



# ALPATA

*a journal of history*

Volume XIV, Spring 2017

UF





Cover: Napoleon Returned from Exile  
- Karl von Steuben

*ALPATA is named after the Seminole word for alligator.*

# ALPATA

*a journal of history*

Volume XIV, Spring 2017  
A publication of the University of Florida

Phi Alpha Theta, *gamma eta chapter*

*Graduate Managing Editor*  
Cacey Farnsworth

*Undergraduate Managing Editors*  
Jacob Quinlan  
Federico Jimenez

*Book Review Editor*  
Cacey Farnsworth

*Editors*  
Derek Boetcher  
Jacob Quinlan  
Cacey Farnsworth  
Jose Alvarez

*Faculty Advisor*  
Dr. Jack Davis

*Design*  
Federico Jimenez

# Table of Contents

## Thematic Section

### **Multicultural Britain: The Unexpected Outcome of the 1948 British Nationality Act**

*Derek N. Boetcher* ..... 1

### **Laughing in the Face of the Law: How New Orleans Evaded the Effects of Prohibition**

*Jacob Quinlan* ..... 7

### **Tense Memory: Understanding the Legacy of Fidel Castro**

*Jose Alvarez* .....12

## Student Submissions

### **British Abolitionism and the End of the Illegal Transatlantic Slave Trade in Brazil**

*Jacob Quinlan* .....16

### **The “I” in Faith: Peter Abelard and Medieval Self-Identification**

*William Johnson* .....35

### **A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew Walk into a Bazaar: Economic Interests and Interfaith Relations in Spain under the Almoravids and Almohads**

*Logan Leonard* .....49

## Book Reviews

**Jessica R. Pliley's *Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI***

Reviewed by Meagan Frenzer .....66

**Jisheng Yang's *Tombstone: The Untold Story of Mao's Great Famine***

Reviewed by Hanchao Zhao .....70

**Carlos M. N. Eire's *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650***

Reviewed by Bryan D. Kozik .....73

**Jason Stahl's *Right Moves: The Conservative Think Tank in Political Culture Since 1945***

Reviewed by David Meltsner .....77

**William R. Summerhill's *Inglorious Revolution: Political Institutions, Sovereign Debt, and Financial Underdevelopment in Imperial Brazil***

Reviewed by Licínio Nunes de Miranda.....81

**Jane S., Gerber's *The Jews in the Caribbean***

Reviewed by Oren Okhovat .....85

**Johannes Fried's *Charlemagne***

Reviewed by Robert E. Lierse .....89

**Melissa L. Sevigny's *Mythical River: Chasing the Mirage of New Water in the American Southwest***

Reviewed by Ryan Thompson .....93



# Notes on Contributors

## Thematic Section:

Derek Boetcher - Ph.D. Candidate

Jacob Quinlan - Undergraduate Student

Jose Alvarez - M.A. Candidate

## Book Reviews Editor:

Cacey Farnsworth - Ph.D. Candidate

## Student Contributors:

Jacob Quinlan - Undergraduate Student

William Johnson - Undergraduate Student

Leonard Logan - Undergraduate Student





## Thematic Section

---



## Multicultural Britain: The Unexpected Outcome of the 1948 British Nationality Act

---

Derek N. Boetcher

In 1945, few people in the British Empire could have expected Great Britain, especially England, to become a multicultural society by the early 1960s. As Britain continued to try to maintain its imperial ties after the Second World War, Parliament passed the 1948 British Nationality Act, which, according to political scientist Randall Hansen, provided “a definition of citizenship that included Britons and colonial subjects under the same nationality. They were both citizens of the United Kingdom and colonies with full citizenship rights in the UK.”<sup>1</sup> In part, the act was meant to make it easier for laborers from the Old Commonwealth (Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) to come to Britain, which this legislation did. But the act also codified full rights of British citizenship for

---

<sup>1</sup> Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-war Britain: The Institutional Origins of a Multicultural Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 17.

immigrants from the New Commonwealth and existing colonies. Immigrants the act granted full citizenship, especially those from the West Indies, came to Britain by the tens of thousands between 1948 and 1962, and unexpectedly turned the United Kingdom into a multicultural society.

The origins of the British Nationality Act had little to do with immigration, but this legislation could not avoid becoming attached to migration issues. Imperial citizenship concerns were an important motivating factor behind the creation of the 1948 act. The Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946 broke away from the traditional common code of British citizenship and opened up the possibility that each Commonwealth nation could define subject status in several divergent ways. To overcome the potentially damaging legal inconsistencies to British citizenship that the Canadian act had introduced, the 1948 act, according to Hansen, was intended “to maintain the substance of the pre-1946 arrangement, including the right of all British subjects to enter the United Kingdom.”<sup>2</sup> Implicit within this 1948 definition of British subjecthood was British politicians’ assumption that past migratory patterns, primarily consisting of small-scale movement to and from the Old Commonwealth, would continue.

Instead, migration patterns changed almost immediately with the arrival of New Commonwealth immigrants in London on June 22, 1948. These immigrants were a group of approximately 500 Jamaicans who had unexpectedly arrived on the *Empire Windrush*. The British government could not obstruct their arrival, but it made no

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 53.

attempts to encourage further immigration into the United Kingdom from the New Commonwealth. Although people of color had lived in Britain since the eighteenth century, they made up a small population of approximately 15,000 to 30,000. Thus, white Britons were not prepared for the tens of thousands of people of color who arrived in the United Kingdom in the 1950s.

Although citizenship issues were foundational to the 1948 act, racial issues surrounding the resulting mass migration of people of color from the New Commonwealth became an increasing part of the political conversation about immigration in the 1950s. According to journalist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, “when the *Windrush* landed, politicians were already discussing the ‘problems’ these immigrants would create for the British nation.”<sup>3</sup> A small but vocal minority of primarily conservative British politicians in the 1950s, such as Cyril Osborne and Norman Pannell, claimed that they were concerned with potential issues stemming from overall immigration, but they consistently directed their attention to West Indian migrants. Essentially, the New Commonwealth immigrants, who had full citizenship rights to migrate to the United Kingdom, were seen as a burden and a threat to good race relations rather than as a potential asset to Britain’s labor pool and cultural fabric. But to apply controls to New Commonwealth migration, meant that the British Parliament would have to simultaneously restrict Old Commonwealth migration. British politicians debated this

---

<sup>3</sup> Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, *True Colours: Attitudes to Multiculturalism and the Role of Government* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 1999), 48.

issue for several years, until 1955, when the Conservative government opted for no migration controls rather than break its ideological commitment to the citizenship rights of Old Commonwealth citizens. Thus, according to Hansen, “policy-makers accepted the transformation of the United Kingdom into a multicultural society as the price of supporting the ties between Britain and the Old Dominions.”<sup>4</sup>

The reluctant acceptance of the United Kingdom becoming a multicultural society did not prevent British politicians from continuing the debate about immigration control along racial lines. Following major disturbances in Nottingham and London in 1958 a vocal minority of conservative politicians combined with members of white working-class neighborhoods renewed their demands for immigration control, but this time as a way to prevent future racist attacks on West Indians. Regardless, the British government was not yet willing to accept this argument. Also, the Colonial Office continued to act as a bulwark of the government’s willingness to tolerate non-white migration into the United Kingdom. But as the empire came to an end in the 1960s the Colonial Office lost its power and influence in the British government, and some form of immigration control became possible.

In 1962, the Conservative government introduced a quota system intended to limit non-white immigration into the United Kingdom. The Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962, according to Miles and Phizacklea, “stated that British citizens living in the Commonwealth could enter Britain only if they possessed a Ministry of Labour

---

<sup>4</sup> Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-war Britain*, 19.

employment voucher, or if they were a dependent of such a person already resident in Britain, or a student.”<sup>5</sup> But even this legislation brought about an unexpected result. As rumors of immigration control circulated throughout the Commonwealth in 1961, a “beat-the-ban” rush occurred. By the end of that year, a record 136,000 New Commonwealth immigrants had come to the United Kingdom. Thus, by the time the Commonwealth Immigrants Act became law on July 1, 1962, the colored population of Britain was close to 500,000. Although the act brought about the end of large-scale New Commonwealth immigration to the United Kingdom, it did not end nonwhite immigration altogether. The legislation guaranteed the right of spouses, children, and grandparents over 65 to join their families who had already emigrated to the United Kingdom. After 1962 many people from the New Commonwealth took advantage of this citizenship right to emigrate to Britain.

Ultimately, it was the 1948 British Nationality Act that set in motion critical, but unanticipated changes to the United Kingdom as the British Empire began to definitively break apart. In particular, as Hansen contends, the aim of the act “was constitutional: the retention of a uniform status, and the possession of uniform privileges, for all British subjects.”<sup>6</sup> By addressing the constitutional challenges of the Canadian Citizenship Act, the British attempted to reaffirm the pre-war status quo definition of British subjecthood, but opened up the way for an

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 40. Also see, “Quota System of Entry into Britain,” *The Times* (2 November 1961), 12.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 35.



## Multicultural Britain

unexpected mass migration from the New Commonwealth, a fundamental change to the cultural fabric of the United Kingdom, and a blossoming of racial issues throughout the 1950s and beyond to contemporary British society.

## Laughing in the Face of the Law: How New Orleans Evaded the Effects of Prohibition

---

*Jacob Quinlan*

On January 17, 1919, the people of New Orleans received the worst news imaginable. Local newspapers reported that Nebraska ratified the Eighteenth Amendment, officially making it federal law. Orleanians could not believe it—they lost the fight to remain a wet state. Advancements toward Prohibition were not new to Louisiana. Prohibitionists from the northern part of the state held considerable influence in the legislature at the turn of the twentieth century. Despite this, Orleanians never viewed Prohibition as a real threat. Tavern, bar, and saloon culture was just too normal in New Orleans to ever be criminalized. As such, Prohibition was as unexpected as it was unwelcomed, and Orleanians were sure to make that clear to their local authorities. Despite increased legislation against the sale and consumption of alcohol in Louisiana, New Orleans and the Orleans Parish as a whole, remained wet until the last minute. Interestingly, the transportation and sale of alcohol surged as restrictions tightened,

culminating in a thirteen-year-long period of underground alcohol culture, which remained just as common and lively as during the pre-Prohibition days. As historian Joy Jackson titled the era, Prohibition in New Orleans was the “unlikeliest crusade.”<sup>1</sup>

As early as 1902, legislators from the northern part of the state had begun to make advancements toward statewide prohibition. Northern legislators passed local option laws in 1902, and the Blind Tiger Acts in the 1910s, which permitted the search and seizure of suspicious illegal drinking establishments, were building blocks to eventual statewide prohibition in 1918. The legislative vote revealed the disunity in New Orleans over temperance. Initially, lawmakers from the north and south of Louisiana were deadlocked in a twenty to twenty vote. At the next assembly, the deadlock broke with a twenty-one to twenty split.<sup>2</sup> While residents of New Orleans were known for their love of liquor, the northern part of Louisiana was a bulwark of aggressive prohibitionists. Indeed, Shreveport, Louisiana, was home to the Anti-Saloon League, arguably the most fervent and influential prohibitionist organization in the country. Only three months after statewide prohibition was enacted in 1918, a federal effort to conserve resources for the First World War manifested itself in even bigger steps toward prohibition. Congress passed the Wartime Prohibition Act, which aimed to conserve grain resources by outlawing the production of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Jackson, Joy. 1978. Prohibition in new orleans: The unlikeliest crusade. *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 19 (3): 284.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 261.

vaguely defined “intoxicating” beverages.<sup>3</sup> By the time national Prohibition was enacted in 1920, almost every parish in Louisiana was dry, except Orleans. Indeed, the state’s urban center was anything thing but dry.

No person knows how much alcohol was consumed on New Year’s Eve 1920, but the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* remembered it as “beyond calculation,” and as the noisiest night in the city’s history.<sup>4</sup> This behavior echoed on the night of June 30, the eve of the Wartime Prohibition Act. Many Orleanians laughed in the face of these encroaching restrictions and remained, as one historian described them, “belligerently wet.”<sup>5</sup> In the years leading up to Prohibition, Orleanians remained relaxed in the face of impending Prohibition as if it were a myth—an unattainable obsession for northern prohibitionists that would soon “fizzle out.”<sup>6</sup> So, many in the alcohol industry carried on. On the eve of Prohibition, a publication for brewers across the country listed an exciting development in New Orleans. A new brewery called “Jackson Brewing Co.” was to be opened on Toulouse and Decatur Streets. The details of the brewery were impressive. It was to be three stories high, cost \$100,000, and equipped with “modern machinery.”<sup>7</sup> Immediately below the brewery listing was an advertisement for the “MultiPlex,” a beer fountain in another part of town that disguised itself as a

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 263.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 263.

<sup>5</sup> Ellis, Scott S. *Madame Vieux Carré: The French Quarter in the Twentieth Century*. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 8.

<sup>6</sup> Jackson, Joy. 1978. Prohibition in new orleans. 263.

<sup>7</sup> Brewers Journal: Volumes 52-53, January 1, 1919. Gibson Publishing Company. 76-77.

“money-making soda fountain.”<sup>8</sup> This technology would have appealed to bar, tavern, and saloon owners in New Orleans like the new, three-story brewery on Decatur and Toulouse. It gave them a covert way to “keep the old stand open for profitable business in spite of Prohibition.”

Another piece in the journal listed the names of breweries undergoing changes to meet the “adverse conditions” of the Wartime Prohibition Act. Three breweries in New Orleans underwent such changes by changing little more than their names, as in “Brewing Co.” to “Bottling Co.,” “Beverage Co.,” and “Pure Products Co.”<sup>9</sup>

Additionally, by January 1919, as Jackson notes, “rumrunning” alcohol to dry counties and states was a “thriving business.”<sup>10</sup> This underground business extended out of the country as well. Determined to keep their saloons and breweries in business, Orleanians shipped an exponential amount of alcohol to foreign ports, many of which were South American.<sup>11</sup> During this time, and well into the Prohibition Era, it became commonplace for brewers and seller to practice bootlegging instead of selling openly in their saloons.<sup>12</sup> Bootleggers circumvented Prohibition in surprisingly creative ways. In one instance, a notoriously adept undercover federal agent, Isadore “Izzy” Einstein, visited New Orleans to assess how quickly he could get a drink in comparison with other American cities. Less than a minute in the city, a taxi driver, instead of directing him to the nearest bar, “produced a pint [in his

---

<sup>8</sup> Brewers Journal. 76-77.

<sup>9</sup> Brewers Journal. 381.

<sup>10</sup> Jackson. 263.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 266.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 265

cab] and offered to sell it to him.”<sup>13</sup> While Prohibition was an unexpected inconvenience for Orleanians, the parish stood defiantly in the face of national pressures.

After thirteen years of subversive brewing and dodging the liquor raids of federal agents like Einstein, Prohibition ended. On April 13, 1933, at exactly noon, the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed. New Orleans flooded with alcohol. The streets were full of joyous Orleanians, even the drivers whose trucks were loaded with beer were drinking.<sup>14</sup> The legislators of northern Louisiana lost their sting by federal cuts on prohibition bureaus, and the ardent members of the Anti-Saloon League no longer had a battle to fight. Breweries like the three-story Jackson Brewing Co. could once again stand tall, the use of covert technology like the MultiPlex became obsolete, and breweries no longer needed to euphemize their names. The belligerently wet parish in Louisiana was no longer a minority, and the news that shocked drinkers all over the city became mere history.

---

<sup>13</sup>Ibid. 269.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. 284

## **Tense Memory: Understanding the Legacy of Fidel Castro**

---

*Jose Alvarez*

Fidel Castro's unprecedented ascent to power in Cuba, in what would eventually become the first Marxist country in the Western Hemisphere, was an unforeseen development in American plans to combat Communism. In spite of crippling economic and political circumstances, Castro established an unexpectedly stable government that continuously remained independent of American influence despite the expectations of its detractors. Traumatic events in the small Caribbean island's history insured the difficult nature of Cuba's ardent commitment to the ideological nature of the 26<sup>th</sup> of July movement. Numerous assassination attempts on Castro, political crises such as the Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crisis, and the dissolution of its primary benefactor are enough to sink most nations, yet Cuba continues to exist and maintain its sovereignty. This duality between principled dedication and startlingly

harsh realities leaves the world with a mixed legacy that remains to be sorted out in the coming years.

In 1959, with the cutting tensions of the Cold War serving as the political backdrop, the Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro's 26<sup>th</sup> of July Movement unexpectedly toppled the regime of Fulgencio Batista and established itself less than 100 miles from continental United States. After ruling either himself or through puppet heads of states for half a century, the forced removal of Batista and subsequent Marxist-Leninist leanings of the new Cuban government threatened to upset the fickle balance of power between the two nuclear superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. For the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Cuba played a prominent role in the foreign policy of the global superpowers.

To be sure, Castro's list of achievements is enough to portray him as a hero. After the Cuban Revolution, the standard of living for the majority of Cubans rose significantly. Literacy rates skyrocketed from a meager 60% to 96% in the span of two years, placing Cuba amongst the countries of the world with the highest literacy rate.<sup>1</sup> Healthcare was expanded and made widely accessible to even the lowest rung of society in the most geographically isolated locations.<sup>2</sup> Castro also successfully restored Cuba to independence and escaped the American sphere of influence. These achievements drastically improved the quality of life of Cuba's lowest class, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Cardoso, Eliana A., and Ann Helwege. 1992. *Cuba after communism*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

<sup>2</sup> Hirschfeld, Katherine. 2007. *Health, politics, and revolution in Cuba since 1898*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.



these achievements are remarkable in their own right and cement the lasting status of the Cuban Revolution.

However successful Fidel and Raul may have been, their achievements came at a significant cost. Fidel and Raul's human rights record was dreadful. Abysmal prison conditions, a horrific record on LGBTQ rights, and the complete suppression of opposing viewpoints drastically undermined much of the work that Castro expected to complete.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, overdependence on the Soviet Union's good will stagnated economic growth, and once their benefactor went bankrupt, it became impossible for Cubans to maintain their standard of living. The Special Period of the 1990s incurred avoidable hardships.<sup>4</sup>

The legacy of Castro is mixed. Those who choose to glorify his achievements have much to choose from, as do his many critics. But at last we can begin to sort the pieces and make sense of his extended time in power. Following his death, Raul observed his brother's wishes and banned the naming of public locations after him, so as to avoid the creation of a cult of personality. Let's observe this desire and let him and his memory rest in peace, in order to put this mixed period behind us and look ahead into an almost certainly different future.

---

<sup>3</sup> Loss, Jacqueline, and José Manuel Prieto González. 2012. *Caviar with rum: Cuba-USSR and the post-Soviet experience*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>4</sup> Hernandez-Reguant, Ariana. 2009. *Cuba in the Special Period: culture and ideology in the 1990s*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

## Student Submissions

---

## **British Abolitionism and the End of the Illegal Transatlantic Slave Trade in Brazil**

---

*Jacob Quinlan*

The illegal slave trade in Brazil lasted from 1831 to 1850 and was consistently challenged by British abolitionist pressure. Only when combined with the efforts of the Brazilian government in 1850, however, did the British achieve their goal of abolition. This paper will explore the role of British abolitionist pressure against the illegal slave trade by dividing the years of the trade into three sections. The early years of the illegal trade went largely unaffected by British abolitionism. Britain's poor use of naval resources allowed Brazilian slave traders to carry on their business largely undetected. This changed in the 1840's when Britain began to endow greater authority to their naval ships, creating a more aggressive effort against the illegal slave trade. Despite this, the 1840's proved to be a time of increased productivity for slave traders. Indeed, these years marked the peak of productivity of the illegal slave trade. This pressure was manifested, in part, through abolitionist legislation like the Palmerston and

Aberdeen Acts. These acts permitted the British navy to have more authority on the high seas in seizing ships suspected of transporting slaves. Slave traders responded to this, however, by disguising their ships under the guise of other nationalities, such as the United States, and by simply shifting the concentration of their trade<sup>1</sup>. Britain's frustrated effort towards abolitionism lasted until 1850, when the illegal transatlantic slave trade finally dissolved. The dissolution of the slave trade was not a direct result of an increase British pressure, but of a conglomerate of three major factors. In addition to British pressure against the slave trade, the Brazilian government had also begun to apply increased pressure against traders<sup>2</sup>. In addition to this, an oversupply of slaves in the market retarded the trader's ability to maneuver the pressure directed against them<sup>3</sup>.

In his 1848 book, British official Henry J. Matson asked how the British was to end the slave trade in Brazil. He by writing, "Let us first understand what we have hitherto done. I need not go back farther than the year 1840; previously to that, we had positively done nothing."<sup>4</sup> Matson goes on to state that Brazilian traders knew that the British, although they had legislated extensively on the illegality of the trade, worked with the Brazilian government, and even labeled the trade as "piracy", the

---

<sup>1</sup> Mary Catherine Karasch, "The Brazilian Slavers and the Illegal Slave Trade, 1836-1851." (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1967).

<sup>2</sup> Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869* (Cambridge: University Press, 1970)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Henry J. Matson, *Remarks on the Slave trade and African Squadron*. (London, 1848), 51.

traders knew it “was only pen and ink,”<sup>5</sup> and carried on with the trade. Matson offers numerical data to support this inefficacy by revealing that, before 1840, slave imports from Africa to Rio had been steadily increasing until they plummeted by fifty percent in 1840.<sup>6</sup> The reasons for this failure to suppress the trade lie in Britain’s poor use of their naval resources.

The slaves coming into Brazil during the 1830’s were from the coast of West Africa, Angola in particular.<sup>7</sup> The Brazilians imported from Angola extensively despite Angolan prohibitions against the trade.<sup>8</sup> The coast of west Africa was spotted with British warships during the 1830’s.<sup>9</sup> The purpose for this, however, was not solely to bar slave ships from sailing to Brazil. Britain’s attention in Africa was divided between protecting their own interests there, and intercepting slave ships.<sup>10</sup> In addition to this, the number of ships stationed on the West African coast was small. The total amount of ships in the coast of West Africa never exceeded more than eight at any one given time.<sup>11</sup> Despite its meager size, his small West African squadron was wrought with other incompetencies. The quality of the squadron was poor. Large, slow, and old, the ships stationed on the coast of West Africa were no match for the

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Karasch, *Slavers*, 3. Note: Karasch misinterprets this data in *Slavers* p.3 by including slave importations to Havana with the Rio figures, resulting in a doubled amount of what Matson actually recorded.

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

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Bethell, *Abolition*.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

American clippers ships used by the Brazilian traders.<sup>12</sup> Another issue with the West African squadron was the lack of conviction among British naval officers to devote resources toward abolitionism. Correspondence between British commissioners in West Africa reveal consistent petitioning for an increase in the number and quality of ships devoted to the slave trade. Save for Lord Palmerston, their petitions fell on deaf ears.<sup>13</sup> In 1833, British “Minister of Marine” reported to the British legislative Assembly that, “there ought, it is evident, to be a greater number of these small Vessels on the Stocks, as well for the Service of the Mails as for the more important object of preventing the contraband in Slaves.”<sup>14</sup> It also evident that British officers in Brazil would acknowledge the arrival of slave-bearing ships in Rio, but also acknowledged the “hopeless nature of the attempts to prevent it [them],” unless a warship were sent to patrol the eastern coast.<sup>15</sup> The British, however, were reticent to devote sufficient attention to the supplying of naval resources against the slave trade. In a biography of Palmerston, he is quoted to have complained that no British official, “have ever felt any interest in the suppression of the slave trade.”<sup>16</sup> Similar sentiment was felt by British

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>14</sup> George Jackson to Palmerston, 17 June, 1833, in *British and Foreign State Papers 1833-1834, Vol. 22*. (London: Ridgway and Sons, Picadilly, 1847), 38.

<sup>15</sup> George Jackson to Palmerston, 12 November, 1833, in *British and Foreign State Papers 1833-1834, Vol. 22*. (London: Ridgway and Sons, Picadilly, 1847), 40.

<sup>16</sup> Bethell, *Abolition*.

officer William Ouseley.<sup>17</sup> Aside from this, even if the number and quality of ships had improved, the lack of authority of the British Navy would also have rendered them useless in suppressing the slave trade.

During the 1830's British naval ships had little to no authority to seize ships suspected of trading slaves. The only measure of such authority the British navy had was attained by the use of mixed commissions, which served to adjudicate the few slave ships that were captured. Bethell reports that several mixed commissions existed such as the Anglo-Brazilian Commission out of Rio.<sup>18</sup> Despite minor successes of the mixed commissions such as the capture of slave ships like *Fluminense* and *Dous de Março* in 1834, the latter of which was eventually acquitted by the mixed commission due to legal prohibitions.<sup>19</sup> British cruisers continually ran into legal barriers that prohibited them from having much success in seizing slave ships. The issue of authority within these mixed commissions is that British ships could only seize slave ships sailing under the Brazilian flag, when "almost all of the ships engaged in the [slave] traffic sailed under the Portuguese flag."<sup>20</sup> Given the nature of the treaty established between Britain and Portugal some years before, ships sailing under the Portuguese flag were immune to search and seizure. Brazilian traders took advantage of this by attempting to sail exclusively under the Portuguese flag. British officers

---

<sup>17</sup> Sir William Gore Ouseley, *Notes on the Slave-trade, with Remarks on the Measures Adopted for its Suppression* (London: J. Rodwell, 1850).

<sup>18</sup> Bethell, *Abolition*.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Karasch, *Slavery*, 5.

WM. Smith and H.W. Macaulay recognized this and lamented to Lord Palmerston how the stipulations of the Treaty made it difficult to “devise and adopt any plan... that cannot be readily evaded or circumvented by the ingenuity of Slave-dealers.”<sup>21</sup>

The years 1839 to 1849 marked a noteworthy change in Britain’s approach to abolishing the illegal slave trade in Brazil. Parliament enacted legislation that finally gave British cruisers more legal authority than they had ever had hitherto. The Palmerston and Aberdeen Acts, passed in 1839 and 1840, respectively, provided British cruisers the legal flexibility to seize and search suspected slave ships with greater liberty. The first two years of this brief period were particularly successful for the British and will be discussed first.

The tide changed for the British navy with the onset of the 1840’s. Matson claims, “... during these said two years, 1841-42, Her Majesty’s brig... then under my command, on the coast of Africa, captured a considerably greater number of slave-vessels than did the whole of the two squadrons of Brazil and the West Indies combined.”<sup>22</sup> This sudden success was brought about primarily because the British Navy was now permitted to seize and capture any Portuguese citizens suspected of involvement in slave trading. This solved the issue of Brazilian traders sailing under the disguise of the Portuguese flag. In fact, by now

---

<sup>21</sup> Smith to Palmerston, 5 January, 1833, in *British and Foreign State Papers 1833-1834, Vol. 22*. (London: Ridgway and Sons, Picadilly, 1847), 9.

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=6ksyAQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA11>

<sup>22</sup> Matson, *Remarks*, 36.



they had essentially disappeared and been replaced by Brazilian and American flags.<sup>23</sup> The Palmerston Act was the result of much Portugal's unwillingness to compromise on a viable anti-slavery treaty with Britain.<sup>24</sup> Palmerston, then, pushed the bill through Parliament notwithstanding Portugal's disapproval, and offense of the intrusive act.<sup>25</sup> As exemplified in Matson's aforementioned account, this launched Britain into a successful streak of capturing Brazilian slavers.<sup>26</sup> As a result, the number of slaves imported into Rio during this time, dropped significantly.<sup>27</sup> This success, however, was short lived. In 1843, dissention in Parliament over the destruction caused by the Palmerston Act nearly halted this success.<sup>28</sup> As a result of the enhanced authority provided under the Palmerston Act, British naval ships not only seized, but often sank and burned Portuguese ships.<sup>29</sup> In response to this, Lord Aberdeen restricted British naval ships from destroying the cruisers of other nations.<sup>30</sup> This failure to achieve unity within Parliament coupled with uncontrollable variables, such as a sudden increase in demand for slaves, disabled the British from having consistent and significant success in abolition.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Karasch, *Traders*, 6.

<sup>24</sup> Leslie Bethell, "Britain, Portugal and the Suppression of the Brazilian Slave Trade: The Origins of Lord Palmerston's Act of 1839," *The English Historical Review* 80 (1965): 761–84.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/559311>.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Karasch, *Slavers*, 4.

<sup>27</sup> Karasch, *Slavers*, 7.

<sup>28</sup> Karasch, *Slavers*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. This is for the claim that an increase in demand for slaves also contributed to the increase in importations.

The Aberdeen Act was passed in 1845. What this act authorized the British to do surpassed that of the Palmerston Act. The Aberdeen Act permitted British ships to seize any Brazilian ship suspected of carrying slaves, and also encouraged the Brazilian government to enforce anti-slavery laws that had been established decades prior. The results were significant. Bethell states that “the period after 1845 was by far the most successful the British Navy had ever enjoyed,” with a total of 400 slave ships captured from 1840 to 1850.<sup>32</sup> Despite this apparent success, in 1846, the number of slaves imported to Brazil almost tripled, revealing the overall ineptitude of the British to effectively halt the trade. This increase was the result of several factors.

Brazilian slavers were innovative in their evasion of Britain’s enforcement of the Aberdeen Act. Because British cruisers could now seize slave ships sailing under the Portuguese flag, it became increasingly common for traders to sail under the Brazilian and, more importantly, the American flag.<sup>33</sup> The involvement of American traders in the contraband Brazilian slave trade is significant, and actually began prior to 1846.<sup>34</sup> During the time of the illegal slave trade, the Religious Society of Friends in Philadelphia

---

<sup>32</sup> Bethell, *Abolition*, 282.

<sup>33</sup> Karasch, *Slavers*. Specifies that almost no ships after 1846 had sailed under the Portuguese flag.

<sup>34</sup> Society of Friends, *Facts and Observations Relative to the Participation of American Citizens in the African Slave Trade*, (United States: 1841), 26.

Note: This source reveals evidence of American involvement in the illegal trade to Brazil prior to the Aberdeen Act. See Karasch, *Slavers*, for increasingly common use of American ships after the Aberdeen Act.

were actively speaking out against slavery both in the united States and in the world. Describing slavery as a “nefarious” practice, they believed it was contradictory to the very nature of America’s valuing of personal rights.<sup>35</sup>

Aside from moral indignation, the Quaker’s had compiled evidence of American involvement in the 1839 correspondence between Rear Admiral Elliot and Charles Wood collected by the Quakers, American citizens, particularly in Baltimore, were more interested in the slave trade to Brazil than what was “generally supposed.”<sup>36</sup> Other documents from British captains record that upon finding ships anchored in Brazil under American colors, they did not feel justified in searching them or asking for documentations of proof. Such was the case in 1847 with the ship, *Dido*. *Dido*, a Baltimore-made vessel, sailed from Havana to Bahia with slaves and general cargo onboard such as arms, ammunition, and tobacco.<sup>37</sup> Upon its arrival, the ship, having hoisted American colors and with its American papers at hand, disembarked their slaves undetected and sailed back to Havana<sup>38</sup>. The crew of the *Dido* was also seen boarding the *Mary Lushing* in Baltimore which was, it was later discovered, sold to slave traders in Havana with the American Commissioner still onboard for the purpose of maintaining a feigned American identity. Another example of this is the *Eagle*. The *Eagle*, also American-made, was reported to have imported slaves in Bahia, but went undetected by its American documentation. The crew, made up of Spaniards, was

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 23.

intercepted by British cruisers and sent to Sierra Leone to be adjudicated. The courts there, however, refused to do so claiming it would be unjustified to adjudicate an American ship.<sup>39</sup> Brazilian traders, however, did not limit themselves to only the American identity. Because of the plethora of treaties signed between Britain and other nations, the slavers would simply use whichever nationality best protected them in a given situation. One particular crew was reported to have used as many as three different flags and papers in one single trip<sup>40</sup> The significance of these examples is that they demonstrate the evasive nature of Britain's abolitionist goals. Using the nationalities of other nations to evade British anti-slavery laws like the Aberdeen Act, however, is not the only explanation for the tripled amount of slaves in 1846.

Brazilian traders also began to store slaves more efficiently on their ships. Instead of using slave decks which were easily detected by the ever-increasing amount of British cruisers, the slavers would store as many slaves possible within the ship, often at the expense of the slaves' comfort and health. Karasch notes that slavers preferred to transport young boys so as to maximize the ship's capacity. The ship *Venus*, for example, was reported to have carried 460 tons of slaves. In another instance, upon searching the inner decks a slaver's ship, a British officer reported that he had not seen any slaves whatsoever until he found them hidden intentionally under furniture exposed to the heat of the ship's stoves. In the same ship, the officer reported six

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Karasch, *Traders*, 44.

female slaves bound together with rope.<sup>41</sup> One ship “crammed [135 slaves] into a space capable of containing about 30 at full length.”<sup>42</sup> Oftentimes these efforts toward concealing slaves efficiently, led to many deaths. One ship, the *Incomprehensivel*, landed in Rio, lost 83 of the 785 slaves on board to illness, while another 180 needed medical attention.<sup>43</sup>

Despite Britain’s increase in pressure on the coast of Rio, the city received the most slaves that any other city Brazil throughout the 1840’s. This is because Rio was home to “the largest slave markets” in Brazil, and, by virtue of compliant Brazilian authorities, enabled slavers to unload and store their cargo with ease.<sup>44</sup> As British pressure increased, however, so did the amount of popular ports among Brazilian traders. Smaller ports to north and south of Rio, like Cabo Frio, Marambaia, Ilha Grande, and Macaé were also popular among traders. Karasch notes that Macaé in particular was popular because of the affordable bribes available there, and because it was a convenient passage for sending slaves to Minas Gerais. In this sense, increased British pressure not only fell short of its goals, but also caused slavery in Brazil to expand. Thus, evasive strategies like feigning nationalities, commonplace bribery, slave storage, and a relocation of slave imports explain the exponential growth of slave importation in 1846 despite increased British pressure.

The year 1850 marked the end of the illegal slave trade in Brazil. By this time, the slave trade had already

---

<sup>41</sup> Society of Friends, *Observations*, 32.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>44</sup> Karasch, *Traders*, 39.

been diminished by three factors which eventually culminated in the total halt of the illegal trade.<sup>45</sup> The first of these is the increased presence and aggression of British cruisers along the Brazilian coast. Correspondence on the eve of 1850 between Lord Palmerston and Hudson reveals the increased "... detaining and visiting Brazilian vessels within the territorial waters of the Brazilian Empire, and especially off and at the mouth of the port of Bahia."<sup>46</sup> A series of letters exchanged between the two reveal reports of several slave ships successfully detained and tried, including American ships like the *Excellent* and the *Martha*.<sup>47</sup> As previously mentioned, the Brazilian traders had developed an immunity to British seizure by using the national identities of other nations, especially American. What, then, allowed the British to seize these otherwise immune ships? Abolitionists within Parliament had discovered a legal loophole in the anti-slave trade Acts of 1839, and 1845 that permitted them to seize any and all ships in Brazilian waters. Correspondence explains how the acts did not provide specific limitations for search and seizure within Brazilian and waters, and therefore permitted them to seize any ship suspected of trading slaves.<sup>48</sup> This discovery solved what seemed to be a legal conundrum in the capture of two Brazilian ships the *Malteza* and the *Conceição*. British officials were concerned about the

---

<sup>45</sup> Bethell, *Abolition*, 331.

<sup>46</sup> Hudson to Palmerston, 29 December, 1833, in *British and Foreign State Papers 1849-1850, Vol. 38*. (London: Ridgway and Sons, Picadilly, 1862), 468.

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=CY8AAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA468>

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Bethell, *Abolition*, 326.

legality of the capture of these ships because they were captured in Brazilian waters. When the Foreign off informed them of this legal loophole, it not only justified these two captures, but several on Brazilian waters and on the high seas as exemplified in the various standing orders issued by Rear Admiral Reynolds and other British commanders.<sup>49</sup>

As Bethell argues, however, by the time Britain made this aggressive advance into British waters, the slave trade in Brazil had begun to diminish.<sup>50</sup> This is because the Brazilian government had already begun to apply increased pressure against the traders, and because of a “glut” in the Brazilian slave market<sup>51</sup>. This is significant because it demonstrates the various causes for the abolition of the illegal trade, and also demonstrates that British pressure alone was not the only contributing factor to the eventual end of the slave trade.

Brazilian congressman, Eusébio de Queiroz, in July 1850, wrote an anti-slave trade bill that was, as relevant correspondence demonstrates, passed very quickly in the Chamber.<sup>52</sup> The enforcement of this bill was manifested in the activation of the Brazilian navy, São Paulo’s President, Vicente Pires da Mota, ordering that all slave ships in the province be seized. It is difficult to ascertain the motives of the Brazilian government in actively suppressing the slave trade in 1850. Correspondence suggests that Britain’s

---

<sup>49</sup> Russell to Reynolds, 8 July 1850, *Accounts and Papers Session 4 February - 8 August 1851* (Great Britain House of Commons: 1851), 323.

<sup>50</sup> Bethell, *Abolition*, 327.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 340.

desire “... to draw the serious attention of the Government of Brazil to the continued and vast importation of African negroes into the Brazilian territory, in violation of the treaty engagements and in defiance of the laws of Brazil,” is evidence that it was British pressure on the Brazilian government that led to their aggressive approach in 1850. Such was the view of Lord Palmerston in a letter to Hudson. He perceived that “... the Brazilian Government felt that Brazil is powerless to resist the pressure of Great Britain; that they saw clearly that this pressure must, if continued, fully accomplish its purpose of putting down the Slave Trade.”<sup>53</sup>

Evidence also suggests that the reason the Brazilian government acted so decidedly against the slave trade was to prevent further violence on the coasts of Brazil. Since the British invaded British waters, much naval violence broke out between British ships and slave trips, along with Brazilian forts. One such incident is recorded in a complaint by Lord Palmerston. He writes to Hudson of an “attack made by the Fort of Paranagua on that vessel, by which one seaman of Her Majesty’s ship was killed and two wounded.”<sup>54</sup> In July 1850, Brazilian official Senhor Paulino de Souza grieved to Hudson in a conversation that

---

<sup>53</sup> Palmerston to Hudson, 15 October 1850, *Accounts and Papers Session 4 February - 8 August 1851* (Great Britain House of Commons: 1851), 242.

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=FpdMAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA242>

<sup>54</sup> Hudson to Palmerston, 3 August 1850, *Accounts and Papers Session 4 February - 8 August 1851* (Great Britain House of Commons: 1851), 240.

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=FpdMAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA240>



he was angry about the attacks, bombardments, seizures, and general violence occurring so frequently on the coast of Brazil, and that he would rather be in a state of war with Britain than permit that to go on. He also negotiated with Hudson that if the British navy would suspend their attacks and searches, than de Souza would take better action against the traders.<sup>55</sup> Considering that British pressure against the slave trade began in 1831, increased significantly over time through acts such as the Palmerston and Aberdeen Acts, and yet did not spur the Brazilian government to take more serious action against the slave trade until 1850, it is more likely that this fear of naval violence on the coast of Brazil was the direct cause for Brazilian suppression of the trade than British pressure in general.

Alternative explanations exist as to the abolition of the slave trade in 1850. Two in particular, are that of slave agency and yellow fever.<sup>56</sup> It is argued that the eventual abolition of the slave trade in 1850 was the result of years of slave resistance.<sup>57</sup> Neither of these arguments, however, engage with traditional views of abolition such as Bethell, which include the role of the British navy, and Brazilian politics. In regard to slave agency, Needell engages the popular example of the Malê revolt in 1835. The scale of

---

<sup>55</sup> De Souza and Hudson, 13 July, 1850, *Accounts and Papers Session 4 February - 8 August 1851* (Great Britain House of Commons: 1851), 233.

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=FpdMAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA233>

<sup>56</sup> Jeffrey Needell, "The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade in 1850: Historiography, Slave Agency and Statesmanship," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol 33, (2001): 217-8, 687.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

the revolt was too insignificant to make any real impact on the abolition of the slave trade. The rebels involved were dispersed, rebelled at different times, and, in total, only lasted a few hours in the morning. Furthermore, end result was a decisive victory on the side of the landholders.<sup>58</sup> It also worth noting that no report or mention of the rebellion exists in Brazilian government documents.<sup>59</sup> Another failed attempt at rebellion far too insignificant to make any lasting impact on abolition was that of Vassouras in 1838<sup>60</sup>. Aside from large number of slaves that surrendered during this revolt, and its rural location, what is most compelling is that de Sousa, president of the region, demonstrated no real concern over the incident.<sup>61</sup>

Another popular explanation for the end of the slave trade is the fear of yellow fever. Proponents of this explanation, like Graden and Chaloub, overestimate the significance of the yellow fever in its effect on the implementation of the abolitionist policy in 1850. The sources drawn upon to support this argument are weak.<sup>62</sup> The cited governmental speeches which mention fear of the disease as a reason for abolition were inconsequential in that they were delivered by politicians that were of the party opposite the one which ultimately enforced the policy, and, furthermore, were delivered after the policy was publicized.<sup>63</sup> Graden uses a provincial report which mentions the fever, but fails to connect the alleged

---

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 691.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 694

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 697.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

significance of it to the decision-making process of policy makers. The conclusions of the French medical report cited by Chaloub, although taken into account by one José Pereira do Rego, was ultimately doubted by the politician and thus inconsequential to the passing of the anti-slavery bill in 1850. Chaloub also misinterprets a report on the demise of the slave trade written by Hudson. The report allegedly stated that yellow fever had been a popular argument in the policy-making process via periodicals, however, the nature of these periodicals was not for such purposes, dependent on British subsidization, and thus neither influential nor popular among readers.<sup>64</sup>

Although both slave agency and the yellow fever are elements of the illegal slave trade period, and perhaps significant in their own right, they do not offer a sufficiently corroborative explanation as to how the slave trade was abolished in 1850.

The illegal slave trade in Brazil, from the Brazilian anti-slavery policy in 1831 to its abolition in 1850, is an event in Anglo-Brazilian history marked with great significance. This paper explored the effect and role of British abolitionist pressure on the illegal slave trade in Brazil, and the causes for the ultimate abolition of the illegal trade. British abolitionist pressure, combined with abolitionist pressure from the Brazilian government ended the illegal slave trade in Brazil. From the years 1831 to 1849, British abolitionist pressure did not achieve the desired effect. In the 1830's British cruisers were stationed primarily along the coast of West Africa. These ships, however, were slow, old, and generally unfit to pursue and

---

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

capture the quick American-made schooners used by Brazilian traders. Furthermore, there were too few ships. Sources reveal that, for the most part, slave traders would often make full trips without being detected by any British cruisers along the coast. Another issue with British abolitionist efforts in the 1830's was the lack of authority of the British navy. British ships could not legally seize, search, and try the slave ships involved in the slave trade. In general, the British during this time were divided in their interests. Only some members of Parliament were actively devoted to the abolishing of the illegal slave trade in Brazil. While the slave population increased in Brazil, these few asserted the issue of the slave trade until finally the Palmerston Act was passed in 1839.

The Palmerston Act permitted British cruisers to capture and try all Portuguese citizens suspected of involvement in the slave trade. Soon after, in 1845, the Aberdeen Act was passed which further increased Britain's naval authority in matters of the slave trade. Under this act, British cruisers could seize and try any Brazilian ship suspected of involvement in the slave trade. These advances were only seemingly successful. The slave population tripled in 1846. Brazilian traders devised legal loopholes such as feigned nationalities, bribery, and simply moving the concentration of the trade away from Rio in order to evade Britain's increasing pressure. The trade carried on. In 1850, slavery was abolished. Almost simultaneously, Britain and the Brazilian government both closed in on the illegal trade in Brazil, resulting in the enacting of a bill that officially outlawed the illegal slave trade in Brazil. Correspondence reveals that the Brazilian

## Slavery in Brazil

government did not react legislatively to the illegal slave trade until naval conflict with British ships on the coast of Brazil alarmed Brazilian officials. Alternative explanations for abolition in 1850 such as slave agency, and the epidemic of yellow fever do not hold up to scrutiny and do not adequately address the more obvious causes like British and Brazilian abolitionism.

## The "I" in Faith: Peter Abelard and Medieval Self-Identification

---

*William Johnson*

Peter Abelard (1079-1142) was a twelfth-century French philosopher, known today for his theological treatises and scandalous personal life. Around 1132, Abelard wrote a memoir, formatted as an extended letter to a grieving friend. It was one of the first autobiographical documents produced in Europe in over 700 years, the last being Saint Augustine's *Confessions*, a spiritual autobiography written in the fifth century.

At a time when societal, cultural, and theological developments occurred rapidly (leading modern historians to label the period a "Twelfth-Century Renaissance"), Abelard's narrative provided a rare opportunity to uncover the extent to which individual identity existed during the middle ages.<sup>1</sup> The period was one of rigidity as Western European society was divided into three distinct orders:

---

<sup>1</sup> For more information on the current theories surrounding the Twelfth-Century Renaissance, see R.N. Swanson, *The Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

those who fought (the nobility), those who prayed (the clergy), and those who worked (the peasants). Abelard was an oddity in this formula. As a philosopher, he rejected the material demands and rewards of knighthood while simultaneously accepting its spirit and values. As a monk, he refused to abandon the worldly field of philosophy. His memoir stands apart in the medieval world, while simultaneously rooted in traditional narratives and tropes.

The following analysis of this unique document is organized in four parts; a brief narrative of Abelard's life, followed by a discussion of his position as a member of the nobility, as a castrated masculine figure, and finally as a controversial theologian. While earlier historians have analyzed Abelard's life in detail, many have conflicting perspectives on the identity he attempted to convey. Analysis clearly demonstrates that the self-narrative Abelard constructed in his memoir was an attempt to define his turbulent and unique life in the context of a rigid medieval society.

Peter Abelard was the firstborn son of a minor Frankish nobleman. He rejected his father's inheritance at a young age by refusing to become a knight, opting instead to pursue a career as a philosopher. Travelling across France, Abelard quickly became one of the most respected scholars in the Parisian area. At times, he attracted thousands of students to his lectures. Abelard's downfall came in his mid-thirties when he entered a scandalous sexual relationship with the teenaged noblewoman, Heloise. This scandal was eventually exposed, but only after Heloise became pregnant with his child. Abelard married Heloise against her uncle's wishes, which prompted her uncle to

take violent action against Abelard. Hired men snuck onto Abelard's estate in the dead of night and castrated him.

Humiliated, Abelard fled to monastic life where he continued teaching both secular and theological topics and published his book *Theologia Summi Boni* (Theology of the Supreme Good). Abelard's misfortunes continued as his book was condemned as heretical at the Council of Soissons by his own students. With the help of friends among the French nobility, Abelard spent the next decade rebuilding his reputation, eventually acquiring his own abbot and regaining contact with Heloise, who had become a nun. At fifty-three, Abelard wrote his memoir *Historia Calamitatum* at the time.<sup>2</sup> The work, although originally a letter of consultation to a friend, was made public in order to legitimize his controversial actions (namely his conflicts with other respected medieval scholars) in the eyes of the public. In the final chapter, Abelard concluded that although he had undergone immense personal sorrow, his life demonstrated that adversity can purify the soul and bring one closer to God.

The narrative provided a unique perspective on masculine expectations among Western European nobles in the High Middle Ages. Abelard should have become a knight, training for war and protecting his father's household. Instead, he left home and became a wandering philosopher. Abelard never mentioned any resistance to his abdication, and never at any point was he branded a coward for his actions. The chronology of his life revealed,

---

<sup>2</sup> Peter Abelard and Heloise, *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, trans. Betty Radice, revised by M.T. Clanchy, (London: Penguin Books, 1974).



however, that Abelard came of age at the same time Pope Urban II convened the nobility of France at Clermont to call for the First Crusade to retake Jerusalem and the Holy Land.<sup>3</sup> Urban II's tour, passing through much of southern France, stopped at the town of Angers (about ninety kilometers from Abelard's home in Le Pallet).<sup>4</sup> Although Abelard did not recount these events in his memoir, it would have been unlikely for him to not observe them as they transpired.

Although Abelard made no mention of the birth of the Crusades, he did not fully detach himself from the martial world. Instead, he described his chosen field of learning through metaphors of the battlefield, as he was supplied by "the armory of logical reasoning" and charged headlong into "the battle of minds in disputation."<sup>5</sup> Abelard later recounted how he went about "laying siege" to various teachers and holding firm while they "attacked [his] doctrines."<sup>6</sup> Through such language, Abelard conveyed that he was not less of a man for choosing academics over combat. Rather, he had become a defender of intellectual truth.

Most Frankish knights did not serve in the Crusades, so it would be incorrect to assume Abelard was labeled a coward for preferring academic life. It was at this time, however, that new concepts of violence were developing in the Christian world. Starting at the end of the

---

<sup>3</sup> Abelard, *The Letters of Abelard*, ix.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Tyreman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 91.

<sup>5</sup> Abelard, *The Letters of Abelard*, Letter 1, 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Letter 1, 2.

tenth century, the knights and clergy of Western Europe bound themselves to non-aggression pacts (the Peace of God and Truce of God) that aimed to prevent Christians from spilling Christian blood through mutual oaths, spiritual reflection, and the threat of excommunication.<sup>7</sup> Pope Urban II took this concept further by arguing that warfare against non-Christians could remit sins (rather than being a sin that needed remittance). Christopher Tyreman described the movement as "penitential warfare," a system in which one's sins could be forgiven if they fought for God.<sup>8</sup> Prior to this movement, warfare was a necessary evil among Christians. If properly conducted against the enemies of Christ, it could be a pathway to salvation. By defining himself with a military vocabulary at a time when knighthood was becoming a respectable institution (so long as violence was properly directed), Abelard indirectly linked his work to the work of God. With this logic, Abelard could recount his academic battles and conquests without shame or remorse.

Biographer M. T. Clanchy notes that Abelard's enemies also adopted militant language while describing him, though their descriptions leaned closer to that of a bloody warlord than a chivalric knight. In 1133, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, a monumental twelfth-century abbot, described Abelard as having "teeth which are spears and arrows and a tongue which is a sharp sword," and in 1140 labeled him "Goliath... girt all round in his fine accoutrements of war."<sup>9</sup> Considering that *Historia*

---

<sup>7</sup> Tyreman, 43-44.

<sup>8</sup> Tyreman, 67.

<sup>9</sup> M. T. Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life*, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell

*Calamitatum* was written in 1132, this language could be interpreted as a response to Abelard's self-narrative. While the extent of circulation for Abelard's memoir was uncertain, we do know from Heloise's letters that it at least reached the Oratory of the Paraclete in Ferreux-Quincey, France.<sup>10</sup> If the memoir was circulated from Paris (over 100 kilometers away from the Oratory of the Paraclete) or St. Gildas (almost 600 kilometers away), then Abelard's innovative autobiographical efforts could not have gone unnoticed by his contemporaries who were forced to push back against the powerful rhetoric of this rediscovered genre.

Clanchy concludes that Abelard sought to portray himself as "Christ-like in his sufferings" but without the "mystical experience or supernatural enlightenment."<sup>11</sup> Abelard as a Christ figure added several layers to his already complex identity. Like Christ, Abelard faced heavy criticism and oppression for his teachings. Nevertheless, he still attracted large crowds wherever he taught. Christ's final punishment led to his resurrection and ascension into heaven; comparisons could be drawn from Abelard's adoption of monasticism and the role of "holy eunuch" in the face of his castration. Parallels between the story of Abelard and Christ extend beyond basic Biblical allegory, they were written at a time when the symbol of Christ was evolving into a military figure among knights on crusade.

---

Publishers, 1999), 145.

<sup>10</sup> Abelard, *The Letters of Abelard*, Letter 2, 47. Although Abelard was technically the abbot of the Oratory of the Paraclete, he rarely visited. Most of that part of his life was spent either at St. Gildas (where he was also the abbot) and Paris (where he occasionally taught).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 125.

Tyreman therefore adequately describes the symbol of the cross as a "military banner... part relic, part totem, part uniform."<sup>12</sup> Abelard's literary use of *imitatio christi* (imitation of Christ) tied into his self-perception as a knight at war. As such, Abelard modified the common literary trope of a sinner guided by God to become a warrior following the banner of Christ to new battlefields, which ultimately led him to challenge what he perceived as the sinful nature of monastic communities in France.<sup>13</sup>

Abelard's use of militant language was not a reflective glance at adventurous youth in the secular world. Philosopher or monk, Abelard saw himself as a warrior. Although he lived in a world where those who prayed were distinctly separate from those who fought, Abelard's memoir mimicked the Crusading movement by blurring societal divides. When Abelard was castrated, he fled the secular world to take the vows of a monk. In his memoir, he theorized that he would not have been welcome in the secular world any longer, as "according to the dread letter of the law, God holds eunuchs in such abomination..." that to enter a church again would be impossible.<sup>14</sup> He cited passages from Leviticus and Deuteronomy that discriminate against eunuchs as unclean to explain his exodus from society. Yet, it was his own choice, not the discrimination of others, that lead Abelard to a monastic life. Sean Eisen Murphy analyzed Abelard's statements and found that, in fact, contemporary canon law did not discriminate against eunuchs who had been castrated by

---

<sup>12</sup> Tyreman, 70.

<sup>13</sup> Abelard, *The Letters of Abelard*, Letter 1, 18.

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

others.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, Abelard's choice of monastic life was his own. Still, Abelard's castration was irrefutably a life-changing embarrassment, one that he was forced to come to terms with in the years that followed as he developed into a person whose station and circumstances put him above gender.

Abelard's castration was no doubt used as ammunition by rival scholars as they refuted his work. Roscelin, a former teacher, savagely mocked Abelard's Latin name "Petrus." In Latin grammar, the second declension ending "us" implies a masculine singular subject. Roscelin argued that because Abelard was no longer fully male the name Petrus was no longer accurate, and therefore he must refer to himself as "imperfectus Petrus" (incomplete Peter).<sup>16</sup> Although public knowledge of Abelard's injury was used to slander his work, the taunting did not deter him. In fact, the mention of the event in monastic correspondence serves as evidence that Abelard remained active in the fields of theology and philosophy almost immediately following the incident. Monastic life was not meant to be a haven from Abelard's enemies, but rather a tactical retreat that allowed him to rebuild his respectability, gain new students, publish new works (the *Theologia Summi Boni*), and face new

---

<sup>15</sup> Sean Eisen Murphy, "The Letter of the Law: Abelard, Moses, and the Problem with Being a Eunuch," *Journal of Medieval History* 30, no. 2 (2004): 161-85.

<sup>16</sup> Martin Irvine, "Abelard and (Re) Writing the Male Body: Castration, Identity, and Remasculinization," *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler, (New York: Garland Pub., 1997), 92.

enemies.<sup>17</sup>

Martin Irvine considered Abelard's autobiography to be a narrative of his battle to maintain his masculine identity. Irvine described Abelard's castration and, more significantly, his trial at the Council of Soissons, as incidents where he was "emasculated, victimized, and feminized by enemies who worked to remove his masculine identity."<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the presence of militarized metaphors in his early writing contrasted with his defeats. Abelard's later career was a long-term campaign to "reinvent himself and demonstrate his inner masculinity."<sup>19</sup> While Abelard used his castration as proof of his chastity and obedience to God, Irvine argued that his overall objective was to re-enter the masculine world rather than stand apart. The fields of scholasticism and theology were overwhelmingly worlds of men, and Abelard could not hope to regain what he had lost unless he reasserted himself as a full man.

It is important to note that, despite taunting from Roscelin, Abelard faced criticism for his proximity to nuns of the Paraclete.<sup>20</sup> Abelard described his relationship with the nuns as "a haven of peace and safety from the raging storms" of persecution from his fellow monks.<sup>21</sup> As a direct result of these accusations, Abelard was motivated to closely consider the spiritual significance of his castration in his writing. In both his *Historia Calamitatum* and his

---

<sup>17</sup> Abelard, *The Letters of Abelard*, Letter 1, 20.

<sup>18</sup> Irvine, 95.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>20</sup> Abelard, *The Letters of Abelard*, Letter 1, 36.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, Letter 1, 40.

letters to Heloise, Abelard drew a contrast between his own story and that of Origen, a 3<sup>rd</sup> century monk who was condemned by the Church for self-castrating to avoid sin. Abelard considered his own condition to be one of sexual liberation; “God’s compassion” allowed Abelard to “escape” criminal intent for self-mutilation.<sup>22</sup>

The narrative of sexuality that Abelard presented in his writing is one of self-control. By demonstrating that his castration allowed him to gain mastery over his sexual desires, Abelard legitimized himself as a monk. A key part of proving his divine chastity was redefining his complex relationship with Heloise. Near the end of the *Historia Calamitatum*, Abelard described Heloise as “my sister in Christ rather than my wife.”<sup>23</sup> This distinction was not well received by the abbess, who still addressed him as “my beloved” and continued to reminisce on their happy days together before his castration.<sup>24</sup> She specifically referenced the beautiful poetry that Abelard wrote for her. Clanchy notes that Abelard, although a prolific poet previously, condemned the art after his castration to show his successful adjustment into monastic life.<sup>25</sup> The breaking of both sexual and romantic connections to Heloise reaffirmed Abelard’s commitment to chastity and monastic life.

While Abelard cut all sexual and romantic ties with Heloise, his continued correspondence with her indicated to his contemporaries that he was not at risk of returning to his sexually deviant lifestyle. Clanchy interpreted Heloise’s

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, Letter 5, 83.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, Letter 1, 35.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, Letter 2, 47, 52.

<sup>25</sup> Clanchy, 134.

language as an underlying message to Abelard demanding that he distinguish his love for her from his love for Christ.<sup>26</sup> Clanchy also theorized that Abelard's claim of never loving, only lusting after Heloise could reflect the mental side-effects of his castration. He suspected that the trauma may have "disgusted him with sexuality and distorted his memories."<sup>27</sup> Regardless of his true feelings towards sexuality, Abelard's ability to represent himself as a celibate hinged on refuting Heloise's advancements. The letters between Abelard and Heloise were not private documents. The letters were a public discourse, and their debate allowed Abelard to confirm his dominion over sexual desire.

Abelard's sexual identity is a complex topic on which scholars are yet to reach a consensus. Historians continue to stand divided as to whether his post-castration writing attempts to show him as a masculine figure with rhetorical ability substituting his physical deformity, or a sexless figure gifted by God to be the perfect monastic scholar. These conflicting identities highlight the fact that medieval notions of gender were fluid. Abelard was not trapped in a rigid masculine or neutered order; he defined himself instead through narrative. Using autobiography, Abelard exerted control over his public identity. Although Abelard conformed to the typical monastic standards of chastity, he defined his sexual abstinence in relation to his career and his conversion. The ability of twelfth century writers to take ownership of their identities, even those that conformed to what was considered "normal," was vital to

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 149.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 151.



the development of individualism.

Abelard wrote his autobiography at a time when the act of recording life events became increasingly common. The nobility wrote or dictated memoirs as a means of recording their triumphs and legitimizing their claims to property. One such example was the justification of William I's conquest of England as recorded in the Domesday Book.<sup>28</sup> Monks, in comparison, recorded life events based on the conventions of conversion established by St. Augustine of Hippo's *Confessions*, written around 400 AD. Abelard's contemporary Guibert of Nogent wrote a memoir of his sinful youth and his eventual conversion to God. In the first chapter, Guibert declares "I confess to Thy Majesty, O God, my endless wanderings from Thy paths, and my turning back so often to the bosom of Thy Mercy, directed by Thee in spite of all."<sup>29</sup> Abelard, in contrast, begins his memoir by lamenting his misfortunes and regaling the reader with his fateful decision to become a philosopher.

Abelard's narrative, although mimicking confession, channeled the blame for his misfortune not on his own sins, but on the wickedness of others.<sup>30</sup> Returning to Abelard's narrative of a scholastic knight at war, the "enemies" that beset him are not his own sins, but the nefarious intentions of his fellow philosophers and

---

<sup>28</sup> Clanchy, 123.

<sup>29</sup> Guibert of Nogent, "The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent", trans. John F. Benton, *Self and Society in Medieval France*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press., 1984), 35.

<sup>30</sup> Clanchy, 124.

monks.<sup>31</sup> Even as he wrote his memoir, Abelard was looking over his shoulder at his fellow monks, noting in particular, "Nay, the persecution carried on by my sons rages against me more perilously and continuously than that of my open enemies, for my sons I have always with me, and I am ever exposed to their treacheries."<sup>32</sup> Abelard presented himself as a victim in his memoir, playing the role of a hero under siege by wicked forces.

Despite his tendencies to dramatize his writing with colorful and militant language, Abelard did have real enemies. At the time of his writing, Abelard was one of the most controversial figures in Europe. St. Bernard of Clairvaux especially despised Abelard and his work. St. Bernard's fame was twofold; first, he reformed the Cistercian Order of monks and spread its teaching across Western Europe., second, with his famous letter "In Praise of the New Knighthood," Bernard convinced the Papacy to endorse the formation of the Templars, Christianity's first monastic fighting order. Bernard publicly denounced Abelard's work as a blemish to the study of theology. He even went so far as to accuse Abelard of writing a new Gospel, mockingly labeling him "a fifth Evangelist."<sup>33</sup> Bernard's animosity stemmed from Abelard's emphasis on logical reasoning over established doctrine. Abelard's famous book *Sic et Non* compiled the contradictory quotes of various saints throughout history. The intent of the book was to allow students to analyze these contradictions and deduce the true faith for themselves. To this end his

---

<sup>31</sup> Abelard, *The Letters of Abelard*, Letter 1, 21.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, Letter 1, 40.

<sup>33</sup> Clanchy, 6.

autobiography served the dual purpose of recounting his conversion while at the same time legitimizing his academic career.

The full effect of Abelard's castration in relation to the narrative was more than a climax in a simple story of conversion, it was a gateway into new opportunities for self-expression. Abelard transcended the rigid gender and class roles of the medieval world, recreating himself as an impoverished but brave knight always ready to do battle against the enemies of the Lord. His identity crisis initiated by castration caused Abelard to develop a level of self-awareness unique to the medieval world. Through this he was able to create a self-narrative of desperate combat against unyielding foes and abysmal misfortune. Abelard effectively rewrote his role in society; he was the hero that triumphed through difficulties to do God's work and teach mankind about the world they inhabited. Abelard's memoir serves as evidence that the genre of medieval conversion need not always conclude with the conventional ending of a sinful confessor fading into a quiet and humble monastic life. Rather, the circumstances of conversion could serve as a focal point for redefining the individual. For Peter Abelard, this meant recreating himself to allow for new adventures and new battles in the name of God.

Student Submission

**A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew Walk into a Bazaar:  
Economic Interests and Interfaith Relations in Spain  
under the Almoravids and Almohads**

---

*Logan Leonard*

In the world of 2017, each day seems to bring forth headlines of racial and religious conflict at home and abroad. Each week raises new questions of identity and faith as we, in fits and starts, reconcile ourselves with the globe's increasing interconnectedness or else fight back against the tide of the 'other.' In such a world, and at such a time, the idea of a bygone golden age of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim harmony can provide comfort and inspiration to the peacemakers of today who dream of re-achieving coexistence. The Spanish term '*convivencia*,' or 'living together,' captures this sentiment perfectly. It represents not only an ideal, but also a historical argument that Islamic Spain in the Middle Ages was a paragon of peace and tolerance despite its religious heterogeneity. At the opposite extreme in the historical discourse of this topic stands the notion of a Dark Ages Iberia wracked by the violent religious barbarism of a pre-modern era. Both descriptions

believe the complexities, nuances, and at times flagrant contradictions of medieval Iberian society under Muslim rule. If we hope to remedy the great issues of our own time, it is prudent to understand and learn from this time and place in which adherents of the three major Abrahamic faiths interacted on a scale rarely matched before or since.<sup>1</sup> To this end, we must seek out and comprehensively analyze the factors at play in the domestic peace or lack thereof among the various religious factions of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth century Iberia. This essay will briefly explore the impact of economic factors on Muslim Spain's interfaith relations as well as the effects of the tumult of interfaith relations on the medieval Spanish economy.

From the local marketplace regulations of Andalusian municipalities to the grand macroeconomic forces of the Mediterranean trade system, commercial features established the background setting for relations between faith communities and provided incentives for the actors on this stage of history. At the same time, upswings and downturns in interfaith hostilities shaped the geography and limits of commerce in the Spanish Middle Ages.<sup>2</sup> Often, mercantile trends reflected Iberians' deep mistrust against

---

<sup>1</sup> Olivia Remie Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900-1500*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought (4th. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 138-149.

<sup>2</sup> The Arabic name for the part of the Iberian Peninsula under Muslim political control during the Middle Ages was *Al-Andalus*. Here, *Al-Andalus* refers to the mostly unified and autonomous Spanish region of the historical Almoravid and Almohad Islamic empires. It is used here mostly synonymously with 'Spain' and 'Iberia.' The adjectival form of this name is *Andalusian*.

those of competing creeds, even as trade increasingly integrated groups and individuals across religious divisions.

The Almoravids and Almohads presided over this period. From the mid-eleventh century to the mid-thirteenth, they ruled the southern portion of the Iberian Peninsula as well as significant northwestern African territories referred to as the Maghreb.<sup>3</sup> Spanish urbanization and commerce largely flourished under their administration.<sup>4</sup> As part of the closely interconnected greater Islamic world, Al-Andalus benefited from open long-distance trade across the Mediterranean. It brought a wide variety of cheap goods to its shores and opened new markets for its products.<sup>5</sup> The capital accumulated from the

---

<sup>3</sup> Both the Almoravids and the Almohads began as violent religious-political movements in modern-day Morocco. In the mid-tenth century, the Almoravids amassed power as a local political force there that urged separation from the influence of the Shiite caliphate in Damascus. After consolidating northwest Africa, an area also known as the Barbary Coast or the *Maghreb*, under their rule, Almoravid armies swept northward and united the *taifa* kingdoms of Al-Andalus beneath a single government. Their military presence renewed Andalusí resistance to advancing Christian armies, temporarily holding the so-called *Reconquista*, or 'Reconquest,' at bay. Similarly, the Almohads began as a religious movement within the ranks of Moroccan clerics dedicated to what they considered a purer form of Sunni Islam that emphasized the monotheistic properties, or oneness, of God. They, too, led a massive revolt in the Maghreb and surged northward to overthrow the Almoravids in Spain. Their activity rejuvenated Muslim defense of Al-Andalus, until, like the Almoravids, their centralized rule frayed and eventually collapsed beneath the weight of myriad internal and external pressures. Hugh Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of Al-Andalus* (Harlow, United Kingdom: Addison Wesley Longman, 1996), 154-165 and 196-200.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas F. Glick, *The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World*, ed. Larry J. Rivera, et al., 2ns, rev. ed., vol. 27, *Islamic and Christian*

profits of this trade allowed for Andalusí upper-middle class investment in both local agricultural infrastructure and long-distance trade missions. Both of these promulgated the excess food production necessary for advanced economic activities. To meet the growing demand for their wares, artisans flocked to prosperous port cities. In so doing, such professionals geographically concentrated themselves into currency-based economic alcoves.<sup>6</sup> These islands of cash amidst a sea of barter economies, as well as the institutions and infrastructure initially built for international trade, allowed local farmers to more quickly and easily sell food to meet their city's high demand. This process of ongoing development, in turn, prompted greater agricultural surpluses that supported and further accelerated medieval urbanization in towns along major trade routes.<sup>7</sup>

All of this had important implications for the preexisting religious communities of Al-Andalus. Jews since the time of late Antiquity had thrived as urban craftsmen and financiers throughout the Mediterranean. By the middle ages, they had established and maintained a strong economic base in every major Andalusí population center.<sup>8</sup> As Spanish cities grew as part of the earlier described process of urbanization, Jewish artisans found their skilled labor increasingly in demand. Naturally, they were drawn to opportunities for socioeconomic

---

*Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2005), 113-143.

<sup>6</sup> Constable, *Trade and Traders*, 138-149.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Marcus Arkin, *Aspects of Jewish Economic History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1975), 25.

advancement in prosperous trade hubs. For this reason, Muslim authorities tended to embrace and support Jewish communities in their area. They quite often did so even in the face of popular and to some degree clerical frustration against the relatively wealthy minority they viewed as both other and heathen.<sup>9</sup>

Without major state-sponsored persecution against their communities, the work of Jewish merchants and specialists became the core and heartbeat of the more advanced element of the Andalusi economy.<sup>10</sup> They provided the foundation upon which other sophisticated economic features were built. Large-scale credit lending institutions and the production and sale of luxury goods are excellent examples of such advanced industries unlikely to have been established without the commercial artistry and social peculiarities of the Jewish communities.<sup>11</sup> Strict Jewish prohibitions against usury- in practice, against interest on loans in any form- when conducting business with other Jews went far in distributing wealth and losses throughout the community.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the Jews most often prospered or fell as communities rather than as individuals. This religious restriction presented Jews with an economic incentive to focus their efforts on living and working together as a group rather than seeking commercial and relational inroads with the rest of society. Thus, and though there were many prominent exceptions, Jews generally sought to cloister themselves in urban areas when

---

<sup>9</sup> Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain*, 130-135.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Arkin, *Aspects of Jewish Economic History*, 27-28.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 28-29.



A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew Walk into a Bazaar  
given the chance, further contributing to Spanish  
urbanization.<sup>13</sup>

Beyond those relating to fiscal matters, other religious traditions such as corporate worship and communal Talmudic schooling of Jewish youth drove Jews to live together, as did security concerns.<sup>14</sup> Spain had a tendency to experience violent and religiously motivated mass political movements in both the Christian north and the Islamic south. As a result, Iberian Jewish communities regularly were forced to go out of their way to ensure their own safety or to find a group or institution prepared to guarantee it. Walled cities and armed garrisons offered protection from sporadic anti-Semitic violence in ways not afforded in the rural frontier lands between Christian and Muslim strongholds.<sup>15</sup> Because economic incentives, religious traditions, and security concerns all worked together to Jewish communities to dwell in somewhat segregated Jewish portions of cities, it is difficult to demarcate where the influence of one factor begins or ends or the degree to which one factor was more important than another. Nevertheless, all factors, including economic ones, must be carefully considered and taken into account to form a comprehensive understanding of the behaviors of faith groups in Al-Andalus and their impact on medieval interfaith relations.

In this way, economic forces and the threat of interreligious conflict worked together to shape the social geography of Muslim Spain and attract a specific faith

---

<sup>13</sup> Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain*, 116-123.

<sup>14</sup> Arkin, *Aspects of Jewish Economic History*, 28-29.

<sup>15</sup> Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain*, 116-123.

community to its cities. At the same time, the religious characteristics of that group drove economic development in Andalusí metropolises. This led to harmonious relations between Jewish communities and the Muslim establishment. Unfortunately, it also divided that establishment against the poor masses and conservative elements of the clergy envious of the Jews' prosperity and supposed influence with the political elite. The story of medieval urbanization in Iberia paints a striking picture of the complex relationships between religious groups and even between factions and strata of different religious groups. It additionally makes clear the enormous influence of the fiscal concerns of each party involved and the economic trends beyond any of their immediate control on those relationships.

While scholarly and philosophic interaction between Jews, Christians, and Muslims tended to exacerbate differences along religious lines, on the "neutral democratizing plane of economic endeavor" theological differences were often quite quickly brushed aside.<sup>16</sup> Economically, each group generally tried to meet and interlock with the needs and interests of its neighbors. Indeed, the desire to make money often overruled loyalty to fellow members of their religious group. In Córdoba, which had shifted from Muslim to Christian and back to Muslim control in the early twelfth century, a scene that provides a clear example of the strong influence of business interests

---

<sup>16</sup> Abraham A. Neuman, *A Political-Economic Study*, vol. 1, *The Jews in Spain: Their Social, Political and Social Life during the Middle Ages*, The Morris Loeb Series (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1942), 161.

on interfaith relations played out in the midst of that process.<sup>17</sup> There, Christians in the newly recaptured city eagerly attempted to sell at high prices the Muslim properties they had recently bought up at low prices back to their original owners. A complex real estate lawsuit ensued. As it worked its way through Almoravid courts and flared interreligious tensions at this possible example of larceny and price gouging, Muslim businessmen pounced. They eagerly purchased the land and properties from their erstwhile Christian owners. In doing so, they transferred the property back into Muslim hands and erased the state's need to claim and divide those properties as spoils of religious war. The businessmen promptly resold the lands to their original owners at a great markup or kept and developed it for themselves. These Muslim merchants did so even to the detriment of the innocent Muslim original owners.<sup>18</sup> This episode seems telling with regard to how ordinary Muslims may have viewed and interacted with ordinary members of other faiths. For the sake of mutual financial gain, private Muslim and Christian individuals crossed faith lines to evade real estate market religious restrictions and together earn a profit. For these Muslim businessmen, economic opportunities trumped both religious and civic loyalties. Their own fiscal interests overrode the concerns of the common folk who shared their faith as well as the Islamic social policies of the Muslim

---

<sup>17</sup> Al-Wansharishi. "The Illegal Trade in Plundered Property." 1124. In *Arabic Sources (711-1501)*, compiled by Charles Melville and Ahmad Ubaydli, Vol. 3 of *Christians and Moors in Spain*. (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1992), 124-127.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

government.

Unlike individual citizens, the authorities of Muslim Spain were held accountable to the many competing interests of the groups they ruled and represented. These included both the concerns of the royal treasury and those of the Islamic religious-political movements that had brought them to power in the first place. As such, administrators were forced to take an official interest in promoting Islamic values and restricting Judaism and Christianity in the social aspects of the market place. They attempted to do so, however, without damaging tax revenue by overly burdening Christians and Jews.<sup>19</sup> For example, Muslim policymakers reserved for non-Muslims jobs considered demeaning, such as giving massages, taking care of pigs and mules, and cleaning garbage and sewage.<sup>20</sup> This law may have attacked the dignity of non-Muslims, but it did not harm their financial prospects. In much the same way, Jews and Christians were placed in the same category as the medically diseased for legal actuarial purposes. They were banned from wearing certain kinds of clothing so as to make them visually stand out before buyers and sellers of wares in the marketplace.<sup>21</sup> Sexual segregation in public areas, and especially those near church zones on the belief that Christian priests were

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibn 'Abdūn. "Market Regulations in Muslim Seville," translated by Bernard Lewis, *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources*, edited by Olivia Remie Constable, 2nd ed., The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012) 227-232.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 230.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 231.

notoriously licentious, was strictly enforced.<sup>22</sup> These regulations may have degraded the social standing of non-Muslims, but they did not sabotage Jews' and Christians' potential to achieve prosperity.

As a counterexample, some might point to the fact that Muslims were not permitted to sell or lend books of science of any kind to Christians and Jews.<sup>23</sup> Muslim authorities were clearly aware of their society's edge in scientific knowledge over their northern rivals. They apparently hoped to keep it that way. While caveats were carved out for some medical purposes, sharing knowledge even in that field was expressly discouraged, if not totally prohibited.<sup>24</sup> Yet even in this case, it is the ability of non-Muslims to achieve their intellectual aspirations that was forcibly stunted, not their ability to grow rich and satisfy. The monarchs of Al-Andalus left many other avenues to success available for their Christian and Jewish subjects in commerce, artisanship, finance, and, to a certain degree, politics. History records numerous influential non-Muslims who received appointments to advisory roles in the courts of the Almoravids and Almohads.<sup>25</sup> That they were entrusted with such positions yet simultaneously barred

---

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 230.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Ra'uf, "Rules for the Christians." late 11th century, *Arabic Sources (711-1501)*, compiled by Charles Melville and Ahmad Ubaydli, Vol. 3 of *Christians and Moors in Spain* (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1992), 113-15.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Jonathan Ray, "Beyond Tolerance and Persecution: Reassessing Our Approach to Medieval Convivencia," *Jewish Social Studies* 11, no. 2 (Winter 2005): 1-18.

from learning the secrets of Muslim science and technology speaks to the complex and seemingly contradictory nature of the social relationship between the politically dominant majority religious group and the religious minorities over which they ruled.

In all these things, Islamic social policy was officially and symbolically advanced and imposed upon the infidels within Andalusí society. It did so without actually harming their prospects for prosperity and with them the revenues of the Andalusí government. This system allowed the state to point out such laws in the face of conservative clerical criticism or occasional popular indignation against heathens. In the meantime, the government maintained its own tax-based wealth and power. Thus, once more, the financial interests of one faction of Andalusí society competed and compromised with the religious goals of others to produce a society that was marked neither by extraordinary harmony and tolerance nor by total religious apartheid and inescapable persecution of minorities.

Despite these official restrictions, marketplaces in Seville, Almería, and Córdoba were relatively more open and free from regulation compared, for instance, to those of the Christian north. *Muhtasibs*, or marketplace officials, held fairly little power themselves. They likely only succeeded in enforcing the general guidelines of Islamic social policy when not preoccupied with more pressing and material matters, such as possible health code violations or the use of deceitful measurement methods by crooked merchants.<sup>26</sup> Rather than stifle Jewish and Christian

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibn ‘Abdūn, “Market Regulations in Muslim Seville,” 227-232.

economic output, the governments of the Almoravids and their Almohad successors actively encouraged the industry and commerce of their infidel communities. Instead of segregating parts of the marketplace along religious lines as in the Christian north, Muslim authorities organized them by trade group and type of goods sold.<sup>27</sup> In this way, Muslims, Jews, and Christians all competed against one another and their coreligionists to produce and provide superior products and undercut rivals' prices. In addition, Al-Andalus mimicked the permanent bazaar structure of eastern marketplaces rather than the weekly markets of Christian Europe. This allowed for greater opportunity to meet and react to changes in local, regional, and international demand for Andalusi products and foreign imports.<sup>28</sup> These factors, along with others, set the Andalusi economy on the path to prosperity from the very beginning of united Muslim rule. Critically, they blurred economic distinctions between faith communities as they did so.

While matters of the local economy often brought ordinary Jews, Christians, and Muslims together, trade beyond the borders of Spain often widened the gap between them and their communities. Jews were typically seen by the Muslim state as unaligned agents in the seemingly global conflict between Islamic and Christian forces. As such, they enjoyed enormous freedom and mobility to travel the Mediterranean or conduct business in the Christian north. The Christians of Muslim Spain, by contrast, were not nearly so trusted.<sup>29</sup> Muslim rulers feared

---

<sup>27</sup> Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain*, 123-130.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Constable, *Trade and Traders*, 62-67.

that their Christian subjects would actively conspire against Islamic kingdoms while travelling in the realms of their Roman Catholic brethren. As a result, they tightly restricted the mobility of Spanish Christian merchants and either sent away or intensely supervised Christian merchants of foreign origin who arrived in their ports.<sup>30</sup> One Andalusī scholar, reflecting on Almoravid Almería, noted the bustling port's welcome of Syrian and Egyptian ships whose Muslim merchants came in search of Spanish wine and metal manufactured goods.<sup>31</sup> From a purely economic and geographical standpoint, it seems odd that Damascus traders would prefer to incur the costs of traversing the entire Mediterranean for these goods. At the time, the production of each was booming in much nearer Greece and Italy.<sup>32</sup> The widespread willingness of sharp businessmen to turn down greater profits and high-quality goods closer to home clearly demonstrates the enormous obstacle Christian-Muslim antagonism presented to the commerce of the medieval world. Over and over, traffic and trade between the ports of Al-Andalus and Christian ones such as Genoa, Marseilles, and Barcelona rose and fell at the mercy of heightened or downplayed religious antagonism between the Muslim government in Al-Andalus and the Roman Catholic ones of its various nearby

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Al-Idrīsī, "Trade and Industry in a Muslim Port," translated by Olivia Remie Constable, *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources*, edited by Olivia Remie Constable, 2nd ed., The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 232-233.

<sup>32</sup> Abualafia, David. "Asia, Africa, and the Trade of Medieval Europe," *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (Cambridge: 1997).



European neighbors.<sup>33</sup> Such oscillations in foreign policy were typically the result of the influence of three factors. First, temporarily greater clerical political influence at home or in European courts might result in trade barriers against traders of opposing religions. Second, the threat of imminent outright religious warfare might inspire fear of Christians merchants at home and abroad. Third, a desire to establish closer military or diplomatic ties to other Islamic states could require limiting trade relations with Christian ones.<sup>34</sup> In other words, foreign policy was often determined far more by political and military interests or by outside factors than by purely pious intentions or spiritual apathy on the part of the Andalusí state.

For their part, Jewish merchants, though certainly more active across wider territories than their Muslim and Christian counterparts, did little to forge cross-religious economic integration. Instead of trading in the public market centers of the ports and cities to which they traveled as one might expect, many Jews preferred to trade directly in and with local Jewish populations. Those local Jews would then hawk the foreign goods at higher prices in the general market.<sup>35</sup> This Jewish trade network, frequently mentioned and well recorded in the Cairo *Geniza* collection of commercial records, allowed mobile merchants to lodge, eat, and trade in a trusted environment amidst their fellow Jews.<sup>36</sup> While Muslim and Christian merchants sometimes also followed this pattern, with them the trend seems more

---

<sup>33</sup> Constable, *Trade and Traders*, 248-252.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 52-62.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

an accidental consequence of the Christian- or Muslim-majority nature of their destinations rather than an intentional effort to link disparate communities of their coreligionists as it was with the Jews.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, the fact that Muslims, Christians, and Jews all carried out separate but overlapping international trade missions and showed strong inclinations to deal exclusively with those of their same faith demonstrates the strong effect intra-faith ties and interfaith relations had on medieval commerce.

Whether opting for strategic interdependence or equally strategic isolation, the individuals and faith communities of Al-Andalus consistently acted in what they perceived to be their own best interest when interacting with or avoiding those of other creeds. For all the bluster of medieval theologians and harshly worded restrictions on minorities, it is clear there never existed a truly monolithic Muslim bloc. Muslim businessmen felt free to breeze past the concerns of Muslim common folk when doing business across religious lines, even as hawkish Islamic clerics decried the supposed depravity of Spanish Christians and Jews. The Almoravid and Almohad states, meanwhile, attempted to domestically negotiate compromises that afforded them the greatest amount of wealth, power, and moral authority possible and challenged interreligious foreign trade only when doing so was in their military or diplomatic interests. The resulting society was a madhouse of contradictions when viewed purely from a religious, economic, or political perspective. Simplistic descriptions such as those attached to the historical notions of

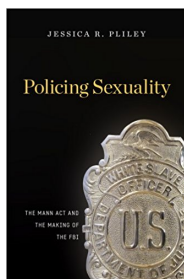
---

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 62-71.

*'convivencia'* or the so-called European Dark Ages fail to do it justice. Better, instead, to seek to understand the many competing factors and factions within and beyond the reach of medieval Muslim Spain that shaped its society. From the security concerns and economic aspirations of Jewish merchants to the priorities of Muslim marketplace regulators, and from the broad socioeconomic forces of urbanization along international trade routes to the organization of stalls in the local marketplace, commerce played an enormously important part in shaping the nature of relations between faith communities, just as changes in interfaith relations disrupted or facilitated commerce in the middle ages. These phenomena did not end with their era. The clash or confluence of religious values and economic incentives, the devastating effect of lack of trust on trade, and the conflict between social policy and political ambitions persist in every town, every nation, and every region in the modern age. Yet by closely examining the role of economics in the interreligious peace or lack of thereof in eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth century Iberia, we can come to better understand the society they collectively created and, perhaps, learn from their successes and failures as we forge our own in an increasingly globalized and multicultural modern world.

## Book Reviews

---



Book Review

**Jessica R. Pliley**

***Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI***

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.

---

*Reviewed by Meagan Frenzer*

*Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI*, by historian Jessica R. Pliley, presents an analysis of the passage and enforcement of the 1910 Mann Act. Formally known as the White-Slave Traffic Act, the Mann Act criminalized the transportation of women across state lines for immoral purposes, including, but not limited to, prostitution. Pliley connects this federal law to the transnational origins of white slavery narratives as well as the expanding scope of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Policing Sexuality* traces the influence of race, gender, and changing sexual morals on policing traditional notions of domesticity as well as female mobility from the passage of the Mann Act into the early 1940s.

Written by assistant state's attorney Clifford Roe and U.S. attorney Edwin W. Sims, and supported by Illinois congressman James R. Mann, who sat on the House

Committee of Interstate and Foreign Commerce, the 1910 White-Slave Traffic Act intended to address the concerns raised by white slavery narratives. White slavery accounts insisted that “white slavers,” typically Jewish or Eastern European men, preyed on young white women throughout different cities. These white slavers raped and then sold the women into a life of prostitution. Pliley argues that the Mann Act was the product of Progressive Era belief that thorough research and investigation can lead to practical solutions. The enforcement of the Mann Act resulted in the significant expansion of the presence of the newly formed Bureau of Investigation, an agency with the capacity to conduct large-scale political surveillance.

Despite originally targeting sex traffickers, the Mann Act enforcement and prosecution greatly shifts as a result of the ambiguity in the act’s language. The ambiguity of the “immoral purposes” clause allowed for the extensive expansion of the jurisdiction of the federal government to police commercial and noncommercial sex (98). Therefore, in response to the 1917 Supreme Court decision of *Caminetti v. United States*, the enforcement of the Mann Act in the 1920s shifted to also incorporate the protection of traditional notions of marriage and domesticity. This resulted in the intervention by local white-slave agents in acts of adultery, bigamy, voluntary prostitution, and miscegenation.

These conservative ideologies of female sexuality and social mobility influenced the Mann Act since its passage. The Mann Act passed in theory to rescue white women from the perpetrators of white slavery and return them to their chaste Christian domestic roles. However,

Pliley describes how federal aid was appropriated based on numerous characteristics, most importantly the race of the woman. Intervention also rested on the white woman's prior sexual health and experience. Additionally, the women's consent played no role in these cases.

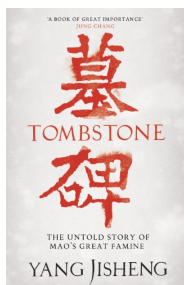
Collectively, the investigations cited by Pliley demonstrate how the FBI played a critical role in its early formation to reaffirm conventional racial and gender relations during a period in United States history when modernizing concepts of sexuality and female mobility challenged traditional patriarchal values.

The bulk of Pliley's sources come from the Bureau of Investigation and Federal Bureau of Investigation Mann Act investigative records from 1910 to the late 1930s. The second half of *Policing Sexuality* and Pliley's analysis of the enforcement of the Mann Act and its influence on the FBI's development relies heavily on the cases from these records. However, Pliley herself notes that some of the cases examined were at times atypical. This begs the question of whether such cases should have been excluded from her analysis to present a more representative set of cases when charting the larger influence of the Mann Act on FBI policing and expansion.

Nevertheless, *Policing Sexuality* contributes a fresh perspective on state formation and the monitoring of sexual encounters. Pliley's work engages students and specialists alike to participate in a discussion on numerous topics, including moral reform, xenophobia, federal governing scope, and evolving sexual norms. Overall, Pliley reveals the expansion of the FBI depended upon increased focus in policing sexuality and female mobility during the 1910s to

the late 1930s. *Policing Sexuality* provides an opportunity for future historians to build upon her work, and potentially apply her methodology to contemporary instances of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.





**Jisheng Yang**

***Tombstone: The Untold Story of Mao's Great Famine***

15 ed. 2 vols. Hong Kong: Cosmosbooks, 2016.

---

*Reviewed by Hanchao Zhao*

The newest edition of Jisheng Yang's prestigious work *Tombstone: The Untold Story of Mao's Great Famine* is by far the most articulate study of the human-made Chinese famine from 1959 to 1961. The central argument of the book is that the totalitarian political system was the culprit of the famine. As a senior state journalist, Yang accessed many documents never released to the public and interviewed many of the officials who were in power during the period.

The first half of the book describes the cruel effects of the famine across China. Yang points out that people not only died from starvation, but also from the abuses of local officials. In 1958, Mao Zedong launched his Great Leap Forward campaign with the idealistic dream to "build up communism is a short period of time" (694). The campaign was ill designed as it not only ignored the most basic economic rules, but also neglected commonsense in

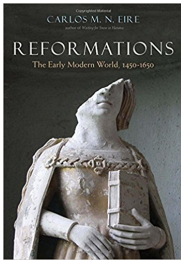
agriculture and industry while pursuing its goals. As a result, China was thrown into misery. In particular, Yang's study focuses on rural areas in the provinces that were most effected while also including the famine's effects in Chinese cities. Yang's use of ethnography to describe the lives of ordinary people during the famine is strengthened by the inclusion of many detailed cases of abuse contained in government archives to make *Tombstone* a unique work that provides readers with vivid and direct impressions of the famine.

The second half of Yang's work analyzes the famine from a historical and sociological perspective. Yang refutes the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) deceptive version of history, traces the origin and causes of the Great Leap Forward, portrays the gradual development of the famine, describes the political atmosphere and incidents during the famine, introduces the social and economic problems caused by the famine, and discusses the famine's shadowy legacy over China. The CCP blamed the famine on natural disasters and Soviet Union sabotage. Yang argues that this claim is baseless and false. Yang's study demonstrates instead that the totalitarian political regime of Mao Zedong was the prime cause of the famine. Mao Zedong was widely considered "the last emperor of China," and the most powerful one in Chinese history (1062). Along with his lackeys, Mao established a tightly structured hierarchical state centered around himself. The state controlled every aspect of society, as well as each dimension of people's lives. Such a system not only governed bodies, it also controlled minds. Although the system was stable as long as Mao was alive, it lacked a

necessary self-healing mechanism if policies went awry. As a result, when Mao developed his unrealistic and ambitious economic plan in the 1950s, there was simply no force that could prevent the implementation of these destructive policies. It was under such a scheme that the Great Leap Forward became a “great leap backward” (772). Based on a plethora of studies, Yang concludes that there were at least thirty-six million people who starved to death between 1959 and 1962, in addition to sixty million fewer births due to malnutrition. The famine resulted in Liu Shaoqi’s quasi-coup in 1962 that in turn led to Mao’s launch of the Great Culture Revolution in 1966.

Yang’s book is significant in two regards. First, he includes almost all of the official documents and secondary sources published in China about the famine—even those that at one time were off-limits. The inclusion of these sources will no doubt benefit future scholars of the topic. Second, he describes the famine not as an isolated event, but connects it to the political and socioeconomic culture of China under Mao.

The biggest weakness of the study—attributable to government censorship and the fact that Yang is monolingual—is the use of a limited number of translated Western publications and virtually no publications from Hong Kong or Taiwan. The inclusion of the perspectives from these unassessed sources would no doubt increase the volume’s already impressive academic contribution. Regardless, Yang has built an indestructible tombstone for his father and the millions of Chinese who died in the famine.



Book Review

**Carlos M. N. Eire**

***Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650***

*New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016.*

---

*Reviewed by Bryan D. Kozik*

As we approach this year's 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of Martin Luther's *Ninety-five Theses* (149-150), the traditional starting point of the Protestant Reformation, it has never been more challenging or admirable for a scholar to compose a comprehensive, balanced, and accessible narrative of the entire age of "interlocking Reformations" (xi). Carlos M. N. Eire's response to this challenge, his survey *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650*, is thus a remarkable achievement illuminating a most remarkable period in history.

Writing at the conclusion of nearly five centuries of mostly polemical discussions of religious reform, Eire delivers an impressively clear and impartial "narrative for beginners and nonspecialists" while still incorporating the most pivotal and recent scholarly interpretations (xii). He establishes one of the most compelling cases yet for using

the plural “Reformations” to refer to the transformation of early modern Western Christianity, by illustrating the great variety of parallel and intersecting efforts to reform the Roman Church. Eire makes it plain to readers that any responsible treatment of the Reformations must be pluralistic and widely inclusive. Although the book does contain several unavoidably detailed explications, the narrative is as compartmentalized and linear as possible while still accounting for the diversity, complexity, nuances, and sensitivities of early modern Christian reform. Positioning his book as a crucial link between the works of specialized scholars and more popular interests, Eire builds upon two assumptions: “that no Westerner can ever hope to know him- or herself, or the world he or she lives in, without first understanding this crucial turning point in history,” and that “one must take religion seriously as a real factor in human events,” even if it is “in ways that we now find difficult to imagine or comprehend” (viii).

The internal organization of *Reformations* is essential to the sizeable book’s accessibility and clarity. Eire divides his 757-page narrative into twenty-six concise chapters grouped in four large sections: “On the Edge”; “Protestants”; “Catholics”; and “Consequences”. Given the great complexity of the issues being discussed, the simplicity of each chapter title and section title provides the reader with the necessary orientation and facility to process the entire narrative. Eire also introduces each section with a different less well-known vignette set in early modern Rome, offering vivid and entertaining context for the ensuing arguments.

Eire's first section is devoted to the theology, practices, and structures of late medieval Western Christianity, as well as the Roman Church's many administrative failings, external challenges, and internal reform efforts preceding Martin Luther's criticisms. The result is a colorful depiction of a vibrant and universal, yet flawed and self-critical, Church—referring to both the institution and the populace—that in the early sixteenth century was already facing some dissent but was ripe for more drastic fissures.

The second section encompasses the most traditional events of the Reformations, including the Lutheran reforms, the Swiss reforms led by Zwingli and Calvin, and state-sponsored reforms in northern Europe. Eire gives substantial attention to the radical and smaller-scale reform efforts of the mid-sixteenth century, arguing that they are as critical to our understanding of early modern religion as are the three primary "confessions"—Lutheran, Reformed, and Catholic (591).

Eire's third section examines the long and contested process of Catholic reform, a topic that often receives either less attention or woeful mischaracterization in historical analyses of the Reformations. He reveals that the Catholic Reformations could be as ambitious, diverse, and conflicted as the Protestant Reformations, extending both before Martin Luther's career and after the traditional ending of the Protestant Reformation, the Thirty Years' War.

The concluding fourth section presents a variety of the Reformations' consequences, ranging from political to intellectual to spiritual and demonological. The selected consequences fit quite neatly into his broader argument—

reserved for this last section—that the Reformations were “a change in conceptual worldview” that “transformed the nature of religion itself, especially of religion as it is lived out” in the western world (744, 746).

Eire’s *Reformations* unfortunately succumbs to one of the traditional pitfalls of scholarship on early modern Europe: using a predominantly narrow scope for Latin Christendom at the expense of the experiences of Christians in Europe’s northern and eastern expanses. Given the book’s large volume however, this characteristic is understandable. Eire’s is an imperative portrayal of the early modern Christian world, especially as a bridge between professional historians and public readers. *Reformations* will become an essential part of the early modern canon, as a tremendous example for scholars and an invaluable resource for a curious general audience.



Book Review

Jason Stahl

***Right Moves: The Conservative Think Tank in Political Culture Since 1945***

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016

---

*Reviewed by David Meltsner*

On January 20, 1981, Ronald Reagan proclaimed that “government is the problem” before embarking on an eight-year journey to remake America along conservative lines. By the end of his first year in office, the right-wing Heritage Foundation boasted that most of its ideas were being executed by the new administration while the Economic Recovery Tax Act incorporated supply-side tax cuts supported by a neoconservative think tank. The influence that groups like Heritage wielded in helping Reagan dismantle the New Deal order would have seemed improbable during the zenith of liberalism two decades earlier. In *Right Moves: The Conservative Think Tank in American Political Culture Since 1945*, Jason Stahl accounts for the transformation of conservative think tanks from obscure academic pariahs to formidable institutions that drove policy debates. The result is an accessible and



engaging intellectual history that complements the New Right historiographical canon while offering monitions as the Trump era begins.

Stahl draws on a number primary sources including think tank archives, presidential papers, and period media sources to trace the stages in the transformation of think tanks from nonpartisan research to sites “of political and cultural power” (4). Stahl dedicates chapter one to explaining the first phase of this process, when conservative think tanks struggled to stay relevant in a postwar environment “reoriented to the liberal consensus” (10). Organizations, like the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and the Hoover Institution, wanted to push anti-statist policy, and Barry Goldwater’s 1964 presidential campaign provided staffers with an opportunity to fight liberalism. This task, however, was impossible within AEI given the group’s firm commitment to the “educative support of policy discussions” (35).

Stahl goes on to detail the second stage in the transformation of conservative think tanks when staffers argued in the late 1960s that their biases would “balance a marketplace of ideas...dominated by liberals” (47). In the following decade, organizations like AEI and Heritage exploited this model to enter the policy-debating arena and overcome the liberal consensus. With the marketplace paradigm firmly entrenched and policy debate entry barriers so low, think tanks introduced conservative policies regularly through the Reagan presidency. Stahl concludes by juxtaposing the continuous rightward political shift during the 1990s and early 2000s in relation to the work of liberal and conservative think tanks, which fashioned

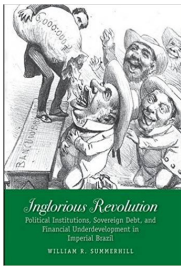
bipartisan consensus around welfare reform and the 2003 Iraq invasion.

*Right Moves* effectively addresses a gap in New Right historiography. Unlike authors who have written about conservative think tanks cursorily, Stahl properly positions them as potent political forces post-1978. Like existing scholarship, *Right Moves* suggests that during the nadir of conservatism in the 1960s, activists laid the foundations for what would become the Reagan Revolution, and for this reason Stahl's book should be read alongside seminal New Right political and social histories. Even though Stahl presents a coherent and credible argument, *Right Moves* is not without its flaws. Stahl effectively dispels "mythmaking" behind events such as the origins of Heritage, leading one to wonder if oral interviews with conservatives like Bill Kristol, Pat Buchanan, or Edwin Feulner, would have provided additional context and dimension for readers. If these leading figures declined to be interviewed, this, too, could have been noted.

After Reagan's inauguration, conservative policies advocated by think tanks became law within an increasingly accessible marketplace of ideas. Just as Heritage prepared for the Reagan Administration, the group is emerging as a powerful force behind another Republican transition. Given Donald Trump's solicitation of white nationalist counsel, and the general proliferation of both Alt-Right and illegitimate news sources, one can speculate that think tanks will exploit the existing marketplace model to influence all ends of the political spectrum over the next four years. Additionally, as liberals reckon with Hillary

## Book Review: Right Moves

Clinton's loss, some pundits have called for the Democratic Party to temper its positions on social issues, but, as Stahl notes, think tank efforts to diminish the voice of Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition fostered a conservative consensus on issues like welfare reform and criminal justice policy, much to the detriment of low-income Americans. In short, besides its application to current political dynamics, *Right Moves* offers a valuable contribution to New Right historiography and serves as a useful primer for politically engaged citizens, conservatives, and students of modern American history and journalism.



Book Review

**William R. Summerhill**

***Inglorious Revolution: Political Institutions, Sovereign Debt, and Financial Underdevelopment in Imperial Brazil***

*New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2015.*

---

*Reviewed by Licínio Nunes de Miranda*

Economics has long been the dread of many historians—especially among Latin Americanists—who have preferred in the past decades to delve into the realm of social history. The reason for Latin America's underdevelopment over more than five hundred years after European arrival has been the source of endless debate among academics. The question of whom or what should be blamed—if we are allowed to oversimplify the matter—is irresistibly compelling, particularly when considering Latin America has been both blessed with an amalgam and abundance of natural resources, and cursed with chronic political and economic instability. This paradox is even more discernible with Brazil, which seems fated to be continually relegated to the position of a country full of unaccomplished potentials. William Summerhill's

*Inglorious Revolution* is therefore a welcome publication that at last has provided some concrete answers to Brazil's underdevelopment.

Summerhill ascertains that Brazil during most of the nineteenth century was characterized by the contrasting features of persistent financial underdevelopment, despite having a national government with exceptional creditworthiness at home and abroad. The explanation for this phenomenon is examined through eight-detailed chapters that study financial developments in Brazil from independence in 1822, to the early republican era in the 1890s. The enactment of the Constitution of 1824 set the stage, providing the national parliament with prerogatives on matters concerning taxation, budget, and borrowing. The constitutional framework also allowed for a strong central government with a greater capability to manage its financial affairs. As a consequence, the national government had a remarkable commitment to honor its debts, causing it to pay smaller interest rates after each borrowing. By 1889, the last year of the monarchy, Brazil had established a reputation unrivaled within Latin America, as more entities were willing to invest in the country.

Some of the qualities that proved essential for the growth of respectable public finance, in turn became a surprising hindrance to the development of private financing. Banking in Brazil remained rudimentary at worse and lacking at best. If the national government was able to borrow easily, the same could not be said in regard to private individuals and companies. Entrepreneurial

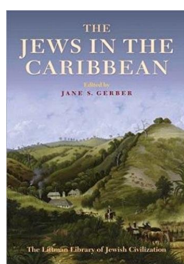
creation and growth in particular were retarded due to government meddling and bureaucratic barriers. Credit remained scarce during the imperial era as the interest required to service the nation's debts was prohibitively high. Without available capital in abundance for the private sector, Brazil never experienced the large economic growth and material development of the United States during the same period. The factors that led to this problem were several. Mainly: heavy bureaucracy, impenetrable regulations, and the effects of petty politics in gubernatorial decisions and appointments.

Despite these barriers, Brazil underwent sustainable, albeit constrained, growth. It was later, in the early republican governments, that Brazil fell from grace. They opted for inflationary, and unrestrained credit policies that crashed the economy and resulted in the first of many defaults. Unlike previous historians, Summerhill insinuates that the change in the form of government in 1889 was a disastrous event with profound and detrimental effects that still hamper Brazil's development to the present day.

Summerhill's fascinating analysis will hopefully lead to further examination of the actual impact of the end of the monarchy. His confident employment of a vast array of primary sources and meticulous analysis provides further credence to his findings. Whether a similar (and much necessary) study on the republican regime will be done eventually by him or someone else is a question to wonder. Moreover, Summerhill has demonstrated that studies cannot focus in a country and treat it as an isolate entity, disregarding any meaningful comparison with other

## Book Review: Inglorious Revolution

countries. There have been excellent researches on slavery and other social topics of Brazil, but it is exasperating that no study has been done on Brazilians and their quality of life compared to other people beyond Latin America. Summerhill has shown that financial development was curtailed, but it failed to answer the impact it had on the lives of average Brazilians, which is understandable since this has never been the goal of his book. Regardless, *Inglorious Revolution* is a fitting addition to a historiographic field that has experienced a stunning expansion in the past decades.



Book Review

Jane S., Gerber, ed.

***The Jews in the Caribbean***

Portland, OR: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization,  
2014.

---

Reviewed by Oren Okhovat

*The Jews in the Caribbean* represents a growing interest in the Portuguese Jewish Atlantic diaspora. The field emerged with a handful of early twentieth-century scholars. However, it was in the 1970s that economic and Inquisition historians began taking note of former *conversos* who stood apart from the greater Sephardi Jewish Diaspora. The ensuing literature has defined Portuguese Jewish Atlantic historiography until today. The current anthology contributes to this literature by attempting to “bring together senior scholars from several disciplines and junior scholars in the early stages of their research to explore the Jewish diaspora in the Atlantic world” (1).

The senior scholars include pioneers of the field, such as Gérard Nahon, Wim Klooster, Jonathan Israel, and Miriam Bodian. The latter two introduce the compilation



with overviews of Portuguese Jewish culture and commerce, respectively. Noah Gelfand supplements their observations by noting the precarious Jewish position in the early modern Atlantic as he explores the commercial influence of Jews, and their constant need to negotiate privileges and rights of settlement in the colonies. These two themes—commerce and communal autonomy—underlie the main tensions that faced Atlantic Jewry.

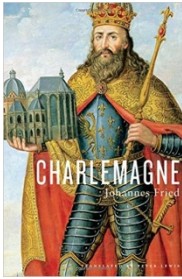
The six subsequent sections are similarly structured: an introduction by one or more senior scholars, followed by emerging scholars with insightful new analyses. A total of twenty-one historians are included, each of whom focuses on a unique element from the seven themes of the collection. The studies range chronologically from the late-sixteenth to the early-twentieth century, and thematically include social, cultural, and economic histories, as well as historical anthropology. Part two is introduced by Gérard Nahon and contains two intuitive analyses by Jessica Roitman and Hilit Surowitz-Israel. Building upon one another's findings, the three explore internal tensions between community and authority. Nahon highlights intercommunal tensions between the Amsterdam Jewish authorities and their colonial offshoots. The other two explore relationships between colonial administrations, communal authorities, and community members. Surowitz-Israel (building on Paul Gilroy's *Black Atlantic*) calls for historians to remove artificial geographic boundaries in order to achieve more comprehensive historical pictures. She urges scholars to consider the history of Portuguese Jews on both sides of the Atlantic rather than limiting conversations to one colony or another. In doing so,

Portuguese Jewish history becomes much less marginal by becoming a transatlantic subject.

The remaining sections are a deeper look into the community by teasing out social dynamics, material or visual culture, and personal narratives. These include artistic expressions in nineteenth-century Jamaica (Jackie Ranston), the stories that cemeteries in the circum-Caribbean uncover (Rachel Frankel), and the cultural shifts revealed by changing Synagogue architectural designs. The fourth section discusses the role of Jews in slave societies. While slaves, and former slaves, of Jews negotiated their place within colonial society by adopting a Eurafrikan-Sephardi Jewish identity, Sephardi Jews themselves were continuously renegotiating their own place within these same societies. Part five reassess the geographical boundaries of Caribbean Jewry. Eli Faber notes the extent to which Portuguese Jews spread across the Atlantic: Amsterdam, Brazil, the Caribbean, North America, the West African coast and London. However, he asserts that despite this expansion, Jews saw themselves as one seamless entity: A Portuguese Jewish Nation.

The compilation ends with three personal narratives serving as case studies for the preceding sections and leads into an assessment of the contemporary Jewish Caribbean. Bringing the compilation full circle, Judah Cohen revisits the constant Jewish need to negotiate a place within Caribbean society in a modern context. He wonders what role the memory of a vibrant Jewish Caribbean past has played in shaping modern Caribbean Jewry.

Despite a more than 300-year chronological scope, twenty-one contributors, and a wide range of themes, the collection does an excellent job in presenting a cohesive story. Many questions remain to be answered, but this work arguably lays the foundation for a new and growing historiographical field. It is a must read for any student of the Portuguese Jewish diaspora but is not limited to that audience. The questions explored here are relevant to every aspect of the Atlantic world including tensions between collective and personal identity, the experience of diaspora groups, as well as Jewish, European, and American history in general.



Book Review

**Johannes Fried**  
***Charlemagne***

*Translated by Peter Lewis. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016. Originally published as Karl der Große: Gewalt und Glaube. Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck. 2013.*

---

*Reviewed by Robert E. Lierse*

Johannes Fried's work, simply titled *Charlemagne*, at first glance may seem like another bloated treatise adding to an already vast ocean of scholarship on the exalted king of the Franks. Thankfully this is not the case. Through the use of eloquent prose, rigorous scholarship, and imaginative analysis, Fried presents a fascinating study that will captivate both scholars and the general public. Another biography would hardly be revolutionary. Recent publications by Derek Wilson and Matthias Becher have already presented compelling analyses of the events of Charlemagne's life. Fried's work stands out as more than a biography, however; it is a glimpse at the inner consciousness of a monumental figure. Such an undertaking is inherently difficult. Sources from Charlemagne's own lifetime are limited, fragmented, and

contain scarcely any material from his personal or private life. Fried is unfazed by this dearth of material and asserts that the only thing a historian can do is rely on his or her own imagination to fill in the gaps. Thus begins what the author describes as a “work of fiction” (vii).

Part one focuses on the spiritual, intellectual, and ethical influences that Charlemagne was subjected to during his formative years. There is a tremendous emphasis on Charlemagne’s religious inculcation, and Fried expounds on the moral and spiritual responsibility imbued upon the young prince. Charlemagne also learned from the world around him; violence, intrigue, and earthly desire were conditions he became intimate with. Fried deftly juxtaposes the dichotomous nature of Charlemagne’s upbringing in an attempt to bring us closer to understanding the psyche of the legendary king.

Part two shifts the focus away from Charlemagne himself and examines the wider world in which he existed. Fried describes, in tedious detail, the political and social landscape from Aachen to Baghdad.

Part three examines Charlemagne as a warrior and dissects the various military campaigns undertaken during his reign. Here again the author contrasts the spiritual with a bloody reality as he tries to discern possible moral, spiritual, and pragmatic reasoning for Charlemagne’s numerous wars. Unfortunately, Fried is vague in his findings. Unable to pinpoint any exact purpose, Fried alludes to possibilities, but ultimately comes to no overt conclusion.

Part four looks at the means by which Charlemagne was able to expand, maintain, and exert his regnal

authority. Fried skillfully analyzes the spiritual quandary faced by Charlemagne as he balanced the marriages, bribes, and threats of violence needed to secure his power. An examination of the *Capitulare de villis* also yields insight into Charlemagne's manorial estates, and the author connects economic reform to the expansion and stabilization of the Frankish realm.

Part five is an examination of Charlemagne's faith and its influence on his reign. Through masterful interpretation of primary sources, the author details how Charlemagne succeeded in inextricably weaving together faith and royal authority. Fried argues that to "maintain the divine order of the world", Charlemagne encouraged the cultivation of knowledge (284). Fried goes on to proclaim that the culture of learning promoted by Charlemagne was of "momentous significance" as it was an unprecedented "move toward modernization" and that the "effects can be felt right up to the present day" (286-87).

Part six is a look at courtly life. Well written and sprinkled with whimsical allusions to Charlemagne ruling from his bath, this section does not seem to contribute anything significantly new to scholarship.

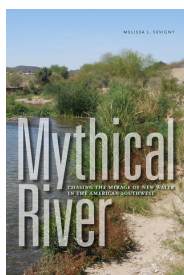
Part seven is a methodical review of Charlemagne's path to imperial power that culminates in a fascinating deconstruction of Einhard's biographical account of the coronation. Once again bringing together the secular and the spiritual, Fried scrutinizes Einhard's account and compellingly reveals hidden meanings to nearly every aspect of the ceremony.

The final section, part eight, deals with the later years of Charlemagne's life as Fried focuses his attention

## Book Review: Charlemagne

on how Charlemagne sought to prepare both his empire and his soul for the inevitable.

It is impossible in a brief summary to do justice to this meticulously crafted work. The author's intimate knowledge of the sources is evident, and his thought-provoking analysis encourages the reader to look beyond centuries of legend and myth. Anyone interested in Charlemagne or the Carolingian world would be remiss to pass on this masterful contribution to scholarship. Though laboriously repetitive at times, Fried's work is an engaging panegyric that brings us closer than any previous work to the man who in his own time was simply known as Karl.



Book Review

**Melissa L. Sevigny**

***Mythical River: Chasing the Mirage of New Water in the American Southwest***

*Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2016.*

---

*Reviewed by Ryan Thompson*

With *Mythical River: Chasing the Mirage of New Water in the American Southwest*, Melissa L. Sevigny adroitly joins the company of veteran nature writers such as Terry Tempest Williams and Annie Dillard, who for decades have bravely told tales of their own wonder and fear alongside clear and sometimes unflinching prose about nature in the places they know best. For Sevigny, that place is Arizona, especially the area in and around Tucson with its familiar but threatened mesquite and saguaro. She nostalgically—several times Sevigny rhetorically longs for the precise words to express the sense of loss that comes so easily to place-based writers in this environmental epoch—recalls arroyos gathering with an ephemeral rush of water that summertime monsoons brought near the converted guesthouse, built by her grandfather, in which she was raised. Her earlier intrigue never dissipates but is enhanced



by her scientific writing. In one memorable passage about memory and loss, Sevigny notes that "Marine biologists coined the term 'shifting baselines' to explain our failure to grieve, our forgetfulness. Each year we measure changes against an always-changing world; we weigh our losses against an already diminished thing. More than water disappeared," she mourns, when a now-decommissioned dam was built at Fossil Creek, halfway between Phoenix and Flagstaff. This being a local study, the dam represented but a miniscule fraction of this frontier nation's efforts to stabilize and monetize the cycles of nature. (124).

In *Mythical River*, history comes in several guises. Foremost is Sevigny's own past. On what was evoked when she later saw "real" rivers like the Colorado, Klamath, and Mississippi: "That first arroyo imprinted me as surely as if its unpredictable torrent made up the blood in my veins" (36). Like ribs attached to the spinal column of memoir are detailed accounts of negotiations crisscrossing science and policy, both ever in flux, over "a century's worth of murky water law" (75-76). The non-Westerner will be grateful for the graceful explanations that Sevigny gives concerning crucial—but less familiar to those east of the Hundredth Meridian—concepts as reserved water rights. While the science and laws prove volatile throughout the piece, the most determinative historical constancy through her book is the power of myth. This is an area of life of which historians have probably ceded to anthropologists and religious scholars too eagerly and without protest.

Sevigny effectively shows how uber-rationalist entities such as the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation were beholden to myth. Like the Western rivers that flow

alternately above and below ground, myth is sometimes an unseen causal agent. The most persistent myth she identifies—and one that is placed in the brief interlude chapters titled "River Notes," which alternate with those principally drawn from personal experience or scientific and political analysis—is that of the Buenaventura, a non-existent river that successions of European explorers were convinced would flow from the headwaters of the Colorado to the California coast. Like the miasma that was believed to emanate from swamps in wetter regions, the lack of an actual body of water in this case—like evidence that mosquitos were actually vectors of yellow fever and other tropical illnesses—did not necessarily discourage emigrants from believing in the fecundity of the Southwest for their ends: "They couldn't imagine a river that didn't reach the sea" (xiii). We have fully come into the moment when "Westerners still believe this myth of abundance. Where we once trapped beavers as if they would never vanish, now we mine the aquifer as if it will never go dry" (80).

Like Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, Seigny's *Mythical River* eschews genre boundaries to reveal the interconnectedness of childhood wonder and adult responsibility, held together in loose bonds of environmental history. Seigny, who feels protective love toward her home region against the unyielding promises of growth without limit, still scrutinizes topics like non-native species and rootedness. Her lack of dogma comes out of grasping for hope in dark times. Her sober revelation that she loves a desert "landscape that cannot sustain me, a place wounded by my presence" is achieved through her reading of primary texts and primary experience. Probably

Book Review: Mythical River

not too distant in the future, this memoir will be a critical primary source of its own (143).

# Submission Guidelines

Become a published author in Alpata, the award-winning, student-run journal of Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society's Gamma Eta chapter at the University of Florida. All University of Florida students are invited to submit. All historical papers will be considered.

## Submission Length

Undergraduate Papers:	2,500 — 4,000 words
Graduate Papers:	5,000 words, minimum
Book Reviews:	500 — 750 words

All submissions must follow the Chicago Manual of Style humanities documentation system.

Submit electronically to **ufalpata@gmail.com** or send three hard copies, each with a cover page containing your contact information, to:

Department of History  
025 Keene - Flint Hall  
PO box 117320  
Gainesville FL 32611

*To ensure equality in the selection process, do not include your name or contact information anywhere within your submission other than on your contact page.*



# Department of History

025 Keene - Flint Hall  
PO box 117320  
Gainesville, FL, 32611

[www.history.ufl.edu](http://www.history.ufl.edu)

Phi Alpha Theta  
gamma eta chapter

**UF** | UNIVERSITY of  
**FLORIDA**