitment and emigration of *non-burakumin* and *burakumin* alike. The presence of a former principal of the Kamoto-village primary school, Saito Todao, in the division further augmented a good relationship. Known as an

³⁸ Takahashi, 59.

³⁹ But once again, little or no information exists about the fate of these groups in Manchuria.

⁴⁰ Takahashi, 152-4.

"honorable teacher who had done his best for the village," he was widely respected and trusted by the outcastes. There is little reason to believe that Saito did not have the interests of the village at heart when he began his recruitment efforts there, so in many ways, the Kamoto experience is one of good intentions that led to disastrous results.

Following a village meeting about emigration in April 1940, Saito returned to the village almost daily to encourage as many villagers as possible to emigrate.⁴¹ Saito predicted that emigration would fulfill the community's desire "to create a life without discrimination for their children." He also told the villagers that their departure would not only improve their own lives, but that those who remained behind would also have more land to farm. (93®)

While the community did not feel that their economic situation necessitated emigration, many were inspired by the promise of owning vast stretches of land for the first time. They were also motivated by Saito's exhortations that this "would be a golden opportunity" for them to contribute to the resolution of the *burakumin* problem. The most powerful impetus for Kamoto *burakumin* to emigrate was their hope that "a move to Manchuria equals an end to discrimination," and Saito's exhortations to "do it for your children's future!"⁴²

Regardless of Saito's good intentions, it appears that often those who had no intention of going themselves were the same people urging others to go. After the initial recruitment meeting featuring speeches by several prefectural officials and the village may or on April 19, 1940, many other government officials and emigration proponents visited Kamoto to stir up support. In August, the Social Welfare Division, Yuwakai, and other groups sponsored a three-day series of speeches on emigration, and starting in September, an extended training course was held. During these meetings, Toyoda Kazuji, a senior member in the community, announced his support for the emigration plan. His hope for *bumkumin* inclusion, fostered by the propaganda of *gozoku kyowa*, is apparent: "Now is the time that we must go forth as members of the Yamato race and as soldiers armed with hoes to emigrate to the continent and construct Japan's righteous paradise and the harmony of five races."⁴³ Recruitment meetings were replete with such heady rhetoric and promises supplied by prefectural and municipal officials. Later even Kato Kanji, one of the strongest advocates of Manchurian immigration, visited Kamoto to encourage participation. The recruitment drive had a half-religious revival/half carnivalesque atmosphere about it. Speech after speech glorified Japan's continental empire and painted images of farming one's own land as the sun set on the distant horizon. Dreamy exaggeration elicited laughter: "in Manchuria fish do not swim in water, but water flows through the fish."⁴⁴ Of course, everyone realized that some of the rhetoric was too good to be true, but these tales of an imagined promised land, free of discrimination and full of (94®) promise, were a powerful attraction to *burakumin*.

Shimomura Harunotsuke, a Kamoto *burakumin* who had visited Manchuria, made a more sophisticated argument for immigration. In a recruiting tract published in July 1941 titled, "Discrimination will disappear if you live in Manchuria" (*Manshu ni sumeba sabetsu wa kaishd sum*), he asserted that because prejudice against outcastes was a "societal consciousness" rather than a "personal consciousness," it would naturally disappear once Japanese moved away from the traditional society on the home islands. Shimomura claimed that because life in Manchuria was more demanding, hard work and practical experience on the land would take precedence over one's lineage. While prejudice might not disappear immediately, he wrote, the Manchurian pioneer experience would lessen its influence with

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 92-93.

⁴² Araragi, 71, 313.

⁴³ Takahashi, 94.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

time. Shimomura cited the experiences of several outcastes to support his argument. One older *burakumin* had been promoted to group leader in a mixed settlement after demonstrating his abilities. A younger outcaste got in a fistfight with a *non-burakumin* soon after arriving in Manchuria, but later became fast friends with his former opponent. Their friendship was subsequently cemented when they married each other's sisters.⁴⁵

As the Kutami Pioneer Party discovered, though, discrimination did not disappear in Manchuria. The group's interactions with *non-burakumin* Japanese outside of their settlement—in the army, in the Youth League or elsewhere—often resulted in incidents of discrimination. Comments such as "Hey, be on your guard, he is one of those" were not uncommon.⁴⁶ Another Kutami settler, who as a child in Kumamoto had not experienced discrimination, encountered prejudice for the first time in Manchuria. The Yuwakai also reported numerous incidents of discrimination experienced by other *burakumin* in Manchuria, especially among those in youth brigades.⁴⁷ Even so, many Kutami settlers felt they had escaped from the prejudice of their homeland. Both reality and perception were a product of the settlement's physical isolation from other Japanese emigrants, (95®) and especially the presence of the Chinese, who simply replaced *burakumin* at the bottom of the social structure.

Just as the promises of an end to discrimination went unfulfilled, so did the idealistic rhetoric of *gozoku kyowa*. As soon as the Kutami Pioneer Party arrived, any premise of Asian brotherhood dissipated. As one settler recalled,

We fully intended to carve out our existence in the middle of an untamed wilderness, but when we arrived we found that there were already houses, planted fields, orchards, and pastureland. The Kwantung Army had purchased all of it. We were so surprised that we could settle in just like that. The hardest part was watching the Chinese who had lived there move. The regional officials of the Development Agency came to force them out, and because of the army's presence, it was useless for them to put up much resistance, so they left... The police from town came in with a rush, yelling "Get out, get out" and chased them away. The women were especially unable to control their emotions and cried as they were forced to leave. Oh, how I felt sorry for them that day.⁴⁸

Now landless and destitute, the Chinese had little choice but to work as field laborers for the new owners in order to survive. Similar scenes unfolded with each new group of settlers from Kutami. Moreover, because the Kumamoto *burakumin* were unfamiliar with the appropriate fanning techniques in Manchuria, they were dependent on these same Chinese to teach them the appropriate methods. Yet, despite regrets such as those expressed above, many thought their relationship with the Chinese was only natural.⁴⁹ They believed that as a "chosen people" on a "sacred mission" they had special privilege to the land, and that somehow the Chinese sharing their agricultural knowledge was the essence of *gozoku kyowa*.

⁴⁵ Takahashi, 223-37. (The full text of Shimomura's tract is found in Takahashi's appendix.)

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Takahashi, 54.

⁴⁹ Although the Kutami *burakumin* thought they inherently deserved their position above the Chinese, they, according to former members, sincerely believed in *gozoku kyowa* and were kinder to the Chinese "coolies" than one might suspect. Remembering their own persecution at the bottom of the class structure in Kumamoto as outcastes and tenanted peasants, another former member recalled how they refrained from treating the Chinese roughly. But he also admitted that another motivation for his kindness, was that the Kutami *burakumin* relied heavily on Chinese farming knowledge and labor. See Takahashi, 122-23.

Indeed, their new-found status caused the Kutami outcastes (96®) to feel as if they had been "reincarnated," "emancipated," or as if they were part of the "world's number one race." Ownership of the land was to be transferred from joint ownership to individual ownership five years from the time they began to till it. Farming acres of land as they pleased was a dream come true for the Kutami *burakumin*. Not only did the outcastes oversee the work of dozens of Chinese, they could count on being treated as superiors by the Chinese and welcomed in Chinese villages by "adults," as Japanese called Chinese village leaders. One former member remembered that when he was away from the settlement at night, he would knock on the gate of the biggest Chinese home he could find. "I'd ask them to put me up for the night, and they would. And they would also serve up me a feast first," he recalled. With retribution by the Kwantung Army a real possibility, the sincerity of such kindnesses is questionable.

Moreover, once the army disappeared, so did most of the goodwill. In August 1945, the "blissful" ignorance of the settlers came to a sudden and tragic end. By late summer the population of the village had been reduced from over 300 to 276 settlers; the Kwantung Army drafted thirty-five able-bodied men from February to August. Those who remained in the village were almost all women, children, or the elderly. One hundred and twenty-four were children under the age of sixteen.⁵⁰ Certainly these changes must have created a sense of anxiety, but the settlers, largely isolated from any rumors about Japan's rapidly deteriorating fortunes, were confident that they would be protected by the Kwantung Army.

Their faith was tragically misplaced. On August 11, 1945, even after hearing rumors that the Soviet Union had declared war on Japan, the settlement remained largely unconcerned. Two days later, they received an order from regional officials to move to a neighboring settlement. But before they could leave the following day, the group discovered that hostile Chinese, (97®) including those who had once worked their fields, had surrounded the main settlement compound where they had gathered in preparation to leave. A siege began. On the second day, the desperate group negotiated a guaranteed passage to safety to Kwantung Army-held territory in exchange for the few weapons they had, only to find that they had been tricked. Still, they were able to repel repeated assaults. But when the Chinese attacked in early morning hours of August 17, they met no resistance. Instead, they found that the Kutami settlers had committed mass-suicide.

Of the 276 settlers in the settlement during those final days, only one survived. Ordered by his comrades to communicate their fate to their fathers and brothers who had been conscripted by the army, Miyamoto Sadakichi somehow escaped death during the final attack and resulting fire. He was soon captured by the advancing Soviet army, and returned to Japan in 1946 after spending nearly a year in a prison camp.⁵¹

The fate of the Kutami Pioneer Party was hardly an exception. Among "the 270,000 or so Japanese settlers in Manchuria in 1945, about 80,000 died, the majority women and children."⁵² Numerous settlements committed "group suicide." All were, no doubt, influenced

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 17 and 6.

⁵¹ Takahashi, 15-35.

⁵² As a part of Kwantung Army strategy, Japanese emigrants had been settled along the Manchurian-Soviet border or in centers of Chinese resistance. As a result, when the Kwantung Army retreated, the settlements were left defenseless. It is "estimated that while the 'pioneer settlers' represented only fourteen per cent of the total number of Japanese in Manchuria at the end of the war, they accounted for nearly fifty per cent of the deaths." Wilson, 283. Some estimates list civilian deaths in Manchuria as high as 200,000. Alvin D. Coox, *Nomonhan: Japan against Russia, 1939* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 1073. For more on the last days of Manchuria and another detailed account that is typical of the fate of many Japanese settlers, see Louis Alien, *The End of the War in Asia* (London: Hart-Davis MacGibbon, 1976), 193-218.

by the immediate despair and panic in the face of hostile Chinese and rapidly advancing Russian troops. Certainly imperial education also inspired settlers to take their lives in the name of the emperor. But there was an additional psychological motivation for *burakumin*. Having achieved a (98®) sense of freedom from discrimination in Manchukuo, the prospect of returning home to face continued discrimination contributed to their despair. Outcaste emigrants not only faced the loss of their material dreams, but also the end to their imagined, "emancipation," even if they survived and were repatriated. Perhaps it was with these thoughts that the Kutami group chose the option that offered the only refuge from prejudice: death.

Conclusion

Like the Gifu monument, a monument honoring Japan's wartime dead stands in Kamoto village. The names of the 275 people who died on August 17, 1945 are cut into the stone marker, and a neighboring museum tells the story of the Kutami Pioneer Group. On one hand, the Kamoto memorial symbolizes the outcastes' success in reclaiming their past, but on the other, the Kamoto monument represents a kind of surrender to the state. The narratives told by the monument and the museum adhere to the state-sanctioned story of the 1930s and 1940s—that a military cabal triggered an uncontrolled wave of expansion and war, and that the Japanese people, helpless to withstand, were sacrificed in its wake. Both the national and the Kamoto narratives portray ordinary Japanese as passive victims. The colonized are hardly mentioned. Instead, the Kamoto account, like Hiroshima in the state's narrative of World War II, emphasizes the final scene of the Manchurian settlement story—the deadly siege—while ignoring the preceding years of state aggression and the societal participation in Japan's colonial project. This selective public memory, then, portrays the colonized as aggressors, and the colonizers as victims.

Be that as it may, the motivations and experience of *burakumin* emigrants differed from *non-burakumin*. The bitterness of the Manchurian disaster lingers in a particular way for outcastes. Comments about the Kamoto monument and museum sometimes reopen the festering wounds of history. After their dedication, for instance, a local official remarked, "It's not surprising that *burakumin* would kill their children, women, and parents. Even at that, they still act as if they were victimized." Other prejudice lingers as well. In recent years, several engagements have been called off in the area when one of the partner's (99®) families learned of the pariah ancestry of the other party.⁵³ Not even the ultimate sacrifice of their ancestors has allowed outcastes to "become" Japanese and escape discrimination.

Although I have recounted the experience of the *burakumin* in parallel with *non-burakumin* Japanese emigrants, and although *burakumin* were colonizers, comparisons between *burakumin* and the colonized are not unwarranted. The state's cooptation and mobilization of outcastes can be considered as an example of internal colonization similar to that of the Okinawans and Ainu. The people of Okinawa were still perceived as un-Japanese, and were "characterized as lacking industriousness, hygiene, education, or 'spirit'" in the early twentieth-century, hundreds of years after their island chain was absorbed by Japan.⁵⁴ Likewise, Ainu, the indigenous people of northern island of Hokkaido that was not fully incorporated as a part of Japan until the nineteenth-century, were depicted as alien and backwards.

⁵³ Araragi, 6.

⁵⁴ Alan S. Christy, "The Making of Imperial Subjects in Okinawa," in *Positions: East Asian Culture's Critique* 1, no. 3, (Winter 1993): 614.

But comparisons should not end with the colonization of groups within Japan. There are significant similarities between the colonizing *burakumin* and the very people whose land they took—the colonized of Japan's wider empire. The depiction of the *burakumin* as deficient in character and ethnically inferior was akin to the characterization of the colonized Other throughout the Japanese empire. Koreans, part of the Japanese empire after annexation of the peninsula in 1910, were portrayed as filthy, primitive, lazy, and "closer to beasts than to human beings."⁵⁵ In Manchuria, Japanese characterized Chinese as having "dirty racial habits." This was exactly how Japanese stereotyped *burakumin* within Japan. At the same time the state promised to include marginalized groups within Japan as "Japanese" and to include the externally colonized as Asian brothers, it depicted these same peoples as inferior and primitive. Thus, the rhetoric of ethnic Japanese solidarity and Asian (100®) brotherhood was fraught with irresolvable contradictions.

The experience of the *burakumin* in Manchuria demonstrates that attempts to conceal discrimination will inevitably lead to new forms of discrimination. The *burakumin* "escape" from domestic oppression only moved them to the other side of the equation. Once in Manchukuo, the inconsistent Japanese vision of Asian brotherhood blinded *burakumin* to the unaltered cycle of prejudice directed at them by their fellow Japanese. Like many ordinary Japanese of the wartime years, outcasts were caught in the merciless and largely inescapable contradictions of Japanese colonialism. Their choices were wholly inadequate. Because *burakumin* were particularly disadvantaged, they, among Japanese, were especially vulnerable to manipulation from above. In certain respects, they had more in common with the colonized than they did their fellow colonizers in Manchuria. In the end, like many of the colonized, the *burakumin* became victims, even as they collaborated in the aggression of Japanese colonialism.

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⁵⁵ Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 398-406.

Historians' "Black Muslim" Problem: An Examination of the Black Nationalism Thesis in the Historiography of Islam in America

by Zaheer Ali

Traditionally, scholars have presented the history of Islam in the African-American community as two separate, disconnected narratives—one of an African religious tradition that did not survive American slavery, and the other of one among many new religious movements that emerged in the early twentieth century. While an estimated twenty percent of the Africans brought to the Americas during the transatlantic slave trade were brought from Muslim-dominated areas of West Africa and were, therefore, likely Muslims,¹ in his study of the religious life of the slaves, Albert Raboteau concludes that "in the United States the gods of Africa died."² The development of the domestic slave trade, the decline in the importation of new slaves who could refresh the American South with African cultural traditions, along with slave owners' suppression of indigenous (102®) African religions, and slaves' eventual conversion to Christianity all obscured Islam's presence in the slave community.³ By the early twentieth century, all that apparently remained of Islam in the African-American community were the scattered recollections of former slaves and their descendants who told Works Project Administration (WPA) employees of their ancestors' observance of traditional Islamic rituals and practices.⁴ Hence, scholars seeking to trace the historic development of contemporary Islam in the black community found little evidence that could directly connect twentieth-century Islam with an African ancestor.

Unable to establish a direct link between twentieth-century Islam and its nineteenth-century antecedent in the African-American community, scholars turned to black nationalism to provide the historical context for the religion's origins and development. Advocates of the "black nationalism thesis" of Islam's genesis and development argue that twentieth-century African-American Islam has little or no Islamic antecedent and developed primarily independent of, and in isolation from, other Muslim communities. They contend instead that an analysis of the doctrines and organizational patterns of twentieth-century African-American Muslim movements reveals that these movements were primarily, if not exclusively, black nationalist projects that simply used the symbols of the Islamic religion to

¹ "Finding the approximate number of Muslims who landed in the Americas may prove an extremely difficult task," writes Sylviane A. Diouf. Taking into account the data and estimates provided by Philip Curtin (46.3%), Allan Austin (10%), and Michael Gomez ("thousands if not tens of thousands"), for the number of slaves who came to the Americas from Muslim-dominated regions of West Africa, Diouf proposes "an estimate of 15 to 20 percent." See Sylviane A. Diouf, *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 45-48; Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); Allan Austin, *African Muslims in Antebellum America* (New York: Garland, 1984); and Michael Gomez, "Muslims in Early America," *Journal of Southern History* 60 (November 1994): 671-710.

² Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 86.

³ Raboteau, 43-92.

⁴ Savannah Unit of the Georgia Writers Project of the Works Project Administration (WPA), *Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies Among the Georgia Coastal Negroes* (1940; Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986).

advance nationalist goals of race consciousness, group solidarity, and self-determination. The two most significant monographs that exemplify this approach are C. Eric Lincoln's *The Black Muslims in America* (1961) and E. U. Essien-Udom's *Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America* (1962).⁵ (103®)

Both Lincoln and Essien-Udom argue the black nationalism thesis of Islam by focusing on the Nation of Islam (NOI)-the movement founded in Detroit in 1930 by a mysterious figure named W. Fard Muhammad and led to prominence in the 1950s and 1960s by Elijah Muhammad (born Poole) and his spokesman Malcolm X (Little).

Lincoln's study had a particularly profound impact on the study of Islam in America: while his contemporaries and the popular media referred to the NOI simply as "Muslims" or "Negro American Muslims," Lincoln introduced "black Muslim" as a descriptive phrase that highlighted the "racial emphases" peculiar to the movement.⁶ For its part, the NOI itself objected to the term, and Malcolm X protested its use by members of the media:

The public mind fixed on "Black Muslims." From Mr. [Elijah] Muhammad on down, the name "Black Muslims" distressed everyone in the Nation of Islam. I tried for at least two years to kill off that "Black Muslims." Every newspaper and magazine writer and microphone I got close to: "No! We are black people here in America. Our religion is Islam. We are properly called 'Muslims'!" But that "Black Muslims" name never got dislodged.⁷

The phrase proved to be equally problematic to scholars: at the same time that "black Muslim" accurately reflects the black nationalist ideology of the NOI and successfully differentiates the NOI's own distinct brand of Islam from the rest of the Muslim world, the term implicates all Muslims within the black community as "black Muslims" whether they identify with the NOI or not. Scholars and laypersons alike often overlooked this distinction and freely used the term "black Muslim" to encompass all Muslims in the African-American community, regardless of their affiliation to the NOI. More importantly, most (104®) scholars have relied primarily, if not completely, on Lincoln's and Essien-Udom's framework of black nationalism in subsequent examinations of Islam in the black community. As a result, early historians treated the NOI as "the black Muslims in America," and regarded the NOI's history-as a black nationalist movement-as the main narrative in Islam's twentieth-century history in the African-American community.

However, while the NOI may in fact be the most significant African-American Muslim community to emerge in the early twentieth century, the use of the "Nation of Islam" archetype-situated within the historical narrative of black nationalism-limits attempts to provide an accurate history of American Islam's origins and development. On its surface, the focus on the Nation of Islam simply ignores the diversity of Muslim movements that developed alongside, but were separate and distinct from, the NOI. More deeply, while black nationalism has proven to be a rich source for themes that guide the critical inquiry into the history of Islam in the black community, it does not sufficiently account for Islam's genesis or diversity in twentieth-century black America-even in the case of the Nation of Islam.

⁵ C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America*, 3rd ed. (Trenton, New Jersey, and Grand Rapids, Michigan: jointly published by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company and Africa World Press, 1994. Originally published in 1961); E. U. Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

⁶ Lincoln, xvii; for Lincoln's contemporaries' references to the Nation of Islam, see Essien-Udom; "The Black Supremacists," *Time* (10 August 1959): 24-25; "Black Supremacy' Cult in U.S.-How Much of a Threat?" *U.S. News & World Report* (9 November 1959): 112.

⁷ Malcolm X (with the assistance of Alex Haley), *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1964; 1973), 247.

Recent studies, such as Aminah Beverly McCloud's *African American Islam* (1995) and Richard Brent Turner's *Islam in the African American Experience* (1996), illustrate the limitations of the NOI model and its black nationalism thesis, by broadening their inquiries to include themes and models drawn from Islamic history.⁸ By doing so, these studies emphasize that the development of Islam in the black community is part of a larger Islamic history—a much more inclusive narrative that even accounts for elements of black nationalism without yielding to the limitations of the black nationalism thesis.

The earliest scholarly works on Islam in the black community were primarily sociological inquiries that examined Muslim communities within the context of emerging religious movements among recent African-American migrants to the north during the post-World War I years. In his 1937 study of the (105®) Nation of Islam—the first scholarly treatment of the subject—Eerdmann D. Beynon discusses the origins of the religion as part of "a chain of movements arising out of the growing disillusionment and race consciousness of recent Negro migrants to northern cities."⁹ According to Beynon, the NOI was primarily a vehicle for "migrant Negroes to secure a status satisfactory to themselves after their escape from the old southern accommodation of white and Negro."¹⁰ In 1944, Arthur Huff Fauset continued this line of inquiry in his examination of another self-proclaimed Islamic movement, Noble Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple, as one among many "Negro religious cults" that appeared at "[a]bout the beginning of the twentieth century, possibly coexistent with the industrial and economic upheaval which was characterizing the same period."¹¹ In his classification of these movements, Fauset suggests that the "Islamic cults" be considered under a "broader classification" of "nationalistic."¹² While both the Nation of Islam and the Moorish Science Temple made claims to a lost Islamic legacy, neither Beynon nor Fauset examined the possibility of an Islamic antecedent for the "cults" they each observed. Instead, these initial studies treat Islam as a new religious movement, best viewed within the context of the emerging nationalist movements in African-American religion.

Yet, as early as 1925, signs of Islam in the African-American past had begun to emerge with the publication of an authoritative translation from Arabic of the "first story of an educated Mohammedan slave in America," entitled "Autobiography of Omar ibn Said, Slave in North Carolina, 1831" in the *American Historical Review*.¹³ A second Arabic manuscript by a Muslim slave is the subject of a 1940 article in the *Journal of Negro (106®) History*.¹⁴ That same year, even more evidence of the Islamic heritage of African-Americans appeared in the Georgia Writers' Project's *Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies among the Georgia Coastal Negroes*, which features several interviews with ex-slaves and their descendants who recounted memories of their Muslim ancestors' religious practices, including observance of Muslim prayer services, Islamic dietary law, and ritual dress.¹⁵ These documents date Islam's presence in the African-American community much earlier than the twentieth-century advent

⁸ Aminah Beverly McCloud, *African American Islam* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

⁹ Eerdmann D. Beynon, "The Voodoo Cult Among Negro Migrants in Detroit" *American Journal of Sociology* 43 (July 1937-May 1938): 894.

¹⁰ Beynon, 907.

¹¹ Arthur Huff Fauset, *Black Gods of the Metropolis: Negro Religious Cults of the Urban North* (1944; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 8, 41–51.

¹² Fauset, 9.

¹³ "Autobiography of Omar ibn Said," *American Historical Review* 30 (July 1925): 787–795.

¹⁴ Joseph H. Greenberg, "The Decipherment of the 'Ben-Ali Diary,' a Preliminary Statement," *Journal of Negro History* 25 (July 1940): 372–375.

¹⁵ Savannah Unit of the Georgia Writers' Project of the Works Project Administration (WPA).

of "nationalistic cults," and hence suggest a broader historical context within which to view the emergence of the Nation of Islam or the Moorish Science Temple in a broader historical context.

Nearly twenty-five years later, partially in response to "[spokesmen for the black Muslims [who] never tire of insisting that the original religion of Negroes was Islam, that their language was Arabic, and that they had a distinctively African culture," Morroe Berger sought to examine "American Negroes' attitude toward the African past, and their historic relation to Islam both in Africa and, surprisingly, our own country."¹⁶ In his 1964 article *for Horizon*, Berger highlights three key areas that would later provide possible links that connect the "black Muslims" of the twentieth century to an Islamic past, notably Islam's role in Africa, nineteenth-century black nationalist Edward W. Blyden's conviction that "Islam was better for Africans than Christianity," and nineteenth-century accounts of African Muslims enslaved in America.¹⁷ In so doing, Berger is the first to attempt to examine the NOI within the historical context of Islam's development in Africa and nineteenth-century America. But merely suggesting that the "themes that inspire Muslims today began in the nineteenth century," seems (107®) to be as far as Berger can go. Regarding the NOI, Berger concludes very similarly to Beynon and Fauset:

When Islam reappears in our time, it has no apparent continuity with the past; rather, it arises out of the same despair that produces other messianic movements among exploited peoples in the midst of rapid change, and out of a secular nationalism associated with Africa's struggle for freedom and independence.¹⁸

Berger's yielding to the black nationalism thesis is not surprising, considering the impressive and convincing treatment the thesis had received from Lincoln and Essien-Udom, whose works—published in 1961 and 1962 respectively—preceded Berger's article by a few years. Lincoln's socio-historical study of the NOI entitled *The Black Muslims in America*, and Essien-Udom's *Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America*, an ethno-history of black nationalism that focuses on the NOI, articulates the black nationalism thesis of Islam so persuasively that both texts became authoritative sources on the movement for later scholars. For both Lincoln and Essien-Udom, the 1930 advent of Islam in the form of the NOI is best understood in the context of the historical development of black nationalism. Lincoln best describes the social context at this historical moment as "a vacuum of extremist protest against racial indignities" created by the decline of two movements, which—similar to Beynon and Fauset—he characterizes as black nationalist: Noble Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple and Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA).¹⁹ Whereas Beynon asserts that "the effect of both these movements [the 'Moorish-Americans' and Garveyism] upon the future members of the Nation of Islam was largely indirect," Lincoln and Essien-Udom make compelling arguments that the NOI was in fact the direct heir and descendant of both the "religious nationalism" of the Moorish Science Temple and the "political nationalism" (which Essien-Udom refers to as "secular") of the UNIA.²⁰ (108®)

The Moorish Science Temple, established in 1913 by Noble Drew Ali, predates the NOI as a religious movement that utilized the language and symbols, if not theology, of Islam; and

¹⁶ Morroe Berger, "The Black Muslims," *Horizon* 6 (Winter 1964): 49.

¹⁷ Berger, 50, 51-54.

¹⁸ Berger, 54-55.

¹⁹ Lincoln, 62.

²⁰ Beynon, 898; Lincoln, 47-62; Essien-Udom, 43-46, 63.

according to Lincoln and Essien-Udom, the Moorish movement contributed directly to the NOI's racial ideology, religious doctrines, and membership. As the NOI would later do, Drew Ali rejected the term "Negro" and instead identified black people in America as "Asiatics."²¹ Additionally, Drew Ali claimed "Islam... for the Asiatics" and "Christianity... for the Europeans," a claim echoed by the NOI's "fundamental tenet... that all blacks are Muslims by nature and that Christianity is a white religion."²² Lincoln and Essien-Udom argue that there is evidence-more than ideological and doctrinal similarities-that the NOI possibly grew directly out of the Moorish movement. According to Lincoln, after the decline of the Moorish movement, "[m]any Moors... were among the earliest converts to the Black Muslim movement. They feel quite at home in this new nationalism."²³ Essien-Udom supports Lincoln's claim by citing Arna Bontemps' and Jack Conroy's report that the NOI grew out of a faction of Moors who accepted NOI founder W. Fard Muhammad's claim that he was Noble Drew Ali incarnate.²⁴ Regardless of the veracity of the report-according to Essien-Udom, the connection between the two movements was "emphatically denied" by NOI members²⁵-Lincoln and Essien-Udom successfully present the continuity between the Moorish movement and the NOI within the framework of the development of the religious strain of black nationalism.

Regarding the NOI's inheritance from the UNIA, Lincoln argues that the Nation of Islam "learned much from Marcus Garvey" and his program of political and economic nationalism.²⁶ Founded in New York in 1917, the UNIA's membership reportedly reached well over one million at its height, becoming (109®) perhaps the most successful mass movement in the black community in the twentieth century. The Association's motto, "One God! One Aim! One Destiny," and Garvey's popular slogan, "Up, you mighty race, you can accomplish what you will," highlighted the movement's focus on racial unity and improvement. Garvey promoted a pan-African vision that linked black people throughout Africa and the Diaspora, and even advocated selective repatriation to Africa.²⁷ Garvey supported his programmatic objectives through the UNIA's institutions: *The Negro World* newspaper, which had a circulation of over 200,000; the Black Star Steamship Line for international trade and commerce; and auxiliary groups like the Universal Black Cross Nurses, the Black Eagle Flying Corps, and the paramilitary Universal African Legion.²⁸

Like Garvey, NOI leader Elijah Muhammad demanded that "every Black Man in America be reunited with his own."²⁹ While Muhammad did not necessarily advocate repatriation, he was in favor of territorial nationalism (i.e., the separation of blacks and whites and the creation of an all-black state in America).³⁰ Working towards that goal, the NOI grew into a highly organized community with several institutions that mirrored those of the UNIA: the *Muhammad Speaks* newspaper provided news from throughout the black world, the establishment of businesses at an aggressive pace brought the community closer to economic autonomy, and its membership was divided into the Muslim Girls Training-

²¹ Lincoln, 48; Essien-Udom, 34.

²² Essien-Udom, 34; Lincoln 51, 72.

²³ Lincoln, 52.

²⁴ Essien-Udom, 35,43. Also see Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy, *They Seek a City* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1945), 174-184.

²⁵ Essien-Udom, 63 note 1.

²⁶ Lincoln, 63.

²⁷ Lincoln, 54,56.

²⁸ Lincoln, 52-61; Essien-Udom, 36-43.

²⁹ Elijah Muhammad, quoted in Lincoln, 79.

³⁰ Lincoln, 91.

General Civilization Class (MGT-GCC) for women and the paramilitary Fruit of Islam (FOI) for men.³¹ That some of the features of the NOI seem to echo Garvey's earlier work in the UNIA surprises neither Lincoln nor Essien-Udom. In fact, Essien-Udom indicates that "[Elijah] Muhammad... acknowledges Marcus Garvey as a forerunner of his movement."³² By framing their studies of the NOI in the context of the Moorish Science Temple and the UNIA, Lincoln and Essien-Udom convincingly establish and (110®) elaborate the black nationalism thesis of the Nation of Islam as the modern-day successor of black nationalist movements in American history.

To its credit, the black nationalism thesis of Islam highlights the role that race and racial consciousness have played in twentieth-century Islamic history in America. However, scholars have tended to rely too heavily on the thesis's emphasis on race, and they often end up marginalizing any role played by Islam itself in Muslim communities' development. For example, David W. Wills admits that the NOI's founding and development exposes the "limitations of the 'Protestant-Catholic-Jew' definition of American pluralism;" yet, instead of expanding that definition in religious terms to include Islam, Wills argues that the limitations are sufficiently addressed by including "the encounter of black and white"-that is, race-as "one of the crucial, central themes in the religious history of the United States."³³

Far from challenging this posture, some scholars of black religion have been satisfied with viewing the phenomenon of Islam in the black community through the limited lens of "the encounter of black and white," as long as it illustrates the merits of their own arguments. In Hans A. Baer's and Merrill Singer's "typology of Black sectarianism as a response to racial stratification," Islamically-oriented communities are "[t]he best-known messianic-nationalist sects" which "constitute the most radical protest to and departure from the institutions and conventions of the larger society."³⁴ In a similar but more extreme usage of the Islam-as-black-nationalism view, Gayraud S. Wilmore posits Islam as a "dechristianized black radicalism" in dialectical relation to a "deradicalized black church." According to Wilmore, Islamic "sects and cults" in the mid-twentieth century constituted a stream of black radicalism that "threw off religious influences altogether and continued as a belligerent and thoroughly secularized black racism, empty of any self-conscious (111®) ideological or redemptive significance."³⁵ For Wilmore, "dechristianized black radicalism" is a "secularized" (as opposed to "Islamicized") black radicalism, regardless of whether or not Islam is present. Like Baer and Singer, he has little use in his discussion for the role of Islam as a religious force.

However, several other scholars, including Richard Brent Turner, Michael A. Gomez, and Aminah Beverly McCloud, have turned their attention toward Islam, seeking to expand the historical context beyond black nationalism for the development of twentieth-century African-American Islam.³⁶ Their studies are particularly concerned with examining possible continuities between the Islam of nineteenth-century Africans enslaved in America and the

³¹ Essien-Udom, 143-181.

³² Essien-Udom, 63.

³³ David W. Wills, "The Central Themes of American Religious History: Pluralism, Puritanism, and the Encounter of Black and White," in Timothy E. Fulop and Albert J. Raboteau, eds., *African-American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 20.

³⁴ Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer, *African-American Religion in the Twentieth Century: Varieties of Protest and Accommodation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 60.

³⁵ Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People*, 2nd ed. (1973; Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983), 170.

³⁶ See Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); McCloud; and Turner.

Islam of twentieth-century African-Americans. While their findings regarding any direct connection between the two centuries of Islam—other than the thematic continuities suggested by Berger—much earlier—remain inconclusive, these studies nonetheless resist the black nationalism thesis' impulse to minimize or ignore the role of Islam in the formation of Muslim communities in black America.

According to Richard Brent Turner, the marginalization of Islam's significance in analyses which overemphasize the role of black nationalism in African-American Islamic development is due to the "myth of a race-blind Islam." Turner argues that there is evidence that racial separatism among

Muslims in America in the twentieth century was not completely the result of black nationalism and was not a new phenomenon in Islam, but was, in fact, a normative pattern for black people in Islam that was established in Africa before the Atlantic slave trade.³⁷

Turner challenges the "myth of a race-blind Islam" by examining Islam's history in West Africa, where he contends social stratification—and particularly ethnic identification—co-existed with Islam. Citing the "tension between orthodox Islam and African cultural particularism" in the examples of fourteenth-century Mali and sixteenth-century Songhay, Turner writes that West African Muslims embraced the religion of Islam, but "separated themselves from the judgments of non-black Muslims from North Africa."³⁸ Ultimately, Turner's analysis suffers from his liberal use of "black" and "non-black," which not only glosses over the many ethnic differences within African Muslim societies but also carries the baggage of twentieth-century assumptions of race into precolonial Africa.

Much more careful than Turner in this regard, Michael A. Gomez still links Islam to the establishment of an African-American identity. In *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (1998), Gomez argues that African Muslims—whether Fulbe, Mandinka, or Hausa—transcended their ethnic differences in North America, where Islam allowed them to relate to each other and to non-Muslims simply as Muslims.³⁹ Focusing on the lives of the African Muslims that Berger examined over thirty years ago—as well as those that the Georgia Writers' Project documented twenty years before that—Gomez shows for example how Muslims on the Georgia coast built a closely knit community, centered around Islam, that included different African ethnic groups as well as new converts to the faith.⁴⁰ The notion of this early "pan-African" sensibility lends credence to Turner's argument that Islam's relationship with black nationalism began well before the twentieth century.

Turner then directs his attention to the nineteenth century with a more incisive historical analysis of black nationalism's contact with Islam, and identifies several specific forerunners to the advent of Islam in the twentieth century. First, Turner picks up where Berger leaves off, with black nationalist Edward W. Blyden, whom he believes provides the bridge between the "old Islam of the original African Muslim slaves and the 'new (113®) African-American Islam' of the twentieth century."⁴¹ Turner suggests that Blyden—a student of Arabic who had collected a few Arabic manuscripts from Muslims in Liberia—may have read some of the African slave Omar ibn Said's Arabic manuscripts in 1863, which had convinced Christian missionaries to send Arabic Bibles to Liberia. During his visits to Muslim areas in Africa in

³⁷ Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience*, 5.

³⁸ Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience*, 21.

³⁹ Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks*, 60.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 78-82.

⁴¹ Richard Brent Turner, "Edward Wilmot Blyden and Pan-Africanism: The Ideological Roots of Islam and Black Nationalism in the United States," *Muslim World* 87 (April 1997): 169.

the 1860s and 1870s, Blyden became impressed by Islam's power to unify Africans and the high level of literacy among African Muslims. In his collection of essays, *Christianity, Islam and The Negro Race*, Blyden argued that Islam was a more appropriate religion for African-Americans.⁴² The second forerunner to twentieth century Islam who Richard Turner identifies is Henry McNeal Turner, a leading critic of Christianity's racism in the late nineteenth century who contributed to a "black bitterness toward racism in Christianity."⁴³ This bitterness combined with Blyden's favorable assessments of Islam to construct a "black political and cultural identity constituting] a new strand in the racial discourse of the nineteenth century and foreshadowed similar developments among African-American Muslims in the early twentieth century."⁴⁴

Yet, while nineteenth-century Islamic developments may have set the stage for the religion's twentieth-century development, a direct connection between the two remains elusive. In a 1994 article, Gomez does point out that both Moorish leader Noble Drew Ali and NOI leader Elijah Muhammad came from parts of the South-North Carolina and Georgia, respectively-where Islamic survivals endured into the 1930s; and he does speculate on the possibility that Elijah Muhammad may have come from a family with an Islamic heritage.⁴⁵ However, when Gomez revised the article for inclusion as a chapter in his book, (114®) *Exchanging Our Country Marks*, he edited out these speculations, perhaps due to insufficient evidence. Unable to link the two centuries of Islam directly, Turner himself is content to emphasize cultural "significations," "discourse," and "ideas" about Islam that persist into the twentieth-century nationalist movements.

Nonetheless, Turner's zeal to find the Islamic "significations" does unearth some interesting facts about the influence of Islam on Marcus Garvey's UNIA that Lincoln and Essien-Udom overlooked. While Essien-Udom mentioned that in London in 1912, Garvey associated with Duse Muhammad Ali, an Egyptian author through whom Garvey met "African and West Indian students, African nationalists, sailors, and dock workers," Essien-Udom failed to mention that Ali was also a prominent member of London's Muslim community.⁴⁶ Ali's *The African Times and Orient Review* was one of the most influential journals for the Pan-African movement in the early 1900s, often containing articles on Islam, African and Asian news, and even a section in Arabic. In the early 1920s, Ali brought his Pan-African Islamic message more directly to UNIA when he worked for its organ, *Negro World*. Garvey also came into contact with Islam in 1922 when a group of Muslim delegates at the UNIA Convention proposed that Garvey adopt Islam as the UNIA's official religion. Garvey decided against their proposal, wanting to maintain a non-denominational religious status for his movement, but he nonetheless incorporated the rhetoric of Islam in the UNIA's language. Statements such as "The Negro is crying for a Mohammed to come forth and give him the Koran of economic and intellectual welfare," and references to Garvey as "a child of Allah" are examples of Islamic themes being used to signify black leadership.⁴⁷ In addition to being signifiers of Islam, these Islamic references evidence the presence and influence of Muslims in the UNIA.

⁴² Edward W. Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and The Negro Race* (1888; Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1967).

⁴³ Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience*, 59.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Michael A. Gomez, "Muslims in Early America" 709-710.

⁴⁶ Essien-Udom, 36.

⁴⁷ Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience*, 86-88.

As Turner's approach to Garvey demonstrates, the focus on significations on Islam facilitates a way for scholars to examine African-American Islam using Islamically inspired concepts (115®) that may reveal deeper Islamic involvement than is suggested by the conventional black nationalism thesis. In addition to Turner, Aminah Beverly McCloud uses this approach to situate her study of African-American Muslim communities much more soundly within the context of Islamic history. In so doing, Turner's and McCloud's studies reveal a richer, more diverse history of Islam in the black community.

Departing from the black nationalism typology offered by earlier scholars, McCloud offers a conceptual framework based on the Islamic principles of *'asabiya* (group consolidation or "nation-building") and *ummah* (Islamic universalism) to frame her discussion of African-American Islam.⁴⁸ McCloud's model treats communities like the NOI-conventionally portrayed as "black nationalist"-as an *'asabiya* type within the larger fold of Islam. By thus using an Islamic basis to examine African-American Islam, McCloud is able to both highlight the often-ignored Islamic features of the NOI, and include other African-American Muslim communities-such as those that adhere to Ahmadiyyah, Sufi, and Sunni traditions (the *ummah* type)-which often lack an overt racial emphasis and are therefore largely ignored by scholars of black religion.

Other scholars in the field have similarly turned to Islamic concepts and history for a fresh perspective on the religion's development in black America. Samory Rashid offers the Islamic principles *oijihad* (struggle), *hijra* (flight), and *ummah* (universalism) as a means of understanding the history of African-American Muslims' struggle against slavery, flight or separation from racial discrimination, and maturity into the Islamic fold.⁴⁹ Likewise, SulaymanNyang draws his typology from the history of two early American Muslims-Elijah Muhammad and Muhammad Russell Alexander Webb-to distinguish between "Elijahian" and "Webbian" approaches to Islamic propagation in America.⁵⁰ By placing African-American Islam in a larger Islamic framework, scholars are softening (116®) the sharp distinction once made between "Muslim" and "black Muslim." As a result, they have been able to demonstrate that the relationship between Islam and black nationalism is neither a twentieth-century innovation nor a relationship where one ideal negated the other.

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⁴⁸ McCloud, 3-5.

⁴⁹ Samory Rashid, "Blacks and the Law of Resistance in Islam," *Journal of Islamic Law* 4 (Fall/Winter 1999): 87-124.

⁵⁰ Sulayman S. Nyang, *Islam in the United States of America* (N.p.: ABC International Group, Inc., 1999), 69-70.

Reviews

Farah Jasmine Griffin, *Beloved Sisters and Loving Friends* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 303 pp.

Jim Downs, Jr.

Beloved Sisters and Loving Friends is a collection of letters written between 1854 and 1868 by Addie Brown to Rebecca Primus, both African-American women during the nineteenth century. Compiled and annotated by cultural and literary historian Farah Jasmine Griffin, the letters—according to Griffin—are a rare glimpse into the ordinary lives of black women and, more importantly, "move beyond both the silence in the historical record and black women's self-imposed silence about their inner lives." (4) The importance of the Brown-Primus correspondence, Griffin further argues, is that not all black women between 1854 and 1868 were either Southern slaves or Northern abolitionists. Griffin places the collection within the emerging field of black women's history, taking her cue from the work of black feminist scholars Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Darlene Clark-Hine, and Deborah Gray White. However, Griffin refuses to simply view the Primus-Brown correspondence within the context of black women's experience; her annotations urge readers to see the various letters as illustrations of broader historical themes of the period.

The edition includes 150 letters written by Brown to Primus. Primus's letters to Brown have not been discovered; however, Brown's letters include responses and comments to issues which Primus must have raised. A portrait of Rebecca Primus emerges through this correspondence, as well as through Griffin's historical excavation of institutional records and family papers. Primus grew up in a middle-class black community in Hartford, Connecticut. She was a teacher who moved to the South during the Reconstruction period to help educate the freed people. The *Freedmans Aid Society* sponsored Primus's trip to Maryland, where she ultimately established a school for freed people. Addie Brown, unlike Rebecca, was not formally educated. She was, however, an intelligent, literate woman who worked most of her life as a domestic servant. Her letters to Rebecca sharply challenge stereotypes of unintelligent black women domestics during this period. Writing to Rebecca, (118®) Brown often chronicles her intellectual interests, ranging from her fascination with religious literature to her reading of Frederick Douglass's autobiography. While Addie often complains of her unfair wages and difficult working conditions, she also mentions the festivities surrounding the holidays, a local wedding, and a humorous account of an aunt getting false teeth.

Beyond the sentimental and beautiful world these women describe lies a seductive subtext to their relationship. Griffin carefully avoids placing this subtext within a twentieth-century category of identity, but instead relies on Carroll Smith Rosenberg's idea that emotional ties between women and the development of same-sex friendships were accepted during the nineteenth century. While the reader is left to speculate about the exact nature of the relationship, the title of the book as well as the title of Chapter II, "If you was a man," suggest Griffin's concern for the relationship to be read beyond the traditional scope of friendship. Addie's love for Rebecca, nonetheless, is indelibly marked on her many letters to Rebecca. Whether Addie was frustrated by her work or excited about a friend's visit, she would always find time to write Rebecca, and she often concluded with a sentence that articulated her desire to be with her beloved friend.

While notions of identity and gender remain hotly contested in the study of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Brown-Primus correspondence offers an exciting example of gender as an analytical category of historical investigation. Surprisingly, the Brown-Primus letters written during the Civil War offer few references to either the war or its effects on their communities. Presumably, African-Americans living near the battlegrounds-Primus lived in Maryland for part of the period- would have commented on the social unrest caused by the war, but Rebecca and Addie did not. The absence of the war in the letters raises a provocative question of what the Civil War must have meant to middle-class black women in the North. *Beloved Sisters and Loving Friends* is a wonderful contribution to nineteenth-century American history. To attempt to further place it within a subcategory would only undercut the intricate value and inherent importance that the letters offer.